| The Third Pillar of Diplomacy? Culture and cultural diplomacy in international relations | |
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| Discipline<br>*Academic field* | International history, contemporary IR studies |
| Enseignant<br>*Teacher* | Louis Clerc |
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| Niveau de formation<br>*Academic level* | Master |
| Volume horaire<br>*Hours* | 20 |
| Langue<br>*Language* | English |

## Description du cours / *Course outline*

For most students in IR, the term cultural diplomacy will bring to mind vague images of Goethe institutes, cultural propaganda and state-funded exchange programs. Some of them might make the link with the notion of soft power, popularized by the US political scientist Joseph Nye in the early 1990s and used nowadays indiscriminately to mean anything from Hollywood movies to the state-funded use of cybercrime. All of this might seem a bit dated in a world that has recently reacquainted itself with hard power through the war on terror, tensions in the Indo-Pacific, war in Ukraine or military coups in Western Africa. But soft power and cultural diplomacy are more interesting notions than the caricatures they have become in popular debates: they reveal an essential part of international relations and foreign policy, where the arts, science, cultural exchanges, religions are used by governments in their foreign policy, and culture, identity, image influence international relations and foreign policies. In the high-octane world of international relations, these aspects are often forgotten, or taken for granted: this course aims at unpacking them for the students, and helping them to analyze these phenomena and their evolutions. Taught by a historian, the course will also aim at replacing contemporary trends into longer historical developments.

Generally, the course will insist on the difference between **cultural diplomacy**, where culture is used by states or other international actors in pursuance of certain strategic interests, **cultural relations**, which are the natural relations between human communities in the realm of culture, science, the arts, and **culture in international relations**, by which we mean the role of cultural trends (identity, anthropological trends, etc) in international relations and foreign policy. When the Fulbright program is an example of the first phenomenon, the arrival in France of manga culture in the 1990s would be an example of the second, and the cultural roots of US foreign policy in the specific history and national identity of the country an example of the last notion.

The first part of the course will present the historiographical and scientific debate on culture and international relations. We will start from a definition of what we mean by "culture", then by an examination of the notion of soft power. We will then move to a simple model of foreign policy and international relations, to serve as a stage for culture and cultural diplomacy. The goal here will be to clearly state the difference between cultural diplomacy and cultural international relations, and the difference between culture as anthropological underlying trends and culture as the arts, science, cultural exchanges, etc. We will then examine in more details the debate about definitions

of cultural diplomacy, the goal here being to obtain simple tools of analysis allowing the students to understand the role of culture in IRs and foreign policies.

The second part of the course will present global evolutions in time and space regarding cultural diplomacy. We will concentrate on European and American cases, but the goal of this part is also to present other cases and their evolutions.

The third part of the course will be made of case studies in the role of culture in international relations, from the influence of cultural trends (eg. culture and the US foreign policy) to cases of cultural diplomacy (the Alliance Française, small states' cultural diplomacy, Hollywood and wartime propaganda, the Soviet Union, Chinese cultural diplomacy, etc).

Finally, the last sessions of the course will be dedicated to the students' presentations.

## Objectifs pédagogiques du cours / *Course objectives*

The students will be asked during the course to acquire the basic notions allowing them to identify the mechanisms linked to the use of culture and image by states in their foreign policy. They will also be expected to recognize and analyze the role of cultural trends and identity in international relations and foreign policy.

The main objective of the course is for the students to realize a group study of cases linked to cultural diplomacy and culture in international relations, in the form of an essay. In their essay, the students will be expected to:

. find supplementary information on the cases (the teacher will provide a few references as a starting point)

. expose the main elements of the case under study, answering the following simple questions:
-> for case studies of cultural diplomacy: who are the main protagonists? How did this cultural diplomacy activity change in time? What were and are its main intentions? What are its main activities?
-> for case studies linked to the role of culture in international relations: can we say that this international phenomenon is based on cultural trends? What kind of trends influence this case? How does this influence unfold in the actions of sub-state groups and states?

Each group will then schedule a feedback session with the teacher, that will happen through Zoom. The link for all sessions is: https://utu.zoom.us/j/7150378467

During the feedback sessions, the students will describe their essay and explain how they wrote it. The teacher will then provide feedback and discuss the essay.

The final grade will be based on the quality of the essay, the quality of discussion during the feedback sessions, and participation during the sessions.

The emergence of easy to use writing tools using **Large Language Models**, such as ChatGPT or Bard, has become an issue teachers and students have to contend with. Ideally students would understand what these AI tools can do (help with writing, help with modeling sentences and paragraphs especially in English, suggest associations…) and what these tools cannot do (find references, reflect on a subject, evaluate right and wrong, etc). The LLMs are good at producing sentences that *look* like an essay, but they cannot for example part true from false – for them, a true sentence is a sentence that *looks* true. They can tell the truth on some things, because their training feeds them with enormous amount of data on an immense variety of things, but they wouldn't know how to differentiate true from false. They also tend to make up sources for their "essays", that they think look genuine.

The LLMs are thus useful when it comes to refining the language and suggesting organization for the text of an essay (ideally the student writes the essay and asks the LLM to re-organize or correct it), but they should not be used to completely write the essay. At their worst, they blur in the mind of students the difference between right and wrong arguments and references.

However, considering their simplicity of use and large availability, forbidding LLMs altogether in the writing of essays is a losing proposition. In this course, the students will be allowed to use LLMs in the writing of their essays, if they want to do so. HOWEVER, those using LLMs will have to add at the end of their essay a small chapter declaring that they have used a LLM, which one, and in which way, and reflecting on the experience. Students should also check and double-check the references eventually provided by the LLM, as in most cases these references will be made up by the AI: they will *look* like real references, but might not be real references.

If a group of students uses a LLM and does not report its use, the group's essay will be considered plagiarism and the group will be disqualified.

## Compétences acquises / *Learning outcomes*

Following this lecture series, the students…:

. will acquire a knowledge of the historiographical and scientific debate about culture in international relations, and especially the debate surrounding the definition of culture and cultural diplomacy
. will be able to recognize and analyze the contemporary use of culture by governments in their foreign policy
. will understand the role of cultural underlying forces in international relations
. will understand the main evolutions in the practices of cultural diplomacy throughout the 20th century

## Plan de cours par séance / *Course content for each session*

16.10: Introduction, main notions (live)
17.10: Historical evolutions of the forms of cultural diplomacy and international cultural relations after 1945 and up to nowadays (live)
18.10: 2 superpowers and culture: US and Soviet cultural diplomacy in the 20th century (live)
23.10: The cultural diplomacy of authoritarian and totalitarian states, the cultural diplomacy of small states (live)
24.10: European cases: France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland (live)
25.10: Cultural relations and cultural diplomacy outside the euro-atlantic world (live)

November-December: Group presentations and Q&A (distant)

## Références bibliographiques / *Bibliography*

At this stage, the students are invited to browse through Bruce Gregory's extensive list of cases and bibliography to get a notion of the richness of the field:

https://www.publicdiplomacycouncil.org/academic-study-public-diplomacy/bruce-gregorys-resources/

The English-language Wikipedia entry on Cultural diplomacy is essentially dealing with the Anglo-American world, as often, but it will give you an idea of the main notions in the field:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_diplomacy

An interesting intellectual game, for those of you able to play it, is to look at different linguistic versions of the entry for different takes on what is meant in different languages by "cultural diplomacy". This is a great way to make you think in concrete ways about the ways cultural diversity influences international relations.

More specific bibliography will be provided in good time ahead of the course. A good point of departure, though, is the following short article by Charlotte Faucher, which gives a good summary of important notions:

Charlotte Faucher, "Cultural Diplomacy and International Relations in 20th Century Europe", Contemporary European History, 25/2/2016, 373-385.

https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/contemporary-european-history/article/abs/cultural-diplomacy-and-international-cultural-relations-in-twentiethcentury-europe/1E1E78E94626D07D228512DC230901D6  (The article should be accessible through your library. Be in touch with the teacher in case of problems.)

Mini CV de l'enseignant / *Mini CV of the teacher*

Louis Clerc is a professor in Contemporary History with the University of Turku, Finland. A historian by trade, he defended his PhD in 2007 in the University of Strasbourg, France. His area of specialization is international history and especially the history of cultural and public diplomacy. He is also a specialist of the Nordic Countries' contemporary foreign policies. He has published on both these subjects in various settings. Clerc was the dean of the University of Turku's Faculty of Social Sciences for the period 2020-2022.