

The Dance Dilemma: The Importance of Dance for Diplomacy During the Cold War

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Abstract

Many countries have used dance as a tool to foster cultural understanding in times of peace as well as in times of tension. This research paper considers the question: *why did the United States use dance as an instrument to promote its soft power during the Cold War?* In order to critically analyze existing literature and utilize additional research to understand whether US dance diplomacy was the result of the United States' drive to compete with the USSR for soft power or not, this study considers a case in which both the United States and the Soviet Union sent dance troupes to West Africa. An analysis of this case should shed light on the true reasons for the United States' use of dance based off of a framework generated by cultural diplomacy scholars.

Keywords: Diplomacy, Dance, Soviet

1. Introduction

Many countries have their own unique styles of dance that have evolved to become an integral part of their cultures; Cuban salsa, Russian ballet, and Dominican bachata are just a few examples. For this reason, dance has been used as a tool to foster cultural understanding and mutual respect in times of peace as well as in times of tension. Interestingly, because dance is used by states to promote diplomatic relations, it also has parallels with the international political status quo. More powerful countries are able to use dance and other cultural activities as tools to perhaps increase their international influence.

This paper presents an examination of how the United States used dance as a cultural tool during the Cold War. Moreover, it hopes to glean a further understanding of how cultural diplomacy promotes a race for soft power between powerful states. This paper will examine the United States' use of dance as a cultural tool against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

In introducing cultural diplomacy during the Cold War, it is important to first outline a brief history of US and USSR cultural diplomacy. In 1925, the Soviet Union created the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, also known as VOKS.¹ VOKS was created in order to promote cultural diplomacy internationally. It became the medium through which the Soviet government could send Soviet cultural acts abroad. Though this cultural initiative was at first hailed as a massive Soviet propaganda campaign by the United States, the State Department soon created its own cultural diplomacy program. In 1935, it commissioned the American Dance and Theatre Academy (ANTA) to initiate a cultural diplomacy program through the performing arts.² Within ANTA, the State Department created a Dance Advisory Panel of dance experts who decided which distinctly American performing arts acts to send abroad. Furthermore, in 1948, the United States passed the Smith-Mundt Act, which enabled the exchange of cultural activities between the United States and foreign countries.³

2. Cultural Diplomacy

This brief introduction of the history of cultural diplomacy in the United States and the Soviet Union reveals that cultural diplomacy was a relatively new form of foreign policy at the onset of the Cold War. As such, it is important to specify the meaning of cultural diplomacy as it pertains to both the study itself and the context of its use during the Cold War.

Currently, the United States State Department uses Milton C. Cummings, Jr.'s definition of cultural diplomacy. Cummings defines cultural diplomacy as "the exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding."⁴ However, though cultural diplomacy presently reflects an exchange of the arts, in the early years of the Cold War, cultural diplomacy referred instead to the dissemination of information of one state to another. Therefore, in this paper, cultural diplomacy is defined as the presence of cultural efforts of one country in another country that do not require any reciprocation. The definition of 'cultural diplomacy' presented by Cummings and the current State Department is what is termed 'cultural exchange' in this paper.

3. Analyzing Existing Research Regarding U.S. Cultural Diplomacy

The research puzzle that this study addresses is *why did the United States use dance as an instrument to promote its soft power during the Cold War?* This is an important question to answer primarily because of the lack of literature surrounding the topic. The question presents a currently unexamined puzzle in Cold War history.

The various hypotheses stemming from these assumptions are derived from existing literature. They mirror the broad framework that scholars touch upon to explain the reasons why the United States engaged in cultural diplomacy by applying that framework specifically to the United States' use of dance.

This literature review strives to understand common and contrasting opinions about the United States' use of the performing arts, specifically dance, in order to gain soft power abroad during a time of heightened conflict. Generally, the literature is divided into four distinct schools of thought: (1) that the United States utilized cultural diplomacy in order to influence foreign social perceptions of the United States (2) that the United States utilized cultural diplomacy to influence foreign geopolitics (3) that the United States utilized cultural diplomacy to respond to domestic political pressures and (4) that the United States utilized cultural diplomacy in direct political response to the cultural diplomacy actions of other countries.

Most scholars agree that the use of cultural diplomacy to influence soft power abroad was an important facet of United States foreign policy. According to Joseph Nye, soft power represents a country's ability to influence people through attractive efforts. In a time when physical war was avoided at all costs, it is clear that both the United States and the Soviet Union sought to increase their intangible, or soft, power not only against each other, but also globally.⁵ Mark Lewis, in an article entitled "Soft Power," deems that soft power is important in order to change negative conceptions of the American people in other countries.⁶ Lewis' analysis stems from the current decrease in United States attention to soft power, and addresses the historical importance of cultural diplomacy.

Kevin Mulcahy argues that in allowing American cultural activities to speak for themselves, non-Americans are able to develop more positive attitudes toward American values.⁷ He finds through his research that the United States entered the cultural diplomacy field much later than other countries, with its first initiative in the 1930s. Mulcahy argues that this tardiness reflects the reason that the United States used cultural diplomacy in order to push a political agenda as opposed to non-politically exchanging ideas and cultures.

There are some, however, who do not wholly agree that cultural diplomacy is a viable foreign policy option when used to promote soft power. Those scholars, including Louisa Rice, argue that cultural diplomacy used as propaganda is sometimes problematic if a country is not ready for exposure to America's culture or if the country is colonized by another country.⁸ During the Cold War, for example, the colonized countries of West Africa achieved independence from France. While this was an important reason that the United States felt compelled to increase its soft power there before the Soviet Union could do so, the French viewed this invasion of United States culture as a threat to their soft power and cultural influence that had existed there for decades.

Looking deeper into the literature surrounding cultural diplomacy, scholars fall into four main schools of thought when attempting to understand why the United States utilized cultural diplomacy in the first place. The first is that the United States used cultural diplomacy in order to influence foreign perceptions of the United States. Mulcahy, for one, argues that the performing arts worked extremely well to project a positive image of the United States on foreign countries. According to scholar Rosa Magnusdottir, the United States launched their performing arts

initiative as a cultural offense.⁹ She argues that the United States used the performing arts as propaganda to control foreign countries' perceptions of the United States. The more positive the propaganda was towards the United States, the more negative other countries would feel about the Soviet Union.

The second is that the United States used cultural diplomacy to influence foreign geopolitics. For example, Amzat Assani writes about the bipolarity of influence during the Cold War.¹⁰ He discusses how both the United States and Russia attempted to woo developing states; Russia through its ballet troupes, and the United States through its jazz heritage. According to Assani, the CIA found it problematic that the Soviet Union promoted cultural activities in West Africa, and so retaliated with American performing artists. This demonstrates that the United States sought to influence the politics of the West African region, thus implying that geopolitics played a large role in the US's decision to promote cultural diplomacy there.

The third is that the United States used cultural diplomacy to strengthen the domestic political atmosphere. In a time when McCarthyism was a prominent political belief, some scholars believe that the United States government wanted to increase voter confidence in the US government in the face of Communism and the anti-communist sentiment. As such, cultural diplomacy was a way in which the government convinced the American people that it was doing something to combat Communism and promote pro-American sentiment across the international arena. In fact, cultural diplomacy seemed to create a stronger central government in the eyes of the American people since it integrated public and private sectors under Eisenhower to all work towards the same goal.¹¹

The fourth is that the United States used cultural diplomacy as a political response to the cultural diplomacy actions of the USSR. Magnusdottir also argues that the Soviet Union was forced to react to the United States' cultural offense with a cultural defense of its own. Scholars such as Sarah Fried-Gintis suggest, using historical analysis, that the United States used cultural diplomacy as a direct defensive tactic against the Soviet cultural diplomacy programs already in place. Fried-Gintis argues that the reason that the Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 was important was because it reflected the defensive nature of the United States' cultural diplomacy and foreign policy.¹² She describes the act as a necessary culture war against Soviet propaganda.

Though for the most part scholars positively acknowledge the use of the performing arts in general during the Cold War, scholars are divided into two sides of a debate with regard to the efficacy of dance specifically; some believing that dance to is incredibly pertinent; others believing that there is not any type of dance that accurately represents the American culture and so dance is an ineffective cultural tool.

Nicole Murphy Holland argues that dance provides neutral zones where states can assert their own national identities without consequences.¹³ Further, Fried-Gintis argues that the revival of American ballet post-World War II demonstrates that American ballet is a fundamental aspect of the American culture. She uses qualitative analysis of the development of an artistic community in New York City to prove that ballet became uniquely American during the Cold War time period and discusses how President Eisenhower encouraged the American National Theatre and Academy to send ballet performances abroad during the Cold War to expose people to the American dance culture. Fried-Gintis uses Ballet Theatre, the company most often hired to perform abroad by the United States government during the Cold War, to highlight that ballet grew to be a representation of the American culture. The 'melting pot' of dance talent in Ballet Theater reflects a culture in the United States where everyone is able to succeed.

Melinda Copel, author and reviewer of "Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War," finds that dance was a key element of the United States' cultural diplomacy abroad during the Cold War. Copel analyzes how American ballet, humanistic modern dance, and tap dance were the three types of dance that the United States utilized to reflect the American culture abroad.

On the other hand, scholars such as Assani disagree with the concept of a uniquely American dance culture. According to him, the United States used jazz music as a means to promote cultural diplomacy because it could not compete with Soviet ballet. Assani analyzes historical data of how the Soviet Union influenced foreign countries through the use of Russian ballet, a dance form typically associated with the Soviet Union as well as one that uniquely encapsulates the Russian culture. Assani argues that since the United States had no such traditional dance form, their efforts to utilize jazz dance and tap dance were futile since those types of dance were not as uniquely American as Russian ballet was Russian. However, many other scholars contend that the prevalence of the Soviet Union's ballet may have been a reason that the United States sought to establish its own forms of dance that could compete with the influence of Russian ballet on the international arena.

It is clear through an analysis of current scholarly discussion that there are many areas that require further study. The main area has to do with connecting the importance of dance during the Cold War to its uses in foreign countries. Though most scholars agree that cultural diplomacy was used abroad during the war, the connection between United States government sponsored dance programs and their performances in those countries has never fully been made. Therefore, this paper uses the framework of scholarly discussion surrounding cultural diplomacy in

order to understand dance diplomacy specifically. Its research revolves around a case study that compares how and why the United States and the Soviet Union used dance in West Africa.

4. Methodology

The intent of this study is to evaluate, based on the current literature, the reasons that the United States utilized dance diplomacy during the Cold War. There are distinct variables and data sources present that break down this exploration. Furthermore, this section will detail the operationalization of those variables and the competing hypotheses that stem from them.

The dependent variable, or the outcome, is that the United States sent dance companies abroad during the Cold War. Secondly, the independent variables in assessing this outcome follow the four schools of thought outlined by scholars. The four competing hypotheses that stem from these independent variables are:

H₁: Negative foreign perceptions of the United States prompted the United States to engage in cultural diplomacy

H₂: Geopolitical factors prompted the United States to engage in cultural diplomacy

H₃: The climate of domestic politics prompted the United States to engage in cultural diplomacy

H₄: USSR dance tours abroad prompted the United States to respond with its own dance tours

Operationalizing the dependent variable is quite straightforward through a qualitative content analysis of United States' political discourse such as State Department policy documents, Congressional hearings, Presidential memos, letters, and remarks, and Dance Advisory Panel meeting minutes. Since this puzzle seeks to understand United States actions during a specific time period, the most logical way to analyze government political discourse is to address it in a chronological fashion.

The puzzle in this research question revolves around the independent variables, or what prompted the United States to engage in dance diplomacy. Those variables will not necessarily be clear until thorough analysis of the data is conducted.

These variables can be operationalized through a qualitative analysis of State Department documents regarding United States cultural diplomacy efforts, Congressional hearings, Presidential memos, letters, remarks, government bills, and Dance Advisory Panel meeting minutes. These pieces of data will help demonstrate the connection between the Soviet Union and United States' cultural activities and dance tours abroad and should establish a chronology of cultural activity that may illuminate the reasons for the United States' international dance tours.

Due to the nature of the data, a qualitative discourse analysis analyzing each document's language and context will be conducted. However, in order to avoid making broad assumptions about a document's meaning, it is important to analyze the data at face value.

The natures of the data sources require that the evidence will be presented in two parts. The first part of this data analysis section seeks to understand the broader context of cultural diplomacy. These data sources address United States cultural diplomacy efforts holistically, placing dance tours under an exhaustive list of its cultural activities.

The second part of the data analysis section seeks to address the United States' use of dance specifically. This section will analyze a case study in which both the United States and the Soviet Union sent dance troupes abroad to West Africa between 1959 and 1962. The data that address this case study specifically are all found within the meeting minutes of the Dance Advisory Panel. This panel is the only government group that addresses United States international dance diplomacy specifically, as it is the panel that decides which dance troupes to send abroad.

4.1 Justification Of Case Study

This paper analyzes a case study in order to answer this question with specificity and depth. This specific case study is important because it calls upon an instance in which both the United States and the Soviet Union sought to improve their respective soft powers in a third party country.

For this case study to effectively analyze variables, it is vital to first establish the rationale behind the selection of this particular case study. Firstly, this section will address the reason that West Africa is an important area of the world for both the United States and the Soviet Union. In doing so, this section will first briefly establish the history of the United States' foreign policy in West Africa. Secondly, this section will highlight the reasons that the West

Africa case study is so important in understanding why the United States used dance as an instrument to increase its soft power during the Cold War.

Though there is relatively little documented about the United States' relations with West Africa before the Cold War, international interest in the area has been present since America was found in 1492. After the Americas were colonized, the trans-Atlantic slave trade became the main source of relations between the Americas and West Africa. American slavery relied heavily on this trans-Atlantic slave trade, which continued until its abolition. After that time, the United States showed very little interest in West Africa. Decades later, United States interest in West Africa peaked again during World War II, when West African ports were used to help transport US military goods. In addition, West African raw materials were used to fuel US war efforts. After the war, the United States sought to improve its relations with West Africa by denouncing European colonial efforts there. In the wake of the upsurge of West African nationalism that followed, the United States was not prepared for its rhetoric to manifest itself as anti-colonialist activity in West Africa. It was during this uncertain time for West Africa when the Cold War had its beginnings.¹⁵

The importance of West Africa to the United States most likely explains the decision of the United States to engage in dance diplomacy there. According to Louisa Rice, West Africa was important because the French owned it during the initial stages of the Cold War. Rice argues that the United States did not want the Soviet Union's influence to cast a shadow over France or its colonies at that time, and so worked hard to maintain its soft power through culture in French-owned territories such as West Africa.

Assani adds that West Africa was an important area to the United States because of its weak economic market in the 1960s, immediately after its independence. He believes that the United States focused on developing its soft power in West Africa even after the states' independence because it believed that it had economic potential there.

Economic, political, and material gains aside, this particular case study of Soviet and United States dance activity in West Africa is an important case study in supporting the hypotheses stated. It represents the first time in the Cold War when both the Soviet Union and the United States sent dance troupes to the same foreign country. Previously, the Soviet Union and the United States had only engaged in cultural exchanges with each other.¹⁶ This highlights the importance of this case study since it brings in a third party state for the first time, and thus has implications on the power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. An analysis of the chronology of this case as well as Dance Advisory Panel meeting minutes will shed an interesting light as to what the specific circumstances of the case study were and how they relate to the reasons why the United States sent dance troupes abroad.

5. Data Analysis

The data will be presented in two different sections of analysis. The first section reflects data that display the United States' perception of Soviet cultural activities in general. The second section analyzes Dance Panel meeting minutes related to a particular case study in order to understand the United States' rationale for engaging in dance diplomacy.

5.1 Breaking Down The Hypotheses

Much of the data collected from the government dealt broadly with the reason that the United States felt compelled to engage in international cultural activities in the first place. This data serves to present a context in which the United States sent dance troupes abroad. This section analyzes State Department documents, Congressional hearings, government acts, and Presidential addresses from 1948 to 1962 that addressed cultural diplomacy.

The United States government addressed the issue of cultural diplomacy beginning in 1948 with the passage of the Smith-Mundt Act. The purpose of this act, according to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Report of 1948, was that it provided a means for the United States to respond to "weapons of false propaganda and misinformation."¹⁷ According to the report, there had previously been an "inability of the part of the United States to deal adequately with those weapons" of propaganda. This is the first piece of legislation addressing the need for cultural exchange with other countries with the United States. The repetitive use of the word 'propaganda' here suggests strongly that exchange programs were needed to respond to what the United States perceived as Soviet propaganda abroad. The United States government's perception of Soviet cultural actions was that the Soviet Union was spreading propaganda internationally and the United States needed to effectively respond to that propaganda with its own cultural exchange programs.

The next publicly available discussion of United States cultural diplomacy programs was in 1950. In August of that year, President Harry S. Truman wrote a telling letter to Senator Flanders regarding United States cultural

diplomacy programs abroad. In this letter, President Truman refers specifically to the 'Campaign of Truth,' a broad name to represent the dissemination of United States cultural activity abroad. He writes:

On July 13, I transmitted to the Congress an appropriation request for \$89,000,000 to carry forward the Campaign of Truth. The House of Representatives has cut this amount to \$65,655,850. This is far less than the amount needed to carry on campaign that you advocate.¹⁸

Truman's request for more funds demonstrates his perception of the importance of cultural diplomacy programs abroad. His letter suggests this importance as well as the reasons why Truman felt cultural diplomacy programs were so crucial. In his letter, President Truman acknowledges the reasons behind the cultural campaign of the United States. He states that the US must "make [it]self heard round the world" in response to the "communist propaganda" that the Soviet Union has launched.¹⁹ Truman also suggests that the United States must respond to this propaganda with its own cultural actions.

Furthermore, a State Department Bulletin of 1951 published a report written by Edward W. Barrett, the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. The article was entitled "The Kremlin's Intensified Campaign in the Field of Cultural Affairs." In this article, Barrett presents an outline of the State Department's perception of Soviet cultural activities abroad:

Recent reports from our embassies in all parts of the world leave no doubt that the Kremlin is mountain a gigantic propaganda offensive against us in the field of cultural affairs... This offensive is intended to prove once and for all that the West, and particularly the United States, is without culture, and that the Soviet Union is the very cradle of culture.²⁰

He calls this "intensification of cultural activity" the USSR's "most recent tactic...to strengthen...Soviet superiority."²¹ In his conclusion, Barrett reasons that this perception of USSR cultural activity is what should drive the United States to engage in "international educational and cultural interchange."²² Barrett's State Department article uses key phrases that clearly indicate that United States cultural activity is, in fact, based heavily on the United States' perceptions of Soviet international cultural diplomacy.

Further, in 1951, President Truman issued a statement about Voice of America. In his statement, he mentions that the appropriations to the cultural exchange programs are "closely connected with our national defense and security" against the "initiation of Soviet radio jamming."²³ Truman's statement, especially with the use of the words 'defense' and 'security,' suggests that Truman seemed to view United States' cultural programs as defensive measures against the Soviet Union's initial introduction of cultural programs to international countries.

During the Congressional Hearings of 1955, State Department employee Frank Coniff presented an insight as to what his perceptions of Soviet cultural actions were based on his trip to the Soviet Union:

We did gain the impression that the [USSR] had the idea that in the coming years they could so manipulate events that they could gain an edge on us in the Cold War, which I now think is a soft war. In accordance to their own theory, the Russians seem to feel that every form of endeavor is subject to ideological struggle, and such a thing like sports and theater and an avenue like literature are weapons to the Russians in this struggle with us. It is the impression of Mr. Hearst and Mr. Kingsbury Smith and myself that our American artists can help also in winning opinions among our allies, among the uncommitted nations, and even back of the Iron Curtain...²⁴

Coniff's testimony gives a telling insight into the United States' perception of USSR cultural actions. His first hand visit to the Soviet Union reflects what the State Department's perception of the Soviet Union was. Coniff's subsequent testimony that it is the United States' responsibility to combat Soviet cultural activities further reflects the United States' perceptions of those Soviet cultural actions.

All of the data so far reflect that the United States' perception of Soviet cultural activities as acts of propaganda was, in fact, the reason that the government sent its own cultural programs abroad. However, as the Cold War continued, the data seems to indicate that the cause of United States cultural diplomacy programs abroad began to vary. In a letter to Mr. Streibert from the White House in August of 1955, President Eisenhower makes clear his reasons for requesting further funds for international cultural actions. He writes:

It is my intention that this fund be used to demonstrate to peoples of other countries our accomplishments in the cultural field. It is also my desire that this fund be used for projects of all kinds that will demonstrate in a dramatic and effective manner the excellence of our free enterprise system as reflected in our products and our cultural values.²⁵

This statement seems to underline a different reason for United States cultural action abroad. Instead of mentioning how the United States should combat Soviet cultural actions, Eisenhower discusses how it is important to disseminate information about United States culture, seemingly independent of the Soviet Union's international cultural actions. In fact, the Soviet Union is not mentioned once. This suggests that Eisenhower's decision to send cultural activities abroad was not exclusively a result of the United States' perception of Soviet cultural activities.

Furthermore, in his remarks at a meeting with the Board of Foreign Scholarships and the US Advisory Commissions on Educational Exchange, in 1961, President John F. Kennedy stated "there is no better way to strengthen our bonds of understanding and friendship with older nations than through educational and cultural exchange."²⁶ Again, the words 'propaganda' and 'Soviet Union' were not mentioned in his remarks. The Soviet Union's actions seemed to have little or no impact on United States government decisions regarding its cultural diplomacy programs.

In 1962, Kennedy made remarks about United States cultural diplomacy efforts abroad. In his remarks, he states that it is the job of United States' culture to "bring our story around the world in a way which serves to represent democracy and the United States in its most favorable light."²⁷ The Soviet Union is not mentioned in Kennedy's remarks in 1962. This seems surprising since the data suggest that Soviet cultural propaganda was the main reason officials promoted US cultural diplomacy abroad between 1948 and 1955. After Kennedy's remarks in 1962 and for the remainder of the Cold War, the concept of cultural diplomacy rarely, if ever, surfaced in public discourse and so data collection ended here.

There are, perhaps, many reasons for this evident shift in the United States' reasoning in sending cultural activities abroad. The first may be that since the data collected are from public sources, it is hard to truly understand whether these are the true thoughts of the government or simply the 'public' opinions of the government. This is particularly appropriate in the latter years of data collection, between 1955 and 1962, since there are two public remarks made by President Kennedy that both have no mention of the Soviet Union or its cultural propaganda to which the United States felt compelled to respond to. However, the private letter written by President Eisenhower to Mr. Streibert in 1955 dispels that reasoning, since it was a private and important document in which the President makes clear his desires. A second reason for this change could be that different Presidents interpreted United States cultural diplomacy differently over time. Either way, the data make it clear that there was a shift in the perceptions of United States foreign cultural policy during the Cold War between 1948 and 1962. Though the data suggest that the United States began its cultural diplomacy programs as a result of their perceptions of Soviet cultural actions abroad, it seems from government documents that this initial cultural defensive by the United States soon turned into an offensive effort. It was in this offensive effort that the United States strove not to respond to the Soviet Union's actions, but to establish good relations with other countries in its own right.

Though the government data demonstrate the United States' initial perceptions of Soviet cultural actions in general, they do have weight on the hypotheses I have presented with regard to dance. Since dance is one of the cultural activities sent abroad by the United States, the above data clearly demonstrates that on a broader level, Soviet cultural activities did play a role in the United States' decision to send its own cultural activities abroad initially. The data can also help to acknowledge that this hypothesis is necessary, but not sufficient, in understanding why the United States sent cultural diplomacy programs abroad in the first place. Since dance is one of the cultural activities sent abroad by both the Soviet Union and the United States, the case study I am analyzing should parallel the broader findings of cultural exchange as demonstrated by the State Department documents, congressional hearings, and Presidential letters and remarks.

5.2 Case Study: Dance Diplomacy In West Africa

In order to address the research question and hypotheses more specifically, I will analyze, again through a qualitative content analysis, data surrounding one case study during the Cold War. This case study analyzes the specific circumstances surrounding the Soviet Union and the United States' dance diplomacy efforts in West Africa between 1959, the year that those countries began to gain independence from France, and 1962.

In the year 1959, the year that West African countries began gaining their independence from France, the USSR's Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Contacts sent its famous Kirov Ballet on a tour that began in Ghana. The company performed *Swan Lake* in 12 West African countries. This event seemed to be the catalyst for

United States dance diplomacy in West Africa. In 1961, the United States Dance Panel sent Georgie Tapps, a white tapper, to West Africa. He performed a set of dances in Ghana and through West Africa between December 1961 and April 1962. The year he returned, the United States sent another dancer to West Africa, the modern and jazz ballet artist Pearl Primus who performed a four-month tour in Ghana, Liberia, Togo, Cameroon, and Guinea before her tour was extended to ten months. This chronology reflects that the United States seemed initially to respond to Soviet dance effort in West Africa, but then turned its dance diplomacy into a more offensive effort with the extension of Primus' tour. Substantive confirmation of the suggestion of this chronological analysis requires analysis of Dance Panel minutes specific to this case. Those minutes are the ones taken just before the Dance Panel sent Georgie Tapps and Pearl Primus to West Africa.

The American National Theatre and Academy, contracted by the State Department, was in charge of sending American dance troupes abroad. The main panel in charge of sending troupes abroad was the Dance Advisory Panel. Therefore, the Dance Panel directly represents the thoughts and actions of the United States government.

In their January 1961 meeting, the Dance Panel discussed the prospect of sending Georgie Tapps to West Africa. Their meeting minutes state that they felt it was crucial to send an American dancer to West Africa:

We must bring American performing arts to Africa, where Soviets have tried to uproot the idea of an American dance culture with their Soviet Ballet.²⁸

This clear statement of intent demonstrates the dance panel's perception of Soviet Ballet in Africa. The minutes reflect that the panel thought that Soviet Ballet was attempting to paint the United States and its dance culture in a negative light. The strong rhetoric of this statement clearly suggests this perception. Firstly, the Dance Panel refers to Soviet ballet as 'their' Soviet ballet. The use of the word 'their' suggests that the Dance Panel is attempting to separate the United States from the Soviet Union as much as possible. The word 'their' even ensures that Soviet ballet is a completely different dance than an inherently American dance.

Furthermore, with use of the word 'uproot,' the Dance Panel reflects their assumption of what the Soviet Union was attempting to do with its dance efforts. The word 'uproot' suggests that the Soviet Union was using ballet in order to prove that the United States did not actually have a dance culture. It connotes an extremely negative action by the Soviet Union against the United States. This perception of Soviet Ballet in West Africa by the United States' Dance Panel explicitly causes the Dance Panel to send Georgie Tapps, and American tapper, on a tour of West Africa.

The second time the Dance Panel sent a dance troupe to West Africa was in 1962, when they sent Pearl Primus and Borde on tour. This tour was not, chronologically, in response to Soviet cultural actions because the Soviet Union only sent a Ballet company to West Africa in 1959, to which the United States had already responded with Georgie Tapps. In analyzing the Dance Panel minutes of September 1961, the panel clearly identifies the reasons why they decide to send Pearl Primus to West Africa. They state her purpose:

She is dancing there to show the new states of Africa the dynamism of the American Performing Arts, the scope of cultural development of the Negro in America, the immense importance of preserving every facet of our heritage in the formal presentation of the folk art of the Nation, [and] to learn from the African leaders...how the United States can assist in the cultural development of African countries.²⁹

Nowhere in their September 1961 minutes does the Dance Panel mention the Soviet Union or its cultural activities internationally. In addition, the rhetoric of the Dance Panel minutes does not imply that they are sending Pearl Primus to West Africa as a result of any negative actions by the Soviet Union. In fact, the rhetoric suggests that the Dance Panel intends to send Pearl Primus to West Africa in order to help develop relations between the United States and West Africa, independent of Soviet cultural actions in the same region. Furthermore, the use of the words 'show' and 'learn' suggest more of an exchange in cultures as opposed to a dissemination of American culture to West Africa. This suggests that their reason for sending Pearl Primus perhaps had nothing to do with the Soviet Union, and rather was an opportunity for the United States to present a cultural offensive in West Africa.

The qualitative data collected from these dance panel minutes shed an interesting light on the United States' perception of the Soviet Union's international dance tours. Initially, the panel minutes and their rhetoric indicate that the United States perceived USSR Ballet tours in West Africa as a soft attack on the United States. As a result, the United States felt that it was compelled to send its own dancer to West Africa. However, in sending its second dancer, Pearl Primus, to West Africa, the Dance Panel minutes present no indication that they were retaliating against Soviet propaganda. It appears that, similar to the trend of United States cultural diplomacy in general, United

States dance diplomacy began as a defensive action against the Soviet Union, but then turned into an offensive action to benefit the United States. It becomes clear that though that hypothesis reflects a necessary condition for the United States' decision to send dance troupes to West Africa, it is not the sufficient condition in explaining United States dance diplomacy during the Cold War. There are, as suggested by the data, perhaps other reasons for United States interest in pursuing dance diplomacy in the latter years of the Cold War.

6. Conclusions and Implications for Theory and Policy

It is evident that the case study and its respective data parallel the overall trend of United States cultural diplomacy between 1948 and 1962, though the case study only represents the time period between 1959 and 1962. Although the United States initially sought to send cultural diplomacy programs and dance companies abroad in response to Soviet cultural actions and international dance tours, the data indicate that there was a shift from this defensive cultural and dance diplomacy to a more offensive approach. The data therefore suggest that in this time period, the independent variable that United States perceptions of the Soviet Union's international dance tours led it to engage in dance diplomacy, is a necessary but not sufficient explanation of the United States' decision to send dance tours abroad.

The results of these findings have two main implications for International Relations theory and policy. The first is that cultural diplomacy and soft power are important factors in the international arena when countries are vying for power. In a time period such as the Cold War, where inter-state armed conflicts are avoided as much as possible, military power is not the only relevant type of power to determine the strength of a state. These findings illustrate that soft power, bolstered by cultural diplomacy, is another important type of power that can determine the strength and influence of a state internationally. Although more recent cultural exchange programs such as "Basketball Diplomacy" and "Hip-Hop Diplomacy" focus on the interchange of values and ideas and the cultural diplomacy programs of the Cold War were focused on disseminating perceptions of the United States to other countries, it is clear that soft power through the means of dance and other cultural activities is becoming an increasingly significant indicator of the influence states have on the international stage.

The second main implication for International Relations theory presents an interesting view of the back-and-forth nature of Soviet and United States dance diplomacy efforts during the Cold War. My findings suggest that the United States and the Soviet Union seemed to engage in a security dilemma of culture. Since neither the United States nor the Soviet Union wanted to directly engage in armed conflict, Cold War conflict was reflected by a cultural competition for soft power. This cultural competition, coupled with an increased sense of tension between the two states with the continuation of the Cold War, can be referred to as a security dilemma of culture. When the Soviet Union sent cultural activities abroad to increase its soft power, the United States responded, at least initially, with its own cultural activities to increase its soft power. The findings demonstrate that the same applies with sending dance troupes abroad. Even though this security dilemma of culture was only present in the first United States response to Soviet actions, it still represents a fascinating observation that power, whether soft or hard, plays a role in states' relationships even when diplomacy is involved. This is certainly an area in which more research will have to be conducted. Further studies may seek to find other examples of this security dilemma of culture in tense periods of history in which armed conflict was avoided.

The current study of the United States' cultural actions during the Cold War has a few shortcomings. Firstly, it only seeks to understand the United States' use of dance during the Cold War. This limited time period may not make the case study conducive to generalization, since there was a very specific context in which dance diplomacy was used. A further limitation may be the lack of government sources that discuss dance diplomacy. Though, of course, dance is a form of cultural diplomacy and therefore government sources discussing cultural diplomacy in general do apply to the United States' use of dance, the hypotheses would be far stronger if those government documents addressed the use of dance specifically. Even so, the use of dance panel meeting minutes serve as valuable State Department documents that demonstrate the rationale behind the United States' use of dance abroad. Future studies may strive to access different, private government data in which a President discusses the use of dance. Finally, a third limitation of this study was the lack of access to all of the Dance Panel meeting minutes. Two of the meeting minutes available proved extremely valuable to the study, but access to the full archives of meeting minutes would have exposed a much broader understanding of the way the Dance Panel functioned as well as their rationales behind sending other dance troupes abroad as well. This is certainly an area for further research.

Overall, the study conducted presents an initial analysis of why the United States used dance as a tool to increase its soft power during the Cold War. Though many scholars have previously documented how the United States used dance during the Cold War, none have delved into the rationale behind the government's decisions to send dance

troupes on international tours. Since there are not many publicly accessible government documents relevant to this case, there is much room for further research with more private government documents as well as access to the full archives of Dance Panel meeting minutes. An analytical view of the United States' position on the use of cultural diplomacy has proved important in understanding US foreign policy in the future. Presently, the United States is in a situation where its hegemony is potentially declining. Understanding why the United States used dance as a measure of power during the Cold War may also shed light onto current measures to gaining soft power. Further research may help illuminate the trends in United States foreign policy with regard to cultural diplomacy, and whether the security dilemma of culture is present in other cases, or whether it was simply an illustration of the nature of the Cold War.

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