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FROM THE EDITORS

Issue 3, Winter 2010

PD has entered its second year and second phase of production led by a dedicated team of public diplomacy graduate students and support from scholars and practitioners in the field. We are excited to bring you this latest issue focusing on the subject of cultural diplomacy.

Governments, non-state actors, multinational corporations and influential individuals have all, at some point, utilized culture as a tool for communicating and relating to foreign as well as domestic audiences. While this is common practice, it is not always correctly identified as cultural diplomacy. Our goal in this issue is to bring together the history and theory that underpins this element of diplomacy in order to recognize its value as well as its limitations. Our lead articles, found under the heading **Connecting Through Culture**, touch upon the numerous debates that surround cultural diplomacy as a practice.

Diplomacy continues to garner strong interest from policymakers and observers. With this in mind, we have pursued additional measures to improve *PD* as a forum for up-to-date and dynamic dialogue. We have taken measures to engage a broader audience by enhancing our print issue and reconstructing our virtual presence.

PD has always been first and foremost an online publication and our new site allows us to maintain our communication with readers between the releases of our biannual issues. Please visit us at www.publicdiplomacymagazine.org. We look forward to continuing this dialogue with you.

Sincerely,

Tala Mohebi
Editor-in-Chief

Katharine Keith
Senior Editor

John Nahas
Senior Editor

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FORUM

The Need for Sensitive Politics in the Quest for a World Without Walls David Watt

On November 9, 2009, the world watched as hundreds of giant, painted dominoes toppled in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin to mark 20 years since the end of the Cold War. World leaders gathered to express the symbolism of this momentous event in the context of the global community of the 21st Century. That same weekend, from November 6-9, the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) played host to participants and speakers in the framework of “A World Without Walls: An International Congress on “Soft Power, Cultural Diplomacy and Interdependence.” On this momentous day, two decades since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Europe, one sentiment prevailed: we are one people. There is no doubt the age of interdependency is upon us. An age which demands a fresh approach to international relations in the context of these turbulent times, where we are faced by the threat of global warming, religious extremism and controversial military conflict. It is the cue for cultural diplomacy to take to the world stage.

In the 10th anniversary year of the foundation of the ICD, the “World Without Walls” congress brought together the largest range of speakers in the institute’s history to address the most pressing issues facing our world today and the role that cultural diplomacy can play in their resolution. For the last decade, the ICD has sought to promote global peace and stability by strengthening and supporting intercultural relations in the political and international sphere as well as at the grass-roots level. The institute is founded

on the principle that cultural diplomacy is an indispensable tool in conducting international relations and is not secondary to political diplomacy, but rather functions as an intrinsic aspect of it. Cultural diplomacy can therefore be seen as a vital foundation of all political activity.

While there is no concrete definition of the term, American political scientist and author Milton C. Cummings’ definition of cultural diplomacy, “the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding,” effectively encompasses the institute’s approach to the concept. In this sense, cultural diplomacy can be interpreted to indicate any mutual exchange between cultures.

This exchange—and cultural diplomacy in a wider sense—can be extended via the encouragement of intercultural dialogue in an academic context to include, for example, the politics of Soft Power and the way that international affairs are handled. Professor Joseph Nye Jr. of Harvard University, who coined the term “Soft Power,” underlines that the use of what we describe as cultural diplomacy is an important component of Soft Power. Professor Nye categorizes the resources that lead to Soft Power as culture (both elite and popular); policy-making and its perception from abroad; and a country’s value system and legitimacy in this regard. He further suggests that to successfully “attract” others—a term which he uses to refer to the act of convincing someone that a culture or policy is appealing—leaders must “pay attention to the diversity of views and culture of others and have to learn to listen more.”

During the “World Without Walls” Congress a great deal of emphasis was placed on the fact that the ability to understand changing contexts and situations is critical for good leadership. To comprehend the impulses that lead to opinion and reaction in consideration of the significance of cultural aspects and how they come to bear on society and politics is a useful resource for any world leader. Today more than ever, it is important to understand actions within the framework of the culture from which they are spawned and in relation to which outside culture(s) they respond. Global media and the digital age see to the broadcasting of images and snapshots within the myriad of world cultures constantly being observed and analyzed. One of the challenges we face in today’s world is to aid this reception and encourage the active and effective digestion of this information.

The trend toward accepting the need for cultural diplomacy and the

benefits of Soft Power in achieving both common and individual interests has grown significantly in recent years. An obvious example is the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama with its significantly different approach to foreign policy. This may be the most shining example, relished by the media and global thinkers alike, and is certainly easy to reference by the President's landmark speech in Cairo on June 4, 2009 and the recently bestowed Nobel Peace Prize. Nonetheless, let us not forget UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, who champions the merits of "quiet" diplomacy with his "velvet glove" approach. Ki-Moon describes himself as a harmonizer and consensus builder.

During the ICD "A World Without Walls" Congress, many leading figures in international relations came together to support the need for institutions promoting cultural diplomacy in an often volatile global climate and a world which is becoming increasingly interdependent. Former candidate for the 2007 French Presidential Elections, Ségolène Royal, spoke of the changed world since 1989 and outlined her vision for a United States of Europe, more effective in tackling global issues. During panel discussions ambassadors, academics and former heads of state expressed the views that intercultural dialogue is a necessity in today's international relations. Additionally, ICD Advisory Board members like Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, former Latvian President and candidate for the EU-Presidency have shown their commitment to the message of the ICD. With the support of remarkable figures like this, the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy hopes to continue its work and secure the position of cultural diplomacy at the forefront of international political relations in the future.

David Watt has been a member of the team at the ICD since summer 2009 where his responsibilities include CD News reporting and the co-ordination of the Young Leaders' Forum "The UK Meets Germany."

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

New Technology and New Public Diplomacy

Evgeny Morozov

Given the prominent role of social media in recent protests in Moldova and Iran, its potential uses and misuses have attracted significant attention from various parts of the American intelligence community. The most important recent development has been a significant investment by In-Q-Tel, a CIA-funded venture capital firm, in Visible Technologies, a firm that tracks social media. According to an In-Q-Tel spokesman, one of the hopes of this collaboration is that the intelligence community will get an "early-warning detection on how issues are playing internationally."

The State Department announced its commitment to experiment with the use of social networking for citizen engagement and civic participation in the Middle East (which folds nicely under Hillary Clinton's recently announced initiative of "Civil Society 2.0"). The State Department is planning to award up to \$5 million in grants in this area. Speaking in Pakistan, Clinton also extended her support for the creation of Pakistan's first mobile phone-based social network, called *Humari Awaz* ("Our Voice").

The director general of the International Telecommunications Union warned, "the next world war could happen in cyberspace and that would be a catastrophe." In the meantime, a New York-based anti-globalization activist was arrested for using Twitter to direct protesters during the G20 summit in Pittsburgh. The Russian police admitted to reading Twitter for tips about

protest rallies.

A spokesman for the Israel Defense Forces announced plans for a dedicated Internet and new media department unit. According to *Haaretz*, the department will focus on the Internet's social media networks mainly to reach an international audience directly rather than through the regular media. The Iraqi government has launched a YouTube channel which, according to Prime Minister Nuri al Maliki, will help to "counter lies" and "showcase its successes." It has also announced a partnership with Google, whereby the search giant will undertake scanning of archives at the Iraq National Museum.

In Iran, the Revolutionary Guards began experimenting with crowdsourcing by uploading photos of anti-government protesters in the streets of Tehran, so that they can be identified. Thaksin Shinawatra, Thailand's embattled former prime minister who is currently in exile launched an ambitious new media campaign to promote his political agenda; among other tools, it relies on online television channels and text messaging. Facebook and Stanford University announced that they are collaborating on an application known as the Peace Dot Initiative that encourages and chronicles friendships between historically rival groups. Additionally, it contains links to anti-violence activist groups, polls about the viability of world peace and a "Share Your Thoughts" widget.

The Vatican persevered in its eager embrace of new media. Representations from Facebook, YouTube and Wikipedia were invited to brief the Council of the Bishops' Conferences of Europe (CEEM). CEEM's President, Bishop Jean-Michel di Falcothe, said that the church can better communicate its mission if it takes a more active role in its portrayal through new media. In the meantime, a group of volunteers in Saudi Arabia launched the Facebook Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, a Facebook group dedicated to promoting the activities of the Saudi religious police that bears the same name.

The mobile space continues bustling with innovation. A new initiative from the BBC World Service Trust enables thousands of Bangladeshis to learn English via mobile phones. Through its *Janala* service, the BBC offers 250 audio and SMS lessons at different levels. Each lesson is a three-minute phone call, which costs a few pence. 300,000 people signed up to test the service in the first few days since the launch.

More foreign governments are beginning to feel uneasy about

the growing dominance of American technology firms in their markets, mostly due to concerns about national security. Thus, citing concerns over "information sovereignty," Cuba has objected to plans for a new Internet cable that would connect it to the US, opting out for a more expensive cable connection to its ally Venezuela. In Turkey, Tayfun Acarer, the chairman of the country's Information Technologies and Communication Board, announced that government engineers are working on their own search engine that would better serve the sensibilities of Turkey and the rest of the Muslim world. Acarer also announced another government plan: to supply every Turkish citizen with a 10 GB email account - thus bypassing the need for them to use services like Gmail.

Evgeny Morozov is a contributing editor to Foreign Policy magazine and is a Yahoo fellow at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University. His book on Internet and democracy will be published by PublicAffairs in late 2010.

International Broadcasting

Geoffrey Cowan

According to various public opinion polls, most of the world now has a vastly improved opinion of our president and our country. In early July, 2009, the Pew Research Center for People and the Press reported that “The image of the United States has improved markedly in most parts of the world, reflecting global confidence in Barack Obama.” The improvement is most dramatic in Western Europe, where Pew reported that, “favorable ratings for both the nation and the American people have soared.”

The country is also viewed far more favorably in most of Latin America, Africa and Asia. When President Obama left for Asia in mid-November, 2009, Pew reported that more than 80 percent of the people in Japan and South Korea “have at least some confidence” in Obama to do the right thing in world affairs, a dramatic jump from a year earlier when only a quarter of the Japanese and 30 percent of the South Koreans had any confidence in President Bush.

President Obama’s personal story, oratorical skill and political talents are undeniable American assets. He is the face of the nation and he has a remarkably international background. In Asia, he correctly announced that he is “America’s first Pacific President,” having spent his formative years in Indonesia and Hawaii; in Africa, he is understandably seen as America’s first African President, the son of a Kenyan father; and he connected with many people of the Middle East when he told the crowd at Cairo University that “I am a Christian, but my father came from a Kenyan family that includes generations of Muslims.”

But no president, no matter how popular or unpopular, can or should be the sole embodiment of a nation’s public diplomacy. A key goal of public diplomacy must be to communicate a nation’s values to the people of the world, qualities and beliefs that transcend any particular leader or administration. It may take decades for the experience of an exchange program to bear fruit, for example, but exchanges are a central tool of public diplomacy. Effective public diplomacy requires a very long view of the country’s interests and in that sense must be larger and more enduring than

the popularity or unpopularity of any individual leader.

Indeed, effective public diplomacy can, at times, include programs that might seem to undermine the marketing of the person in power. For example, for international broadcasting to be effective people around the world must find it credible and reliable; they must be convinced that it will describe the facts even when those facts are unpleasant, even when they place the current government in a bad light. As the Voice of America (VOA) announced in its first broadcast: “The news may be good. The news may be bad. We shall tell you the truth.” While I headed the VOA in the mid- 1990s, there was no question about the need to report details of the Whitewater probe of President Clinton, nor could my successors ignore the Monica Lewinsky story, no matter how much it might sully the President’s reputation around the world.

It has been tempting, at times, for government officials charged with sending speakers and performers around the world to try to exclude those who disagree with the administration in power. Yet, successful public diplomacy practitioners don’t only use speakers and artists to celebrate and reinforce the image and policy of the administration in power; sometimes they send out representatives who are outspoken critics of the administration and its policies. The goal is often to combat unfair stereotypes, to show the rich talent and ideological diversity of our debate and our culture. For example, in 2007, while she was the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy, Karen Hughes sent Ozomatli, a popular Los Angeles-based anti-war and anti-Bush band, to the Middle East. Their goal was to reach out to people who did not like the President but could still find much to like in the United States.

At a time when we have a popular president, it remains essential to put renewed vigor into the vital and sometimes very different mission of public diplomats. Though the nation is blessed by some very talented career officers who keep operations humming, as of a year after the election of 2008 there was no new leadership in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, where both the Assistant Secretary and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary remained vacant, nor had any new leader been named to head the Bureau of International Information Programs. Just recently, the White House nominated a roster of distinguished people to serve on the board of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, which oversees VOA, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and other international broadcasting entities.

The Obama administration came into office promising to increase the country's commitment to public diplomacy. During the first year, thanks to the President's popularity, it has begun to improve America's image in the world. It has also initiated some important programs that may have long-term benefits, including those featuring scientists and women. Hopefully in the second year it will find new ways to put fresh leadership and vitality into the other tools of public diplomacy.

Geoffrey Cowan is a University Professor and Annenberg Family Chair in Communication Leadership at the University of Southern California, and previous Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism. Cowan has been an important force in the communication world as a public interest lawyer, academic administrator, best-selling author and award-winning teacher, playwright, television producer and government official, having served as the 22nd director of the Voice of America.

21st Century Science Diplomacy

Nina Fedoroff

Historically, science has been used by nations to gain military and economic advantage. The role of science and scientists took on another dimension during the Cold War of the last century. U.S. scientists continued to communicate with their counterparts behind what was called "The Iron Curtain"—an almost forgotten term today. Ongoing communications between scientists in the Soviet Union and the United States, as well as between scientists and their respective governments, have been credited with keeping the Cold War cold and for laying the groundwork for eventual dialogue between Reagan and Gorbachev.

In the immediate wake of the Soviet Union's disintegration, both the U.S. government and philanthropist George Soros invested significantly in the science and scientists of the former Soviet Union, albeit for rather different reasons. Under the leadership of Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar, Congress established the Cooperative Threat Reduction program in 1991, with the objectives of disarming nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and finding employment for Soviet weapons scientists. In 1992, philanthropist George Soros founded the International Science Foundation, which funded travel and research grants.

Within the State Department, the Office of the Science Adviser to the Secretary of State was established by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in 2000 in response to a National Research Council study titled "The Pervasive Role of Science, Technology, and Health in Foreign Policy." Under the leadership of the first Adviser, Dr. Norman Neureiter, the number of active scientists in the department began to grow through expansion of the AAAS Science Diplomacy Fellows program. The Jefferson Science Fellows program was established by the second Adviser, Dr. George Atkinson, initially with funds from the MacArthur Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation. Jefferson Science Fellows are tenured professors at American universities who come to the State Department for one year with salary support from their own university and local living and travel expenses paid by the State Department. Fellows consult for the State Department for an additional five years after returning to their home institutions.

As the third Adviser, I have promoted the concept of science diplomacy as a powerful means of bridging political and ideological differences to address the common problems facing humanity and build constructive, knowledge-based international partnerships. But science diplomacy isn't just statecraft—it can be done by scientists and engineers everywhere. The challenge of connecting scientists in other countries, be they developed or developing, with American scientists and scientific expertise should increasingly become part of every scientist's job. We need to make global service—what I've called science diplomacy—a part of what we do as scientists and engineers, whether we work in a government agency, a university, a research institute or a company. We need our scientists and engineers, our experts of all kinds, to help us jump the digital divide and create a world where all people have the educational and economic opportunities to build and live in sustainable knowledge societies.

Dr. Nina Fedoroff is Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State and to the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development. She is also is a Professor at Penn State University. Dr. Fedoroff is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the European Academy of Sciences. She has served on the National Science Board of the National Science Foundation. Dr. Fedoroff is a 2006 National Medal of Science laureate.

CONNECTING THROUGH CULTURE

Differences in culture are often cited as roadblocks to international cooperation. However, when viewed through a different lens, culture can reveal numerous opportunities for establishing meaningful connections. In fact, public diplomacy practitioners have a longstanding tradition of employing cultural diplomacy. Opinions differ on the exact role culture should play in diplomacy, but the fact remains that it has, and continues to impact relations between states. The authors in **Connecting Through Culture** explore the various methods in which cultural diplomacy has been employed. USIA veteran **Richard T. Arndt** outlines the historical ties of American public diplomacy to its cultural roots. In doing so he also highlights the failures of present-day practitioners to utilize and embrace this vital tool. In contrast, former Director of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture at UNESCO, **Yudhishtir Raj Isar**, warns against the over-extension of the term “cultural diplomacy” as well as the limitations faced by state and non-state actors in their use of culture. Looking forward, Professor of International Relations and Cultural Diplomacy **César Villanueva Rivas** offers a new theoretical framework for cultural diplomacy by using both cosmopolitanism and social constructivism. These discussions are followed by **Sharon Memis**, the British Council USA Director, who offers insights on evaluating and measuring the success of cultural diplomacy programs. By presenting a snapshot of several key arenas of public diplomacy, these articles are meant to inspire conversation and bring attention to the opportunities made possible by connecting through culture.

The Hush-Hush Debate: The Cultural Foundations of U.S. Public Diplomacy

Richard T. Arndt

In the late 1940s, a visiting American dowager gushed to young USIS officer Armin Meyer in Baghdad, “Oh Mr. Meyer, tell me about USIS. Is it very hush-hush?” Meyer’s response: “Not at all, madam, it’s very blah-blah.”

Things have not changed in 60 years. Anyone seeking to learn about public diplomacy (PD) today, with minimal internet skills, can easily find 10,000 words a day pouring out of the collective fingertips of our great nation. Six fine universities, including the host of this publication, have established strong programs to foster research and guide students into this world, be it for business or public service. The books on the subject pile higher by the year.

And yet Cultural Diplomacy, arguably the base on which American PD stands and the deep substance of Soft Power, is mentioned only in passing, usually as a component which has been overtaken by change and new tools. Thoughtful Americans began writing pertinently on the subject early on, beginning with Franklin, Jefferson, Hawthorne and Henry James and producing world-scale monographs—even before the French—like McMurry and Lee’s *The Cultural Approach* (1947), inspired by three-time Pulitzer winner Archibald MacLeish. The analytical output flourished during the 1950s and 1960s, culminating in masterpieces by Coombs and Frankel, with hearty support by the university world and the foundations. Today it is left to the novelists.

The hushing of the debate about the role of culture in diplomacy bothers few. The foundations await evidence that someone cares; and the universities, finding “no one to talk to in Washington” (Robert Goheen, 2007), have lost heart and turned their attention to other matters.

This is curious in that Edmund Gullion’s phrase public diplomacy, for which the most honest definition I have found is “what USIA used to do,” has always rested on a broad cultural foundation; anywhere from 70-95 percent of USIA’s field activity, depending on the country situation, focused on cultural affairs since its beginnings in 1917. It is even more curious in that what is now called PD, from 1938 until 1946, was subordinate to cultural diplomacy and only took charge under the pressures of the undeclared Cold War, never to bounce back to “normal.” Now academic stars like Harvard Dean Joseph Nye deplore the downward drift of the U.S. image around the world, attribute the slump to poor PD, and list its tools as exchanges, libraries, cultural centers, English teaching, books and other programs—all cultural tools, many of which were funded until 1977 and of course since 1999 by the Department of State—the favorite target for PD blame. Soft Power, like it or not, means the diplomacy of cultures.

In personal terms, it seems strange that my comprehensive if massive tome on cultural diplomacy (*The First Resort of Kings*, 2005) circulates more and more widely, is adopted in more university classrooms, and begins to be familiar to the English-reading world abroad, while stimulating several translation efforts. Invitations here and there by foreign scholars suggest they have noticed the disappearance of the fine people and products of American cultural diplomacy, launched unofficially by Franklin and Jefferson, taken over by the private world, and since 1938 supported in part by the formal apparatus of government.

One journey to a far country a year ago helped me discover a great bastion of the Public Diplomats at the University of Southern California. With a colleague from culture-drenched Mexico, we argued for rescuing the diplomacy of cultures from the embrace of propaganda. We pointed out that, even in good years, the practitioners of cultural work abroad struggled to keep their values intact in the hard-nosed context of the world of foreign affairs, as it is has been formulated since the Congress of Vienna. USIA, that beloved club that we all miss, was in fact “a propaganda agency—and don’t ever forget it,” in the prophetic warning of the late Richard E. Neustadt to a new entrant in its cultural service (1963).

A careful search through the writing on PD since 9/11 will turn up little evidence that its cultural base is the *sine qua non* of the idea; the random lip-service in such writing tends to liken culture’s role to some kind of dainty charm dangling from the foreign policy bracelet. My friend the British

scholar Nicholas Cull, admittedly a historian of political propaganda, in a recent 35-page typescript written with Juliana Pilon on the demise of USIA, by-passes USIA's and State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA), kidnapped by Carter's USIA in 1977 and digested incompletely with the pangs of dyspepsia until USIA's end in 1999.

Today ECA is the only remainder of USIA recognizable to old-timers; it survives relatively intact. Its budget this year, for exchanges alone, will pass \$600 million, if the House has its way, in contrast to the \$27,000 granted its founders in 1938. It has slogged ahead, in fair weather and foul, for seventy years. Its tenacity is notable, its survival impressive, its steady support thought-provoking; its visibility is close to zero. Of late, celebrations pop up regularly around the world as Fulbright Commissions toast 50 or 60 years of operation; but the 70th anniversary of the founding of State's Bureau of Educational Affairs on May 23, 1938 passed unnoticed last year.

Meanwhile, the new administration has tapped Secretary Clinton's entourage for key appointments to ECA and the UNESCO National Commission, capped by an Assistant Secretary who must carry on the line of Ben Cherrington, Archibald MacLeish, Philip Coombs, Charles Frankel and Alice Ilchman, among other university educators of yore.

When "America's Salesman" William Benton, in one of Harry Truman's better-concealed mistakes, took over the Bureau of Cultural Affairs from MacLeish at the peak of his stride in the fall of 1945, the scholar-lawyer-poet-editor ceded to the ultimate PR-genius and advertising seized the reins from intellect. Benton's line of successors from PR and journalism would head the new USIA (1953), while MacLeish's ECA successors spoke from and for the university world.

Once in charge, the information function—as we called propaganda—gradually wove its nets around the cultural officers and drove them back to their universities or into internal exile, leaving a few dedicated officers to do their best with what they could squeeze out of a tense collegial climate. The trends and cycles had little or nothing to do with U.S. party politics: culture flourished under FDR and Eisenhower, Kennedy and the senior Bush; USIA's swallowing of ECA was done by Carter's team, and the unkindest cuts of all were made in the well-intentioned years of Clinton-Gore.

Now, step by step, the structure built carefully over the six decades after 1938 has been dismantled, especially in the field. From 200-odd libraries abroad, we have slid to a dozen or so. Cultural staff overseas, U.S.

and foreign, has been halved or worse. The U.S. has left direct English teaching to the less qualified—Iran has taken over the giant Iran-America Society and trebled its teaching capacity. Exchanges, including Fulbright, have held steady in funding but suffer from inflation and over-extension; in recent decades, even Fulbright has tolerated shorter-term purposes which would have horrified the founders. A few cultural centers in private hands hang on, funded by English-teaching, but U.S. government support is gone. A thoughtful staffer from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has recently traveled abroad to press Congress's interest in what are now called "American Corners," with three scheduled for Mexico (Guadalajara, Chihuahua and Tijuana). The cultural attachés, once a stout breed of university dons adept in the language and culture of their host-countries and gently resistant to the pressures of U.S. politics and "public affairs," have given way to bright neophytes who have never practiced cultural diplomacy, who may or may not carry the values necessary to understanding its unstated rules, and for whom there are few mentors left in the service brave enough to speak out.

Not long ago, I called on a U.S. Cultural Attaché in a major partner nation to offer a signed copy of my book; the officer thought it amusing to assert that in ten years, like all books, mine would be totally obsolete. I refrained from noting that such a development would delight illiterates and non-readers.

The decay is not complete. In Mexico City the flagship Benjamin Franklin Library, the second major private U.S. library in history to be established abroad (after post-World War I Paris), is now part of USIS; its collection of 30,000 volumes is supervised by the Press Officer; it occupies a handsome space shared with the U.S. Trade Office and the embassy student counseling center. Its director, a literate and book-loving internet expert, is dedicated to outreach, free circulation, research, and efficient inter-library loans. Half a dozen outstanding staff spend their time assisting a near-capacity stream of research-oriented visitors; its collection is linked to the burgeoning libraries of Mexico and its plucky but embattled universities; many libraries are led by former Franklin staff. Elsewhere, they have disappeared, except in India and Africa, where libraries survive because the host political climate will not permit their closing.

Exchanges have fared better: thanks to the humanism of the late Senator Claiborne Pell, they persist at a funding level just below inflation.

In the case of the Fulbright Program, there is more to be said: various short-range diversions have been tolerated, against all the rules. And a look at the last three appointments to its ten-member U.S. supervisory board (FSB) is revealing: originally non-partisan and appointed by the president, reporting directly to his office, it comprised, in its first 20 years of major university presidents and educators plus General Omar Bradley representing the GIs. The newest appointees to this once-imposing body: a prep-school football coach from the president's youth, a former secretary from his father's White House, and the go-between who brought him together with the future first lady. Despite such diminution, total funding for the bi-national Program rises every year as foreign government contributions mount, to the irritation of those USIS field chiefs who lament their loss of control.

The new post of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, put in place after USIA's demise, has had seven directors in ten years, uniquely chosen from the PR world—six women and one man (in order: Lieberman, Beers, Tutweiler, Harrison (acting), Hughes, Glassman—from broadcasting, and McHale—from Discovery Channel. One of these stumbled into a classic diplomatic *gaffe* by announcing to a counterpart in an allied nation's foreign ministry that the U.S. was not interested in public and cultural affairs because it had only one four-letter priority—I-R-A-Q. Another boasted of supporting a presidential visit abroad by collecting thousands of e-mail addresses from all embassies in the region and regaling their owners with what Americans call “spam.”

Below the Undersecretary, appointments are bright, inexperienced youth. The post of Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, created by MacLeish, has since 1938 been filled by university figures with extensive foreign experience, with two notably successful exceptions; the tradition was honored as late as the Reagan and Bush I eras by four PhD-educators. Clinton opened a new door, appointing a party worker who had served at mid-level in the Endowment for the Humanities; since then, all four bipartisan appointments come from political campaigns or the PR world. The first, a fine manager with a nose for excellence, trusted staff to carry on while acting for absent Undersecretaries, then left for a leadership role in public broadcasting. Two other came from White House offices (Appointments and Social Secretary); one had extensive PR experience and the other was a young mother who spent most of her tour on two extended periods of maternity leave. The fourth was a bright Iranian woman, a living

product of international education and exchange, eager to learn and quick to appreciate. Before 2000, only one woman had headed the Bureau: since 2000 all have been women.

The U.S. private world has learned not to rely on government but has persisted. The universities and foundations, told by Sumner Welles and Cordell Hull that they would have to carry 95 percent of the burden, accepted a bargain in which the government played little more than a facilitative, cooperative and coordinative role. While the percentages changed, private institutions are still the heart of cultural outreach; they have maintained and expanded their commitment. But where the private world and the universities dealt in 1938 with only a few dozen countries worldwide, now there are nearly 200, requiring daily attention. Their impact is vital but barely visible.

Non-funded student flows survive, but new problems surface daily. Without competition until the 1990s, the U.S. could amass and maintain half a million foreign students on its campuses at any given moment. Now attractive new European programs like Erasmus make the interchange of students in continental university systems as easy as boarding a bus. In the wake of 9/11, rigidified U.S. visa rules repelled thousands; meanwhile the world's perception of violence in U.S. cities and on its campuses has discouraged many others.

Good omens these days are minute and invariably have downsides: the universal growth of English as a second language has long lulled the self-indulgent American myth that Yanks are genetically incapable of learning a foreign language; today it becomes clear that is also conceals the shallow and approximate quality of the new globalized version of English, limiting the depth and quality of communication. If reading is in decline, as my cultural officer friend reminded me, it explains why a recent question was asked of me by an intelligent and sophisticated foreign student: she queried a reference in my book to the outflow of intellectuals from Europe in the 1930s; in a quiet corner, I tried to explain the racial, anti-intellectual and anti-scientific theories of Hitler and Mussolini and their impact on education and science in Europe, hence their contribution to North and South America.

Without readers, U.S. book publishing has become precarious. The first cuts fall on foreign translations: today only three percent of all U.S. publications are translated from a foreign language, and only a third of those, i.e. one percent, are literary or imaginative. The spread of technological fads like texting and twittering feed the new “sound-bite society,” replacing

knowledge with information and reducing human communication to what Gary Trudeau's Roland Hedley calls "the first rough draft of gossip." Such gadgets contribute nothing to the deepening of human knowledge and learning. Meanwhile, the easy and growing availability in any laptop of vast stores of information, as in Wikipedia, is creating a small epidemic of plagiarism in classrooms, turning teachers into sleuths and demanding new software to unmask the misguided and self-corrupting dishonesty of the writers.

Downsides go unnoticed. There was worldwide jubilation when the U.S., having virtually destroyed UNESCO in 1983 by withdrawing and taking Mrs. Thatcher's UK with us (a 40 percent budget cut for the stunned multilateral); the UN subsidiary dealing with Education, Science, Culture and Communications remains the only way to attack global questions of culture, to preserve art and monuments around the globe, to fight the tsunami of information drowning knowledge, learning and wisdom. The U.S. announced its return on September 12, 2002 but the return was half-hearted. A sound ambassadorial team assembled in Paris; but the indispensable U.S. National Commission for UNESCO was hamstrung, perhaps deliberately by anti-UNESCO elements in the administration: one hundred members mandated by Congress or specified fields to represent U.S. intellect and funnel its thinking upwards into the work of the Paris-based organization were collected, and then sat idle. Glaringly inadequate appointments and legislative camouflage reduced the Commission to little more than a PR mechanism for the party in power. The widespread U.S. support needed for exercising leadership in UNESCO was squandered. UNESCO remains as the right vehicle to attack the world's mega-problems, global issues like education, hunger, immigration, and violence. Its Dialogue of Civilizations is specifically addressed to putting the lie to Huntington's thesis of inevitable clash, especially with Islam. In January 2009, a stirring new administration took office; after nearly a year, it has put a well-intentioned UNESCO team in place to rectify this skillful bit of sabotage. Now the hard work begins.

There are other smaller signals, such as my warm welcome at USC and other campuses where PD is in vogue, my two trips to Mexico, and regular appearances elsewhere. In February 2010 in Madrid, my message will be carried to a scholarly conference with a challenging theme (Culture and Propaganda). The Dutch scholar Jan Melissen encouragingly seems to take a more European view of PD, insisting on its humanistic substance.

The Department of Defense, no longer able to rely on USIA to handle its public affairs, has moved forcefully to develop its own PD outreach; it shows openness, with the U.S. military's traditional respect for education, to understanding that more is needed than press releases, spin-control and free chewing-gum. And the caliber of the new Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, former Iowa Congressman James Leach, raises many hopes.

Still, these straws dance about in strong winds. The present administration has inherited two wars, a damaged economy, a crippling national debt, an inadequate health-care system, and long-simmering issues like education and immigration. Amidst these dramatic challenges, Cultural Diplomacy is not the highest priority. But there is so much that could be done easily. For one example, surplus war materiel in Iraq, as in the first Gulf War, is being destroyed or sold locally with no memory of Fulbright's ingenuity in hammering swords into plowshares through exchanges.

Another: economists know that employment lags far behind in recoveries from recession; yet no thought seems to have been given to creating tens of thousands of low-cost jobs for unemployed university graduates for work which might advance U.S. foreign interests—expanding the Peace Corps, trebling Fulbright exchanges, extending Teach For America abroad, creating new overseas outreach programs in public health or infrastructural development, or global language-acquisition programs in hard-language cultures.

Our nation, without information from leadership, is beguiled by Soft Power and sees PD as the quick fix to all problems; but it has little idea of what made the U.S. mix of culture and information we call public diplomacy, based on bi-national and multinational cooperation, so special, indeed unique in human history, a remarkable American exception. With no advice to the contrary, Americans equate PD with PR and advertising; their representatives in Congress are no more alert to the point. In the American hegemon's attempt to project itself in depth to foreign friends as a benign world leader, this blind spot is costly. It is the best way to reduce the threat of U.S. power, but it has been forgotten.

While it is not the fault of the universities, the power to bridge the gap may rest in university hands. In this publication guided and edited by students, it may be permissible to speculate: might a focused university effort, during the tenure of an administration inclined to listen, turn things

around? In particular, what better initiative for the six universities where PD programs are in place? Students of PD are equipped to spark such a campaign on their campuses and help it spread to other campuses. PD marches under the banner of communications: what better platform from which to enlist other disciplines and departments. The trick is to help the university community recognize that public diplomacy abroad, without a quasi-independent cultural diplomatic base, is mere PR. To lead the academic disciplines in the humanities, social sciences and science itself, the PD community must find language spelling out PD's relevance to *all* aspects of human knowledge and life.

In such a cause, the first step is to articulate a simple, accessible theory of cultural and public diplomacy. Characteristic of PD prose is the nonchalance with which sound definitions are overlooked. More poignant is the elusive search for a theory to fit within the concept of communications. In a democracy, theories must sound like common sense if they are to bridge the gap between the conceptualizers and the implementers, thousands of groundlings at their daily work abroad and at home. Perhaps it is not out of order for an old-timer to suggest a commonsense approach, based on field realities and functions.

From the viewpoint of a cultural diplomat, PD is the art of shaping, adjusting and communicating national policies to foreign governments and publics, based largely on the tools, methods and cultures of the various media. CD on the other hand strengthens the dialogue between a nation's intellectual and professional leaders and their students with counterparts in every country in the world. At its best, PD values reflect the *New York Times*, while CD's reflect Harvard, Stanford, Michigan and USC.

To define cultural diplomacy, begin with cultural *relations*—which happen by themselves, a mosaic of human encounters fostered by films and media, trade, tourism, intermarriage, the arts of imagination, foreign study, books, neighborly gossip and chance encounters. Cultural *diplomacy* on the other hand only begins when a nation-state steps in and tries to manage, to whatever extent it can, this natural two-way cultural flow so as better to advance national interests, preferably on both sides of borders. Some cultural relations are teaching opportunities, others learning situations; both processes educate the teachers as much as the student. The goal is to move from teacher-student to colleagues.

It then follows that a cultural diplomat's first duty in a new country,

while deepening his or her understanding of that nation, is to review and assess what is already happening between his home-country and the hosts. This survey by the new arrival will continue throughout the tour of duty and perhaps over a lifetime. This survey usually falls into three baskets: 1) relations that are flowing well and need no intervention other than awareness, back-pats and social interaction; 2) relations which have been established but which, for whatever reason, are not working as well as they should, requiring delicate reshaping and deepening over time; and 3) relations which are not yet in place, thus not happening at all yet important enough to warrant pump-priming efforts to start things moving—a perfect example, four decades ago, might have been a genuine and widespread dialogue on Islam and its relationship to other religions, political systems and ideologies (it is not too late, by the way).

In all three cases, the desideratum is change: the long-range purpose in each is to bring bilateral relations up from the teaching-learning model to the exchange practiced by relative equals—to move from the undergraduate level to “associating” with professors and earning admission into their club. Fostering change in another country requires subtlety; cultural diplomats are like acupuncturists, in that they seek to inject tiny intruding ideas into a body-politic so as to stimulate adaptive responses and new attitudes, thus narrowing gaps in communications between the two nations, over time. When tensions are too high, as in wartime, bilateralism may have to give way to multinational institutions like UNESCO.

Diplomats do five things: they *represent* their country, they *negotiate* differences which threaten conflict and forge agreements like Fulbright to strengthen relations; they *advise* in the shaping of their nations' policies towards the host-nation; they develop and use *networks* inside and outside the host-country, bringing useful friends to support their work, and they “*program*,” arranging situations where learning can take place, sometimes no more complicated than a shared cup of tea or a walk in the woods, sometimes involving a performance by a symphonic orchestra or ballet before thousands.

Good diplomats perform all five functions, but programming is the central preoccupation of diplomats of culture, education and ideas because they have an array of tools at hand. Every conversation, lunch, film-show, book-gift, short-term or long-term visit to the U.S., performance by a jazz group, visit by an American student, exhibit of photographs or painting,

Fulbright selection process, or translation of an important book—in short, virtually every act of the cultural diplomat’s daily life—is dedicated to narrowing the gaps in bilateral perceptions and to deepening knowledge on both sides. The cultural diplomats take the lead because of their tools: they can call down the perfect visitor to lecture to the think-tank of the Ministry of Labor, or find the right teacher for a class in Library Science, or recruit a humane economist who can defuse the fear of higher mathematical methods, or send a bright young Marxian historian to the right U.S. university to deepen awareness of his incomplete background. This is the kind of commonsense theory which might help engage others and win their support.

To conclude, I once asked a prominent professor of PD whether my message was pointless chaff in the wind. His answer lifted my spirits: he said that we culturalists must persist, that without the values and history that the cultural viewpoint brings to bear, his work in PD was incomplete. So I continue unrolling my own particular brand of “blah-blah,” trying to bring the issues buried in PD out into the open so that its students—and all American citizens—may see the need for protecting the cultural dimension of U.S. overseas outreach, whatever discomforts it may bring.

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Cultural Diplomacy: An Overplayed Hand?

Yudhishthir Raj Isar

Introduction

My title connotes a certain unease with the vogueish currency the term “cultural diplomacy” enjoys nowadays—unease not with the concept itself, but with the ways in which its deployment has been extended from state to non-state actors and conflated with the broader notion of international cultural relations. The resulting claims now being made on cultural diplomacy’s behalf seem both ambiguous and overstated. The ambiguity resides in attempts to elevate its theory and practice above the level of national interest; the overstatement in the idea that today, cultural diplomacy can help to “manage the international environment” to use Nicholas Cull’s term (2009). Both claims are inadequately supported by the empirical record, I would argue; the first resorts to special pleading and the other to wishful thinking. Public diplomacy “is a term much used but seldom subjected to rigorous analysis,” Cull (2009: 10); ditto, I would argue, as regards cultural diplomacy, a rallying cry adopted under somewhat false premises.

These skeptical views might seem surprising on the part of a former cultural official at UNESCO, who has also been a civil society activist in the arts field. Such an actor would be expected to uphold any discourse that foregrounds culture. So why the heterodox impulse? The explanation lies in my coterminous re-grounding in the critical stances of culturally oriented social sciences’ academic disciplines. Rather than take official cultural policy positions for granted, as a matter simply for rationalization, such perspectives predispose one to seek out the imperatives of ideology and power that drive them, inspired *inter alia* by the cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and his school. This analytical perspective posits the existence of an “economy of cultural prestige” or, as James English has it “the various interests at stake for the institutional and individual agents of culture, the games and mechanisms and stratagems by means of which these

interests assert themselves, and the ultimate role such cultural assertions of interest play in maintaining or altering the social distribution of power...” (2007: 8-9). The misconceptions of the neophyte may also be to blame, for I have had limited exposure to scholarly studies of cultural diplomacy. I must therefore advance my views somewhat tentatively, although they are based on 35 years of experience, tempered by the ethnographer’s gaze, in the international arena of nation-state position-taking and negotiation in the realm of culture (see bio).

In the pages that follow, therefore, I shall first critique the portmanteau notion cultural diplomacy has become and seek to explain why this semantic proliferation has occurred. Next, I shall explore the reasons why caution may be required and expectations cut to size. The cautionary note is directed at arts practitioners and organizations as well as private-sector actors; the admonitions about expectations apply more to governments. Next, I shall challenge the assumptions governments appear to make about the efficacy of cultural diplomacy. Finally, on the basis of my own direct experience of managing cultural heritage issues at UNESCO, I shall look at a key function of cultural diplomacy that is curiously downplayed in the current proliferation of meanings: the accrual by nation-states of symbolic capital through the placing of their ideas and cultural properties in the global economy of prestige.

The Ever-broader Remit

Richard Arndt has distinguished, rightly in my view, between cultural relations that “grow naturally and organically, without government intervention” and “cultural *diplomacy* [that] 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” (Arndt, 2006: xviii). This is clear and unambiguous. But the term has become far more capacious that that, in large part because of the view that public diplomacy may be practiced by a “multi-national corporation, non-governmental organization, international organization, terrorist organization/stateless paramilitary organization or other player on the world stage” (Cull, 2009: 12). What is more, its users now want it to include the entire gamut of contemporary issues in the field of culture. A recent cultural diplomacy conference typically tackles issues ranging as far as the role of artists in social change, international *private* philanthropy in the arts and cultural rights—an issue

internal to national communities if there ever was one.¹

I deliberately listed the trope of “intercultural dialogue” first in the above enumeration, for together with the notion of “dialogue of civilizations” this notion has become the favoured overarching trope for *all* cultural cooperation. One would not quarrel with this ambition in itself. It is surely vital to foster the sorts of *intercultural competencies* needed to respond to the dual “claims of cultures to retain their variety, and to ... meet and intermingle within the context of a new global civilization ... through risky dialogues with other cultures than can lead to estrangement and contestation as well as comprehension and mutual learning” (Benhabib 2002: xii-xiv). Or, as Jacques Delors put it, to learn how to live together in “a new spirit which, guided by recognition of our growing interdependence and a common analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, would induce people to implement common projects or to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way” (Delors et al. 1996: 23).

But the forging of such a new intercultural spirit requires processes far more complex and person-to-person based than the panoply of cultural diplomacy can offer. Of course this is where broader definitions serve their purpose. A case in point is Milton Cummings’ often cited belief that cultural diplomacy “refers to the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding” (Cummings, 2003: 1). In point of fact, its true actors are neither nations nor peoples. Governmental agents and envoys are, joining nationalism and internationalism. In this process, these state actors are deeply engaged in the practice of what Raymond Williams called “cultural policy as display.” This may consist either of “national aggrandizement,” or “economic reductionism,” or both (the latter term refers to the justification of cultural investment in terms of economic and employment pay-offs). For the first, historical precedents abound—the arts patronage of princes, kings and bishops. Also the great exhibitions and world fairs that ran from the mid-nineteenth and the mid-twentieth centuries; these combined both display and commerce, concerned as they were with “promoting national business in a complex interplay with other nations and in the context of trade rivalry” (McGuigan, 2004: 91). So why are these obvious and abiding instrumental purposes of cultural diplomacy so played down, even elided,

¹ Topics discussed at the ‘Cultures in Conflict/Culture on the Move’ conference co-organized in Paris in November 2008 by the Aspen Institute and The American University of Paris as the first ‘Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum.’

today? Perhaps it is awkward to explicitly recognize such workings of the “exhibitionary complex” (Bennett, 1995) built into state cultural policy for what they are.

While the logic of the “new” public diplomacy may well be for governments to build alliances with non-state actors in order to engage with much larger publics (Cull, 2009) the question is whether artists and arts organizers are actually interested in singing the government-led tune. The theatre scholar and activist Dragan Klaić suggests not; for him their motivations in working across national boundaries are “about more than promotion,” focussing on purposes such as mutual learning; pooling of resources; co-financing; technical assistance; joint reflection, debate, research and experimentation; and “in its most complex forms, cooperation in the creative processes, the creation of new artistic works” (2007:46).

The failure to recognize that cultural actors do not pursue State interest-driven deliverables seems to signal a disjuncture from reality. Cull recognizes (2009: 19) that “discomfort with advocacy roles and overt diplomatic objectives have led some Cultural Diplomacy organizations to distance themselves from the term...” On the other hand, they are unlikely to distance themselves equally from the grants available for the sorts of activities listed above. Recourse to grand cultural narratives such as “intercultural dialogue,” or “mutual understanding” makes it easier for them to adopt this stance, just as it makes it easier for governments to advance the national interest cloaked in their mantle. So there is a respondent opportunism at work on the part of cultural actors, even if its mainsprings are different, i.e. artistic, deontological, ethical or axiological rather than interest-driven in the strict sense of the word—although authors such as Cull would have us read the notion more broadly. Yet espousing the cause of cultural diplomacy is no doubt good strategy, in terms of funding and visibility, even for players who may not want to be in the business of diplomacy at all. Yet this warrants a cautionary appeal to the culture sector not to become a prisoner of a rhetoric developed and propagated by others, in the service of different agendas, to be careful about jumping on to bandwagons opportunistically, so as to position itself on the contemporary policy agenda.² If cultural activists must make overblown claims, for strategic reasons let’s say, then they ought to be more fully aware of what they are doing and why, in other words deploy a heightened *reflexivity* about the discourses they adopt.

² I have written elsewhere of the creative industries hype and the traps it represents for cultural actors whose activity is not ‘industry’ (Anheier and Isar, 2008).

These noble tropes are the products of contemporary *culturalism*, in other words the ways in which agency and causality are attributed to culture, as cultural expression and cultural difference are increasingly deployed in the service of political and other causes. Indeed politicians and policy-makers the world over are using the arts and heritage as resources in the service of ends such as economic growth, employment, or social cohesion (Yúdice, 2003). Another major trend is embodied in the special meaning of “cultural diversity” that inspires UNESCO’s 2005 *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*). Expenditures on the arts, even more so on the “creative industries,” are now justified not for the value or values those arts themselves, but as investments in “protecting” or “promoting” cultures understood as entire ways of life in the broader social science sense of the term culture. As Philip Schlesinger has observed as regards European Union audiovisual policy, it is not the intrinsic merit of the audiovisual sector that is valued. Rather, and this applies globally, “it has been the assumed impact of the production and consumption of audiovisual culture upon national (and European) culture as a way of life that has been central to the debate... sustaining audiovisual production is commonly conflated with protecting (because it is believed to shape) a whole way of life” (Schlesinger, 2001: 94).

Conversely, as regards governmental stances, the uptake of cultural diplomacy as a new frontier in international relations warrants interrogation as well. Three key questions arise here. Is cultural diplomacy really a form of cooperation that transcends cooperation among elites? Is governmental agency central to achieving the goals of trans- and intercultural interaction to which cultural diplomacy now aspires? Can cultural diplomacy overcome negative national images? In all three cases, it seems that too much is expected of cultural diplomacy today, that it is pressed into service in the name of goods that it cannot deliver.

Unjustified Premises?

The first ambitious claim underpinning the boosting of cultural diplomacy is that it transcends cooperation at the elite level as has been practiced for centuries, if not millennia. Yet surely it is not for nothing that Richard Arndt called cultural diplomacy “the first resort of Kings” (Arndt, 2005). Yet some other accounts claim that a world of “static and traditional cultural settings” is being replaced by one “where culture is also a medium between people on a mass scale” (Bound, et al. 2007: 16-17). The same

authors also tell us that “many-to-many cultural exchange is now very fast moving and capable of profound effect, both laterally and upwardly, to the extent that cultural diplomacy now directly affects and may even direct the more traditional forms of public diplomacy.”

There are several problems with this claim. First, the exaggerated directive agency attributed to cultural diplomacy. Second, the implied model of a “two-step flow,” which Cull articulates more clearly when he writes, “PD does not always seek its mass audience directly. Often it has cultivated individuals within the target audience who are themselves influential in the wider community” (2009:12). Closer examination would reveal, I suggest, that cultural diplomacy preaches largely to the converted and that it is principally carried out within and across the “high culture” forms— exhibition exchanges, the performing arts of different traditions, etc. To be sure, all these forms have become increasingly more accessible to larger numbers of people, but has “mass” scale really been attained?

Where the latter really comes into play, it seems to me, governmental agency is less likely to be present. As I have observed elsewhere with regard to cultural policy (Isar, 2009), public policy and its impacts are incorrectly assumed to be principal determinants of what we might call the “cultural system.” Clearly, today a range of other forces are at work in shaping the cultural life of any human group, whether on the level of the nation-state, sub-nationally or supra-nationally. The market, or societal dispositions and actions, notably civil society campaigns related to cultural causes and quality of life issues, impact on the cultural system far more deeply than the measures taken by ministries of culture... (this goes without saying in the USA, but it must be remembered that in practically all other countries, culture is a domain of public policy assumed and funded by the State directly, or at least at arms length). At the forefront of India’s contemporary cultural system, for example, stands the popular culture generated and disseminated by Bollywood and other major centres of film production. The policies of the ministries responsible respectively for “culture” and “information” impinge but superficially on this cultural universe. Instead, they support institutions of “high culture,” offer awards and prizes to artists and writers, and...pursue efforts of cultural diplomacy that pale into insignificance compared with the international reach of the film industry. A similar point was made in the European context by Geoff Mulgan and Ken Worpole, who “alerted us long ago to the fact that the cultural policies doing most to shape national

cultures were not being framed within bespoke government departments but in the boardrooms of very powerful transnational commercial organisations” (Ahearne, 2009: 144)

The second misapprehension, I would argue, has to do with governmental presumptions as to their power of agency in the cultural arena. Today’s dense border-crossing flows and migrations are taking place increasingly beyond the grasp and control of nation-states. What is virtue in the intergovernmental arena is in other circles the vice of “methodological nationalism,” i.e. the assumption that the nation-state is the right container for culture. Now that the primacy of the nation-state appears past its heyday, the nexus of culture and nation no longer holds. There is a growing awareness of the porosity of boundaries and the fluidity and multiplicity of cultural identities. It is not just that this “cracking open,” as Ien Ang puts it (Ang, 2011, forthcoming), of the nationalist narrative undercuts the homogenizing image of nationhood and national culture. More significantly, one might observe, the purposes of mutual understanding are being achieved far more effectively by direct cultural interactions at the civil society level.

The point that “diasporas are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment” (Tölölyan 1991:3) is already being taken by some cultural diplomacy practitioners, e.g., the statement I heard at a Wilton Park conference on intercultural issues in the late 1990s by the Director of the French Cultural Institute in London to the effect that his job was not to present the culture “of” France but cultural life “in” France—he was alluding to the plurality of national origins of artists living and working in that country. The second point is increasingly recognized too, as when cultural diplomacy advisers recognize that “opportunities for global contact and exchange are proliferating as never before” (Bound et al. 2007: 19). Yet curiously the same authors invoke the challenge of enabling “mass populations to develop the vital skills of cultural literacy – where people are able to understand themselves, and others, and the dynamic relationship between the two.” As argued already, it is not a question of mass populations in the first place.

But more importantly, the informal webs of relations among artists and cultural practitioners and their supporting organizations must surely engender richer interactions than those proposed or facilitated by formal State institutions. For civil society actors are also among the principal agents of phenomena such as transculturality, deterritorialization, hybridity and creolization—all produced by “flows and crossovers between cultures, and

the patterns of their intermingling that are produced by the movement of peoples and the restless cultural mixing that now characterizes developed cultural markets” (Bennett, 2001: 19). There is also the accompanying phenomenon of deterritorialization (García Canclini 1995), in other words the loss of the “natural” relation of culture to geographical and social territories. Civil society organizations are among the most active explorers of the emergent zones of culture in which old traditions survive and meld with contemporary novelty, negotiating the various processes just cited. They play a crucial role in facilitating both production and dissemination of a variety of cultural forms. Thus in December 2008 the Dutch NGO HIVOS (Humanist Institute for Co-operation with Developing Countries) and the Open Society Institute (OSI), in cooperation with the Budapest-based Center for the Study of Culture and Society (CSCS) organized on the Bangalore campus of the information society giant INFOSYS, a conference on “Culture and Civil Society Development in Asia.” The conference announcement stated that “networks in the arts and culture sector have created platforms for the interaction of practitioners and mediated between the producer, market and the state.”

The third misapprehension that causes cultural diplomacy to be pressed into heavy duty service beyond its capacities is the conviction that it can effectively overturn deeply negative images of nation-states provoked by their use of the hard power tools of military action and economic domination. The conventional wisdom of cultural activists, scholars and policy-makers alike is that cultural charms can dispel strongly hostile perceptions aroused by the exercise of hard power. But is it reasonable to assume that the perceived depredations of the “Quiet American,” for example, can be so eliminated? The very people who dislike American hard power are probably quite admiring already—if the Pew data is to be believed—of American performing arts; there is no apparent reason why they should change their minds about US foreign policy because they are offered travelling exhibitions, jazz musicians and hip-hop dancers.

Cultural tools were certainly used by the USA to counter Soviet anti-American propaganda during the Cold War or the cultural and media imperialism thesis in both Europe and the global South (Arndt, 2007). But cultural diplomacy rose to salience as a public policy domain in the USA only after the rise of deeply hostile Islamist fundamentalism and in the wake of that arch-culturalist trope, Huntington’s “clash of civilizations” thesis,

as well as the radical deterioration of the American image in the rest of the world after the two invasions of Iraq. Both the theory and the subsequent reality, I argue, have encouraged a shift away from the reasonable aim of conveying a positive image of a national culture or of boosting the recognition of a national cultural model in the rest of the world. In the emblematic French case, this was the key motivation, with the creation of the Alliance Française, the network of French Cultural Centres and the like in order to combat the hegemony of the English language, formerly linked to British imperial dominion and today to the USA’s global cultural power.

Today, however, a more ambitious goal is sought: the voluntaristic extirpation of negative images. This was no doubt the challenge that faced post-war West Germany, which clearly used the Goethe Institute network and a deliberate policy of exporting German high culture—principally music—to present a different face than that of Nazi Germany. But surely enough people in the rest of the world knew already how wonderful German high culture actually was and how well its musicians could play Bach and Beethoven—nor did the latter remove the taint of Nazism. Moreover, while I can provide no evidence to disprove my disbelief, there is simply no good longitudinal social science research that has compared before and after perceptions and thereby demonstrated the power of cultural diplomacy in this regard. For the moment, then, it remains a stipulation, more a matter of faith than of evidence.

A new avatar of cultural diplomacy is the “cultural foreign policy” of the European Union. The challenge here is not so much to counter a negative image of Europe in the rest of the world (imperial Europe’s past colonialism is superseded by fear of imperial America) as to set itself up as a more appealing alternative. The USA is the elephant in the room... Thus in 2007, the European Commission put forward a “Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalizing world” (Commission of the European Communities, 2007). Now adopted by the EU institutions and Member States, as well as the civil society organizations that interact with these institutions, this agenda sets out three sets of objectives: to promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue; to promote culture as a catalyst for creativity in the framework of the Lisbon Strategy and to promote culture as a vital element in the Union’s international relations. The five sub-objectives of the third objective—the cultural diplomacy dimension—are to: further develop political dialogue in culture and promote cultural

exchanges; promote market access for cultural goods and services from developing countries; protect and promote cultural diversity through financial and technical support; ensure that all cooperation programmes and projects take full account of local culture and contribute to increase people's access to culture and to the means of cultural expression, including people-to-people contacts; and promote the active involvement of the EU in the work of international organisations dealing with culture. What really drives these laudable development-oriented goals is the desire to counter the preponderance in the global cultural economy of the lone superpower. The Communication indeed demonstrates a self-conscious awareness of the cultural diplomacy discourse:

The European Union is not just an economic process or a trading power, it is already widely - and accurately - perceived as an unprecedented and successful social and cultural project. The EU is, and must aspire to become even more, an example of a "soft power" founded on norms and values... which, provided they are upheld and promoted, can be of inspiration for the world of tomorrow.

The difficulty, however, is to arrive at a common platform of "inspiration" for the rest of the world on the part of a continent whose nation-states already have established traditions of cultural diplomacy and/or are highly aware of their peoples' wariness about any loss of cultural sovereignty to the supra-national entity. Hence the limited competencies for culture enjoyed by the European Union and which the Communication is designed to help supersede. How can the EU project itself culturally as speaking with one voice, the very notion of "European identity" being an aporia? Formerly, Europe symbolized empire, but today, the paradox Susan Sontag identified is that the new idea of Europe is about retrenchment: "the Europeanization, not of the rest of the world, but... of Europe itself" (cited in Morley and Robbins, 1990:3). Against this backdrop, a number of national cultural centers/institutes have recently formed a non-profit association called European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC). While European artists associations and foundations have articulated the need for a concerted, joined-up European platform that can project an image of a single "cultural Europe," EUNIC's mission statement makes no strict mention of this. It contents itself with the following boilerplate formulation: "The purpose of EUNIC is to create effective partnerships and networks between the participating organisations, to improve and promote cultural

diversity and understanding between European societies, and to strengthen international dialogue and co-operation with countries outside Europe."

UNESCO in the Global Economy of Prestige

Any locus of international cultural politics is necessarily also a site for the confrontation of ideas, interests and power-relations with respect to symbolic meanings. Yet UNESCO's discourse privileges a kind of ideal Kantian internationalism. Phrases in its Constitution such the following could also be construed as a sort of post-War cultural diplomacy urtext at the international organization level: "States Parties ... are agreed and determined to develop and to increase the means of communication between their peoples and to employ these means for the purposes of mutual understanding and a truer and more perfect knowledge of each other's lives." As the mission was to construct "the defences of peace in the minds of men" the assumption was that culture, in the singular, was a beneficent higher attribute that should be deployed for this purpose. Culture and cultural co-operation were thus means of meeting the overarching peace-building objective. Yet they were not limited to this instrumental role. It was not simply a question of what culture could do for UNESCO. It was also about what UNESCO could do for culture—hence by extension, for the cultures of its Member States, in other words very much in a paradigm of representation.

Abstract issues and causes have of course been championed diversely by Member States for reasons of principle dictated by their respective national value systems and traditions. Yet these positions of principle have also been ways of marking territory and control in ideological and discursive terms, of using institutions to try and make their own meanings of terms both dominant and authoritative. Thus the British anthropologist Susan Wright sat in on the deliberations of a Drafting Committee at the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development held in Stockholm in 1998. In the drafting room, "the delegates of the member states were asserting their power to limit definitions of 'culture for development' to those compatible with various 'national cultures' of nation states" (Wright, 1998:177). Wright also identified the different "ways that 'culture' was being linked in a new semantic cluster with 'creativity,' 'diversity,' 'development,' 'participation' and 'freedom'" and the ways in which "differently positioned actors draw on, stretch or challenge an accumulation of meanings of 'culture' (and) try to make their meaning 'stick'" (1998: 175).

A graphic illustration of such positioning was actually provided by

the behavior of the US Delegation to the World Conference on Cultural Policies organized by UNESCO in Mexico City in 1982, in the second year of Ronald Reagan's first term, during which the influence of the arch-conservative right, led by the Heritage Foundation, was to lead the US to leave UNESCO. In Mexico as well, a conference-drafting group produced an extensive "Mexico City Declaration" containing inter alia the very broad definition of culture that has since become canonical in these circles. The definition reads as follows – note the part I have italicized:

that in its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, *the fundamental rights of the human being*, values systems, traditions and beliefs...

The inclusion of the words "the fundamental rights of the human being" may appear somewhat incongruous; they were added at the adamant insistence of the US delegation, mindful of the coded significance, in Cold War ideological warfare terms, of the notion of individual human rights, as opposed to collective rights and peace, the code words used by the other side—and which were used to justify say the cause of the Palestinian people or the black majority in Apartheid South Africa, or deployed as counters in the struggle against "cultural imperialism." Without the italicized words, the United States would not have been a party to the Declaration and hence to the consensus-based decision-making that was the rule in UNESCO at that time.

The above anecdote illustrates one facet of the image-building or "branding" motivations of nation-states as they play out at UNESCO. Even in this setting, where some might expect national postures to be harnessed to the promotion of high internationalist ideals, the imperatives of what Raymond Williams called "cultural policy as display" also dominate. "The public pomp of a particular social order" was Williams' gloss on the ceremonials of the British Royal Family and the like, which constituted the ritual symbolization of nationhood (Williams, cited in McGuigan, 2004: 61). He carefully distinguished these unacknowledged, even unnoticed purposes, from "cultural policy proper," which consists of support to the arts, media regulation and the negotiation of national community or identity. "Cultural

policy as display" is in fact what drives Member States of UNESCO. To be sure, Cull's distinction between traditional forms of diplomacy that engage with other state actors and new ones that play the national cultural card with broader audiences in mind is valid too—indeed governments operate on both the two levels in UNESCO. But in both cases, the peace-building ideals of that organization, which should lead its members to cooperate in an unhindered spirit of global conviviality, are trumped by the imperatives of national representation and recognition in the international arena. In this perspective, then, UNESCO is a field with its own rules of negotiation and transaction, possessed, like any other, of its own forms of symbolic capital that Member States deploy.

Beyond the anecdotal, my argument can also be illustrated through the process that has unfolded over the last three decades at UNESCO around the expanding notion of "cultural heritage." This has been a two-pronged expansion, as a growing number and variety of material traces of past cultural life—structures, sites, artefacts—have entered the term's embrace, and as the idea of heritage has recently cloned itself, with the recognition of a new double: "intangible heritage." This development is in large part the result of the workings of a global "economy of cultural prestige," as different kinds of "heritage" status accorded to their "cultural properties" function as symbolic capital and "the many local markets and local scales of value are bound into ever tighter relations of interdependence" (English, 2005: 259). The earliest UNESCO definitions used the notion of heritage very narrowly, referring not to the entirety of the cultural inheritance, but to material forms only, architectural and monumental. This usage originated from the Euro-American architectural conservation community in the 1950s, then was gradually naturalised in the conceptual arsenal of UNESCO and other international organizations. These same conservation professionals were also the drafters of the 1972 *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* that established the World Heritage mechanisms that in fact select cultural heritage properties and sites for consecration on the global honour roll that is the World Heritage List. Hence as the World Heritage process gathered momentum in the last decade of the twentieth century, it became increasingly obvious that the List could not but be skewed towards those countries rich in such material traces from their respective pasts. Many countries—mostly in the global South—would not find adequate representation on this geocultural enumeration of

the superlative. This realization began to reach the sub-national level too, as both cities and regions within nations sought to gain World Heritage recognition for their distinct branding purposes. They too have tapped into the international economy prestige embodied in the World Heritage mechanisms. They have carried out complex processes of economic and political negotiation and transaction with their respective national or federal governments in order to obtain international recognition for local cultural goods—a classic procedure of the glocalization process.

Precisely because governments—again at multiple levels within nation-states—are increasingly “sensitive to the value of publicly asserting the value of their [distinctive] cultures in various forums that bestow and reflect international prestige” (Kurin, 2004: 68) calls for action on the intangible front, made as early as 1972, when the World Heritage Convention was adopted, and renewed fitfully thereafter, developed momentum in the late 1990s. By this time far more than national or local pride were at stake, for questions of culture and cultural identity had become a global issue, voicing rising concerns about the impacts of globalisation and the belief that cultures were now being corroded far more strongly than they ever had been before. Thus the new century saw the emergence of a new cause in international cultural politics, the combat for “cultural diversity,” a revamped articulation of the “cultural exception” movement that sought to exempt cultural goods and services from international free trade rules. For this newer avatar of cultural militancy, the alliance with the “intangible heritage” camp was both natural and advantageous. The election of a senior Japanese diplomat to be UNESCO Director-General in 1999 reinforced the already accumulated momentum, as he brought with him his society’s awareness of the intangible as well as his government’s determination to invest in globalising that sensibility, in other words to place Japan’s own practice at the forefront of the global economy of prestige. Together, these factors propelled the negotiations that culminated in the adoption in 2003 of the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*.

In cultural conservation terms the cause is amply justified. It is glossed by UNESCO in terms that brook no contestation: “cultural heritage is not limited to material manifestations, such as monuments and objects... This notion also encompasses living expressions and the traditions that countless groups and communities worldwide have inherited from their ancestors and transmit to their descendants, in most cases orally” Yet at

the same time, like the prizes and awards analyzed by James English, the national “properties” inscribed as either “World” or “intangible” heritage are also institutional agents of what he calls “capital intraconversion”: the symbolic charge they contain negotiates transactions between cultural and economic, or cultural and political capital.

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Cosmopolitan Constructivism: Mapping a Road to the Future of Cultural and Public Diplomacy

César Villanueva Rivas

"How can countries gain the affection and esteem of other nations?" asks Edward T. Hall in the introduction to *The Silent Language* (1959: ix). "Though the United States has spent billions of dollars on foreign aid programs, it has captured neither the affection nor esteem of the rest of the world," asserted Hall, adding that "It is not my thesis that Americans should be universally loved. But I take no consolation in the remark of a government official who stated that 'we don't have to be liked just so long as we are respected.' In most countries we are neither liked nor respected," he concluded after a careful evaluation of the perceptions and miscommunications between American officials and foreign diplomats at the end of the 1950s. The context was not an easy one: the Cold War, the Korean War, and struggles within the Western world. However E.T. Hall, the diplomatic anthropologist had a point: Countries care about their reputations and how they are seen by others abroad – the way foreign nations care about domestic perceptions of their culture, policies, and intentions. Today, diplomats invest efforts and resources in trying to leave a mark for their countries in a congested world of information and, paradoxically, rampant simplifications. The lesson noted by most countries is that the ways in which their identities and intentions are constructed abroad count. More importantly, the way countries internalize cosmopolitan values such as tolerance, friendship and respect for each other, will ultimately determine how others look upon them. Foreign ministries across the world have sooner or later come to realize this: the construction of diplomatic cosmopolitan values matters.

The study of traditional and modern diplomatic theory has been permeated by the political logic of a great umbrella called Rationalism, which includes Realism and Liberal Institutionalism among its very different

strands. As a response to the Rationalist approach, another umbrella called Reflectivism has emerged, including views from diverse camps such as Social Constructivism, Feminism, Environmentalism, and the study of ethics in diplomacy. Reflectivist theories seek to challenge the fundamental assumptions of Rationalism (for instance “power struggle,” the “selfish rational actor” or the “anarchy” of the international system) by introducing new relevant elements to the study of Diplomacy and International Relations (such as culture, identity, or feminism). In cultural and public diplomacy terms, these debates have spun off divergent theories such as Soft Power, the Clash of Civilizations and more recently Nation Branding.

As a consequence of the Reflectivist challenge, public and cultural diplomacies require deeper review to incorporate theoretical positions into the discussion; it is the same with Cosmopolitan Constructivism. Public and cultural diplomacies are constitutive camps that can help attain universalistic and normative foreign policy objectives, like befriending other nations, the building of sound communication channels with societies abroad, and the understanding and appreciation of cultures different from ours. I have referred to as Cosmopolitan Constructivism elsewhere (Villanueva 2007) as a theory philosophically based on multilateral diplomacy, cosmopolitan theory and constructivist politics. This approach belongs to the long tradition formulated by people interested in fostering peace, understanding and friendly relations among nations. One of them, the British diplomat Harold Nicolson, noted in *Diplomacy* that “the progress of diplomatic theory has been from the narrow conception of exclusive tribal rights to the wider conception of inclusive common interests” (Nicolson 1963: 17). What Nicolson intended was certainly a form of “moral diplomacy,” which is nothing but a reference to a world-citizen view of the nation, where the international common good makes for sound diplomacy. Cosmopolitan Constructivism is, to paraphrase Nicolson, the global establishment of inclusive common interests.

Why Constructivism?

In constructivist terms, I primarily emphasize the work of Alexander Wendt, whose book *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999) is pivotal to my understanding of the “constructivist turn” in the field of cultural and public diplomacies. Wendt has expressed severe criticism of traditional IR approaches that fail to see the importance of identity, norms and culture in the field. Wendt takes identity to be part of cultural phenomena, or collective group beliefs where ideas are shared and “communally sustained,”

thus becoming inherently a public phenomenon (1999: 164). In a broad philosophical consideration, Social Constructivism is about seeing human consciousness changing, adapting to, and participating in international (or global) life. Its foundations take into consideration the role of ideas in shaping our understanding of Self-and-Other, as well as the world-out-there. Social Constructivism rests on an irreducibly intersubjective dimension of human interaction: the capacity and will of people to take a deliberate action towards the world and to lend it *significance*. This capacity, in return, gives rise to social facts, or facts that depend on human agreement and typically require human institutions for their existence (money, human rights, sovereignty, for example). Cultural and public diplomacies can benefit from one of the most important social facts proposed by constructivist theory: collective identities. Constructivists contend that not only are identities and interests of actors “socially constructed,” but also that they must share the stage with a whole host of other ideational factors emanating from people as cultural beings. A core feature of cultural and public diplomacies may be precisely the construction of collective identities of peace, understanding and diversity at the international level. For the constructivist camp, values, norms, interests and behaviors are dependent on the collective identity a group assumes. In constructivist lenses, there is nothing more to the point than MacLeish’s UNESCO preamble, which reminds us that, “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.” Public and cultural diplomacies will play a role in shaping those ideas and identities accordingly.

Why Cosmopolitanism?

Cosmopolitanism is traditionally associated with a straightforward idea: the willingness to be part of a society of nations and participate in its welfare, on material, institutional or moral grounds.¹ This simple account is not self-evident for most nations, or for some types of diplomacies and diplomats. Cosmopolitanism’s simple premise is to live and let live, understand and be understood, show respect and enjoy respect in return. Cosmopolitanism has three parts: *multilateralism*, *pluralism* and *reflexivity*. The first is based on principles stressing a common mechanism

¹ There is a vast literature on the topic of Cosmopolitanism. This is not the place to discuss typologies and differences in conceptions. It is safe to say that in modern times the main point of reference for cosmopolitanism is Immanuel Kant’s book *Perpetual Peace*. In this sense, Cosmopolitanism is a way of building long-lasting peace beyond the State, paying attention to the “world’s citizen”.

of cooperation in the field of communications, culture and international relations; it requires diplomacies willing to engage in conventions, declarations and to respect common decisions, beyond their own national agenda (cfr. Ruggie 1989 and 1993). The second assumes the world is to be complex, hosting diverse and multiple expressions of cultures, ideas and peoples. The third promotes an integrated and holistic view of global cultural encounters, whose main purpose is to address common problems (poverty, environment, racism, etc.) based on the mutual exploration of possibilities and responsibilities, resorting to the principles of listening to and respecting each other (cfr. Pérez de Cuellar, 1997). Many concrete examples of the cosmopolitan agenda can be found in conventions and declarations issued by international organizations such as the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice of 1978, the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance of 1995, or more recently the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, the UN Millennium Development Goals, or the forthcoming UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Cosmopolitan agendas may be led by non-official diplomatic actors like rock star Bono acting as a world citizen and attracting efforts towards direct greater attention to Africa, or NGO's such as Amnesty International fighting for freedom of conscience and human rights on a global scale.

The Theory of Cosmopolitan Constructivism

The bottom-line of Cosmopolitan Constructivism is straightforward: people, cultures and states matter, and cultural and public diplomacies collaborate in the inter-subjective construction of ideas, norms and identities towards cooperation, welfare and understanding. The point is to construct durable friendly relations among states by addressing in their societies and cultures the construction of cosmopolitan ideas and identities. The theory celebrates cultural differences, societal exchanges, and peer-to-peer encounters fostering common understanding. Offices of Foreign Affairs and citizens are welcomed as agents to formulate programs that develop cosmopolitan values. Under this theoretical normative framework, cultural and public diplomacies can also be seen as societal cosmopolitan political arrangements conducive to the improvement of multilateral channels to reach common goals, the construction of global awareness about other people's life conditions and lifestyles around the globe, and the spread of solidarity and peace in nations worldwide (cfr. Reus-Smit 1999).

Cosmopolitan Constructivism draws from the Ally-Friend Theory

which sees nations from their best side, predisposed to cooperate and create long lasting peace (cfr. Mayor 2008). Rather than trying to summarize that rich and extensive body of work, let me just suggest some ideas around constructivist and cosmopolitan theories for its conclusiveness. To be an *Other-Ally* or *Other-Friend* in diplomacy usually implies a reciprocal recognition of the Other's self as existentially similar or following/supporting similar goals without obstructing or challenging them. Wendt says that in friendship, states usually expect to observe two rules: "(1) disputes will be settled without war or the threat of war (the rule of non-violence); and (2) they will fight as a team if the security of any one is threatened by a third party (the rule of mutual aid)" (1999: 299). In cultural and public diplomatic terms, this would imply stressing the long-term foreign policy objectives, or "absolute gains" side of the equation, where countries do not expect to "become friends" overnight, actually trying to encourage their societies to join a process of common understanding and societal exchanges, step by step. Wendt distinguishes allies from friends, saying that the former "engage in the same basic behaviour as friends, but they do not expect their relationship to continue indefinitely," as is usually the case with the latter (1999: 299). This description of the state's calculations on Self and Other enters the realms of what Wendt categorizes as Kantian culture, or an international structure where "a new international political culture has emerged in the West within which non-violence and team-play are the norm" (1999: 297).

In Wendt's analysis of Kantian Culture, the internalization process plays a major role in understanding why, for example, nations are willing to make cooperative moves by themselves, setting aside sanctions or selfishness. Wendt explains that beyond *coercion* (first-level degree, for example a treaty or a mandate), *self-interest* (second-level degree, for example fears of nuclear disaster or cultural clashes), *legitimacy* (third-level degree) lies the most developed of these actions pursued by states, since it emerges from the state's principles and convictions. Wendt explains: in the "Third Degree case actors identify with other's expectations, relating to them as part of themselves. The Other is now inside the cognitive boundary of the Self, constituting who it sees itself as in relation to the Other, its 'Me'" (1999: 273). In other words, Self is not self-interested but rather it is interested in the *Other*. Cosmopolitanism draws much from this idea. Multilateral diplomacy, collective security "one for all, all for one" reciprocity, cooperation, and open, transparent political systems, help develop *Other* and *Myself* as

friends. Wendt further argues that “International interests are now part of the national interest, not just interests that states have to advance in order to advance their separate national interest; friendship is a preference over an outcome, not just a preference over a strategy” (1999: 305).² The cultivation of friendship in a global world among nations allows the achievement of the Kantian notion of a “perpetual peace order,” where the interests of humankind must prevail over those of the individual.

But this cosmopolitan view is not a given; countries must work hard against prejudice and blindness. John Tomlinson argues that the cosmopolitans should have a sense of commitment to belonging to the world as a whole, suggesting that a cosmopolitan agenda of human rights, environmental concerns, cultural integration and economic and political progressive demands, can be a link to the development of friendly relations among peoples and states in a challenging global culture (1999 and 2002). More interestingly, Tomlinson’s view reasserts that Cosmopolitanism is “first of all... a willingness to engage with the Other. It is an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrast rather than uniformity” (1999: 185).

A Program for Cosmopolitan Constructivism

In similar terms, friendship can be developed, according to Zygmunt Bauman, by looking at the universality of “ethical humanism” as an honorable aspiration, challenged by narrow economic and political views in a paradoxically global world. For Bauman, universality is a communicational capacity to achieve mutual understanding taking into consideration the other’s responses and moves, allowing for a conversation across domains of cultural difference (1995 and 1999). In diplomacy, Raymond Cohen has questioned the legitimacy of this “cosmopolitan view,” saying that it is “right to reject ‘ridiculous stereotypes,’ such as ‘inscrutable orientals’ and ‘haggling Arabs.’” No serious student of culture would really propose such travesties. But is not the image of the cosmopolitan diplomat, free of all narrow cultural limitations, an equally questionable stereotype? Is the impact of culture really so superficial that it can be removed by a few years of foreign travel?” (1991: 17). In fact, one pertinent observation may be the case: in today’s world, societies sometimes have to navigate against “parochial diplomats” who do not understand -or want to participate- in the complex cosmopolitan

² In fact, Wendt never uses the term “cosmopolitan” to refer to this or any other of his main proposals, but I find many coincidences with how Cosmopolitanism reasons about Other, particularly in friendly relations among parties.

global sphere. Akira Iriye argues that the dangers of rampant nationalism in societies are more evident now than before, although it was assumed that a new spirit of internationalism might be fostered by means of better communication and information flows across nations. What he describes as “Cultural Internationalism” saw its first signs of life in the 19th century with the birth of the Universal Postal Union, the International Bureau of Weights and Measures, the Red Cross, etc. and later in the 20th century when some politicians, intellectuals and artists realized that one way of forging a stable and lasting international peace was to encourage international cultural exchange and cooperation. These are the seeds of the International Commission of Intellectual Cooperation under the League of Nations and then the all-well-known UNESCO. In *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*, Iriye shows how widespread and important this idea became for the development of a cultural diplomacy without the constraints of the “national interest” (1997: 142). He describes a surprising array of efforts to foster cooperation, from the creation of an international language to student exchange programs, international lecture circuits, and other cultural activities. Iriye concludes that the effort of “cultural internationalism” can only be appreciated in the context of world politics within a cosmopolitan framework. A lasting and stable world order cannot rely merely on governments and power politics, it also depends on the free exchange of cultures among peoples in pursuing common intellectual and cultural interests via openly cosmopolitan public and cultural diplomacies.

Under the cosmopolitan constructivist framework, one might define the mission of public and cultural diplomacies, following Paul Sharp, as a bottom-up representational activity where the focal point is “expressed as now having evolved to the point where states are authentic expressions of popular sovereignty and nations are authentic expressions of popular cultural identity” (1999: 51). For Sharp diplomacy should be seen as independent of the modern state system, because in this way it is unnecessary to restrict our analysis in determining who is and who is not a diplomatic player: “Once diplomacy is seen again in terms of representation rather than as an instrument of more substantive foreign policies, then it becomes possible to see how it expresses a human condition that precedes and transcends the experience of living in the sovereign, territorial states of the past few hundred years” (1999: 51). And a final feature of cultural and public diplomacies is visible when “Diplomats not only seek to represent their states to the world,

but also seek to represent that world back to their respective states, with the objective of keeping the whole ensemble together” (1999: 53). This idea, obvious though it may seem, lies near the heart of diplomacy, and calls for an examination of the political values diplomats may hold. In other words, it is a self-reflexive issue. Diplomats have a mission to report the other states’ views and interests on global issues and cultural activities, an assignment laden with responsibility. The representation of the *Other* back to their countries is a diplomatic representational problem that keeps international relations in motion: “these situations may be examined as instances in which diplomats are engaged in the construction, maintenance, and representation of different identities to one another” (1999: 54). At the heart of this problem, then, is the fact that representations of foreign identities are also expressions of the condition of domestic national identities.

A minimalist program of Cosmopolitan Constructivism may include six aspects:

1) Making the creation of peace and friendly relations with other nations one of the most important goals of foreign policy and allocate resources to fulfill that purpose;

2) Investing in international educational exchanges targeting groups in foreign societies that have the talent but may not have the resources to study abroad. Ideally, create bilateral or regional institutions to administer and organize the exchanges such as the Fulbright-García Robles program (Mexico) or the NordForsk (Scandinavia);

3) Creating a solid infrastructure for international cooperation, in which money and human resources can flow together and address important and urgent common topics with other nations; for example, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, or the International Cooperation Agency of Japan;

4) Establishing institutions abroad as a platform for sharing knowledge about your own country, and engaging foreign publics in sharing your own national ideas about lifestyles, welfare, and the arts or to teach languages, but also to discuss domestic issues that may be relevant for the two parties such as human rights, life conditions of children, or popular culture. These institutions should operate with independence in the selection of their activities and policies. The British Council, the Swedish Institute, the Goethe Institute, or the Cultural Center of Spain in some countries, are good examples of such initiatives;

5) Building the necessary channels to communicate with foreign publics, to listen to their concerns, and to create mutual ways to involvement. If possible, establish a television or radio broadcast service, digital communication or web interaction to engage publics in dialogue and exchange. Well-established examples of these efforts are the BBC in the UK, TV5 Monde of France, or VOA, NPR and PBS in the US;

6) Educating young people in school programs related to international solidarity, mutual understanding and sensitivity for diversity and multiculturalism. Some of these programs can also be targeted to professionals, public officials, diplomats and teachers.

Cosmopolitan Constructivism: An Idealist Approach?

Is the theory pure idealism? Let me return to my comment on US diplomacy at the beginning of this article. A few years back, the diplomatic news from the US to the world was simplistic, black and white dichotomies or unilateral politics. Only a few years back, the mere prospect of listening to an American president arguing for ideas other than “the American interest” or the unilateral “promotion of American values” would have been hard to imagine. Today, the idea of an American president addressing the world from Cairo, quoting the Quran, acknowledging the need to do more for the developing world, and delivering a message of hope and change for the international community has caught us by surprise. In just a short time, the quality of discourse in world politics from the world’s superpower has undergone a major shift from a nationalist, parochial judgment to a refreshing cosmopolitanism.

After all, Cosmopolitan Constructivism is not new. Efforts to bring about peace among peoples, cities or nations have existed ever since the birth of civilization. In our times, the most solid international platform summarizing what we look for as a community of states, is the UN Charter: “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war... to reaffirm the faith in fundamental human rights...to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained... [and] to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.” To my knowledge, no country has disowned these values, even if we think of them as goals, a desirable or idealistic umbrella. To Americans to adopt these values is a necessary stage in US history; but it is also a message to our own civilization that we must adapt if we are to reach anywhere.

Being aware that peoples and countries have economic, military or political interests that take precedence over being friends is the goal. The claim here is not for a single-minded cosmopolitan constructivist foreign policy. No one could reasonably advocate that all foreign policies must be only based on these universalistic principles. I issue this cautious warning because I see very little of cosmopolitanism in cultural and public diplomacies worldwide (cfr. Knudsen 2004). Yet I suggest and even urge that all foreign policies begin nurturing and developing the cosmopolitan and universalistic values already embedded deeply in their own diplomacies. In truth, a significant share of the activities called cultural and public diplomacies are addressed to persuasion, manipulation, winning hearts and minds, and the selling of images and national brands. These actions flow from the logic required by the security/military ethos, rather than as part of a citizen's need for the promotion of diversity, exchanges and goodwill.

In sum, Cosmopolitan Constructivism can be defined as the recognition that the construction of a peaceful community of states matters as the highest goal for diplomacy, and that governments must make use of cultural and public diplomacies as mechanisms to collaborate in the common understanding of their own cultures, diversities and differences. Put simply, Cosmopolitan Constructivism aims at constructing long-lasting friendly relations among states by inviting their societies to learn from each other in the construction of cosmopolitan cultural attitudes. This discourse celebrates "cultural difference," cultural exchange, civil societies' diversity and face-to-face encounters in the struggle to foster common understanding. Cultural and public diplomacies are political arrangements conducive to the construction of a plurality of representations of cultures abroad via diplomatic institutions. It is time to take these ideas seriously, if we are to make a difference in the 21st century.

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Showing the Power of "Cultural Relations": Strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation at the British Council

Sharon Memis

The British Council is the U.K.'s cultural relations organization. Our 7,500 staff in 109 countries and territories build engagement and trust for the U.K. through the exchange of



knowledge and ideas between people worldwide. The British Council was established in 1934 to counter the fascist propaganda of that period. Our founders believed that the best way to combat extremism was through greater international cultural engagement and understanding. The British Council was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1940 and in 2009 we celebrated 75 years of cultural relations. As an NDPB (non-departmental public body) and a charity (not-for-profit), we have operational independence and work at arm's length from government. Our annual budget is approximately \$1 billion with just under one third coming from a core government grant and the remainder 'earned' through other activities such as English language teaching, examination administration, development contract management and other partnership work. Our operational independence allows us to focus on our long-term charitable objectives and enables us to work when and where other relations with the U.K. are strained.

The challenges of measuring the "return on engagement" of cultural relations

What the British Council calls "Cultural Relations"—the building of trust and engagement through the exchange of knowledge and ideas between people worldwide—is a long-term investment and its full benefits are not achieved immediately. The objective of cultural relations is not to support short-term foreign policy messages; instead, by engaging through the common languages of education, arts, science and sport—promoting understanding and removing misunderstanding—long-term people-to-

people and society-to-society relationships and engagement are fostered. By building up a “cultural relations credit” over time, other international engagement can be more effective whether government-to-government relations are friendly or tense. For example, at a time of diplomatic tension between Russia and the U.K., the British Council supported continuing cultural engagement through the arts by helping broker relationships that resulted in a major exhibition of U.K. art going to Moscow and of Russian art going to London.

The difficulty with the “long-term” is that public and private funders tend to be more interested in the short term so international cultural engagement must also demonstrate value for money and impact in the short and medium term to retain the confidence and support of its funders, stakeholders and partners. In short, there must be a demonstrable “return on engagement.” The British Council, over a number of years, has developed an increasingly rigorous approach to evaluation which provides short, medium and long-term indicators of success. Our approach is both quantitative and qualitative. The numbers that contribute to our corporate “scorecard” are one aspect and help provide short-term indicators of impact across our global network. We also use project specific quantitative data and qualitative “stories” to show the medium and long-term impact of our work. Before examining how we evaluate today, it is worth looking at how we started systematic and formal evaluation some 20 years ago to understand the drivers, the learning processes involved and the challenges of introducing evaluation into the “culture” of an organization such as the British Council. Many of the lessons learned then are still relevant today. Our evaluation system has of course improved immeasurably over the years and is increasingly accepted as essential and useful within the “culture” of the organization. It has taken time but the mainstreaming of evaluation really is an achievement.

Evaluation at the British Council: A Little Bit of History

In 1991, I worked at the British Council in Paris on what we called an “evaluation pilot.” The driver was a review by the NAO (National Audit Office) which basically said that the British Council had reasonable planning systems, was relatively efficient but that we needed to improve our impact measurement systems. We commissioned a well-known external consultancy firm to develop a methodology which they set out in a telephone-directory sized manual. It wasn’t rocket science. We were told to take a more

systematic approach to defining the “priority groups” we wished to engage with, interview 50 of the most senior people (half of whom we should not know) and give questionnaires to everyone else involved in our programs. In Paris, our “priority groups” then comprised the elite and future elite of France and professionals in the sectors in which the British Council worked. In a country where a diploma from a small group of Grandes Ecoles meant a virtually guaranteed path to influence, identifying the elite was a relatively easy exercise. The “professional” groups were pretty much self-defining given that the British Council worked in British Studies, science, English language and the arts. As obvious as it may sound today, this was the first time we had taken a systematic and strategic approach to analyzing and defining our target audiences and it helped us immeasurably in sharpening our focus.

The French found our interest in evaluation rather curious and this helped us gain access to an extraordinarily senior group of people. The interview questions were, I recall, rather banal. Asking a senior government or cultural figure in Paris whether they had ever been to the U.K. was actually a little embarrassing. However, once the questionnaire was completed, the conversations we had were extraordinary and this was what truly enriched our programs and expanded our networks over the ensuing years. This demonstrated better than anything that listening to what people want rather than designing something you think they want is more effective. Again, this sounds obvious but even today there are countless examples of public diplomacy agents focused more on messaging than listening.

The second part of the process was a series of questionnaires for those engaged in our programs, which assessed customer satisfaction and tried to ascertain whether perceptions of the U.K. had improved as a result of our work. We were surprised that people were quite happy to complete them and even more surprised at how useful the exercise was. Asking program participants for measurable feedback was invaluable in demonstrating success and in determining which programs to drop and which to continue or change.

Part of our brief was to ask our counterparts in France how they evaluated their international cultural work. The response was splendid: “La culture est trop importante pour être évaluée” (culture is too important to be evaluated). Many of us had secret sympathy for this view at the beginning but as we embarked on a much more systematic approach to defining target

audiences and took a more market-oriented approach to our work, asking a range of senior contacts what their priorities were and seeking the views of our “customers” as to what they thought of the British Council and the U.K., we all began to be somewhat less skeptical about monitoring and evaluation. Not only did we now have quantitative evidence of success for our funders and partners, we were also better placed to make informed resource decisions about how we could achieve the greatest impact amongst the people we wanted to reach.

Almost 20 years on, this all sounds rather basic but I recount the story of our first real foray into evaluation in 1991 because the lessons learned then in the first few post Cold-War years were invaluable, and are still relevant today. It also serves as a useful reminder of why we need to assess the impact of cultural relations. First, most cultural relations practitioners are using other people’s money for at least part of their activity. In the case of the British Council, just under one third of our budget is from the U.K. government; using taxpayers’ money brings with it an obligation to demonstrate value for money and “benefit.” The drivers behind the 1991 evaluation pilot—the NAO wanting us to demonstrate efficient and effective use of public funds—are even more important today given the enormous pressure on public and indeed private funds. Second, and in some ways more importantly, cultural relations practitioners, like most professionals, want to know that they are “making a difference” and constantly seek to improve effectiveness by learning lessons from the past. Without a robust planning, monitoring and evaluation process, this is simply not possible.

The 1991 NAO report was therefore an important catalyst for the organization to start taking evaluation seriously. It helped us see the value of defining what we wanted to achieve, who we wanted to reach, what difference we wanted to make and how we would know when we had achieved it. It went beyond the obligation of accountability and showed us how to achieve greater impact and demonstrate success to our partners and stakeholders. This has made us immeasurably stronger.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation in the British Council Today

In the 20 years since we embarked on formal evaluation, we have developed and continue to develop, much more robust and sophisticated quantitative and qualitative approaches to PME (planning, monitoring and evaluation). We introduced a “balanced scorecard” in the 1990s backed up

by a qualitative “storyboard.” Inevitably, our first version was over-complex and tried to measure anything that moved. Whilst we have simplified our systems and now “measure what matters,” one of the biggest challenges over the years was how to make monitoring and evaluation part of the “culture” of the organization so that it was not seen simply as another management task. With the tight strategic framework and the outcomes and results focused planning we have introduced over the last few years, monitoring and evaluation has had to take a more central place in the British Council. When the most senior staff in the organization are held “accountable” for results, monitoring and evaluation has to be mainstreamed and everyone begins to appreciate its relevance.

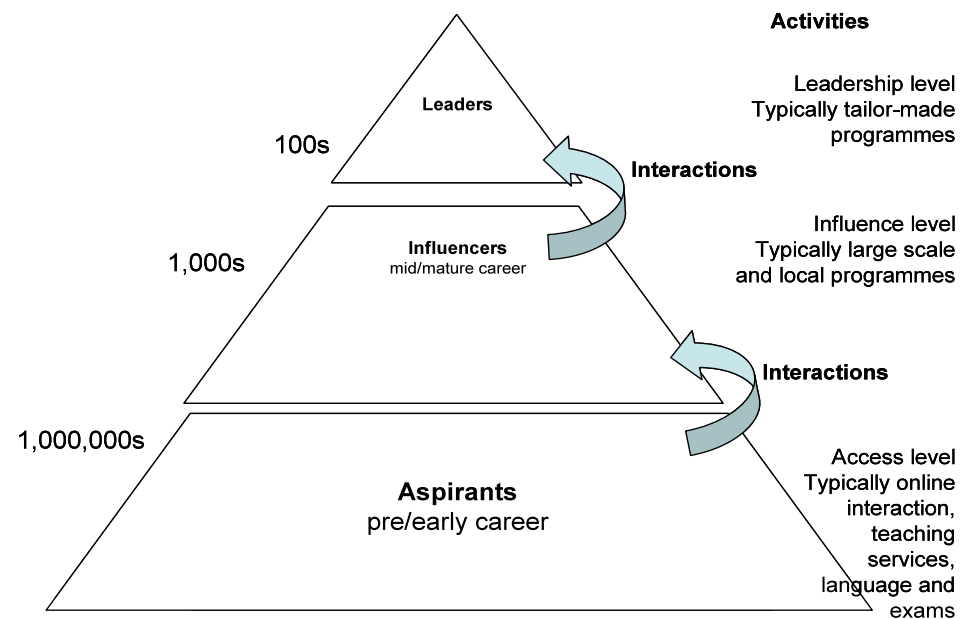
The importance of defining target audiences, objectives, outcomes and success measures is central to our evaluation system; planning, monitoring and evaluation are therefore inextricably linked. To achieve our organizational purpose, the British Council has a corporate strategic framework which guides our programming across our global network from the smallest local projects to our large-scale international products. All our activity contributes to three strategic programmatic strands: creative and knowledge economy, intercultural dialogue and climate change. Strategy informs impact targets and planning from the top of the organization down, and impact deliverables contribute to the organization’s overall performance from junior colleagues “on the ground” up to the CEO. We have been quite successful in ensuring our teams understand the strategic framework and the importance of the role of monitoring and evaluation in delivering results. Establishing clear, concise and ambitious organizational objectives not only provides a compass for every action we take, but it provides a set of targets which enable effective evaluation.

Rigorous internal mechanisms for project design and development ensure quality control and establish a set of criteria for impact assessment. Before project ideas receive any resources, teams must articulate the project outcomes (the change the project hopes to accomplish), outputs (the goods or services produced to achieve these outcomes) and audiences (numbers and quality of engagement). These are the basic elements of the British Council’s internal project commissioning informed by the Project Logic model of corporate planning and performance. A four stage process beginning with design and development, moving on to proof of concept, build and test, and ending with the release of the project, occurs over two to three years to

ensure the success of the business model.

All project proposals include a robust monitoring and evaluation process (normally, around five percent of a project’s resources are set aside for evaluation) and have an “exit strategy.” If targets are not met, the project will need to be changed or stopped.

Through each project, we need to be able to articulate a story of impact and legacy. This is primarily through two interconnected functions: audiences and change. Who are we seeking to work with, and in what numbers? Three categories of audiences help us narrow our focus: Leaders—decision makers on a national or regional level, Influencers—emerging leaders and gatekeepers to larger audiences, and Aspirants—primarily young people who are seeking information and opportunities. The scale to which these audiences are involved in our programming depends on the outcomes of the project—i.e. the change we wish to accomplish. Change often falls into two categories: it is either a personal learning change—regarding perception or capacity building, or an action change—a shift in behavior, setting an agenda, or an institutional change. The type of changes desired in the project outcomes—both long-term and short term—dictate the level of engagement with which audience and the level of investment per individual.



The British Council recognizes that cultural relations work varies from project to project. In measuring impact, short-term quantitative measures of audiences engaged and reached are important, as well as qualitative indicators of the social implications, changes achieved and lasting legacy within specific cultural contexts. Therefore we use customized project-specific research, monitoring and evaluation methods in addition to the universal “Balanced Scorecard” which ensures that all British Council programming is subject to some standardized quantitative measures.

The Corporate Scorecard includes the level of audiences engaged directly; audiences reached through cascaded means or through radio, television and the web; the amount of products and services delivered by the project; and survey scores that assess customers’ attitudes toward and expectations of the British Council’s programming, its quality, reputation and likelihood of recommendation. Projects, countries and regions have targets within the scorecard for which teams are accountable. This data informs planning and success against organizational strategic targets and is becoming more important as the British Council moves towards impact-led planning.

The changes delivered by a project among the audiences involved—whether they are personal or action-oriented—do not tend to lend themselves to standardized quantitative metrics. However, being clear about the exact nature of the outcome ahead of time, and using varying evaluation methods including surveys, network analysis, in-depth interviewing and storyboarding does enable project managers to measure the difference a project has made—both in the short and long term.

Our monitoring and evaluation is not perfect but the quantitative and qualitative methods together do provide us with useful data and compelling stories which help persuade our stakeholders and partners of the benefit of supporting and working with the British Council. To articulate this in practical terms, the case study below shows the strategic contributions of one project to local, regional and corporate British Council outcomes.

Artistic Innovation Leads to More Inclusive Societies: Cultural Relations and Human Rights

In Asia, two million people are moving into urban areas each month, creating cities filled with the ferment of economic possibilities and societal tensions between traditional ways of living and the impact that the opportunities and risks of globalization present.

To stimulate the entrepreneurial possibilities of young people in these places while encouraging them to create open and diverse societies, part of the British Council's regional Creative Cities project (spanning 11 countries in East Asia and China), included a Hong Kong-based "48 Hour Inclusive Design Challenge."

A creative workshop in the guise of a design competition, the Challenge asked designers from across the region to divide into groups and team up with volunteers with physical disabilities, competing to produce a design concept for a product usable by both disabled and non disabled people within 48 hours. Each team was led by a design mentor from the U.K. and a local disabled design partner.

There were three outcomes for the 48 Hour Inclusive Design Challenge: 1) "Put disabled people at the heart of the innovation process and demonstrate how they can be a vital part in the design process as a template for social inclusion." 2) "Share U.K. expertise in Inclusive Design and increase the capacity of designers or design educators in China and the East Asia region to engage with a disadvantaged community in the process of innovation. 3) "Increase the activity of city and cultural leaders to promote the benefits of developing Inclusive Design."

Inclusive design can be a tool for bringing business advantage, diversity and innovation to design communities while at the same time raising awareness about people with special needs. None of the East Asian designers in this particular competition, no matter their seniority in the design field, had ever worked with a disabled person. The British Council invited the Helen Hamlyn Centre of the Royal College of Arts in the U.K. to bring inclusive design experts in as mentors, helping designers think out of the box and highlighting good examples of common technology like Bluetooth which have roots in assistive technology.

The winning team's design, the MPwerStyx, was inspired by two brothers with an inherited metabolic disorder that damages body tissues and limits the development of joint movements. The brothers enjoyed surfing the internet, but found a traditional computer mouse cumbersome. Inspired by their dexterity with Chinese cutlery, the winning team reinvented the mouse in the style of a pair of chopsticks.

Surveys and interviews with the design team participants and the disabled volunteers made clear that a strong shift in perception had occurred (more on that below).

The following are summaries of the quantitative and qualitative evaluations conducted at three levels of the British Council, based on information gathered from participants in the 48 Hour Inclusive Design Challenge. Each section represents a distinct set of needs that each project must aim to fulfil: local/country, regional and global.

Hong Kong

The most immediate measurement of impact is at the local level: how the project met the British Council Hong Kong office's local strategic goals. Did the project take full advantage of—or, ideally, strengthen—the British Council's pre-existing Hong Kong relationships? Did the project connect the British Council with new audiences? And what sort of change happened as a result?

British Council's Hong Kong office was responsible for determining the impact of the project on a local level. As they took the lead on the 48 Hour Inclusive Design Challenge, they were also responsible for compiling all measurement and evaluation figures for the project within each participating country, and therefore, the impact of the project overall.

Since the competition was headquartered and held in Hong Kong, it was an opportunity for the office to expand and strengthen its local partnerships with public, private and not-for-profit institutions. The project included extensive pre-event activities beginning several weeks before the competition to drum up interest among key influencers and the general public. Key Hong Kong design organizations joined the British Council as partners in the project, including the Hong Kong Government's DesignSmart Initiative which supplied grant funding and Hong Kong Youth Advocates who volunteered to provide administrative support during the competition. The partnership element is crucial; it not only ensures an informed, culturally aware approach, but it makes the most of the British Council resources assigned to the project by leveraging further investment.

The British Council Hong Kong team engaged one "Leader," with the project—Victor Lo, Chairman of the Hong Kong Design Center, in an effort to ensure high level support. As a senior official with national decision making capabilities, Lo is considered a "Leader" within the British Council's audience metrics, and therefore would be accounted for on the Scorecard as such. While Lo is not the prime audience for this project, engagement with leaders is often important in securing the project's goals enjoy longevity past the competition.

The 48-hour Inclusive Design Challenge engaged 79 “Influencers” in China and Hong Kong’s disabled and design communities (the second tier of the British Council’s Scorecard audience profile). These Influencers were either advisors and partners or local designers participating in the competition. In the case of the six disabled design partners who lead the challenge teams alongside a U.K. design mentor, longer, deeper relationships were established with the British Council as a result of collaborating together on the project design and delivery. In opening up the challenge and making it a publicly accessible competition, the British Council was able to call upon the larger set of Influencers involved, as gatekeepers to their communities, to draw in a further 250 young people and general members of the public (Aspirants) who either volunteered during the challenge or who were in attendance. Competition audiences engaged directly with the subject matter, as they voted on the best designs.

Pitching the event to journalists and a partnership with a local news organization resulted in an estimated two million impressions in Hong Kong. Successful media is a key output from a project like the Design Challenge, but the British Council does not focus on readership, or viewership within the Scorecard’s audience profile. Media helps raise awareness, but our aim is to measure the degree to which audiences have been directly impacted as a result of our work.

Project partner Hong Kong Design Center provided strongly positive feedback that the project met the organization’s needs: “It’s really a good chance to cooperate with the British Council to co-organize this meaningful public event to promote the idea of inclusive design successfully. The event was successful as it attracted many people from design and different industries, media and the general public to participate and arouse their awareness of this topic.”

Regional: China and East Asia

Regionally, the British Council evaluated the 48-hour Inclusive Design Challenge in all 11 participating countries. Did the project achieve its outcomes—did it deliver a personal-learning, or action-oriented change? What could be done next time to improve the project? Did the participating teams from regions outside of Hong Kong incorporate their learnings in future projects? Project managers analyzed quantitative and qualitative data to answer these questions.

A survey distributed to participants and audience members of the

48 Hour Inclusive Design Challenge asked respondents to indicate whether the event met their expectations, whether they considered the event “high quality,” and whether they considered the British Council a leader in its field. Respondents were also encouraged to provide qualitative feedback in blank spaces provided. Those surveyed were given five choices (ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.”) Responses were collated and weighted to give an average score representing the given question on a hundred-point scale. The “Expectations” question, for example, yielded a total score of 82 – halfway between Strongly Agree and Agree; respondents also felt that the event was a high quality event, earning a score of 85 in this category. The question about the British Council’s reputation in the cultural relations field—always a difficult metric to work with if people have little international experience—earned an average score of 76

Perhaps telling a more detailed story, however, are the aims originally set out by the project team alongside the accomplishments. Project leaders aimed to “put disabled people at the heart of the innovation process and demonstrate how they can be a vital part in the design process as a template for social inclusion.” In the end, six disabled design partners collaborated with six U.K. design mentors and with 44 designers and design educators from 11 different countries across Hong Kong, China and East Asia. These 56 experts competed and then collaborated to produce the design of a product that ultimately solved a problem faced by disabled people.

Perception change amongst competition participants and audience members was an important qualitative consideration at the regional level. One designer from Guangzhou commented, “In China we seldom think of people with disabilities – it’s a taboo subject. The situation is getting better now but there is still much to be done. The competition challenged us morally, emotionally and technically – what an inspiration!” One of the volunteers from mainland China observed, “I feel so thankful to the British Council and all the designers for creating designs that break the barrier between the non-disabled and disabled worlds. This is the first time in my life that I’ve been treated as a normal member of society.”

Media coverage of the competition allowed seven million people to hear about the project in China and East Asia, North America and New Zealand through the media; prominent full-page stories appeared in Hong Kong newspaper and stories filled Chinese websites.

Global: The British Council

The Impact of the 48-hour Inclusive Design Challenge was not only felt in terms of audiences engaged—Leaders, Influencers and Aspirants—or in the personal learning of attendees regarding the perception of disabilities, but there was an action-oriented change in the marketplace as a direct result of the project: the winning design concept was showcased in the 2008 London Design Festival to an audience of over 2,000 and subsequently bought by a production house, ready to be created and made available to millions of people. None of these achievements could have been made in isolation. Partnership was the key to success in this case. 50 percent of the project budget was derived through strategic partnership with local government and NGOs.

New economic and social developments often hinge upon the creativity and innovation that arts professionals bring to the table. This Inclusive Design Challenge demonstrated yet again that the arts and creative industries provide unique ways for people to debate contemporary issues, challenge opinions and increase mutual understanding while simultaneously laying the groundwork for innovations that will drive economic growth.

Qualitative feedback from the East Asian participants made clear the Challenge highlighted the practical benefits of a collaborative, inclusive approach to product design: an opportunity to identify new market opportunities and insight into how the utilization of aesthetics combined with usability lead to real-world entrepreneurship. Mentorship by the Royal College of Arts staff contributed to fostering new ways of working while simultaneously highlighting the U.K. as an effective partner for skills development and contributing U.K. expertise to international cooperation - both key goals for the British Council globally in our Creative and Knowledge Economy program area and for one of the project's key outcomes. As a result, the Hong Kong Design Centre has already organized another Inclusive Design workshop, and one of the project partners, Cyberport, is exploring a future partnership with the Royal College of Art in incorporating inclusive design in improving digital lifestyle in Hong Kong.

Beside the benefits to the regional creative economy, this project also contributed to another priority for the British Council: through Intercultural Dialogue, a more open and inclusive society. Through shared work in a creative endeavour, both disabled and non-disabled participants contributed to positive social change in East Asia while strengthening the bonds between

different perspectives within their region and with the U.K.—a key outcome of our global work in building trust and engagement between people worldwide.

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PERSPECTIVES

Out from Under the Proscenium: A Paradigm for U.S. Cultural Diplomacy

Peter Kovach

An important and highly symbolic subset of cultural presentation is a nation's cultural diplomacy. Based on my almost 30 years of experience doing cultural diplomacy in the U.S. Foreign Service and the changed political context in which our nation's public diplomacy is presently conducted, I advocate a new way forward in presenting ourselves as a culture, whether in the area of performance, sports, the arts more generally or other collaborative endeavors achieved through exchanges.

In the international arena, a government's cultural program communicates on at least two levels: first, the human level of substantive exchange between people and institutions, whether centered on artistic performance or production, sports competition or training or co-mingling of intellectual creation in think-tanks or the like. The second level is symbolic, as the context of the exchange and its creative results are echoed in the media. Implicitly at least, the interaction is modeled on this second level. Is the relationship patronizing, egalitarian and how does it empower the participants?

During the Cold War, USIA and the Department of State put their thumb in the dike, for symbolism's sake and typically put a jazz Great on tour, to compete with the unabashed offerings from the Soviet Union and China. The result was a cultural diplomacy in which Dizzie met the Bolshoi

Ballet with a Chinese acrobat swinging in the midst. All three Cold War rivals put their iconic acts forward acting out a kind of sublimated conflict.

On the level of symbolism, these widely heralded presentations were staged performances. The vector was the superior superpower performing down to "third world" audiences from under proscenium arches. To the thousands that witnessed these spectacles live and the millions that saw, heard, or read about them in the media, the message of superiority could not have been clearer.

I advocate an opposite approach for a new era and a new U.S. administration. The excesses and inherent resentment of the superpowers have mounted these past four decades, and the rest of the world is catching up in fits and starts. This is indeed an era in which President Obama's tone of "respectful engagement" among equals needs to be a watchword of people-to-people interaction. The nation's cultural diplomacy must therefore bring our cultural presentations "out from under the proscenium." We must do this in the spirit of wanting to be known and wanting, in turn, to know others. In this age, where American juggernaut no longer garners automatic respect, we have no choice but to advance a cultural diplomacy of engagement.

Entry into the world of 2.0 communication further impels such a change in cultural diplomacy. 2.0 implies more than giving control of image, symbol and message. Creative presentation via the Internet is predicated on presumed equality among those who engage their international peers as equal co-creators, whether in the realm of the arts or ideas. The medium itself is a great leveler.

Ironically, in an age of instantaneous communication, the emphasis advocated here would require a commitment to longer-term exchanges on the ground, prepared and sustained by collaborative creation on platforms such as Second Life and other social media. Even in USIA, such longer exchanges, like "professionals in residence," were only sporadically funded over time. To the good, they usually required some kind of cost or in-kind support from the host country institutions.

Our biggest and best acts still travel far and wide on the international economy and now in the digital universe. Driven by the market, America still sends out the big names and, seductively, the entertainment markets invite foreigners to see how "we do things better the American way." Some critics may dub this as "hegemonistic" but I think we need to take this as a given.

A program initiative like this would project an image of America willing to engage on a level playing field. An American artist, for example, would apply to go to a country based on his/her initial interest in the arts in the host country. The U.S. Embassy in the country would arrange compatible hosting. The time the American participant spent on the ground would be dedicated to co-creation: of music, dance, graphic art, sport or intellectual endeavors. A grant under this scheme would include money to travel the emerging fusion and its co-creators around the host country and region and in some cases allow the artists etc. to bring their work to the U.S. This in turn would validate the country partner, and add to American's knowledge of the outside world, creating a notion that fusion of culture and creative endeavor is something that enhances both cultures.

I fought hard to send a clean-cut group of Muslim-American rappers out of Washington D.C., Native Deen, on the road to Indonesia and Malaysia, where their music has a following in the key, under 25 demographic that post 9/11 public diplomacy aims at. They finally traveled two years later. But a Malay critic quipped to me at the time, contemplating the prospect of a Native Deen performance on a Kuala Lumpur stage, under the proscenium: "The subliminal message will be, now Americans are even telling us how to be good Muslims."

It hardly seems revolutionary to eschew mediums of "cultural performance," epitomized by the big names and price tags, for a cultural diplomacy that travels Americans to meet their foreign counterparts on a level playing field, peer-to-peer. Such cultural diplomacy would generate a very different symbolic value—one that listens, respects and creates synthesis as an end-product rather than performance in the more traditional sense of our act on their stage.

There are, of course, historical examples; ping-pong diplomacy with China prior to former President Nixon and Chairman Mao's diplomatic opening is a great example. We very consciously played the Chinese at a game far more theirs than ours. We probably lost more than we won. A basketball exchange I instigated in Bahrain in the early 1980s is another good example. I persuaded the old USIA to deliberately pick a Division III team from a good school, Case Western Reserve. This team I argued could conceivably lose a game or two with no diminution of effort—and they did, to the delight of Arab fans. Also, picking student-athletes from a top school guaranteed a greater degree of finesse in accommodating cultural

difference. The basketball exchange gave us a unique access to the Shia majority underclass. It opened doors of access, of invitations to weddings, funerals and celebrations as well as a channel of serious dialogue that stayed open for years.

A recent private trip to Egypt by jazzman Darryl Kennedy, illustrates the point in a setting at the heart of U.S. post-9/11 diplomacy. Partnering with an Egyptian musician encountered during his earlier stint as "Jazz Ambassador," Kennedy spent two months in Cairo, jamming with a local group. Finding a compatible Egyptian musical partner, Kennedy finally cut a joint CD with this Egyptian band and ended up doing a widely acclaimed combined concert tour in Egypt. Kennedy came across as humble, and as an American who listened and paid the highest compliment possible to his Egyptian counterparts, generating a fusion sound, a sound that did not value one cultural component over the other. This is the prototype of what I advocate. Had the group been funded to tour America, this cultural exchange, would have been a perfect prototype, with the Egyptians garnering press notice and belying American stereotypes.

About four years ago, a young political officer out of Appalachia, a professional bluegrass musician, reported for duty at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis. Encouraged by his embassy, he mixed it musically with some of Tunisia's best pop and folk musicians. Their jam sessions eventually yielded a polished fusion; CDs were cut. The Department answered Embassy Tunis' appeal for financial support. The young officer's musical partners from Charlottesville, VA came out to Tunisia and soon the Tunisian-American ensemble launched on a tour of Tunisia and North Africa. Finally the Americans returned to the U.S. with their Tunisian friends for a tour that was highlighted by an appearance at the Kennedy Center. The media image of the collaboration was one of exchange writ large, of partnership of equals and co-creators.

In the "fusion" century, why not disperse a stream of pop musicians for longer periods to jam, mix it and finally integrate unique products that respect the local milieu and arrive squarely in the concentric space among participating cultures.

Renew the initiative of having an American university class share a curriculum between one and three other universities overseas "meeting" together on a biweekly basis by Internet visual conference.

Then there is performance and conflict resolution, USAID sent

a master of drum circles to Northern Iraq three years ago to teach social drumming to Iraqis drawn from over a dozen confessional or ethnic communities. Those who worked in the Arab world or Israel in the 1990s will not soon forget the melding of young classical musicians from Israel and surrounding Arab countries gathered in New Hampshire for summer workshops, funded by the U.S. government. Together, these young Arabs and Israelis made music, shared living spaces, hiked and even developed crushes on Israeli contemporaries and vice versa.

The experiences with the peer-to-peer cultural diplomacy suggested here are not novel. What we need now is to brand the concept, package and fund it. One of the great things about this kind of programming is that it is easy to attract private sector or host country collaboration—either in cash or kind. With funding to share the fruits of the competition or art on both shores, and skillful media work to include millions more participating vicariously, the U.S. may happily be seen as a respectful equal—and our co-citizens may learn a thing or two about the world in the process. And the world will have some darn good art produced in the fusion; one I think even the most acerbic critic would label “non-hegemonic.”

Peter Kovach is a career public diplomacy officer in the senior foreign service. Currently, he directs the Office of International Religious Freedom at the Department of State. He has taught at UCLA and UMass. Kovach currently teaches meditation to underserved groups and advocates absorbing wisdom from all traditions while cultivating life insight.

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Department of State or the U.S. Government.

U.S.A. and UNESCO

Jim Leach

Speech to the 35th Session of the General Conference, UNESCO, Paris, France, October 8, 2009

As chairman of the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities, I would like to underscore traditional American cultural interests and note certain initiatives of the Obama Administration and their implications for the future of UNESCO.

The United States is a young country that has benefited from the greatest cultural aid in history: the ideas, traditions, faith and family systems brought to us from all over the world—from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America.

We consider ourselves, like all countries, to have a unique national culture, and as a sprawling, immigrant society, a mosaic of subcultures. This circumstance coupled with our debt to so many cultural sources obligates us to respect and leads us to help preserve fundamental aspects of various cultures the world over.

The United States does not have a centralized Ministry of Culture. International cultural initiatives are heavily the province of the private sector, but they are also the province of a variety of governmental institutions, such as the Departments of State, Education, and Energy, the National Science Foundation, the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities, and two broad-based cultural funding institutions: The National Endowment for the Arts, which supports creative endeavors such as cinema, theater, the arts and craft, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, which emphasizes the perspective of history, philosophy, and literature.

I would like to outline the responsibilities and programs of the institution I head. The work of the National Endowment for the Humanities is principally domestic, but between a quarter and a third of our grants have traditionally been awarded for projects on the history and culture of other countries. What follows is a sampling of the range of international programs

countries. What follows is a sampling of the range of international programs we have supported:

- Resources to allow for the creation of an Afghanistan Digital Library and an online version of the Encyclopaedia Iranica as well as financial collaboration on the creation of the Encyclopedia of Egyptology and the revision and updating of the Encyclopedia of Islam.

- Funding for the development of a Web-based archive of the indigenous languages of Latin America, digital documentation and reconstruction of an ancient Mayan temple for a UNESCO heritage site, and curricular modules to explore the African roots of Latin music.

- Resources to create a grammar, dictionary, and texts of the Dogon language of Mali, a Web-based trilingual dictionary for Kinyarwanda, Swahili, and English, and an exhibition of dynasty and divinity in Yoruba art.

- Financing the creation of a dictionary of the Gandhari language, documentation of two endangered Papuan languages—Western Pantar and Nedebang (Indonesia), translation of early Buddhist manuscripts, re-imagining of the ancient Buddhist caves of Xiangtangshan, digitization of archaeological collections from Mongolia's High Altai region, and assistance to a Harvard-Fudan University collaboration on creation of an authoritative geographic information system covering over two millennia of Chinese history.

- Assistance to advance the publication of a multi-volume (online as well as printed) edition of Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages, as well as the development of a parallel history project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

In a new emphasis on “bridging cultures,” the National Endowment for the Humanities is open to partnering with UNESCO and member states in international initiatives that in our unique NEH system are competitively peer-reviewed by experts in diverse fields drawn largely from the academic community.

We are particularly interested in advancing the digital humanities. The Internet, combined with the computer and smart phone and a panoply of new digital-age devices, represents the greatest breakthrough in knowledge accumulation since the book and the greatest impetus to providing access to learning on a non-class, non-gender, non-state basis ever.

As with the digital library, a concept advanced so nobly by UNESCO

in partnership with the Library of Congress and others, the United States is committed to open communications and information sharing with all peoples in all corners of the globe.

Today's world is hallmarked by change and acceleration. Unfortunately, as has been made too evident, rapid change can be destabilizing and sometimes violence-inducing. In this global setting, it is our assumption that shared learning with open dialogue is more likely to lead to pacific relations between peoples of the world than any other circumstance. Knowledge is unifying.

As President Obama so presciently observed in Cairo in June 2009, “All of us share this world for but a brief moment in time. The question is whether we spend that time focused on what pushes us apart, or whether we commit ourselves to an effort—a sustained effort—to find common ground, to focus on the future we seek for our children, and to respect the dignity of all human beings.”

Accordingly, the President suggested as a goal that a young person in the American Midwest be able to communicate on a regular basis with a young person in the Middle East. By analogy a young person in Europe or Africa should be able to communicate with a young person in Asia or South America. And, perhaps as significantly, a person of any age should be able to reach out and communicate with anyone in his or her own society. A twittering world is a communicative place, a global neighborhood more likely to live with itself.

In an age where terrorism has become globalized and genocidal acts are recent memory, we must be ever mindful of Einstein's warning that splitting the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking. We have no choice except to improve upon what has been an historical constant—human nature. If this is too daunting an immediate task, we must take an intermediate step and, in concert, expand shared experiences. Increasing knowledge, particularly of each other's cultures, is probing humanity, sharing the human condition. It widens senses of family and community.

As the UNESCO charter affirms, peace must be founded “upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.”

With respect for the charter, the United States is fully committed to working constructively within the multi-lateral framework of UNESCO and, in addition, supports a number of complementary bilateral initiatives.

The Obama Administration, for instance, is committed to advancing

basic education the world over, particularly in Africa where a quarter of a billion dollars in education aid is targeted over a one year period. U.S. international basic education funds have increased eight-fold over the last decade, and the Obama Administration is prepared to take the next step, increasing access to higher education through an emphasis on community colleges and the development, among other techniques, of robust courses that can be taken online. Few educational initiatives have more potential to help equalize access to learning around the world.

The Obama Administration is also committed to significantly increasing support for science on the assumption that we are at an historic juncture where advances in science and the technologies applicable to basic research are the most exciting aspect of life on the planet. We are learning more and more about ourselves, our origins, and our capacity to cope with disease and extend life. Unlike gold or precious metals, science cannot be kept in vaults. It is the most quickly shared commodity on earth.

In a world where overall economic activity has slowed for the first time in several decades, the U.S. remains committed to doing its part by playing a constructive role in UNESCO and helping advance cultural understanding between all peoples of the earth.

Jim Leach is the ninth Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Leach was nominated by President Barack Obama and confirmed by the Senate in 2009. Leach previously served 30 years representing southeastern Iowa in the U.S. House of Representatives, where he chaired the Banking and Financial Services Committee, the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, and founded and co-chaired the Congressional Humanities Caucus. After leaving Congress in 2007, Leach joined the faculty at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, where he was the John L. Weinberg Visiting Professor of Public and International Affairs until his confirmation as NEH chairman.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN PRACTICE

Advancing Public Diplomacy Through World Expos Vicente González Loscertales

Encompassing connections between aesthetics and functionality, culture and politics, tradition and innovation, entertainment and diplomacy, utopia and reality, World Expos are an inimitable phenomenon. For two centuries, World Expos have maintained a unique ability to resonate with the global public and to advance the international image of nations.

Until recently, however, the explicit connection between World Expos and public diplomacy has not been fully explored. The concept of public diplomacy has always been part of the DNA of these events since their inception in the 18th century, when France took the initiative to organize a national exhibition in Paris. The exhibition was meant to showcase the country's industry and establish a new platform to inject novel ideas into society and engage citizens in the events of an emerging nation.

By adding an international dimension to this event, the *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, held in London in 1851, inaugurated Expos as the hallmark events of the globalizing industrial era. Between April and October 1851, 25 participating countries welcomed more than 6 million visitors who wished to discover new products, new architectures, new materials, and new nations.

Although the concept of an international platform for communication and exchange of industrial developments was in itself new and powerful,

governments and cities continued to expand the scope and the contents of these early Expos. Originally conceived to promote industry, Expos began to connect cultures and present national achievements in all domains of human activity. Participation in an Expo also offered opportunities for political and economic cooperation and provided an ideal framework to promote national identity—making each Expo an essential destination for official visits by heads of state and other high-level government officials.

As these events acquired greater international legitimacy and their diplomatic significance increased, nations felt the need to establish a shared international framework to support the development of Expos, to protect their educational value and to ensure appropriate guarantees for organizing and participating countries. The Paris Convention of 1928 defined such a framework and established the *Bureau International des Expositions* (BIE), which remains a unique organization where conventional diplomacy and public diplomacy go hand in hand.

Through its mission to foster Expos as platforms for education, innovation and cooperation, the BIE facilitates the link between traditional diplomatic activities and public diplomacy and connects the multiplicity of players that now engage with foreign publics. Alongside governments, the BIE increasingly reaches out to a variety of international organizations, non-governmental entities, corporations, and cities. In this landscape of diverse global communicators, these actors are all searching for opportunities to catalyze the world's views and energies.

The real challenge is to create a setting where this can happen in a way that is non-confrontational, with approaches that are innovative and with the conditions that allow for the bridging of high-level public institutions and civil society. World Expos provide precisely this setting. Within an Expo, the host country, the invited countries and other organizations come together to orchestrate an educational exchange with the global public; to promote the development of platforms for innovation and cultural progress; and to support the making of new international destinations and identities.



If the origin of Expos coincided with the Industrial Revolution and a historical period focused on creation and projection of the identity of nations, it is no surprise that today, in light of new world dynamics, we are experiencing a renewed and growing interest in World Expos. The fabric of societies is increasingly shaped by economic and communication revolutions, with nations—and now cities—competing for relevance and attractiveness on the world stage. As nation and city-branding become strategic priorities, World Expos provide a powerful tool to support the competitive image of cities and countries.

This growing interest in Expos is reflected in both quantitative and qualitative aspects. Today 156 nations have ratified the BIE Convention. More than 250 participant countries will be present at the upcoming Shanghai Expo 2010. The number of cities bidding to host World Expos is increasing and their cultural profile is diversifying. Additionally, Expos continue to be the single most visited event, averaging 15-20 million visitors over six months. Shanghai 2010 is expecting a record 70 million visitors. From a content point of view, Expos offer a powerful stage for cities and nations to both meet and exceed their branding and communication objectives.

Today's repositioning of Expos as a special type of public diplomacy platform is based on the awareness that these events can no longer be the default presentation stage for new products. Product innovation now proceeds at a faster pace than the staging of Expos and communication is becoming more immediate and specialized. People learn about new products from other more flexible platforms and about world cultures and destinations through mobility, television and the Internet.

In order to fulfil their role as platforms for education and progress, Expos must be able to inspire and connect the actions of governments and civil society in their common endeavours, in order to match available resources to the global challenges facing the world. To this end, Expos are changing the way in which they encapsulate and communicate innovation by shifting from a view of innovation, purely driven by materials and products, to one supported by solutions and practices.

Recent Expos have placed greater emphasis on selecting a specific theme as their central core and organizing principle. So, Expos have come to support the dual goals of public diplomacy. On the one hand, Expos represent a key asset for governments and international organizations in their efforts to communicate the major issues at the top of their global agendas. At the

same time, the host city and country can serve as a catalyst for bringing global attention to a key issue for humanity, attaching to it a more innovative and relevant image that advances their brand as well as their cultural and political identity.

Expos provide a snapshot of the state of the world at a particular time in order to help the general public understand future perspectives. Therefore it is not a coincidence that the various themes of Expos, in this new century, all make reference to the top priorities established by the international community. Since the year 2000, the main UN agendas have guided the selection of Expo themes. Agenda 21 of the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro inspired the themes of Hannover 2000 *Humankind, Nature and Technology: A New World Arising*, Aichi 2005 *Nature's Wisdom*, Zaragoza 2008 *Water and Sustainable Development* and Shanghai 2010 *Better City, Better Life*.

Following the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the future Expo of Yeosu 2012, with its theme *The Living Ocean and Coast: Diversity of Resources and Sustainable Activities*, will focus on harmonizing the development and environmental preservation of maritime resources with a special emphasis on climate change. Finally, Milan 2015, through its theme *Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*, has committed to promote the UN campaign to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

To further illustrate the current repositioning of World Expos as tools for public diplomacy, I would like to stress that the concepts of “exhibition” and “display” involve an active participation of players, who contribute means and engage in a dynamic exchange within the Expo. All the exhibitors, host countries and participants alike, make unique contributions to the urban and cultural regeneration efforts undertaken by the host nation.

In turn, the host country makes available to participants a unique stage that allows them to reach the national public as well as to connect with each other and with other institutions that might help advance medium and long-term projects with mutual economic, political or technological benefits. This is why Expos facilitate multilateral cooperation and enable the exchange of practices. As a result, Expos support, at the more concrete level, a country's strategic public communication goals or even the adoption of new policies and solutions.

Expos have identified “best practices” as a new form of exhibition

that can bridge public policy goals and practical implementations and that provide a framework for cooperation between the diverse global players in their public education efforts. Best practices are a way to bring together the practical perspective of Expos, the central role of the theme and the educational responsibility of all participants.

Shanghai 2010 will be the first Expo to give true exhibition status to the concept of “best practices.” In doing so, it has made the Expo even more universal by inviting a new group of participants, i.e., cities, which, today, hold the key to the implementation of the solutions for designing, planning and building quality environments for urban life. The Urban Best Practices Area is a 15 hectares zone at the heart of the Expo site where cities from around the world will present and exchange the concrete solutions they have adopted to address specific urban challenges.

With best practices, real-life takes a central role in Expos and contributes to enhancing its unique ability to educate the public through experience, experimentation and cooperation between participants. Because best practices within Expos represent the best solutions from around the world that can and ought to be shared, they also contribute to providing concrete content to multilateral public diplomacy initiatives. As a way to help unravel the meaning of progress in our present time and as a way of sharing solutions in a spirit of solidarity, best practices must and will become more of an integral part of Expos.

In the effort to help societies understand the processes of globalization and to foster a public understanding of the interconnections in our world, Expos are one of the few instruments that can help fill the knowledge and awareness gap related to global problems. Furthermore, they provide opportunities to accelerate urban and economic transformations, to attract international participants and to raise the profile of the country on the world's stage. They are fertile grounds for cooperation and multilateral public diplomacy ambitions.

Expos are engines of change that strongly support the top-down policy efforts of governments. Their transformational power affects societies in both material ways (architecture, urban planning, transportation) and intangible ways (culture and education). The desire to dream, the freedom to imagine and the inspiration to act have remained a constant characteristic of expos through the years, making them catalysts for urban and cultural regeneration.

For the numerous international players that successfully and productively come together in a city to build a multidimensional vision of the world, Expos are a new platform that allow for the expression of different voices on an equal footing. What is truly remarkable is that by marrying public diplomacy and cooperation, Expos provide a non-confrontational setting with a breadth of benefits— whether socio-economic, cultural, political, or environmental—that are second to none.

For the public, Expos are first and foremost an ephemeral microcosm that offers memorable experiences for the duration of the event. This short-term aspect is reflected in the usage of the term “World’s Fair” in the United States, which unfortunately misses the long-term impact of Expos. A renewed urban environment and a regenerated cultural setting have, in fact, a tremendous power to shape the future prospects of a city and its citizens. Not only do Expos have significant quality of life benefits but they help spark active citizenship and shape new behaviors. For instance, through the Expos of Aichi 2005 and Zaragoza 2008 citizens there gained a completely new awareness of the environmental implications of their behaviour and significantly changed their daily practices. At the same time, the meeting of other cultures created greater incentives for travelling abroad and learning new foreign languages. Although this may sound like anecdotal information, it is nonetheless very significant as it proves that Expos can be sources of inspiration and support for large public campaigns of different types. To prove this point, there is an ongoing campaign to ban smoking in Shanghai in preparation for the upcoming World Expo.

For host cities, Expos are a key part of a strategic plan for urban development and act as catalysts for accelerating infrastructural transformations. By linking different eras of urban life, Expos can be thought of as the rite of passage chosen by a city to enact a vision for its future layout, for the mobility within its walls and for the social, economic and cultural activities it will support. The role of Expos as instruments for urban renewal has remained constant throughout the years, although it is amplified today with the focus on quality of life. As the world experiences massive urbanization, much global attention is focused on solutions that can improve existing major cities and enable smaller cities to grow in sustainable ways. The actions that will accompany urban renewal fuelled by Expos will involve, among others, the regeneration of certain areas, the overall or partial branding or re-branding of the city and the reconfiguration of the

city’s operational systems, such as its transportation and telecommunication networks. As a result, cities will increasingly reflect and rely upon a culture of sustainable urban development with Expos as an important instrument for sharing “best practices” and facilitating global debates for better solutions. For governments and the international community, Expos offer a unique platform for multilateral public diplomacy: they are platforms to educate the public and vehicles to promote national identity, away from local political debates. Expos have become a domain in international life where the struggle for power is not predominant and countries find a place to discuss global concerns in a non-confrontational environment. Part of the reason for this is that Expos are all-inclusive. Not only do they offer a place for dialogue amongst diverse institutions, but countries can have equal opportunities to be present. In particular, developing countries increasingly value their presence in the Expos as an opportunity to show their achievements beyond the stereotypes. At the same time, organizers value the presence of developing countries as a testimony of the universality of the values that they are trying to promote.

In fulfilling their duty to educate through innovation, Expos can also increasingly support activities in digital public diplomacy. Although the Internet has often been quoted as a threat to the relevance of World Expos, its capacity to reach an even bigger public actually makes it a critical asset for future Expos. Shanghai 2010 will launch a full virtual counterpart to the physical Expo, thus bringing the event to an even larger public that will be able to explore the site and the pavilions in a multidimensional digital environment. Shanghai 2010 Online will also further expand the modes of exhibition which, given the nature of the Internet, will be more dynamic and open. Participants will no longer be limited by the physical constraints of the pavilion space and will be able to enhance their presence in novel and richer ways. At the same time, by facilitating the online presence of all participants, the Expo will make its own contribution towards bridging the digital divide.

For the BIE, the digital Expo is a strategic initiative which embodies how physical expos can incorporate and be enhanced by the logic, the mediums and the trends of the 21st Century. The Internet is indeed a medium that provides both a natural and a necessary extension to Expos by connecting and engaging a bigger global public, especially younger generations.

As expos continue to foster their timeless and universal values of

education, innovation and cooperation, they must also align themselves with the expectations and the tools available to the global community. Indeed, Expos are first and foremost at the service of the common endeavour of a multiplicity of actors engaged in promoting quality of life through progress and prosperity. To this end, today's Expos bring together countries, global actors and citizens around a theme of universal interest—becoming a key, and possibly the broadest instrument for public diplomacy in the 21st century.



Vicente González Loscertales has studied in Spain, France, Germany and Mexico. He has a Ph.D. in history. He took up the post of Secretary General of the International Exhibitions Bureau (BIE) in 1994. Before that he was Deputy Secretary General of the BIE. Previously, Loscertales served as Director of International Participation at EXPO '92 Seville, Deputy Director General for Cooperation at the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain and

Deputy Director General for Scientific and Technological Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Spain. He has also been a professor at the University in Madrid.

Incredible India

Leena Nandan

When the task of defining one word—beauty—is so vast, how much more difficult must it be to capture the spirit and essence of a whole country. A country that is both ancient and modern, which has passion and wisdom, that is unchanging yet ever changing—a country that veritably defies definition. This is the conundrum that the Tourism Ministry of the Government of India faced seven years ago when it embarked on the ambitious task of trying to brand the country for the first time.

What were the imperatives behind the branding exercise? Post 9/11, tourism all over the world had taken a downturn. There was pain, anger, trauma and disbelief; travel was far from everyone's mind. The tourism sector, never very robust in India, looked like it would be sucked into the maelstrom. The country had to overcome this, and to turn crisis into opportunity. The first step had to be to forge a new identity, one that would distinguish India in the minds of the global traveler, and create a strong, positive image under an overarching brand. For too long, myriad descriptions of "Magical India," "Ancient India," "Mystical India" and similar such hyperboles had been floating around; the time had come for out of the box thinking.

That was the genesis and within no time, the concept became a mission. The Tourism Ministry decided to involve the best artistic minds and introduced a countrywide creative competition to attract people who would bring to the table a perspective that was fresh and original. Ideas for branding came in droves so a committee was set up to evaluate, short-list and recommend. It was a time of frenzied activity as meetings metamorphosed into brainstorming sessions. The heady feeling of being caught up in something creative, something unique, made the process worthwhile. And so it went until: Eureka: "Incredible India" was born.

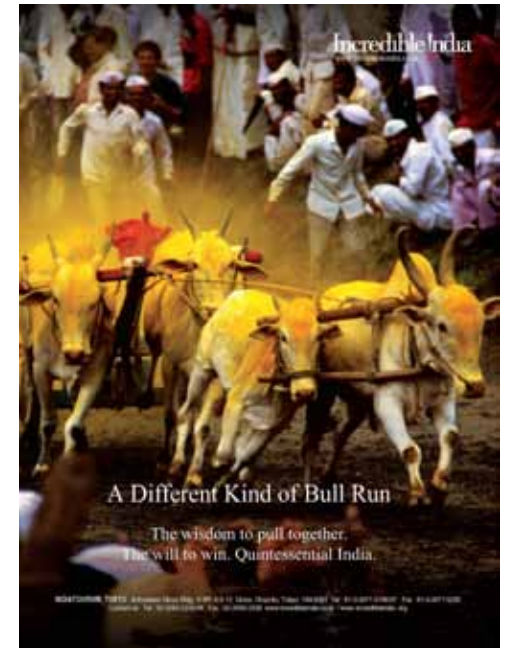


Incredible India captured the imagination of everyone immediately. The logo, which cleverly played on the use of the exclamation mark, was finalized, and the euphoria was palpable. This was creativity at its best. The buy-in from all stakeholders was instantaneous. The Indian private sector, generally gloomily certain of the Indian government's dullness, were wide-eyed in admiration. A new era of partnership was born between public and private sectors.

The first campaign, rolled out in 2002-03, was based on the use of brilliant images featuring the different tourism attractions of India—whether wildlife or wellness, deserts or monuments. There was innovation in every presentation of the “!” of India—it could be the figure of the camel on the horizon gazing across the rippling golden sands, or the spire on the graceful dome of the Taj Mahal, eloquent in its somber silence. The imagery was startling and the choice of media was made with equal care. Readers of leading newspapers and travel magazines all over the world suddenly found themselves admiring a slick and glossy campaign promoting India—and it was ubiquitous. Incredible India had arrived on the world stage. The next stage of the campaign sought to deliver the same message in a starkly different fashion, and to do so with bite. A tiger in a cenotaph blandly stated, “Not all Indians are polite, hospitable and vegetarian.” To emphasize the country's spiritual heritage, there was an image of a Buddhist monk ascending the steps of an ancient university, while the caption was simple yet profound, “A step by step guide to salvation.” Yet another was a study in contrast, where a surreal black-and-white image of the Taj bore a tongue-in-cheek inscription, “And to think that men these days get away with giving flowers and chocolates to their wives.” The ads invited you to laugh with India, and at India. It was a bold, confident, in-your-face campaign.

Branding India for a foreign audience is a challenge in every respect. India means many things to the outside world, ranging from “enigmatic” and “complex,” to the not-so-complimentary “difficult.” The most advanced research centers stand cheek by jowl with rippling green paddy fields ploughed by stolid oxen. Rockets take off into outer space and the moon mission is the subject of drawing-room discussions, while sturdy mules with tinkling bells on their stout necks sedately bring the farmer back to home and hearth in a million villages. It is a country of paradoxes, and no one can remain indifferent to it. All five senses come alive here—and this, in fact, became the source of inspiration for one of the campaigns.

There is color in every aspect of Indian life—the clothes, the spices, even the homes. The concept was tweaked imaginatively, so “red hot” became the description of chilies drying in the sun while “pure white” perfectly described the purity of love that the Taj Mahal symbolizes. This creative route was a huge hit, and, when carried over to television, the result was breathtaking. Audiences discovered the different facets of India through vibrant colors, right from the fiery gold of the setting sun to the glowing red sandstone of intricately carved monuments.



Insofar as the campaign focuses on India as a tourism destination, it also keeps pace with the outside world. Beyond photography, kitsch art-style illustrations were also used effectively. One ad illustration proclaimed, “Get rid of 21st century stress. Stand for 5000 years,” and featured an artist's impression of a woman standing upside down in a yoga posture. If style is influenced by international trends, so too is the content. The global meltdown of 2008 had plunged the world into a mood of doom and gloom, so the Incredible India campaign commented on it through a visual of a bullock-cart race, pictured above, with the caption “A different kind of bull run.” It made everyone sit up, take note and smile.

After the Mumbai terror attack, a conscious decision was taken that the campaign had to make a strong and compelling statement about the entire country. So the ads showing a tiger close up included a message that reflected the mood of the country through a quote from Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of non-violence: “I want all the cultures of all lands to blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.” It expressed forcefully the strength, resolve and resilience of this incredible country.

In this era of communication and globalization, outreach cannot be

confined to the print and television media alone. The Ministry's campaign has taken into account FM radio and Internet, including the increasingly popular You-Tube. A new direction has been forged with the Incredible India events worldwide, which revolve around the soft power of India. This soft power is drawn from the graceful forms of classical music and dance, the robust and earthy folk culture, the exquisite craftsmanship of artisans and weavers who nurture the craft traditions of the country, and above all, the cuisine. The cultural expositions began in 2007 in Berlin where India was the partner country at the International Tourism Bourse. The grey environs of Berlin vanished in an explosion of sound and color as 200 artists stormed every venue with pulsating beats and rhythms. Winter appeared to have sulkily retreated to a corner when faced with huge outdoor brandings of a crystal clear sea under a dazzling blue sky that provocatively stated "In India it is 36 degrees centigrade."

Buoyed by the success of the Berlin experience, the Ministry zeroed in on two new venues, especially as 2007 marked 60 years of India's independence. "India Now" in London and "Incredible India@60" in New York had indoor as well as outdoor events. The size and scale of both were in proportion to the vastness of India.

In London, all of Regent Street was pedestrianized; every store had an India display, there were dance performances going on while spicy food tickled the palate of all visitors as they savored the balmy weather and festive mood. A special campaign was unveiled under the tag line, "India is closer than you think." The standard images of everyday London in an Indian setting made people do a double take. There was "Elephant & Castle" written across an image of a richly caparisoned elephant posing in front of a palace. "Oxford Circus" had people perching precariously and happily on an auto—what the image denoted was the quintessential chaos of India that both beguiles and exasperates visitors.

Meanwhile, New York had never envisaged that Bryant Park could boast a sand sculpture of the Taj Mahal in front of which Bihu dancers from Assam would weave their magic. The Lincoln Center was filled to capacity with an audience who sat mesmerized through the choreographed performances that included a medley of classical and folk dance. The photography exhibition and the fashion show on the sidelines of the event, all gave New Yorkers much to talk about.

In 2008, after having wowed Europe and the U.S., Incredible India

decided to focus on Asia—Singapore and China, to be exact. The Orchard Plaza, a commercial hub of Singapore, was enthralled by the beats of Bhangra and the whirl of Pungcholam dancers who twirled around the stage even as they beat their drums. In China, the subtle flavors and aromas of India food and the kaleidoscope of colors of the cultural presentations were a resounding success. The food festivals, enthusiastically organized by leading hotels in Beijing and Shanghai, drew people in like a magnet.

This year, Russia and Los Angeles have been at the receiving-end of our cultural diplomacy. In Moscow and St. Petersburg, the exposition of Indian culture has been a great success, so too in Los Angeles. The print and outdoor signage campaign in Los Angeles had Hollywood as the theme. "Toy Story" was tagged on an image of attractive Indian toy dolls. Meanwhile, "Natural Born Killers" was captioned with a Bengal tiger giving its trademark killer look. In September 2009 the Hollywood Bowl was transformed into something quite different with the "India Calling" event. Music and graceful dance competed with the colorful pavilions of village artisans. It was a lively, noisy, crowded atmosphere—a microcosm of India itself. The main program, with classical, fusion, pop, folk and Bollywood numbers had people tapping their feet and breaking into dance.

The focus of the Incredible India campaign is innovation. The Ministry has been able to come up with new, stylish inspirational and creative ideas, that draw from the a country that has drama and spirituality, chaos and serenity. You can lose yourself here and find yourself here because the discovery of India is nothing less than a journey of self-fulfillment. But to truly understand India, one lifetime is not enough.

Leena Nandan has extensive experience in destination promotion and marketing. During her tenure in the Ministry of Tourism, the "Atithi Devo Bhavah" campaign was launched with the purpose of generating social awareness all over the country. The campaign now has a leading film star, Aamir Khan as its brand ambassador. She looks after the Incredible India Campaign in overseas markets where it has won several international awards. She has handled several international marketing events such as "India Now," "Incredible India@60" and "India Calling." In addition to promotion and publicity, Nandan's responsibilities include creation of tourism infrastructure and development of niche products like rural eco-tourism and cruise tourism.

AT POST

At Post asks practitioners to break down the mechanics of public diplomacy. In this interview, *PD*'s *Katherine Keith* spoke with *Joe Mellot*, Special Assistant for the Undersecretary of Public Diplomacy at the U.S. Department of State.

1. Definitions of public diplomacy, including the role of public diplomats, abound. What, in your own words, is your job description?

I think the simplest thing to say is: working on ways, as a government entity, to build relationships between groups in two different societies, two different cultures, two different countries. It is facilitating and increasing people-to-people engagement across borders.

What I see as my job description, as a public diplomat, is finding ways to facilitate that kind of interaction between people and to find groups with similar outlooks and so that the connections that exist between two countries are deeper than just government-to-government. I want to ensure that there are links between groups in society that can ensure that when we, as nation, come up against issues on which we don't agree or don't

necessarily see eye-to-eye on, there is enough other underlying relationship where we can come to terms with those issues and find areas in which we do agree in order to move forward.

2. What activities are imperative to doing your job and reaching your PD goals?

A lot of that starts with understanding markets that we are trying to be a part of and trying to work with. You don't want to say, "I want to reach people through new media or social media," if you don't know what social media are important to them. You don't want to say "I want to create a website where I can talk to people." That forces people to come to your website, whereas it is much more effective to ensure that your message is actually on websites where people already go. So I think the heart of it is being very clear on what your strategy is, what it is you're trying to accomplish; being very particular about what tools you have; and measuring the resources you have and ensuring that they're going to be the tools that actually reach people where they are. That's a very theoretical answer to that.

3. Describe a recent project that is demonstrative of your organization's PD initiatives.

I am working as a special assistant for the Undersecretary of Public Diplomacy right now. One of the areas I focus on is South and Central Asia, which includes Pakistan. Pakistan is clearly a major policy objective for this administration and strengthening ties between the people of Pakistan and the people of the United States is central to what we're trying to do with public diplomacy in Pakistan. Doing that is part of restoring our policies at the government level—we have communication at the government-to-government level that is not supported by relations that we've built people-to-people.

Secretary Clinton's visit to Pakistan in October exemplifies the approach we are taking. When Secretary Clinton went to Pakistan she made it very clear that one of the things she wanted to do was reinvigorate the long-existing ties between the people of the United States and the people of Pakistan. In August, when Ambassador Holbrook went to Pakistan prior to the Secretary's visit, the conversations that he started-up with people were to say that we've talked about security, and while security is important, there are also a number of other issues that are important to us in our relationship with Pakistan. We have to look at how our relationship has, over the

years, developed and where we want it to go in terms of supporting civic institutions that are part and parcel of the democratic institutions we want to see take place and we want to support. By doing that we can have another conversation in Pakistan about issues and that help strengthen ties and keep the conversation going even when times are tough.

Some of the specific steps we took in terms of public diplomacy are to ensure we have an active role in conversations that are happening within the media and getting information to the public about U.S. commitment to help Pakistanis with their issues on access to energy. We can't allow other people to speak on our behalf. We can't make policies that say, if this is a difficult media environment we're not going to engage in it. Instead, we have to say that we will engage with them on issues that are of importance to them and start talking about how we're working together. That's a difficult position in a place like Pakistan where we haven't had that sense of conversation for a long time.

There is also the issue that being part of the conversation is tied to the notion of respect and mutuality. If we are not there listening and are not engaging, then it sends the message that we only engage when it's about us. Public diplomacy is a two-way relationship that has to happen all the time. That needs to be backed up with longer-term relationship building like exchange programs, highlighting aspects of American culture so that the people understand what we are as a people. So their expectations of what Americans are and what America represents are more in line with how we want to be perceived. Likewise it's important for them to understand that in this conversation we developed expectations so it is a two-way street.

4. How does your organization establish its public diplomacy goals? Who sets the priorities? Is there an emphasis on specific issues or regions?

This is one of the things we're actually looking at right now and talking about. Undersecretary McHale is working within the State Department to put together a public diplomacy strategy going forward and look at some of those issues. PD is a two-way street. It has to begin with a discussion with our hosts, because they're the ones who have their ear on the ground and report back to us on the issues that matter. Where is the conversation that we need to be a part of? Who are the partners that we need to work with? But there also has to be leadership from above. There are also administration-specific goals that may change from one to administration to the next, but

the means of conveying those sorts of goals have to be in place all the time. In terms of emphasis about specific issues or regions, we have to recognize there are aspects of public diplomacy that are about relationship-building that have to be long-term. You don't build relationships by changing your focus every two years on those sorts of things.

5. Who are your strategic partners, within and outside your organization - in executing your projects?

Strategic partners are key to actually being successful in public diplomacy. It really depends upon the issue. I think our goal in the government is to say, "this is the issue we want to address. This is the audience in this particular place we want to talk to. What's the best way we want to bring value?" So in terms of determining strategic partners I think you need to say, "What are your strategic goals? What do you want to do or what are the issues you're facing in the particular country or audience you're talking to?" And how do you find the right voices to forge those kinds of relationships so that it is not always such a government voice and other voices that explain the story of who we are.

Strategic partners are key: universities, student groups, business groups and private industry all play a role, which we use depends on the issues.

6. What is the most constructive piece of advice you have received for practicing public diplomacy?

Listen. Understand what other people are looking for and think about what you are doing in terms of engaging other audiences. You have to figure out what the issues are that are important to them and talk about and engage on those issues so that they're willing to engage on issues that are important to you. You're going to be part of an exchange. Like in a conversation you cannot assume that what matters to you is going to matter to your audience.

7. Share a personal experience (good or bad) about PD in practice. Something that was surprising, interesting or otherwise influenced the way you practice public diplomacy.

When I was in Bangladesh in 2002 I was working at the consular office. If you're engaged in cross-cultural communication of any kind, everything you do has an element of public diplomacy to it. I was working in a consular office in a majority Muslim country which we've had a longstanding relationship with. I come to this country all the time and my work dealt with Visas. While I had a wonderful tour working in the Embassy

there it was a very difficult time for Bangladeshis entering the United States. There were a lot of visa restrictions since that was the first summer new students were applying to go to the United States after 9/11 and they had to go through new procedures. So in the consular section we said, “We can go forward and not do anything about it and a lot of people probably won’t get their visas because they’re used to how things used to work and we could just not engage and leave the market in Bangladesh.” Or we could say, “Where is the audience we want to reach? Where are good students, and good business people who we want to come to the United States; whose interest in the U.S. we will continue to encourage and make them feel welcome despite what they’re hearing.” And that’s what we did. So my role as a consular officer became first and foremost as a public diplomacy officer. One of the things that mattered to us was not to lose that audience that was paramount to ensuring that we had good relations with the people of Bangladesh. We kept up that dialogue so that we didn’t lose the trust of the people that we wanted to be engaged with.

Joe Mellott is Special Assistant in the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Mellott joined the Foreign Service in 2001 and has served as Embassy Spokesman and Press Attache at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, as a press officer in the European Bureau and as the action officer for Afghanistan issues and ISAF at the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels. Prior to that, Mellott worked with the United States Information Agency in Washington and served as the Public Affairs Assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Tirana, Albania, and as the Information and Cultural Assistant at the U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

CASE STUDY

Nollywood Diplomacy Chidiogo Akunyili

“Film and video production are shining examples of how cultural industries—as vehicles of identity, values and meanings—can open the door to dialogue and understanding between peoples, but also to economic growth and development.” -Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO.

According to the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD), a Berlin-based NGO concerned with the promotion of global peace and stability, cultural diplomacy describes a form of peaceful and constructive intercultural dialogue aimed at fostering sustainable relationships based on understanding, and trust. The ICD further asserts that cultural diplomacy has the power to “reduce the likelihood of socio-cultural, political, and military conflicts.”

Africa is a continent of great diversity, where cultural, religious, linguistic and geo-political differences abound. In spite of these differences, many African countries are unified by the experience of ethnic and religious conflicts. The ongoing war in Darfur, reminiscent of the Rwandan genocide, comprising of ethnic violence and cleansing, readily comes to mind. In view of Africa’s unique multi-ethnic and religious landscape, and history of intolerance and conflicts, the benefits of cultural diplomacy—a form of inter-cultural dialogue—cannot be underestimated.

This paper analyzes the role of film as a tool of cultural diplomacy, with the ability to show, educate, entertain, and indoctrinate at the same time and by doing so promote nations and cultures. This will be done using the

case study of the Nigerian movie Industry—Nollywood.

As early as the 1960s and 70s, Nigerian filmmakers like Ladi Ladebo, Eddie Ugboma, Herbert Ogunde, and Ola Balogun were already making films. However, owing to the economic depression of the 1980s and 90s and the devaluation of the *Naira*, filming in celluloid became extremely expensive and was largely abandoned. In the early 1990s, to fill the existing void, a new breed of filmmakers came into view shooting on video, and distributing directly to home video cassettes. These were the beginnings of what became known as Nollywood.

The Nigerian movie industry colloquially known as Nollywood came to the limelight in 1992 with Kenneth Nnebue's wildly successful film titled "Living in Bondage." In this film, Andy Okeke, a middle class Nigerian male, from the East of Nigeria had a beautiful wife, a good family and a good life. He was satisfied with this until he ran into his old friend Paulo who was exceptionally wealthy and driving big cars. Andy, intent on partaking in this life of excess joined Paulo in a secret society meeting, which promised him all his hearts desires, but for the one ultimate sacrifice of killing the one he loved most. Andy obsessed with lust for the unimaginable riches—*blood money*—that awaited him, and eventually killed his wife Merit. The carefree life of excess he had envisioned however, was short lived as the ghost of Merit began haunting him. He was literally "living in bondage." However, like all good movies, Andy was able to find redemption by giving up all his ill-gotten wealth and becoming "born-again."

The movie managed to touch on social issues of the time capturing, in one story, many aspects of Nigerian life and realities. Its depiction of Paulo's sudden wealth mirrored the reality of Nigerian elites who, overnight, acquired unexplained riches; Andy on the other hand represented the average Nigerian, who upon witnessing the rewards of corruption, joins for the promise of wealth at any cost. Beautiful and unassuming Merit represented the innocent victim of unbridled greed.

"Living in Bondage" paved the way for a whole generation of Nollywood movies. These video productions, despite low quality, took on a life of their own as new movies were literally churned out on a daily basis. This, in addition to rampant piracy, meant that a wide array of movies were cheap and readily available.

According to a global cinema survey conducted by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), in terms of annual production, Nigeria is the

second largest movie industry, second only to Bollywood, having overtaken Hollywood. In the English-speaking areas of Africa, Nollywood has become a household name. Not only do the majority of sub-Saharan Africans enjoy these movies, but also its viewership extends across the Caribbean from Jamaica, Trinidad, Belize, and Haiti to the United States. With a production of nearly 1,000 movies per year, compared to US production of about 500, and wide regional reach, Nigeria's movie industry is a powerful tool at the nation's disposal. In an interview with Emeka Mba, Director-General of Nigeria's Film and Video Censors Board (FVCB), he stated that while the low quality and the often "negative" themes and stories do not do justice to Nigeria's image, the fact remains that Nollywood is indispensable for Nigerian cultural diplomacy. "It is the most powerful PR that any nation, especially Nigeria, has at its disposal to change mindsets and build a new vision for our people and for others to share in that vision."

In 1970, the Nigerian-Biafran war, which lasted three devastating years, concluded in the defeat of South-Eastern Nigeria (Biafra). The defeated east, predominantly comprising of Igbos, was left in ruins and its ensuing marginalization meant that Eastern development trailed far behind those of Northern and Southwestern counterparts. These past injustices have been largely addressed by the creation of a federalist Nigeria with autonomous states and local governments. However, despite political demarches, on a personal level, Igbo still had the unfortunate reputation of being backward and rural—a stereotype that Nollywood has largely dispelled in the last two decades.

The Nollywood industry has three major clusters of production in the East, South, and North of Nigeria with the East being the most dominant region of production. As a result, many films employ Igbo cinema stars and are filmed in the East. For the first time, over 100 million non-Eastern Nigerians, most of who have never been to the East, can witness the diversity and richness of East Nigeria and form their own opinions. The consequence is felt even beyond the Nigerian borders to remote parts of Africa, where Igbo phrases, such as *igwe*, *chineke*, and mannerisms like the three hand salutes of Igbo chiefs have become norms. Nollywood thus, on a national and regional level plays the role of a cultural diplomat, whose ability to foster dialogue could play a tangible role in educating and creating support to abate ethnic and religious conflict.

John McCall, associate professor at the Southern Illinois University

Carbondale, who specialized in the study of Nollywood said, “Nigerian video movies are one of the most visible developments of an emergent African culture industry.” Given the unique position of Nollywood as a means of cultural expression, the Nigerian movie industry has an ability to change the way Nigerians perceive our country and affect how others view Nigeria as well through its reach and influence. It enables a reevaluation of our conception of the role of culture in politics and on the international forum. Nollywood has thus, simply put, become Nigeria’s unlikely ambassador.

The title of a very recent BBC documentary asked, “Can the home of 419 internet scams, corruption and voodoo ever transmit a positive image?” For many years, the African story has been told by western media. The latter often tell the single story of poverty, famine, ethnic and religious violence, HIV/AIDS and corruption. While these stories are in no way false, they are often misleading in their singularity and exaggeration. African countries, irrespective of the level of development are consequently suffering from what has come to be known as “continent brand effect,” whereby every country bears the heavy burden of brand Africa.

Nollywood serves as a means whereby Nigeria can escape the African brand and everyday Nigerians can have their stories heard. Thanks to Nollywood, the images of Nigeria’s rich and diverse culture, its people, family values, traditions and customs can be exported, leading to a more complete image of the country unlike the hereto perpetuation of stereotypes that have hurt Nigerian foreign investment and its people.

The government of Nigeria has recently taken on the task of addressing Nigeria’s negative image problem. In 2009, Nigeria, under the leadership of the Minister of Information and Communication, launched a rebranding project. This campaign, under the slogan of “Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation,” aims to reinvent Nigeria’s image. One of the chosen agents of this change was none other than the Nigerian film industry—Nollywood. The ministry indentified film as a veritable means of shaping how we see ourselves, and also how the rest of the world sees us. The ministry insisted that it was time Nigeria defined an identity, character, image and influence, challenging Nollywood with the single task of acting on the country’s behalf. This included an appeal to abandon constant negative portrayal of Nigerians as brash, corrupt and violent, instead using movies as a means for Nigerian cultural diplomacy.

Joseph Stalin said, “If we could control the medium of the American

motion picture, I would need nothing else to convert the entire world to Communism.” Nollywood, at the heart of Nigerian social and cultural identity, not only shapes the lives of Nigerians that watch its movies but also an ever-increasing foreign audience. By highlighting average Nigerian’s life, Nollywood has the power to not only reinforce positive attitudes, but also project Nigeria’s national identity to domestic audiences and visitors alike—a veritable achievement of cultural diplomacy.

Chidiogo Akunyili is a citizen of Nigeria with a background in International Relations and Political Science. She currently resides in Beijing, working in the field of Sino-African consulting. For more details please contact Akunyili at chidiogo@gmail.com.

Pop Culture Diplomacy

Kenjiro Monji

Before assuming my current post as director-general of the public diplomacy department with the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MOFA], I served as the Japanese ambassador to Iraq for one year and five months. Although people tend to think of Iraq as a place where military power, or “hard power,” takes precedence over all else, my experience there made me realize that a country’s positive image, or “soft power,” can be a real asset in terms of promoting diplomatic relations. The Iraqi people identify with the image of Japan’s remarkable comeback after World War II and hope for the same sort of success in rebuilding their nation. This positive view toward Japan facilitated my diplomatic responsibilities as ambassador, and I have carried this awareness of the importance of soft power with me to my new post, in which I hope very much to advance Japan’s public diplomacy.

Tapping into the Power of Pop Culture

In recent years, MOFA has taken advantage of the worldwide popularity of pop culture, such as *manga* (comics) and *anime* (animated films), as a tool for public diplomacy. This is because Japanese pop culture has been attracting a high level of interest overseas and has the potential to draw large audiences, a fact that many in Japan have yet to realize.

For example, in July 2009, more than 165,000 people attended Japan Expo in Paris over the course of its four-day run. Japan Expo is one of the largest Japanese pop culture events in the world, attracting young fans of Japanese culture from both inside and outside Europe. The festival features a number of booths introducing various types of Japanese culture including *manga*, *anime*, video games, music and fashion, as well as martial arts and a batting cage. It has been held each July since 1999 in suburban Paris, and this year, for the first time, it took place with the joint participation of MOFA, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Japan Tourism Agency. Furthermore, in Spain and the United States, Japan-related events have drawn

close to 100,000 visitors each. Using *anime* and *manga* as a gateway, I hope to encourage these fans to develop a comprehensive interest in Japan and its culture. In fact, interest in *anime* and *manga* has prompted an increasing number of fans to study the Japanese language. Some wish to watch their favorite animated films undubbed or to read the next installment in a comic series without waiting for the translated version. The passionate interest of some fans has even led them to make “pilgrimages” to the locations where their favorite stories are set. For example, there has apparently been a dramatic increase in the number of foreign visitors to Washimiyamachi in Saitama Prefecture, which serves as the setting for the *anime* series *Lucky Star*.

Moreover, since language defines culture, the fact that more people abroad are studying Japanese is of tremendous benefit to Japan. There are about three million students of the Japanese language throughout the world, and Japanese-language education forms one of the pillars of our public diplomacy.

Interestingly, the organizer of Japan Expo told me that, while *anime* and *manga* currently occupy center stage, traditional Japanese culture is also one of the main components of the festival’s events. This line of thinking mirrors our own in that, he intends to place greater focus on traditional culture in the future.

Pop Culture Incorporated into Foreign Policy

Then how is pop culture being incorporated into Japan’s foreign policy? MOFA has launched three notable initiatives, as outlined below: First, this year MOFA held the Third International MANGA Award competition. The award was established to honor manga artists who contribute to the promotion of this genre overseas. This is the realization of an idea contained in the policy speech on cultural diplomacy, “A New Look at Cultural Diplomacy: A Call to Japan’s Cultural Practitioners,” given on April 28, 2006 by then-Foreign Minister Taro Aso. The award is expected to further enhance understanding of Japanese culture among overseas cartoonists.

Second, in 2008 MOFA appointed the character Doraemon as *Anime* Ambassador. We would like people around the world to know more about the positive side of Japan through Japanese *anime* characters that are universally popular. This is why the film festivals conducted by our Embassies and Consulates General always attract large audiences. Since *anime* films deal

with everyday life in Japan, their screening conveys to people overseas what ordinary Japanese people are thinking, what sort of lives we are leading, and what sort of futures we are trying to create. Since the creation of the role of an *Anime* Ambassador, we have held nearly 120 screenings of *Doraemon* movies in more than 60 cities across the world, with subtitles available in five languages. Costumed *Doraemon* characters have paid visits to some of those cities, where they were warmly welcomed.

I first gained a sense of the power of Japanese *anime* upon hearing that in Laos, children had laughed and cried as they followed the story in an animated film screened in Japanese without Laotian subtitles. I would like to actively promote the use of *anime* and *manga*, not as a subculture but as one of the highly positive aspects of mainstream Japanese culture.

Lastly, in February this year MOFA appointed three Trend

Communicators of Japanese Pop Culture, pictured at right, commonly known as Kawaii [cute] Ambassadors. Certain aspects of Japanese young women's fashion have also struck a chord in foreign countries. For example, girls' high school uniforms, "Harajuku-style" outfits [Harajuku is a trendy district in Tokyo], and "Lolita" frills-and-lace fashion. So far, we have sent three Kawaii Ambassadors, each of them a well-known representative of these fashion genres, to Bangkok and Paris. In addition, on their own initiative they have visited a number of other cities, including Rome, Barcelona and Moscow. In November, they are going



Kawaii Ambassadors and Doraemon

to participate in pop culture events in Barcelona, Moscow and a few cities in Brazil. Since fashion has many subcategories, we are also considering adding new members, if we can find suitable individuals representing other types of fashion.



Cosplay symposium

While these manifestations of Japanese fashion are gaining popularity, "cosplay" [*kosupure*, costume play-dressing], in which fans dress up as characters from *anime*, *manga* and video games, has come to attract a growing number of young people from all over the world as well. The World Cosplay Summit has taken place every year since 2003 for the purpose of facilitating an international exchange of youth through a participatory event. In 2009, for the first time, the Japanese representatives won the first prize "Ministry of Foreign Affairs Award," vying with participants from 15 countries who had negotiated preliminary costume competitions in their own countries.

Countering the Criticism About Pop Culture Diplomacy

While these activities have generally been favorably received, they have also encountered some criticism. I would like to respond to this by making four points.

First, MOFA is by no means devoting itself solely to culture. Including government subsidies to the Japan Foundation, an independent body for cultural exchanges, the budget of the Public Diplomacy Department accounts for just 3.5 percent of the Ministry's overall budget, and the amount has shrunk for the past eight years in a row.

Second, pop culture is not the only aspect of Japanese culture we are seeking to disseminate. The overwhelming majority of our cultural promotion activities involve traditional culture and other aspects of contemporary culture, such as holding biennial and triennial exhibitions. But I think it is only natural to include pop culture if we wish to communicate an accurate picture of Japanese culture to people overseas.

Third, I would not say that MOFA is supporting and promoting pop culture directly. The current boom in Japanese pop culture arose without any help from the government, and some creators may actually consider our involvement irksome. So it is not so much a case of government support of pop culture, as one of the government tapping into its tremendous power to attract fans. Pop culture has the potential to serve as a starting-point for cultivating an interest in Japanese culture as a whole.

Fourth, certain matters are best handled by the government. Problems like piracy and other issues concerning intellectual property need to be resolved at the governmental level.

While MOFA does what it can to transmit Japan's culture overseas, I think this is a task that calls for the combined support of the entire country. In this endeavor, I hope to promote cooperation between different branches of the government and between the government and the private sector.

Toward Soft Power Diplomacy

Soft power includes not only pop culture but also traditional culture, Japanese values and our way of life, including our reverence for the spirit of harmony and the idea of symbiosis with nature, which are becoming ever more relevant in the globalized world of the 21st century. Indeed, energy conservation and recognition of the need for action to protect the environment could even be considered to embody Japan's traditional values and way of life, with the backing of our leading-edge technology. As Japan's strength lies in soft power, I would like to pursue pop culture diplomacy within the more broadly defined framework of soft power diplomacy.

Kenjiro Monji has been Director-General for Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, since July 2008. He graduated from the Faculty of Law, Tokyo University, in 1975, whereupon he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Monji has served mainly in the areas of international law and national security, holding such posts in Tokyo as Deputy Director-General of the Treaties Bureau and being seconded to the Ministry of Defence as Director-General for International Affairs. He has worked overseas in France, Australia, Belgium, the United Kingdom and the European Union; and also served as Ambassador to Iraq from 2007 to 2008. Having been awarded the title of Sake Samurai by the Japan Young Sake Brewers' Association Junior Council, Monji promotes Japanese sake overseas.

Public Diplomacy in Lebanon

Etienne F. Augé

In 2009, the *New York Times* and Lonely Planet, two influential opinion makers, ranked Lebanon the best touristic destination of the year. Even if one suspects a well-planned public relations campaign, Lebanon is more and more considered a fashionable and exotic destination in an unstable region. The latest conflict, in 2006, between Hezbollah and Israel seems to be forgotten and Lebanon is slowly reemerging as the "Switzerland of the Middle East". Yet it would be a mistake to see Lebanon as a pacified country, especially when none of the internal and external problems of the country have been solved after the last legislative elections of June 7. Hezbollah continues to expand its influence and is trying to replace the role of Western powers in a country where the state is almost nonexistent.

Identity Struggles

From a historical perspective, Lebanon is a country open to Western influence. The French Embassy controls almost 70 percent of primary and secondary education systems, either directly or indirectly. French is still considered the language of the elite, especially in Christian families but also by other confessions that appreciate the renowned system of education. English is also taught at a very young age, and most students in urban areas are trilingual by the time they attend high school. Although its Education Index is average – according to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Lebanon scored 0.845, ranking 96 out of 180 countries in 2008 – instruction is considered primitive in Lebanon. Parents sometimes work two jobs to send their children to private schools, since public schools do not provide an equal education. Several of the elite schools espouse a foreign curriculum – American, British, French, German – or are run by religious congregations. In some cases they do both, like the Collège Notre-Dame de Jamhour, operated by the Jesuits and supervised by the French Embassy.

The U.S. is also influential in Lebanon, especially in higher education as evidenced by the fact that the best universities, all private, mostly follow the American system. Only Université Saint Joseph (established in 1875 and controlled by the Jesuit order) uses French as the official language of

instruction, although it is becoming more open to other cultures and sources of funding. The top university of Lebanon is the American University of Beirut (AUB). Founded in 1866, AUB attracts the best students of the region. Being the only genuine American university in Lebanon, AUB is paradoxically known to be one of the most anti-American institution. Student activism remains strong in favor of Palestinians, against Israel, and “hence” against the U.S. Even though the U.S. embassy helped establish a center for American Studies, CASAR, in 2003, AUB remains home to a large majority of March 8 Coalition students who repeatedly show hostility to the West. The U.S. embassy continues to help AUB, which ironically contributes to nourishing resentment against America. AUB projects a reputation of excellence yet does not push students and professors to endorse the American way of life, quite the opposite.

Furthermore, the intimidating motorcade of the American Embassy and the fortress where American diplomats are bunkerized do not provide a positive image for a nation that shields itself from Lebanon. On the other hand, France, with its ideally placed embassy on the former Green Line and its nine cultural centers all around Lebanon has managed to make most Lebanese forget it was the former ruling power. Even though France is probably the most influential Western nation in Lebanon, this is not reflected by its trade with the country. Currently China is the first commercial partner of Lebanon. While Europe used to hold this place, it did so by combining the efforts of all European Embassies. France is investing a massive amount of money into Lebanese cultural life, and helps organize major international events such as the *Jeux de la Francophonie*. In September 2009, these Francophone games (French-speaking Olympics) took place in Beirut and attracted 70 countries. Failing to show a rise in French cultural influence, the *Jeux de la Francophonie* were a complete failure. On the other hand, the yearly *Salon du Livre*, a major French book fair is the largest in the world after Paris and Montréal, according to the press release. Also, the best film schools (IESAV and ALBA) use French as their language of instruction. France and to a lesser extent French-speaking countries are the main providers of funds for the Lebanese cinema, which could not survive without foreign help. The Lebanese government does not support culture in general and cinema in particular, especially since censorship is strong and is imposed according to three main criteria: religion, morality and politics. Sometimes, the result of this control over cinema is hardly understandable.

Fred Astaire is forbidden for being Jewish, but Steven Spielberg’s movies are authorized. Most Lebanese are not affected though, and use pirated versions of movies. This illegal traffic benefits mostly Hezbollah, the only organization able to traffic through the Lebanese borders and decide what may enter and what may not.

Hezbollah, a State Within the State

Just like France, Hezbollah has long understood that in order to attract sympathizers, it should develop its soft power. The “Party of God” has developed a network of support for its community, but also for anyone who would like to receive first-class medical treatment at its hospitals or receive top-level instruction through its education network. Thanks to the financial support of Iran – around \$10 million U.S. dollars a month – and the control of most goods in and out of Lebanon – Hezbollah is now running an impressive public service, totally independent from the Lebanese government. *Al Rasul Al Azam* Hospital for example is one of the best medical facilities in Lebanon, and is treating poor and wealthy alike for minor fees. According to former AUB professor Judith Palmer Harik, when it comes to reconstruction, *Jihad al Binaa* is the most experienced association in Lebanon. Since reconstructions occur all the time as a result of repeated conflicts in Lebanon, *Jihad al Binaa* is always busy; as opposed to the Lebanese government which lacks funding, expertise and political will. One last example of the will of Hezbollah to take care of its own is the *Al Jarrah* Association, which is making sure the wounded of the paramilitary department of Hezbollah do not have to worry about their future, in some cases introducing them to wives who will consider them not as crippled, but as martyrs of the cause.

Yet, the most powerful weapon in Hezbollah’s arsenal is its media network, including *Al Nour*, a radio station, the weekly publication *Al Intiqad*, and most importantly *Al Manar*, its television station. *Al Manar* started broadcasting in 1991 and is the official TV of the “Resistance”. It has become increasingly popular among Arab nations and even beyond, to the point that France, Spain, Germany and the U.S. have banned it from broadcasting through satellite. The reasons for such a ban are diverse, but mostly involve the continuous spread of hate against Israel, even if the Jewish state is never named as such, but is instead labeled as the “Zionist entity.” Support to Palestinians is continuous on *Al Manar*, songs and videos are frequent to exhort viewers to support the “Resistance” against Zionism

and the West. Consequently, *Al Manar* is extremely popular among Arab audiences, but also with viewers from the rest of the world who consider the fight against Israel and the U.S. a new ideology. More engaged than the Qatari *Al Jazeera*, *Al Manar* aims to be the voice against oppression, especially after the July war of 2006 when Hassan Nasrallah, leader of Hezbollah, appeared like the “New Nasser,” defying the great nations and uniting most Arabs and anti-Zionists. This image is contradictory, Hezbollah being mainly funded by Iran who is not an Arab nation but a Persian one. As for Western channels, Lebanese can enjoy most of them through pirated satellite networks, which helps them learn foreign languages; but such channels are watched in Lebanon only for their entertainment value. When looking for news and political analysis, Lebanese viewers will immediately turn to local and/or regional stations, including *Al Manar*.

Little by little, new allegiances emerge in Lebanon, and the old tutelary Western powers lose ground to Arabic and Persian influences. Millions of dollars are poured into a country populated by only 4 million inhabitants. Why is Lebanon so important for other nations? Probably because against all odds, Lebanon has remained a democracy in a region dominated by kingdoms and dictatorships. A gate between East and West, Lebanon has not yet chosen which side of the world it wants to endorse. This situation makes it unique, and probably a premium choice for tourists all year long who are looking for a thrilling experience. Yet this fragile equilibrium might soon come to an end, as Lebanon will have to choose in the near future which model of society it will call its own. This choice might be the end of the Lebanese exception, for better or for worse.

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IN PRINT

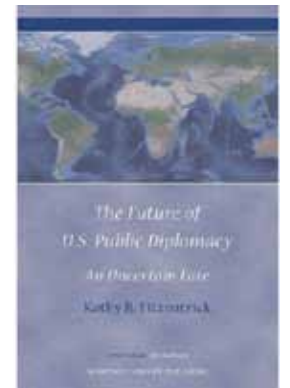
The Future of U.S. Public Diplomacy: An Uncertain Fate, *by* *Kathy R. Fitzpatrick*

Reviewed by Mark Preston

Historically, public diplomacy has been one of the most important yet misunderstood components of international relations. Only during times of war or national crisis has the United States devoted the resources necessary to support mutual exchange with foreign publics while simultaneously welcoming their opinion. There has never been a standard operating procedure for public diplomacy, and its future function remains largely in question.

In *The Future of Public Diplomacy*, Kathy Fitzpatrick delineates key lessons of the past in order to facilitate contemporary debate among the next generation of scholars and practitioners who are charged with developing and implementing concrete solutions. Critical mistakes can best be understood from the reflections of an expert group of former diplomats who Fitzpatrick refers to as the “collective” voice. By viewing past experiences as a guide for progress, today’s scholars can learn how to be better listeners, interact with locals, build long-term relationships, be honest, and responsible in the use of new technology.

Fitzpatrick begins her assessment by describing 9/11 as a wakeup call



for U.S. public diplomacy. The significance of 9/11, suggests Fitzpatrick, is that it seared the necessity of maintaining positive relations with the international community into the U.S. foreign policy apparatus. However, as old habits within the establishment die hard, so too do the reactionary critique and condescension from State Department officials and Foreign Service elite. Throughout the Cold War and even after 9/11, public diplomacy has failed to consistently serve as a proactive enterprise that advances U.S. national interests. After long periods of resource depletion, culminating with the dissolution of the United States Information Agency (USIA)—the only independently run organization devoted to public diplomacy—and its subsequent merger into the State Department, public diplomacy has been plagued by myopic leadership and haphazard strategic direction.

Throughout her book, Fitzpatrick repeatedly emphasizes that the U.S. has projected a lack of respect toward the opinions and attitudes of foreign publics. Amidst such self-induced setbacks, imagination and innovation are fundamental characteristics that will enable what she calls “new public diplomacy” to move forward. However, fresh initiatives are continually suppressed by what Fitzpatrick refers to as a “bureaucratic straightjacket.” Change cannot come without a reality check, Fitzpatrick points out. While sustained funding from the US government is necessary, collaboration from outside entities such as private corporations and non-governmental organizations are increasingly important in representing a broad spectrum of interests. Since 9/11, there have been numerous proposals for how public diplomacy can be applied in branding America. Ideas including bringing back USIA, starting a new government branch entirely, developing a private agency, or transferring large quantities of public diplomacy functions to separate nonprofit or private sector organizations. Other suggestions include restructuring public diplomacy within the State Department, delegating various programs to separate government agencies, or simply keeping the current structure in place. In any case, the list of options continues to grow.

Fitzpatrick puts options for change into context by showing the reader how the balance of power between nations has become more diffuse as a result of globalization. Emerging technology, increased interdependence, and the rising influence of non-state actors have led to a greater degree of network-based engagement. As a result of these developments, Fitzpatrick argues that “soft power,” a term coined by Joseph Nye, which traditionally was used to describe public diplomacy, is being replaced with what others

are referring to as “smart power.” Unlike “soft power,” which involves cultural and ideologically-based dialogue to influence support from foreign nations, “smart power” combines economic and military advantages with public diplomacy for strategic balance.

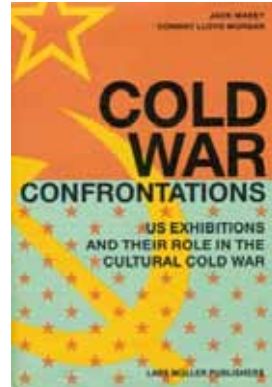
In illustrating how various dimensions of this new public diplomacy can be incorporated to produce positive results, Fitzpatrick recommends honesty as the best policy for moving forward. Numerous surveys and suggestions from former diplomats maintain that only truth can help yield the level of trust needed to sustain long-term relationships between the U.S. and foreign publics that are capable of producing mutually beneficial outcomes. By illuminating the misjudgments that have steered public diplomacy into its current state of disarray, Fitzpatrick opens the door for U.S. policymakers to accept accountability for previous mistakes and move on, since dithering can ultimately lead to an irrevocably tragic fate.

Scholarship is a continuous journey that requires patience, tolerance, and above all humility. *The Future of Public Diplomacy* is an invaluable contribution to a field in need of repair by instilling tomorrow’s practitioners to lead with a higher purpose in connecting people with ideas rather than bluster, nations with principle rather than cowardice, and mankind with peace instead of fear.

Cold War Confrontations: U.S. Exhibitions and Their Role in the Cultural Cold War, by Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan

Reviewed by Andrew Wulf

The USIA exhibits that grew in size and complexity through the Cold War era were spawned by the belief that personal contact—with enemies as well as friends—was an important element in creating more favorable conditions for stability and peace (Masey and Morgan, p. 402).



Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan's *Cold War Confrontations: U.S. Exhibitions and Their Role in the Cultural Cold War* is not a typical historical analysis of American cultural diplomacy, refracted through archival evidence and extensive interviews with foreign service personnel. This book does not attempt to tell a comprehensive story of how America “laid claim to the cultural sector” in its nearly five-decade face-off with the Soviet Union. At first glance, the authors’ method of historiography reminds this reader of Joseph Ellis’ fascinating biography of Thomas Jefferson, *American Sphinx*. Both are popular histories that, instead of taking on the full freight of their subjects they attempt a nuanced, even cinematic approach, to invoke Ellis, in explicating providential moments that best explain the subject at hand.

This book tells the seldom heard story of American design at World’s Fairs and international exhibitions within their political and cultural contexts, based mainly on Masey’s personal archives, declassified documents, and his

own accounts of his work with the United States Information Agency from 1951 to 1979, where for much of that period he was director of design. It is from this unique perspective in which the thought-provoking contribution to the literature is most profound, for Masey was seemingly everywhere during this period, designing America’s charm war, from “the kitchen” in Moscow to kimonos in Osaka.

Masey’s description of his many years on the Cold War’s cultural front lines:

For those who lived through it, it was a real experience of combat, and a combat in which all weapons, except the nuclear ultimate, could be used. For the USIA the chosen weapon was information outreach, and part of its arsenal of communication was the medium of exhibitions, designed to illuminate, inform and influence as wide an audience as possible (p. 412).

Masey began his career as an exhibits designer in Company B of the 603rd Camouflage Engineers, a sub-unit of the “Ghost Army”. After D-Day it used decoy inflatable rubber tanks and assorted battle materiel to dupe the German armies on the battlefields of World War II Europe. Remarkably, his brothers in subterfuge included future fashion legend Bill Blass and color field painter Ellsworth Kelly. Conway Lloyd Morgan is a British author whose works on contemporary architecture and design include works devoted to Jean Nouvel, Philippe Starck, and Marc Newson.

As in the Ellis biography, the authors address only a handful of important moments in the history of U.S. sponsored exhibitions, yet they do so with a zoom lens. The book follows a chronological trajectory—replete with hundreds of photos that illustrated the visitor’s experience of a series of exhibitions, particularly those that visited the Soviet Union, which preached against the hysteria that Americans were monsters. These traveling shows initially targeted Western Europe in the days of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, specifically to safeguard Germany’s revitalization as a demilitarized and democratic republic, and Europe’s ongoing alliance and identification with America and the ideals for which the Allies fought so hard.

In the introduction, Masey and Morgan effectively situate the genesis of the cultural Cold War within its proper historical setting. Additionally, they remind the reader of a prominent clause in Truman’s policy: the promise of

American support for free peoples “who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.” This phrase referenced more than the risk of a rising communist regime in Greece. In short, both Truman’s and Marshall’s ideas directly echoed George Kennan’s 1946 telegram that urged American containment of the post-war Soviet regime, a “conspiracy within a conspiracy” that understands only force, disrespect for objective truth, and “the exploiting of differences and conflicts between capitalist powers.” This warning shot across the bow of American foreign relations would help ignite decades of nuclear proliferation, proxy wars like Korea and Vietnam, and endless spy games on both sides of the Iron Curtain. This brief history of the international climate in the first years of the Cold War sets the stage for America’s drive to contain through culture, and this is where Jack Masey steps into the picture.

By the mid-1950s these international exhibitions were focused on a wider audience base and began to enlist the talents of a number of designers who, half a century later, continue to influence modern aesthetics. These individuals included R. Buckminster Fuller, Charles and Ray Eames, George Nelson, Peter Blake, Ivan Chermayeff, and Thomas Geismar. These designers and others, not to mention legions of government and museum personnel, contributed to the ultimate look, feel, and message of these displays of American values.

A brief overview of the scope of this book: at the 1955 Indian Industries Fair in New Delhi, the U.S. pavilion featured an “atomics” exhibition that echoed Eisenhower’s 1953 *Atoms for Peace* address to the United Nations general assembly. In 1956, the U.S. built a pavilion at the Jeshyn International Fair in Kabul, Afghanistan, showcasing Fuller’s nylon-encased dome. The year 1957 saw the beginning of a series of U.S. exhibitions at the George C. Marshall House in West Berlin (designed by Blake), which delivered a sleek, modern aesthetic to otherwise odd exhibition subjects of medicine, building, and daily life in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The 1958 Brussels Universal Exposition emphasized the theme of nuclear energy; however the U.S. aimed to show a more human side by including fashion shows, New York “streetscapes” designed by Chermayeff and Geismar, and a display of voting machines. The authors lend a considerable focus to the American National Exhibition of 1959 in Moscow and additional exhibitions on all things American—from plastics to books—that toured the Soviet Union through the mid-1960s.

Throughout this compelling study, Masey and Morgan offer unusual insight into the process of how America’s cultural values were projected to the world during the Cold War. It is arguable that as a result of personal memoirs such as these, the international exhibitions are becoming identified by scholars less as curious relics of bygone eras and more as learning tools for future American foreign relations. Admittedly, a cultural historian is hard pressed to describe just how good design could effectively send America’s message to foreign publics. The authors conclude their descriptions of exhibitions with two world’s fairs. At Montreal’s Expo ’67, American newspapers lambasted the American pavilion. *The Washington Star* declared:

The net effect of the U.S. pavilion is one of gawky self-consciousness...the disproportionate emphasis...on aging film sirens...can only tend to reaffirm the shopworn cliché once cherished by all foreigners—that American culture is composed of movies and chewing gum.

The *Charleston Gazette* took the rebuke of the American section one step further: “What the hell does all this mean?” However, as was sometimes the case in which attitudes at home toward American culture differed from those abroad, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* stated:

Wit, elegance and irony are best accomplished in the American exhibition which we look upon as the sensation of Expo ’67. There is no boasting about technical achievements, nor about industrial products; the largest industrial nation in the world does not exhibit one single automobile... they are not trying to educate, to boast; they are just pleasing.

What is richly evident in Jack Masey and Conway Lloyd Morgan’s book is that exhibitions do not stop having relevance after their de-installation. This paean to a vital chapter of American public diplomacy offers an insider’s view as to just how and why American cultural exhibitions abroad took shape during the Cold War when the United States and Soviet Union brandished culture as an ideological weapon. Ultimately, the authors champion the human element of these cultural endeavors: the presence of American guides speaking with inquisitive visitors at these venues around the world. This is what Edward R. Murrow meant when he celebrated “the last three feet...one person talking to another.”

ENDNOTE

Soft Power and Cultural Diplomacy

Joseph S. Nye, Jr.

This article is adapted from a speech delivered at Syracuse University Cultural Diplomacy Symposium, New York, Sept. 20, 2009

Culture is the way in which humans transmit knowledge and give meaning to our lives. Culture can also be an instrument of power. A Nazi leader is alleged to have said that when he heard the word culture, he reached for his gun. Stalin once asked derisively how many divisions the Pope had, but Catholic culture outlasted Soviet culture. In China, President Hu Jintao has told the 17th party congress that China needs to invest more in soft power. As a result, China has begun to establish Confucius Institutes around the world to promote appreciation of its culture. Here at home, Assistant Secretary of State Andrew J. Shapiro recently said that smart power, the intelligent integration of hard and soft power tools, “is at the very heart of President Obama and Secretary Clinton’s foreign policy vision.” I will show that cultural diplomacy is an important soft power tool, but first let me discuss what soft power means.

Soft Power

Power is the ability to affect others to obtain the outcomes you want. One can affect their behavior in three main ways: threats of coercion (“sticks”); inducements and payments (“carrots”); and attraction that makes others want what you want. A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries want to follow it. It is also important to set the agenda and attract others in world politics, and not only force them to change through the threat or use of military or economic weapons. Soft power—getting others to want the outcomes that you want—co-opts people

rather than coerces them.

Soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others. At the personal level, it is the power of attraction and seduction. Political leaders have long understood the power that comes from setting the agenda and determining the framework of a debate. Soft power is a staple of daily democratic politics. The ability to establish preferences tends to be associated with intangible assets such as an attractive personality, culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority.

Culture is a soft power resource that produces attraction that can be measured by asking people through polls or focus groups. Whether that attraction in turn produces desired policy outcomes has to be judged in particular cases. The gap between power measured as resources and power judged as the outcomes of behavior is not unique to soft power. It occurs with all forms of power.

The distinction between power measured in behavioral outcomes and power measured in terms of resources is important for understanding the relationship between soft power and cultural diplomacy. In international politics, the resources that produce soft power arise from the values an organization or country expresses in its culture, in the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies, and in the way it handles its relations with others. Cultural diplomacy is one of the public diplomacy instruments that governments use to mobilize these resources to produce attraction by communicating with the publics rather than merely the governments of other countries. If the content of a country’s culture, values and policies are not attractive, public diplomacy that “broadcasts” them cannot produce soft power. It may produce just the opposite.

Diplomacy in the Global Information Age

Promoting positive images of one’s country is not new, but the conditions for projecting soft power have transformed dramatically in recent years. Information is power and today a much larger part of the world’s population has access to that power. Technological advances have led to dramatic reduction in the cost of processing and transmitting information. The result is an explosion of information, and that has produced a “paradox of plenty.” Plenty of information leads to scarcity of attention. Therefore, attention rather than information becomes the scarce resource, and those who can distinguish valuable information from background clutter gain

power. Editors and cue-givers become more in demand, and this is a source of power for those who can tell us where to focus our attention.

Among editors and cue-givers, credibility is the crucial resource. Governments compete for credibility not only with other governments, but with a broad range of alternatives including news media, corporations, non-governmental organizations, inter-governmental organizations, and networks of scientific communities. Under the new conditions of the information age, the soft sell may prove more effective than a hard sell. Without underlying national credibility, the instruments of public diplomacy cannot translate cultural resources into the soft power of attraction. The effectiveness of public diplomacy is measured by minds changed not dollars spent.

Prospects for Public and Cultural Diplomacy

Skeptics who treat the term “public diplomacy” as a mere euphemism for propaganda miss the point. Simple propaganda often lacks credibility, and thus is counterproductive as public diplomacy.

The mix of direct government information to long-term cultural relationships varies with three dimensions of public diplomacy. The first and most immediate dimension is daily communications. The second dimension is strategic communication, which develops a set of simple themes much as a political or advertising campaign does. The third dimension of public diplomacy is the development of lasting relationships with key individuals over many years through scholarships, exchanges, training, seminars, conferences, and access to media channels.

Each of these dimensions of public diplomacy plays an important role in helping create an attractive image of a country that can improve its prospects for obtaining its desired outcomes. But policies that appear narrowly self-serving or arrogantly presented are likely to consume rather than produce soft power. At best, long-standing friendly relationships may lead others to be slightly more tolerant in their responses. Sometimes friends will give you the benefit of the doubt or forgive more willingly. This is what is meant by an enabling or a disabling environment for policy.

Effective public diplomacy is a two-way street that involves listening as well as talking. In order to get others to want the same outcomes you want, you have to understand how they are hearing your messages and adapt accordingly. Preaching at foreigners is not the best way to convert them. Too often political leaders think that the problem is simply that others lack information, and that if they simply knew what we know, they will see things

our way. All information goes through cultural filters, and declamatory statements are rarely heard as intended.

Even when policy and communications are “in sync,” wielding soft power resources in an information age is difficult. For one thing, government communications are only a small fraction of the total communications among societies in an age that is awash in information. Developing long-term relationships is not always profitable in the short term, and thus leaving it simply to the market may lead to under-investment. While higher education may pay for itself, and non-profit organizations can help, many exchange programs would shrink without government support. At the same time, post-modern publics are generally skeptical of authority, and governments are often mistrusted. It often behooves governments to keep in the background and to work with private actors. Some NGOs enjoy more trust than governments do, and though they are difficult to control, they can be useful channels of communication. Companies can also take the lead in sponsoring specific public diplomacy projects.

Another benefit to indirect citizen diplomacy is that it is often able to take more risks in presenting a range of views. It is sometimes domestically difficult for the government to support presentation of views that are critical of its own policies. Yet such criticism is often the most effective way of establishing credibility. Part of America’s soft power grows out of the openness of its society and polity and the fact that a free press, Congress and courts can criticize and correct policies. When the government instruments avoid such criticism, they not only diminish their own credibility but also fail to capitalize on an important source of attraction for foreign elites.

Finally, it is a mistake to see public diplomacy simply in adversarial terms. Sometimes there is a competition of “my information” versus “your information,” but often there can be gains for both sides. Political leaders may share mutual and similar objectives—for example the promotion of democracy and human rights. In such circumstances, there can be joint gains from public and cultural diplomacy programs. Cooperative public diplomacy can also help take the edge off suspicions of narrow national motives.

Cultural diplomacy is an important tool in the arsenal of smart power, but smart public diplomacy requires an understanding of the role of credibility, self-criticism, and the role of civil society in generating soft power. Public diplomacy that degenerates into propaganda not only fails

to convince, but can undercut soft power. Soft power depends upon an understanding of the minds of others. The best public and cultural diplomacy is a two way street.

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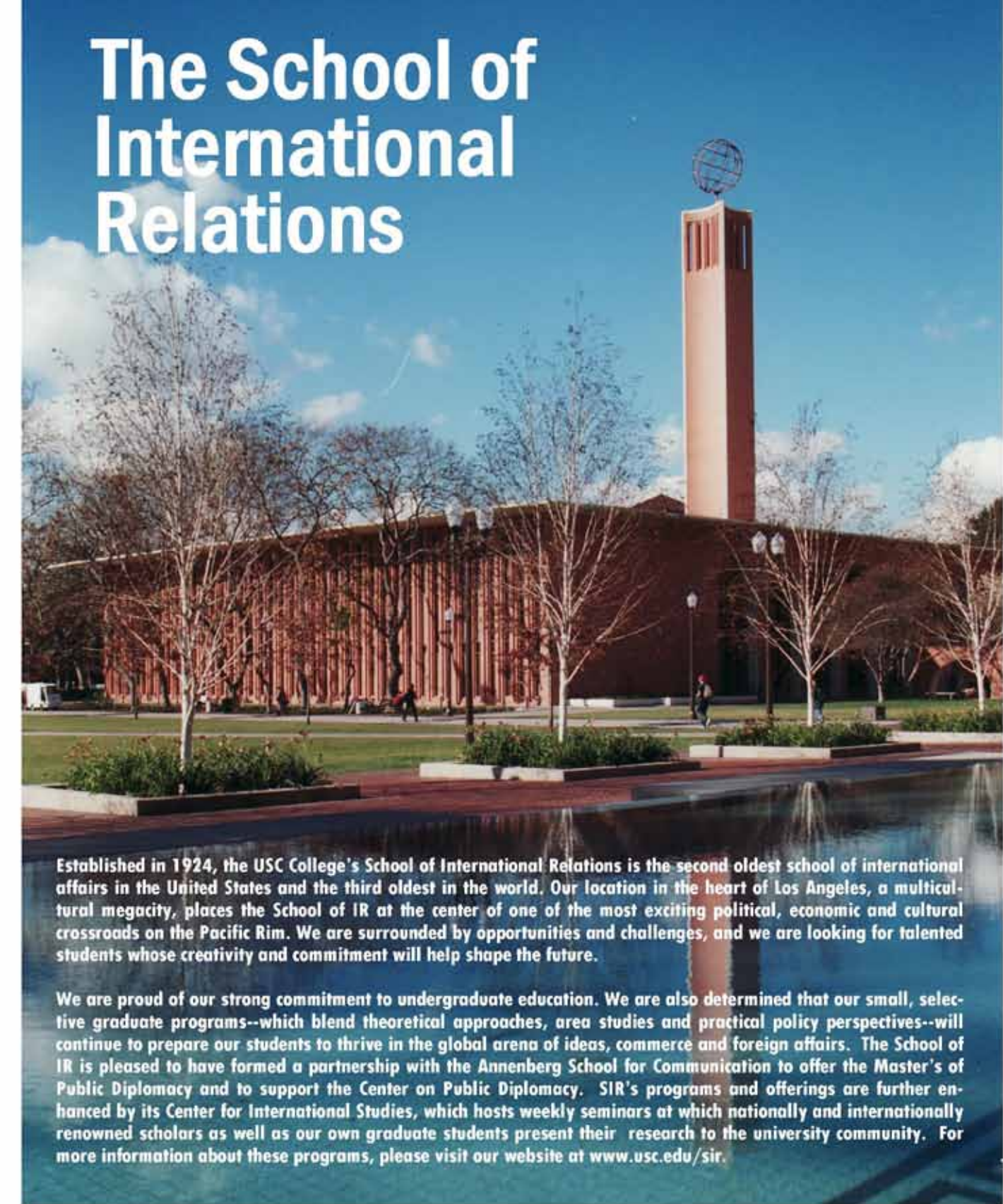
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