

ifa ECP Monitor Comparative Report

# Arts and culture institutes

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Hertie School



Institut für  
Auslandsbeziehungen

## 1. Introduction

Cultural institutes are often the main instrument of a country's external cultural policy (ECP) and a visible symbol of efforts to gain "soft power." They constitute one form of "cultural diplomacy," which affects soft power as part of "the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes" (Nye, 2011). Although cultural institutes form only one part of cultural diplomacy, itself a subset of the total ECP of a country, they are often the most visible manifestation of a country's efforts to share its culture with an international audience. Indeed, a Goethe-Institut, British Council, or Institut français are frequently the first point of contact and the first impression that foreigners reach before learning the culture and language of another country or even visiting there to work or study.

What is cultural diplomacy? This is a difficult task, as some scholars have critiqued the term for its analytical sprawl (Isar, 2010). To determine a workable definition, first it is necessary to understand what culture means in the international setting. Nye (2008, p. 97) argues that "culture is the set of practices that create meaning for a society, and it has many manifestations" from so-called "high" to "low" or "mass" culture. Cummings (2009) expands this to say that cultural diplomacy is the "exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding." Goals include "a positive agenda of cooperation in spite of policy differences," creating "a neutral platform for people-to-people contact" and "and serving as 'a flexible, universally acceptable vehicle for rapprochement with countries where diplomatic relations have been strained or absent'" (Ang et al., 2015 p. 368).

Due to their significance, this report examines the role that international cultural institutes (ICIs) play in countries' external policies. Although they do not constitute the entirety of cultural and arts diplomacy, their visibility and clear quantifiability make them an important and useful object of study. In some cases where ICIs are not present, the foreign or cultural ministries take over. These are discussed where relevant.

Why do countries employ cultural strategies internationally? As Goff (2013, p. 1) argues, "cultural diplomacy springs from two premises: first, that good relations can take root in the fertile ground of understanding and respect" and "second, cultural diplomacy rests on the assumption that art, language, and education are among the most significant entry points into a culture." These (allegedly) universal values can help transcend political divisions. For example, the US and Cuba—two countries with frosty (or no) diplomatic ties for decades—have cooperated on high-level cultural projects, including those with the New York Philharmonic and the New York City Ballet.

Despite these clear and often admirable goals, the process of cultural diplomacy—and the use of ICIs within it—is intricate and filled with contradictions. Cultural institutes operate a complicated intersection of culture and foreign policy, with an inherent tension between cultural practitioners (who often support culture for its own sake) and the state backers (who often seek to instrumentalize culture for foreign policy purposes). Indeed, "cultural diplomacy's position at the intersection of government and the cultural world is both a source of strength and challenge" (Goff 2013, p. 11). Other scholars expand on this situation, pointing out that "this contradictory understanding rests on the widely held tendency, in current discourses, to

elide the fundamental institutional location of cultural diplomacy within the machinery of government and, therefore, the inevitable restrictions imposed on it in terms of the interests it is meant to serve” (Ang et al., 2015, p. 370).

This report, then, will explore the use of ICIs in regard to cultural diplomacy, presenting a limited but representative sample of many of the most significant nations. Data and primary sources are used wherever possible, with secondary sources contributing to the more thematic discussion of the role of cultural diplomacy in foreign policy, as well as the tensions between the two in practice.

## 2. External cultural and arts policy in action

While many government documents on the topic of cultural policy refer to a cultural “strategy,” efforts at influence are often far more fragmented than practitioners would like to admit. For example, the US State Department outlined a clear role for cultural diplomacy in 2005 in a report titled *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*:

“Cultural diplomacy is the linchpin of public diplomacy; for it is in cultural activities that a nation’s idea of itself is best represented. And cultural diplomacy can enhance our national security in subtle, wide-ranging, and sustainable ways. Indeed history may record that America’s cultural riches played no less a role than military action in shaping our international leadership, including the war on terror. For the values embedded in our artistic and intellectual traditions form a bulwark against the forces of darkness.” (US Department of State 2005, p. 1)

Despite this forceful and strategic language, the US began cutting cultural efforts in the run-up to the report’s publication and has done little to reverse that trend, seeing its job completed after Cold War “victory” and preferring instead to rely on private actors. It is important, then, to consider the *actual* activities of ICIs, not simply take their stated ambitions at face value.

Ang et al. (2015, p. 375) generalize this incoherence, pointing out that “cultural diplomacy as policy seems particularly prone to a disorganized coexistence of divergent rationales within government practices [...] perhaps consistency and coherence cannot be expected of a field that encompasses very different conceptions of ‘culture,’ varying aims and types of instrumentalization, and a range of institutional locations, including foreign affairs departments, cultural ministries, trade promotion agencies, and a multiplicity of relationships with non-state cultural bodies.”

By definition, cultural diplomacy must involve some connection to the state. In practice, this usually involves the foreign ministry, although the relationship between state and culture is not consistent across countries. Indeed, “cultural diplomacy’s connection to a government’s foreign policy goals, to its diplomacy, and to its foreign ministry varies between states, but the absence of any such link precludes an activity from being deemed cultural diplomacy” (Mark, 2008). As Ang et al. (2018) add on the subject of the tensions, there is a risk of “conflation of cultural diplomacy *stricto sensu*, which is essentially an interest-driven governmental practice, with cultural relations, which tends to be driven by ideals rather than interests and is practiced largely by non-state actors.” Researchers must therefore be cleareyed when discussing the role and intention of ICIs and external cultural policy.

In contrast to public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy is not unidirectional. Rather than broadcast a view of a country for public consumption, cultural diplomacy in general—and ICIs specifically—seek interaction and engagement from foreign audiences. Cultural diplomacy in practice, therefore, takes a number of forms. As Goff (2013) points out, “sending French academics on exchange to Arab countries is cultural diplomacy. But so is the Institut du monde arabe in Paris, which seeks to familiarize the French with Arab history and culture on French soil.” Other typical forms include art exhibitions, theatre productions, and book fairs sponsored by the ICI or embassy.

Forms of cultural diplomacy practices by ICIs vary substantially across time and location. The practice of cultural diplomacy is improvisatory and ad hoc, with practice constantly evolving. Institutional relationships also differ substantially. As one researcher argues, “the British Council and the Goethe Institutes are para-public entities operating at arm’s length from the governments of Britain and Germany. The Alliances françaises are independent of the French government. The Confucian Institutes involve relatively greater state involvement. Each of these instances of varying degrees of state involvement would qualify as cultural diplomacy” (Goff, 2013, p. 9).

In practice, cultural diplomacy and the ICIs have been driven to a more market-based logic in many countries. Rather than the propagandistic aims of the 1930s and 40s or the grand-narrative cultural diplomacy of the Cold War, cultural diplomacy today is seen by some governments as a way to promote economic interests (Paschalidis 2009). The idea of “nation branding” (perhaps best exemplified by the UK’s GREAT campaign) is indicative of this. At the same time, the institutes themselves are now seen as more independent actors, as many countries (like the UK, Italy, and France) seek more self-funding for their ICIs, reducing state support and instead relying on their own revenues. This has occurred at the same time as the mass proliferation of ICIs from “new players”. These two phenomena are closely related: international competition and the global triumph of capitalism mean that culture is yet another way to compete in the worldwide marketplace, and ICIs provide an important way to enter it.

### 3. Primary actors in arts and culture promotion

Like many fields of ECP, cultural institutes operate on a highly unequal playing field. Specifically, “Britain, France, Germany, Spain, and China all operate what might be considered main powers of cultural diplomacy: the British Council, the Alliance française, the Goethe Institute, the Cervantes Institute, and the Confucian Institute, respectively” (Goff, 2013, p. 9). Of these, only China has truly broken into the older “club” of mostly Western European titans in ECP (although Russia can also be considered as a large player in ICIs today).

#### *Traditional players*

The growth of cultural institutes in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries was spearheaded by four of the main imperial powers: Britain, France, Italy, and Germany. Even today, these countries serve as models for the type of institutions that newer players are establishing. Britain and France were both exemplary for how cultural institutes paralleled imperial and geopolitical priorities. France, in particular, has a long imperial history of the use of ICIs, with many institutes used to promote the French language in contested geopolitical areas, such as the

Middle East after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. This trend arguably continues today with its influence in *Françafrique*. In the late 1800s, France used “external cultural policy mainly in the context of its competition with Great Britain for political and economic hegemony in the Middle East over the disintegrating territories of the Ottoman Empire” (Paschalidis, 2009, p. 278).

France today has two major institutes, Institut français (IF) and Alliance française (AF). IF was created as a result of recent reforms to the cultural sector, whereas AF is a longstanding semi-independent institution with roots dating back to the late 1800s. The chapters of the Alliance française offer more than 20,000 cultural events worldwide every year, with nearly 15,000 employees worldwide (Alliance française, 2018). The individual branches of the Alliance française are independent associations founded in accordance with national law. They largely finance themselves independently through language course income and donations and thus bear roughly 95 percent of their own costs (Alliance française, 2018).

The Institut français—which, unlike the AF, is directly tied to the government—is also intended to promote international cultural activities in France, for example, through series of events and festivals (Institut français, 2019). In 2019, the budget amounted to around €39 million; about a quarter was directly invested in promoting the network, most of which is provided by the MFA (Institut français, 2020). However, there is currently a goal to reduce reliance on the state by promoting partnerships with other funders. In addition to the agency in Paris, the Institut français consists of a network of 98 national institutes with 128 branches, some of them historic, which now operate under the same name and logo to improve the visibility of foreign cultural policy. The regional focus of IF is on the European Union (around 40 percent of the institutes) and North Africa and the Middle East (around 25 percent of the institutes) (Institut français, 2018). Through their activities, they support the French publishing industry as well as the fields of music, film, theatre, and dance. In most cases, a cultural attaché serves as director of the IF (Schneider, 2015, p. 363).

Britain, although the leading imperial power at the time, responded slightly later: “It was the opening up of language schools by the Deutsche Akademie, as well as the expansion of Dante Alighieri Society in the strategic regions of the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean which prompted the foundation of the British Council in 1934 and dictated its location strategy during its first decade of operation” (Paschalidis 2009, p. 281). Specifically, the United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (formerly the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) founded the British Committee for Foreign Relations to create a “friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of Britain and the world” (British Council, 2017). The British Council still fulfills this mission today by promoting programs in the priority areas of education, culture, and society. The programs of the British Council are assigned to three overarching objectives in the current business plan (2016-2020): (1) security and stability, (2) prosperity and development, and (3) influence and attractiveness. The British Council is also responsible for organizing bilateral cultural years (British Council, 2016).

It has 177 offices in over 116 countries (British Council, 2019). In 2019, the British Council had a revenue of €1.33 billion, up from 1.1 billion in 2015. However, only about 15% of these funds are provided by the Foreign Office as “grant-in aid” (€ 201 million in 2019) (British Council, 2019). In order to close this gap, the British Council uses English courses and language exams, which are subject to a fee, to finance its other services and programs.

Germany's Goethe-Institut (whose current roles were previously served by the Deutsche Akademie, or DA) initially served an important function to connect the language and culture of disparate German-speaking communities outside of the territorial boundaries of the German state. Following WWII, DA was disbanded and reformed as the Goethe-Institut, which has remained a leader in cultural exchange today. With 157 institutes in 98 countries and the headquarters in Germany, the GI is Germany's largest ECP intermediary organization. About 3,820 people work for the Goethe-Institut: 2,800 abroad and about 700 in the headquarters and the institutes in Germany (Goethe-Institut, 2019). The institute's income consists primarily of the revenue from its language courses and institutional and project funding from the Federal Foreign Office. In the field of culture, the institute's nearly 20,000 events per year reached around 11 million visitors (Goethe-Institut, 2019).

In addition to the Goethe-Institut, the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) is Germany's oldest cultural intermediary organization and celebrated its centenary in 2017. ifa is financed by grants from the Federal Foreign Office, the state of Baden-Württemberg, and the state capital of Stuttgart. Additionally, third-party funds are available for some projects. The annual budget for 2019 was €30.96 million. The institute has about 150 employees at its headquarters in Stuttgart and its sub-office in Berlin (ifa, 2020).

Italy, another late-unifier like Germany (by Western European standards), was also an early force in cultural institutes. In the late 1800s, the institutes served as a way to connect Italian-speaking merchants in the Mediterranean. Today, unlike the national cultural institutes in several other European countries, such as the UK's British Council and Germany's Goethe-Institut, the Istituto Italiano di Cultura (IIC) is not organized in an "arms-length" manner. Instead, they are subordinated to the Farnesina (foreign ministry). As this political connection exposes the institutions to the changeability of the Italian government, this manner of management has been attributed to instability in long-term mission and guidance (Bodo & Bodo, 2016). Similarly, in the past, the budget allocated to the IIC did not measure up to the institutional importance they carry, which has often limited their activity to the provision of their standard services, including regular classes and their libraries, limiting their flexibility to adapt new programmes for their respective local audiences (Barillaro, 2021).

### *Newer powers*

Another set of countries currently have impressive cultural networks, yet they are not as time-honored as the older Western European players.

Russia, which has an impressive cultural presence during the Cold War days of the Soviet Union, revamped its international cultural efforts in the late 2000s. Currently, Russia has three major players in the fields of arts and culture abroad: Rossotrudnichestvo, Russkiy Mir, and the Russia Centres, which it operates. Rossotrudnichestvo, founded in 2008, has the largest footprint abroad, with a presence in over 80 countries and about 600 employees around the world with a budget of €66 million. Rossotrudnichestvo's goals include (1) integration of the former Soviet countries; (2) promotion of Russian culture; (3) strengthening the position of the Russian language; (4) cooperation and exchanges in higher education; (5) promotion of the Russian economy, science, and technology abroad; (6) support of Russian compatriots abroad; and (7) preservation of historical monuments (Rossotrudnichestvo, 2015). Russkiy Mir, which is modeled after institutions like the British Council and Goethe-Institut, has an

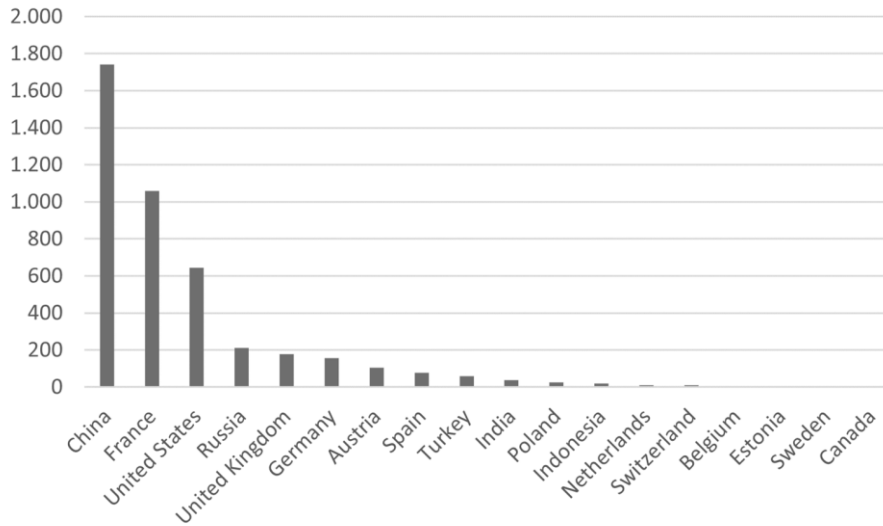
annual budget of around €11.3 million from public funds and private donations for the maintenance of around 100 Russian Centres and the support of other organizations, such as Russian language libraries (Lutsevych, 2016, p. 14).

China's ICI profile has risen substantially in the last two decades. The Confucius Institutes and Classrooms are the best-known instruments of Chinese foreign cultural and educational policy and fall under the Ministry of Education. Confucius Institutes and Classrooms are set up as joint ventures. Confucius Institutes are in most cases connected to local universities, while Confucius Classrooms are attached to schools. As a rule, the CI Chinese partner institutions are foreign universities certified by Hanban, the agency that oversees of the Confucius Institutes and Classrooms (Scheng, 2015, p. 94). They have expanded rapidly in recent years, but have also faced pushback in some western countries. Their primary goals are language promotion, but are also active in the cultural field.

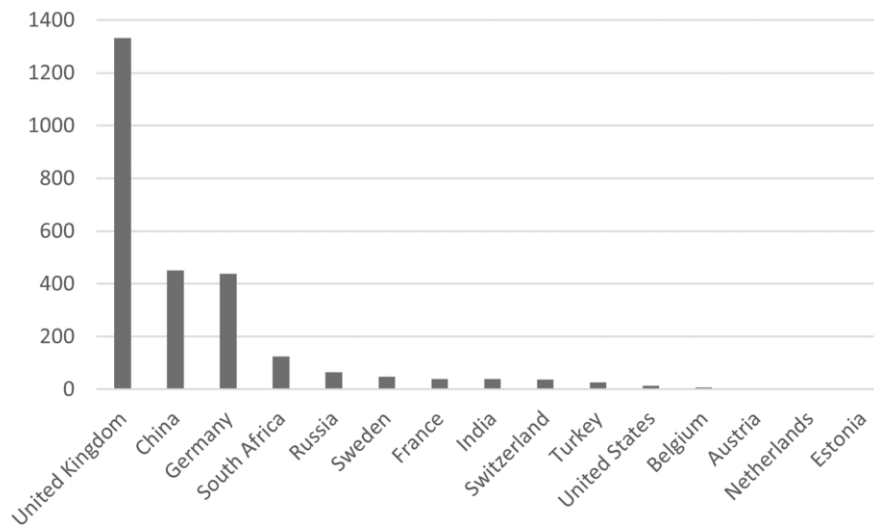
In addition to the two main types of Confucius institutions, there are also a number of new initiatives with the roughly 70 "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI) countries. The BRI is an economic and infrastructure plan stretching from Southeast Asia via the Middle East to Europe, partially paralleling the Silk Road from centuries prior. In addition to economic links, the BRI often emphasizes shared cultural heritage (IIAS, 2016). Additionally, the China National Arts fund has been active in BRI countries, supporting 13 projects in 22 countries and regions with 23.46 million RMB (China National Arts Fund, 2017). Furthermore, Chinese Cultural Centres (CCCs) are a longstanding player in China's ECP. There are two primary functions of the CCCs. First, they are understood as "windows" that provide a glimpse into China: 60 to 70 per cent of their activities serve to promote Chinese artists and present Chinese culture to the world.

Despite its massive cultural influence around the world, the US has a relatively limited institutional presence compared to the likes of the UK, France, or Germany. For example, the Bureau of International Information Programs' (a subsidiary of the State Department) "American Spaces" brings together a variety of organizations that inform people around the world about the U.S. and its policies, organize language and cultural programs, and provide advice on exchange programs and study visits to the United States. The overarching concept of American Spaces was not developed until 2008, with locations moving to libraries or embassies due to concerns about terrorism. In 2018, there were 645 American spaces, a slight decline from previous years (ACPD, 2019). Their location indicates some US regional ECP priorities: Europe (178), Africa (128), South and Central Asia (100), East Asia and Pacific (80+) (Ibid.). In 2018, it invested more than \$17 million (about €15 million) in the maintenance and expansion of these spaces (ibid.).

Additionally, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has over eighty cultural and educational programs designed to promote mutual understanding between Americans and people worldwide. The programs are managed by the ECA offices and implemented in cooperation with American and local partners in over 160 countries. The ECA has over 400 locations, 500 employees, and an annual budget of \$2.19 billion in 2018, although much of this is invested within the United States (ECA, 2019).

**Chart 1: Number of cultural institutes**

Source: ECP Monitor

**Chart 2: Cultural institute budget (€ million)**

Source: ECP Monitor



## 4. Additional actors in arts and culture promotion

As Paschalidis (2009) describes, the post-1989 period has seen a number of non-traditional powers enter the field of international cultural policy, specifically as the era of “cultural diplomacy” gave way to the “cultural capitalism” of today, with ECP often subordinated to economic goals and “nation branding” becoming a main function of ECP. While this proliferation means that the number of countries with arts and culture institutions abroad is too numerous to fully document in this report, a shorter list of relevant countries is presented here. The focus is on medium-sized developed nations as well as large developing countries, two categories of state that have been most prominently involved in the proliferation of international cultural institutes.

Spain, which has a long colonial history and the advantage of a world-spanning language. Despite many cultural strengths, the Instituto Cervantes (IC) was only founded in 1991 as a government agency with a mandate to promote the Spanish language and culture. As a renowned brand of Spanish ECP, Instituto Cervantes has a fair deal of independence, though the “arm’s length” between state and institute is noticeably shorter than international equivalents like the Goethe-Institut or British Council. At present, 86 cities in 45 countries host a branch of the Instituto Cervantes, with new openings planned in Sub-Saharan Africa and the US (MCD, 2019). In total, there are 65 centers, almost half of which are in Europe. In 2019, the institute operated on a budget of €123.9 million, 53.5% of which was covered by public funding, and the rest comes from self-financing activities like language courses (Instituto Cervantes, 2019). The Spanish Public Agency for Cultural Action (*Acción Cultural Española*) (AC/E), a state agency set up in 2010, is also active in Spanish ECP. It orchestrates public support for the promotion of Spanish culture and heritage, both domestically and abroad.

Like the UK, Sweden’s ECP approach is focused on its carefully crafted “national brand,” a strategy of which the Swedish Institute (*Svenska Institutet*, SI) is an important part. SI is a government agency under the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that promotes Sweden around the world. Although it has limited permanent physical presence abroad, SI was active in 128 countries in 2015 (Swedish Institute, 2016). Its task is to disseminate knowledge about Sweden and the Swedish language abroad and promote cooperation and lasting relationships with other countries in the fields of culture, education and research, and business (*ibid.*). These goals are implemented with the capacity of about 140 employees and an annual budget of nearly €50 million. Its geographic focus is heavily on other European countries.

After the fall of communism in Eastern Europe in 1989, many former Warsaw Pact countries sought to demonstrate their cultural proficiency abroad, in many cases emulating more time-honored Western European institutions. For example, Poland established the Adam Mickiewicz Institute (named after the Polish national poet) in 2000, which is overseen by the Department of International Relations at the Ministry of Culture and accordant with the guidelines of the Polish foreign policy. Traditionally, the geographic focus has been on Europe, the Eastern neighborhood, and countries such as the UK, USA, India, Brazil, Israel, China, Japan. The budget was €9,478,000 in 2015 (Smits, Daubeuf, & Kern, 2016). Polish Institutes (*Instituty Polskie*), as affiliates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are equally important, acting as “emissaries of Poland” to strengthen bilateral relations and enhance the image of the country

abroad. In total, 25 Polish institutes are active in 23 countries worldwide. Similar to the AMI, Polish Institutes are medium-sized organizations (estimated 175 staff) with a budget of €10-40 million (Ibid.).

Indonesia, a massive country but a limited ECP player, has increased its role recently. The Indonesian Ministry for Education and Culture took a significant step in 2014, when it established the “Rumah Budaya Indonesia” (RBI), Indonesian Houses of Culture. Akin to the British Council, these are national cultural institutes to support Indonesia’s local cultural exchange abroad (Cohen, 2019). With a rapid expansion over recent years, 19 RBIs currently exist. Out of these, 17 were created in countries which were already home to an Indonesian cultural attaché, while two were not (Myanmar and Turkey). The RBI carries out three primary functions: facilitating learning about Indonesian culture, hosting Indonesian cultural events and performances, and promoting and advocating for Indonesian culture abroad (WILDAN, 2017).

Brazil eschews the dedicated cultural institution model of other nations, instead employing Brazilian Cultural Centres which are located in the cultural departments of embassies and consulates. This network forms the cornerstone of Brazilian cultural diplomacy. Over 4,000 people take advantage of the services offered in 28 Brazilian cultural centers in 24 countries each year (Rede Brasil Cultural, 2017). Rede Brasil Cultural also supports offerings in schools. These include, for example, lectures or cultural festivals. The network consists of 28 cultural centers (Cultural-Centros) in 24 countries, 5 groups for Brazilian studies (Núcleos de Estudos Brasileiros) in four countries, and 29 lecturers (Leitorados), whereby these are mainly active in higher education (Ibid.).

Qatar has a unique approach to cultural diplomacy, seeking to attract foreign institutions to its own soil rather than establishing institutions abroad. Indeed, since the turn of the millennium, Qatar has promoted many initiatives at home and abroad with the aim of establishing Qatar as an important cultural center. By pursuing prestige, Qatar’s partnerships skew toward well-known European cultural centers like Italy and France. In the country itself, the most ambitious project was founding the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha. Other ambitious projects included the Doha Tribeca Film Festival, organized annually between 2009 and 2012 to promote Qatari and Arabic films, the Doha Film Institute, founded in 2010, and the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 2007. In addition, an architectural complex was opened in 2010, the cultural village of Katara, where many cultural institutions are located, including the Qatar Fine Arts Society, the Visual Art Centre, the Qatar Photographic Society, the Childhood Cultural Centre, the Theatre Society and the Qatar Music Academy (Gulf Times, 2010). Qatar Museums (QM), founded in 2005, is also a large player, and helps organize bilateral cultural years.

## 5. Conclusion

As we have seen, cultural institutes and cultural diplomacy serve an important and increasing role in nations' ECP. However, they are far from a panacea. As Goff (2013) argues, cultural diplomacy "cannot change outcomes where policies are entrenched, but it can soften, clarify, complicate, and provide expanded opportunities for connection in the hands of an adept diplomat." Overly aggressive efforts can also risk a backlash. For example, in the wake of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, the US organized a photo exhibition to "depict —not in words, but in pictures—the loss, the pain, but also the strength and resolve of New York, of Americans." While it aroused some sympathy, others found it overly heavy-handed and propagandistic, countering the initial aim (Ibid., p. 10). A similar phenomenon of backlash seems to apply to some Chinese and Russian efforts today.

For all the talk of globalization and the expansion of new players, there is a degree of remarkable continuity in cultural power over the last century. Indeed, "the global scene continues to be heavily dominated by the institutional networks maintained by ex-imperial states...moreover, the geographical spread of most of these networks roughly coincides with the spatial boundaries of their former dominions or spheres of influence" (Paschalidis, 2009, pp. 286-7). Although the rise of new nations in the ICI space is important, it is also crucial to contextualize this narrative within the continued dominance of mostly older players.

With international tensions rising, ICIs will likely become more important, as "an odd mixture of old and new nationalisms co-exists uneasily with supranational formations and transnational processes, the century-old instrument of the Cultural Institute abroad seems ready for its most vigorous growth yet." (Paschalidis 2009, p. 284). This creates a paradox: "precisely because the global cultural arena is now inhabited by ever denser flows of ideas, images, perceptions and messages, in which a wide range of people are taking part in ever greater numbers, that the stakes in the struggle to shape [international cultural relations] through cultural diplomacy have become so much higher for nation-states, even as success in this field becomes ever more difficult to achieve" (Ang et al., 2015, p. 372). This competition relates closely to the marketization of culture, as some country's ECP has shifted toward a more commercialized stance. This trend has paralleled a massive increase in the cultural trade in recent decades (Paschalidis, 2009, p. 285).

Will this trend once again shift back to a more power-based rule of ICIs? This seems likely, at least for some of the largest ECP players. In the last decade in particular, the renewed geopolitical competition between the US and Russia and China has put great power politics back at the forefront of international relations. Cultural institutes are a significant part of this, as Russia and China have attempted to expand their footprint. However, as economics are set to play a more substantial role in this "new Cold War" than the original, we can expect a fusion of market-based and power-based cultural competition. Even as more positive-sum understandings of cultural cooperation and multilateralism will remain important, the new era will likely increasingly combine both the Cold War-era battle of narratives and "neoliberal" understandings of culture as a tool to enhance economic relationships and opportunities. With these two forces at play, the importance of ICIs is only set to expand.

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70173 Stuttgart,  
Postfach 10 24 63,  
D-70020 Stuttgart

[www.ifa.de](http://www.ifa.de)

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