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North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative

# CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS CRITICAL PRACTICE

Summit Report

This document is the first in the
North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative series on
The Cultural Relations Approach to Diplomacy: Practice, Players, Policy.

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# CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS CRITICAL PRACTICE

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## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Although we meet virtually in conversation as we take this initiative forward, we acknowledge that our bodies occupy lands that belong to Indigenous peoples. The series of research summits in which we will engage over the next three years take place on these lands. We encourage readers to consider their specific relationship to these lands and to the Indigenous peoples who have lived here since time immemorial.

Specifically, Queen's University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory and is now home to many Indigenous communities. It is our understanding that this territory is included in the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and the Confederacy of the Ojibwe and Allied Nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

The Royal Ontario Museum sits on what has been the ancestral lands of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Anishinabek Nation, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, from time immemorial to today.

# OHÈN:TON KARIHWATÉHKWEN

***Kanonhsyonne Janice C. Hill (Jan)***
- ***Associate Vice-Principal**, Indigenous Initiatives and Reconciliation*
- ***Office of Indigenous Initiatives**, Queen's University, Kingston, ON.*



**KENTSIOHKWA** sewatahonsiyost kahnikariwesa. te tsitawanonwerahton Ne Shonkwayatihson. Ne wahi rosa:anyon. Ne kati Ne Ohen:ton Karihwatehkwen. Enkawenno hetston.

Onen sewatahonhsiyohst kentyohkwa, ne:'e kati ohenton karihwatehkwen enkatewennonkohte. (The business will come to pass)

Akwekon enska entitewahwe'nonni ne onkwa'nikonhra tahnon teyethinonhweraton ne akwekon yonkhi yenawases tsi ohwentsya:te. (all the things on the Earth)

Akwekon enska entitewahwe'nonni ne onkwa'nikonhra tahnon teyethinonhweraton ne akwekon yonkhi yenawases tsi tkaronhya:te. (all the things in the Sky/Heavens)

Tahnon onen kati akwekon tetshitewanonhweraton ne Shonkwaya'tihson. (The Creator)

Tho ni yoh ton hak ne sewa'nikon:ra. (That is all)

Today we give greetings and thanks that all the things on the Earth and in the Heavens continue to fulfill their responsibilities and therefore make it possible for us to exist as human beings. We acknowledge and give thanks to the Creator of all things and the energy of Creation that this is so.

'She:kon Sewakwe:kon, Wa'tkwanonhwerá:ton. Kanonhsyonne ne yonkiats. Karahkwine Catherine Brant kénha yontátyats ne Akenistenha tahnon Lennox Hill kénha ronwá:yats ne Rakeniha. Wakenyahton Kanyen'kehá:ka niwakwenhontsyoten. Kenhtè:ke nitewakenon, Kenhtè:ke kenekare.

Kanonhsyonne, "She is Making a House," is what they call me. My deceased mother is Catherine Brant and my deceased father is Lennox Hill. He was Wolf clan; I am Turtle clan of the Mohawk Nation. I am from Kenhtè:ke and that is where I live.

In a more formal introduction, I would continue on to tell you about my family, my children and who my grandparents are, and so on. For today I will share that both of my

Kanonhsyonne

parents and all of my grandparents at least six generations back are Kanyen'kehá:ka.

It is customary and respectful that before I address a group I place myself in relation to who I am within my family, clan and Nation. It is important that I position myself so that you know where I am speaking from, what informs me and where I am in relation to you.

It is important to acknowledge and pay respect to ancestral and traditional territories and local Indigenous communities. By doing so, we honour our Indigenous ancestors and the current stewards of the land and speak to our personal, spiritual, political and social relationships with the land and each other.

To be meaningful and respectful, a territorial acknowledgement needs to be intentional. It is a time to give thanks, and to consider our individual and collective roles in the stewardship of Mother Earth and in building relationships between Indigenous peoples and communities and the rest of the world and the Earth.

I would encourage all of you to consider the land you stand on today and think about how you are in relationship with it.

I am also the Associate Vice-Principal, Indigenous Initiatives and Reconciliation, here at Queen's University. It's my responsibility to work toward decolonization, Indigenization and reconciliation across our campuses.

In my culture women are the keepers of the land. Ours is the responsibility to hold, care for and protect the land for the coming faces. The land belongs to them and those who will come after them. Similarly, in decision making we are instructed to ensure that the decisions we make take into consideration the next seven generations, ensuring our decisions won't adversely affect our children, and theirs, and theirs – seven generations into the future. We are also instructed to remember our ancestors seven generations into the past and remember all that they did to ensure we are still here, on our land and remembering who we are and where we come from.

On behalf of the Office of Indigenous Initiatives at Queen's University I welcome you to this amazing gathering.

Nyawen Kiwahi. Thank you for your kind attention. •

# BARBARA CROW

• ***Dean,*** *Faculty of Arts & Science*
***Queen's University***



**ON** behalf of Queen's University, I am pleased to present the results of the research summit, *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice*. This report offers a fresh and important perspective on cultural diplomacy by a wide-ranging group of practitioners and scholars under the leadership of the North America Cultural Diplomacy Initiative (NACDI). As Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at Queen's (FAS), I am keenly aware of the urgent need to engage in exchanges of the kind Kanonhsyonne Janice Hill outlines in her opening remarks.

First, I would like to acknowledge that Queen's University sits on the territories of the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabe peoples. I am grateful to be able to live, work, study, learn and teach on these lands, and I extend my land acknowledgement through the personalized, detailed acknowledgements that our students, faculty and staff offer every day, both on these lands and beyond.

What we did not know when we created this land acknowledgment for our faculty was that "beyond" would mean digital, and that in 2020, due to the pandemic, engaging with our communities would be done, for the most part, remotely. Yet, while the virtual nature of this summit has illuminated possibilities for participation in the digital space, we have yet to successfully guarantee the broad access to bandwidth and technology necessary to equitably facilitate learning and knowledge online.

This pandemic has also challenged how we communicate by more deeply exposing and reinforcing other, yet related, fault lines and systems of oppression. Countless communities have been forced to finally reckon with cultures and systems that contribute to white supremacy and the ongoing systemic oppression of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour. My community, the FAS, is no exception. As Queen's largest faculty, we are committed to the guiding principles of diversity and inclusion, including antiracism, decolonization, and Indigenous resurgence. These immediate concerns underscore the importance of diplomacy in fostering positive dialogue around the definition and framing of the most pressing local and global issues we face.

This report, which invites us to critically engage with the assumptions underpinning our

relationships to each other and where we stand – both intellectually and physically – further aligns with the vision expressed in Queen's new Strategic Plan; namely to articulate a global purpose for the university. As Principal Deane recently wrote: "we need deliberately to reconsider and renegotiate our relationship with the world beyond Queen's. That world includes Canada as constituted in the third decade of the Twenty-First Century, our community locally as well as globally defined, and the environment on which all of those things depend." For the FAS, this commitment includes engaging our community in globalization, both at home and abroad, notably by supporting international, interdisciplinary research projects, such as this one, that diversify our curriculum and environment.

In this sense, Queen's shares a close affinity with the values and goals of NACDI, our co-host, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the institutions participating in this summit, including the USC Center on Public Diplomacy and the Universidad Iberoamericana. I am excited by these partnerships, as I am by the collaborations and intersections between academics and practitioners signaled by our partnerships with Global Affairs Canada, the Bloor Street Culture Corridor and the International Council of Museums Canada in advancing this important research initiative.

I am therefore delighted to share this report with you – to advance intercultural dialogue, scholarship, and practice around a Cultural Relations approach to diplomacy. In the current global situation, the critical importance of a Cultural Relations approach to diplomacy cannot be overstated. We need to focus on developing personal and intercultural relationships by advancing diplomacy as an interpersonal stance facilitated by cultural and non-governmental organizations, and by prioritizing a long-term perspective over short term interests. Simply put, we need to bring culture into diplomatic dialogue and recognize the importance of engaging educational and cultural institutions, and cultural perspectives, in diplomacy.

I welcome the individual and collective assessments, insights and recommendations of the working group that generated the intense discussion informing this report and I commend the entire team that organized this summit. I am grateful to all of you for the important work that you are doing to advance cultural diplomacy at this critical juncture in time and in the global context. ●

# JOSH BASSECHES

***• Director & CEO,***
***Royal Ontario Museum***



**ON** behalf of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), I am pleased to share with you this report, which bears witness to the research summit, *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice*. Through a vital, critical approach to cultural diplomacy, this path-breaking event challenges our understanding of both culture and diplomacy. We live in complex times and the summit's deliberations help to bring our understanding of global engagement into the twenty-first century.

I am particularly pleased that the ROM was able to co-host this summit together with our friends at Queen's University and in partnership with the USC Center on Public Diplomacy and the Universidad Iberoamericana. Our collaborative efforts have created a true North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative. This summit was one outcome of a Partnership Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and I am delighted to acknowledge the support NACDI has received from this agency. I would also like to acknowledge other partner organizations and thank them for their commitment to this important work: the Bloor Street Culture Corridor, Global Affairs Canada, and the International Council of Museums Canada (ICOM Canada).

The ROM is Canada's largest museum with a singular collection profile across art, culture and nature, including 13 million artworks, cultural objects and natural history specimens. It sits on the ancestral lands of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Anishinabek Nation, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, since time immemorial. It is Canada's most visited museum and one of the most visited in North America; a place we hope to return to soon as we emerge from the pandemic. Significantly, we are also Canada's global museum, which is reflected in our collections, our partnerships and networks, and our outlook on the world. Active in dozens of countries around the globe, the ROM, its activities and its mission are inherently global.

Yet, at the same time, our commitment is also local. We are located in one of the world's most diverse major cities, Toronto. The diversity of our audiences and the way we approach our engagement with them inform everything we do. At the same time, acknowledging the Museum's colonial roots, and in full commitment to advancing equity and inclusion, both internally and externally, the ROM is dedicated to becoming ever more relevant in and central to people's lives and to being a hub for the global community in which we are embedded.

It is at the intersection of the local and the global that I see the profound impact museums can have on the ways we become ever more aware of and competent in dealing with our world. In this sense, the museum can also emerge as a diplomatic actor on the global stage. With collections and activities spanning the globe, the ROM is committed to advancing thought and practicing leadership in cultural diplomacy and in establishing an integral role for museums within this sphere. It is the Museum's mission to transform people's lives, to jointly shape the future, thereby also carving out a role for the Museum in addressing global challenges, such as systemic racism, reconciliation and climate change. This work demands global action, new alliances and bold approaches. The themes of the research project, the summit and this report speak to and amplify our work in these vital fields of engagement.

I would like to close by thanking the team that organized the summit for their excellent and hard work. And I thank the audience and working group members for their engaged participation, contributions to this report and devotion to advancing the endeavour that is cultural diplomacy.


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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**IN** September 2020, the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative (NACDI) launched its first research summit, *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice*. Hosted jointly by Queen's University and the Royal Ontario Museum, the summit was held virtually on September 24 and 25. This report documents the experience of the summit with the intent of making the conversation and insights generated widely available to practitioners and scholars in order to reframe current discussion and to stimulate conversation going forward, with the goal of establishing Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice.

*Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice* is the first of three research summits taking place across North America that form the larger project entitled *The Cultural Relations Approach to Diplomacy: Practice, Players, Policy.* Bringing together academics and practitioners from both sides of the culture/diplomacy divide to consider the potential of a Cultural Relations approach to diplomatic activity broadly understood, the series aims to reframe current discussion around the relationship of "the cultural" to diplomacy in the study and practice of global relations. This first summit's focus on *practice* feeds into the second summit's consideration of the globe's *players*, which informs the third summit's interest in the development of effective *policy* responses. The summits are meant to facilitate the development of discussion over time through a sequence of exchanges that bring emerging lines of inquiry forward for consideration, and to serve as a focal point for networking among partners in charting directions for further research, advocacy and policy development.

The first summit was comprised of a public panel and three work-

shop sessions taking place over the span of two days. The public panel was titled *Beyond Projection: Towards a Critical Cultural Diplomacy*. It was chaired by Dr. Jian (Jay) Wang, the director of the University of Southern California's Center on Public Diplomacy. Panelists representing a range of constituencies and perspectives included: Jolene Rickard, History of Art and Visual Studies, Cornell University; Pablo Raphael de Madrid, Director General of Cultural Promotion and Festivals, Secretary of Culture, Mexico; Nora Rahimian, creative consultant and co-founder, #CultureFix; and Josh Basseches, Director & CEO, Royal Ontario Museum. The panelists were asked to consider diplomacy as a set of behaviours, dispositions and attitudes within a broader spectrum of cultural relations and to critically imagine a "new cultural diplomacy." In so doing, panelists addressed the question of whether non-state actors, including non-governmental (NGOs) and non-profit organizations (NPOs), cultural institutions and activist groups, can be considered the new diplomats of the twenty-first century. Additionally, the panelists discussed whether players in the new networked environment can come together to address global challenges and conduct more effective transcultural relations.

The three workshop sessions, played out as chapters in this report, were designed to foster dialogic, generative discussions amongst the workshop participants. Each session included two moderators and approximately forty participants. Other summit attendees formed a broader audience of up to two hundred who watched these sessions and engaged with the workshop group through questions and comments. The intent was to create a hothouse environment conducive to catalyzing the collective expertise and experience of academics and practitioners in order to drive development of a critical field at the conjunction of culture and diplomacy, and at the same time to fulfil participants' interest in informing and vitalizing their own practices and research areas, thereby feeding back into the theories, methodologies and practices of the broader constituencies they represent. The three sessions were titled: "The 'Culture' in Cultural Diplomacy"; "Beyond State Centrism: Addressing the Limits of Diplomacy"; and "The Cultural Relations Approach to Network Diplomacy."

The summit saw wide international engagement and included participants from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, United Kingdom, and the United States. The core group of invited workshop participants reflected a diverse circle of actors engaged in or with expertise on Cultural Diplomacy, including academic researchers, personnel from intergovernmental network organizations, private philanthropies and foreign ministries, private cultural consultants, artists, and other cultural producers. Each of these participants provided a position statement on Cultural Diplomacy in advance, demonstrating the range of perspectives in the field. These statements are included in the appendix of this report.

The three workshop sessions of *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice* generated conversation that led to a series of significant recommendations. These recommendations are the main outcome of the summit. Participants called for a fresh approach to Cultural Diplomacy and for the topic to be reframed as a critical practice in light of new perspectives and a broader range of participants. Furthermore, the

## THE 2020 SUMMIT

prompted participants to share their experiences with the goals of provoking new insights, advancing diverse perspectives on Cultural Diplomacy, inspiring other participants, establishing new networks across sectors and disciplines, and more broadly, foregrounding challenges to Western epistemic dominance in both the study and practice of Cultural Diplomacy. Specifically, the goals of the 2020 summit were to:

1. Launch the research project, *The Cultural Relations Approach to Cultural Diplomacy: Practice, Players, Policy*, by initiating the first in a series of three summits (2020 to 2022);
2. Bring together academics and practitioners from multiple vantage points on both sides of the culture/diplomacy divide;
3. Generate a series of recommendations to guide future study of and engagement in Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice.

discussions signalled avenues for future examination. The three summit workshop sessions and their recommendations are addressed in-depth in subsequent chapters of this report. The report also contains an introductory essay by Jeffrey Brison and Lynda Jessup, which addresses the larger project and situates the summit discussions in relation to the field. Our interest lies in tapping the potential of a critical Cultural Diplomacy to connect North America globally. To this end, the summit discussions led to the following recommendations:

- **Open the discussion** of Cultural Diplomacy to contestation by advancing a critically active research agenda that brings together the insights of academics and practitioners on the diplomatic side with their counterparts in the cultural disciplines to embrace diverse understandings of how "culture" operates "diplomatically" and, in so doing, move discussion beyond the singular perspective of Cultural Diplomacy as a state-based practice.

- **Broaden the historical scope** of analysis to encompass historically and culturally specific examples of Cultural Diplomacy that problematize any singular or monolithic understanding of the practice, thus productively complicating analysis and opening up consideration of global Cultural Relations as a transhistorical activity.

- **Challenge Eurocentric understandings** of diplomacy to contend with the reality of colonialism; first and foremost, by understanding that the planet is more than a set of states in a universalizing international community, but rather a place of many epistemic worlds.

- **Question privilege** and challenge the assumption that diplomacy in the global networked environment is necessarily an emancipatory and democratizing practice. At base, this entails questioning the privilege accorded to Western knowledge systems that perpetuate colonialism and colonialist relations, systemic racism and differentials of power.

• **Consider structures of governance** that facilitate the role of cultural practitioners in fostering positive Cultural Relations, notably by challenging asymmetries of power within the nation-state and global civil society that implicate cultural practitioners in policy agendas they did not necessarily help shape and that may be inimical to their values and interests.

• **Recognize the myth of culture's neutrality** by considering how the concept of culture itself is implicated in broader fields of power and its mobilization, and by more deeply understanding the instrumentality of practitioners' perceptions of culture as neutral.

• **Use the tools at hand to advance critical study and practice**. It is necessary to couple Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Relations and to deepen discussion at their confluence, recognizing that the diplomatic and cultural activities encompassed by these terms operate within larger fields of exchange and negotiation that politically implicate state-centric actors, cultural practitioners and academics.

• **Work to facilitate a means rather than an end** by focusing on the process and not on the goals of network action, notably by giving precedence to long-term horizons and organic relationship-building over immediate interests and short-term deliverables.

• **Ground discussion in self-reflexivity** as a foundational principal in the study and practice of global relations, particularly over issues of power.

• **Enact interactive problem framing** by working across cultural and epistemic boundaries to facilitate alternative epistemic entry points into the hegemonic study and practice of diplomatic action that enable a rereading of "success" as something other than the achievement of apparent solutions to problems, hegemonically defined.

• **Engage the past through a multi-epistemic lens** by mobilizing the insights provided by historically specific case studies to challenge the Western orthodoxy that diplomatic action necessarily exists only in the realm of formal interstate relations.

Looking ahead, we hope to build on these recommendations and initiate new conversations with the next summit in 2021. This second summit will address *Players* and will be hosted by the Center on Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. In 2022 the third summit on *Policy* will be held at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City.

The 2020 summit was organized by NACDI team members from across North America, who worked with seven Research Fellows. The organizing team would like to extend sincere thanks to the Research Fellows who supported the summit organization. Most importantly, the organizing team would like to thank the participants for their enthusiastic engagement and contributions, which were vital to the success of the event.

We hope this report serves to document the knowledge generated by the summit, and more so, that it may spur further conversation, insights and research on Cultural Diplomacy. ●

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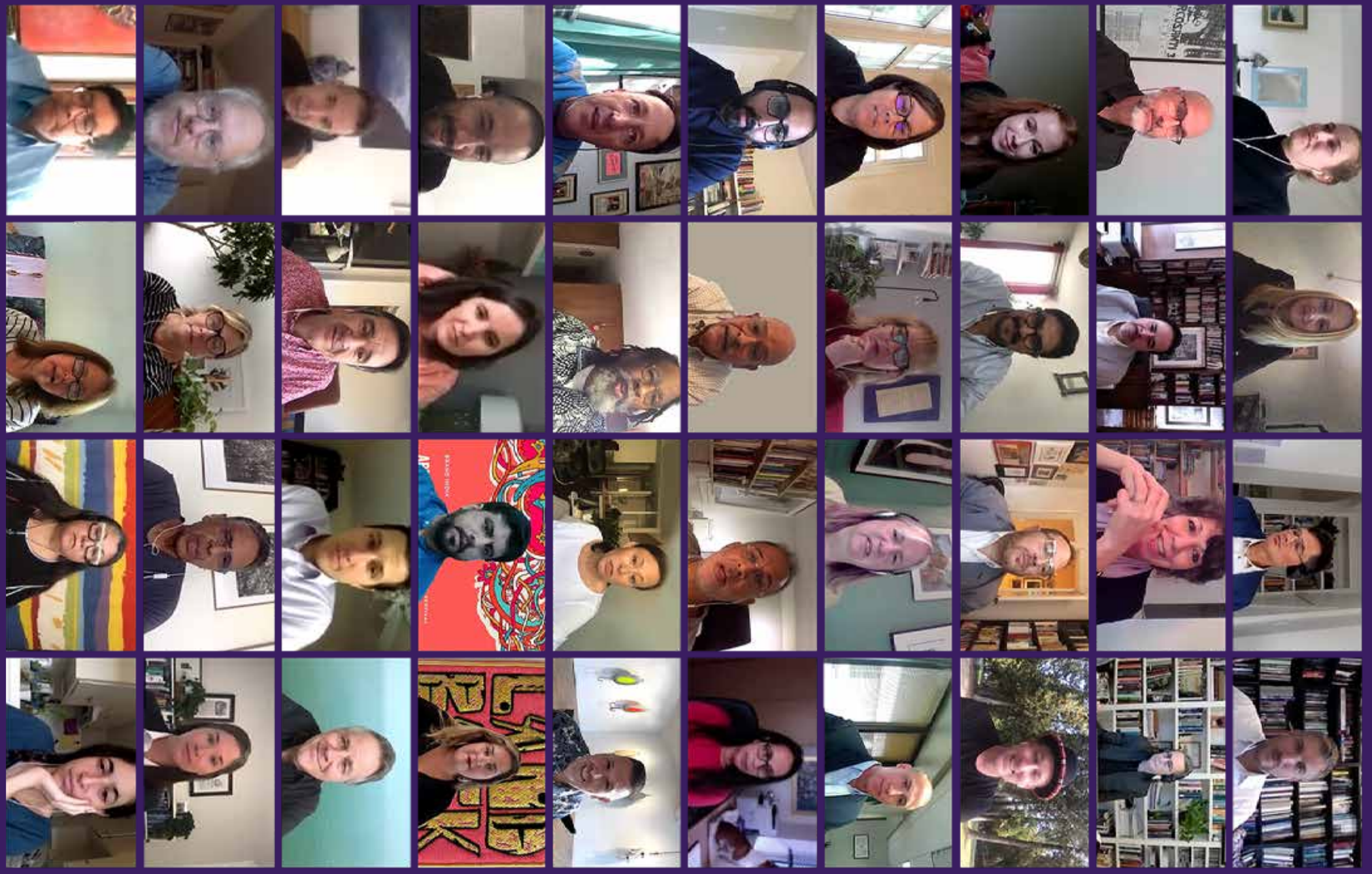


# THE SUMMIT

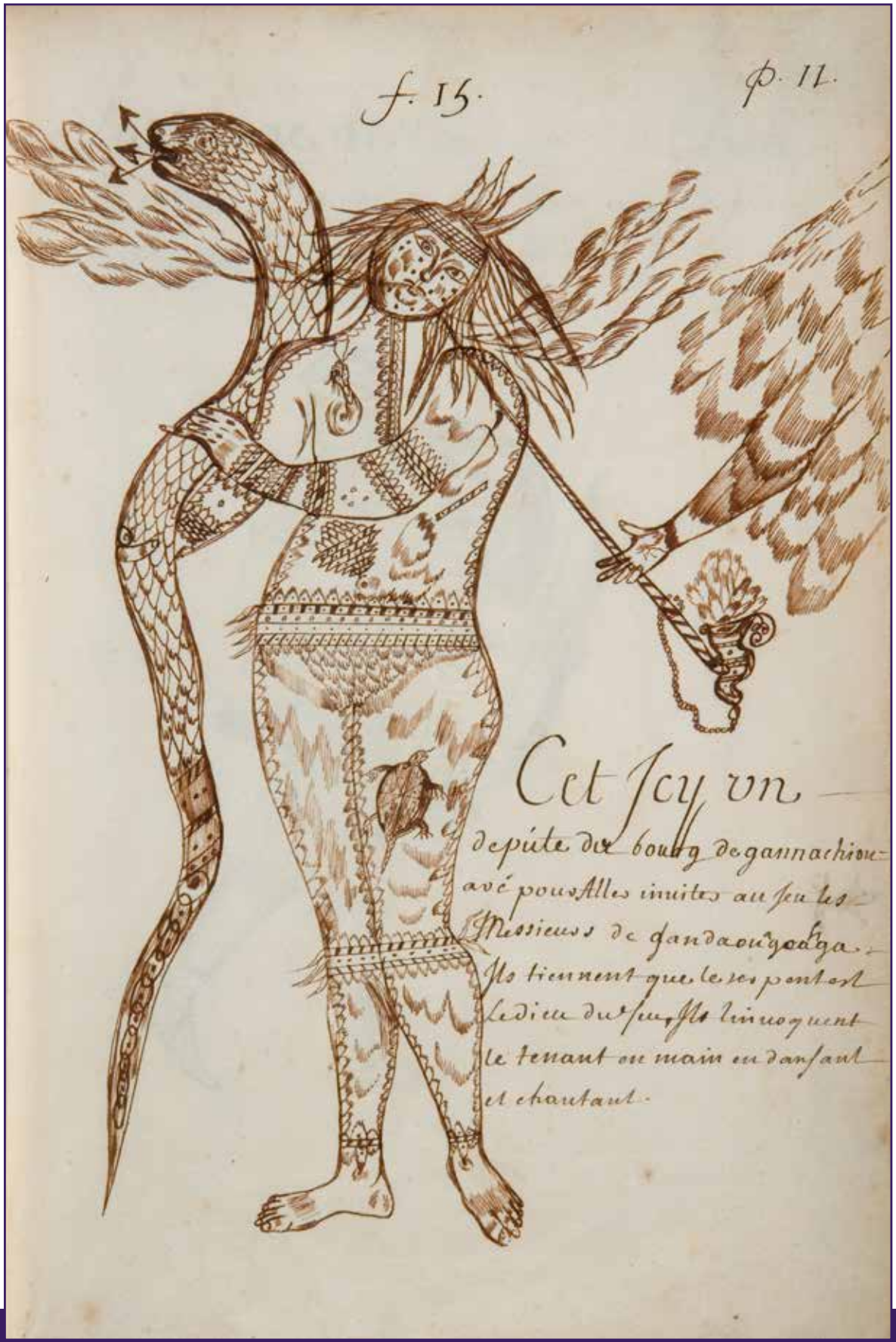
# TOWARD CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS CRITICAL PRACTICE

**BY** JEFFREY BRISON and LYNDA JESSUP



## INTRODUCTION: THE EMISSARY FROM GANNACHIOUAVÉ AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

In an article published three years ago in the *International Journal of Cultural Policy,* César Villanueva Rivas (2018) argues for the value of what he calls a cosmopolitan constructivist approach to the practice of Cultural Diplomacy. A scholar of International Relations based in Mexico City, Villanueva opens his argument with discussion of Bartolomé de las Casas, a sixteenth-century Spanish priest who travelled from Europe as part of the Christian mission to the Americas. Reasoning from a broad conceptual basis, Villanueva uses de las Casas as a touchstone to advance his case for the value of a cosmopolitan vision in advancing diplomatic action. De las Casas, he explains, "was not a cultural diplomat in the strict sense of the word. However, for his profound observations on the lives in the Americas, de las Casas resembled a modern one. As a priest, he was an observer and later a critic of the methods the Spanish employed in their Conquest of the New World back in the 16th century." Advocating for the inclusion of Indigenous people in the European Christian community, de las Casas worked to mediate the relationship between the two worlds based on reasoned understanding and an ethical appreciation of others. In this sense, Villanueva asserts, "Bartolomé de las Casas *practiced* as a 'cultural attaché' of Spain, embracing the Otherness of the Indigenous peoples of America with an open mind, eager to understand their circumstances and dilemmas without surrendering his own religious identity" (681, emphasis in original).

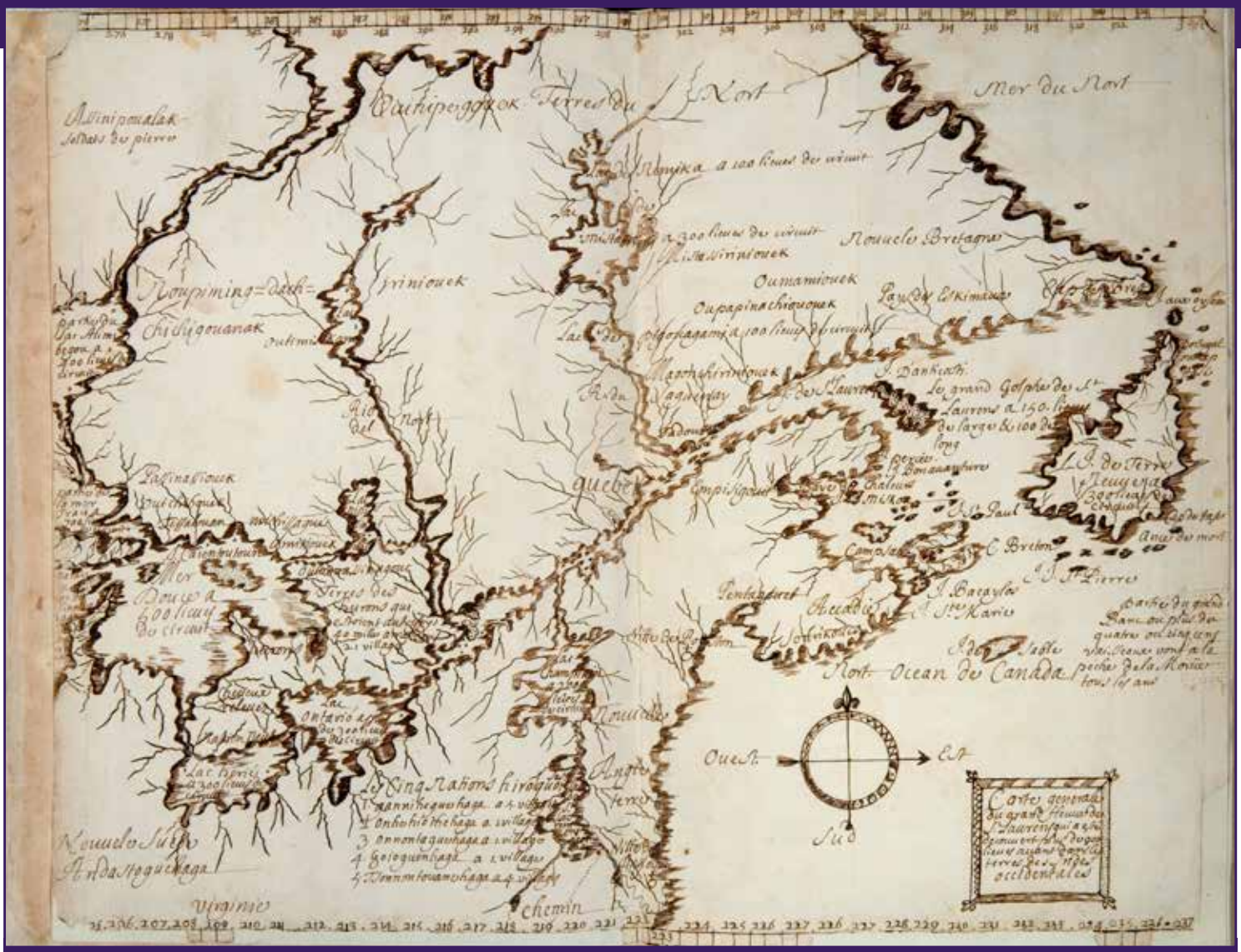



A drawing attributed to Jesuit missionary Louis Nicolas. The caption reads, "This is a representative sent by the village of Gannachiou-aé to invite the gentlemen of Gandaouahoahga to a game," *Codex Canadensis*, c. 1700, Ink on Paper, Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa OK.

We raise Villanueva's reference to a historical figure in the context of this introductory essay because, like Villanueva, we see value in looking to the past for precedents in thinking about the practice of cultural diplomacy in the current global era. The location of this summit's co-hosts in the cities of Toronto and Kingston suggests an immediate example in the regard. It calls up a page from the *Codex Canadensis*, a late seventeenth-century manuscript attributed to French Jesuit missionary Louis Nicolas, who, like de las Casas, travelled from Europe to advance the Christian mission, although in this instance, in northern North America. The Codex is a foundational document in early Canadian history, an album of illustrations believed to have accompanied Nicolas's *Histoire naturelle des Indes occidentales*. It is noted for its exquisite drawings depicting the Indigenous peoples of northeastern North America and the fauna and flora of New France in the seventeenth century (Gagnon 2011; De Asúa 2018, 4). The page, illustrated here, contains a brown-ink drawing of a person holding an enormous serpent and smoking a pipe. The figure faces the viewer, standing contrapposto, Nicolas's careful attention to the rendering of their tattoos and other personal adornments serving both to document the stranger's appearance and to animate the surface of the page with pattern. As much expressive and fantastical as it is documentary, the drawing is not only a picture of one of the area's inhabitants, but also an artifact of the cultural relationship that once existed between the French in North America and the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island.

A caption to the right of the figure is telling in this regard: "C'est icy un député du bourg de Gannachiouavé pour aller inviter au jeu les Messieurs de Gandaou[a]gaa[h]ga. Ils tiennent que le serpent est le dieu du jeu. Ils l'invoquent, le tenant en main en dansant et chantant. / This is an emissary sent by the village of Gannachiouavé on his way to invite the gentlemen of Gandaouaghaga to a game. They believe that the snake is the god of the game. They invoke the god by holding the snake in their hands while dancing and singing." The caption identifies the figure with Gannachiouavé, located on the north shore of Lake Ontario (as are the present-day cities of Toronto and Kingston), where at the time of Nicolas, the Haudenosaunee had recently established themselves.[1] To be more precise, the emissary is identified with a diplomatic mission on behalf of the village to those in the Haudenosaunee settlement of Gandaouagué, near the recently established Jesuit Mission of Saint-Pierre located in the northeastern part of what is now known as the United States (Gagnon 2011, 20–22). Their intention was to invite the men of the village to participate in a cultural event. The emissary was not a diplomat in the modern sense, but in the same way that Bartolomé de las Casas practiced as a cultural attaché of the Spanish, the envoy might best be described as a cultural attaché of Gannachiouavé, who speaks today to the foundational role that cultural relations played in diplomatic activity at the time.

A moment of intercultural understand-




A drawing attributed to Jesuit missionary Louis Nicolas. The caption reads, "General map of the great St Lawrence River, which has been explored more than 900 leagues inland in the West Indies," *Codex Canadensis*, c. 1700, Ink on Paper,
Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa OK

ing might be imagined in the historical encounter between artist and sitter that the page represents but for Nicolas's treatment of the emissary as subject matter for a natural history – a cultural expression of the Jesuit missionary agenda that inherently precluded appreciation of the way of life represented by the Haudenosaunee. The relations the Jesuits cultivated with Indigenous Peoples globally were intended to advance the Society's primary goal of proselytization. Cross-cultural intimacy was directed to it, Steven Harris (2005) explains: "long-term residency, care in learning languages, attention to customs, and the desire to win the trust and confidence of Indigenous peoples – these were the distinguishing characteristics of the Society's mission strategy" that were conducive to the appropriation of natural knowledge and the production of natural histories for consumption by the Christian community

at home (76).[2] Jesuit overseas science entailed blanket rejection of Indigenous spiritual and ritual practices associated with the mobilization of natural knowledge and of Indigenous intelligence systems generally; invariably, they were filtered by the Jesuits' conceptual separation of "natural" from "supernatural" and their self-identity as guardians of Catholicism and of the Christian God as site of the supernatural (Harris 2005; O'Malley, Bailey, Harris & Kennedy, 1999). To Nicolas, the emissary from Gannachiouavé, like Indigenous people globally, was a pagan in the community of Christendom, which did not perceive the Haudenosaunee in an autonomous reality (Deslandres 1999; see also Gagnon 2011, 74–75).

As significant in this context as the nature of Nicolas's relationship with his subject is the attention his rendering draws to the international relations of Indigenous Peoples. In this instance, the emissary from Gannachiouavé evinces the cultural diplomacy animating the political alliance of the Haudenosaunee, a historically powerful confederacy resident in northeast North America known to the French as the Iroquois League, which in the late seventeenth century consisted of five nations: the Kanien'kehá:ka, Tsonontowane'á:ka, Ononta'kahá:ka, Oneniote'á:ka, and Kahoniokwenhá:ka. Anishinaabe scholar Hayden King points out that by this time the Indigenous diplomatic canon was millennia old, and thus it should not be surprising that the Indigenous approach to international relations also found expression in the earliest treaties between Indigenous Peoples and Europeans. It informed such foundational accords as Kaswentha – the Two Row Wampum Treaty the Kanien'kehá:ka entered into early in the seventeenth century with the influx of Europeans to their lands in eastern Haudenosaunee territory. The Two Row treaty documents their perception of an ongoing relationship between Indigenous Peoples and newcomers in terms of mutual autonomy and non-interference based on acceptance of the parties' distinct ways of life (Lyons 1986 in King 2019; Parmenter 2013). "Relationships within Indigenous thought are paramount," Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson explains. Accordingly, understanding the Indigenous tradition of "place-based internationalism," she writes,

*Even the briefest survey of Indigenous diplomacies demonstrates a "radically divergent approach to the international" than that arising from the sovereignty-based normativity of the Westphalian state system*

> *needs to start with our intelligence systems, or what Dene scholar Glen Sean Coulthard calls 'grounded normativity' – the systems of ethics that are continuously generated by a relationship with a particular place, with land, through the Indigenous processes and knowledges that make up Indigenous life. … Grounded normativity generates nations as networks of complex, layered, multidimensional, intimate relationships with human and non-human beings. Our societies work very well when those relationships are balanced.*[3] *(Simpson 2016, 22–23)*

King (2019), like Simpson and Coulthard, is emphatic: even the briefest survey of Indigenous diplomacies demonstrates a "radically divergent approach to the international" than that arising from the sovereignty-based normativity of the Westphalian state system emergent at the time of the *Codex*'s creation (see also Simpson 2008, 2016, 2017; Coulthard & Simpson 2016; Osiander 2001).

So, we ask with Villanueva Rivas: What can we learn from these historical actors today? In this introduction, we argue that a productive approach to cultural diplomacy should look to the example of the emissary from Gannachiouavé, who models diplomatic activity not as a professional concern but as an interpersonal stance.[4] The emissary engaged in diplomacy as a social practice, one aimed at building positive relations and mitigating conflict using culture as a medium. With the emissary as a touchstone for the discussion below, we advocate for increased attention to this Cultural Relations approach, which is identified today with people-to-people relations, reciprocity and a long-term perspective. This approach is commonplace to a range of non-state actors in the cultural sphere, including arts organizations and advocacy groups, cultural institutions and practitioner associations, activist networks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society organizations, who bring a critically informed understanding of culture to their activities. They do so perhaps to the same degree that they remain largely uncritical of their concomitant engagement in the diplomatic field, which for its part brings a relatively unproblematized understanding of culture to the practice and study of International Relations (Reus-Smit 2018, 2019). With this situation as a focus, we argue for the potential to energize practice, research and advocacy at the convergence of culture and diplomacy. Our contention is that greater reflexivity is needed to radicalize analysis of the Eurocentric epistemic constraints currently exercised by the statist tradition, which hinders the vitalization of global knowledge democracy and the diplomacy-driven policy development it brings to the fore.

In advancing this argument, we are writing as founding members of the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative (NACDI),[5] an informal network of scholars and practitioners ranging across the cultural, international relations and policy fields who share an interest in reframing current debates around culture and diplo-

macy, specifically, their relationship to one another in the study and practice of global relations. In what follows, we outline areas where new thinking might be harnessed to identify some of the limitations on more expansive considerations of Cultural Diplomacy and to help spark the exchanges necessary to generate new languages, new methods, and new conceptual resources to advance this rethinking. Drawing insight from Indigenous, unsettling and decentring theory, we open this essay with a discussion of the *Codex Canadensis* to signal the foundational role such an engagement offers to more wide-angled considerations. Writing of the need for such engagement on the part of the Euro-American academy more broadly, Sami scholar Rauna Kuokkanen (2007) identifies its refusal to do so with "the ongoing exclusion of other than dominant Western epistemic and intellectual traditions." Kuokkanen describes the perpetuation of this situation as "sanctioned epistemic ignorance"; Sankaran Krishna calls it, "a systemic politics of forgetting, a willful amnesia"; Métis/Otipemisiwak scholar Zoe Todd calls it colonialism (2007, 4; 2001, 401, quoted in Zvobgo & Loken 2020; 2016, 4, respectively).

In this introductory essay, we critically reflect on the potential of Cultural Diplomacy in relation to a currently dominant and self-referential body of Euro-American scholarship. We do so mindful of the observation that "the 'minority' populations of Euro-American societies, populations that have historically been underrepresented in this Euro-American academy are the majority of the world's population" (Darian-Smith & McCarty 2017, 227). We suggest three moves toward establishing this enactment as an ongoing process: first, including in the Euro-American academy's consideration of Cultural Diplomacy thinking generated by the disciplines and corresponding fields of practice that actively foreground critical approaches to understandings of culture; second, interrogating state-centrism and the centrality of nation-state-based understandings of culture in the study and practice of Cultural Diplomacy and of global relations more broadly; and third, folding insights gained from these moves back into critical reflections on the implications of culture's role in Cultural Diplomacy as an expression of Eurocentric dualist constructions of nature and culture that reproduce a Western episteme and reassert universalizing claims that deny other ways of knowing and relating to the world (Sundberg 2014). Our interest lies in tapping the potential of a critical Cultural Diplomacy to connect North America globally, understanding that North America is, properly speaking, Turtle Island – not a set of states in a universalizing international community but the site of many epistemic worlds.[6]

## PUTTING CULTURE INTO DIPLOMACY

Mitigating global cultural crises is one of the most fundamental societal challenges of our times. Even a cursory glance at the day's events provides ample evidence that we are living in an increasingly adversarial moment (Mounk 2018; Inglehart & Norris 2016) – a world of global terrorism and refugee crises, culture wars and pandemic politics, coloniality and inequality, climate change and cultural insecurity. And, while mitigating crises through traditional diplomatic channels remains an urgent focus of governments (UNESCO 2005), efforts are flagging. They are flagging not only because the re-emergent, polarizing forces of racism, xenophobia and extremism are "wicked problems" – complex issues that appear "incomprehensible and resistant to solution" (Rittel & Webber 1973; Head & Alford 2013) – but also because the practice of diplomacy itself has shifted. The building and management of global relations is no longer the exclusive domain of a privileged "club" of nation-states as it was in the Cold War era, a club that set the agenda, dictated the policies, picked the players and made the rules of the "rules-based" international order (Heine 2013). The club, and the system they so skillfully crafted at Dumbarton Oaks and in Yalta in the closing days of the Second World War, and which they finalized in San Francisco with the formation of the United Nations at War's end, has been superseded.

Put another way, we have moved past the era of exclusively "international," state-based diplomacy that was institutionalized in 1961 with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. Today, diplomacy takes place in a technologically and socially diverse "networked" environment, based on horizontal communication, dialogue and multidirectional flows of information (Flew & Hartig 2014; McPherson & McGillivray 2017; Cull 2009). Scholars of International Relations speak of a Cold War-Global Era paradigm shift, pointing out that in this global era of network diplomacy states vie for authority with non-state actors such as NGOs, transnational institutions, philanthropists and foundations, non-profit organizations and activist groups – the so-called "new" diplomats (Kelley 2010 and 2014; Constantinou, Cornago, & McConnell 2016; Rosenau 2003; Melissen 2005). In effect, Diplomacy based in state-centred practices and protocols has given way to diplomacy as an interpersonal stance – as a set of behaviours, orientations and attitudes within a broader spectrum of cultural relations. The prohibition on tactile, corporeal interaction threatened by the 2020 global pandemic – that is, on face-to-face encounters in a don't-touch-your-face environment (Boehm 2020; Federal Foreign Office 2020) – has made this apparent. The old-school exclusivity of traditional diplomatic practice is already in the rear-view mirror, as much a victim of the now decades-old Global Era rise of information communication technologies as it is of changes in the post-Cold War international environment (Tyler, Matthews, & Brockhurst 2017; Kelley 2010; Bové 2013).

How this "new" diplomacy can tackle

the current sustained moment of global crisis prompts the question at the heart of the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative: What political work is needed to spur the behavioural changes necessary to build positive relations and mitigate conflict? To answer this question, we draw attention to the diplomatic work of institutions, policymakers and professionals in the field of Cultural Relations. In the current networked environment, we suggest that there is value in looking more closely at an approach to diplomacy identified not with the immediate, short term interests of states and their foreign policy goals but rather with people-to-people relations, non-governmentalism and a long-term outlook (Rose 2017; Melissen 2005; Gillespie, O'Loughlin, Nieto McAvoy & Berneaud-Kötz 2018). With a Janus face that looks for lessons from the past in thinking about the future, we ask how the Cultural Relations approach to diplomacy works today, and through which agents, institutions, organizations, artforms and artifacts. In doing so, we argue for the potential of Cultural Diplomacy not merely as part of the "soft power" toolkit of nation-states (Nye 2004; Van Ham 2010) but also as a multidirectional and activist practice that encompasses a broad range of non-state actors seeking to imagine counterhegemonic possibilities and inclusive futures.

By foregrounding Cultural Diplomacy in terms of its potential we want to promote engagement that is provocative rather than prescriptive – that can be multidirectional and speculative, at once productive and contested, a means rather than an end – and that begins by cultivating conditions conducive to energizing current discussion. As a first step, we suggest an approach aimed at establishing Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice, thereby responding to calls for analyses of cultural diplomacy and for bridging gaps between knowledge creators, bearers and users. Our primary interest involves taking Cultural Diplomacy from an affirmative activity mobilizing a relatively unproblematized "culture" to a reflexive practice that engages fully with the scholarship and experience-based knowledge generated by those trained in what Australian scholar David Carter (2015) refers to as "critical culture." This also constitutes a response to increasing calls for analyses of Cultural Diplomacy informed by

*Including the critical perspective of the cultural disciplines advances what has been called the "epistemological soul searching" triggered by the disintegration of diplomacy as the Western world has conceived it*

the methodologies and approaches of the Euro-American academy's "cultural disciplines" – for the inclusion of such fields in the Creative Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences as History, Philosophy, Art History, Communications Studies, Cultural Sociology, Cultural Geography, Cultural Studies and the Fine Arts in a scholarly literature dominated to date by Political Science, Policy Studies and International Relations (Gilboa 2008; Ang, Isar & Mar 2015; Zaharna 2012; Carter 2015, Constantinou, Cornago & McConnell 2016; Clarke 2016, 2020).

As important as attending to calls for analyses of Cultural Diplomacy by deepening the critical potential of current discussion is a similarly expanded response to the equally urgent call to bridge the gap between "academics" and "practitioners" (EUNIC 2016). Taking our argument for inclusion of "critical culture" one step further, we propose radically rethinking these categories as the field understands them. Currently, those in the field understand Cultural Diplomacy in terms of *diplomatic* practice, and so its academics are those in Political Science, Policy Studies, International Relations and Diplomatic Studies, and its practitioners are diplomats, policymakers, politicians and foreign ministry officials. We advocate for a radical expansion of the "academic" category beyond those working in disciplines traditionally engaged in Cultural Diplomacy research, and of "practitioners" beyond those identified with the diplomatic field to encompass academics and practitioners on the *cultural* side of Cultural Diplomacy – that is, artists, educators, researchers, administrators, activists, entrepreneurs, institutions, NGOs, donors and others active in the cultural sphere. The inclusion of practitioners and scholars from the cultural fields not only enables their engagement with one another but more importantly, brings those on the *cultural* side into conversation with academics and practitioners on the *diplomatic* side.

Specifically, we argue for the inclusion of the critical perspective of the cultural disciplines to advance what has been called the "epistemological soul searching" triggered by the disintegration of diplomacy as the Western world has conceived it (Kelley 2010; Rose 2017). This entails a rigorous interrogation of diplomacy as a practice based in Western liberal constructions of the self and the world. Working from the premise that this diplomacy is epistemically bounded, we want to use the interrogation to deepen self-reflexivity as a relational practice. We are cognizant that openness to epistemic pluralism – to different ways of being in and knowing the world – is contingent upon such a stance (Zaharna 2012; Lipsitz 2010; Kuokkanen 2007; Gori 1978).[7] We see this as a way to advance Cultural Diplomacy as a critical activity informed by practitioners' ongoing examinations of their own subject positions – the beliefs and assumptions they bring to bear in social interaction – and following Gayatri Spivak's insistence on locating oneself by doing what she calls "homework," understanding how Eurocentric ways of seeing have been naturalized in and through institutional and geopolitical power relations. Spivak's call to do "homework" by examining the historical and material circumstances that inform one's

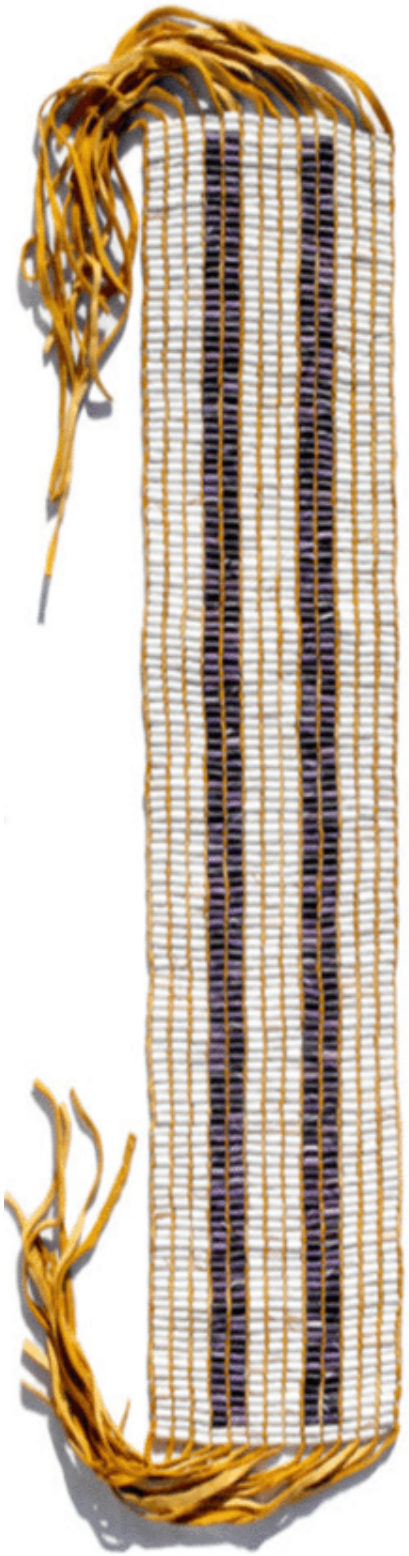
participation in the structures that foster sanctioned ignorance is an invocation to enact a process of unlearning the unself-consciousness that enables such privilege (Sundberg 2014, 39; Kuokkanen 2017; Spivak 1990).

The point in doing so is to engage academics and practitioners in a process of particularizing the intellectual basis of Western diplomacy, with the understanding that the development of a diplomacy that enables multi-epistemic engagement necessarily lies in locating the Western as partial and specific, in "marking as parochial what is otherwise naturalized as universal" (Sundberg 2014). It involves recognition of statist diplomacy as an expression of the global North's claim to epistemic universalism and of this universalist stance as predicated on the denial of other worldviews (Lim 2017; Todd 2016; Santos 2007, 2014; Mignolo 2011; Desolla 2005). More to the point, following Global Studies scholars Eve Darian-Smith and Philip C. McCarty (2017), working toward a more capacious "global knowledge" by decentring these universalist assumptions, "means rethinking our positions relative to other peoples, cultures, epistemologies, ontologies, values, institutions, political organizations, and religions that together speak to how people are relating and being in the world. 'We know what we know from where we stand,'" they remind us, quoting Cree and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach (2009, 7). "'We need to be honest about that.' … [We need an approach] that takes into account that a person's standpoint has numerous intersecting political, economic, social and cultural dimensions and arises from intersectional relations of class, race, ethnicity, gender, and religion that involve cumulative forms of power, oppression, and discrimination" (226; Ang 2008, 2020; Hall 1992; Williams 1958).

In this instance, the process of coming to know where we stand – of doing our "homework" to locate ourselves – is about deepening self-reflexivity as a relational practice by embracing "critical thinking" as a socially-engaged activity that takes Cultural Diplomacy as its object of analysis. We have to remember that "critical thinking" has never been a value-free activity that affords practitioners a position of neutrality from which to consider world matters. Advanced by the Euro-American academy as "a teachable method of self-directed reasoning," critical thinking involves such mental activities as "seeing both sides of an issue, being open to new evidence that disconfirms [one's] ideas, reasoning dispassionately, demanding that claims be backed by evidence, deducing and inferring conclusions from available facts, solving problems, and so forth" (Willingham 2007, 8; quoted in Steger & Wahlrab 2017, 146). Those who practice it seek not neutrality but rather objectivity, a position of detachment commonly described as "critical distance" from which to engage with a domain or disciplinary knowledge of the world that gives meaning to critical thinking in concrete social contexts. Because critical thinking is linked to its social consequences, it necessarily involves political and eth-

ical reflexivity as well as analysis. For its early practitioners, Manfred Steger and Amentahru Wahlrab point out, critical thinking was inseparable from ethico-political engagement with the existing social order: "Critical thinking involved a normative commitment to social justice along the reflective process of coming to rational decisions about world matters" (146–48, quotation 146).

Coming to know where we stand in taking up this engagement pushes us to remember that we also participate in what we critique (Kuokkanen 2007, xiv; Steger & Wahlrab 2017). By virtue of its engagement with the existing social order, critical thinking operates at the conjuncture of critical distance and critical intimacy, as do its practitioners. Whether we find our place in discussion of Cultural Diplomacy through disciplinary training on the cultural or diplomatic side of the culture/diplomacy divide, our disciplinary locations make us complicit in advancing the Euro-American academy's institutionalized production of knowledge; in other words, although we are not a cohesive group, "we all participate, in one way or another, in the business of ideological production" (Kuokkanen 2007) and the social arrangements to which it gives rise. "As an institution," Kuokkanen (2007) explains, "the academy supports and reproduces certain systems of thought and knowledge, and certain structures and conventions. … To a large extent, the academy remains founded on epistemological practices



Kaswentha, the Two Row Wampum Belt. The 1613 Two Row Treaty documents an ongoing relationship between Indigenous Peoples and newcomers in terms of mutual autonomy and non-interference based on acceptance of the parties' distinct ways of life.

and traditions that are selective and exclusionary and that are reflective of and reinscribed by the Enlightenment, colonialism, modernity and, in particular, liberalism. These traditions, discourses and practices," she adds, "have very little awareness of other epistemologies and ontologies and offer them heavily restricted space at best" (quotations, xv, 1 respectively; Santos 2014; Tickner 2016; Benabdallah, Murillo-Zamora & Adetula 2017; Gaudry & Lorenz 2018).

At this level of understanding, the traditions, discourses and practices of Cultural Diplomacy, and by extension, of Cultural Relations, cannot be reduced to those of the disciplines with which they are usually identified. They are a function more broadly of the academy as an institution, inclusive of the full range of disciplinary knowledge, and reproductive of the geopolitics of modern nation-state formation through which they are naturalized as universal. Jon Stratton and Ien Ang (1996) refer to the modern academic disciplines and the nation-state as successful exports of European modernity – "a moment of intersection between the hegemonic universalization of European ideas and practices and, in many cases, non-European local cultures" (380). In doing so, they articulate an observation that has been gaining prominence since the 1980s: the experience of nation-state formation on development of the modern academic disciplines has been formative. It has been so formative in fact that we now speak of the academy's disciplines as mired in "methodological nationalism," as if constituted through a state-centric perspective that posits nations as the taken-for-granted units of analysis and the world as composed of "territorially self-enclosed state-defined societies, economies, or cultures," such that the territorial state has reified the organizational basis of socio-spatial relations globally (Brenner 1999, 40; Amelia, Faist, Glick Schiller & Negriz 2012; Darian-Smith & McCarty 2017; Stone 2020).

*Bringing the cultural disciplines into conversation around Cultural Diplomacy serves to make cultural practitioners aware of their implication in the diplomatic field*

Bringing the cultural disciplines into conversation around Cultural Diplomacy serves to make cultural practitioners aware of their implication in the diplomatic field. It challenges them to do their "homework" by asking them to examine their role in supporting and reproducing Diplomacy as a practice based in liberal constructions of the self and the world. So, their inclusion broadens the range of par-

ticipants in this discussion of Diplomacy's epistemic boundedness. Alongside those trained in Political Science, Policy Studies, International Relations and Diplomatic Studies are those who locate their practice in a Cultural Relations approach, with its emphasis on people-to-people relations, reciprocity, non-governmentalism and a long-term outlook, and thus as removed, if not distinct, from those whose practice is identified with the immediate, short-term interest of states and their foreign policy goals. Our hope is that their new proximity to one another troubles discussion on at least two counts: first, that it foregrounds the myth of culture's neutrality; that is, the diplomatic field's perception of culture as a benign entity through which Cultural Relations practitioners advance long term goals seemingly independent of the strategic interests of the state (Jessup & Smith 2017; Albro 2015; Rose 2017; Gienow-Hecht & Donfried 2010). And second, that it makes apparent that cultural workers are always already involved in the politics of culture that underpin the building and management of global relations (Gibson 2007).

Something of a Trojan Horse, this attention to "the cultural" in diplomacy – to *cultural* relations, to *cultural* diplomacy and to the *cultural* boundedness of diplomacy itself – surreptitiously allows those trained as academics and practitioners in the cultural disciplines into a discussion in which they would otherwise be perceived as lacking authority by those already on the inside. Once inside, self-reflexivity challenges those on the cultural side to examine their taken-for-granted understandings and practices through a diplomatic lens, to recognize themselves as political actors and as such, collaborators with academics and practitioners on the diplomatic side in the "epistemological soul searching" with which Western statist diplomacy is faced. There may be resistance to the use, and perceived misuse, of such terms as "cultural relations," "cultural diplomacy" and "diplomacy" by academics and practitioners on both sides of the aisle – by those who claim authority to define and manage the diplomatic, as well as by those who see greater value in breaking new ground on other fronts than in tussling over terms with those who claim them. The terms can be seen instead as a necessary means through which to engage the two sides with one another, and together with the process of locating upper-case "Diplomacy" in the lower-case diplomatic field. We asked at the outset of this essay what political work is needed to spur the behavioural changes necessary to build positive relations and mitigate conflict. Now, at its conclusion, we suggest at least one task at hand by pointing out that, on a planet comprised of multiple epistemic worlds, the difficult process of coming to terms with this pluriversality has political implications for those currently holding epistemic authority. We would venture to say that the privileging of the Western episteme is itself a wicked problem, one that needs to be addressed. In this endeavour, the Cultural Relations approach is not recuperative; its potential lies not in providing a way out of the problem but in suggesting a way into a deeper understanding of it. It constitutes a first step;

a potentially productive intervention into current discussions of state-centric diplomacy and its place in the pluriversal world of diplomatic action.

## CONVERSATIONS TOWARD A CRITICAL PRACTICE

*Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice* is the first in a series of three research summits in a larger project, entitled *The Cultural Relations Approach to Diplomacy: Practice, Players, Policy.* Advancing our interest in reframing current discussion around the relationship of "the cultural" to diplomacy in the study and practice of global relations, it considers the Cultural Relations approach to diplomatic activity through the first of the three lenses suggested in the overall project's title – *practice* – which will feed into the second summit's consideration of the globe's *players*, which informs the third summit's interest in the potential they hold to vitalize an environment conducive to the development of effective *policy* responses. The three summits are meant to facilitate the development of discussion over time through a sequence of exchanges that bring emerging lines of inquiry forward for consideration, and to serve as a focal point for networking among partners in charting directions for further research, advocacy and policy development. The intention is to generate scholarship and practice that treats cultural diplomacy as a multidirectional, inclusive and potentially activist practice that encompasses a diverse range of actors and their networks. This first summit, *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice,* brings together academics and practitioners from both sides of the culture/diplomacy divide to consider the potential of a Cultural Relations approach to diplomatic activity broadly understood.

The larger conversation this summit initiates is planned to enact the three moves we set out at the opening of this essay in our discussion of Cultural Diplomacy's potential: first, including in discussion the disciplines and corresponding fields of practice that actively foreground critical approaches to culture; second, interrogating state-centrism and the centrality of nation-state-based understandings of culture in the study and practice of Cultural Diplomacy and of global relations more broadly; and third, folding insights gained from these moves back into critical reflection on the implications of culture's role in Cultural Diplomacy as an expression of Eurocentric dualist constructions of nature and culture that reproduce a Western epistemic universalism that denies other ways of knowing and being in the world. The summit is designed to generate the hothouse environment conducive to catalyzing the collective expertise and experience of academics and practitioners that will drive development of a critical field at the conjunction of culture and diplomacy, and at the same time, fulfil participants' interests in informing and vitalizing their own practices and research areas, thereby feeding back into the theories, methodologies and practices of the broader constituencies they represent.

For this reason, the emphasis in the three summits is on promoting critical dialogue and engagement that builds from

one session to the next within each summit, and from one summit to the next across the series. The first in the triad, *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice*, took place as a two-day virtual event consisting of a public panel and three sessions involving a working group of about forty members and a webinar audience that ranged over the two days from one to over two hundred participants. The session descriptions, which head the next three chapters of this report, are drawn directly from this introductory essay, and the close relationship between the two will enable readers to contextualize the observations and recommendations of the working group in the thinking and articulation that underpins the summit series' larger project. The working group members, chosen within constraints exercised by language, time zone, acquaintanceship and availability, were invited with a view to correspondences, combinations and contestations among academics and practitioners, both on either side of the culture/diplomacy aisle and across it. The idea is to begin charting the breadth of an expansive field by including a range of members in recognition that, although some of them might identify more strongly with one point in the conversation mapped over the three sessions than with others, as a group the participants could productively tag-team to drive the discussion forward. Including everyone in all three sessions was the key to catalyzing the development of the socio-critical space we are seeking to establish. To soften the ground further in this regard, we have included an appendix to this report that contains short position statements by the workshop members in which they read themselves into the summit and session descriptions – and which they shared with one another and the audience-participants in an acquaintanceship-building exercise prior to the summit.

*…the privileging of the Western episteme is itself a wicked problem*

We stated earlier in this essay that this summit's move to enact Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice is based on promoting engagement that is provocative rather than prescriptive – that can be multidirectional and speculative, at once productive and contested, a means rather than an end – and that begins by cultivating conditions conducive to energizing current and emergent discussion. Two moderators advanced this effort in each session by initiating conversation with

a few provocative comments designed to spark the group's engagement, judiciously guiding exchange through strategic interventions and feeding into the discussion the contributions and questions of the broader webinar audience of scholars, practitioners and participants who joined using chat and Q&A functions. Rather than attempt to comprehensively reproduce the workshops' exchanges in the full flow of conversations that were discursive, multidirectional and fragmented by the participants' forty different patterns of speech and thought, we have opted in the next three chapters for an approach that draws out and highlights salient points. In each section, these appear as bulleted points below the session description, each a synthesis that seeks to encapsulate moments of convergence and contestation in the group, and each followed by a selection of quotations from the workshop discussion that speaks to the point. The quotations do so relationally and so function both as an ensemble that plays out the lines of discussion, its overarching themes and strong undercurrents, and as articulations of individual positions (often reiterating those of others), whether consolidative or catalytic, argumentative or oppositional.

Constituting the afterlife of *Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice*, these points serve as recommendations for enacting an ongoing and expansive discussion based, as a first step, on decentring the dominant and self-referential body of Euro-American scholarship and experience-based knowledge that currently works against multi-epistemic engagement in diplomacy. Thus, the emphasis in this report is on takeaways. These are intended to enable a building through the summits of the critical space necessary to do this decentring, which involves working toward recognition and acceptance of autonomous worldviews *as such*, rather than trying to incorporate and subsume marginalized perspectives and epistemologies into Eurocentric frameworks and practices (as has been the Western practice to date). Between and beyond the summits, this report is intended to support academics and practitioner communities – artists, and arts and cultural practitioners; programmers and administrators; cultural institutions and organizations; policymakers and analysts; diplomats, activists and entrepreneurs; donors and others interested in enacting the deeper self-reflexivity needed to radicalize analysis of the Western epistemic constraints that currently deny productive engagement with other autonomous worldviews, among them those of Indigenous Peoples and of the Global South. This first summit report stands at the beginning of NACDI's effort and looks forward to advancing it in further summits later this year at the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy in Los Angeles and, in 2022, at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. ●

## ENDNOTES

[1] The City of Toronto sits on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabe, Chippewa, Haudenosaunee and Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. The city is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. Kingston sits on the traditional lands of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, whose precolonial treaty, known as Dish with One Spoon, symbolizes their shared territory and ecology in southern Ontario (see Simpson 2008). As white settlers resident in Kingston, we are uninvited guests on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territory. Lynda Jessup is a citizen of the white supremacist state of Canada and Jeffrey Brison is a citizen of two, the United States of America and Canada.

[2] In addition to natural history, Nicolas devoted himself to language acquisition, producing an Anishinaabemowin reference grammar, *Grammaire algonquine* (Gagnon 2011, Daviault 1994).

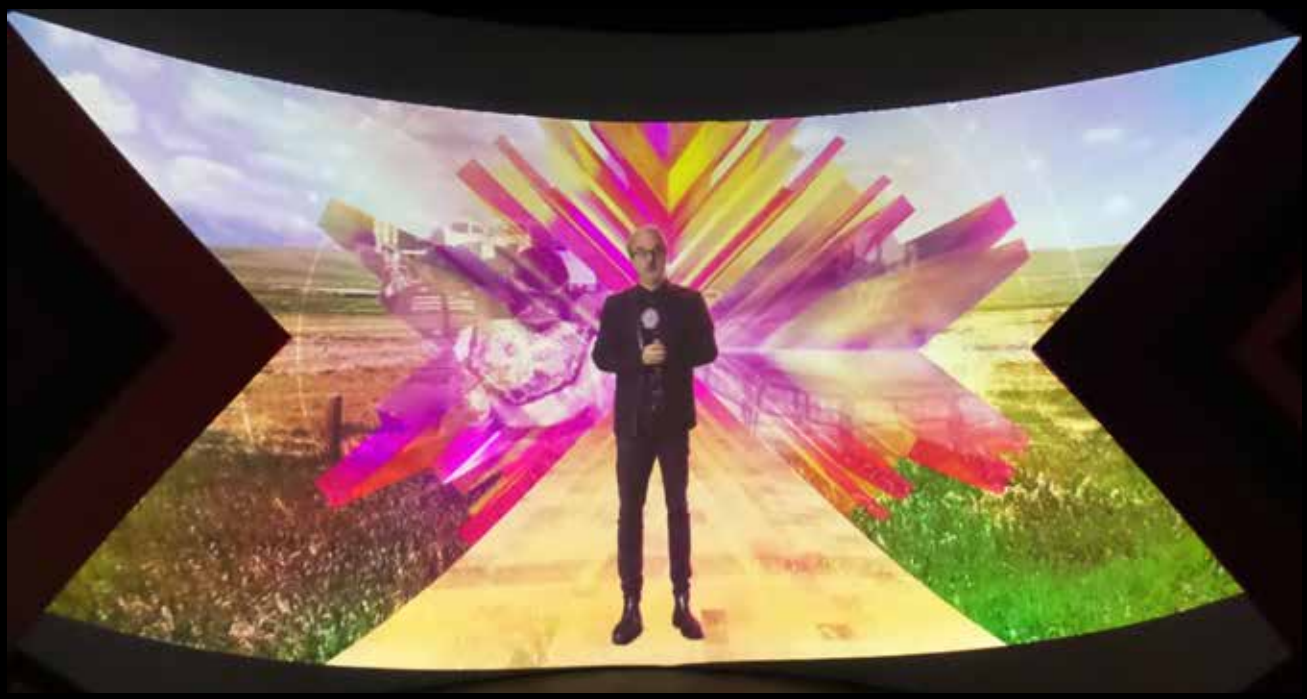
[3] Coulthard and Simpson (2016) explain, "What we are calling 'grounded normativity' refers to the ethical frameworks provided by these Indigenous place-based practices and associated forms of knowledge. Grounded normativity houses and reproduces the practices and procedures, based on deep reciprocity, that are inherently informed by an intimate relationship to place. Grounded normativity teaches us how to live our lives in relation to other people and nonhuman life forms in a profoundly nonauthoritarian, nondominating, nonexploitive manner. Grounded normativity teaches us how to be in respectful diplomatic relationships with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous nations with whom we might share territorial responsibilities or common political or economic interests. Our relationship to the land itself generates the processes, practices, and knowledges that inform our political systems, and through which *we practice solidarity*" [emphasis in the original] (254). See also Coulthard 2014.

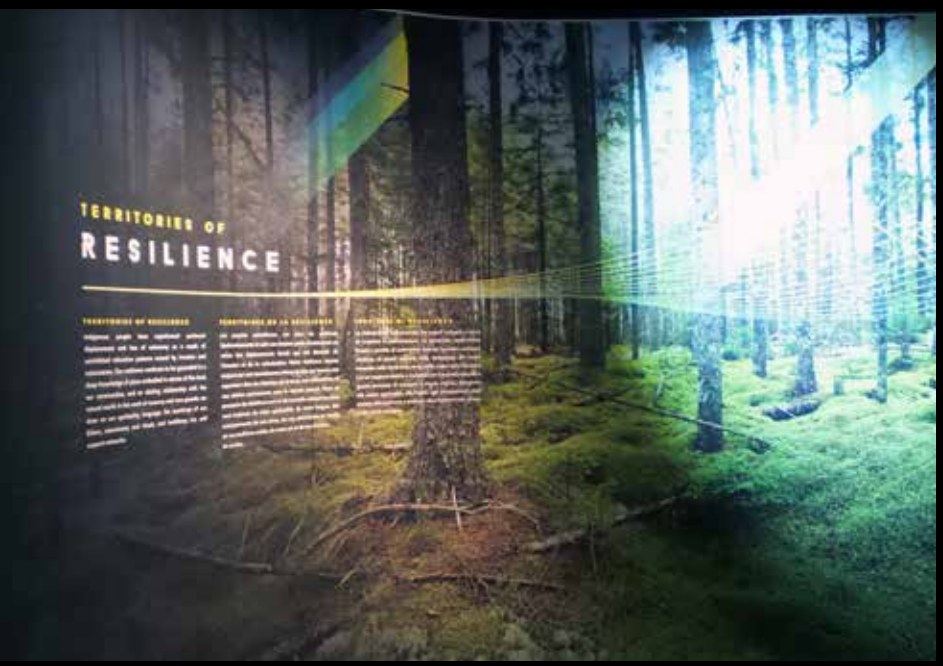
[4] We use upper case when referring to the formal concepts of Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Relations as the Western world conceives them and as they are practiced within the Westphalian state system. We use the lower case when referring to cultural diplomacy and cultural relations within the broader pluriversal field of social interaction.

[5] We are core team members with Nicholas Cull (University of Southern California), Bronwyn Jaques (Queen's University), Dylan Miner (Michigan State University), Sascha Priewe (Royal Ontario Museum), Ben Schnitzer (Queen's University), Sarah E. K. Smith (Carleton University), Erin Sutherland (University of Alberta), Eduardo Luciano Tadeo Hernández (Universidad Iberoamericana), César Villanueva Rivas (Universidad Iberoamericana) and Jay Wang (University of Southern California) in the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative (NACDI). This initiative is supported with funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada; Queen's University and the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada; Center on Public Diplomacy and Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California, USA; Universidad Iberoamericana Cuidad de México, Mexico; Wilson Institute for Canadian History, McMaster University, Canada; International Council of Museums Canada (ICOM Canada); and Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

[6] As scholars located on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, we use the term, Turtle Island, which refers collectively to the continent known as North America. This Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe term is used by many Indigenous peoples in the northeastern part of North America.

[7] We use the word episteme in the sense advanced by Kuokkanen (2007, 56–58), who notes that "'Episteme' is often taken to mean 'of or pertaining to knowledge.' Michel Foucault, however, defines epistemes as 'something like a worldview' and 'the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences, and possibly formalized systems.' … The episteme is a lens through which we perceive the world; we use it to structure the statements that count as knowledge in a particular period. In other words, it is a mode of social reality, a reality that is the taken-for-granted ground whose unwritten rules are learned … through the processes of socialization into a particular culture" (57; Foucault 1972, 191).

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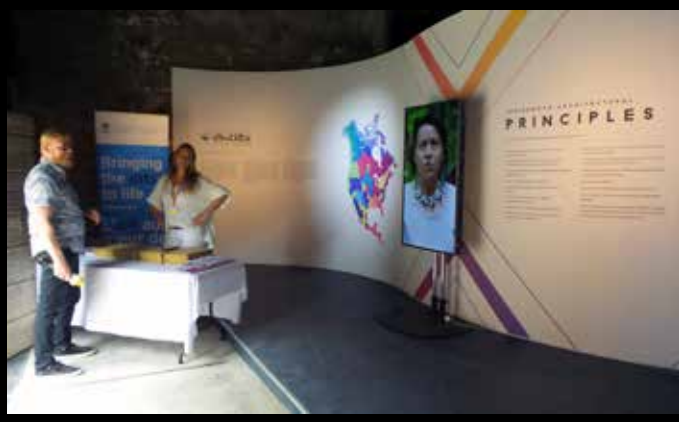

PRINCIPLES

# SUMMIT DESCRIPTION:
# CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AS CRITICAL PRACTICE

*Cultural Diplomacy as Critical Practice* responds to increasing calls for analyses of Cultural Diplomacy informed by the methodologies and approaches of the cultural disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. These specialties have yet to carve out a place for themselves in a Cultural Diplomacy field dominated by Political Science, Policy Studies, International Relations and Diplomatic Studies. Bringing together academics and practitioners from both sides of the culture/diplomacy divide, we ask: How do we understand diplomacy as a critical practice? What lessons from the past and present can inform the future? In short, this research summit asked participants to consider how a Cultural Relations approach to diplomacy opens new avenues to the theoretical and empirical study of diplomacy, and in so doing works to address wicked problems of the times – cultural conflict, climate change, the biopolitical challenges of global pandemics, etc. Ultimately, we hope these discussions empower those seeking to imagine counterhegemonic possibilities and more egalitarian and inclusive futures.

A working group of about forty members and a webinar audience of upwards of a hundred participants generated critical space for engagement and the range of possibilities for ongoing discussion that are played out in the three chapters below. Each chapter begins with the session description that initiated conversation at the summit, which unfolded in three sessions over two days. The descriptions are drawn directly from the introductory essay above, which ties the observations and recommendations of the working group to the aims of the summit series, *The Cultural Relations Approach to Diplomacy: Practice, Players, Policy*, in which this summit is the first. They are followed in each chapter by a bulleted summary of each session's salient points, which now stand as recommendations for driving development of a critical field at the conjunction of culture and diplomacy. Each recommendation is illuminated by a selection of quotations from the participants that operate relationally to trace the discussion not only as a series of individual contributions that are catalytic, consolidative or oppositional, but also as a collective expression with key moments of consensus and contestation, overarching themes and strong undercurrents, insights and experience-based observations. Identified by name in the chapters below, two moderators prompted discussion in each of these sessions with a view to vitalizing critical dialogue and engagement from one session to the next within the summit, and from this first summit to the next in the series and, through those involved in the discussion to the broader constituencies the participants represent. All the workshop participants were included in all the discussions of the summit, and almost all of them are quoted by name below. All participants are additionally profiled in the Appendix to this report in short position statements written by the workshop members themselves in which they read themselves into the summit and session descriptions – and which they shared with one another and the audience-participants prior to the event.

SESSION I

# The "culture" in Cultural Diplomacy

**HOW** can we engage more fully with the concept of "culture" and expand the understanding of it that currently dominates the study and practice of Cultural Diplomacy? We propose that one way to do so lies in moving beyond disciplinary orthodoxies in Political Science, Policy Studies and International Relations to explore critical understandings of culture and Cultural Diplomacy that are informed by the methodologies and approaches espoused by practitioners and academics in the cultural fields. Such a move is important, not only in its own right but also as a means of undermining the tenacious myth of culture's neutrality – the idea that culture operates in a depolitized realm, devoid of inequities of power – and of foregrounding the ways in which cultural workers are always already involved in the politics of culture and the operationalization of diplomacy through their global engagement.

It is worth considering the various ways culture is defined by those academics and practitioners who make it their object of study and practice. Challenging the essentialized link between nation-states and "their" cultures, we ask what culture looks like when considered beyond Western elite/hegemonic cultural expression and when not tethered to states or embedded in nationalist contexts. How can a critical Cultural Diplomacy truly engage with intersectionality, the idea of culture as way(s) of life and their expressions, and with different, often competing systems of meaning and value? How is the culture in Cultural Diplomacy problematized by ontological positions that are not indebted to the nature-culture divide of Western modernity? And finally, we ask how intercultural relations based on an expansive understanding of difference can reframe the fundamental problems of our times.

**MODERATORS:** LYNDA JESSUP and CÉSAR VILLANUEVA RIVAS

# Recommendations

The following are some of the key recommendations that emerged from the discussion:

## • Open the discussion to contestation

"There are at least 20 different understandings of Cultural Diplomacy" says Odila Triebel, commenting on the diversity of participants and perspectives the summit brought into conversation. In the course of rigorous discussion, the participants foregrounded, on the one hand, interest in working from the formal definition of Cultural Diplomacy as a state-based practice, and on the other, in moving beyond that singular perspective to embrace a diversity of understandings of how "culture" operates "diplomatically." The weight of the discussion pushed in the direction of the second position, that is, of advancing a critically active research agenda that brings together the insights of academics and practitioners on the diplomatic side with their counterparts in the cultural disciplines.

***Ryan Rice:*** *As a citizen of the Kanien'kehá:ka nation and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, I'm grounded in diplomacy that is carried forward from that philosophy, and also to the land that we're situated on. I want to thank Janice Hill for bringing forward the Ohèn:ton Karihwatéhkwen – the words before all else – because these are what is really needed to ground us in principles of diplomacy, because these are the original instructions. These are the responsibilities of our situation here and how we can build upon equity within culture, distinguish why there were certain cultures that were dominant, and those histories that imposed on other cultures. So, within a diplomacy position, equity needs to be really understood, first and foremost, before that conversation or that reimagining needs to take hold in all our institutions.*

*In her opening comments, Jan Hill lays out the space that Indigenous peoples operate from. There hasn't really been the recognition that North America is founded on the place that was initially the space of Indigenous peoples. So, how do we continue to have authority in positive and constructive ways in our own homelands and our own territories, while acknowledging the moment or the transition of time and the impact of the settler state?*

**JOLENE RICKARD,**
public panel

***Alberto Fierro:*** *I have doubts that our discussion is about Cultural Diplomacy, because formally, Cultural Diplomacy does have to do with the Vienna Convention [on Diplomatic Relations of 1961] and it does have to do with a country or nation-states doing diplomacy. We can call many other things diplomacy, but it's up to us to decide how formal we want that concept to be.*

***Carla Figueira:*** *I want to underscore the importance of emphasizing the multiplicity of identity, beyond national identity. We cannot avoid our "location" in the world and that for us to "be" in the world, we need a passport. I also believe International Cultural Relations is a much more productive term than Cultural Diplomacy. However, the "International" is also at times problematic, because increasingly the local is international.*

***César Villanueva Rivas:*** *The key concept here is to see if we continue to agree that Cultural Diplomacy should be carried out in the traditional Western way … having the ideas of the nation-state as a guiding line, as a compass, from which the actions of culture should be channeled. I think that's passé, fundamentally. I think we have to go into a broader scale because, simply, there are competing actors that, in practice, challenge the idea of the state as the main actor propelling Cultural Diplomacy actions.*

***Jutta Brendemühl:*** *Speaking from a practitioner standpoint, I think we're labouring over semantics a lot, and I find cultural diplomacy is being used here in very aspirational terms. Personally, I do not position myself in that field. I am firmly rooted in International Cultural Relations. I am very definitely not a diplomat and not an ambassador. Both are terms in popular usage. For example, TIFF [Toronto International Film Festival] had ambassadors this year: the term was used to refer to senior allies in the filmmaking community. In this discussion, we are using a lot of words in aspirational ways that in my work I don't share, or I don't find very helpful. I've been gently trying to steer the conversation more toward International Cultural Relations because I think that's where a lot of that cultural conversation opens up about new players. Corporations: TickTock and Oracle and Walmart are all currently in the news. For me, this is where the power questions play out right now.*

*Nothing really changes but the language. If all we do is change the language and change the faces, without changing the underlying systems, we haven't really changed anything. How do we think about how to build spaces differently? How do we think about accessibility and what are we willing to do? This is self-reflective, emotional work, to examine our own relationships with power. It cannot be an afterthought. It must start from the initial thought process of what it looks like to have folks involved all levels. It's messy and it's uncomfortable. And we have to l earn to be okay with that.*

**NORA RAHIMIAN,**
*public panel*

***Lynda Jessup:*** *A major objective of this research project is to push back against those who say, 'That's not Cultural Diplomacy because those of us who study and practice Cultural Diplomacy in the formal statist sense don't recognize it as such.' This workshop is advancing the idea that those who study "critical culture" – those scholars and practitioners on the cultural side of the diplomacy/culture divide – can productively engage in the discussion of Cultural Diplomacy, a practice in which culture is often instrumentalized by those on the diplomatic side in the state's interests. So those on the cultural side might say, 'Well, if we took culture and a critical culture approach and looked at diplomacy, culture may well cannibalize diplomacy.' That is, diplomacy is not the stable thing in this discussion. It can be destabilized by critical discussions of culture.*

***Robert Albro:*** *There is a very familiar Raymond Williams quote about culture being one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language (1976, 76) – an indication of the challenge here. Sociocultural anthropology has thoroughly dismantled the concept and undertaken a thorough critique, which left "culture" on the side of the road, and once and for all, any self-evident relationship between a people, a place, a culture and an identity as a kind of uniformly shared thing. And so instead the challenge becomes how to contend with a concept that we can't define, and a concept that is used differently and instrumentalized differently in different specific communities; and which, as disciplines like sociocultural anthropology have made clear, is contested?*

*It strikes me that at the intersection of culture, politics and policy is the question of how diplomacy can be reconfigured in an equity seeking manner, or if indeed it can. By this, I mean diplomacy necessitates forms of bilateral compromise (in both equal and unequal relations, and the power dynamic that implies). Presently, on both the right and the left in Anglo/Euro/American politics, compromise is a very bad word indeed, signalling half measures and letting the side down. So, how can rethinking the role and definition of culture allow us to reimagine both diplomacy and new forms of equity-based compromise and consensus between, within and beyond nation-states?*

**SCOTT MACKENZIE,**
webinar participant

*Why persist in using the term "cultural diplomacy" when that is a term best applied to a specific kind of cultural foreign policy that emerges from the mid-nineteenth century. If we want to do something else with culture, in terms of cultural relations, why try to redefine the term "cultural diplomacy" to fit our purpose?*

**DAVID CLARKE,**
webinar participant

*Who are the "diplomats" in cultural diplomacy? My concern is that, especially with regard to minority and stigmatized communities, whether taking individuals to act as representatives at local, national and global levels (in other words, hold them accountable with regard to authenticity, inner-group relations, equity, etc.) may introduce unintended negative consequences, such as talking about discrete, bounded "groups" rather than "group-ness" (using the terminology of sociologist Rogers Brubaker).*

**TAHSEEN SHAMS,**
webinar participant

***Sudarshan Ramabadran:*** *Some point to the need to move away from the Western, state-based understanding of culture. India is not a nation-state. We were not born in 1947. We are a civilizational state, which has a 5000-6000-year history. So, in the case of India, if culture was linked at all to national interest, it followed commerce. Whenever we have engaged with any part of the world, culture has followed, … transcended national boundaries, been organically practiced, and has found resonance, even today, and acceptance. So, when we say, India has enabled Cultural Diplomacy, it has not only instrumentalized culture for her own national interest but also mobilized culture for the benefit of humanity as a win-win.*

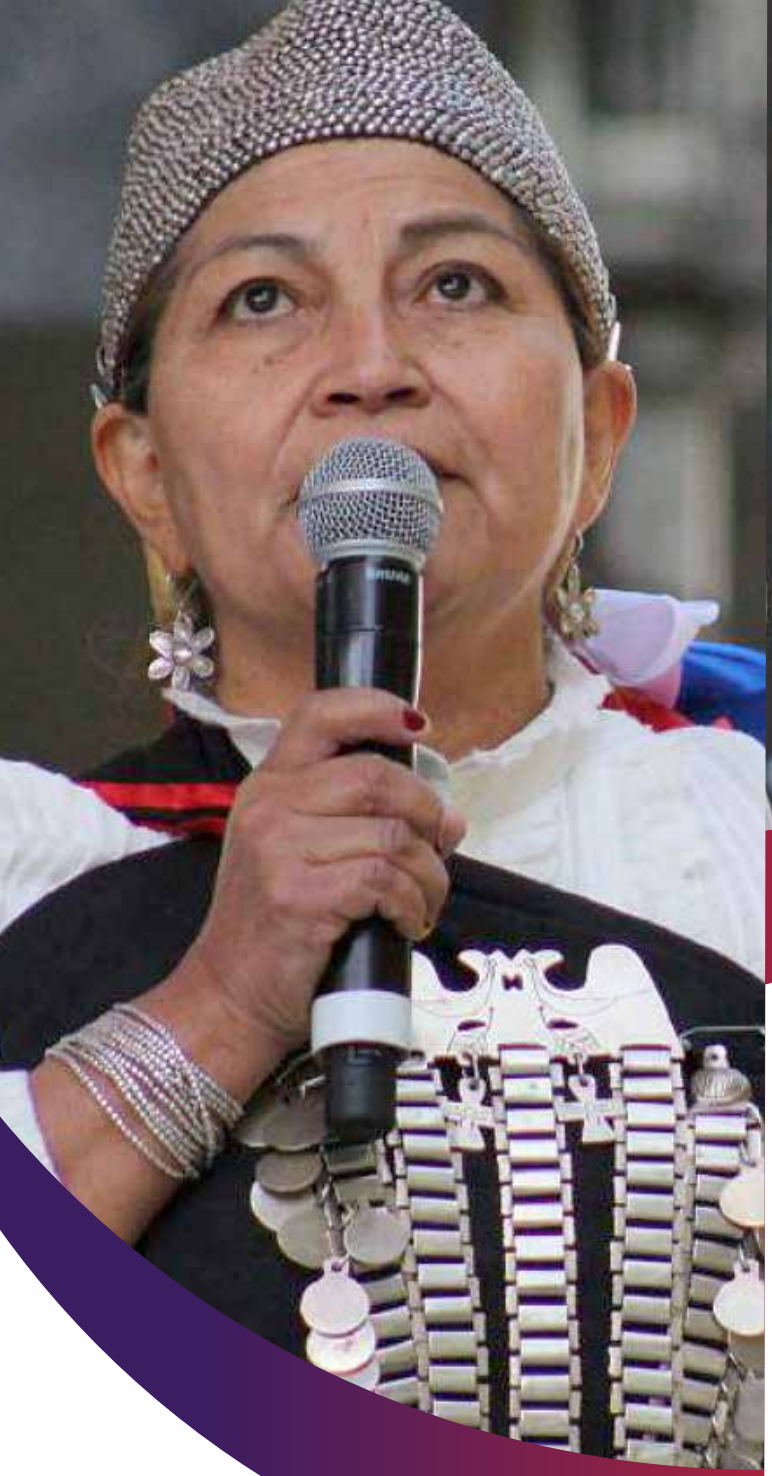
## • Broaden the historical scope of analysis

"Diplomacy" has not always meant formal interstate relations as codified by the modern international system and its "rules-based order" – as "something belonging to nation-states and national cultures," as Noé Cornago put it. There was strong desire in the group to look at a broader sweep of history and thus expand the historical scope of analysis. Participants brought a variety of historically and culturally specific examples of Cultural Diplomacy to the table in order to problematize any singular or monolithic understanding of the practice: the role of religion, millennia-old Indigenous diplomatic actions, Cold War propaganda, creative economies. All were raised as additional lenses through which to productively complicate analysis and open up consideration of global cultural relations as a transhistorical activity.

***Noé Cornago:*** *It is very important to emphasize that diplomacy, with this name, etymologically only appeared in the late eighteenth century – at the beginning of the nineteenth century – and was only later normalized and used in the way we understand it today, as diplomacy related to the nation-state. What is beyond dispute is that what we call, or what we refer to when we discuss diplomacy, predates nation-states. From this point of view, this discussion is about escaping from the narrow understanding of Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy as something belonging to nation-states and national culture. We all in this session have the feeling and the conviction that, as scholars and as practitioners, no longer, not anymore, do we share the ambitions that nation-states in the late nineteen century and the early twentieth century had about promoting their own national cultures. From this point of view, I think that every form of modern diplomacy, and even diplomacy in antiquity, may offer extraordinary potential for showing us how, in the past, before human beings were stuck in the notion of nations and nation-states, they were able to deal with difference; to coexist within difference.*

***César Villanueva Rivas:*** *If we look into the genealogy of Cultural Diplomacy – to the history of the international system – we're talking about the inception of Cultural Diplomacy as a tool of the nation-state, in the service of the national interest ... and that's how it boils down for around 300 years, from the beginning of the seventeenth century to the twentieth century, when other actors came into play. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, with globalization, we have seen a collapse of the traditional statist understanding of Cultural Diplomacy, and that's what we're discussing here: we can still talk about Cultural Diplomacy in association with a national interest, but certainly not exclusively. There are many other actors playing Cultural Diplomacy. I think it is informative to look at the whole spectrum of how Cultural Diplomacy has come to be a concept that we discuss in its own genealogy.*

***Toby Miller:*** *It seems to me that religion is one of the most powerful ways in which cultures are exchanged across territories, sometimes associated with states, sometimes not. If you go back to the Iberian period of imperialism long before the other European imperialisms that people generally focus on when they talk about colonialism, empire and so on, religion, more than social racial science was taken as the key point of differentiation. The notion was that the Spanish and the Portuguese had Catholicism, had Christianity, and nothing else rendered them allegedly superior to the peoples they conquered and enslaved than that. What's interesting is that today, to give you an example from Colombia, where in 2016 there was a very close and very contentious plebiscite on the peace process, US-based, extremely wealthy evangelical Protestants organized the no-case exceedingly powerfully and successfully, based on the fact that they objected to references to equal rights in marriage and equal rights for women in the economy and other sectors. The point of mentioning these two things – the role of religion in Iberian imperialism and the intervention of US-based evangelicals in the recent Columbian election – is that situations such as these are often thought*



*of as somehow rather beyond diplomacy because they don't necessarily directly involve sovereign states, but they have a massive impact on the formation of the behaviour of states, whether that be the conduct of the invading and enslaving imperial powers in the Iberian moment, or the experience of the Columbian peace process in the last five years.*

***Lynda Jessup:*** *Hayden King (2017) has pointed out that at the time of the Two Row Wampum Treaty in the seventeenth century, Indigenous diplomacy, as the canon of diplomacy, was millennia old.*

***Jonathan Chait Auerbach:*** *I don't think we can see Cultural Diplomacy as something monolithic. I think it is something that changes through time; it is something that evolves.… And that's actually it. Instead of looking at this as the challenge, for me as a diplomat, that is the opportunity.*

***James Counts Early:*** *This issue of definition I think needs to be historicized. Our discussion has dealt a lot with logical, conceptual approaches to terminology, but not setting Cultural Diplomacy in the context of actual historical movements. For example, in the United States of America, where I'm from, it targeted the rise of communism during the Cold War. The US – an apartheid country in terms of Indigenous people and African Americans – sent African Americans around the world and*

*upheld jazz music as the expression of the vibrancy of American culture. So, my point here is that a critical approach, from whatever vantage point, is about the question of power. Who will define what ways of knowing and doing – which are not biological imperatives but are socialized imperatives – will have equity, will inform the ideal. And so, I would urge that we situate our definitional, conceptual issues in the actual moment in which we live.*

## • Recognize differentials of power

Discussion emphasized that the inegalitarian relations of power in the state-centric practice of Cultural Diplomacy do not disappear in the current global environment of network diplomacy and its broader range of actors. Even in a global civil society practice, non-state actors, their institutions and organizations do not stand outside broader structures of power determined by economic and military-strategic activities – especially, as Simon Dancey put it, when "overarching global capital" is effecting a "modern form of colonialism in terms of cultural colonialism as well."

***Simon Dancey:*** *I spent ten years as the lead for the British Council on cultural policy whilst trying to enact a change that looked at enshrining civil society approaches to culture within this larger nation-state approach. I think a lot of the time nation-states, while talking about equity, are not actually acting with equity, which plays out through the "arms-length principle" in the work of bodies like the British Council that are part of the larger sphere of governance. So, to actually bring these different civic actors within an equitable global framework of power is very difficult to enact. I'm just talking here about trying to challenge the dominance of nation-state Cultural Diplomacy and how alternatives get neutralized by the nation-state. That's the challenge for those trying to step outside of organizations like the British Council to bring in a strong civic society voice; it becomes neutralized by the Council because that's where you're always directed. You can try to go around them, you can try to go through them, you can try to go under them. But its neutralizing effect is quite pervasive.*

***Eric Fillion:*** *If we're talking about state-based Cultural Diplomacy and how it instrumentalizes culture, there's always the assumption that individuals or community groups are co-opted or neutralized. We must not underestimate the ability of artists to subvert, or to sabotage, in a sense, state-based Cultural Diplomacy. Artists do have agency, and oftentimes they are willing to participate in state-based initiatives because it gives them a certain visibility – gives them access to certain channels – and a negotiation is taking place, whether it's challenging or reshaping the federal state narrative that state-based Cultural Diplomacy puts forward.*

***Patricia Goff:*** *Maybe Cultural Diplomacy is not nearly as influential as we might think. It seems to me that maybe not enough governments or not many governments in that traditional understanding of Cultural Diplomacy, with governments as the actors, are practicing it very much. And to me, that might be good news, because that might mean there's a vacuum; that might mean there's a huge opportunity for initiatives … where non-state actors can step into the breach and use very creative initiatives to mobilize a diversity of cultures to address wicked problems.*

***Mauricio Delfin:*** *I work with civil society, and we do a lot of Cultural Diplomacy, despite the state, let's say. I think that, in addition to the semantics, and the history*

*session, and the genealogy of Cultural Diplomacy, it's also important to look at the whole apparatus, because there's this: I find it very idealistic to say that now that Cultural Diplomacy is made by more actors, not only the state, it is more egalitarian. That statement for me is too general because there's an inequality in the way that these new actors, so called, relate to the possibilities for affordances they have in that ecosystem. So, what those inequalities are in terms of how we relate to the possibilities of doing Cultural Diplomacy is important – and it's important, I think, to get those details and represent the ecosystem in a much more nuanced way. And in that way, we can see the relationships that are possible in this new understanding of Cultural Diplomacy with new actors and agents. How equal are they?*

***Umair Jaffar:*** *From my own personal experience as an immigrant to Canada, the need to assimilate to a more powerful, stronger culture is still there. And we immigrants see ourselves ignoring our languages, our traditions, and trying to be accepted in this new environment that we find ourselves in. So really, you know, who is taking that space and has the power to dictate what culture means for someone else is something that really concerns me.*

## • Challenge Eurocentric understandings

The discussion turned to an insistence on the urgent need to contend with the reality of colonialism – to understand that the planet is more than a set of states in a universalizing international community, but rather a place of many epistemic worlds. As Jolene Rickard put it, "a serious rupture has taken place around the world in the modern era. And this rupture of coloniality needs to be considered in every discussion, in much the same way that anybody today putting together any thought would consider gender."

***Jolene Rickard:*** *The impact of the dispossession of Indigenous peoples isn't something that is a compartment or sidebar of this discussion. It needs to be the platform upon which this discussion takes place in the modern era.*

***Lynda Jessup:*** *Can a critical Cultural Diplomacy truly engage with intersectionality, the idea of cultures and ways of life, their expressions, and with different, often competing systems of meaning and value? We need to remember what Cree and Saulteaux scholar Margaret Kovach [2009] tells us: "We know what we know from where we stand. We need to be honest about that."*

***Umair Jaffar:*** *Ryan Rice kind of said everything I had to say in his earlier comment [above], and I really appreciate that his position statement is "#landback." That's really it for me in terms of looking at a paradigm shift and moving the conversation away from the country connection to, you know, national boundaries. The issue still is, who has the power and who is taking the space – that is, what's dictating what culture means.*

***Robert Albro:*** *One of the dimensions of this – and I come to this thinking about intersections of culture with policy, and local, national and international multilateral spaces – one of the challenging things is that the tools often available to talk about cultural claim-making often compel Indigenous groups, interest groups and minority communities to use tools that weren't their own or aren't their own – to engage in discussions around questions of cultural*

*ownership, for example. And so, it often is the case that Indigenous communities find it necessary to use that language to promote agendas that they themselves might understand quite differently.*

***Ryan Rice:*** *I'm very frustrated – disappointed – but it's not unexpected around these conversations, because we started with an opportunity to understand where we are located. We give a land acknowledgement and we've invited Jan Hill who brought these words forward for an opportunity for this conversation to be inclusive and it immediately shifts and buries that opportunity to really engage with the situation that we are in now. Like, when we talk about reconciliation, we talk about decolonization, the sovereign nation, the international stance of Indigenous people within North America – there's over 500 sovereign nations. So how do you negotiate that or understand that as international relationships? How do you negotiate the fact that our stuff is located in museums across the world – and that now we have no relationship with it? And where's the diplomacy – to be reciprocal and hospitable – to get that back to us? Where do these conversations take place within a Cultural Diplomacy forum?* ●

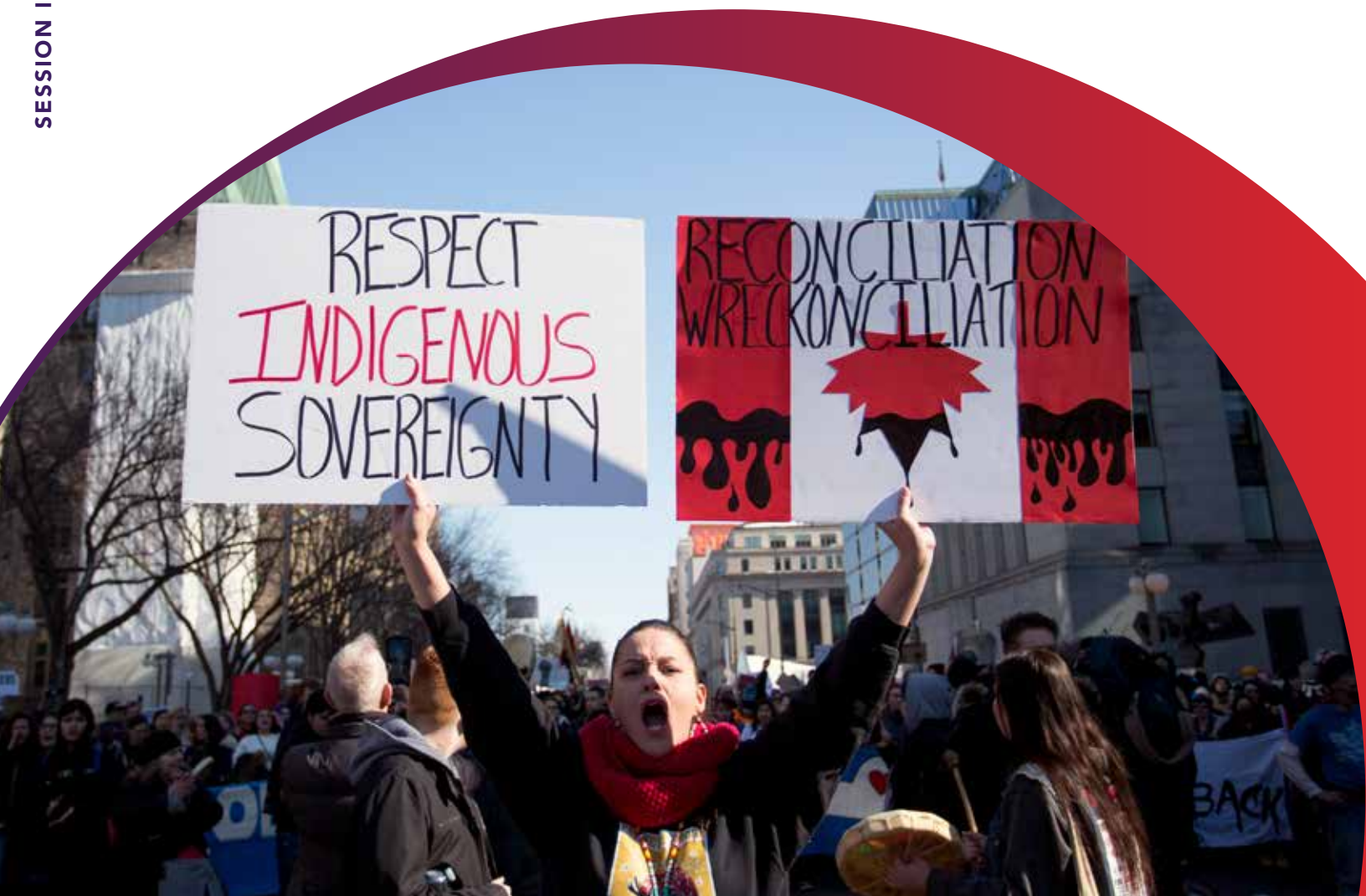
*In every space that we're talking about, Indigenous peoples have been dispossessed of land or rights to those spaces. Even within this moment of trying to come together and work together, there still isn't a satisfying recognition of this relationship, even amongst people that I think are like-minded and want to create a better space for everyone. As Indigenous peoples we have yet to benefit from the wellness of this place at contact, and the largest of the resources of this place, because they are continually extracted from us without our authority. So, there are some important material issues that are too difficult to reconcile.*

**JOLENE RICKARD**,
public panel

SESSION II

# Beyond state centrism: Addressing the limits of Diplomacy





**INTEGRAL** to the proposal that we problematize and expand current understandings of "culture in Cultural Diplomacy" is an interrogation of the Western epistemological basis of diplomacy. This involves moving away from conceptualizations of Cultural Diplomacy as, exclusively, an institutionalized practice of the international system of states and of its professional diplomats and policymakers. What are the implications of insisting upon the state-centric interpretations of Cultural Diplomacy offered by academics and practitioners on the "diplomatic side"? How do we make the difficult yet crucial paradigm shift away from a world dominated by nation-state-driven Cultural Diplomacy to a broader understanding of the diplomatic landscape, one that reflects the cultural and ideological diversity of the world we live in, its interconnectedness and global reach, which extend well beyond the boundaries of existing diplomatic practice and study?

In this conversation we ask: what is missing in studies and practices that geopolitically situate nation-states as the privileged focal points of diplomacy, if not its only actors? What is problematic in state-centric models of behaviour and analysis that deny or underestimate the complexity of culture? Does a focus on the "club of states" and its practice of Cultural Diplomacy simply reinscribe and reinforce the Western hegemonic power of the Cold War club and of its rules of engagement? How do we address the possibilities of thinking through a critical Cultural Diplomacy and draw innovative connections between spheres of global social relations that are usually not considered together (diplomacy and human security, diplomacy and migration, diplomacy and cultural industries, diplomacy and multiculturality, diplomacy and diversity, diplomacy and mutual understanding)? Recognizing that these various spheres are, at base, Western constructions, how do we assess the ways in which policy from the outset is culturally informed and how diplomacy itself is and always has been a cultural practice?

**MODERATORS:** JEFFREY BRISON and DYLAN MINER

*I live within the bounds of a traditional government where we see ourselves as a separate government from both the United States and Canada. We maintain our original form of governance, we are not, as some legal practitioners argue, quasi sovereign, we define our own sovereignty. So, in this whole dialogue I'm committed to an ongoing relationship to a specific place.*

**JOLENE RICKARD**,
public panel

# Recommendations

The following are some of the key recommendations that emerged from the discussion:

## • Question privilege

It is often assumed that, in the global era networked environment, as the number and diversity of non-state actors involved in diplomacy increases, the practice of diplomacy itself is democratized – that "getting beyond the state" is itself a liberatory practice. Participants challenged this idea of democratization, emphasizing the continued existence of uneven fields of engagement and asymmetry in the level of commitment to decolonization in the study and practice of diplomacy. The weight of discussion insisted that current study and practice privilege a Western episteme that perpetuates colonialism and colonialist relationships, systemic racism and differentials of power.

***Robert Albro:*** *When we're thinking about the nation-state as the entity creating the possibility for what we mean by the conjunction of culture with diplomacy, and the history and power relations of dispossession that entails, I think we're also thinking about a question of scale. When we talk about different sovereign entities or polities such as Indigenous peoples, when we talk about nation-states and we talk about civil society actors and new and non-state actors, I think playing in the background of this is the question of alternative scales of engagement, whatever we choose to label it – Cultural Diplomacy or Cultural Relations or whatever.*

***Dylan Miner:*** *I'm coming to you from 1819 Treaty of Saginaw Territory. This is the traditional lands of the Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibway, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations People. I also think it's important to recognize where I am in the US. I want to make sure we name and recognize Breonna Taylor and other individuals, and all those who have been killed, brutalized and impacted by state violence and structural racism. And so, my thinking here is that the issues we are discussing are implicated in colonialism and racism.*

***Ben Schnitzer:*** *If we're talking in terms of decentring the nation-state, I think it's important to remember notions of sovereignty never extinguished, and the treaty itself as an emblematic reminder of failures of abiding by the treaty. I'm thinking, for instance, of the Covenant Chain Alliances between the Haudenosaunee and European colonial powers. As I try to cultivate my practice as someone who is engaged in policy and thinking about the structures of power that underpin relationships between actors, I am considering how we might equitably think about those without replicating structures of colonial domination even as we try to subvert them.*

***Ryan Rice:*** *I'm speaking to Ben's reference to the Covenant Chain. The Covenant Chain requires that we keep shining it so it doesn't tarnish. And we see more people shining it*

*on one side than the other side. Diplomacy needs to be enacted on both sides.*

***Dylan Miner:*** *I'm reading from a book called* Braiding Sweetgrass *by Indigenous scholar Robin Wall Kimmerer (2013), where she asks the question: how do the descendants of settlers become indigenous with a small "i" to a place? What does it mean to become native with a small "n," not indigenous with a capital "I," as rights bearing people to a place within settler colonial structures? How does one become intimately connected with the geographies of that place and with the ecologies? I'm thinking right now in a North American context: The Mi'kmaq fishers and lobster harvesters who are actually asserting a treaty right protected in the 1760 and '61 Treaties of Peace and Friendship are being impeded by civil society actors, and so civil society is impeding this Right. So, there's a relationship, I think, between diplomacies, of the kind that exist between governments, and then what happens between these and civil society, which I think links up to some of the conversation that's been going on here.*

***Erin Sutherland:*** *What I take away from this conversation is that relationships are what is important. How do we have good relationships when those in power aren't actually trying to make lasting and good relationships, when the labour is so one-sided that it is not a good and healthy relationship. The labour of critiquing and pushing back at the state's habit of taking up non-settler communities to promote themselves often falls on those communities marginalized by the state. I often feel that, as an Indigenous person, I am called*

*on to do the critical work for organizations that don't make lasting and meaningful change. How do we ensure the health of our communities and refuse to do the work that is meant for the state and settlers? How do we continue to do critical work but ensure that it is not used by the state in conversations that do not benefit our communities?*

***Linda Grussani:*** *As a cultural practitioner who has been working in state-run institutions for over 20 years, I appreciate being in those spaces, but always know that I'm invited to be in those spaces. I don't think real change can actually take place unless Indigenous peoples are involved at every level of the decision-making process. The work is exhausting, and it will ultimately lead to burnout if one doesn't see change happening. The effort required to make change in these places of resistance is incredibly enormous and draining. I just want to reflect on that – that we can't just be brought in at entry levels; that we need to be part of the overall decision-making process in order to effect change.*

***Catherine C. Cole:*** *I think that question is really interesting. How do we, as Indigenous people, do meaningful work that makes a difference? It's becoming increasingly frustrating to me, after 30 years of this. One is constantly asked to participate, to provide input, and then it just goes nowhere – it is extremely frustrating. I'm currently serving on a Parks Canada Indigenous cultural heritage advisory council and I have to say that it is one of the first times that I actually feel like it's really going to be making a difference. They are interested in decolonizing Press Canada, so that's a positive step, but it's sure been a long time coming.*

*We have to recognize the colonial past of an institution like the ROM, which was founded more than 100 years ago. We have to look at issues of scale and impact and bring humility to our interactions with scholars and museums and other parts of the world, so that we are not perpetuating some of the issues of Western dominance and colonial attitudes. That's a challenge – that's an ongoing piece of work that we are very engaged in. Museums and cultural institutions have a meaningful role to play. It isn't simply about collecting and exhibiting; it's about engaging with the relevant issues of our day.*

**JOSH BASSECHES**,
public panel

***Robert Albro:*** *The observation that undue burden is placed on people from Indigenous communities or minority communities in otherwise diverse or settler societies is an important one, and I think it goes to the heart of the representational conceit built into diplomacy as a geopolitical practice. I think that interrogating these relationships further would help us to unpack the implications of that practice as a set of normative conceptions of the world, if you will, where there's a kind of underlying depoliticized liberalism informing these interactions. We think of cultural interaction as an international activity which decouples participation from politics and means that people are invited to participate, but there's no necessary political outcome that might be aligned with their own particular goals as a situated subject or agent. And so, it really is something about the agency that we assume in this kind of cultural diplomatic practice which, I think, bears much more systematic scrutiny.*

## • Consider structures of governance

While the conversation foregrounded the colonial realities of Cultural Diplomacy, also apparent was the challenge of addressing asymmetries of power when operating within the structures of the nation-state and global civil society. In this context, participants raised the role cultural practitioners play in fostering positive intercultural relations through their networks and communities, which also brought to the fore the implication of cultural practitioners and the extended state sphere of culture in broader agendas of governance. "After all," as Amanda Rodriguez Espanola commented, building on an intervention Nora Rahimian made, "funders (government and non-government) have their agendas that they seek to fulfill through the projects they fund."

***Simon Dancey:*** *There are very strong connections going back twenty or thirty years around movements that I've been involved with as a musician, where people built these dialogues – and I'm talking about quite big dialogues – between the UK and countries like Colombia, Brazil and Argentina, all around sharing music. I'm not talking about discourse between states; I'm talking about mutuality, about meeting each other in a space as equals and talking about sharing practice. Now I know behind that we have all of these colonial and postcolonial structures that we have to deal with as well. But it's interesting that, when I look at this, it was much easier to talk to people as equals as a musician than it was working somewhere like the British Council, where you have that horrendous history of colonialism, however we wanted to try and play it. There's certainly an example there of*

*non-state actors constructing networks around a particular area of culture, around music, and how that then links to the political challenge around social transformation those artistic forms are seen as advancing.*

***Kelly Langgard:*** *I have worked at the Canada Council and now at the Ontario Arts Council as an arts funder. Coming from the perspective of having supported or been involved in a number of arts exchanges internationally, some of which have been more on the promotional side and some of which more on the exchange side, I think there's an opportunity for artists to work together over the long term in a collaborative and co-creative kind of way. When the conditions of that exchange involve a long enough timeframe, it can be generative, it can be exploratory. And, where artists can negotiate and acknowledge differences in ways of expressing and communicating and holding power, that exchange can have powerful results in terms of building understanding and building what we often state as a goal of Cultural Diplomacy, which is mutual understanding. So, I'm really interested in those kinds of exchanges and in the ways in which those who support that kind of practice can foster the best conditions for relationships to develop. As an arts funder, I think it is important to acknowledge that role as an agency of the state, but at the same time, I think there's a certain amount of flexibility on the arm's length relationship that an arts funder can have, where we can focus on the artist or we can prioritize the artist's integrity and interests and try to create as much space in our support as possible to allow for those kinds of meaningful engagements.*

***Umair Jaffar:*** *I represent a music organization here in Canada and we are a non-profit charity, so we are funded by government agencies. I never thought of it as, specifically, Cultural Diplomacy – that we represent what is called world music in the non-Western music forum. We do it in two ways: we do concerts in Canada and then we have an industry event as well where we bring delegates from all across the world to gather and look at Canadian talent or Canadian artists in hopes that those artists will get booked in the other countries. So, in that way we are sort of the new actors, we're sort of exporting talent and we're creating these intercultural relationships. Although we are a charity and a non-profit organization, and we have no direct mandate from the government to do this, we are funded by the government agencies. And there are certain criteria for getting funding and being judged against funding you received for the performance. So, for instance, the criteria for success are how many artists got bookings, and it is that very tangible criteria that we have to report on. This makes us operate under a certain state-based system – funding determining how we should do or go about our job. The intention from our side is very different. We are looking for genuine relationship building.*

*Mexico's cultural diplomacy begins with small steps and big decisions. Earlier this year, we hosted, with UNESCO, a high-level event that resulted in the Los Pinos Declaration (2020), which moved us from the International Year of Indigenous Languages (2019) to the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–32). Bringing together diplomats representing UNESCO member states with Indigenous communities, artists and creators, we worked on the integration of the Los Pinos Declaration into the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. We integrated as a key principle the notion of "nothing for us without us," which sits at the heart of the declaration and of Mexico's cultural diplomacy.*

**PABLO RAPHAEL DE MADRID**,
public panel

*Something to consider with art produced in Indigenous languages, whether that is of the Indigenous communities of the land now recognized as Canada, Cymraeg in Wales or Gaelic in Scotland, there is a huge element of power in the presence of these languages when they are not translated to English. When we translate to the language of the colonizer we lose so much culturally embedded meaning. Preserving art/literature/film in Indigenous languages, within the landscape where it has been created and produced, places Western ideologies on the "outside" for once. This is a very powerful act of resistance toward cultural oppression and limitation.*

**LEE MACLAUCHLAN,**
webinar participant

*When considering the decoupling of cultural diplomacy, or any diplomacy for that matter, from the state, inevitably one runs into the problem of representation. Non-state actors are certainly equipped to represent groups or interests in the way that states represent their constituencies, but what comes of the responsibilities of representation? What gives them legitimacy? How are they made accountable? For states, these questions are addressed to a point in international law. But for nonstate actors?*

**ROBERT KELLEY,**
webinar participant

*While these conversations reflect on the colonial origins of cultural diplomacy, as Nora Rahimian mentioned yesterday, it's important to acknowledge that we do live in a capitalist society and money matters (to eat, to fund projects, etc). What are challenges and opportunities funding-wise when talking about decolonizing the practice? After all, funders (government and non-government) have their agendas that they seek to fulfill through the project they fund.*

**AMANDA RODRIGUEZ ESPINOLA,**
webinar participant

***Kelly Langgard:*** *I think that one of the things that funders are challenged by is to trust artists to say what success looks like in their own terms. I think the tension is that funders are organizations of the state and we work with public funds, and so it's like we have to prove ourselves by demonstrating the impact and the value of public funding or public investment.*

***Jutta Brendemühl:*** *What for me generally underlies the premise of going beyond state centrism are questions of agency, influence and power/sharing … of pluralism, inclusion and participation, and those in turn involve gatekeeping, agenda-setting, funding, etc. I am interested in the rules of the game and goals more than in the players — how are we demanding and ensuring transparency, accountability, equity and checks & balances across the board and to what aims? How do we avoid performative philanthropy or fake democracy, or merely shifting privilege?*

*We need an epistemological shift. People are talking about multiple ontologies, but they struggle to understand what that means. For me, it is a call to rethink how reality is constructed. It's difficult to talk about creating equitable spaces without acknowledging how power and wealth function in the Western European capitalist space in which we're so embedded. The wealth of the Americas was based on the backs of Indigenous and Black bodies. Right now, there's an urgent discussion around recognition of that uncompensated labor and existence. I think we need to articulate how we're going to share those resources.*

**JOLENE RICKARD**,
public panel

***Ryan Rice:*** *We need to look at nation-states, because they're the ones who established the situation of where we are now. They implemented legislation to sever cultures, sever Indigeneity from Indigenous people, sever the land. As far as the cultural sector in Canada is concerned, the Canada Council for the Arts was based on a racist document – the Massey Report – which recognized culture as only coming from Europe. It's an import. Just like in the United States and many other countries, "culture" is seen as something that comes from Western European countries. So, within the Canada Council, and arts infrastructure generally in other settler states like New Zealand and Australia, Indigenous practices and Indigenous culture are dismissed. So, if Indigenous people are expected to be actors on this Cultural Diplomacy stage, then again, there has to be greater understanding that the language of diplomacy many Indigenous people carry with them through the treaty process is not being adhered to by representatives of the settler state.*

## • Recognize that culture's neutrality is a myth

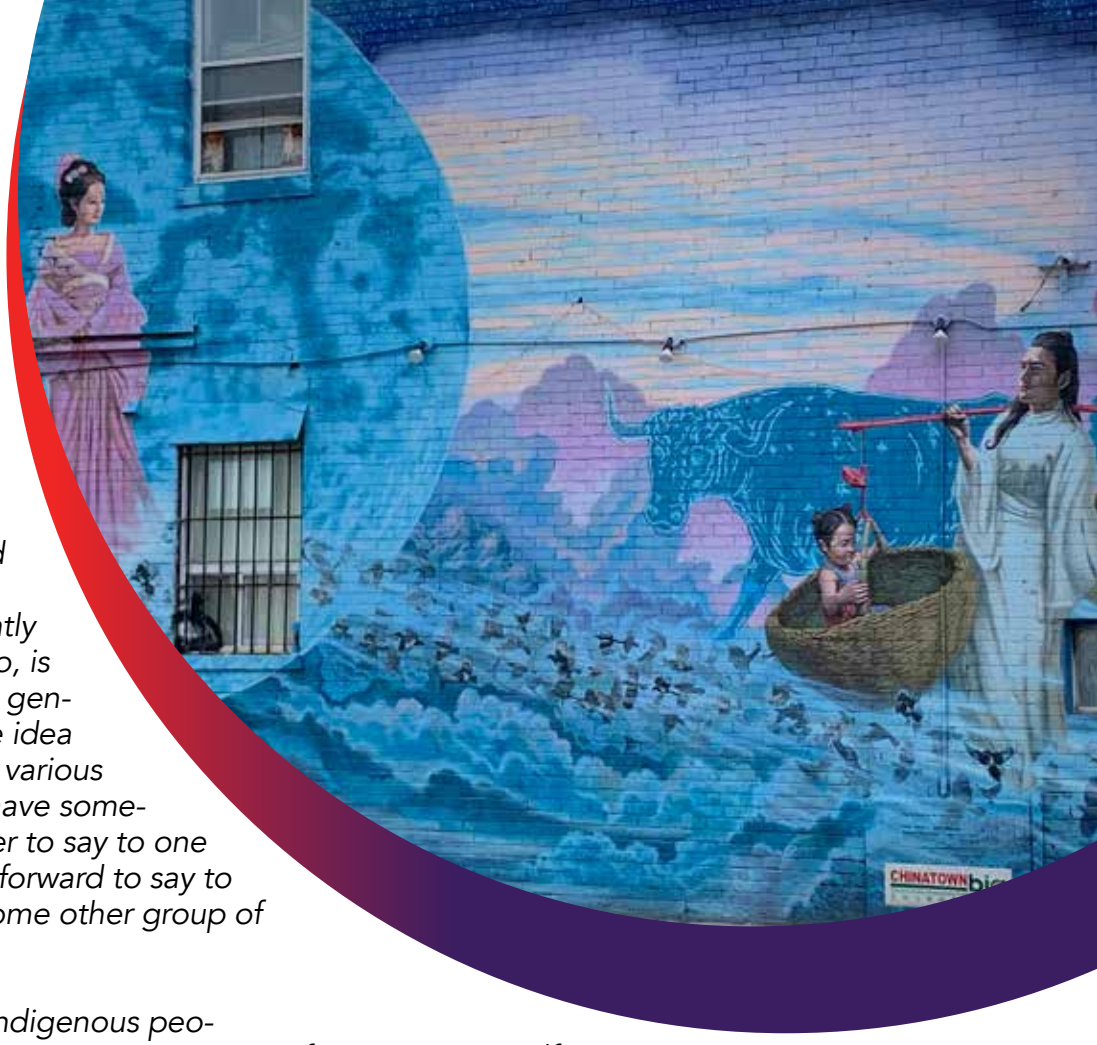
Discussion of the role cultural practitioners play in fostering positive intercultural relations through their networks and communities turned to a consideration of the concept of culture itself as implicated in broader fields of power and its mobilization. Identified by participants as important to discussion going forward as well was a deepened understanding of the instrumentality of practitioners' perceptions of culture as neutral. As Robert Albro put it, "We need to engage with the myth that culture is a depoliticized space of encounter."

*What is the meaning of culture in these times? How can cultural policy be a space that is not just for the policymakers? We understand that culture is not only found in the opera hall and other elite spaces. Culture underpins social networks, empowers communities and promotes economic development. If this is our understanding, then the paradigm must change. We need to think about how to create cultural policies not just among diplomats and policymakers, but also with artists, creators, communities and academics.*

**PABLO RAPHAEL DE MADRID,**
*public panel*

***Robert Albro:*** *One of the things that came up in Simon's intervention earlier is this notion of networks, which suggests a different, looser or more dynamic understanding of engagement that we could describe as a form of cultural relations of one sort or another. But I think that's also helpful because it draws to our attention certain kinds of activities that we want to pay more attention to. At what point do we think that cultural relations or diplomacy are actively happening in those networked relationships? Part of the reason culture has come to the fore in these interactions is because it's incorrectly, and in a dehistorized way, understood to be a depoliticized space of encounter. That's one of the fundamental myths of Cultural Diplomacy as a kind of practice, right? What we are removing from our space of encounter in this understanding is the political grounds on which we're interacting with one another.*

*One of the things that we frequently encounter when we talk about things like theatre or music – one of the justifications we use for getting people together who share a vocation, as theatre people or as musicians or as writers – is that we assume somehow that their common experience*




*makes it more likely or possible that they can have productive transnational exchanges and understand what everybody means. There is the assumption that people in the theatre naturally understand each other because the theatre is just self-evidently apolitical. I think that, too, is problematic. So, I would gently push back against the idea that, say, musicians from various corners of planet Earth have something automatically better to say to one another or more straightforward to say to one another than, say, some other group of people.*

***Jolene Rickard:*** *Some Indigenous people use the language of community, some Indigenous people prefer to use the language of nation, some Indigenous people reject the notion of nation as a strategy. And so there isn't a unified notion of what Indigenous space is. Until we have legible understanding of how Indigenous space works, coupling that with Cultural Diplomacy, in particular the arts or cultural expression, there will always be a whiff of ongoing exploitation that anchors around alterity. The ongoing construction of the Indigenous as the "Other" through the notion of the exotic, even if it's meant to be positive, is deeply colonialist and colonizing. This is the ideological context for the struggles that are embedded deeply within the global flow of artistic cultural practice.*

***Umair Jaffar:*** *Are we simply reinscribing colonial power relationships? I think we are, because when we go on the international stage – and I am talking specifically about the music sector – we are coming with a very well-funded structure, which gives us an edge and a power over other agencies. If I compare myself to, let's say, the music industry in Pakistan, which is where I was before coming to Canada, when we go out on an international platform Canada has a huge contingent, very well-funded, and Pakistan might have one delegate who's paid out of pocket – and so there is a power relationship right there. So, we compare ourselves indirectly without knowing we're exerting a lot of power – by virtue of that, the relationship is already imbalanced. To sum up, we are reinforcing some colonial diplomatic relationships here, just by virtue of the power we have, even without knowing it's being exerted when we go out to build relationships with countries that don't have a central funding infrastructure.*

***James Counts Early:*** *There is a positive orientation in our discussions about the word culture – that it is always something pristine and good and exciting and enlightening. But ways of knowing and doing have ideological foundations. There are Christian fundamentalists who believe that a wom-*

*an's place is in the home, and according to their reading of the Bible that men are in charge. There are homophobic dimensions of culture and so culture has a number of vectors. It's not just a positive expression of ways of knowing and doing and symbolizing. It also has, depending on where you stand and the ideological divide, some harmful implications.*

## • Use the tools at hand to advance critical study and practice

Discussion then developed around the benefits of decoupling two projects embedded in the summit's research project, described by Patricia Goff as "the critique of Cultural Diplomacy and its limitations," and "the exploration of the Cultural Relations alternative." The weight of conversation fell on the need to couple Cultural Relations and Cultural Diplomacy and to deepen discussion at the confluence of the two. The point was made that, ceding the term Cultural Diplomacy to state-centric actors and analysis would be to suggest that the Cultural Relations approach is not always already implicated in advancing the diplomatic action of states and thus to release cultural practitioners and academics from critical examination of the political roles they play in the international field of engagement. Key to critical discussion is recognition that the diplomatic and cultural activities termed Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Relations operate within larger fields of exchange and negotiation.

***Patricia Goff:*** *I guess what I have found valuable as a kind of an entry point into this conversation is to decouple what I see as two projects. One is the critique of Cultural Diplomacy and its limitations – its state-centrism, etc. The other project I see involves specifying in some detail what the potential of the Cultural Relations alternative is. So, when I think about Cultural Diplomacy, I'm confident in my answers to a number of questions. What is the nature of Culture that underpins it? Who are the main actors? What is the objective? When I'm asked the same questions about the Cultural Relations approach, I don't know the answers. What is the concept of Culture that underpins it? Who are the main actors in a Cultural Relations approach? What is its objective or what is the set of objectives that it hopes to fulfill? So, the one project is a critique of Cultural Diplomacy, the other is a building out of the notion of Cultural Relations as an alternative.*

***Rhonda Zaharna:*** *I want to return to the comment about increasing the number of actors – how we assume that if we increase the number of actors, we're democratizing diplomacy, that we're changing diplomacy. I think that we're focusing on "the who" as Patty Goff was saying: "I know what Cultural Diplomacy is. I look at who's the actor and then what their goals and needs are." One of the assumptions when we talk about diplomacy, whether Public Diplomacy or Cultural Diplomacy, is that the focus is on the actor and this actorness – the who. This is actor-based and actor-focused. Looking at Cultural Relations, it seems to be process focused. We're shifting our focus from "who" to "what" and "how." When we're talking about networks – that's process focused. So, I think we need to expand our vision away from actorness, to move beyond it to include considerations of process and issue – from the "who" to the "how."*

*That's what I'm thinking. We're not going to change our view of diplomacy as long as we're locked into the actor.*

***Costas M. Constantinou:*** *I think Rhonda's comments are very useful. We should keep both the actor focus and the issue focus and explore the tension between them. This will allow us also to conceptualize and revisit diplomacy as a practice. If we are interested in developing Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice, then I think it is very important to keep our critical focus on the practice of diplomacy. What I have in mind here is not only the idea of moving beyond the state and looking at other actors. The issue of policy implementation is also very important here. We should not simply see diplomacy as state foreign policy implementation, or any act of policy implementation for that matter, but also see the possibility of policy revision through cultural encounters with others.*

***Jonathan Chait Auerbach:*** *Based on my experience working as a Mexican diplomat in the US, I feel that instead of imposing something, we have to listen, make other actors part of this, because otherwise we continue with this idea that it's the government taking care of the whole topic and not including other actors. If we are going to add other actors, they should be part of the project and they should also be leading it. I think that we diplomats should also be part of it rather than taking on the whole project by ourselves.*

***Yudhishthir Isar:*** *What we really should be talking about is Cultural Relations not Cultural Diplomacy. However, because of the hegemony of the term Cultural Diplomacy, it's very difficult to analyze what's going on in this field without using the term. From my point of view, and that of other researchers with whom I work, there is an ethical obligation to use the term Cultural Diplomacy when what we really mean is not something that diplomats do, and we really think is that it shouldn't be called Cultural Diplomacy but something else. When you get into that framing you immediately realize that it's not just that if states aren't involved then everything is sweetness and light. There are issues of power, there are interests of all kinds, and I have found that the Bourdieusian framing – the idea of a field in which there are interests, rivalries and all kinds of games being played – to be a very fertile one to understand what's going on here, whether you call it Cultural Relations or Cultural Diplomacy, but we're stuck with Cultural Diplomacy. We should recognize this problem when we do our research and that there are other ways of bringing together the actors and the process.* ●

SESSION III

# The Cultural Relations Approach to Network Diplomacy



**IN** recent years the practice of diplomacy has shifted. The building and management of global relations is no longer the work of the hegemonic Cold War club of nation-states. The 2020 pandemic, Trump era politics and the new "culture wars" clearly show that the previous "rules-based order" no longer applies. State-based diplomacy now coexists with and is a part of network (and networked) diplomacy. In the global era, patterns of engagement are being established by a myriad of newly empowered actors, including antiracist activists, scientists, artists, educators, administrators, entrepreneurs, cultural institutions, Indigenous communities, diasporas, cities, NGOs and Non-Profit Organizations, philanthropists and others whose power is cultural as well as political. The complex civil society networks of power constructed by these "new diplomats" work both with and against statist diplomacy to engage with the critical challenges of the day – conflict, disease and environmental degradation among them. This network approach has empowered museum diplomacy, city diplomacy, citizen diplomacy, diaspora diplomacy, Indigenous diplomacies and queer diplomacy, to mention just a few of the Cultural Relations perspectives that contest the most traditional state-centric conceptualizations of diplomacy. Simply put, the metaphoric game of chess still played by the club of states and articulated through national foreign policies and in transnational governance takes place within and alongside civil society networks of cultural relations and power.

Building on the discussions summarized in the two previous chapters of this report, which focus on the primacy of culture and cultural analysis, we move here to consider how a Cultural Relations approach informs both the study and practice of contemporary network diplomacy. What does network diplomacy look like in practice and what are good examples of it? How can practitioners of a critical Cultural Diplomacy harness and deploy network diplomatic practices? What would be considered a successful practice of network diplomacy? How can the web of network diplomatic actors engage more effectively with the chessboard of nation-states and vice versa in order to define and address the fundamental challenges of our times?

**MODERATORS:** NICHOLAS CULL and SASCHA PRIEWE

# Recommendations

The following are some of the key recommendations that emerged from the discussion:

## • Work to facilitate a means rather than an end

Informed by the conversations in the two preceding sessions, their points of emphasis and words of caution, discussion in the final session turned to a consideration of what success in network diplomacy looks like. Participants pulled to the foreground the need to focus on the process rather than on the goals of network activity. In this discussion,long-term horizons and organic relationship-building took precedence over immediate interests and short-term deliverables.

> *Museums are engaged on a global basis. Daily and weekly I am in touch with colleagues around the world. We share exhibitions, send our curators and others to speak around the globe, and host colleagues from other countries. Even when there is a level of tension between nations, we can still have meaningful relationships with museums and colleagues in those places. That is, even within the context of the tensions that we see daily in the world, we can keep things going and have important collaborations where we exchange objects, share exhibitions and keep that flow of diplomacy through the cultural vehicle.*
>
> **JOSH BASSECHES**,
> public panel

***Rhonda Zaharna:*** *I want to step back to the process. What is the network for? I'm advocating for a process oriented focus instead of a goal orientated focus. In the conversation about networks, I ask why? Networks are very fashionable, but what's the purpose? If it's a network of awareness, I want a broad reach. If it's a network of empowerment, I want very dense relationships that I can trust. If it's a network of collaboration and cooperation, I want diversity of perspectives. So, it's not just the idea of "let's have a network." What's the "why" of the network? Why do I even want to join together? Have a process orientation and start with that "why."*

***Simge Erdogan:*** *There is this very strict divide that exists between producers of Cultural Diplomacy and consumers of Cultural Diplomacy. I think that real success, and the idea of Cultural Diplomacy as a process, comes into the picture when we find ways to merge producer and consumer together, and even unpack this division between the consumers and producers of Cultural Diplomacy.*

***Michael Manulak:*** *I echo what a lot of people have said in terms of network diplomacy in its approach. It seems to me to be more the means than the end that we want to investigate. The tools to build networks that are global in scale are unparalleled. And there are many examples of coalitions that are working through a networked approach. I'm thinking of organizations like the International Council of Museums, the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group, which engages 700 million people globally through a network of 96 cities to promote climate action, or even the vaccine alliance that's played such a leadership role in trying to develop a vaccine to get us out of the current pandemic. These are examples of coalitions of actors that have moved away from a strictly state-centric approach.*

*They're not anti-state approaches by any means, but often I think when you're dealing with network diplomacy and you're dealing with the global challenges that we face, it's not an either-or approach, but it's a both-and approach.*

***Simon Dancey:*** *Pontos de Cultura: Points, Places and Practices of Culture, is a networked program that started out as a national project in Brazil in 2004. As Minister of Culture under President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Afro-Brazilian musician Gilberto Gil took state money and basically pushed it out to Indigenous and Afro-Brazilian cultural producers. From the start, Gil abandoned any idea of evaluation and monitoring success in the Western way; he didn't want to have it measured. What Gil essentially said was, 'we trust you to take this money.' He didn't know what success would look like, he just wanted to stimulate these areas and give people money and resources to do what they wanted to do with it. The Culture Points model was adopted by a number of groups across Latin America and later in Europe as well. It's an interesting model, which is very different from the normative Western way of a state using finance to stimulate certain areas of culture.*

## • Ground discussion in self-reflexivity

Discussion returned to an issue raised in the first two sessions, reasserting the importance of self-reflexivity, particularly over issues of power, as a foundational principal in the study and practice of global relations.

***Eduardo Tadeo Hernández:*** *We need to problematize the notion of network. We need to think critically about networks and acknowledge that there are certain power structures that privilege certain bodies, gender expressions, or sexual orientations, while*


*discriminating against others. When we talk about Latin America, or for that matter, the Latinx in the United States, violence on a daily basis is the context in which these cultural relations take place. So, I wonder how can these communities actually drive social change when the possibility for imagination is becoming more and more difficult because of this violence and because of unequal capitalist dynamics? When we talk about success, I believe that for some achieving certain goals either for the state or other actors is the aim of a certain strategy. But for some communities, let's say diaspora communities, queer communities, Indigenous communities, the networks are a matter of survival. We need to have this conversation about networks in non-binary terms and we need to further politicize the notion of diplomacy. That's the only way we can counterbalance the narrative that diplomacy can only be understood from the state perspective and move far beyond that perspective to include other voices from these marginalized communities.*

***Francisco Peredo-Castro:*** *"Success" is related to the visibility of the sector/agents involved in a particular issue. In Mexico we have success with the national cinematic culture, which is financed by the state even if in many cases its production is very critical of the state itself. But we do not have very much success in relation to issues about Indigenous peoples, migrants, gender and so on.*

*Mexico will be the organizer of MONDIACULT 2022, which is a global conference on cultural policies. We are lucky to work in this field with other countries. We have an ambitious bilateral agenda with Canada that links to our work with creators and communities. With Canada, we are working on an agreement for the development of cinematography, including Indigenous cinematography. The work is not just happening between the states but also brings cultural producers and Indigenous communities into the making of cultural policy.*

**PABLO RAPHAEL DE MADRID**,
public panel

***Ryan Rice:*** *I worked for the Canadian government in the Indigenous Art Centre, and when foreign affairs or foreign trade officers would go out across the globe, the one thing that they brought with them was Indigenous art and it was really great for us because it gave us work to do within a global context. But it's very ironic and it's a very strange situation when the Canadian state is going out to the world promoting something that they were also legislating against internally. It was always about this resistance or refusal of the structures that we had to face consistently, and in 2020 it's still pretty much the same.*

***Edgardo Bermejo:*** *Going beyond state centralism is something that we in North America really need to engage in as a region. In the case of Mexico, Cultural Diplomacy is, as in all countries, based basically on cultural and national identity. We, as Mexicans, feel more comfortable working together with the Latin American countries or within the Ibero-American region. It is not the same when we face the opportunity to collaborate within North America, particularly on Cultural Diplomacy. We have trade agreements between Canada and the US and Mexico. We recognize ourselves as a region in terms of trade and commerce and investment, but it is not the same when we talk about culture. We should find ways to create a new narrative to explain North America as a common territory for Cultural Diplomacy.*

***Robert Albro:*** *This was an interesting discussion for me to listen to. I'm particularly interested in our discussions about the sustained ambivalence around the relationship between networks and the state or other sovereign entities and I don't know that we necessarily resolved it. The discussion has drawn our attention to the meanings that are often attached to networks in the context of diplomacy as a kind of activist and cosmopolitan intervention. In addition to thinking of them as more progressive, there's this idea that they cut out the mediator, that networks engage in a more direct and inclusive form of communication. I would question that necessarily, and I'd like to offer a gentle caution here. Anne-Marie Slaughter (2017) has conceptualized a network-centric diplomacy that is state-based and securitized and about leveraging networks in the interest of the state.*

***Nora Rahimian:*** *This discussion of networks still centres on the institution, the nation-state, whatever the body with power is. It still centres on them and then positions community or cultural creators as needing to ask permission to be allowed into spaces. So, going back to this question of why networks are so important, it is because they allow people to reject the power of the institution. So, when musicians come together it allows them to say, 'I don't care about the record label which is a form of indentured servitude, and y'all can keep your power.' I've seen artists around the world create these kinds of networks that allow them to keep wealth. Keep creative control, but also keep control of the messaging and the way that they communicate, and what they communicate with their audiences, which is really the point of where change happens. So, if we're talking about*

*diplomacy as a way of creating change, in my world, that's overthrowing white supremacy, patriarchy, capitalism and colonialism.*

## • Enact interactive problem framing

Based on awareness that people are culturally and epistemically bounded, discussants underscored the need to recognize the limits of cultural and epistemic acuity and to work across these boundaries and at their intersections in framing problems as a dynamic process. This enables a rereading of "success" as something other than the achievement of apparent solutions to problems hegemonically defined. Interactive problem framing enacts alternative epistemic entry points into the hegemonic study and practice of diplomatic action.

***Rhonda Zaharna:*** *In the last session we talked about diplomacy as representation, negotiation and communication. The beauty here is problem solving. There seems to be a focus on a need, a gap, a problem to attack, and so the "why" I see is perhaps the most powerful issue here. Networking is all about problem solving and moving Cultural Diplomacy in the direction of deliberately purposeful problem solving.*

***Costas M. Constantinou:*** *I think the more interesting models of success have to do with the kind of diplomacy that I appreciate and speaks to what colleagues have been talking about, their process and unsettling the division between producers and consumers of culture, the diplomacy of the everyday, cross-ethnic coalitions meeting in networks. That is, not to discuss "culture" per se – "Greek culture" or "Turkish culture" or other national cultures – but to discuss environmental issues or LGBTQ issues in communities. This has transformative potential.*

***David Wellman:*** *I just want to share with you the names of five organizations that I've been documenting the networking work of. They are the Muslim Jewish Conference (MJC), l'Association coexister, Connecting Actions, The European Institute For Dialogue and the African Middle Eastern Leadership Project. These groups work in the milieu of interfaith or interreligious work. They have created a network that started off based on friendship, then it moved to building a common vocabulary, and the word that this group, these groups came up with, which is my new favourite word, is "interconvictional." And interconvictional is inclusive of both practitioners of religions and agnostics and atheists. The idea is everybody has convictions, and we have to talk about the moral and ethical impetus that drives people to want to create community or fight against non-inclusivity. The common objectives that have emerged from these groups are a commitment to antiracist work, a commitment to pushing back against fear and leaders who leverage the fear of the other, and a commitment to antinationalist work.*

***Alberto Fierro:*** *I think that success means being able to really put together a network of organizations, institutions and individuals, and working together with a specific cause. During the last month of the Obama administration and the first year of the Trump administration, the Mexican Embassy and the Mexican Cultural Institute knocked on doors at institutions like the National Endowment for the Arts and the Kennedy Center. When the public discussion, after Trump's election, turned to the question of who will pay for "the wall," the Goethe Institute said, 'we'll do an exhibit of a German artist living in LA that was working on that topic.' At about the same time, the American Film Institute decided to focus on Mexico precisely to showcase the richness of Mexican films. And many other organizations got together to do a film series, for example, with a theme in common.*

*In a network, success for one node might be defined in completely different terms than for other nodes. But I see a successful network as one where the whole network works so each node advances its interests and all advance together. A successful network is also one where a weaker node becomes stronger by connecting to another node (i.e., there's an incentive for collaboration).*

**CÉSAR CORONA,**
webinar participant

*"Success" is related to the visibility of the sector and agents involved in a particular issue. In Mexico we have success with the national cinematic culture, which is financed by the State even if in many cases their production is very critical of the state itself. But we do not have very much success in relation to issues about indigenous peoples, migrants, gender, and so on.*

**FRANCISCO PEREDO-CASTRO,**
webinar participant

*The concept of Guerrilla Diplomacy is rather important for this conversation. Coined by Darryl Copland, Guerrilla Diplomacy is certainly a possibility to go beyond traditional notions of diplomacy. Guerrilla Diplomacy can be seen as interconnected, technology driven, securitized, there are tools to frame and manage issues ranging from pandemic diseases, racism, development, diverse representations, etc.*

**CÉSAR VILLANUEVA RIVAS,**
webinar participant

*I think that a best practice for success is having an idea and getting interesting allies to work on and fund it.*

## • Engage the past through a multi-epistemic lens

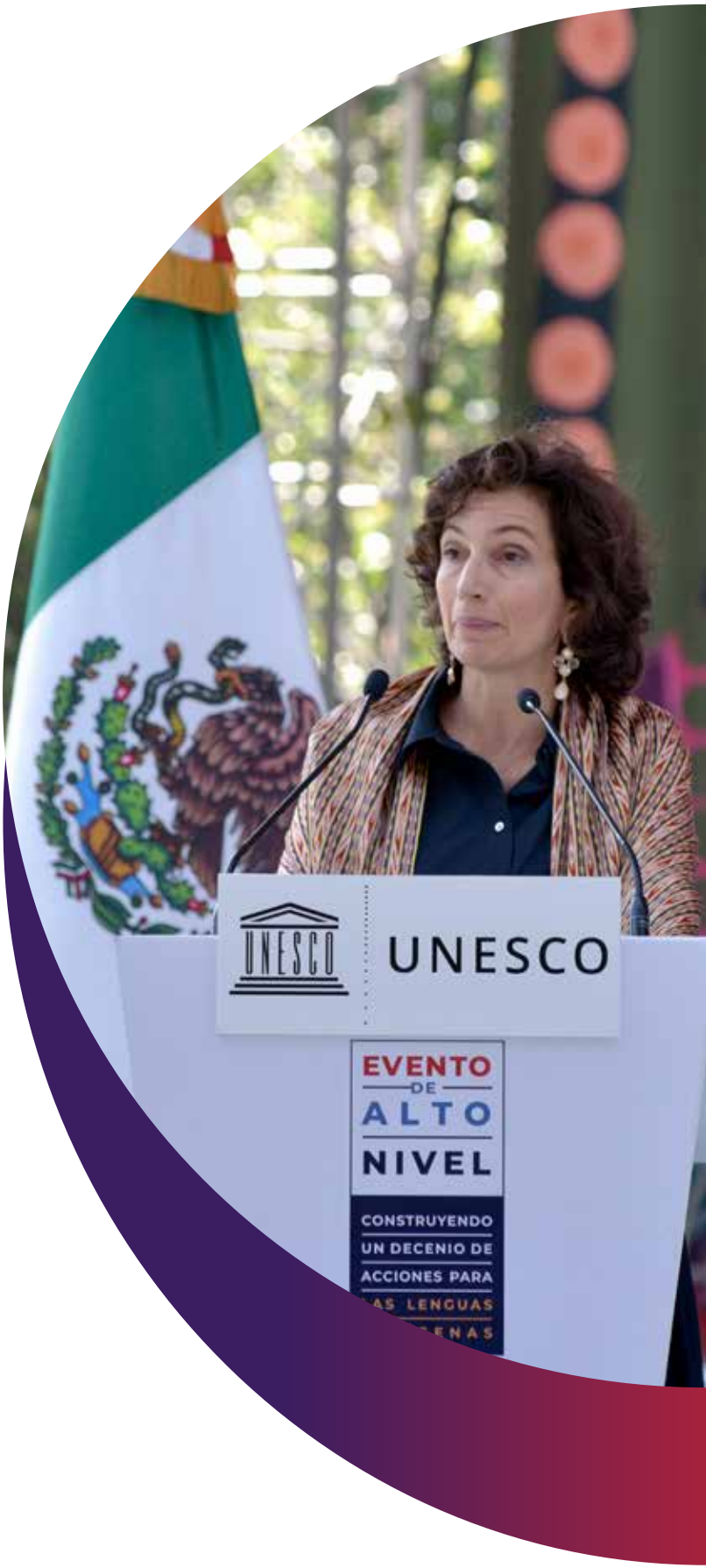
The final session returned to the call, earlier in the summit, to broaden the historical scope of analysis and challenge the Western orthodoxy that diplomatic action necessarily exists only in the realm of formal interstate relations. Discussion then turned to the idea that Cultural Diplomacy as critical practice needs to engage in diplomacy – past and present – as an always-already multi-epistemic activity. There was broad agreement that this ongoing effort requires academics and practitioners to mobilize the insights provided by historically specific case studies.

***César Villanueva Rivas:*** *Diplomacy should not be seen as a fixed practice. Just as culture is an ever-evolving concept, I think diplomacy is too. What we understood about diplomacy in the last century, it's very different from what diplomats actually do today. Diplomats, in the broader sense that many of us are discussing here, create and facilitate networks and thus engage in cultural practice beyond the statist agenda. I think we should also think a little bit about going beyond the methodological nationalism that is embedded in many of our comments. I think we still position ourselves very strongly from our nation's point of view. I would like to see a network which is more under a cosmopolitan view because at the end of the day, a culture, a society, what we're doing here right now – this academic summit – is very cosmopolitan in the best sense of the word.*

***James Counts Early:*** *I want to urge that we do some case studies that ground all of our analytics, theoretical perspectives, historical abstractions, and that tell us about the actual dynamics going on at levels of scale within nations and their citizens, and between nations in regard to altering this power dynamic of how the nation-state reflects its citizenry. I think we have to look at this issue of success as one of dynamic and organic process, not an issue of final outcomes – such as the eradication of inequalities between citizens of different cultural-making backgrounds, or how a certain state might present an official symbolism or cultural image that does not represent the dynamics internal to its citizens. One key example would be the experience of the millions of Latin American citizens who draw on a historical sense of heritage from the various countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and who are actually living that heritage. Even the most marginal of them can go to libraries and have computer access, or they can buy cheap cellphones. They are, in effect, living transnational lives – not the verticality between nations but horizontal lives despite the existence of borders, anthems and flags. This is something that we should study in the Los Angeles area relative to Mexico in particular, but to Central America more generally.*

*I think that artists can collaborate across borders. It's the recognition that our borders are arbitrary. They're not real things; the nation-state is a social construct. So, artists can connect across borders, across social issues and common intersections on issues that globally are impacting all of us. What does it look like to come up with a global solution?*

**NORA RAHIMIAN**,
public panel



***Dylan Miner:*** *I'm thinking about our last session and references to another possible world, and of the need for historically specific case studies. This brings to mind the Zapatistas' notion of "otro mundo posible," and I'm thinking about how this example may help us reframe our conversations or the notion of a world in which many fit. When César was talking about his experience teaching Spanish in North Carolina in 1992, I was thinking that 1994 was also the year NAFTA passed and it also saw the rising up of Zapatista forces in Chiapas. They weren't interested in recreating the nation-state, but instead, in creating non-hierarchical governance –to think not about ways of reproducing state-run diplomacy and power but actually thinking about something else and living and working in that way. As we continue these discussions, I wonder what ways we can look toward and how we look to Indigenous non-state governance forms and Cultural Diplomacy as examples of success, and if we do, how that may inform or change the discourse.*

***Vanessa Bravo:*** *I am working with a group of Latin Americans scholars on a book about diaspora and the role of the diaspora in public diplomacy. Here we are thinking of success as relationship building to advance goals that are for the benefit of the homeland. Now on the one hand, diasporas sometimes work to support governments at home. In many other cases, however, they work against a government's policies in the homeland. And so, for example, we have the case of the Chilean diaspora in China, where the interests of the state and the interests of the diaspora entrepreneurs are very much aligned and they're working in collaboration to advance similar goals. But, there is also a case of the Puerto Rican diaspora organizing as citizens of the United States to force Governor Ricardo Rosselló Nevares to quit because Puerto Ricans were really upset about his performance. In both cases, these are examples of people putting their minds together to achieve specific goals for the benefit of the homeland beyond the geographic space of the nation-state.*

***Ryan Rice:*** *An example of success could be looking at the Indians Pavilion at Expo 67 in Montreal. But when you start to consider success within the cultural sector for Indigenous people within North America, you have to understand that it always came with resistance or refusal. We weren't invited to participate within the institutions of the state, the structures of power, the museums, so, the majority of success that we can measure comes from pushing back. I'm a co-founder of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective that started over 10 years ago to push back against the lack of opportunities for Indigenous curators to work within institutions, whether as guests or in permanent positions within the institutions that hold our objects. So, this was, again about refusal, resistance and pushing back. It has never been a hospitable relationship where we're invited to the table. This success has been achieved through the networks that we have developed over the years that have been consistent with a number of collectives that have taken place to ensure that Indigenous presence is recognized outside of the absence within all these institutions or within this Cultural Diplomacy.* ●

*A museum is not a unit like a nation-state, but it has a role as a certain kind of diplomat. Museums today – unlike many nation-states – have retained the public trust. We know that there has been a variety of research that shows that the public trusts museum information and the evidence-based insights that we offer. So, we need to figure out how to use this and not squander that public trust, because it gives us a platform and a space to engage that is different from that of many other units or entities.*

**JOSH BASSECHES,**
public panel

# APPENDIX:

## WORKSHOP MEMBERS' POSITION STATEMENTS

**Robert Albro**
Research Associate Professor,
American University

In seeking to advance Cultural Diplomacy as more critically engaged, dismantling the "myth of culture's neutrality" and disconnecting culture from an exclusive attachment to the diplomacy of the nation-state are good first steps. But if an anthropological conception of "culture as a total way of life" is to help advance a critical Cultural Diplomacy, this must include the thoroughgoing critique of such a conception. Embracing that critique involves moving beyond diplomacy's frequent treatment of culture as aesthetic expression and essentialized identity, but also any account of cultures as bounded and discrete or assumption that values are shared in the same way across a given cultural group. Anthropology now understands cultural knowledge as contested, constructed, historical, partial, unevenly distributed and hybrid. What does this mean for a critical Cultural Diplomacy?

I see an opportunity to engage in a critical examination of national programs of Cultural Diplomacy as themselves non-universal, nationally contingent and particular expressions of representational purpose and of culture's instrumental power or efficacy. Another is to understand that diverse expert communities, whether foreign service officers, climate scientists, techies, human rights activists, museum curators or national security experts, often mobilize incommensurable conceptions of culture, variously conceived as a source of identity or as soft power, as property, heritage, code, terrain, capital, goods and services, digital content, measurable competence, experimental or adaptive systems, among others.

A reimagined Cultural Diplomacy would anticipate this ontologically plural state of affairs and undertake to better understand how "culture" circulates as an instrumental, problem-solving tool within and among expert communities as privileged sites of diplomatic engagement. In contrast to the assumptions underwriting person-to-person exchange, we might focus instead on the collaborative outcomes of diverse transnational applied cultural networks, giving attention to the non-rivalrous cross-fertilization or co-creation of knowledge emergent from such networks, and their contributions toward the boundary-crossing construction of shared cultural and normative frameworks of discourse, practice and mutual understanding.

## Lourdes Arizpe

National University of Mexico, Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies

One of the most salient trends of this new century has been the expansion of politics into realms of society that hitherto had followed their own rules, among them, the private sphere and the realm of culture. In effect, it could be said that the whole of society is now under the direct influence of politics; that is, of a rethinking that leads to the need to renegotiate many different kinds of relationships, from intersectionality and interculturality to international geopolitics. In this context, I find the term "critical diplomacy" very useful for advancing toward a new understanding of relations between states, constituted civil organizations and social and cultural movements, which are forging new actors involved in international diplomacy.

In my international involvement for many years, first as an activist in movements that provided social and political openings for peasants, women and Indigenous peoples, then as an organizer for, and later on president of, various international academic associations, and finally as a United Nations functionary, advisor and consultant, I was honoured to have been able to participate in this global process. As an anthropologist, I try to describe diplomacy as closely as possible – as an ethnography of what I call "international cultural transactions" – in my book *Culture, International Transactions and the Anthropocene* (2019). It gives me great satisfaction and enthusiasm that a new perspective about this process is now being put forth through this North American Diplomatic Initiative.

Finding what is missing in studies and practices of geopolitics, and bringing in questions about migration, human security, cultural industries and diversity is an attractive research and debate agenda, though perhaps a bit too broad, unless the assumptions taken from the outset clear a path toward practical understandings. To end this statement, I will say that I am particularly interested in the debates related to Western constructions.

## Jonathan Chait Auerbach

Consul General of Mexico in Miami, Florida

Over the last 20 years I have been part of the diplomatic service of Mexico, in which I have served different functions specializing in Cultural Diplomacy. Within the scope of my country's foreign policy, I have worked to generate knowledge about Mexico and to establish spaces for dialogue, both with the populations of host countries and with the Mexican diaspora in its new environments.

My work developed using a previously created narrative in order to avoid isolated actions. The objective: to promote a positive view of Mexico and the contributions of the Mexican diaspora, particularly in the United States, and to generate understanding between societies and the Mexican community.

To do so, and for the fulfilment of certain projects, we considered the following questions: Toward whom are the actions intended? Where should we promote Mexico's presence? Where can we be recognized as Mexicans? How can we find points in common between the main site of operations, Mexico as a country, and the Mexican diaspora, and the promotion of culture as a means of responding to occurrences of hate speech?

We specifically developed projects that could produce an array of different outcomes, or an outcome that, in turn, could lead to other events encompassing different audiences, in order to avoid monolithic narratives.

The goal was for participants to connect with an artist or advocate through a theme or cultural activity, and from there with Mexico.

I hope to share my experience as a cultural diplomat working to generate knowledge of one another and advance an acceptance of differences and cultural diversity in ways that recognize us as participants in the same space.

**Edgardo Bermejo**

Independent Consultant on Cultural Diplomacy and International Cultural Cooperation, Former Cultural Attaché of Mexico in China and Denmark, Former Director of Arts and Culture at the British Council in Mexico

As these discussions go forward, I suggest the United Kingdom as a model of successful cultural policy in the 20th century using the tools of cultural and public diplomacy. When we think of an exemplary model of cultural policy in the last century, the UK offers an admirable story. It is difficult to imagine that the great imperial power that dominated the planet throughout the 19th century, often with violence and authoritarianism, the country that patented capitalist exploitation through the great power of Victorian conservatism, that profusely practiced war, slavery, piracy and looting for its wealth, is now, in the eyes of the world, an international model in matters of cultural policy.

Two elements, among many others, help to explain this transformation: the wise creation of cultural institutions over the last hundred years, which evolved and consolidated over decades (BBC, British Council, BFI, etc.); and an accurate reading of the historical time. In other words, Britons were able to construct a national narrative different from the past to explain to others, and to themselves, the critical role of British cosmopolitan culture in the conformation of a national and social identity. A comparative study between Mexico and the United Kingdom in terms of their cultural models and the projection of their image abroad, should also be part of this consideration.

**Vanessa Bravo**

Associate Professor,
Strategic Communications, Elon University (North Carolina, USA)

Public diplomacy, including Cultural Diplomacy, can be practiced by non-state actors (Cull 2019) such as diaspora communities (Bravo 2014), both in support of home countries and against the goals of the homeland (De Moya 2018). In other words, diasporas can act as cultural diplomats of their home countries but at the same time be critical of their homelands' decisions, laws or positions. This kind of diasporic activism is for sure influencing social change in Latin America. For example, as detailed in the forthcoming (2021) edited book *Latin American Diasporas in Public Diplomacy* (Bravo & De Moya), diasporas from the two countries that occupy the Hispaniola Island have worked together in New York to oppose laws that deny Dominican citizenship to children born in the Dominican Republic but of Haitian mothers with irregular immigration statuses. In another

example, the Puerto Rican diaspora participated in the online and offline #RickyRenuncia movement that ended with the resignation of then-governor Ricardo Roselló, opposing the home government, but they also organized initiatives to support the Island after hurricanes and earthquakes impacted Puerto Rico, sending financial support and engaging in "voluntourism," in this case, in support of homeland goals. Other diaspora groups, such as the Mexican diaspora, are influencing the homeland through the actions of civil society organizations and through direct political action in the form of absentee voting and direct political representation in their legislative bodies at home. And Venezuelans abroad are heading a campaign that exposes the shortcomings of Nicolas Maduro´s regime. Building on this work, I want to highlight how diaspora communities are addressing problems at home and in so doing demonstrate that states are not always the central actors of public diplomacy. Diasporas are utilizing strategic communications on social media, through diaspora media and through different networks of influence.

**Jutta Brendemühl**
Program Curator,
Goethe-Institut Toronto

In times of renewed isolationism and state centrism in response to perceived or real threats, and regardless of form of government, the role of International Cultural Relations (ICR) is challenged and must be sharpened as a foundation for entangled international relations (Goethe-Toronto 2020). While we should understand, acknowledge and celebrate our respective cultural identities, autonomy, sovereignty and histories in order to engage meaningfully with others and contribute to bettering the world (I use this phrase with non-naïve intention), "Cultural Diplomacy" by definition provides the underpinnings for exchange and dialogue. Diplomacy per se necessitates a certain amount of mutuality to distinguish itself from propaganda. Thus, I do not look at "Cultural Diplomacy" so much as a "soft power" strategy but instead refer to ICR as an ongoing strength- and capacity-building exercise that needs long-term strategic planning, investment and grit: the willingness to observe, listen, learn, debate, participate; the assertive resilience to fend off abuse or co-option; and vocal criticality paired with empathy and patience. It is in every country's interest to actively shape its relationships with other nations (not apart from them or against them).

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas recently countered the pervasive mood of "country first" (Maas 2019) with a multilateral "together first" (Deutschland.de 2019) position at the UN General Assembly, as state centrism is simply not an efficient model for diplomacy. The world's most urgent issues are entangled: digitalization, disinformation, populism, authoritarianism, extremism, climate change, energy, migration, security, peace, pandemics. What is needed more than ever is a horizontal shift toward a fortified, universal, human rights-based stance within a polyphonic approach to broader "Cultural Diplomacy," including fiercely independent, arms-length players contributing their complementary strengths to target common goals. Moving beyond state centrism also includes a vertical shift to involve diverse civil society actors and educational partners. That does not exclude or negate a responsible role for governments in safeguarding, coordinating, supporting and funding ICR beyond self-interest or economic utilization, quite the opposite.

The differences, contradictions, dissent, inconveniences and the risk of failure that come with open, pluralist frameworks (and intrinsically, any arts and culture work) must be tolerated, embraced and harnessed in successful, future oriented ICR to enable and enrich social and cultural progress.

**Catherine C. Cole**
Consultant/ Special Advisor,
Commonwealth Association of Museums/ Vice-Chair ICOM CAMOC

CAM is a network of post-colonial museums and museum professionals that reflects on colonial legacies and develops new international relationships and working practices through a distance learning program, international internships and exchanges, international conferences and workshops and demonstration projects with global partners. We practice Cultural Diplomacy and encourage museums throughout the Commonwealth to become activist institutions, to use their resources to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

CAM provides both formal and informal Cultural Diplomacy. Formally, as an Accredited Commonwealth Organization, CAM participates in the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGM) and the triennial Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CCEM), and as an ICOM Accredited Organization, participates in ICOM's General Assemblies, providing a civil society voice at these important international meetings. Informally, CAM organizes activities such as the Caribbean-Canadian Museum Exchange to allow members of the Caribbean museum community and diaspora to learn from one another, and a study of the role of cultural organizations in facilitating the settlement experience as part of the global project Migration: Cities I, (Im)migration and Arrival Cities.

The issues NACDI is raising speak to CAM's practices. Although headquartered in Canada, CAM's membership is predominantly African, Caribbean and South Asian, united by Commonwealth values and a commitment to decolonization. CAM begins from the standpoint that we can learn from one another, that we all benefit from developing an understanding of one another's worldviews. CAM operates without government funding, which has its challenges but also allows for a fair amount of latitude. Museums as institutions can be governmental, not-for-profit, university, corporate or private, so by definition engage a wide spectrum of players. Museums are among the most trusted public institutions – safe spaces to address difficult questions. As sites of lifelong learning museums can help to bridge the gaps in formal education in the histories of different countries and peoples.

**Costas M. Constantinou**
Professor of International Relations,
University of Cyprus

Conceiving of Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice is predicated on accepting certain unconventional or critical moves. A first move demands an appreciation of diplomacy beyond state-centric and policy-oriented concerns. Such a move interrogates the strategic or instrumental use of culture in the service of foreign policy objectives (e.g., for maximizing soft power, for nation branding or even for attaining "high" and "ethical" objectives through a shallow exposition of foreign cultures). A second move recognizes the historically embedded and, indeed, diachronic involvement of diplomacy in "cultural translation'" (Rossow 1962). Ambassadors have always had the responsibility of translating the ideas and values of foreign cultures back to their own communities and vice versa, and it would be pertinent to rethink that critical task beyond national

cultures. A third move understands the need to identify and engage not only "high" cultures but also "low," less visible, liminal or subaltern ones that lack respect or recognition and are thus not commonly translated nor used as resources for critique and praxis. In doing so, forms of cultural domination should be systematically exposed at the same time as the resource potential of diverse cultures for critique and praxis is fully explored.

Conceiving of visual culture as diplomatic critique is predicated on accepting certain additional moves. Given the proliferation and circulation of images in the 21st century, and the impact of the pictorial turn in public and digital diplomacy, a fourth move entails the task of enhancing visual literacy. That is to say, together with language skills, the visual skills of diplomats and students of diplomacy need development, skills that will help them understand and critically engage the processes of visual culture in a spherical manner (i.e., the production of images, the (discursive and semiotic) analysis of their content and their impact on diverse spectatorships). A fifth move should commit to making visible what is invisible or less visible in visual culture, disrupting the dominant viewpoint that images produce and unsettling the numbing, non-reflexive mindset that fast-moving images create. Diplomatic critique should aim to sensitize scholars of diplomatic practice to the processes of framing and montage that occur in different fields and levels and help to retain or regain an ethos of reflexivity and critical appreciation of knowledge production.



**Noé Cornago**

Associate Professor of International Relations,
University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)

Diplomacy has always been a cultural practice. However, to fully understand this fact, the old but hidden continuity between professional diplomatic intercourse and everyday life must be restored along with an older meaning of diplomacy as a way of knowing and dealing with otherness, which we find in history all over the world.

To do so, I argue, official diplomats need to listen carefully to the plurality of voices and legitimacies to which diplomacy owes its representational force and legitimacy, on the one hand, and on the other, to consider those who regard themselves as alternatives to official diplomacy, whom diplomats frequently deem obsolete – namely, community leaders, artists, writers, business executives, scientists and social media activists. The diplomatic community should also recognize that even in its more conventional form, official diplomacy and diplomats are the expression of a unique experiential knowledge, based on never-ending encounters with cultural difference.

Such encounters across centuries forged the practices, techniques, institutions and discourses of diplomacy. But their performance is now more open to public scrutiny and social and political contestation. This new pluralization of diplomacy reveals important functional adjustments and symbolic struggles to which the global diplomatic system must today respond – or even conform – in order to, paradoxically, ensure its own sustainability in an era of "perforated sovereignties" and "agonistic pluralism." Whilst the first notion captures the global functional imperatives behind the fragmentation of state power, which are increasingly visible in the diplomatic realm, the second allows us to remember the expectations of hope, and also the many despairs, that such a transformation entails. In this new context, the cultural field is, as it always has been, a venue for mutual enrichment and peaceful coexistence, but also an important battleground for both severe adjustments in progress and the symbolic struggles that the global diplomatic system is experiencing today.

## Simon Dancey

Visiting Research Fellow,
University of Leeds, UK

I want to advance discussions that address inequality, power and the social construction of reality through imaginaries – our imaginaries and ideas and how they shape the external world and can be utilized for social transformation, particularly in shifting and addressing hegemonies that shape Cultural Relations and Cultural Diplomacy. My most recent work has focused on the nexus between inequality and decoloniality, exploring the areas of cultural epistemicide, particularly building on the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos and "Vincularidad," the Indigenous Latin American epistemology that looks at the fundamental interdependence of all living organisms.

I also argue for the value of exploring the construction of communitarian policy initiatives aimed at enacting the social transformation of inequalities, using culture as a tool for change and a means of empowering the subaltern voice. These initiatives would include very disparate programs and activities, ranging from the favelas of Brazil to the working-class communities of post-industrial South Wales. The commonality is always about exploring and enacting change, and challenging and resisting inequalities and the roles of citizens, NGOs and civil society.

This complex network of social actors involved with Cultural Relations, including those who are the focus of Cultural Relations initiatives, is also the subject of my interest. I want to prompt discussion about the construction, transfer, adaption and adoption of policy at the local, national and international levels, including the value of investigating counterhegemonic policy and subaltern voices and how dominant hegemonies move to neutralize these voices, particularly concerning the dominance of neoliberalism. This has a particular focus on the design, delivery and evaluation of rights-based interventions into conflict and post-conflict contexts, aiming to understand how the impact of securitization, migration and conflict recovery on young people can be addressed. In particular I am looking at how to support at-risk youth and the complex imaginaries and power systems that restrict or empower them within particular socioeconomic and marginalized identities.

## Mauricio Delfin

Director of Asociación Civil Solar

As a researcher and cultural manager, my work focuses on civil society organizations in Latin America and in the relationship between democracy and cultural governance. I would argue that from the perspective of non-state actors and grassroots cultural movements, the notion of Cultural Diplomacy is perceived as distant and limited to the purview of the state. Nevertheless, there are a number of processes taking place across Latin America that could be described as manifestations of critical Cultural Diplomacy.

These initiatives, sustained by regional civic networks and in constant interaction with state actors, infuse national and subnational cultural ecosystems with novel repertoires for civic action. A great example is the *Cultura Viva Comunitaria* (Living Community Culture, or CVC) movement, which has harnessed the political and discursive power of grassroots cultural networks across various Latin American societies and shaped a "continental" movement with concrete legislative and international cooperation results. Yet, the CVC movement

constitutes a notable example of a process that does not occur often enough, linking grassroots agents to a regional political platform with increasingly noticeable international impacts. Nevertheless, the CVC movement leads us to believe that Cultural Diplomacy, when understood as a critical practice and a transformative tool, can employ a diverse range of global platforms (e.g., the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and the Open Government Partnership) to further new orientations in global cultural governance toward novel behaviours, dispositions and attitudes around cultural sustainability and cultural democracy. I would argue that standing in the way of such possibility is a reluctance on the part of non-state, grassroot actors to consider themselves global actors (or "new diplomats"); they tend to work against or despite the state and its institutional limitations, are rarely able to direct their scarce resources to sustain global virtual and non-virtual exchanges and have to face colonial and Eurocentric models of cultural representation.


## James Counts Early

Smithsonian Institution, Former Assistant Secretary,
Education and Public Service and Director,
Cultural Heritage Policy Center Folklife and Cultural Heritage,
Independent Consultant Cultural Democracy and Statecraft Heritage Policy


NEW WORLD COMING!
There's a new world coming!
Everything's gon' be turning over...
Where you gon' be standing
when it comes?

– "Give Your Hands to Struggle"
(Johnson Reagon 1975)

The pre-COVID Old World is now exposed. Class, race, gender and cultural theories about the generative role of global-national, neoliberal, capitalist, economic statecraft as the sine qua non of democracy, human rights, cultural development and material progress falter in light of stark revelations. We see all the more clearly that human affairs within and among nations are conditionally bound by draconian nation-state ethics, the related virulent spread of racism and misogyny and the existentially destructive impact of human societies on the natural environment.

The prophetic lyrics of a "New World Coming," composed in the last quarter of the 20th century by African American woman historian, cultural worker, singer-composer and Civil Rights activist, Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon, invites an analytical exploration of the ideological and political foundations of 21st Century "Cultural Diplomacy as a Critical Practice." Women and men of colour rooted in working class and marginalized nations and communities (200 million+ Afro descendants in the Americas), along with progressive allies among peoples and nations, are integral to developing critical theory and practices to achieve full cultural democracy and diplomacy within and among nations.

The 20th-century origins of US Cultural Diplomacy as international ideological and political strategy began with the intent to influence the self-determination of Latin American nations. Given global US allied and oppositional influences, Dr. Reagon's 20th-century call to attention is directly relevant today.

The nations of Asia and Africa
They're taking over their lives.
The sisters and brothers south
of us
Are finally gettin' wise.
Then take a look, United States
Of the North American clime,
With your strange mixture of
wealth and hate
You won`t be exempt this time
TAPPED ON MY DRUM

## Simge Erdogan

Doctoral Candidate,
Cultural Studies, Queen's University

As Cultural Diplomacy has become networked and has expanded to include non-state actors, it has developed new roles and potentials. The transformation of Cultural Diplomacy from a traditional one-to-one model of cultural communication toward a many-to-many model of cultural exchange and interaction forces us to ask important critical questions: How can we make Cultural Diplomacy more critical and comprehensive? What is the meaning and role of Cultural Diplomacy in constantly changing networked environments? How can non-state actors perform Cultural Diplomacy in socially, culturally and technologically diverse local and global environments?

As an emerging scholar, museum professional and cultural practitioner, I am interested in exploring these questions by examining the potential of non-state actors in Cultural Diplomacy. Through the transdisciplinary perspectives of Cultural Studies, Museology, Visitor Studies and Global Studies, I ask how these actors – museums in particular – mobilize culture and shape the complicated processes of cultural production, reception and consumption, thereby achieving important diplomatic outcomes. I view non-state actors as the new diplomats of the 21st century, pushing the boundaries of traditional state-centred Cultural Diplomacy by shaping local and global discourses and encouraging audiences to view the world from the perspective of others. The changes that have been taking place in Cultural Diplomacy invite us to: (1) expose its study and practice to critical assessment; (2) unfold the audience dimension and find new ways to assess its long-term effects; and (3) pursue a better understanding of the complicated processes of cultural production and consumption, which are informed by a complex set of factors, including institutional motivations, public reception, audience engagement, curatorial practices and the agency of cultural products.

## Alberto Fierro

Diplomat,
Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs

As a member of the Mexican diplomatic corps, I practiced and performed Mexican public diplomacy in the capital of the United States during the previous electoral process and during the first years of the administration of President Trump, through a strategy designed and led by the Government of Mexico, but with the support and involvement of many Mexican, American and international institutions as well as civil society organizations and the artistic communities of both countries.

In an effort to counterbalance US presidential rhetoric against Mexicans and immigrants in general, the Mexican government coordinated an aggressive strategy of Cultural Diplomacy, consisting of artistic and academic events, in order to showcase the numerous contributions of Mexicans and their cultures to the world and specifically to the United States. This allowed the participation of a rich and diverse range of actors in Mexico, the US and other countries. The process included the creation of alliances with national, international and local organizations for joint collaboration in promoting a counternarrative about Mexicans and their cultures. In the US, it was important to find allies who agreed on the significance of the shared and common histories of our nations.

These Cultural Diplomacy efforts were part of a politics of

culture that emphatically uncovered the biases and the lies against Mexicans and immigrants. It is this process of critical Cultural Diplomacy, which assembled a network of alliances among NGOs, institutions and cultural practitioners through festivals, film series and events, that I wish to discuss. Collaboration facilitated a showcasing of the cultural and ideological diversity of Mexico. In this case, our approach was not to use "soft power;" it became an activist practice that welcomed a whole range of actors.


## Carla Figueira

Director MA Cultural Policy,
Relations and Diplomacy & Director MA Tourism and Cultural Policy,
Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths,
University of London, United Kingdom


Cultural Diplomacy needs critical scholarship to develop and grow as a multi/cross/inter/transdisciplinary academic area. I thus welcome the opportunity to discuss the many guises of Cultural Diplomacy and what critical Cultural Diplomacy can be. My academic background is in international relations, arts management and cultural policy and sociolinguistics. In the world of practice, I have managed public cultural services and organized many different arts events. I am also a university lecturer, and in my classroom (these days also virtual) cross-cultural/national engagement is both means and content of teaching and learning. Our different experiences of practice and theory show us various ways of operating in and thinking about Cultural Diplomacy; however, the academic study of all these complex interactions has hardly begun and is often still quite narrow. Indeed, many questions need to be asked and answered: what is "culture" and what is "diplomacy" in Cultural Diplomacy?

But what is the point of asking these questions? Personally, I think Cultural Diplomacy needs to be rethought in the context of the current state of emergency in which we live, which is also a state of emergences. This rethinking needs to take place in its academic study, in its practice and its policy development. I like to think of Cultural Diplomacy as a complex phenomenon and intervention that can be leveraged to produce change. How to enable that? I have grown to appreciate the mouldable, conceptual nature of Cultural Diplomacy, although I often get frustrated by "everything" being Cultural Diplomacy (and "soft power" too…). I think precision and clarity, as well as awareness of complexity and of the need to recognize limits and limitations, are needed when thinking and doing Cultural Diplomacy for change (i.e., critical Cultural Diplomacy).


## Eric Fillion

SSHRC/FRQSC Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of History,
University of Toronto


Jean Désy, the diplomat who orchestrated the 1944 Canada-Brazil cultural agreement (the first of its kind for Canada), reflected on the meaning of culture in an essay written while on his last assignment in Paris in 1954. He defined culture as fluid and relational, as a form of intersub-

jectivity that is sometimes nationally bounded but not always. Notwithstanding his elitism and the Catholic personalism that informed his view of the world, Désy's take on the topic was refreshing compared to that of his colleagues in the staid East Block headquarters of Canada's Department of External Affairs. He wore many hats in Brazil: ambassador, impresario, patron of the arts and cultural mediator. Like the artists that he worked with, many of whom were friends or family, he pursued several agendas simultaneously while working across boundaries between the state and civil society, in the service of both French-speaking Québec and the broader Canadian nation-state. His was a multifarious and multidirectional affair.

The fact that little was known until recently about Désy's career and others like it underscores the importance of history in rethinking diplomacy as a critical practice. In the same way that competing understandings of culture circulated within diplomatic milieus in the past, so-called "new" players have been active, independently or as part of a network, both inside the power apparatus and parallel to it, for much longer than is commonly assumed. In order to "bridge the gap between academics and practitioners," it is imperative to address ideological and disciplinary blind spots, as well as the institutional obstacles and structural forces that have historically impeded the emergence of more adaptable, inclusive and activist approaches to Cultural Diplomacy. Equally important is the need to reflect on Canada's particularities, not least of which is the country's contested federalism now playing out in an increasingly interconnected world.



**Alexandre Couture Gagnon**
Associate Professor,
Department of Political Science, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Network diplomacy refers to public policy decision-making, implementation and evaluation by governments and non-government stakeholders outside the borders of the state. I am interested in discussing network diplomacy as it relates to specific policy fields, notably cultural policy. Via network Cultural Diplomacy, governments and non-government actors promote a particular image of the society they represent (or claim to represent) in foreign states. A key element of network Cultural Diplomacy is that it aligns with the state's cultural policy as a whole; in other words, the objectives of a given state's network Cultural Diplomacy and its cultural policy are similar.

The policy dimensions of network Cultural Diplomacy are what concern me as these discussions go forward. For example, the government of Québec has been actively using network Cultural Diplomacy since the 1970s, first to promote nationalism and build a national identity inside and outside the province following the election of a nationalist government, and later, after the recession of the early 1990s, to market its cultural industries. This is particularly true of the cultural policy of Québec in the United States. The first structured and large foreign program of Québec in the United States was Opération Amérique in the late 1970s. The government embarked on the subtle promotion of a trait of Québec that Americans viewed favourably, French language and culture. Later, the Québec government promoted culture as helping to build national identity while providing jobs and contributing to Québec's economy. Today, the Québec government's main objective in the United States is business opportunities; thus, multiple programs target Québec's artistic promotion. The province's network diplomacy has thus closely tracked its cultural policy. To what extent have non-government actors agreed with the government's shift of objectives? How central have they been in the decision to change the focus of policy?

## Kimberly Gibbons

Executive Director,
Ontario Council for International Cooperation

Achieving universal sustainable development that leaves no one behind is amongst the most pressing global priorities of our lifetime, requiring whole-of-society approaches that prioritize and amplify the perspectives and lived experiences of the most vulnerable. As the field of Cultural Diplomacy seeks to create new spaces for academics and practitioners to examine the potential for "multi-directional and potentially activist practice that encompasses a diverse range of actors," as noted in the NACDI project statement, leaders, practitioners and mobilizers from civil society organizations (CSOs) and communities in the international cooperation, humanitarian and community engagement sectors in Ontario and across Canada have relevant insights to bridge and strengthen global-to-local connections as "new diplomats." Many of these diverse actors seek to catalyze systemic change through strategic programs and partnerships that respect shared values, such as those contained in the Istanbul Principles for CSO Development Effectiveness: respect for and promotion of human rights and social justice; gender equality and equity and the promotion of the rights of women and girls; people's empowerment, democratic ownership and participation; environmental sustainability; transparency and accountability; pursuit of equitable partnerships and solidarity; knowledge creation and sharing and a commitment to mutual learning; and a commitment to realizing positive sustainable change – community-led and informed by local priorities. In Canada, there is a significant gap in the level of public awareness, engagement and mobilization necessary to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals. My hope is that discussions such as those advanced by NACDI will highlight the need to generate ideas for how cultural, scientific and educational institutions and organizations can significantly contribute to Agenda 2030 by using their power and resources to curate spaces for more inclusive dialogue, reflection, research, co-creation and action on real world issues, in partnership with CSOs, community mobilizers, artists, social innovators, grassroots leaders and governments.

## Patricia Goff

Associate Professor,
Wilfrid Laurier University

My work in this area of concern has focused on two aspects. Conceptually, I remain interested in how the traditional, relatively narrow notion of Cultural Diplomacy has been expanding to include non-state actors, as well as new modes of interaction and different goals beyond advancing the "national interest." At the same time, I am acutely aware of the constraints imposed on scholars and practitioners when the starting point of our discussions is that same narrow definition of Cultural Diplomacy. Therefore, I welcome NACDI's initiative to move beyond the language of Cultural Diplomacy, even if the term still lurks beneath some of our discussions. Empirically, I have studied the activities of specific non-state actors, notably the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and satellite museums, to understand their political and economic contributions. Museums are of particular interest to me as a political economist because their cultural raison d'être is increasingly mobilized in the service of their own and other's political and economic objectives, many of which

have little to do with diplomacy. Museum satellites also illuminate new ways that cultural actors can engage with the state, suggesting that the state has not conceded this terrain. Instead, it is forging new partnerships with cultural actors (and vice versa) as relationships between arts institutions and the state evolve. These discussions allow us to delve deeper into this distinctive moment and the immense potential for cultural actors and activities to contribute to pressing issues of our time.

## Andreas Görgen

Director General for Culture and Communication,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Germany, Board Member 1014 – Space for Ideas, New York; Goethe-Institut, Munich; German Academic Exchange Service, Bonn; Federal Holding of Cultural Institutions, Berlin

Western and especially European Cultural Diplomacy is heavily loaded with history: imperial and colonial pasts, the political settings of national states and universalist value sets. Without denying such contexts, cultural policy in the 21st century has to reach out to practices that allow moving beyond these constraints without being naïve – in other words, to develop and offer cultural, academic and civil society policies that can compete with those who play according to "power-rules" and, at the same time, are open to universal challenges without giving universalist answers. To this extent, it might be fruitful to discuss policies that initiate a shift from a "project" approach and an export logic toward investment in common infrastructures such as museums, schools, universities, etc., or open existing infrastructures such as national cultural institutes as hubs for a common purpose. These shifts cannot be performed without taking into account that other players might consider them a "weak" approach and try to take advantage. Furthermore, international cultural policy has to consider that European states have become countries of immigration, and that this fact has to play a role in preparing the common ground of migrant societies by applying intercultural competencies to their home countries. Finally, taking into account a new responsibility for new spaces of culture means especially the digital space. In this perspective, digital diplomacy is part of Cultural Diplomacy because digital rooms are equally challenged by normative and economic conditions, and "shrinking spaces" are to be noticed not only in the analog but also in the digital sphere.

## Linda Grussani

Algonquin Anishinabekwe, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg,
Ph.D. Candidate, Queen's University

Kwey! I am a member of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation and a second-generation Italian-Canadian born and raised on Anishinaabe Akì (Ottawa, ON). My perspective is that of an Indigenous person who works in colonial cultural institutions. For over 20 years, I have worked as a curator and arts administrator with national museums and federal collections. As a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at Queen's University, my research focus is on Indigenous representation in museums, centring my experience and practice in negotiating these problematic spaces.

## Yudhishthir Isar

Emeritus Professor of Cultural Policy Studies,
American University of Paris,
Education Director of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva

Today, perhaps more rapidly than ever before, new ideas and new terms have emerged in the discourse and practice of actors and agencies in both government and the cultural sector. My recent reflection and research have focused on several of these contemporary itineraries, among them the singular trajectory of the term "Cultural Diplomacy." The notion has gained wide and diverse currency over the last two decades. In both international relations and cultural policy framings, it has gradually supplanted the older concept of International Cultural Relations. Deployed together with the term "soft power," whose usage has gone well beyond its original coinage by Joseph Nye, Cultural Diplomacy has become a reigning buzzword. Among arts and culture practitioners, as well as agencies devoted to arts and culture production or delivery, it has become central to the ways in which actors interact with their governmental interlocutors and funders whenever their work takes on an international dimension. I wish to discuss insights into processes and trends in discourse and practice at the state level as well as within the cultural sector that I have seen develop over the past decade. As a keyword, how has the notion of Cultural Diplomacy operated as an organizer, on different levels, of both foreign policy and cultural practice? How has it mobilized political, organizational and media attention? The life of these sorts of terms usually goes through successive phases: formation, dissemination, discursive adaptation and popularization. Then they reach a final stage of consolidation, becoming integral to the general vocabulary. Some do not survive, while others prove to be of lasting usefulness and value well past their phase of consolidation. Where does Cultural Diplomacy stand in this regard?

## Umair Jaffar

Executive Director,
Small World Music (Toronto, Canada)

There is no doubt that the old approaches to Cultural Diplomacy are less relevant and effective in today's world. There is a need to re-evaluate Cultural Diplomacy and to look at intercultural relationship building so that it is based on an expansive mutual empathy and understanding of difference. My interest in these discussions is to find out if we are really breaking free from the issue at the core of Cultural Diplomacy? Or are we just exploring how to make it more effective?

While I find exploring the "what" and "how" of Cultural Diplomacy interesting, I am more curious about the deeper question: "Why Cultural Diplomacy?" This "why" makes us question the mandate behind the entire exercise. Unless we critically examine the hidden agenda behind Cultural Diplomacy, can we really address the fundamental challenges of our times in any meaningful way?

## Bronwyn Jaques

Doctoral Candidate,
Cultural Studies, Queen's University

My understanding of culture is informed by a Cultural Studies framework. "Culture" is neither singular nor unified; it cannot be bound to a nation-state. Culture is intersectional, multifaceted and entirely unique; it encompasses one's individual beliefs, values, attitudes and experiences. It is both way(s) of life and its multiple expressions.

My research examines the ways that "dark heritage" (heritage that is dissonant and difficult to interpret and confront), and specifically prison heritage, are utilized and manipulated by state and non-state actors for purposes of tourism, place-branding, the accumulation of national soft power and as a vehicle for Cultural Diplomacy. How can cultures, such as those of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated communities, which have historically been marginalized, excluded and condemned, contribute to effecting local and global change?

However, my interest goes beyond the instrumentalization of culture and its nationalist projections; I am principally concerned with the ways that dark heritage and its interpretation can create spaces – "contact zones" – that work to foster empathy and compassion between and within cultures and generate opportunities for reconciliation, forgiveness and understanding. I am interested in the ways that Cultural Diplomacy functions at a local level, and the ways that small municipalities and communities can engage in Cultural Diplomacy as processes for mobilizing culture and cultural practices to advance specific narratives, promote cultural values and support political and economic agendas. My view of Cultural Diplomacy resists methodological nationalism and instead emphasizes the importance of local actors and networks – the so-called "new diplomats."

## Kelly Langgard

Director of Granting,
Ontario Arts Council

My knowledge and perspective on Cultural Diplomacy was mostly built over 12 years from 2007 to 2019 when I headed two strategic offices at the Canada Council for the Arts that developed international opportunities for Canadian artists. These included showcases at arts markets, festivals and other fora, multiyear initiatives and exchanges (usually in partnership with Canadian arts organizations or other funders), various research and capacity-building projects and developing international strategy, policy and partnership agreements. We often collaborated with Canadian missions abroad to support and enhance their Cultural Diplomacy initiatives, leveraging opportunities to help artists advance their careers and expand their networks. I recently advised Global Affairs Canada in the development of a renewed Cultural Diplomacy strategy for Canada and know many diplomats who are passionate about the arts and committed to engaging culture in Canadian diplomacy. The resources they can bring and doors they can open for Canadian artists abroad are real. I'm interested in these discussions in what a productive role for government could look like in a networked and relational understanding of Cultural Diplomacy.

Having been part of many projects of varying scopes and scales at national and international levels, I am currently interested in three things: (1) how Cultural Relations happen at the local level in sharing experiences of place and community; (2) to what degree the goal of mutual understanding is met (or not) through various types of cultural

engagement; and (3) the need to discuss ethical practice in intercultural relations. I believe that meaningful Cultural Diplomacy practice requires a co-creative, inclusive and activist mindset.

If mutual understanding is the goal, then acknowledging and negotiating power inequities, prioritizing reciprocity and collaboration, planning for long and deep investments of time and resources, being at home with experimentation and expecting to be changed are all important conditions of the exchange.


## Micheal Manulak

Assistant Professor,
Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University


Owing in large part to advances in information, communication and transportation technologies, power has become increasingly diffuse within the international system. It is in this context that cultural actors, including conservatories, museums and entertainment companies, have enjoyed a heightened capacity to forge global networks with their counterparts. While government-sponsored councils and organizations continue to be active, and in most cases, positive, players, new technologies have enabled direct connections among cultural entities. As a result, governments are able to mediate a shrinking proportion of global cultural interactions. Importantly, cultural players in many countries now have enhanced capacity to access audiences, funding, information and support beyond their borders.

Networks are not power neutral, however. While they can enable enriched cultural exchange, they can also open new avenues for exercising power. They confer increased influence on some and marginalize others. Certain actors are, for instance, positioned to gatekeep or exploit asymmetries in information. Others benefit from early-mover advantages or network effects. Thus, as much as they can depoliticize cultural interchanges, growing networks can create or amplify inequalities. This can contribute as much to the suppression of culture as it can to its promotion.

As the influence of non-governmental cultural players grows, moreover, global cultural relations are being driven by a new and more varied set of norms and interests. In a world where states exercised control over cultural exchange, national interests and intergovernmental norms were positioned to predominate. As cultural organizations gain greater capacity, other, more varied norms and interests, such as those associated with artistic ideas or profit, may increase in importance. As cultural exchange assumes a networked form, it is crucial to understand how the logic of networks shapes the spread of norms and the interests being advanced.


## Toby Miller

Stuart Hall Professor of Cultural Studies,
Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana—Cuajimalpa and Sir Walter Murdoch Distinguished Collaborator, Murdoch University


The word "culture" derives from colere, a Latin verb for tending agriculture. With the advent of European capitalism's division of labour, culture came both to embody such instrumentalism and to abjure it, via industrialized farming and emergent aesthetics. Eighteenth-century German, French and Spanish dictionaries evidence the shift from agricultural cultivation to artistic elevation.

Populations urbanized, food was imported, and textual forms were exchanged. An emergent consumer society produced such events as horse racing, opera, art exhibits, and balls. In the Global South, European imperialism produced anxieties about culture among survivors of Spain's conquista de América, Portugal's missão civilizadora and France and Britain's mission civilisatrice; culture was crucial for both invaders and resisters in a struggle for hegemony.

It is important to challenge any notion that diplomacy only recently involved networks beyond the sovereign state or that the third sector is unusual in exerting pressure over diplomacy, for that is the ordinary business of capital. Multinational corporations have been immensely influential in every conceivable forum, from the formation and subsequent operation of the EU to the conduct of all governments in economic fora. And culture is crucial, especially with many economies adjusting toward services and royalties as their base. Today, the global trade in culture is central to debates between nations. Its value increased from US$559.5 billion in 2010 to US$624 billion in 2011, and the European Commission regards the culture industries as an economic growth sector.

My hope is that discussions such as NACDI's will draw attention to the important intangible resources culture offers – reactions to the crisis of belonging and economic necessity occasioned by capitalist globalization.



**Guadalupe Moreno Toscano**

Doctoral Candidate,
Communication, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico

The role of non-state actors in public diplomacy and specifically in Cultural Diplomacy has grown significantly in the last decades. My interest is in how Mexican contemporary cinema acts as a non-intentional and non-state agent of Cultural Diplomacy, exposing cultural elements that conform to a new kind of soft power.

Soft power is not a fixed concept. Nations use and adapt soft power to their needs in different ways in terms of international relations and imaginary projections. One of the issues this discussion addresses is the need to reformulate and adapt the concept of soft power to the current conditions of the 21st century. It is impossible to imagine a world today without global interactions between industries, companies, non-governmental organizations, universities and individuals, all of which become non-state agents that, intentionally or not, contribute to the soft power efforts made by governments in the design of specific policies to achieve international positioning through persuasion and attraction.

As these discussions continue, I am interested in a new model of soft power in a post-national world, following Villanueva's (2018) conception of a flexible and mouldable soft power. I believe that soft power has a boomerang effect, generated by non-state agents that unintentionally contribute to a country's image. For a country like Mexico, soft power arises from its culture, for example, its rich contemporary cinematography industry. Since 2005, that industry has been funded largely by government grants, contributing to a "renaissance of the Mexican cinema," which in turn, though not intended as a soft power agent, has helped to foster a positive country image worldwide.


## Amy Parks

Doctoral Candidate,
Cultural Studies, Queen's University


While I approach the questions raised by these discussions as an emerging interdisciplinary scholar, my particular experiences as a sometimes casual, sometimes critical consumer of media determine my focus on particular cultural arenas. My broad research interests involve the dynamic processes of new "national" imaginings and representations in a g/localized and digitally mediated context. Though these new configurations of identity continue to develop under hegemonic ideas of the nation-state, they may also offer alternative senses of belonging not constituted or policed by official citizenship. I explore the potential for mass-mediated cultural activities to present new and more productive ways for members of civil society to relate, organize and possibly effect change in democratic processes.

I suggest a critical approach to examining and participating in these processes. As an interrogation of the imbrication of professional sports and media industries exposes, the extent to which social movements can survive un-coopted and uncontained by the limited and censorious language of corporate and place branding should be called into question. I ask whether what may be perceived as more direct access to one another and to new leaders – celebrity athletes, artists and entrepreneurs – is indeed an indication of egalitarian potential or a shift in where power concentrates and how it is communicated. Does this shift, made possible by online platforms and communications technology, simply reflect a reassembly of power from state to private, non-state players wielding a different form of cultural capital? By bringing together a diversity of voices speaking from a broad range of backgrounds and approaches, discussions such as this explore ways to work around these challenges and traps and imagine other ways of relating through cultural consumption.


## Francisco Peredo-Castro

Professor/Researcher,
Centre For Communication Studies, Faculty of Political and Social Science,
National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM),
CECC – FCPyS – UNAM


According to a popular Mexican urban legend, Americans are the people that Mexicans "love to hate" and Canadians are the people "we love to adore." This difference in relationship/interaction is related to the historical configuration of the nation-states of the American continent from colonial times, through their various independence struggles, to their histories as autonomous nations. But even given our peculiarities of sociohistorical formation as nations, it is an unquestionable reality that from the Rio Grande to the Tierra del Fuego, Canada has almost always appeared as "a world apart," distant and disconnected from turbulent Latin American history. In the long history of foreign interventions in this region, Canada has not been seen as a "blatant aggressor" against Mexico and Latin Americans. On the contrary, the need to connect the whole of Latin America, not only with the United States but also with Canada, has been referred to in some conjunctural moments. This was evident when George Jaffin, the American writer of the *Columbia Law Review,* addressed Mexican president Manuel Avila Camacho in the midst of the Second World War, on September 12, 1942, and later on April 8, 1943. His purpose was to raise awareness of the need to also consider Canada as part of the Pan-American Union in the context of the Pan-American

propaganda promoted by Mexico and the United States at the time through texts such as *New World Constitutional Harmony: A Pan-americanadian Panorama* (1942). Informed by these comparative historical relationships between the countries of Latin America and the United States and Canada, I am interested in the role of cultural perceptions, representations and imaginaries constructed in Mexico about Canada, in contexts in which, although there is not a very difficult relationship between both countries, tensions have arisen, such as recently occurred in the process of renegotiating the FTA/NAFTA/TMEC, or immigration matters.

## Nora Rahimian

Co-Founder,
#CultureFix, Creative Consultant

As we watch governments around the world systemically fail in response to climate change, racial and economic injustice, gender issues, a global health crisis and countless other issues that do not recognize borders and nation-states, it becomes increasingly clear that it is necessary to find alternatives to the white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy that are at the root of our global struggles. People in traditional positions of leadership can debate policy and argue over legislation all day, but that type of trickle-down change is slow and often ineffective. How, then, do we create much-needed paradigm shifts? Through art and culture and relationship; it is here that, because of the evoked emotional response and the invitation to imagination, people can begin to think and feel differently about the status quo. It is in emotional opening that they re-examine existing values and beliefs. And as these internal shifts happen, they manifest externally in behaviours.

Part of what makes art so effective in sparking change is the relationship between the artist and audience. There is an underlying trust and assumption of authenticity that allows fans to relate to and connect with both the artist and their art. Audiences know when they are being sold to; they know that governments have agendas, that systems don't always support their best interests. But artists, regardless of their status, often maintain a "one of us" vibe that enables trust. Marketing agencies have long known this, leveraging popular figures to sell sneakers and soda. This same approach can be used to connect us across our global struggles and create meaningful social change.

## Sudarshan Ramabadran

Senior Research Fellow and Administrative Head,
India Foundation's Center for Public Diplomacy and Soft Power

In a civilizational country like India, culture is not based on a singular thought or opinion. There have been and always will be many ideas of India. India has never sought to impose culture as a form of power. Rather, cutting across civilizations, India has sought engagement with the world. Yoga, or India's traditional medicine systems such as Ayurveda, are thousands-of-years old but even today they find resonance, acceptance and practice globally. Culture and commerce have always been key pillars of India's global engagement. At home, mutual respect, love and inclusion have been at the forefront of India's civilizational, democratic and cultural identities. "Assimilate not disintegrate" has been the mantra spanning ages. India's constitution was

drafted by a committee led by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, who hailed from a subaltern community, and reminded the people of the values of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, which remain cornerstones of India's cultural and social ethos.

Be it arts, handicrafts, design, language, literature or cuisine, every place you visit in India can be measured with culture, which has been worn proudly by incredible Indians and is unique to them. This culture has also transcended national boundaries. Today, in the globalized information world of the 21st century, India places culture as a key pillar of its foreign policy initiative and orientation. For thinktanks such as ours, or for policymakers, the objective is to enable Cultural Relations and Cultural Diplomacy to facilitate mutual understanding and dialogue.


## Ryan Rice

Independent Curator and Associate Dean,
Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, School of Interdisciplinary Studies,
OCAD University


# #LandBack


## Jolene Rickard

Associate Professor,
Cornell University – History of Art Department, Art Department
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Recognitions of territory called out in university settings – often the only mention of Indigenous dispossessed land – have become a new form of "welcome" between settlers and Indigenous peoples. The recognition that a university is on Indigenous territory is often a hollow gesture if there are not meaningful accompanying considerations or reparations made toward Indigenous peoples.

Since the mid-1990s, Indigenous art and cultural practitioners have joined colleagues in the field of Indigenous Studies in pursuit of global collaborations and analyses. The movement from comparative scholarship within an American or Canadian context has shifted to a global space, and demands, in the least, the inclusion of Aotearoa (New Zealand), Australia and the broader diaspora of Sami Nations. Key to this movement has been the Native and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) conference hosted by specific Indigenous Nations. NAISA conferences accommodate a broad range of traditional expressions from host communities' perspectives. This more recent assertion of expressions of protocol has instigated and remapped discussion about what kinds of practices are meaningful and not exploitive display. It is a fine line, one that is much debated among Indigenous scholars and communities. Historically, diplomacy was critical to the pre-contact and contact relationships for the maintenance of Indigenous territories in North America. I am concerned with the use and update of Indigenous welcome protocols as a contemporary practice. Who has the right and responsibility to evoke and often modify these established traditions? As an "American" Fulbright Research Scholar and a "guest" of Canada, and while on a tour of Canada's highest court, I asked the tour guide if the Canadian court recognized "Indigenous territory" before its proceedings. The guide proudly said yes, but only if the legal case had Indigenous plaintiffs. I argue, in this case it is performative.

## Ben Schnitzer

Doctoral Candidate,
Cultural Studies, Queen's University

Cultural Diplomacy, as I understand it, has a lot to do with using cultural encounters to relate to others, to listen, take in new perspectives, cultivate empathy and raise awareness of power dynamics. Seen in this light, Cultural Diplomacy can be considered a critical practice – not only because such encounters can help us "practice being critical" of the assumptions that underpin how we understand ourselves and others, but also because the interrogation of these assumptions is essential to addressing the seemingly intractable problems we collectively face.

I think this stance is rooted in my experience as a musician. I had never encountered the terms Cultural Diplomacy or Cultural Relations, yet I instinctively understood the political power of cultural encounters to effect change. It was something so natural to me that it seemed unnecessary to even name it. Later, as a cultural policy analyst for the Canadian government, I came to understand why states would want to name and harness this power and how – through the governance of culture – they might try to limit the extent to which this power could be exercised by other actors whose visions might not adhere to dominant narratives.

This growing understanding, and the resulting disconnect I felt between my identity as an artist and my role as a public servant, led me to pursue a PhD in Cultural Studies at Queen's, where I am looking at how the cultural complexities of Canada's history have shaped the development of – and resistance to – the Cultural Diplomacy initiatives of the Canadian state. I hope to contribute to policy thinking that envisions cultural diplomacies that are sustainable because they are grounded in critical reflection, are committed to the long-term coexistence of different ways of living and advance the interests of a wide range of actors.

## Eduardo Luciano Tadeo Hernández

Doctoral Candidate in Communication,
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To think about Cultural Diplomacy as a critical practice requires us to challenge the Western and positivist notion of diplomacy associated with the sovereign territoriality of the state and a discourse of otherness and exceptionality attached to cultural representation. This doesn't mean that the state's existence should be denied or its end predicted; it rather invites us to recognize that we are currently experiencing a worldwide process of denationalization, where the participation of non-state actors has become fundamental to the conceptual and practical definition of a new architecture of the international system.

My biggest concern in these ongoing discussions is to explore how diasporas are bringing new perspectives to diplomacy, offering new avenues of thought and communication mechanisms to deal with problems such as discrimination and alienation, but also to celebrate diversity and difference. Since diasporas are heterogenous, in social and economic conditions for example, their cultural representations make visible the fictionality of the discourse of the imagined community, and therefore the need to frame the conversation in different terms, such as: (1) intersectionality, to acknowledge and respect differences and to recognize oppressions common to people worldwide; (2) imagi-

nation, to create honest textual and audiovisual discourses to spread the celebration of diversity and to resist the xenophobic and orientalist prejudices of certain conservative and chauvinist leaders and groups; and (3) solidarity, to create networks of collective care where the historical and practical knowledge of communities can help to overcome the international physical and material walls that divide us. In short, as diaspora experiences show us, if Cultural Diplomacy is to become an element in dealing with the crises of our times, we need to question its ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions and to recognize that its main objective should not be to favour the national interest but the construction of global solidarities.

**Odila Triebel**

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ifa (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen), Germany

What is the purpose of Cultural Diplomacy? How does it connect to Cultural Relations? These questions guide my thoughts as I engage with the issues raised by NACDI. Historically, Cultural Diplomacy has been the practice of a country's cultural representation. Its implicit goals were to raise a nation's visibility in the international arena and to allow trust-building, inter-institutional and interpersonal relationships as well as knowledge-sharing. As a practice linked to a political ontology of territory, however, Cultural Diplomacy met its limits in failing to address the fact that cultural practices and products are always the result of complex and fluid exchanges of ideas. Because Cultural Diplomacy is meant to represent a national society, it necessarily belittles the powerful social and aesthetic function of art as a practice that transgresses present epistemologies. And in the 21st century, Cultural Diplomacy has found itself incapable of offering intersectional solutions to global challenges.

Nevertheless, it is a legitimate task for governments to make themselves visible on the global stage, to compete for the reputation as an important global public good contributor, and to sustain bridges of communication and trust-building in times of political tensions. Therefore, since international communication and digital connectivity in democracies now allow cooperation on multiple levels beyond the state, there is no inherent problem to sustaining Cultural Diplomacy as long as it supports multilayered and complex cultural relations. In this way it could be said that Cultural Relations are the critical practice of Cultural Diplomacy. It is a governmental task to provide and secure the infrastructure that allows worldwide cooperation. It is a governmental task to seek multilateral mitigation of global challenges. In democracies, instead of survival of the strongest, values of the common interest, compromise and inclusion should guide the political practices of the global citizenry.

There are two issues of particular interest to me in the move to widen state-centred diplomacy. First, what impact is there on the concept of transnationality when Cultural Relations are mostly supported by national funds? Second, there is some evidence that due to communications technology, "communities of choice" grow and at least add to "communities of destiny" built around place and birth. Social scientists like Arjun Appadurai consider stakeholder-based interest alliances to be more effective. However, since they can serve as supplements to governmental policies as well as practice interest advocacy or serve as watch dogs, their mandates require further debate.

**David Joseph Wellman**

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I have long been fascinated by the current and future potential of Cultural Diplomacy to build bridges, diminish distrust, privilege other voices and perspectives and push beyond the limits of so-called normative diplomatic practices (though Cultural Diplomacy has arguably been integral to the practice of diplomacy since its inception). However, I believe that when the practice of Cultural Diplomacy is first and foremost defined as a state-sponsored endeavour, its full potential is significantly diminished. As we confront the global ecological crisis, the rise of nationalism and the leveraging of the fear of racial, religious and ethnic difference on the part of national leaders and movements to gain power and undermine transnational alliances, the limits of the diplomatic efforts of nation-states to address these challenges are laid bare. My current research on non-state and grassroots diplomatic actors, such as the Vienna-based Muslim Jewish Conference, the French youth movement NGO Coexister, the Washington D.C.-based African Middle Eastern Leadership Project and domestic groups such as Chicago's Inner City Muslim Action Network, has opened my eyes to potential new avenues which Cultural Diplomacy could pursue in concert with and independent of nation-states. Among the innovations these groups offer is the concept of interconvictional bridge building, a term that includes but goes beyond the limits of interreligious engagement. The term "interconvictional" is inclusive of both practitioners of religions and agnostics and atheists and maintains that all three groups hold equally valid and valuable convictions, which inform their actions and predisposition to cooperation and collaboration. In light of the work of Constantinou, Cornago and McConnell in their text *Transprofessional Diplomacy* (Brill 2017), the efforts of these groups take on new meaning and offer new potential – especially as they constitute a leading edge of non-traditional diplomatic actors engaging with challenges that state sponsored diplomacy has thus far failed to adequately address.

**R. S. Zaharna**

American University

Before we address the implications of state-centric Cultural Diplomacy in the 21st century, I would suggest that we critically examine buried assumptions that drive the rather bold idea that states can presume to use "culture" as a tool of their diplomatic practice. As natural as the link between the nation-state and national culture appears today, a glance back at history reveals that link was deliberately forged during the process of state-building. The concept of "culture" (introduced by Sir Edward Tylor in 1871), like the constructs "state" and "diplomacy," originated in contemporary Western Europe. The interlocking conceptual schema of state-culture-diplomacy appears rooted in the mindset of individualism and separateness that helped carve up the world during the 19th and 20th centuries. Globalization and digital technologies are now welding that world back together. If Cultural Diplomacy is struggling today, I would argue it is because the mindset of separateness has grown increasingly out of alignment with the dynamics of connectivity and diversity that define the 21st century. These new dynamics call for a new vision of global diplomacies and human

diversity. Throughout much of human history, the richness of human diversity was a shared resource that spawned the exchange of ideas, artifacts and technological innovation. Today, human diversity is even more critical for innovative problem-solving. I look forward to continuing these discussions and exploring the assumptions that tethered culture to the state and fueled the appeal of Cultural Diplomacy during the last century. I would like to argue for a vision of human diversity as a shared resource of global, humanity-centred diplomacies in the 21st century.



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