

POLICY-MAKING AND ASSESSMENT OF BRAZILIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: A CASE STUDY ON ITAMARATY CULTURAL DIFFUSION (2013–2023)

Formulação e avaliação da diplomacia cultural brasileira: um estudo de caso sobre a difusão cultural do Itamaraty (2013-2023)

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents and analyze evidence-based data regarding the international diffusion of Brazilian culture, as well as the policy-making of Brazilian cultural diplomacy public policies, considering the 'Programa de Difusão Cultural' (PDC) and 'Programa de Ação Cultural e Educacional dos Postos' (PACP), formulated and implemented by the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE/Itamaraty), within 2013 and 2023. To this end, it conceives the presentation of empirical data collected from official annual activities reports' of PDC/PACP implementation upon qualitative and quantitative research methods. This study applies the Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF) model (Carrijo, 2016), in order to identify the cultural domains and recurrent recipients of such Brazilian cultural diplomacy initiatives between 2013 and 2023, considering as the data sample the years of 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022.

Keywords: Cultural Diplomacy. Cultural Diffusion. Brazilian Foreign Policy.

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta e analisa dados baseados em evidências sobre a difusão internacional da cultura brasileira, bem como a formulação de políticas públicas de diplomacia cultural do Brasil, considerando o Programa de Difusão Cultural (PDC) e o Programa de Ação Cultural e Educacional dos Postos (PACP), formulados e implementados pelo Ministério das Relações Exteriores do Brasil (MRE/Itamaraty), entre 2013 e 2023. Para tanto, concebe a apresentação de dados empíricos coletados dos relatórios anuais de atividades oficiais de implementação do PDC/PACP por meio de métodos de pesquisa qualitativa e quantitativa. Este estudo aplica o modelo Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF) (Carrijo, 2016), a fim de identificar os domínios culturais e os destinatários recorrentes de tais iniciativas de diplomacia cultural brasileira mantidas entre 2013 e 2023, considerando como amostra de dados os anos de 2013, 2016, 2019 e 2022.

Palavras-chave: Diplomacia Cultural. Difusão Cultural. Política Externa Brasileira.

INTRODUCTION

For decades, Brazilian cultural diplomacy has strengthened its political dialogue with international peers by shaping agendas for the diffusion of Brazilian culture abroad. Employing an allegedly pluralist and pragmatic discourse, it has sought to model new standards of international relations through cultural engagements. Throughout the 20th century – particularly from the 1980s onward – the efforts of the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE/Itamaraty) have resulted in distinct practices of cultural diplomacy, navigating through its goals, challenges, and possibilities (Flechét, 2012; Dummont & Flechét, 2014; Carrijo, 2016).

From the early cultural awareness within Brazilian Foreign Policy (BFP) at the beginning of the 20th century to the development of an autonomous approach to cultural diplomacy, Brazil's

diplomatic intellectual productivity has been remarkable (Madeira, 2013; Barão, 2014; Carrijo, 2016). The relevance of cultural diplomacy to MRE/Itamaraty is evident, whether through the increasing number of diplomats dedicating their careers to this area or through the relative growth in budget allocations and institutional shifts in favor of nowadays bureaucratic agencies responsible for conducting cultural diplomacy programs and policies from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (Ribeiro, 2011; Madeira, 2013; Carrijo, 2016; Rezende, 2022).

This paper aims to present and analyze evidence-based data regarding the international diffusion of Brazilian culture, as well as the decision-making process in Brazilian cultural diplomacy, by specifically considering the following public policies: *Programa de Difusão Cultural* (PDC), and *Programa de Ação Cultural e Educacional dos Postos* (PACP).. These programs are part of the Brazilian cultural diplomacy agenda officially formulated and implemented by MRE/Itamaraty between 2013 and 2023. The study employs qualitative and quantitative research methods, based on the content analysis of official annual activity reports from Brazilian cultural diplomacy.

The research is guided by the Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF) model, proposed by Carrijo (2016), which identifies the cultural domains predominantly used by Brazilian Foreign Policy in its cultural diplomacy, as well as the recurrent recipients and cultural contents disseminated by the aforementioned public policies. The research questions driving this inquiry are: (1) How is the policy-making structure of public policies for cultural diplomacy at MRE/Itamaraty? and; (2) What are the predominant expressive and symbolic contents and recipients of Brazilian cultural diplomacy initiatives?

By addressing these questions, this paper seeks to reveal the profile of the contents and recipients of Brazil's cultural activities conducted by MRE/Itamaraty through the years of 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022, while also examining key singularities in Brazilian cultural diplomacy's policy-making processes. On the one hand, the paper offers a measurable and accountable approach to the formulation and implementation of Brazilian cultural diplomacy through the CDDAF methodology. On the other hand, it leverages postcolonial contributions in IR theory to provide a critical and multidisciplinary perspective on the nature of Brazilian cultural diplomacy's policy-making processes.

By bridging Public Policy Analysis (PPA) and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) subfields for the study of international diffusion of Brazilian culture abroad – as mobilized by MRE/Itamaraty – this paper problematizes the official discourse evoked by historical-descriptive literature in Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy, which often takes for granted notions such as "pluralism" and "pragmatism" as characters of Brazilian cultural diplomacy. Through an analysis of data collected from PDC and PACP annual activity reports, the study challenges this sort of assumptions as taken for granted classifications to Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy, by offering an evidence-based study over the very activity of the international diffusion of Brazilian culture as per mobilized by MRE/Itamaraty within the period.

1. CULTURAL DIPLOMACY AND BRAZILIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: CONCEPTUAL, THEORETICAL AND PRAXIOLOGICAL CORNERSTONES

The cultural dimension remains an underexplored theme within the epistemologies of International Relations (IR) and even in Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) subfields, despite its growing relevance since the dissolution of the bipolar global order. The end of the Cold War revealed severe limitations of classical IR studies, which were exclusively rooted in the sovereignty of nation-states in system of states described as fundamentally anarchic, and focused primarily on legal, political, economic, military and other material aspects. At the time, these frameworks proved inadequate for understanding the role of cultural elements in states' international relations (Herz, 1987; Lessa & Suppo, 2007; Burni, 2016).

Otherwise, the cultural factor had already been acknowledged by classical scholars prior to the 1980s. Edward Carr (1934), as an example, noted that state's political power in the international arena depends on the ability of its public opinion to articulate an ideology that can be externally functionalized. Hans Morgenthau (1948) emphasized the effectiveness of "cultural imperialism" over military or economic means, as it seeks to influence the minds of individuals, while Raymond Aron (1962) highlighted the role of cultural strategies in fostering persuasion among friendly nations (Lessa & Suppo, 2007; Burni, 2016). By the 1970s, the cultural dimension was increasingly recognized as a tool for maintaining international relations, even if often treated as secondary.

The interdisciplinary nature of IR as an autonomous field of study, itself, gained prominence as new theoretical approaches begun to challenge the centrality of material power in maximizing state's sovereignty. The emergence of such brand new paradigms in IR, marked by debates between classical realism and institutional-deontic idealism, transformed the discipline at the post-World War II. Hedley Bull (1977), for instance, theorized the role of dominant actors in shaping an anarchic international society, while Kenneth Waltz (1979) reformulated classical realism into a "general theory" of international politics. This shift would be further amplified by post-positivist approaches in subsequent decades (Lessa & Suppo, 2007; Castro, 2012).

Although some sort of cultural appeal on IR theory stands out since 70's at least, both dominant approaches reinforced the centrality of political realism within IR's positivist mainstream, resulting that cultural and ideological issues remained marginal in their analyses (Lessa & Suppo, 2007). As an effect, the study of national culture as a tool for foreign policy in IR gained traction with the emergence of three key concepts: soft power, public diplomacy, and cultural relations. These notions, developed primarily by U.S. scholars, are often considered foundational to Cultural Diplomacy in IR. However, their influence requires critical examination.

As soon as Joseph Nye (1990) introduced soft power as a "third way" for states to achieve foreign policy objectives, alongside military and economic power, it became an undeniable discursive term to address cultural issues among nations. For Nye (1990), soft power relies on

attraction rather than coercion, leveraging immaterial resources to influence global audiences. This concept addressed a gap in both realist and neo-realist theories, which focused on material power, and aligned with liberal and neoliberal institutionalist frameworks by acknowledging the role of non-state actors in shaping the fate of international relations (Nye, 1990).

Public diplomacy, in its turn, emerged as a complementary concept, reflecting U.S. efforts to integrate cultural elements into its international engagement. Neal Rosendorf (2009) and Nicholas Cull (2006; 2009) distinguished public diplomacy from traditional diplomacy, defining the latter as state-led engagement with other transnational actors, while public diplomacy, in contrast, involves state's efforts to influence external publics with no direct or intentional control over international affairs, often through targeted interactions with potential for broader impact. Melissen (2005) also states that "public diplomacy is aimed at foreign publics, and strategies for dealing with such publics should be distinguished from the domestic socialization of diplomacy" (p. 13).

John Mitchell (1986) introduced the concept of cultural relations, arguing that it differs from cultural diplomacy in its voluntary, mutual, and cooperative nature, allegedly free from explicit foreign policy objectives. Cultural relations are shaped by historical processes of domination and colonization, reflecting the relational dynamics of cultures across geopolitical contexts. Mitchell (1986) emphasized that while states can engage in both cultural diplomacy and cultural relations, non-state actors are limited to the latter, as they lack the authority to formulate public policies for cultural promotion (Mitchell, 1986; Herz, 1987).

The distinction between cultural diplomacy and cultural relations is widely accepted in the literature. Cultural diplomacy is understood as a state-led process, typically conducted through foreign ministries, aimed at advancing foreign policy objectives through cultural means (Mitchell, 1986; Cummings, 2003). In contrast, cultural relations encompass broader interactions between peoples and institutions, often unfolding independently of official state action and driven by civil society, academic, or artistic initiatives (Mitchell, 1986; Lessa & Suppo, 2007; Dumont & Flechét, 2014). This distinction underscores the exclusive competence of the state in the formulation and implementation of cultural diplomacy strategies, while recognizing that non-state actors can play a relevant role within international cultural relations (Carrijo, 2016; Rezende, 2022).

Milton Cummings (2003) defined cultural diplomacy as the exchange of ideas, arts, information, and other cultural aspects between nations in order to promote mutual understanding and cooperation. Simon Mark (2009) expanded this definition to include subnational governments, though he acknowledged the central government's primacy due to its resources and symbolic authority (Cummings, 2003; Mark, 2009). In Brazilian context, Edgard Telles Ribeiro contribution became a foundational text for studies on cultural diplomacy and Brazilian Foreign Policy (BFP). Telles Ribeiro (1989, 2011) argued that cultural diplomacy should serves to broader national goals, facilitating the achievement of foreign policy objectives by

overcoming cultural barriers (Ribeiro, 2011; Zanella, Neves Júnior e Silva, 2024).

By considering so, this paper adopts the concept of cultural diplomacy as the use of national culture by the state chancellery — in Brazil's case, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE/Itamaraty) — as both an element, an asset and a terrain of foreign policy. This process involves the expressive and symbolic representation of national culture through foreign policy public policies aimed at its international cultural diffusion. While state's remains as primary actor, the execution of cultural diplomacy requires collaboration with domestic institutions and engagement with external audiences. In this process, it is interest to notice how state's uses to deploy its bureaucracies and institutional facilities towards national cultural self-representation abroad through its policies and practices on cultural diplomacy. (Ribeiro, 2011; Rezende, 2022; Zanella, Neves Júnior e Silva, 2024).

Dummont and Flechét (2014) trace the evolution of Brazilian cultural diplomacy throughout the 20th century, emphasizing its shift from a passive recipient of western cultural policies to the role as an active promoter of its national culture abroad. They argue that, since its post-independence, Brazil developed “an active diplomacy, which integrated the cultural dimension” (Dummont & Flechét, 2014, p. 204). This transition marked a abandon from earlier practices where Brazil served as “a simple receptacle of European and North American cultural policies, according to the idea that the winds of culture only blow from east to west or north to south” (Dummont & Flechét, 2014, p. 204), towards a more singular and assertive cultural insertion in international relations.

Historically, these authors identify three phases in the institutionalization of cultural diplomacy by the MRE/Itamaraty. First, between 1920–1945, marked by the influence of Barão do Rio Branco's ideals, emphasizing intellectual cooperation and the projection of a “civilized” Brazil abroad. Second, between 1945–1978, when took place structural reforms in MRE/Itamaraty, including the creation of the Cultural Division (DCI), primordial precursor to the Guimarães Rosa Institute (IGR). Third, the period post – 1964, marked by the consolidation of mechanisms for cultural exchange and information diffusion, even under military dictatorship. By 1964, MRE/Itamaraty had institutionalized cultural diplomacy to “disseminate information about Brazil abroad in all its aspects and keep Brazilian agencies abroad informed about current Brazilian reality” (Dummont & Flechét, 2014, p. 210).

Dummont and Flechét (2014) criticize the instrumentalization of cultural diplomacy, noting that policies often responded to preexisting international interest in Brazilian music and cinema rather than proactively promoting lesser-known forms of art. They observe that “the popularity already acquired by Brazilian cultural productions abroad [...] gave rise to the introduction of specific policies, whose objective was to defend the country's economic and strategic interests” (Dummont & Flechét, 2014, p. 214). Despite ideological shifts across regimes — Estado Novo, the New Republic, and military dictatorship— the authors identify continuity in Brazil's concern with

its international image, concluding that “precocity, continuity, and pragmatism are three characteristics of Brazilian cultural diplomacy” (Dummont & Flechét, 2014, p. 217).

Regarding the Institutional Structure of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy, The MRE/Itamaraty’s organizational framework nowadays seems to reflect its historical pragmatism. The current Guimarães Rosa Institute (IGR) for Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy, raised in 2022, lies under the General Secretariat for Trade Promotion, Science, Technology, Innovation and Culture (SPTC), oversees cultural diffusion through four divisions: (a) Division of Actions for the Promotion of Brazilian Culture (DCULT), which actually promotes Brazilian visual arts, music, literature, and other expressions abroad via PACP public policy; (b) Educational Themes Division (DCE), which manages academic cooperation; (c) Agreements and Multilateral Cultural Affairs Division (DAMC), which negotiates international cultural agreements, and; (d) Portuguese Language Division (DLP), which advances linguistic outreach.

The current DCULT (as well as the former DODC) are central to this study: they hold responsibility for managing PDC/PACP’s public policies, since the evaluation of proposals received from Brazilian embassies and consulates for cultural projects, based on criteria such as artistic excellence, budget feasibility, and bilateral impact. These programs operationalize Brazil’s cultural diplomacy through events coordinated with diplomatic posts, currently guided by IGR’s mandate in order to “promote and diffuse Brazilian culture in its most diverse aspects abroad” (Brasil, Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2017). PDC/PACP’s annual activity reports (2013–2023) provide data on regional distribution and number of implemented projects, offering insights into priorities and preferred outcomes from the Brazilian cultural diplomacy policy-making.

While institutional continuity and pragmatism may remain as hallmarks, the close examination of such Brazilian cultural diplomacy flows, as well its formulation and implementation, could may arise some critiques due to its reactive nature and patterns of preference. Despite the MRE/Itamaraty official rhetoric efforts in turning the formulation and implementation of Brazilian cultural diplomacy more plural in terms of democratic participation, IGR’s structure and PDC/PACP mechanisms exemplify the state’s centralized role in cultural diffusion, even in a scenario in which globalization demands more cosmopolitan approaches. As we intend to present in the next sections, Brazilian cultural diplomacy remains uniquely and critically dependent on MRE/Itamaraty bureaucratic routines and procedures.

2. CULTURAL DIPLOMACY DATA ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK (CDDAF) TOWARDS AN EVIDENCE-BASED ASSESSMENT OF BRAZILIAN CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

The integration of a theoretical and methodological framework for cultural diplomacy, which embraces post-positivist approaches, alongside with data collection and content analysis from official docs related to Brazilian cultural diplomacy public policies, might appear contradictory from a positivist IR resistant perspective. This perception may stem from a longstanding reluctance to apply statistical methods in IR, a hesitation exacerbated when

quantitative data systematization serves to post-positivist approaches (Carrijo, 2016). In the case of postcolonialism, this methodological choice is often viewed as anachronistic due to its roots in literary and cultural studies, where textual analysis predominates. However, post-colonial critiques towards western epistemologies do not inherently preclude the use of quantitative methods (Carrijo, 2016).

Despite this aversion, Mansfield & Pavese (2010) note that IR adopted quantitative methodologies primarily in international security studies during the Cold War, with expansion beyond realism after 1990, including neoliberal institutionalist and even post-positivist approaches like wendtian constructivism. Nevertheless, both cultural diplomacy and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) lags behind other IR subfields, such as security, migration and development studies, in adopting quantitative methodologies. To address this gap, Carrijo (2016) proposes the Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF), a methodological model designed to identify patterns in state's cultural diplomacy, in which the Cultural Diplomacy projects constitute the framework's unity of analysis (Carrijo, 2016).

The model provides a structured quantitative and qualitative approach, enabling measurement and comparison of state-led cultural diplomacy efforts. It systematizes statistical data, with cultural diplomacy projects as its primary unit of analysis, focusing on two key indicators: (1) the total number of projects implemented; (2) the cultural domain of activities employed, and; (3) the geographic destination: (1*) Africa; (2*) Central America and the Caribbean; (3*) North America; (4*) South America; (5*) Asia and Oceania; (6*) Europe; and (7*) the Middle East. Considering so, this paper applies the CDDAF model in order to collect, treat, systematize and analyze statistical patterns of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy initiatives upon the MRE/Itamaraty PDC and PACP's public policies for the sample years of 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2020 (Carrijo, 2016).

Regarding the temporal timeframe of the inquiry, the selection of the 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022 Brazilian cultural diffusion annual exercises is justified by the fact that these years correspond to distinctively recent presidential administrations, allowing the analysis to account for potential shifts in policy orientation and institutional priorities in cultural diplomacy.

Additionally, the sampling necessarily begins in 2013, as the public availability of official Annual Reports on Cultural Diplomacy initiatives only became possible after the enforcement of Brazil's Access to Information Law . 12.527/2011, which made such data systematically accessible from 2012 onwards. As per previously informed, this paper seeks to answer two core questions: (1) How is the policy-making process structure of public policies for cultural diplomacy at MRE/Itamaraty; (2) What are the predominant expressive and symbolic contents and recipients of Brazilian cultural diplomacy initiatives? Therefore, applying the CDDAF model involves identify (1) the number of projects implemented, as well the most frequently applied (2) cultural domains on Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy efforts.

The first indicator, (1) number of projects, measures the total cultural diplomacy initiatives proposed and implemented by the Brazilian government within the analyzed period. The second, (2) cultural domain, reflects the range of expressive fields encompassed by MRE/Itamaraty's actions, classified into twelve categories: Academia & Education; Architecture, Design & Fashion; Performing Arts; Combined Arts; Visual Arts; Cinema & Audiovisual; Sports/Capoeira; Popular Festivals; Gastronomy; Literature; Music; and Heritage & Memory. These follow the official framework of Brazil's cultural diplomacy and are replicated for coding.

As well, as per previously informed, the dataset, built from official PDC and PACP annual activity reports individually for 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022, categorizes projects by seven geographic destination: (1*) Africa; (2*) Central America and the Caribbean; (3*) North America; (4*) South America; (5*) Asia and Oceania; (6*) Europe; and (7*) the Middle East. This categorization of continental regions likewise derives from the taxonomy assigned to the destinations of cultural diplomacy policies, according to MRE/Itamaraty's own cultural diffusion framework. It must be clarified that this paper does not account for budgetary allocations but instead focuses on the frequency and geographic distribution of cultural diplomacy projects, in order to interpose substantive reflection over Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy policy-making process (Carrijo, 2016).

For reaching out the analytical results that will be presented and discussed in this section, PDC and PACP annual activity reports for 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022 were observed in accordance with the following research process: (a) systematic data collection from official documents; (b) coding and categorization of cultural domains and geographic destinations; (c) quantitative processing through computational methods; and (d) critical interpretation informed by the Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF). The statistical analysis of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy annual activity reports was conducted using data analysis software's such as R-Studio, to ensure methodological rigor and data accuracy. The dataset was constructed using primary sources from the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE/Itamaraty), which were accessed, collected, and processed in compliance with the Brazilian Access to Public Information Law (Law No. 12.527, of November 18, 2011). The data were structured according to standardized indicators, including (1) the number of projects, (2) cultural domain, and (3) geographic destination (Carrijo, 2016).

To ensure analytical accuracy, a cross-referencing procedure was adopted to verify the consistency of data across multiple reports. The classification and codification of data on Brazilian diplomatic cultural actions was informed by official taxonomies properly employed by the MRE/Itamaraty on addressing this agenda. In addition, a longitudinal approach was employed to track the evolution of Brazilian cultural diplomacy over a decade, considering the sample of 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022 annual activities. The results obtained through enable a structured assessment of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy. The application of mixed methods thus allows for a comprehensive examination of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy policy-making in recent years. As we

intend to demonstrate, Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy experienced significant expansion during the analyzes period, demonstrating the increasing role of the cultural dimension for Brazilian Foreign Policy (BFP) policy-makers, diplomats and scholars.

The total (1) number projects PDC/PACP implemented by MRE/Itamaraty rose from 243 in 2013 to 585 in 2022, marking a 141% increase. The most notable growth periods occurred between 2013 and 2016, with a 34.5% increase, followed by a 29.1% rise between 2016 and 2019 and a further 38.9% expansion between 2019 and 2022. This consistent upward emphasizes the increasing institutionalization of cultural diplomacy within BFP expedients. For the four years encompassed by the data sample, there were 1.573 (one thousand fifty hundred and seventy-three) PDC/PACP projects implemented. The following table presents the total number of PDC/PACP projects implemented worldwide within the period, providing a clear overview of this significant growth.

Table 1 – Total number of implemented PDC/PACP projects globally

Year	Number of Projects
2013	243
2016	326
2019	422
2022	585

Source: PDC/PACP Official Annual Activity Reports 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022. Own preparation.

In terms of (2) geographic destination, Europe continued to be the main focus of BCD, registering a steady growth from 90 events in 2013 to 224 in 2022, accumulating a total of 687 projects throughout the period. This represented a 149% increase, reinforcing the region's long-standing status as the primary destination for BCD initiatives abroad. The most frequently supported cultural domains in Europe were Visual Arts, with 140 events, and then Music, with 135 events. France, the United Kingdom, and Portugal were among the top recipients of BCD initiatives, aligning with linguistic and cultural ties due to historic and colonial reasons.

Central America and the Caribbean were also increasingly addressed by BCD efforts, albeit at a slower pace compared to other regions. The total number of projects implemented was lower than that of other continents, indicating a more selective engagement. The predominant cultural domains in this region were Music, with 30 events, and Literature, with 25 events, reflecting an emphasis on showcasing Brazil's rich musical and literary traditions to Central American and Caribbean audiences. Among the countries that received the highest number of initiatives were

Cuba, with 15 events, and the Dominican Republic, with 12 events, followed by Panama, Costa Rica, and Jamaica.

South America, although receiving fewer projects in absolute terms, exhibited steady growth, with events rising from 41 in 2013 to 87 in 2022, resulting in an overall increase of 112%. The dominant cultural domains in this region were Music, accounting for 120 events, and Performing Arts, with 90 projects, reinforcing the region's strong cultural and artistic exchange with Brazil. Argentina, Peru, and Chile were the leading recipients of cultural diplomacy initiatives, highlighting a strategy aimed at strengthening ties with regional neighbors.

North America demonstrated notable variations in cultural diplomacy engagement. The number of initiatives increased from 34 in 2013 to 76 in 2022, totaling 186 projects and reflecting an overall growth of 123%. The primary cultural domains represented were Cinema and Audiovisual, with 90 events, and music, with 75 events, reflecting the growing importance of Brazilian audiovisual content in North American markets. The United States was the main destination for these projects, with cultural initiatives concentrated in New York and Los Angeles, underscoring the strategic targeting of key cultural and entertainment hubs. Canada and Mexico also received a significant number of projects.

Africa registered an impressive 220% growth rate, moving from 25 events in 2013 to 80 in 2022, totaling 200 projects across the analyzed period. This upward trajectory highlights a shift in BFP towards enhanced South-South cooperation and the so-called 'Foreign Policy as Affirmative Action' (Vida Gala, 2021), fostering stronger diplomatic ties with African nations through cultural initiatives. Music was the most frequently promoted cultural domain, with 60 projects, followed by Literature, with 50 events. The prominence of these areas reflects a strategy aimed at engaging African audiences through shared cultural heritage, particularly in Lusophone countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and São Tomé & Príncipe.

Similarly, Asia and Oceania exhibited a 161% increase in cultural diplomacy events, rising from 23 in 2013 to 60 in 2022, with a cumulative total of 152 projects. The most recurrent cultural domains in this region were Literature, with 50 events, and Music, with 45 projects. Japan and China were the primary destinations for Brazilian cultural diplomacy in the region Asia and Oceania, while Australia also received a notable number of initiatives. The focus on these countries suggests an effort to position Brazil as a relevant cultural actor in the Asia-Pacific region, leveraging cultural diplomacy to expand diplomatic and economic ties.

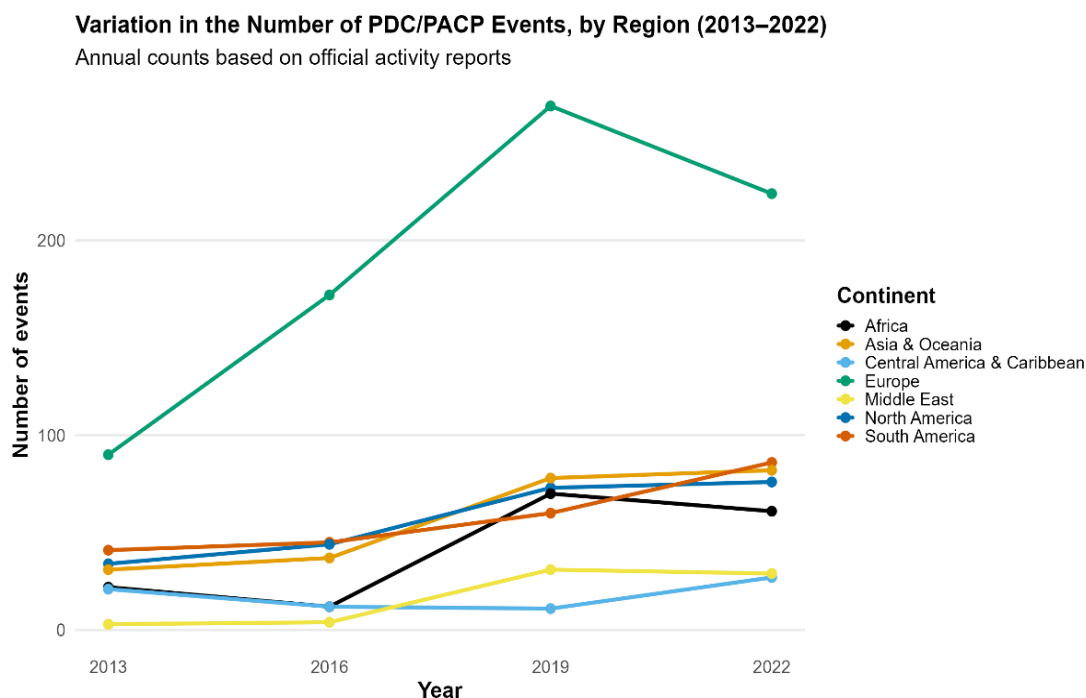
The Middle East stands out as the region with the highest growth rate in Brazilian cultural diplomacy, registering an exceptional 867% increase. Although the region received only three cultural diplomacy projects in 2013, this number surged to 29 by 2022, reflecting a significant shift in BCD engagement toward Middle East audiences. The most commonly promoted cultural domains in the Middle East were Performing Arts, with 20 projects, and Music, with 18 events. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Lebanon were among the primary destinations for

cultural projects.

Although the noticeable and constant increasing in the number of projects of cultural diplomacy implemented though the years, however, they were not distributed homogeneously across different regions. Some geographic destinations received a significantly larger share of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy (BCD) initiatives than others, which may reflects some sort of priorities and preferences in BFP cultural agendas. While Europe remained the primary recipient of these efforts, other regions experienced significant growth, especially Africa, Asia & Oceania, and the Middle East, demonstrating an increasing diversification of cultural diplomacy strategies. This geographical diversification echoes the broader orientations of BFP, historically grounded in principles of autonomy, development, multilateralism, and solidarity with the Global South (Cervo, 2005; Altemani, 2005; Figueira, 2011). In this sense, the growing presence of BCD initiatives across these territories reflects Brazil's universalist vocation and its enduring effort to combine regional engagement with South-South cooperation, reaffirming traditional diplomatic values through new cultural circuits (Cervo, 2005; Pinheiro & Vedoveli, 2012).

Otherwise, the remarkable expansion across different regions highlights the evolving geographic priorities of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy over the past decade. The following graphic illustrates the variation in the number of PDC/PACP projects implemented by region, offering a comparative perspective on the shifting focus of cultural diplomacy initiatives.

Graphic 1 – Variation on the number of PDC/PACP projects implemented, by Region



Source: PDC/PACP Official Annual Activity Reports 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022. Own preparation.

Regarding the (3) cultural domains, the variations in the number of projects implemented

not only reflect the priorities of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy (BCD) over time but also suggest broader strategic shifts influenced by both domestic policy orientations and international relations environment.

The predominance of Music, with a cumulative 522 events, is indicative of the continued emphasis on this cultural domain as a primary vehicle for Brazil's international cultural engagement. This prevalence is not unexpected given the strong global recognition of Brazilian musical genres such as Samba, Bossa Nova, and MPB. However, while Music has consistently maintained its leadership position in BCD, its proportional dominance has slightly waned over time. The reduction in its share of total cultural projects from 2013 to 2022 may suggest a deliberate diversification strategy aimed at expanding Brazil's cultural reach beyond music-centered initiatives.

Visual Arts, constituting the second most prevalent cultural domain with 328 events, displayed a more stable trajectory, with gradual increases across all examined years. This consistency suggests a well-established policy of promoting Brazilian artistic production in global art circuits, particularly through exhibitions, biennials, and international collaborations. The continued engagement with major institutions and the participation of Brazilian artists in leading contemporary art events underscore the strategic role of Visual Arts in maintaining Brazil's presence in the global cultural sphere.

Literature, with 182 recorded events, emerged as the third most prominent domain. While its absolute numbers are lower than those of Music and Visual Arts, its sustained presence within BCD initiatives highlights the growing emphasis on translating and disseminating Brazilian literary works abroad. This trend may be linked to policies aimed at fostering the international visibility of Brazilian authors and increasing the accessibility of Portuguese-language literature in foreign markets. Notably, the data indicate an upward trajectory in Literature-related projects from 2013 to 2019, followed by a stabilization in 2022. This suggests that despite structural constraints such as limited publishing industry support and translation challenges, there has been a deliberate effort to incorporate literary production into the broader cultural diplomacy strategy.

Multidisciplinary artistic expressions, as per categorized under Combined Arts category (namely Festivals with no predominant cultural domain), accounted for 143 events, highlighting the increasing integration of different artistic languages in BCD initiatives. The growing emphasis on hybrid artistic forms aligns with contemporary trends in the global cultural sector, where cross-disciplinary approaches have gained prominence. The relatively high number of events in this category suggests a deliberate effort to support innovative and experimental artistic productions that transcend traditional cultural classifications. These projects, often incorporating elements of many cultural domains serving as a dynamic representation of Brazilian cultural landscape to its external audiences.

Performing Arts, encompassing theater and dance, constituted a total of 102 projects.



Despite its lower representation compared to Music and Visual Arts, Performing Arts holds a unique position within Brazil's cultural diplomacy framework. The complexity of international touring logistics, high operational costs, and venue-specific requirements may have contributed to its limited expansion. However, the presence of over a hundred events indicates a consistent commitment to fostering theatrical and dance productions abroad. The fluctuation in the number of Performing Arts projects over the years may suggest that this domain has faced both opportunities and constraints tied to funding availability and shifting diplomatic priorities.

Beyond Music, Visual Arts, Literature, Combined Arts and Performing Arts, the remaining cultural domains collectively also accounted for a significant share of BCD efforts. Visual Arts, with 328 events, demonstrated a stable and continuous presence, reinforcing Brazil's strategic engagement with the global art scene. Literature, totaling 182 events, benefited from targeted efforts to translate and disseminate Brazilian literary works abroad, albeit facing challenges related to publishing industry support. Combined Arts, with 143 events, reflected the increasing relevance of hybrid artistic expressions, integrating multiple languages in innovative ways. Together, these domains illustrate the evolving priorities of Brazil's cultural diplomacy, highlighting a broader and more nuanced approach that moves beyond traditional formats to embrace interdisciplinary and globally resonant artistic expressions.

The prioritization of Music within Brazilian cultural diplomacy is deeply rooted in historical institutional strategies, as explored by Anaïs Fléchet (2012). In her analysis of MRE/Itamaraty cultural policies historically, Fléchet highlights how music has long functioned as a privileged domain for shaping Brazil's international identity for foreign audiences. She argues that through the exportation of Brazilian popular music, the country has strategically constructed an image of cultural modernity, cosmopolitanism, and national distinctiveness during the XX century. The sustained investment in music diplomacy is a reflection of this long-standing approach, where Brazil capitalizes on the universal appeal of its musical heritage to foster transnational interactions. As also emphasized by Telles Ribeiro (2011, p. 57), "it is reasonable to assume [...] Brazilian popular music would have reached international markets sooner or later; however, MRE/Itamaraty participation facilitated and shortened this process."

Otherwise, while Music remains at the forefront, the diversification of cultural domains on BCD policy-making suggests an attempt to balance musical projection with other artistic expressions that also contribute to MRE/Itamaraty goals on cultural diplomacy. We understand that this shift does not diminish the relevance of Music as an extremely valuable diplomatic tool but rather reflects an adaptive strategy to contemporary cultural and diplomatic dynamics. Visual Arts and Literature, have exhibited growth patterns that suggest increasing institutional support from MRE/Itamaraty. Meanwhile, the emergence of Combined Arts as a significant domain reflects the evolving nature of artistic expression and the necessity for cross-disciplinary approaches in cultural diplomacy.



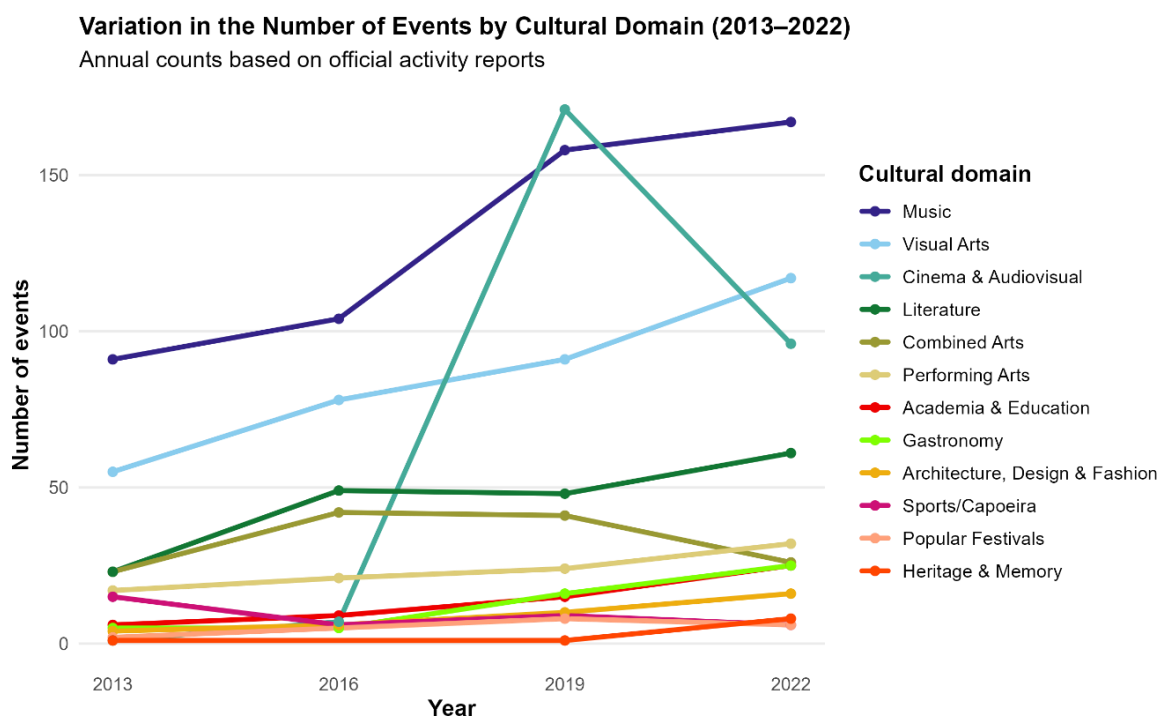
This data-driven analysis underscores the dynamic and evolving nature of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy (BCD) efforts within the analyzed period. The widely spread of a so-called pluralist and pragmatic orientation of BCD, as discussed by Dummont and Fléchet (2014), tends to emphasize the ability of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE/Itamaraty) to navigate between BFP strategic interests and the adaptability of foreign policy public policies on cultural diffusion accordingly to international environment. This approach aligns with broader BFP traditional principles, which historically seek to balance the negotiation between alignment and autonomy with a pragmatic *modus operandi* in its international relations (Saraiva, 2014; Vigevani and Cepaluni, 2016).

As Fléchet (2012) and Carrijo (2016) emphasize, Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy is characterized by a dual dynamic: on one hand, an effort to institutionalize cultural policies as declared instruments of soft power; on the other, a recognition of the historical constraints imposed by institutional and bureaucratic structures and its capacities, as well by shifting political priorities, which may affect the continuity of MRE/Itamaraty goals and interests on cultural diplomacy. For instance, as analyzed by Fléchet (2012), the strategic use of Music as one of the main tools to foster international political dialogue reflects a long-standing tradition of leveraging widely recognized Brazilian genres in order to construct and project a distinct national identity abroad. However, as Dumont and Fléchet (2014) argue, this emphasis on already internationally established cultural elements has at times led to an instrumentalization of cultural diplomacy that prioritizes areas with preexisting international public rather than proactively expanding less-known Brazilian cultural representations (Fléchet, 2012; Dummont and Fléchet, 2014; Carrijo, 2016).

The observed shifts in cultural diplomacy priorities underscore the need for further exploration of the institutional mechanisms that drive these variations, particularly the role of bureaucratic structures, decision-making processes and the very content, i.e. cultural sub dominions, often deployed by BCD through the PDC and PACP policies by MRE/Itamaraty, which also can encompass another Brazilian public administration high-level structures such as the Brazilian Ministry of Culture (MinC), as well other cultural-related government bodies. As noted by Rezende (2022), a deeper understanding of how cultural diplomacy initiatives may reinforce (or challenge) preexisting narratives and archetypes about Brazilian cultural identity should be centered on inquiring MRE/Itamaraty' ability to effectively pluralize BCD activities, since the formulation until the implementation of policies.

We sought to argue that a scenario of more democratization, through the increasing of popular participation on PDC/PACP formulation and implementation would likely result not only in the form of diversification of BCD activities in terms of geographical destination, but chiefly in terms of the already applied cultural domains (Rezende, 2022).

Graphic 2 – Variation on the number of PDC/PACP projects implemented, by Cultural Domain



Source: PDC/PACP Official Annual Activity Reports 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022. Own preparation.

Another interest aspect to note is that while PDC/PACP cultural diffusion actions were distributed across multiple diplomatic representations, certain Brazilian official posts (Embassies, Consulates and so forth) played a particularly prominent role in implementing cultural diplomacy projects. This reflects not only the strategic importance of specific locations but also the varying degrees of institutional capacity and diplomatic engagement among Brazil's foreign representations.

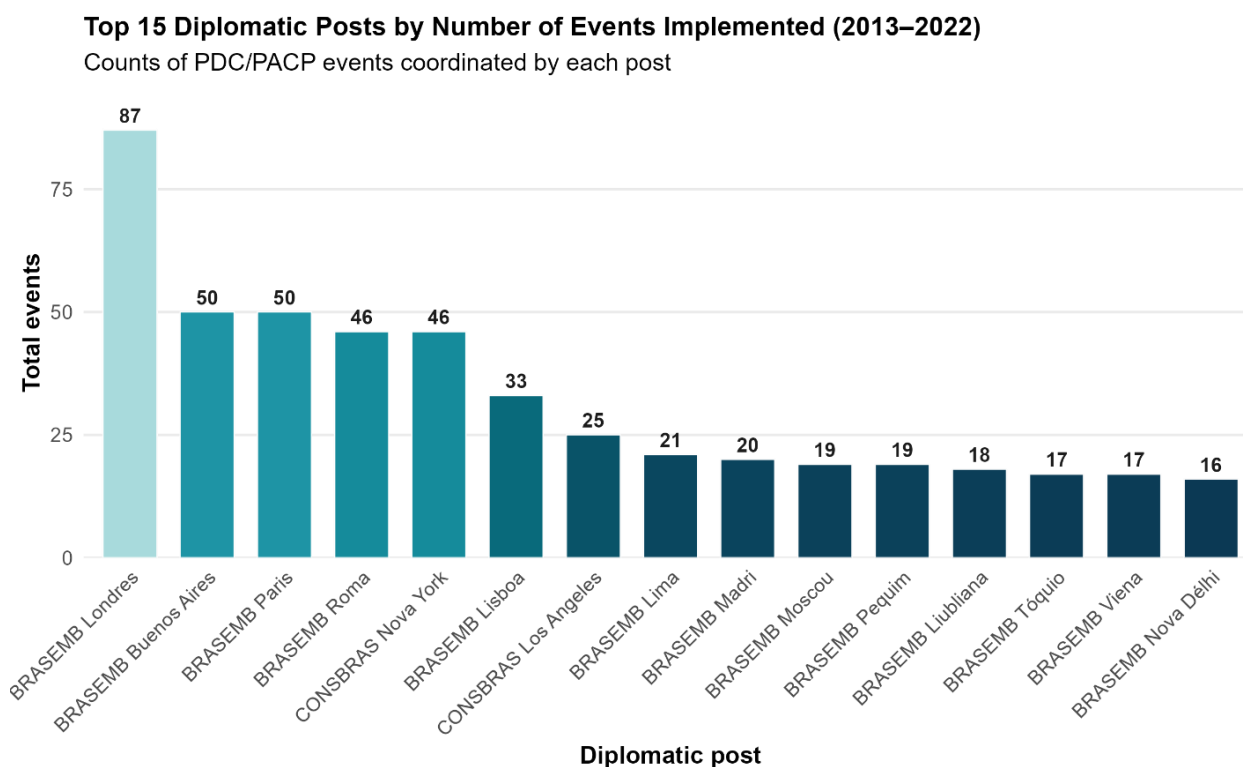
Among the most active diplomatic missions, the Brazilian Embassy in London led with 85 events throughout the analyzed period, making it the single most engaged Brazilian official post in cultural diplomacy efforts. The Brazilian Embassies in Buenos Aires and Paris followed, with 51 and 46 events, respectively, reinforcing the importance of Argentina and France as key cultural partners. The Consulate-General in New York and the Brazilian Embassy in Rome each recorded 42 events, underscoring the centrality of North American and European diplomatic representations in Brazil's cultural strategy. Other key diplomatic missions included the embassies in Lisbon, Lima, Moscow, and Madrid, as well as the general consulates in Los Angeles and Vienna, each facilitating between 17 and 28 cultural events throughout the period.

The preeminence of European and North American diplomatic missions in cultural diplomacy efforts suggests a historically ingrained emphasis on engaging with traditional cultural power centers, as observed in the work of Fléchet (2012) and Dumont & Fléchet (2014). Building on this historical trajectory, Menezes and Boy (2019) show that, in the early 21st century, Europe

— and particularly France — remained central to Brazil’s international cultural projection. Guided by a neodevelopmentalist orientation, the period saw a coordinated effort among Itamaraty, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Education to enhance Brazil’s global visibility through emblematic events such as the Year of Brazil in France (2005). As the authors note, “[...] it was presumed that the country could achieve political, economic and socio-cultural partnerships by staging them abroad” (Menezes & Boy, 2019, p. 3), reaffirming Europe’s role as a privileged arena for the consolidation of Brazil’s cultural diplomacy.

Meanwhile, embassies in Latin America, such as Buenos Aires and Lima, also played a notable role, reflecting BFP regional diplomatic priorities and justifying the neighborhood bounds and the very institutional narrative of Brazilian diplomacy. There is evidence of a gradual diversification of cultural diplomacy actions, with increased activity in non-traditional diplomatic posts, particularly in Asian and Oceania, as well in Middle East. This shift aligns with broader BFP strategies of strengthening Global South international engagements by attempting to expand Brazilian cultural presence beyond its historically related spheres and also resonates with the emerging cultural paradigms advanced by Global South presidencies in the G20, which, as Barão (2024) argues, have sought to reframe international cultural policies around paradigms such as inclusiveness, sustainability, and postcolonial solidarity (Fléchet, 2012; Dumont & Fléchet, 2014; Barão, 2024).

Graphic 3 – Top 15 Brazilian Official Representations Abroad, by Number of Events Implemented (2013 –2022)



Source: PDC/PACP Official Annual Activity Reports 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022. Own preparation

As we sought to highlight, Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy (BCD) uses to be addressed by

historical-descriptive approaches in BFP literature as a “plural” and “pragmatic” activity. On one hand, the accumulation of historical-descriptive studies on Brazilian cultural diplomacy such as in Herz (1987), Telles Ribeiro (2011), Lessa & Suppo (2007), Bijos & Arruda (2010), Lessa, Saraiva & Mappa (2012), Flechét (2012), Dummont (2012), Madeira (2013), Dummont & Flechét (2014), has contributed to reducing public unfamiliarity with the subject since the 1980s. On the other hand, the historiographical tone of Brazilian academic literature on cultural diplomacy has, at times, blurred into the own institutional narrative of official BFP (Carrijo, 2016; Rezende, 2022).

In our study, more than merely revealing the variety of content and recipients of BCD, we aim to explore the extent to which those alleged “pluralism” and “pragmatism” so recurrent in historical-descriptive approaches to BCD truly reflect the reality of this policy in the studied period. Indeed, the increase in BCD initiatives highlights the expansion of cultural engagements abroad, as well the cultural domains preferences and geographic destination priorities. The overall expansion of cultural diplomacy projects across all continents demonstrates MRE/Itamaraty increasing reliance on culture as a mean for fostering and strengthening Brazilian diplomatic relations across the globe.

Such tendencies mirror the broader orientations of BFP during the period, marked first by a strategy of autonomy through diversification and South–South cooperation (Cervo, 2005; Figueira, 2011), followed by phases of pragmatic re-engagement and selective regional prioritization. Accordingly, the geographic and thematic configuration of BCD initiatives appears to echo these shifts, aligning cultural diplomacy practices with the evolving developmental and diplomatic agendas of BFP (Altemani, 2005; Pinheiro & Vedoveli, 2012).

In terms of (3) geographic destination, Europe remained the dominant recipient of BCD initiatives, concentrating nearly a half of all PDC/PACP initiatives in the period (43.9%). This trend highlights Brazil’s enduring engagement with European audiences, a relationship deeply influenced by colonial legacies and historical dependencies. The strong cultural and diplomatic ties with France, Portugal, the United Kingdom, and Spain reflect not only longstanding political and economic connections but also the persistence of Eurocentric paradigms rooted in BFP. However, significant growth was recorded in Africa, Asia and Oceania, and the Middle East, where PDC/PACP projects increased by 220%, 161%, and 867% respectively over the period. This expansion suggests an evolving strategy that seeks to diversify Brazil’s cultural influence beyond its traditional partners, reinforcing Global South relations.

The substantial expansion of BCD initiatives in regions historically less crucial to BFP —such as Africa (+220%), Asia and Oceania (+161%), and the Middle East (+867%)—may be interpreted not merely as a movement toward geographic diversification, but as well as evidence of a paradigmatic reconfiguration of international cultural engagement patterns, in consonance with the advancement of Global South presidencies in multilateral fora such as the G20. As analyzed by Giulia Barão (2024), the Indonesian, Indian, and Brazilian G20 presidencies, within the years of

2022, 2023 and 2024, respectively, have articulated quite an epistemological turn that attempts to displace the Eurocentric and neoliberal centrality of previous cultural policy models, giving rise instead to paradigms rooted in cultural democracy and culture for climate action (Barão, 2024).

Brazil's engagement in mechanisms such as the BRICS, IBAS, and G20 emerges as a relevant explanatory variable for understanding the expansion pattern of BCD initiatives across Global South territories. As argued by Barão (2024) argues, Global South presidencies in G20 have consolidated a common-shared vocabulary of critical cultural paradigms, grounded in principles of inclusive multilateralism, civic participation, and redress of North–South asymmetries. By acting through transnational networks that frame culture as a collective human right and a vector for sustainable development, Brazil enhances the legitimacy and coherence of its cultural diplomacy. Accordingly, the territorial diversification of PDC/PACP initiatives could signal a shift toward more decentralized and participatory practices in BCD (Barão, 2024).

The evidence gathered through the Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF) might challenge these assumptions, revealing a sort of Eurocentric bias in Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy (BCD) efforts from 2013 to 2023, due to the data sample of 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022 annual exercises. The CDDAF analysis of the PDC/PACP public policies shows that, despite fluctuations in the number of projects and cultural domains across regions, the overall implementation of BCD initiatives was robust. Considering the data as per informed in the “Table 1 - Total number of implemented projects PDC/PACP”, a total of 1,578 cultural diplomacy projects were carried out in the years of 2013, 2016, 2019 and 2022, averaging almost 395 events per year.

While this might suggest continuity and pragmatism in Brazil's cultural diplomacy, the geographical distribution of these projects reveals significant disparities. Europe received nearly half of all PDC/PACP initiatives in the period (43.9%), reflecting a strong Eurocentric bias on Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy policy-making. This imbalance persists despite Brazil's historical ties with other regions, such as Africa and South America. The concentration of efforts in Europe undermines the historical-descriptive literature claims of “pluralism” in Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy, highlighting instead a persistent colonial legacy which currently persists on BCD contemporary policy-making. The significant number of cultural events facilitated by MRE/Itamaraty underscores the state's capacity to leverage Brazil's cultural capital. However, the uneven distribution of these efforts raises questions about the more or less balanced distribution of BCD efforts.

Regarding the (2) cultural domains, the most frequently promoted cultural were Music (522 events), Visual Arts (328 events), and Literature (182 events), reaffirming these areas as the core pillars of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy. Notably, Music remained the single most prominent domain across all regions, reflecting its global recognition as a key cultural asset for Brazil's soft power strategy. As noted by Ribeiro (2011) and Fléchet (2012), music has historically served as one of the most effective instruments of Brazilian cultural diplomacy, combining popular and

erudite traditions to project a plural national identity abroad, alongside literature and visual arts as strategic means for promoting the Portuguese language and Brazil's aesthetic vanguards overseas (Ribeiro, 2011; Fléchet, 2012).

However, the prominence of different cultural domains varied across regions, revealing a strategic adaptation to local cultural contexts. These patterns highlight the degree to which BCD policies has evolved to tailor its initiatives to the specific cultural and diplomatic contexts of each region, demonstrating a calculated balance between continuity and adaptation in international cultural engagements. The diversification of cultural domains may indicate a broader effort to engage with diverse audiences and expand the reach of BCD initiatives. Otherwise, as Barão (2014) notes, "the fact that the country has a rich collection of works of art, artistic manifestations [...] is not a sufficient condition for it to be able to formulate and execute an effective foreign cultural policy" (Barão, 2014, p. 96).

In addition, we sought to argue that the ability to convert available cultural resources into effective cultural diplomacy efforts depends on a decolonized approach that prioritizes equitable and inclusive cultural exchange in despite of mere cultural commercialization or imperialism, which, in its turn, chiefly depends on more pluralization of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy decision-making process. The central issue, therefore, is not a lack of cultural resources available to be functionalized by Brazilian State in its broadcasting agency, but the need to address the decision-making processes of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy. As Figueira (2011) argues, "the decision-making process in foreign policy is a complex game of interaction between different actors permeated by a huge range of structures, whether of the international system or domestic" (Figueira, 2011, p. 20).

Considering so, further studies on assessment of Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy public policies should focus on the interaction between state power, foreign policy, and cultural diplomacy, examining how these dynamics influence the formulation and implementation of public policies in this field (Carrijo, 2016). It is also important to recognize the limitations of this research, particularly its temporal and programmatic scope, defined by the selected years upon availability of official data. Such delimitation reflects distinct governmental contexts and policy orientations while budgetary constraints play a decisive role in shaping the implementation and reach of PDC and PACP initiatives. Therefore, future studies could thus broaden the timeframe and further examine how financial resources condition the continuity of BCD public policies, in order to foster further inquiries dedicated to examining recent developments within the institutional framework of BCD, particularly under the scope of the Instituto Guimarães Rosa (IGR).

Since 2023, as an example, the establishment of the Advisory Committee of the Guimarães Rosa Program for Cultural Diplomacy ("*Comitê Consultivo do Programa Guimarães Rosa de Diplomacia Cultural*") has consolidated this institutional framework, creating a consultative and participatory body responsible for advising on the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of cultural

diplomacy initiatives (Ministério das Relações Exteriores, 2023b). Composed of representatives from governmental bodies, academic institutions, and the cultural sector, the committee reflects a renewed commitment to interinstitutional dialogue and shared governance in the formulation and implementation of Brazil's cultural diplomacy policies. Such arrangements offer fertile ground for future research on the impacts of collaborative and cross-sectoral mechanisms in redefining strategies, priorities, and outcomes within Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy.

CONCLUSION

The historical-descriptive approaches to Brazilian cultural diplomacy, often aligned with hegemonic IR narratives, fail to fully capture the complexities of its political practice. While concepts like soft power, public diplomacy, and cultural relations provide useful frameworks, they are insufficient for addressing the realities of cultural diplomacy in a postcolonial context (Ang, Raj Isar & Mar, 2015; Zanella, Neves Júnior e Silva, 2024). The empirical findings of this study challenge the uncritical acceptance of terms like “plural” and “pragmatic” in describing Brazilian Cultural Diplomacy, revealing instead a Eurocentric and uneven approach to cultural diffusion (Rezende, 2022).

Through the application of the Cultural Diplomacy Data Analysis Framework (CDDAF), specifically analyzing the PDC/PACP expedients under MRE/Itamaraty cultural diplomacy for the years 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022, we have demonstrated that these public policies result from specific institutional dynamics, as well as from performative aspects of BFP policy-making. Additionally, we sought to critically engage with the western-centric orientation of historical-descriptive approaches in BCD studies and practices, as well as in the broader formulation of mainstream IR theories. These theories, heavily influenced by U.S.-coined concepts such as Soft Power, Public Diplomacy, and Cultural Relations, continue to struggle in addressing cultural issues beyond the positivist lens that dominates much of international studies.

In doing so, this paper offered an analysis over a significant body of empirical data concerning the international diffusion of Brazilian culture for the years 2013, 2016, 2019, and 2022, while also challenging taken-for-granted historical-descriptive assumptions about BCD as inherently “plural” and “pragmatic.” Although some degree of pragmatism can indeed be observed in the strategic international diffusion of Brazilian culture, the claim of pluralism appears significantly overstated. Our findings reveal a pronounced Eurocentric bias and colonial-inherited orientation in the contemporary internationalization of Brazilian culture as conducted by MRE/Itamaraty, which problematizes the extent to which BCD effectively engages with a genuine diversified global cultural landscape.

Recent multilateral developments, however, indicate emerging efforts to reorient Brazil's cultural diplomacy toward greater pluralism and South–South engagement. As observed by Barão (2024), the Indonesian, Indian, and Brazilian G20 presidencies (2022–2024) have advanced a shared agenda grounded in cultural democracy, inclusive multilateralism, and sustainability,



seeking to displace Eurocentric and neoliberal policy models. Brazil's active role in forums such as the BRICS, IBAS, and G20 Cultural Working Group, alongside renewed cooperation with UNESCO and the OEI, reflects a gradual shift toward more participatory and epistemically diverse practices.

Therefore, in light of these emerging dynamic, future research should further investigate the effectiveness and long-term impact of BCD PDC/PACP public policies by employing a well-informed, evidence-based approach that integrates both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. A mixed-methods framework would enable a more comprehensive understanding of how institutional structures, resource allocation, and transnational partnerships shape Brazil's international cultural diffusion strategies and their outcomes among recipient audiences. In addition, comparative analyses with other national cultural diplomacy models could yield valuable insights into best practices and inform the refinement of BCD under the evolving mandate of MRE/Itamaraty.

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