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Cultural Diplomacy and International Cultural Relations, Volume I, Oliver Bennett (ed).

London: Routledge

The first volume of the Routledge book series on cultural diplomacy is a compilation of journal papers published in the *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, volume 23, issue 6 (November 2017). These papers have been collated into a book edition, which is a commendable initiative due to oversaturation of journal articles in various journals, however, since this is a compilation of chapters that derive from the above-mentioned journal issue, the book would have benefited from an in-depth introductory study that an editor could have provided to set the debate into a wider literature context and to provide more merit to potential readers and buyers of the book. Having said this, this does not undermine the value of the book and the merit of publishing this work, because knowledge produced in chapters makes a contribution to our understanding of cultural diplomacy and international cultural relations and as such justifies dual publication of this work.

Cultural diplomacy studies usually focus on the distinction between public and cultural diplomacy or debating cultural diplomacy as a subset of public diplomacy (Lending, 2000). Scholars who see cultural diplomacy as distinguished from public diplomacy often argue that the long-term relationship building is what distinguishes cultural diplomacy from public diplomacy, usually centred on persuasion through political and cultural communication meant to instigate mutual understanding (Signitzer, 2008; Leonard, 1997; Sablosky, 2003; Topić & Sciortino, 2013). Cultural diplomacy is often discussed in the domain of strategic communication and long-term effort (Leonard, 1997), which makes cultural diplomacy close to the practice of public relations which is also centred on durational relationship-building (Signitzer, 2008; Tench & Yeomans, 2017; Topić, 2017).

This book leans more towards the understanding of cultural diplomacy as a subset of public diplomacy, with chapters exploring dark heritage and places of memories from the historical conflicts. For example, chapters such as the Great War in Slovenia which became a focus of the soft power initiatives after the demise of second Yugoslavia (chapter 1), EU's efforts in promoting enlargement and alternative modes of governance with particular focus on activities in Serbia (chapter 2, Indian understanding of cultural diplomacy as international relations and the historical development of cultural diplomacy/international relations in India (chapter 4), cultural diplomacy in Qatar and its link to national identity construction and elite legitimation (chapter 5), European cultural diplomacy and diaspora relations with Kazakhstan (chapter 6),

Japan's participation in UNESCO's Orient project meant to change the image of the country (chapter 7) and the free trade agreement between the EU and Canada (chapter 8).

All these chapters are in the domain of cultural diplomacy being understood as a subset of public diplomacy, however, there is also a chapter in the book that leans towards the understanding of cultural diplomacy as a long and sustained communication and cultural effort to build relationships, namely the chapter on the role of Russian language and education in Armenia (chapter 3). However, this chapter also discusses the intertwined nature between cultural and public diplomacy and the need to study these two fields together, with the use of a particular historical understanding. For example, in the case of Russian language and education in Armenia and the programmes Russia launched, it is clear that this policy came as a part of Russian foreign policy and a policy-driven attempt to create a transnational community that will be centred on civic rather than ethnic values. Thus, Russian authorities decided to use culture and education to integrate former soviet countries in a community that will span across borders and create a new cultural union of people's formerly together in the USSR.

While all the chapters are excellent, two chapters particularly stand out. The first one is the chapter by Maria Trinidad García Leiva on the EU-Canada trade agreement, which analyses the role of culture and cultural diversity in this agreement. As the author correctly emphasises, the trade agreement can be seen as a further economic liberalisation, however, the agreement has merit because of cultural production such as film. It is well known that the EU has a film quota that prevents Americanisation and protects European cultural industries, and Leiva analyses how these values are enshrined in the EU-Canada trade agreement. This chapter would have benefited from updating as the trade agreement has since been signed, however, the chapter shows how culture may play a role in business negotiations and how cultural diversity can be enshrined into international and transnational policies and agreements. The other excellent chapter is the one by David Clarke, Anna Cento Bull and Marianna Deganutti who introduced the underexplored concept of 'dark heritage' to cultural diplomacy studies. Some works explore how dark heritage is used in collective memories and politics (Lebel, 2013) but this chapter takes this further and elaborates on how dark memory became part of Slovene cultural diplomacy, thus extending the field of cultural diplomacy studies as a whole.

In summary, the book provides lots of food for thought and informative content that deepens our knowledge of cultural diplomacy and international cultural relations as a field. Whilst

obviously limited by the scope of the original special issue, the book would have benefited from more chapters on cultural societies and their role in cultural diplomacy and international cultural relations, for example, the role of arts societies, music choirs or dance organisations, which are all invested in promoting their countries and local culture abroad through their performances.

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