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# Swinging Between Culture and Politics: Novel Interdisciplinary Perspectives

## 1 Introduction

In politics, culture matters. Culture might not decide the outcome of a military conflict, but it can certainly explain the reasons behind a political crisis or why agents and agencies may be willing to come into conflict and fight for or against a cause. We finished this chapter as the entire world shuddered before the terrifying Russian bombings over Kiev and Kharkiv. The media, politicians, and much of our society acknowledge Ukraine's European values. But history tells us that the struggle for Eurasian borders is nothing new, and empires and contemporary governments compete to maintain political and cultural hegemony but also to keep border territories free from the influence of opposing powers. Much has happened since Vladimir Putin was elected in 2000, namely, the Russian occupation of Georgian territories and the annexation of Crimea. The Maidan protests in 2013 only reminded us of the Ukrainian government's decision to reject signing the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement on the same year in favour of keeping their closer relations to Russia. Therefore, it seems clear that trying to join the EU has not only been a political decision, but also a struggle for cultural dominance between Russia and the Western world.

Culture matters in domestic and international politics, as shared culture can create a powerful sense of community. It can also be used to consolidate a given collectivity or to shape its image in the international arena. By taking a global approach, this book stresses the importance of acknowledging the role of cultural practices and the relevance of historicising cultural relations, intellectual cooperation, and cultural diplomacy in order to better understand shifting power dynamics. By collectivity, we refer to a group of people who identify with each other through their shared features – be they cultural, linguistic, ideological, or of any other kind – who benefit from some form of collective agency. We include political collectivities based on a given territory – states or regions, but also substate and supranational territories – as well as ethnic, linguistic, gender, confessional, ideological, and professional collectivities, to name but a few.

The relationships between culture and politics, and more precisely, the political uses of culture, constitute a broad topic<sup>1</sup> that has been addressed in a variety of disciplines in the humanities and in the social and political sciences. In the humanities, the issue can be addressed from different scales, considering the domestic uses of a culture and its foreign purposes. On the one hand, from a national-scale perspective that pertains to the domestic, relevant topics may include the role of culture in the construction of a given collectivity (Thièsse 1999, 2019), the political engagement of cultural actors (Sapiro 2018), and cultural policies, that is, the ways national cultures are regulated and promoted by governments and other public actors (Dubois 1999). On the other hand, from an international or transnational approach, disciplines working with cultural contact, exchange, or transfer have also addressed the political uses of culture. For example, we can find abundant literature discussing power relations and the political dimensions of translation (Álvarez and Vidal 1996; Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002; Fernández and Evans 2018) in the field of translation studies. Thus, the previously mentioned topics have also been addressed in relation to how translation affects the forging of collectivities (Kristmannsson 2005; Sapiro 2011; Dizdar et al. 2015), the political engagement of translators (Baker 2013), and the growing field of translation policy (Meylaerts 2011). To give a specific example: the translation policy of national institutes for culture can only be understood within a set of relationships that connect multiple spaces on both the local and global level (McMartin 2019; Kvirikashvili 2022). Likewise, we may also analyse the political uses of translation regarding the role of translators and interpreters in international relations and world politics (Roland 1999; Osborne 2018). Global approaches to literature (Casanova 1999; Boschetti 2010; Moretti 2000; Roig-Sanz and Rotger 2022) and history (Middell and Naumann 2010; Rotger, Roig Sanz and Puxán Oliva 2019) have also favoured the problematisation of relationships between cultures and especially the understanding of how culture is deployed politically. Indeed, that culture and literature are relevant as ways to get to know the Other and enhance a sense of the local is generally assumed. However, culture and literature also have subversive potential and can be mobilised to transgress national borders and challenge homogenising ideas such as that of world literature (Damrosch 2003), thus showing their crucial role in the definition of collectivities.

In the domain of the social sciences, the relationship between politics and culture has been the object of extensive writing as well. Among the different

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<sup>1</sup> For this reason, this overview does not aim to provide a state of the art or exhaustive references, but to outline some of the works that address the topics at hand.

theories emerging in the field of sociology, Pierre Bourdieu (1979, 1992) provides fruitful concepts and insights to tackle the relationships between the symbolic and the material, the social functions of culture, and the reproduction of power relations. His work has contributed to rethinking the articulations between power in politics not only in the social sciences, but also in socially oriented disciplines in the humanities, such as the sociologies of literature (Sapiro 2014) and translation (Heilbron 1999; Wolf and Fukari 2007). In parallel, the cultural turn in international relations and political science has reasserted the role of culture in these domains. In this regard, it is necessary to acknowledge that the term “culture” has often been employed in the fields of international relations and political science in a broad, somewhat vague sense. The topics approached include the role of beliefs, representations, and collective mentalities in politics, as well as the analysis of the practices, objects, and products that embody them, from beauty or sports contests to symbolic goods. Other related topics are the images nations have of each other, as well as emotions in politics or in political organisations (Scaglia 2019). In this framework, cultural exchanges and cultural diplomacy have been the object of growing interest and witnessed the emergence of a new field, that of international cultural relations (see Chaubet in this volume, as well as Milza 1980; Iriye 1997 and 2002; Rolland 2004; Chaubet and Martin 2011; and Singh et al. 2019). Drawing from insights in cultural history, the cultural turn has also broadened these fields’ scope by overcoming state-centred and top-down approaches.

In this respect, we argue that the topics covered by international cultural relations partially overlap with those covered by some scholars in the humanities who either work in literary and translation studies or in cultural and global history, as explained above, given their shared interest in foreign cultural promotion, cultural projection, and culture in general as a source of intangible resources of power. Likewise, they show a shared interest in specific actors at the very crossroads of the political and the cultural fields, such as the writer-diplomat, also called the intellectual-diplomat (Badel 2012; Marichal and Pita 2019), who could be also understood as cultural mediators (Roig-Sanz and Meylaerts 2018). By the same token, objects traditionally approached by historians of international relations, such as cultural diplomacy and intellectual cooperation, have drawn renewed interest and are being approached from a specifically cultural perspective (see, for example, Hauser et al. 2011; Mc Martin 2019; and Carbó-Catalan and Meylaerts 2022).

Thus, from an interdisciplinary gaze, a new research landscape appears, and traditional activities related to the literary and cultural world such as literary awards, literary festivals, book fairs, literary magazines, or literary associations are now being examined as sharing similar roles and purposes to other

events that are commonly associated to international cultural relations. While these mechanisms necessarily pursue autonomous goals (related specifically to the development of the literary or cultural field or to the creation of symbolic value), our contribution emphasises the ways its animators used such mechanisms as tools to reach heteronomous goals, such as intervening in how a given culture is perceived abroad. The main purpose of this book, which we have titled *Culture as Soft Power. Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy*, is to contribute to institutionalising an area of study that criss-crosses cultural relations, intellectual cooperation, and cultural diplomacy in an interdisciplinary way.

While close, these activities have historically been approached from different disciplines. Cultural relations have been examined within a literary and translation-history perspective, whereas intellectual cooperation and cultural diplomacy have generally been addressed by historians of international relations, or by scholars working on cultural, intellectual and global history. This scholarly fragmentation mostly but not exclusively stems from the actors involved in the phenomena at hand. State-actors and international cultural organisations were generally addressed in international relations, whereas non-state actors have been traditionally associated with the analysis of cultural relations within the fields of literary history and translation studies. However, we see both as cross-pollinating perspectives in the sense that they show reciprocal and continuous interactions. They also share the ultimate purpose of promoting cultural transfer in a broad sense, while they organise overlapping activities that fulfil different functions in the political and cultural fields.

We also argue that rigid distinctions between these activities should be questioned. First, the criteria that has traditionally been employed to distinguish between cultural relations and cultural diplomacy, that is, the presence of state and non-state actors, poses several limitations (for some proposed definitions on cultural diplomacy and details on the lack of a unified or consensual definition, see Goff 2013). Since their collaboration is extremely common, the analytical value of this distinction can be challenged. See, for example, the case of national institutions, such as the French Alliance française, the Portuguese Instituto Camões, the Spanish Instituto Cervantes, and the Italian Dante Alighieri, which present varying degrees of autonomy from national governments. Indeed, the necessary precondition to their success in the cultural field is their autonomy from political powers, given that a too-straightforward dependency on the political field may turn culture into propaganda. Therefore, public powers are involved in the cultural domain in a myriad of ways, which are not always explicit. In a similar vein, the proximity of cultural actors to the political sphere and especially to the state is not always acknowledged. Nonetheless, the

transnational turn in international relations and history (Iriye 2012; Iriye and Saunier 2009) has opened the door to studying a wider range of actors in cross-border activities. Among substate actors, we may include regions and cities, while philanthropic foundations, NGOs, and multinational companies would fall under the category of non-state actors. While their role in the contemporary world is often acknowledged, the international activities of non-state or substate actors needs more historical research (Smith et al. 2019), and the cultural domain offers a fruitful vantage point to do so (Carbó-Catalan 2022).

Second, it has traditionally been considered that intellectual cooperation differed from diplomatic practices given its disinterested nature and specialised scope. However, intellectual cooperation and cultural diplomacy are not necessarily opposed and can be considered as two faces of the same coin. Intellectual cooperation is a form of associating one's own image with terms such as "disinterestedness," "civilisation," "cosmopolitanism." or, as performed in the interwar period, with that of "internationalism." These terms operate as "positive axiological operators" (Sapiro 2020, 484) and they contribute to shaping the image of a given country or collectivity in positive terms, thus approaching the more self-interested diplomatic domain.

In sum, we do not deny that state-actors have access to means that other actors or collectivities might not, and that cooperation and diplomacy have different goals. However, our analyses suggest that a more nuanced understanding is needed to acknowledge their overlaps and relationships to each other. We refrain from making rigid distinctions between cultural relations, cultural diplomacy, and intellectual cooperation, as we focus on the social dimension that the three activities share – specifically, how culture, in its diverse manifestations, is employed by diplomats, politicians, and intellectuals in a broad sense (writers, artists, musicians, university professors, etc.) to represent more or less bounded and static collectivities and shape their images abroad. To move past a partial understanding of such activities, we focus on a dynamic and interconnected history of their functions in the social field. Therefore, we assume that cultural relations may have political outcomes. To give some examples, we may note that much controversy was elicited by the literary manifesto *Pour une littérature-monde en français* published in the journal *Le Monde* in March of 2007 during the French presidential election. The publication marked a turning point in the historical and asymmetric division between France's and other Francophone literatures. However, the manifesto was criticised for its exotic and idealistic gaze, given the centrality of the publishing industry in Paris. Another example that also sustains the idea that cultural manifestations may have major political effects is the oppression of literary and artistic creation. For example, Salman Rushdie was accused of blasphemy following the publication of the *The Satanic*

*Verses* (1988), which cost him a fatwa ordering his execution. The Italian writer Roberto Saviano has lived under police protection since the publication of *Gomorra* (2006) as a consequence of the threats he received from the mafia group Camorra. Finally, PEN International's work to protect writers at risk and support writers in exile sheds light on numerous cases from all over the world showing that culture can be sometimes considered a threat to different collectivities. In other cultural fields, the preservation of cultural heritage has also triggered political contention, both in the present and in the past. Monument preservation has played a fundamental role for the nation-state and has made visible local and global interests from a symbolic, cultural, and political perspective. The history of cultural heritage and tangible culture has also been marked by major controversies beyond the cultural domain. In recent times, global claims for slavery reparations have shaken European governments. The Black Lives Matter movement has pushed the reparations agenda in terms of public memory as well, and our times have witnessed the toppling of statues and colonial monuments all over the world.

If we approach the phenomenon the other way round, from politics to culture, we should take into account that cultural diplomacy and intellectual cooperation may perform specific roles in the cultural and intellectual domains. A clear example is the publication of translations sponsored by committees, institutes, or organisations funded by public institutions, among other common cultural programs, such as language teaching and artist tours. While reinforcing commercial relations and contributing to a culture's dissemination and *rayonnement*, sponsored books become part of the literary and the cultural field: they need to be related to the broader available supply in the literary marketplace as they can reinforce the presence of a given genre or foster innovative or conservative literary practices. In the domain of media, film and television also offer numerous examples given their potential to reach global audiences. For instance, we may note the creation of CGTN Spanish, a Spanish-language news and entertainment channel launched in Beijing in 2007 to disseminate Chinese culture among a Spanish-speaking international audience. While the political dimension of this project is evident, its broadcasted emissions have become part of the available supply and must prove appealing in order to attract audiences.

Within this general framework, this book advocates for a multi- and interdisciplinary understanding of the fields under study and engages in a dialogue with several disciplines that are multidisciplinary themselves. We also connect with often-isolated research communities whose objects of study have evolved and risen from contact zones with other disciplines. Thus, we aim to move beyond previous disciplinary approaches and propose, on the one hand, an interdisciplinary theoretical framework at the crossroads of international cultural

relations, intellectual history, global literary studies, and translation studies that contributes to overcoming previous disciplinary fragmentation and considers the common features, as well as the differences, of relevant undertakings in which culture is put at the service of international relations and exchanges, and, on the other hand, an analysis of a wide range of mechanisms deployed by individual and collective actors to establish cultural relations with political aims at different scales (local, national, regional, global), which, over time, will shed light on the relevant role of other regions, cities, localities, and lesser-known actors. In this volume, we can point out the relevant role of cities such as Santiago, Chile, in the chapters by Juliette Dumont-Quessard (chapter 5), Alexandra Pita (chapter 6), and Camila Gatica (chapter 7); Florence, Italy, as presented by Adam Humphreys (chapter 8); Lima, Bogotá, Caracas, and Havana as addressed by Juan David Murillo (chapter 15); and Paris and Geneva, as addressed by Martin Grandjean (chapter 4). In this book, we mainly focus on geopolitical collectivities, although we also explore the strategies employed by other transnational collectivities to consolidate themselves and shape their respective images abroad. For instance, we delve into ideological movements, such as anarchism, as in the contribution by Campanella (chapter 11), but one could also consider transnational movements led by women.

## **2 The Notion of Soft Power: An Interdisciplinary Theoretical Framework to Approach Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy**

The notion of soft power lies at the core of our interdisciplinary theoretical framework. Our choice to use this concept in the volume's title is certainly a provocative one. A diversity of definitions has been proposed since Joseph Nye's first formulation (1990, 2004), from its initial American, state-centred, and Cold War-related definitions to more flexible applications and understandings in terms of chronology, geography, and the actors involved, especially since the 2000s. Indeed, the debates around this notion clearly reflect the ways the geographic, chronological, and thematic focus affect the definition being mobilised in each case. In this sense, we do not seek to suggest a definition that aims at systematicity, but to explore its application upon new research objects from a cultural perspective and across different geographical and historical contexts. Our understanding of soft power does not hinge upon distinguishing it from hard power, which is

often the case in international relations, as illustrated by the oft-quoted attraction and coercion binary. Instead, we address it from the perspective of conceptualising the potential of culture in terms of international politics.

We also use this notion to grasp how cultural activities have the capacity to consolidate, legitimise, and consecrate a given collectivity, not only as a cultural actor, but also as a political one, through foreign action. Therefore, we understand soft power as the capacity to project oneself positively and modify the actions, opinions, and beliefs of the Other by providing a sense of confidence, attraction, and prestige. Soft power is indeed used as a partial synonym of prestige, but with an emphasis on its political effects. Each historical period deploys different resources to exert soft power: the means of the ancient Greeks are nothing like those of the Soviet Union or those of twenty-first century Canada. However, they all used cultural manifestations to reinforce their image and promote a sense of epistemic familiarity between them and the Other. In this sense, our understanding of the term is close to other notions that are more commonly employed in the humanities and the sociology of culture to conceptualise power and describe power relations, such as that of the dominating and the dominated, symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1979, 1992), cultural hegemony (Gramsci 1971), and more broad terms such as prestige (Underwood and Sellers 2016) as applied to literary studies. When examining the idea of culture, we find ourselves in the domain of the immaterial, the intangible, and the imaginary, but culture has material, tangible, and real effects. For example, religion is an imaginary institution, to borrow the expression from Castoriadis (1987). Nevertheless, very *real* wars have been fought in its name. Therefore, we chose to use the term soft power to emphasise the idea that culture matters beyond the symbolic domain.

Enjoying far more debate in international relations, this term is less common in literary studies, cultural history, and in the humanities more broadly. However, several examples of activities related to the literary and cultural domain have been approached from a soft power perspective over the last few years. For example, language teaching abroad (Pan 2013), archaeology (Luke and Kersel 2015), translation (Batchelor 2019), sports (Grix et al. 2019), theatre (Rivière de Carles 2016), and cinema (Rawnsley 2021). Thus, we borrow the term from the field of international relations and political theory to discuss actors and organisations that have been traditionally addressed from the perspective of international cultural relations, but also those actors and objects that belong to the cultural and literary realms, such as monuments, literary magazines, contests, and awards. Regarding the latter, studying literary prizes can certainly tell us a lot about the economy of prestige (English 2005), the representation of cultural diversity, and the gender gap in the most well-known national

and international awards, but also about nation branding, the dissemination of specific cultural values, and the functioning of the global literary marketplace.

Thus, the notion of soft power can help us study cultural activities related to struggles for cultural legitimacy and consecration. Indeed, literary awards are a clear way of reinforcing the consolidation of a given collectivity and shaping its international image. This can be done through international literary prizes (see Jack McMartin and Nùria Codina regarding the EU Prize for Literature, in chapter 16) and cultural contests (the research by Margarida Casacuberta in chapter 12), but also through the representation of a given collectivity in an influential magazine. For example, we may observe the case described by Margarita Garbisu (chapter 10) regarding the *Europäische Revue*. Likewise, the consolidation of a given collectivity can also be reached through cultural heritage (see Bianka Trötschel-Daniels, chapter 13) or through the role of specific actors in the history of publishing and periodicals – such as Orsini Bertani and Benito Milla (see Lucía Campanella, chapter 11), who were both key to the history of anarchism, or Manuel Scorza, as addressed by Juan David Murillo (chapter 15).

The idea of soft power can also lead us to a better understanding of how cultural systems, which are often interconnected within asymmetrical and hierarchical relations, are ruled by political, economic, and social interests. One of the central remnants of Romanticism in the Western understanding of the world has been to identify nations, cultures, and languages in univocal terms. Culture has played a crucial role in the invention of nations as imagined communities (Anderson 1983; Thiesse 1999, 2019), but this, in turn, has determined the ways we categorise cultures. The deep intricacies between culture and language in the construction of the nation explain why language and the nation are associated in metonymic terms. In turn, this metonymy explains the potential of cultural and intellectual ventures in terms of soft power and as a means to shape the international image of substate, state, or supranational political entities. National pride is overwhelmingly present in cultural contests, such as Eurovision and the Oscars, and other awards related to the production of knowledge and science, such as the Nobel Prize. But this presence sheds light on the ways cultural representation can quickly become a form of political representation. While the nation-state has been frequently challenged as a unit of analysis in the name of globalisation and complex developments throughout the early twenty-first century, networks and inter- and transcultural exchanges that do not fit a Eurocentric explanatory model, the prevalence of the nation-state as the main structuring category for literary and cultural production is still undeniable. Thus, transnational scholarship and global approaches cannot neglect the historiographies of national literatures when analysing lengthy

cultural processes. Indeed, bookshelves in libraries and bookshops are divided according to a nation-state pattern, as are pavilions in book fairs, art exhibitions, and other cultural events. Foreign language and literature departments as well as area studies often follow geopolitical rather than linguistic criteria, and we rarely refer to German-speaking literature to bring together the literature written in Germany, Austria, and eventually by German-speaking authors from Switzerland, Luxembourg, and Belgium. The national as the structuring principle of the literary and the cultural has not gone unchallenged, especially but not exclusively when referring to literature from former colonies.<sup>2</sup> This issue has led to scholarly debates regarding methodological nationalism (Amelina et al. 2012), as well as political debates. For example, in 2007, Catalonia became guest of honour at the Frankfurt Bookfair and a fierce debate arose regarding whether only Catalan authors writing in Catalan should be represented, or also Catalan authors writing in Spanish, thus illustrating the political dimensions of cultural representation and consecration.

By focusing on the effects of all these endeavours, the book sheds light on a wide range of experiences that were not always formal or governmental and allows us to suggest new research paths such as soft power and translation, soft power and literary prizes, soft power and periodicals, soft power and the publishing or film industries, or soft power and cultural heritage. In this respect, the book analyses the agency of intellectuals and publishers whom we conceptualise as cultural mediators, as we understand them as having played a central roles in terms of soft power, often through their participation in collective projects. Some of the figures that best illustrate the overlaps between culture and politics the aforementioned intellectual diplomats, but also university professors, translators, and politicians acting as cultural sponsors, for example. In this respect, the idea of soft power applied to literary and cultural history enables researchers to rethink the articulations between power and culture and to reach a better understanding of cultural foreign action within the fields of global literary studies, the sociology of literature, and translation studies, among others.

Another criterion employed for the case studies in this volume is that of institutionalisation. Institutionalisation appears as a central feature as it reflects the will to develop an activity that is sustained over time, presupposes the existence of personnel and funds to carry it out, and anticipates a certain degree of

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<sup>2</sup> While it has been argued that French literature is actually a subset of Francophone literature and not the other way around, in most of its uses, “Francophone literature” conveys a hierarchy and a distinction based on political rather than linguistic criteria (this debate has been the object of abundant discussion; see for example Hargreaves et al. (2010).

organisation and planification. In this sense, we understand cultural organisations as collectives of actors who promote cultural transfer in a broad sense, facilitating the circulation of people, ideas, and symbolic goods and the establishment of transnational or international intellectual networks. Likewise, we see cultural organisations as spaces that may be analysed from a national scale in that they provide cohesion to national cultural fields by articulating the relationships between the various actors in said space, but also from a global perspective, as they enable relations with other collectivities. Within this soft power approach and the multi- and interdisciplinary comprehension of cultural relations, intellectual cooperation, and cultural diplomacy, we aim to make a strong contribution in relation to the historicisation of cultural diplomacy from a transnational perspective. In so doing, we emphasise (i) the theorisation of the role and potential of cultural goods in the political international arena from a cultural and humanistic perspective by discussing the historic articulations between state and non-state actors at the crossroads of culture and politics and analysing the strategies to internationalise a given culture and the entanglements of public and private actors in such a framework; (ii) the different connotations that foreign action in the cultural field, also known as cultural projection, can present according to each culture's position in the international arena – for instance, when it comes to hegemonic cultures, foreign promotion may camouflage an imperialist project, while when it comes to peripheral, non-state, or minority cultures, foreign promotion appears to be a necessary strategy to compensate for a lack of economic and military power or to counter perceived invisibility; and (iii) the idea of networks and connectivity through cultural exchanges, cultural practices, and the agents involved, especially women mediators (see chapter 2 by Paula Bruno). In this respect, our emphasis on the relational, rather than on isolated, prefixed categories, also fosters the reassessment of cultural-contact and circulation phenomena, shedding light on unknown aspects of the past.

### 3 The Contents of this Volume

In exploring the possibility of building a transnational comparison by selecting case studies spanning from the late nineteenth century to the present day across diverse geographical contexts, this volume historicises a number of cultural institutions and organisations that can be studied through the lens of soft power. While it covers different geographic contexts, the book has a significant focus on Latin America and the Spanish-speaking world, as these areas have enjoyed less study using this approach. The contributions of this book analyse

the uses of culture as a source of soft power and as a means to reach goals in the political and social arenas (for example, peace in the case of the institutions of intellectual cooperation created under the aegis of the League of Nations, or the recognition of single countries in the case of national institutions). While not all contributors discuss the notion of soft power, their objects shed light on the ways culture might be used to intervene in how a given collectivity is perceived. The book is divided into three sections. Part 1 includes a novel and interdisciplinary theoretical framework and a thorough review of the literature to bridge various scholarly traditions and elucidate their confluence, which results from their respective movements from culture to politics and from politics to culture. In part 2, a second set of contributions analyses and compares several cultural organisations of the interwar period specialised in intellectual cooperation, cultural diplomacy, and cultural relations. Part 3 applies the soft-power-perspective to the study of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations in the post-war era, thus shedding light on patterns and mechanisms that characterise and distinguish the practices undertaken prior to and after the war, contributing to their historicisation.

The book opens with the present chapter on novel interdisciplinary perspectives on culture and politics (chapter 1), followed by two contributions that offer states of the art on our object of research. François Chaubet (chapter 2) provides an overview of the field of international cultural relations and addresses the theoretical frameworks that have been explored at the cross-roads between culture and politics. He also deals with cultural globalisation and how it challenges foreign cultural action. As we have seen, it is not a matter of exchanging cultural products, but of the meaning and symbolic value of exchanges. On a different note, this book contributes to highlighting the need to write a history of the role of women in cultural diplomacy. In this respect, the chapter by Paula Bruno (chapter 3) discusses the concept of collectivity in terms of gender and proposes a literature review on the role of women in diplomatic history. Bruno identifies relevant topics in this domain and proposes several analytical approaches. Her focus on women is suggested as a first step toward analysing diplomatic cultural history with a gender perspective, while also contributing to reasserting the presence of peripheral cultures – Latin American cultures in this case – in the theorisation of our objects of study. Rather than simply arguing for the exceptionality of these women, we propose that, in order to gain a fuller picture of this phenomenon, women must also be taken into account.

In Part 2, we include papers dealing with cultural diplomacy, cultural relations, and intellectual cooperation in the interwar period. Martin Grandjean (chapter 4) questions the problematic relationship between Geneva and Paris

around the activities of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) and the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC). He examines the institutional history of intellectual cooperation and sheds light on the relationships between cooperation and diplomacy. Through this contribution, the book also discusses methodological issues, such as the challenges and possibilities of using quantitative methods and social-network analysis to approach this growing avenue of research. Within the framework of cultural internationalism, we strive to shed light on lesser-analysed geographical spaces and subfields of activity. Specifically, Juliette Dumont-Quessard (chapter 5) addresses intellectual cooperation with a focus on academic activities and shows the way Chile's strategy to shape the country's image abroad in the interwar period hinged upon educational activities. In so doing, she sheds light on the intricacies of intellectual cooperation and cultural diplomacy – deepening our knowledge in this domain by addressing such intricacies with a thematically and geographically decentred focus. Alexandra Pita González (chapter 6) discusses two related conferences organised by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Santiago, Chile, in January of 1939. These events allow us to observe the tensions between Europe and America and vindicate a certain American regionalism that was absent in the intellectual cooperation that had been institutionalised by the League of Nations. Camila Gatica (chapter 7) addresses the foundation of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute in Rome, as well as the foundation of the Instituto de Cinematografía Educativa in Santiago, Chile. Through these institutions, the potential of cinema in the domain of education is addressed within the framework of cultural internationalism, that is, as a means of promoting mutual understanding between cultures. At the same time, she elucidates the interest of individual countries in promoting such ventures, both with national and international goals.

The notion of the institution is fundamental in the contribution by Adam Humphreys (chapter 8), who studies the British Institute of Florence as the first example of a British cultural institute outside of the United Kingdom. By shedding light on the involvement of government actors in its history, this research challenges the pre-existing narrative of the institute as a privately funded initiative. Seen within the wider context of British propaganda development and the UK's relationship with Italy during the First World War, the Institute's foundation is reassessed as a manifestation of converging local and global interests, both British and Italian. Humphreys also highlights the trans-scale and trans-dimensional role of key actors, such as Edward Hutton and Lina Waterfield, collaborating both locally and with the British government and Foreign Office. The following chapter, by Simona Škrabec and Jaume Subirana (chapter 9), is based on an analysis of the history of the early years of the Catalan PEN (1922), the

Catalan branch of PEN International, founded in October 1921 by the British writer Catherine Amy Dawson Scott. The authors explore how this cultural and human rights organisation was able to create cohesion within a collectivity over a long period of time despite the difficult circumstances in Europe and Catalonia over the twentieth century. The chapter also highlights how the Catalan PEN pursued its desire for Catalan culture to be considered an equal on the international stage.

Deploying a more literary perspective, the text by Margarita Garbisu (chapter 10) narrates the history of the *Europäische Revue*, a magazine founded by the Austrian intellectual Karl Anton Rohan as an international platform that would link German culture to other European countries after the Great War. In 1929, the *Europäische Revue* launched an unprecedented initiative that linked five well-known periodicals from different nationalities whose shared cosmopolitan vision of culture blurred national borders – specifically, the English, UK, *Criterion*, the Spanish *Revista de Occidente*, the French *La Nouvelle Revue française* and the Italian *Nuova Antologia*. The following contribution, by Lucía Campanella (chapter 11), applies the notion of soft power to publishing history and explores the trajectories of Orsini Bertani and Benito Milla, two anarchist cultural mediators who worked as publishers, booksellers, printers, and magazine editors and operated in Uruguay at the intersection of culture and politics in both the local and international arena. Campanella also uses the notion of soft power to explore anarchist cultural internationalism.

In Part 3, the book includes works dealing with cultural relations, cultural diplomacy, and intellectual history after the Second World War, giving a specific place to questions related to cultural heritage and literary institutions (see the chapters by Trötschel-Daniels and Casacuberta). The chapter by Margarida Casacuberta (chapter 12) discusses the transnational history of the Floral Games and Literary Contests in Catalan and their role in the establishment of literary, cultural, intellectual, and political networks, demonstrating the potential of literary cartography in illustrating and analysing this complex system of cultural, identity, political, and territorial relations of transnational scope. The chapter by Bianka Trötschel-Daniels (chapter 13) traces the development of international spaces in which the preservation of cultural heritage functioned as an asset of cultural diplomacy. She takes the end of the nineteenth century as a starting point to analyse how an international space for debate on monument preservation emerged. She then focuses on two specific cases related to the German history of monument preservation – specifically the refusal of the German government to participate in the International Commission on Historic Monuments in 1933, and the barring of monument preservationists from the German Democratic Republic in the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS, founded in

1964. Then, Jorge Locane (chapter 14) tackles the ways the Peace Movement contributed to the translation of Latin American literature into Russian, Chinese, German (in the DDR), and some Eastern European languages. With a special focus on the World Peace Council (WPC) as a bank of social capital that catapulted several Latin American literary projects to the global market, he illustrates an ideological circuit that predated the boom in more commercial circuits. Within a publishing and book-history perspective, Juan David Murillo (chapter 15) addresses the roles of two publishers, Manuel Scorza and Enrique Congrains Martin, in the dissemination of literary festivals that provided mass access to books, “cultivating” popular sectors and expanding the consumption of national literature. With autonomous goals, these ventures were not deprived of a political dimension, as they also pursued Latin American cultural integration. Núria Codina and Jack McMartin (chapter 16) look into the EU Prize for Literature (EUPL) and the different ways the national structures or infiltrates its functioning. In contrast to other literary prizes, its proximity to the political pole illustrates the interest of political actors in literature as a way of building collective identities, focusing on regional identities.

## 4 Conclusions

This chapter has outlined several research interests that point to the confluence between a broad range of scholarly disciplines interested in the relations between culture and politics in the international arena, as well as to those aspects that blur a clear-cut distinction between cultural relations, cultural diplomacy, and intellectual cooperation. It is fair to acknowledge that we do not yet have ample literature discussing all three activities and their overlaps, but their close ties and co-dependent relations are undeniable and would push us to believe that there is still room for an entangled history of cultural relations, cultural diplomacy, and intellectual cooperation. This book invites the reader, whether she is a specialist in one of the aforementioned disciplines, ranging from international cultural relations to translation studies, or a non-specialist reader exploring the foreign uses of culture in the international arena, to reconsider the activities, institutions, events, and actors at the crossroads of politics and culture in their Janus-faced nature.

Our purpose has been to bring together a number of case studies that push forward an interdisciplinary dialogue between the above fields. The notion of the institution has been key to their selection, as we understand that institutionalisation implies a desire for continuity and systematicity. By focusing on the effects

of their undertakings in the social domain, either with a cultural or political emphasis, we have fostered narratives that go beyond internalist accounts of such institutions. We have placed the notion of soft power, a concept allowing us to conceptualise the potential of culture in political and international terms, at the core of our interdisciplinary perspective. We have used this notion to understand how cultural activities can legitimise a given collectivity, not only in the cultural realm, but also in the political one, through foreign action.

As things stand, future research avenues to boost this interdisciplinary theoretical framework would include the borrowing of other concepts, such as that of nation branding in marketing and political science (Braber et al. 2021) or that of salience, as applied to literary studies (Koebler 2018; Lanzendörfer and Norrick-Rühl 2020). They offer the potential to discuss the interconnections between power and culture and to get a better understanding of cultural projection and foreign action. These potential research interests can help us amplify our idea of the political functions of culture and the types of activities that can fulfil them, broadening our analytical dimensions for cultural-projection activities from a political as well as a cultural perspective.

Shedding light on the cultural aspect of cultural diplomacy and intellectual cooperation, as well as on the political dimension of cultural relations, also enables us to focus on forgotten or neglected actors. Indeed, most researchers working on intellectual cooperation and cultural diplomacy have considered the roles of major figures in the “centres” of cultural production (Paris, London, New York), but have left aside the roles that other regions, cultural capitals, and apparently secondary actors have played. Decentred histories are possible by focusing on new objects and actors, but also, as suggested by Bilotto (2020), by looking into the so-called peripheral, marginal, or insignificant in highly centralised archives, such as that of the League of Nations. With the same decentralising horizon in mind, in this book we have gathered a list of well-known scholars who are diverse in terms of their affiliations (U. of Paris Nanterre, CONICET, U. of Lausanne, U. de Colima, Sorbonne Nouvelle, U. de Chile, U. of Reading, U. Pompeu Fabra, U. Oberta de Catalunya, U. Complutense de Madrid, U. de la República, U. de Girona, U. of Wuppertal, U. of Oslo, Instituto Caro y Cuervo, and KU Leuven) and geographical origins (France, Argentina, Switzerland, Mexico, Chile, United Kingdom, Spain, Uruguay, Germany, Colombia, and Belgium). With this diversity, we seek to bring together researchers working on a variety of geographies and institutions, so that we can diversify the origin of their scientific production and include researchers at different stages in their career. World theories flatten the diversity that in fact exists, and we thus argue that complexity needs to be acknowledged and discussed, as epistemic progress cannot hinge upon the universalisation of particular practices.

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