

1.

Introduction

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Culture and cultural artefacts have been an important instrument of establishing and maintaining political relations between different peoples and states since the emergence of diplomatic practice in the 17th century, and some authors date this practice as far back as the period of ancient civilizations.¹ Despite the long history of using culture for different political purposes and interests, particularly in relation to bonding peoples and states or increasing their influence, it was not until the creation of nation-states and, above all, the development of modern mass media such as widespread newspapers and journals, and regional and national radio and TV stations that this practice flourished and gained prominence. Therefore, it is no coincidence that researchers of this topic mainly on the last two centuries, particularly the Cold War era as one of the peak moments when it comes to creatively employing cultural products to achieve an array of nationally and internationally oriented political goals.² Apart from revealing how diverse cultural actions contributed to the promotion of the countries of both the Western and the Eastern Bloc, along with their dominant values and ideology, a large number of studies published in the recent decades have also served to indirectly point to the necessity of thorough examination of the cultural part of foreign policy making and international relations, to providing it a stronger theoretical foundation and to the importance of including in the analyses different cases from different periods.

Academics active in this area emphasize the need for greater clarity in defining key concepts and classificatory schemes in the analysis of cultural segments of international relations. For instance, Ang, Isar Ray and Mar highlight the popularity and, at the same time, the obscurity of the concept of cultural diplomacy, which has been given a dominant place in debates starting from the beginning of the 21st century.³ As these authors observe, the semantic field of this term has

¹ See Richard T. Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* (Potomac Books, 2006), 1–23.

² Hundreds of thousands of studies dedicated to this topic that are mainly focused on the post-WWII period can be found in the most prestigious scholarly databases and search engines, including Google Scholar, EBSCO Discovery Service, JSTOR, Springer Link, etc.

³ Ien Ang, Yudhisthir Isar Ray, Phillip Mar, “Cultural Diplomacy: Beyond the National Interest?” *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21/4 (2015): 365–381.

“broadened considerably over the years,” making it applicable to “pretty much any practice that is related to purposeful cultural cooperation between nations or group of nations.”⁴ This tendency not only contributed to a blurring of the lines between the concept of cultural diplomacy and other concepts that evolved prior to its expansion, including international cultural relations, public diplomacy and soft power, but also undermined the efforts to create a more coherent approach to the research of cultural phenomena in the domain of international relations. The issue is exacerbated by the heterogeneous disciplinary framing of this topic. Although it is mainly explored in the areas of political sciences and history, interest in researching the phenomenon also appears in other fields, including sociology, art history, musicology, ethnomusicology, etc. Apart from the fact that uncritical use of the concept of cultural diplomacy has made it “a floating signifier,”⁵ an even more challenging consequence, in our opinion, is the inability to properly link the research results to already produced knowledge on the one hand and on the other to systematically compare cases from different historical and geopolitical settings.

Notwithstanding certain difficulties that manifest in exploring the cultural part of international relations in the recent decades, the abundant and steadily growing collection of studies created after the fall of the Berlin Wall indicates that researchers are recognizing the importance and relevance of this topic along with its multifaceted potential. It is the potential that this research area offers for a broader and more nuanced understanding of the sphere of international affairs, along with capturing the complexities of the process of constructing a national culture and national cultural policy-making, that served as the primary motive for the preparation of this collection. Another very important aspect was that cultural phenomena have been on the margin in the research of the foreign policies of countries of Southeast Europe—including the countries that belonged to the Eastern Bloc—and have not been given much attention in discussions. Moreover, the presence of music in the conducting of international relations of the peoples and states of this part of Europe in modern history is almost completely neglected in existing publications.

Encouraged by the growing interest in the examination of the role of music in the sphere of international affairs from the 17th century on,⁶ which has become evident in the last decade, and intrigued by the possibilities it brings for gaining new insights into cultural and musical phenomena both in the national and international context, we decided to gather scholars from different fields (history, musicology) from Southeast and Central Europe who are familiar with different historical periods. The intended focus was the era of nation-states, particularly

⁴ Ibid., 366.

⁵ Ibid., 367.

⁶ See the list of selected studies in the bibliography section.

from the 18th to 20th century, but above all after World War I. In geographical terms, we focused on the peoples and countries of Southeast Europe, particularly those that were part of former Yugoslavia, together with parts of Central Europe that belonged to the Eastern Bloc (Czechoslovakia). The main aim was not to give final and axiomatic answers to issues concerning the employment of music and musical activities in international relations in the given period and geopolitical settings, but to point to the diversity of interconnections between the spheres of music, culture, international relations and politics as well as their outcomes. Our starting point was the assumption that culture serves as one of the sources for international relations, and that its relevance is determined by the historical circumstances and dominant tendencies in the national and international settings (development of states' cultural sphere, their economic and political power, power relations on the international scene, etc.). Apart from that, it is also important to create a clear conceptual distinction between the more general contexts of the use of culture and music in the sphere of international affairs, where not only the state and its bodies but also non-state actors have a crucial contribution (international cultural relations) through formal and informal occasions, and the more specific contexts where the primary role is statecraft (cultural diplomacy).

As a result, fourteen studies were prepared and divided into three sections. The first part, entitled "Diplomacy Behind the Scenes: Musicians' Contact With the Diplomatic Sphere" comprises of three chapters focusing on different phenomena—the intensive political and intellectual networking of a circle of 18th-century Croatian diplomats, composers and polymaths (Luka and Miho Sorkočević, Julije Bajamonti and Ruđer Bošković) with their European fellows and the resulting intercultural exchanges (Ivana Tomić Ferić); the influence of the political and diplomatic engagement of the Serbian Metropolitan in the Habsburg Monarchy, Josif Rajačić, in creating the project of Serbian national music (Vesna Peno and Goran Vasin); the particularities of the diplomatic career of one of the most notable 20th-century Serbian and Yugoslav music scholars, Petar Bingulac (Ratomir Milikić). Besides revealing previously less known or completely unknown facts, these studies indicate the relevance of considering different types of international contacts of individuals and groups in the process of establishing national (and regional) policies, as well as highlight the role of cultural and social capital in the activities of state diplomats.

The second part, entitled "Reflections of Foreign Policies in National Music Spheres," contains six chapters dedicated to discussing how the established foreign policies of selected states, including interwar Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, and post-WWII Romania and Czechoslovakia, affected music production, distribution, consumption and research. Among other issues, attention was given to the power struggles between Great Britain and the Third Reich in the 1930s and the way they

manifested in the musical life of Belgrade, at the time the capital of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Ranka Gašić); the influence of Yugoslavia's political alliance with France between the two world wars on the cultural and music production of some of the most prestigious artistic circles in Belgrade (Srđan Atanasovski); the Yugoslav–Bulgarian diplomatic disputes after the Great War over the territory and peoples of Vardar Macedonia and their impact on the research of the folk music of that region (Ivana Vesić), as well as the outcomes of rapprochement between the two countries after 1937 in the domain of cultural exchange (Stefanka Georgieva). Moreover, this section presents the different stages of foreign policy of Communist Romania from 1948 to 1989 and how they marked music production and distribution in this country along with the reception of foreign musical works (Florinela Popa); the effects of the political turn in Czechoslovakia in 1948 and its adherence to the policies of the Eastern Bloc on the transforming the dominant views on music aesthetics, poetics and national music production (Lenka Křupková). These chapters convincingly point to the significance of power relations in the international arena in the shaping of (national) cultural and music spheres, as well as the existence of a correlation between activities in the national and international settings, and the resulting necessity of simultaneously observing two different levels—national and international—due to their close intertwining.

The third part, entitled “Music as a Means of Cultural Diplomacy,” consists of five chapters offering a detailed insight into the strategies and programming of cultural cooperation and exchange of socialist Yugoslavia in different phases of its existence. Among other issues, the chapters explore how cultural and musical activities abroad followed the efforts of Yugoslav authorities to establish closer ties with certain countries, to promote Yugoslavia's achievements, values and ideology, and to counter negative representations. Apart from the in-depth scrutiny of Yugoslav foreign policy towards France (Aleksandra Kolaković) and Finland (Maja Vasiljević), where the general tendencies and turns were brought to light through the extent and prestige of the cultural and musical undertakings prepared, another very comprehensive and illuminative study is the examination of how international tours of professional folk dance ensembles were employed for the purpose of realizing the country's various political goals in the international framework (Ivan Hofman), as well as the study on the tours of popular bands and folk music performers (Julijana Papazova). The Yugoslav political shift in the late 1940s and its ramifications particularly in connection to exporting its musical products and accomplishments to the Western Bloc were also thoroughly examined (Biljana Milanović).

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