

CULTURE

&

SYMPOSIUM REPORT OF
CULTURE AND DIPLOMACY
IN THE CHANGING WORLD:
ITS RELATIONS, VALUES AND PRACTICES

DIPLOMACY

16.DECEMBER.2020

INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM “CULTURE AND DIPLOMACY IN THE CHANGING WORLD: ITS RELATIONS, VALUES AND PRACTICES”

16 December 2020

Fifth-floor Auditorium, Bangkok Art and Culture Centre
and via YouTube Live

Organized by:

The Japan Foundation, Bangkok

In cooperation with:

Goethe-Institut Thailand,

British Council Thailand,

Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC)



PRE- FACE

This report consists of session summaries from the international public symposium entitled “Culture and Diplomacy in the Changing World: Its Relations, Values and Practices” which took place on December 16, 2020 at Bangkok Art and Culture Centre in Thailand. The symposium was also broadcast online via the Japan Foundation, Bangkok’s YouTube channel. The symposium explored the role of culture in terms of diplomatic endeavors in the context of the further divisions in our societies and the world, as well as in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The insights given by all the speakers, as well as the discussions among them, were inspirational and diverse, particularly in providing comparative points of view from different nations and backgrounds. We hope that the report will serve not only practitioners and scholars but also the general public who are interested in the topic as a resource to think further about “Culture and Diplomacy”.

We would like to extend our gratitude and appreciation to all the speakers for the informative talks, and Bangkok Art Biennale Foundation for their kind cooperation in this event.

This report serves as a summarized archive of the symposium. The summary of part I is grouped by topics, meanwhile, part II provides dialogue-based contents. Full video documentation of the symposium can be found via the QR code below.



May 2021

The Japan Foundation, Bangkok
Goethe-Institut Thailand
British Council Thailand
Bangkok Art and Culture Centre

LIST OF SPEAKERS AND DISCUSSANTS



**Assoc. Prof.
Dr. Kitti Prasirtsuk**

Vice-Rector for International Affairs,
Thammasat University, Thailand



Yoshioka Norihiko

Director-General,
The Japan Foundation,
Bangkok, Thailand



**Assoc. Prof.
Dr. Natthanan Kunnamas**

Jean Monnet Chair and Jean Monnet
Modules Coordinator, Director of the
Centre for European Studies, Chula-
longkorn University, Thailand



**Prof.
Dr. Apinan Poshyananda**

CEO and Artistic Director of Bangkok
Art Biennale 2020, Thailand



Ronald Grätz

Secretary General, IFA (Institut für
Auslandsbeziehungen), Germany



Sasapin Siriwanij

Artistic Director of Bangkok
International Performing Arts
Meeting (BIPAM), Thailand



Dr. Xin Gu

Senior Lecturer, School of Media Film
and Journalism, Monash University,
Australia
Expert, UNESCO 2005 Convention
on the Diversity of Cultural Expression



Maren Niemeyer

Director, Goethe-Institut Thailand



**Prof. Dr.
Shibasaki Atsushi**

Komazawa University, Japan



Andrew Glass OBE

Country Director, British Council,
Thailand

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

12:30 Open registration

13:00 - 14:30

Part I :

**Cultural Diplomacy:
Its concepts and Interpretations
in Each Nation**

Moderators and discussants

Assoc. Prof. Dr Kitti Prasirtsuk
Vice-Rector for International Affairs, Thammasat University,
Thailand

Assoc. Prof. Dr Natthanan Kunnamas
Jean Monnet Chair and Jean Monnet Modules Coordinator,
Director of the Centre for European Studies, Chulalongkorn
University, Thailand

Speakers

Ronald Grätz
Secretary General, IFA (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen),
Germany

Dr Xin Gu
Senior Lecturer, School of Media Film and Journalism,
Monash University, Australia
Expert, UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Diversity of
Cultural Expression

Prof. Dr Shibasaki Atsushi
Komazawa University, Japan

15:00 - 16:30

Part II :

**Cultural Exchange in Practice:
Motivations behind Planning
and Participation**

Moderator

Yoshioka Norihiko
Director-General, The Japan Foundation, Bangkok,
Thailand

Speakers

Prof. Dr. Apinan Poshyananda
CEO and Artistic Director of Bangkok Art Biennale 2020,
Thailand

Sasapin Siriwanij

Artistic Director of Bangkok International Performing Arts
Meeting (BIPAM), Thailand

Maren Niemeyer

Director, Goethe-Institut Thailand

Andrew Glass OBE

Country Director, British Council, Thailand

16:30 - 17:00

Part III:

Wrap Up: So anyway for Diplomacy or beyond?

PROFILE OF SPEAKERS:



Ronald Grätz

Secretary General, IFA (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen), Germany

Before assuming his current position at IFA, he was director of the Goethe-Institut in Portugal. Ronald Grätz worked as Division Director for German Language at the UNESCO scheme Colégio Benjamin Constant in São Paulo, of which he was also deputy director. In 1993, he qualified as a lecturer at the Goethe-Institut in Munich, Cairo and Goettingen and worked as consultant for pedagogical support and as a teacher with the Goethe-Institut in Barcelona (1994-98). From 2002 to 2005, Ronald Grätz was a consultant for new media and the director of local programme activities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia at the Goethe-Institut in Moscow.



Prof. Dr. Shibasaki Atsushi

Komazawa University, Japan

Prof. Shibasaki is an expert of the history, theory and philosophy of international cultural relations and international relations. He had published several books, including International Cultural Relations in Modern Japan: History of Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1934-45 (Yushindo, 1999), Self, State, and International Relations: Tomonaga Sanjuro, Immanuel Kant, and the naissance of the worldview in modern Japan (Sobunshya, 2009), and others. He had been a guest professor at the Institute of European Global Studies, University of Basel, Switzerland (2017-18). His field of research varies from the history of international cultural relations in modern Japan to the concept of soft power, Kenneth Waltz, concept of fear, Immanuel Kant, Antonio Negri and Bob Dylan. His latest book is International Cultural Relations in Modern and Contemporary Japan: Towards a Study of Global Cultural Relations (Yushindo, 2020), and latest paper is "What are Our 'Common Challenge' and 'Shared Approach'? A Theoretical Analysis of the Nature of 'Japanese' International Relations from the Perspective of International Cultural Relations" (Kokusai Seiji (International Relations), 2020).



Dr. Xin Gu

Senior Lecturer, School of Media Film and Journalism, Monash University, Australia
Expert, UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expression

Dr. Xin Gu is an expert appointed by UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Expression of Cultural Diversity (2019-22). She was director of the Master of Cultural and Creative Industries (MCCI) at Monash University in Australia (2018-19). She has published widely on urban creative clusters and agglomerations, cultural work, creative entrepreneurship, cultural and creative industries policy, media cities, maker culture and cyberculture. Xin has worked with policy initiatives in the UK, China and Indonesia to support small-scale local creative industries development services. Her work focuses on the transformation of creative cities and the creative economy under different social, economic and political conditions. Xin's current research concerns the digital creative economy, looking at the democratization of creativity through vast transformative digital media ecosystems. Her recent publications include *Red Creatives* (Intellect, 2020) and *Re-imagining Creative Cities in Twenty-First Century Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan 2020).



Assoc. Prof.

Dr. Kitti Prasirtsuk

Vice-Rector for International Affairs,
Thammasat University, Thailand

He received his B.A. from Thammasat, an M.A. from Keio University and a Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley. His areas of interest include international relations in East and Southeast Asia, Japanese politics and foreign policy, and ASEAN. He taught International Relations in Southeast Asia as a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and also gave special lectures at Peking University, Waseda University, Yonsei University, Korea University, ANU, and the University of Munich. In addition, Kitti is regularly invited to speak at international symposium, including at Columbia University, Nikkei Forum, Beijing Forum, and Jeju Forum. Aside teaching, he is Vice Rector for International Affairs and Associate Professor of Political Science at Thammasat University in Thailand. He serves as an advisory committee for the Asia Center under the Japan Foundation, which promotes exchange between Japan and ASEAN. He is also a committee of the International Studies Center at the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and a former strategic committee at the Thai Ministry of Defence (2014-19).

PROFILE OF SPEAKERS:



Assoc. Prof.
Dr. Natthanan Kunnamas

Jean Monnet Chair and Jean Monnet Modules Coordinator,
Director of the Centre for European Studies, Chulalongkorn
University, Thailand

Natthanan received BA in International Affairs and German Language from Thammasat University. Having won Leeds-ASEM Chevening Scholarship, she studied MA European Politics at University of Leeds, UK and further won Thai government's funding for doctoral degree at the same place. Currently, she is a full-time professor and the Director of the Centre for European Studies, Chulalongkorn University. In 2019, she was decorated Knight of the Order of Academic Palm, Republic of France. In 2012, she received the certificate on Comparative Regionalisms from American University, USA and Central European University, Hungary. Natthanan was awarded the European Union Jean Monnet Chair Professorship, the first Thai and ASEAN to be titled this honourable professorship in 2016. Her recent works for example including studies and researches on political and economic transformations of Eastern European countries, particularly the Former Yugoslavian countries, and "Normative Power Europe". She is now doing the research projects on "Innovation diplomacy" and "A Study on International Security through Public Diplomacy: Thailand's International Strategy with the United Kingdom and the European Union" supported by Thai governmental funding agencies.



Prof.
Dr. Apinan Poshyananda

CEO and Artistic Director of Bangkok
Art Biennale 2020, Thailand

Prof. Dr. Apinan Poshyananda received his bachelor and master degree in Fine Arts from Edinburgh University and Ph.D. in History of Art from Cornell University. He served as Director-General, Office of Contemporary Art and Culture, Director-General of Cultural Promotion Department and, the Permanent Secretary and Acting Minister, Ministry of Culture (Thailand) when he was to commission and curate the first Thai Pavilion at 50th Venice Biennale. He has curated and directed international art exhibitions including Contemporary Art from Asia: Traditions/Tensions (1996, Grey Art Gallery, Queen Museum of Art, and Asia Society Galleries, New York); Traces of Siamese Smile: Art + Faith + Politic + Love (2008, Bangkok Art and Culture Centre), Thailand Eye (2015, Saatchi Gallery, London and BACC). He is a committee member of the Asian Cultural Council, New York; Solomon Guggenheim Museum, New York; Board of National Gallery, Singapore; Board of Foundation of BACC; and Advisor to President and CEO, Thai Beverage Plc.



Sasapin Siriwanij

Artistic Director of Bangkok International Performing Arts Meeting (BIPAM), Thailand

Ms. Sasapin is a core member of B-Floor Theatre alongside being an independent theater artist and producer. She began acting in 2005 while studying at Chulalongkorn University, where she received her M.A and B.A in English Literature. She was awarded Best Performance by a Female Artist in 2017 by the Theater Critics Association Thailand (IACT) for her work Oh! Ode (Oh! What Joy, What Goodness, What Beauty Calls For Ode No.7012), a performance art piece exploring political implications within Thai traditional art forms which later was invited to present at the 4th Berliner Herbstsalon by Maxim Gorki Theater, Berlin. Sasapin has taken the role of Artistic Director of Bangkok International Performing Arts Meeting (BIPAM) since 2018, and has co-founded Producers of Thai Performing Arts Network (POTPAN).



Maren Niemeyer

Director, Goethe-Institut Thailand

Born in Bremen, Germany, Maren Niemeyer studied journalism, German philology and film theory in Paris and Berlin. She has worked as a journalist, editor, documentary filmmaker and producer for national and international radio and TV channels, mainly for ARD, ZDF, DW-TV and the German-French cultural channel ARTE. In 2007, Maren produced the ARTE/ARD Documentary-Series about the magic hippie trail to Kathmandu in the late sixties and she produced a worldwide broadcasted series about the Myths of German Design for Deutsche Welle TV in 2008. From 2008 to 2009, she was a Commissioning Editor for the Documentary Film department of NDR/ARTE. From 2010 to 2016, she was Program-Coordinator for the Film-Department of the Goethe-Institut Headquarter in Munich. Since July 2016, Maren Niemeyer is the director of the Goethe- Institut Thailand.

PROFILE OF SPEAKERS:



Andrew Glass OBE

Country Director, British Council,
Thailand

Andrew Glass has been with British Council for 30 years. Before he moved to Thailand, he worked alongside multinational colleagues in eight countries; namely Spain, Italy, Slovenia, Germany, UK, Serbia/Montenegro and Kuwait. A genuine believer in how cultural and educational relations bring people and countries closer together, Andrew has catalysed positive changes everywhere he has worked. Since he moved to Thailand in 2014, he has been working closely with the public and private sectors to create opportunities for people by raising levels of English, internationalising higher education and science and supporting the creative economy in Thailand. Andrew was appointed Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2012 UK New Year's Honours List. He has a Bachelor's Degree in German & Politics from Bristol University, during which time he spent a year at Konstanz University in Germany. He has an MA in Applied Linguistics/Teaching English from Aston University and a Diploma in Management from Henley Management School (University of Reading).



Yoshioka Norihiko

Director-General,
The Japan Foundation,
Bangkok, Thailand

After graduation from Faculty of Letters, Arts and Sciences, Waseda University, he started his career in the Japan Foundation. From 1999 to 2004, he moved to Bangkok as an Assistant Director managing cultural events such as Japanese film festivals, arts exhibitions and stage performances. Yoshioka earned M.A. in International Economics and Finance from Chulalongkorn University in 2008 and was Deputy Director of the Japan Foundation Center for Cultural Exchange in Vietnam from 2010-14, followed by the service as Deputy Director, Arts, Culture and Exchange Section I & II, the Japan Foundation Asia Center in Tokyo. Since April 2016, he is the Director-General of the Japan Foundation, Bangkok. He was a regular member of the Cool Japan Movement Promotion Council by Cabinet Secretariat, Government of Japan from April – August 2014. His publications include (As a translator) “Zayu no Nippon” [Lit. My Desk Side Japan], Prabda Yoon, Typhoon Books Japan, 2008; “Chikyu de Saigo no Futari” [Last Life in the Universe], Prabda Yoon, Sony Magazines, 2004; (as a co-author) “Tonan Asia Bunka Jiten” [Lit. Encyclopedia on Southeast Asian Cultures], Nobuta Toshihiro et al., Maruzen, 2019; “Asia Eiga” [Lit. Asian Films], Yomota Inuhiko et al., Sakuhinsha, 2003.

PART I:

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: ITS CONCEPTS AND INTERPRETATIONS IN EACH NATION

Definition of “Cultural Diplomacy” in the context of each nation

④ Grätz¹:

Foreign cultural policy (FCP) is the basis for Germany's foreign policy, and culture is the basis for all pillars of diplomacy, and economic, cultural and education policies. Germany does not have a Ministry of Culture and Education. Therefore, FCP is undertaken by independent educational and cultural organizations within the scope of target agreements and framework contracts with the German Foreign Office. It reflects the strategic and regional focuses and responsibilities of German foreign policy. It does not act in interest of something, but in responsibility for the global issue.

④ Dr. Gu²:

Chinese cultural diplomacy has taken new meanings through a reimagining of the Chinese public at home and abroad. The concepts of ‘soft power’ and ‘cultural diplomacy’ are fundamentally different, and culture attractiveness is not soft power. It is a soft power source as some have argued. However, neither the government nor any of the cultural agencies can be defined as a form of soft power. This has some implications for the not-so-successful attempts by the Chinese government and associated agencies trying to deploy Chinese soft power overseas.

④ Dr. Shibasaki³:

I will propose four phases of tentative polarisation of international cultural relations in modern Japan (1905 - present day). The term ‘international cultural relations’ is used in a broader sense including what we call cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and foreign culture policy. The concept of national diplomacy was first introduced after the victory of the Sino-Japanese War. Then, after the defeat of the Asia Pacific War, the main keyword evolved to ‘mutual understanding’. Also, ‘internationalisation’ was introduced by emerging non-state initiatives. From the latter half of the 1970s, we could detect a transition of keywords. From internationalisation to globalisation, from mutual understanding to public diplomacy or soft power. A bi-polarisation or a so-called Neoliberalistic trend and the civil society or the people-centred trend emerged in international cultural relations in this phase. The trend continued in the 2000s and up until now with a deeper gap between state and people oriented relations. The concept of soft power was also revisited in this phase.

1 Information on the context of Germany as presented by Ronald Grätz.

2 Information on the context of China as presented by Dr. Xin Gu.

3 Information on the context of Japan as presented by Prof. Dr Shibasaki Atsushi.

How “Cultural Diplomacy” represents each nation

⑤ Grätz:

Foreign cultural policy (FCP) presents Germany as an interested, trustworthy, credible, reliable, and long-term partner. It is committed to the values of democracy, human rights, freedom of opinion, freedom of art and science, peace and environmental protection; based on the principle that forms of expression of all cultures are of equal value. FCP rejects any definition of culture that equals a representation of the state since it sees cultural value in the diversity and differences of languages, cultural spaces, and cultural history. It focuses on information about the culture in and from Germany; art from Germany rather than German art.

⑤ Dr. Gu:

Confucianism is a key reference to Chinese soft power. Soft power only emerged in China around the year 2000. However, instead of building on contemporary cultural understandings, the Chinese government decided to re-appropriate Confucianism prioritizing collective rights over individual rights. It has now become the heart of contemporary cultural diplomacy; representing the disconnectedness between traditional cultural diplomacy practices and contemporary Chinese cultural industries influenced by western popular culture.

⑤ Dr. Shibasaki:

From 1905 to 1945, Japan presented itself as a ‘special nation’ with its mission civilisatrice. In rivalry with China, the mission insisted that Japan was the only nation that possessed a convergence of western-eastern civilisation in world history. It also highlighted that concept by designing and initiating national diplomacy through public institutions, or even non-state initiatives. However, other countries misunderstood this as its ‘supremacy’ of culture and people. Hence Japan’s inspiration to stress mutual understanding in the next phase; a starting-over under US occupation. Although Japan did not entirely abandon the original east-west convergence idea, its cultural exchange activities involved some self-criticism and self-observation of the Japanese cultural supremacy. Mutual understanding reflects how Japan still wants to learn foreign culture, but also wishes to be understood authentically. The main target was East Asia and Southeast Asia. From the 2000s, the state revisited the concept of soft power with a more subtle approach via state branding initiatives. As the concept of mutual understanding deepens, international cultural relations evolve in the balance between people-centred cultural relations and a solution for national interests.

of display

se is not soft power on its own' (I. Ang et al 2015)

tone, defined by its global domination of
ral ideology, consumerism, freedom of choice

ophers have long understood the power that
nda and determining the framework for a
ish preferences tends to be associated with
s such as culture, ideology and institutions.'

**Part I: Cultural Diplomacy:
Its Concepts and Interpretations
in Each Nation**



Dr. Xin Gu
Monash University, Australia

The role and relations of the state in “Cultural Diplomacy”

- ⑤ Grätz:

Experiences from WWII and the Nazi Regime had steered Germany to not give the hand to its government, but to let independent cultural institutes operate FCP autonomously, and see themselves as close to the state and distant from governments⁴; belonging to civil society. In contemporary understanding, it is mentioned as ‘foreign cultural relations’ rather than ‘foreign cultural policy’ to draw away from the nationalised action of the government. The key is to gain trust in German society and other people.
- ⑤ Dr. Gu:

The Chinese discourse is closely aligned with national interest. The agenda-setting process has been one directional and state-centred. Soft power has become less a conversation about what China is or how it should be perceived by international audiences, and more often a domestic debate about China's national cultural identity and its relation to the Communist Party. It is also significantly related and based on shared values and multilateral approaches and regional roles. The government is anxious to project a positive image of China and maintain cultural security through the one-party rule's legitimisation.
- ⑤ Dr. Shibasaki:

For Japan, Public institutions and other initiatives had served the state's vision and mission during the early times of national policy. However, as time developed, many other actors emerged in the cultural relations of Japan, especially with Southeast Asia. As the millennium approached, the bi-polarisation of the neoliberal state versus citizen or people-oriented approaches caused a wider gap in Japan's international cultural relations.

⁴ In German governing context

Shibasaki (2020, Ch.2)
 Intelligence & Japanese
 Diplomacy (ultra-
 Asianism), 'correct'
 (1919-), KBS (1934),
 National/Foreign/Great-

US occupation, i-
 a-US-Japan trilogy,
 (1972), emergence of
 (etc.)

reference), soft power
 er, NPOs)

neo-liberal (state) vs
), public diplomacy,
 11. and COVID-19

Part I: Cultural Diplomacy: Its Concepts and Interpretations in Each Nation



Prof. Dr. Shibasaki Atsushi
 Komazawa University, Japan

Practices of “Cultural Diplomacy”

④ Grätz:

Foreign cultural policy (FCP) sees itself as the presentation and dissemination of culture from Germany abroad and also, equally, as a two-way street, along with culture from other countries which is disseminated, presented and discussed in Germany. Therefore, FCP is an ongoing dialogue and process with cultures within and outside Germany. In the German context, there is a distinct awareness when mentioning the words 'culture' and 'state'. Culture and state do not work in the context of the EU since there is diversity in culture, identity and between nations. FCP is considered more of a network.

④ Dr. Gu:

The biggest impediment to China's cultural soft power is its inability to separate its global ambitions from domestic politics; balancing impartiality and strategic legitimacy. Part of the problem is that Chinese cultural diplomacy developed as a response to western domination of the public sphere. Most of its approaches are seen as defensive, undermining the credibility of the government's attempt at true global engagement. Major cultural diplomatic strategies are the Confucius Institute and One Belt One Road initiative. Both illustrate the ineffectiveness and divergences in popular perception of how China sees itself and how the world sees China. Despite Confucius Institute's goodwill to display Chinese cultural achievements, it is perceived by the West to be in direct tension with the more grounded and realistic discussion of China's current role in the world. On the other hand, One Belt One Road aims at providing the idea of the Silk Road, building on a common history of transnationalism, which is a much more powerful narrative than the American's soft power. However, this has faced resistance from competing economies in the region.

④ Dr. Shibasaki:

The convergence of eastern-western culture and civilisation by Japan at the time emerged as a core cultural identity and national diplomacy in modern Japan. It was used as the Japanese version of 'mission civilisatrice' or civilising mission. The concept of national diplomacy was designed and initiated through public institutions such as KBS (Kokusai Bunka Shinkokai, 1934-1972); the first institution in Japan, the Japan Foundation being its successor, IPR (Institute of Pacific Relations), or non-state initiatives such as JASC (Japan-America Student Conference, 1934-). During the 'mutual understanding' phase, the Asia-US-Japan Trilogy, i-House (International House of Japan, 1950-), and the Japan Foundation (1972-) were institutional expressions in this era. Since the 1970s, non-state initiatives have emerged and tried to establish transnational cultural or social relations, not via government support. Following the civil society trend, HIF (Hokkaido International Foundation, 1979-) pioneered in the realisation of international cultural relations programs totally independent from the state. Hakone Conference (1988-1997) played a critical role in the networking initiative of cultural exchange initiators and leaders throughout Japan. The Great Earthquake in Kobe in 1995 also made people realise the significance of volunteer work and social activities of non-profit organisations. "With Monbusho scholarships, ODA (Official Development Assistance) combined, Japan has been advancing cultural diplomacy rather well in the region. The image of the Anti-Japan movement in the early 1970s had disappeared by 1980. However, multi-actors in cultural relations with Southeast Asia have emerged and have organically popularised Japanese cultural icons, pop music, manga, animation, TV series and films. Government initiated programs such as the Japan Foundation's cultural exchanges have advanced the cultural diplomacy in the region as well, but much credit should also be given to the private sector."



“Cultural Diplomacy” now and its challenges

⑤ Grätz:

From dialogue to cooperation, and to production. International cultural dialogues have evolved in the past ten years. When a dialogue about an art exhibition outside of Germany was not enough, cooperation and co-production were introduced to create deeper cultural relations and dialogue. Also, in the context of Europe, FCP is considered as community building while holding hands with networks or partners such as the British Council. Digital transformation is also a significant element through which we can create space and a platform for bringing people together to create an international dialogue. An expansion of FCP's target group is another issue to consider. It should not be limited to decision-makers, young elites in politics, culture and economy, and civil-society protagonists, but also children, women, teachers, and people outside the big cities. FCP is aware of Germany's historical responsibility for National Socialism and its horrific crimes. It, therefore, sees itself as a driver for cultural relation, dialogue, and global understanding in the aim to create peace.

⑤ Dr. Gu:

In order to instrumentalise creative cultural industries (CCI) as cultural diplomacy, China needs to re-think its future as a creative nation; equating China's creative deficit to the country's democracy deficit. First, China still uses culture oversight as an instrument to legitimise the modern communist state. Many of China's best-known rappers have chosen to sing with nationalistic pride rather than challenging the establishment. Hip-hop became an official cultural diplomacy tool when it began to organise around a binary of whether you 'Love China or Hate China'. Endorsement of hip-hop by state media is an indication of the appropriation of the popularist narrative. Second, the key to Chinese cultural diplomacy is still the attempt to dominate and build China's power internationally by telling its story from a Chinese perspective. This is a response driven by the Chinese public as much as by a top-down desire coming from the government.

⑤ Dr. Shibasaki:

We should remind ourselves that cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy are global cultural relations. They are aligned with international and intercultural relations, but not exclusively. If the original idea of cultural diplomacy is (also) what the state makes of it, global cultural relations are what people make of them. This can contribute to empowering people-centered cultural relations. For a 'new beginning' to overcome the dichotomy between the neoliberal state and civil society, a significant focus on empowering the human chain of compassion through global cultural activities is proposed.



What will be the future of “Cultural Diplomacy”?

Global citizenship > national citizenship and its dilemma

- ② Dr. Prasirtsuk: The title of this seminar is on the relation between cultural diplomacy and value practices. It seems that a good way to go for cultural diplomacy is to work on global citizenship and global issues rather than national issues. Germany is the frontrunner in this case, with its post-nationalist culture, and possibly because of the EU context. On the other hand, national culture remains prevalent and significantly strong in Asia. People in Asia still expect interest when promoting cultural diplomacy; what would be beneficial and what utilities are to be gained. Hence, the dilemma of East Asian countries in promoting cultural diplomacy.
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Growing out of the dilemma

- ② Dr. Kunnamas: How can cultural diplomacy be conducted for the sake of culture, cultural collaboration, or cultural understanding rather than the sake of national security? Mr. Grätz mentioned the necessity of cultural policies responding to a strategic goal; how can we strategize state and culture differences?
- ② Dr. Gu: It has been written that “going beyond the national interest is in the national interest”. To make cultural policy strategies work, you need to present this as a genuine and sincere approach about dialogue, about bottom up grassroots engagement rather than as a political instrument from top-down. It should be a social construction, a re-imagination of new kinds of national identities, and a re-defining of national interests. The state has to allow co-creation of those meanings by its citizens and other agencies, not exclusively by the state.
- ② Dr. Shibasaki: The key still remains in engendering compassion or infectious spread in cultural activities. Also, when we look back at the dilemma of national interest and global citizenship, we may need to rethink the binary conception of those two ideas. Both are exclusive and opposite to each other. However, every international or global cultural activity has some element of a ‘true effect’ apart from political intentions.
- ② Grätz: It is about building a network. We agree that civil society has become more important and powerful. Therefore, we need to encourage and create spaces of learning where people can have open dialogues. The idea of social network. We also have to think about questions regarding identity; languages, traditions, rituals. Interests and responsibility are different. If we speak about interests, we use culture as an instrument, and oftentimes it does not work. I prefer to speak about responsibility for the world, as well on the issue of migration.

Cool XX?: Utilising cultural branding and cultural creative industries (CCI)

- ② Dr. Prasirtsuk: In response to the success of Japanese pop culture and icons in Southeast Asia by non-government actors, the Japanese state initiated the Cool Japan project in the early 2000s. A minister was assigned to be in charge of Cool Japan with budgets allocated to improve the industry and promote Japan's image and branding since Japan faced new cultural competitors; Korea and China. However, it has not been as successful as the prior organic phenomenon by private sectors.
- ② Grätz: Cool Britain. I don't believe this kind of nation branding works very well in the long term. Artists often do not seem to fit well with being an instrument of cultural policy. I believe in open discussions and looking for common questions we all have of the world.
- ② Dr. Gu: Cool Britain also reflects the systemic inequality in the CCI sectors. During good times, we look at CCI as cultural branding for the nation. But when they are in need, there is nothing that goes to them. We need to reevaluate the value of culture and be aware that culture is beyond economic output. Culture is a way of life. We need to respect that fact and embark on projects contributing to it.

Creating peace

- ② Grätz: Cultural dialogue is about understanding and creating space for understanding. To see differences, to agree, to agree to disagree, to respect other opinions, to create space for interest. It is one way to create peace, because if you know someone, the possibility to see them as an enemy is lessened.
- ② Dr. Gu: My view is that cultural diplomacy has its limitations. It can play a complementary role to other diplomatic practices, but if two countries are not having a dialogue, cultural diplomacy can do very little.





Role of individual state departments and consulates in promoting dialogue

② Dr. Gu:

The role of international agencies that are working at arm's length with the government in trying to promote national interests is a very different socio-political context. Sometimes, it creates tension when the state has certain kinds of cultural policies organised around national interest, and then agencies operating outside the national borders begin to develop people-to-people connections and start to change the direction of the national interest. It would be great to give these agencies the space and freedom to develop these connections to empower local voices within the context in which they are operating. They do not only represent their national interests, they are making sense of other nations for national bodies in terms of the ways in which they should engage with other cultures.

② Grätz:

In Germany and many European countries, there are networks of cultural institutes for one region that are locally driven and operated, such as the Goethe-Institut in Bangkok. That is the way to create people-to-people contact and react to local conditions; which are the main issues or main interests of each city.

② Dr. Shibasaki:

The Japan Foundation has been very active in reaching out to local people and creating a regional cultural network, which has contributed to and promoted mutual cultural understanding, especially in the Southeast Asian region.

PART II:

CULTURAL EXCHANGE IN PRACTICE: MOTIVATIONS BEHIND PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION

The cultural organisations' perspectives: Mission and activities

⑤ Yoshioka:

I would like to start with the two cultural institutes who are here with us. What is your mission? Also, each institute has their own favoured term for its activities; “cultural relations” for British Council, “cultural cooperation” for Goethe-Institut, “cultural exchange” for the Japan Foundation. How is that related to your mission? And how has your direction, policy, and range of culture changed throughout the years?

⑤ Glass:

British Council was founded in the UK in 1934 as an arm's length body, partially funded by the UK Foreign Office. Approximately 13% of our funding comes from the UK government and 87% is from other income sources. Our mission is to *build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through art and culture, education, and English language*. Education also covers scientific collaboration. The latter half of the sentence explains the focus of our work. Connections, understanding and trust between people is not limited to people-to-people, but also institution-to-institution, country-to-country. Cultural relations⁵ fit across the dimensions of ‘access to opportunity’ (in language education and skills), ‘exchange’ (between scientists, artists, and universities), and ‘promotion’ (of the country, study opportunities, certain amount of broadcasting) of the UK's soft power scheme. “Soft power is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies.”⁶ Cultural relations activities contribute to the UK's soft power, but it focuses on people liking, understanding, acting, valuing, and trusting each other.



Over the decades, British Council's three core areas of English, arts, and education remain. Mutual agendas (which are relevant to both the UK and the country we are working in) have always been important to us. We work in partnership, and promote innovation. In the past we were often perceived wrongly as a funding agency, or seen just as a library, or organiser of traditional events. In Thailand, we've narrowed down our focus in the past 4-5 years. Our focus has been on raising levels of English, internationalising higher education and science, and building a creative economy. One example is the project we've been organizing with Chiang Mai University and Manchester

⁵ The term for British Council's activities.

⁶ Joseph Nye (2004)

Metropolitan University. Through British Council's intervention, we gathered local weavers in Nan, designers and academics in Bangkok and Manchester together to help enhance traditional designs and add value to local craft products. We also brought in marketing training, and are taking the project forward digitally to encourage local business start-ups and social enterprises.

What difference does cultural relation make and why does it matter? A survey on the difference in people's perception of the UK has been conducted in a number of countries. People who have never been involved in cultural relations with the UK showed 49% trust, while people who have, especially with British Council, showed 75% trust. As mentioned earlier, this trust can lead ultimately to peace. But more immediately, it contributes to the likelihood of trading, engaging in education partnerships, cooperation in culture and arts, and even just visiting the country.



Photos provided by British Council

② Niemeyer:

The Goethe-Institut just celebrated its 60th anniversary in Thailand. We have gone through changes and various activities throughout the years. Our mission is still to promote German language, cultural exchange, and information about Germany. And in the last 10-15 years, the concept of civil society and Europe has become more important. Therefore, we do not see ourselves as a German cultural institution, but a European one. In the beginning, the Goethe-Institut focused on classical music and founded the first orchestra in Thailand. In the 70s, we focused on experimental film programs, inspiring many filmmakers. Later, the Science Film Festival was initiated to attract students and the younger generation in the Southeast Asian region to science. Our new field of focus is the Youth Program; a program to develop youth parliament and youth conferences in Thailand together with Thai NGOs and the government. We took it forward by connecting it to the young people of Europe to start boosting democratic structure. Another new area of focus is the Thai diaspora in Germany. An exhibition called 'Thai Park'; a place where Thai people in Germany meet and talk, had just recently opened in Berlin and Bangkok. We also try to support Thai artists living in Germany. Our cultural exchange programs are no longer limited to outside Germany, they also happen in Germany because we are a multicultural society.

The Goethe-Institut is also a platform for dialogue; which is becoming more and more important. We want to give protected room for people to discuss democratic development and the possibility of the country's future. This does not mean we take sides, but we create a safe space; giving people a chance to meet and be protected.

During the COVID-19 crisis, digitalisation has often been highlighted. Though the digital format is considered crucial, it can never stand alone. Physical exchange is still very important. This conference is an example that boosts together the future format that should be developed.





The individuals' perspectives: working with cultural organisations

② Yoshioka:

Both of you are independent artists who have experiences with many cultural organisations and experience working with embassies. Please share any impressions, feedback and feelings about working with these organisations?

② Dr. Poshyananda:

As an independent curator, as well as working at the ministry, and Bangkok Biennale foundation, over 30 years, I've had variable experiences. First, cultural diplomacy has to be seen in a context of cultural hegemony and cultural imperialism which has resulted in many disagreements. We have discussed already that there have been some limitations of cultural diplomacy because cultural hegemony is a power of control but it can also mean seduction. It can lure and become very attractive. The way of attraction and its results depend very much on bilateral communication or multi-exchanges. It can be enriching and a vehicle for making various cultures understand each other more. Or, it can reduce trauma from the state. After the coup d'état in 2015, the Thai government was rejected by many European countries. Cultural connections via art was one way to ease that tension during the hangover of the coup. It can also maintain a connection during transitioning times in this context of Thailand.

I had a discussion with the Japan Foundation in 1994 regarding hegemony, and how Japan looks at itself as a big brother that can manipulate Southeast Asia. One example was assigning Japanese curators to select Thai artists for Fukuoka Triennale, instead of Thai curators. This was a one-way look; a scrutiny. Why can't we look back at Japan? So I tried turning the tables by inviting Araki Nobuyoshi, the most controversial Japanese artist at the time to come to Thailand in 1999. This of course made many people feel uncomfortable, but it was to show that cultural diplomacy can be a lot of fun. Also, a lot of asking back; what about us? Our "Thai-Yo" exhibition later on was also an exchange with Japanese curators and JF (The Japan Foundation), not just one-way contact.

Bangkok Art Biennale is still very young; only four years old. Our aim is to show artworks, not as a counter, but to give alternatives to government initiated projects. This edition was curated under the theme of "Escape Routes". We ask ourselves about what can be shown or not? How does one artist comply, or do they work as a cultural instrument? Upon the installation of Ai Weiwei's work, we were asked politely by the Chinese embassy to remove this work, to which we refused diplomatically. This is the limitation of cultural diplomacy. For this, we choose to stand with artists.



🕒 Siriwanij:

BIPAM is a young, independent networking platform founded in 2017 where we create space for exchanging dialogues, and conversations among the Thai, Southeast Asia, and international performing arts community. When it comes to cultural organisations, we've had great support from the Japan Foundation and Goethe-Institut. Today I represent BIPAM, but I wear many hats within the performing arts scene in Bangkok, resulting in different relationships with international cultural institutes in Thailand. Frankly speaking, we rely on them, since we lack direct support from our own government.

The general difference between each institute is that there are organisations that act like a friend, those who act like a state, and some who stay between the two. Relationships as friends makes everything easier in terms of human-level understanding. When acting like a friend, you know the people you have to talk to, not just the building. This relationship brings the right curation; knowing what you want and who you want. The key to fostering deep relationships comes with the luxury of time and space that the institutes can afford to give to artists and communities. The perks of formal processes are that it is very clear, simple, and easy. But from an artist perspective, human relationships are much appreciated.

For international exchange, be it a project initiated by us or by invitation, both are two-way collaboration exchanges. By invitation, the benefit is it's an eye-opening opportunity. When it's our own initiation, it comes from the artist's wishes and desires, so it's a direct reach. The cultural institute's role comes in facilitating to make it happen. The reason for us to connect internationally is to realise and explore possibilities, especially when there are many dead ends in your society. It is to fuel the hearts of the artists knowing that there are other ways to go, different kinds of operations that can be made and done. BIPAM is one of the players that provide a gateway to those opportunities. I was intrigued by IFA's (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen) earlier presentation regarding Germany not exporting German art, but art from Germany. This differentiation is very important and needs to be discussed more in Thailand. It brings us to the question of Thai identity and how we connect that 'Thainess' to nationalism and traditionalism. However, the contemporary is connected to internationalism in a sense that we're not exclusively talking about an assumed national identity, but rather about the real people making it. Where they are geographically making it and why. What kind of dialogue does it create? BIPAM aims to bring these kinds of dialogues to the contemporary performing arts community in Thailand. We wish to bring in international mindsets to ignite waves and inspiration to art practitioners in Thailand via this two-way exchange.



Gostan Forward by Five Arts Centre :
One of the showcase performance in
BIPAM 2018



In Ter_s View x New Cambodian Artists :
A Thai Cambodian collaboration
performance initiated by BIPAM2019

Q&A:

① Yoshioka:

Thank you everyone for your contributions. There is one question I had in mind for the British Council. Why not Shakespeare?

② Glass:

We did have an international programme to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016. The answer to the question is; does the British Council need to 'promote' Shakespeare? He's a known figure internationally. What value can we necessarily add? It's about priorities. There are so many things we could do if we had unlimited resources, funding, and time to get involved. When you select something, you also deselect something.

③ Yoshioka:

So when you say building trust by cultural relations, the focus is shifted to building personal networks and engagements with people, rather than promoting British culture itself?

④ Glass:

Yes, exactly.

⑤ Yoshioka:

Most organizations have film festivals to foster understanding about its country. It means promoting culture, but at the same time, it can be a showcase or display of culture to promote the image or branding of the nation. How do you think about this kind of effect as a diplomatic tool for the home country?

⑥ Niemeyer:

First of all, just a nod to Andrew regarding Shakespeare. We have the same problem with the dilemma of promoting Bertolt Brecht. It is also about what audience these subjects draw to it, especially when done in its original German language. The audiences' tastes and wishes are different in the last 20 years. And this is also my answer regarding film festivals. In order to find youth and a more diverse audience, we tend to curate films which may not promote Germany with a positive branding, but to show German culture regarding the multicultural and political problems it possesses. This should be a wonderful window.

Question from live streaming:

Due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions, international travel is more expensive than before, could you please share your experiences on how, in a creative way, to conduct cultural exchange activities?

⑤ Niemeyer:

A lot of streaming strategies are in focus. In Berlin, there is a wonderful project to support independent music clubs worldwide by streaming events from local clubs, and Bangkok has been a strong part of it. There are still many functions to explore in this time of experiment.

⑤ Glass:

COVID-19 has forced us to work in different ways with technology; the way we should have done a few years ago. It is a chance to broaden our audience range. With online functions, we can reach out to wider audiences. We had a major public science competition that had to be done online back in March and attracted 10-12 million people. It was later held physically, and hybrid models are sure to stay.

⑤ Dr. Poshyananda:

For BAB, we had to solve not just logistical preparation problems, but also those in terms of creating the artwork. Due to strict lockdown regulations in some countries, artists were not able to gather their team to create the artwork by themselves and send it over. Instead, it had to be created here in Bangkok (with close instructions from the artist via Zoom). Bringing over artists was not completely impossible, but we had to go through processes with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and each embassy. It was complicated and added to the budget, but we had to do it since we do need to create a physical experience for certain programs.

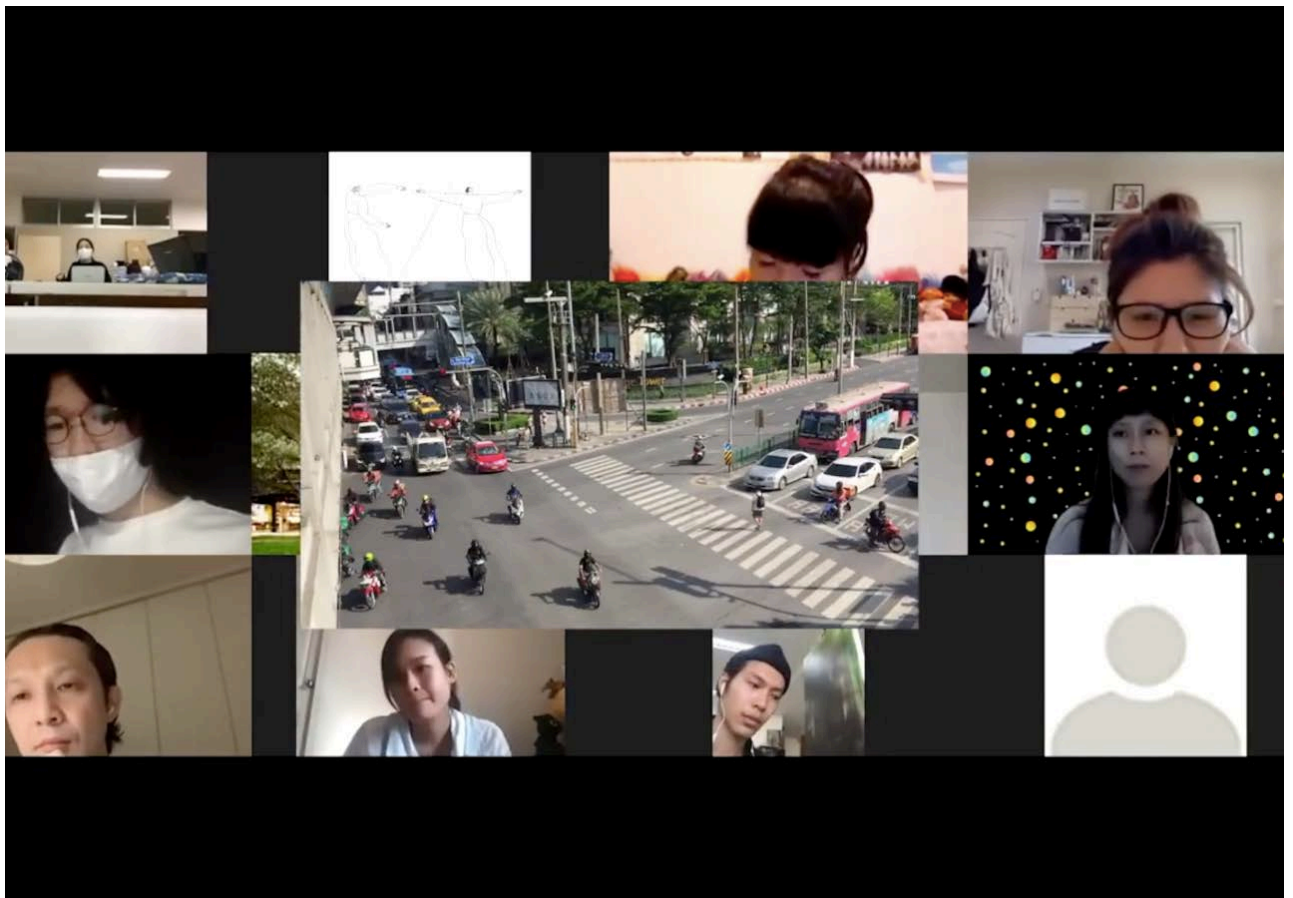
⑤ Siriwanij:

2020 was actually a gap year for BIPAM, but after COVID-19 hit, we thought about how we should respond to it. Our mission is to connect with Southeast Asia - what does it mean during these times? So, during the time of lockdown, we came up with 'Under the SEA'; a series of

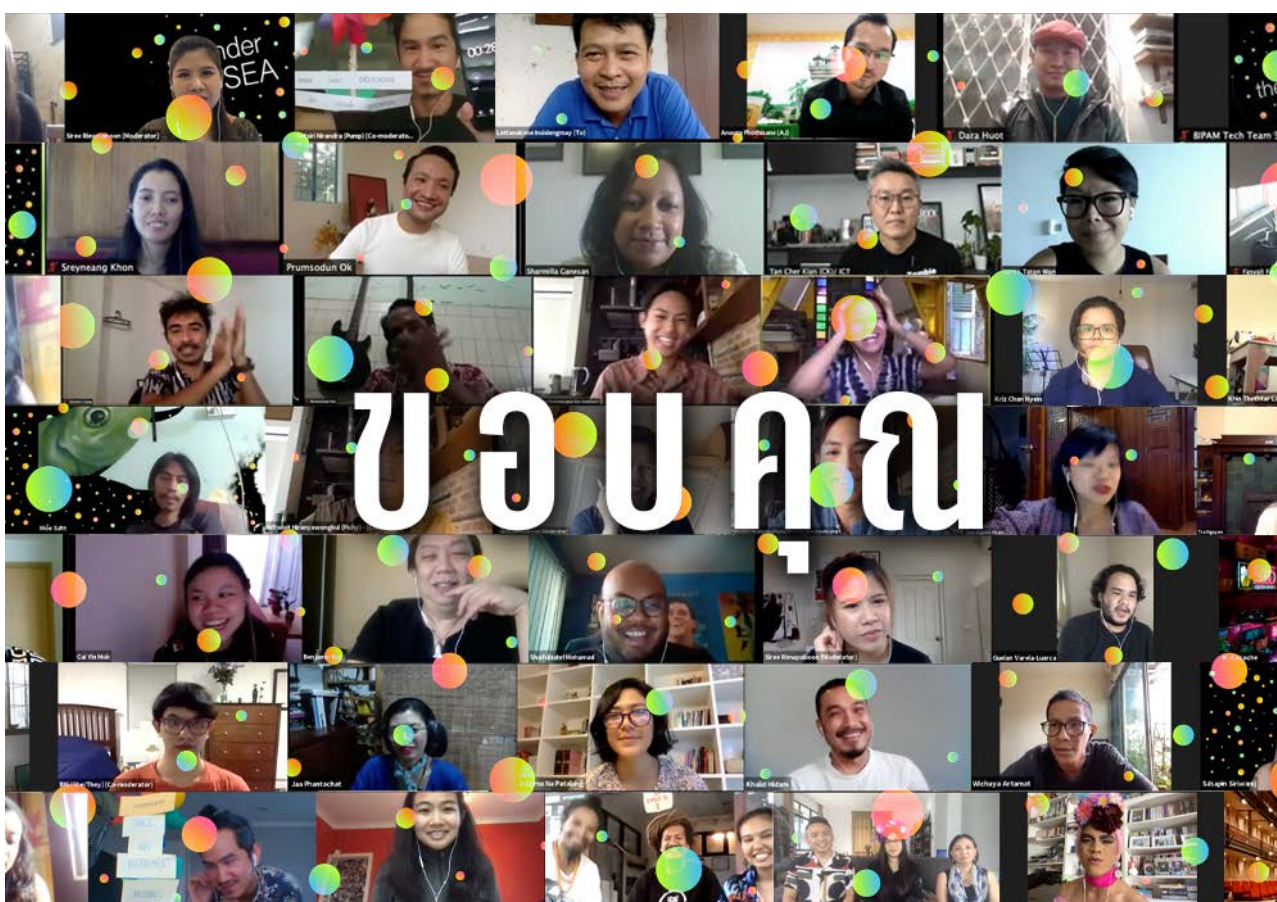
Zoom conversations with performing art practitioners from all of the 11 SEA countries over the course of 11 Saturdays. The idea was simply to catch up with our neighbours, and also have conversations with countries we've never set foot in. I consider this project a success for us, not that we drew thousands of viewers, but because we took the time to get to know each country better - through conversations and by observing their backgrounds, seeing their homes, pets, children, backyards, even neighbourhoods through their screens. We have also been experimenting with an artist incubation project since September with Festival/Tokyo. It was a challenge for the young artists from each city to exchange and collaborate across the online platform, especially with a research task that required interpretation and communication of the human's five senses. We had physical exhibitions in both Bangkok and Tokyo to showcase the collaboration result. Already, we are seeing many different ways to collaborate online, but I agree with the other presenters that online platforms are not here to replace offline or physical events, but they should be here to enhance the real experience of the arts we still need as human beings.

⑤ Yoshioka:

The Japan Foundation has also organised online events for the last nine months. Indeed, it helped us reach out to more people, especially in parts that are difficult to access physically. We recently co-organised a film project introducing the deep south of Thailand which attracted many audiences in Japan and worldwide via online screening. However, one thing I noticed is that when building a new network, online platforms may not be as efficient. But if we are to maintain an existing network, it's easier and has more potential. Physical contact is still important.



- ⊗ Casual networking in BIPAM 2019
- ⊗ The City : A hybrid collaboration project by Festival Tokyo



- ⊗ Panel discussions among international performing art practitioners in BIPAM
- ⊙ Under the SEA : Online webinar series with 11 countries in SEA in 2020

PART III:

WRAP UP:

SO ANYWAY FOR DIPLOMACY OR BEYOND?

How do we practically tackle the 'dilemma'?

⑤ Yoshioka:

Despite promoting trust, dialogue and building networks, the world seems to be still or even more divided into extreme edges. So do the international cultural practices. Some practices are developed in a way of liberal and people-centered directions, while some are more expected for national interests and identities. This division affects to the evaluation of the choice of an artist involved. For instance, as Dr. Apinan explained earlier, BAB invited Ai Weiwei. While some believe that this selection is highly appreciated and good promotion of art in Thailand, but some at the same time believe that it should be avoided, this means that it provides negative impacts to some groups of people and close their doors even though the organizer's intention was open. How can we tackle this problem or fill in the gaps?

⑤ Dr.
Poshyananda:

Artists should have the freedom to express themselves and not have to comply with any goodwill. We have government initiatives for that. Art is about life, which has so many rich layers beyond cultural diplomacy. Yes, Ai Weiwei is a controversial figure, but if we only focus on the doors which close, we won't see other positive impacts and greater subjects we can touch on. Of course it can be risky, but we must not let it limit us.

⑤ Glass:

People with closed minds tend to speak louder. But if we look at the passionate global youth movement on climate change, COVID-19 vaccines that were developed by international collaboration, or even students across Southeast Asia raising their voices for democracy - there are a lot of positive things happening. So it's a matter of how we look at a more nuanced picture and connect to it.

⑤ Grätz:

I would like to refer to the VUCA theory. It tries to explain the world in four words; Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity. The world right now is changing. Everything is unsure, difficult to understand, and full of contradictions. This provokes nationalism. We see many states in Europe becoming less democratic, which is exactly why cultural dialogue and understanding matter more than ever - to draw the state in another direction.

⑤ Siriwanij:

I think the role of art and culture is to open up closed communities. We want to bring art into the most closed areas to open doors of thinking, emotions, feelings, and human relationships. In the art and culture world, apart from artists and institutions, there are also mediators. Mediators play an important role in connecting and being a bridge for various parties, not so that they can become friends, but to allow understanding and awareness of the opposite side. Then, people get to decide what they make out of the discovery of differences.



Range and definition of culture for state funded activities

- ② Yoshioka: It was mentioned that Germany does not support German culture, but culture from Germany and in Germany, resulting in the ability to support Thai diaspora nowadays. This somehow links to Dr. Xin Gu's presentation about the relationship between policies and national interests, and the idea of a shared interest explored from the bottom-up. Do you have consensus in German society that culture in and from Germany (not exclusively German culture) should be supported and promoted by the government fund? If so, how could we achieve such consensus?
- ② Grätz: Yes we do, and that's one basic point of how we think and act. Consensus of the society, independent from the government. In the past and present Germany's foreign ministers have come from different political parties, so we have to agree on this principle. I think it is successful because it is the truth we need. It shows the openness of the society and how we're willing to integrate people. I would insist on responsibility rather than interest, but if it's an interest of having peace and understanding from a cultural dialogue, yes. If it's an interest such as the economy; something else has to be realised.
- ② Niemeyer: One more important aspect is the population decline in Germany. It's clear that Germany will be a country of immigration and people of other roots, so it's better to include them early. Germany is not just German nationality, it's the people living there. Rather than the nationality of the art, the quality of the art should be most in focus.
- ② Yoshioka: I see that Germany's foreign policy direction is very much post-nation oriented. In the past, the world tried to create institutes that function beyond nation states such as the United Nations, but I am not sure if it has worked as intended. There still seems to be nationalistic interests involved in the international framework, especially political and economic interests. The area of art and culture may be a better area to form such an international community beyond national borders.

Can East and Southeast Asia follow the European model of cultural diplomacy?

② Yoshioka: In the context of Asian countries, we're more like competitors, especially among China, Korea, and Japan, while Europe is beyond state level. Can Europe be a model to Asian countries in that respect?

② Dr. Prasirtsuk: Overall, I think I'm encouraged by the way practitioners and artists carried out their programs. The important thing is that the government should give freedom to projects where they can express their arts and opinions. For Asian countries, I agree about competition. That is the key problem we're facing which is keeping us from developing to the stage of post-nationalist cultural promotion and engagement, which EU countries have been doing for a while now. A decade ago I started research on nationalism in East Asia, but I only focused on the EU as a model for economic and strategic relations. Now I'm aware that cultural relations are very powerful and can help amend and improve relationships among countries. This is the question we have to ponder for several years. But the direction is quite clear, that we should develop cultural relations.

② Dr. Gu: First, I don't think Ai Weiwei is controversial - he was when he pioneered contemporary art in China over 20 years ago. I think the fact we think he's controversial is because of the lack of engagement with Chinese contemporary art. That's something about us rather than him, which proves the point about the huge space for us to do cultural diplomacy work. We should engage with the local scene, which is what agencies like British Council did in the late 1990s in China; discovering a huge group of Chinese contemporary artists and bringing them to international attention. That's the role that cultural diplomacy agencies should perform. They should continue giving voices and spaces to build people-to-people links. I think Ai Weiwei is good, but can we also have more diversity, like younger, female, and more contemporary lesser-known names in these international arts and exhibitions.

For me, the key for Asia's future cultural diplomacy is; 'going beyond the national interest should be the national interest'. I don't think there should be any conflicts between national interests and the interests of the people. The role of cultural diplomacy should be about making sense of such engagements (between the national interests and civic interests) happening on the ground - how we bring those voices to represent and reflect the national interest and national identity should be the key.

- ⑤ Dr. Shibasaki: Regarding national interests, one way to change the minds of government officials is to invite them to cultural activities. It would be interesting to see how cases of local cultural activities done by arm's length institutes can have an effect on the concept of each nations' cultural diplomacy. One impression I had and would like to point out is that cultural diplomacy and soft power needs culture. But does culture itself need diplomacy and soft power? If so, in what way? I think the answer lies in how we define the essence of culture.

Question from the audience:

Would Brexit impact the British Council's commitment to its mission globally?

⑤ Glass:

Because of the way we exited and how negotiations were handled I'm picking up that there is some tension between the UK and the rest of Europe. But because of how things are happening on the political level, it makes our people-to-people or institution-to-institution relationships much more important. Brexit or not, artists in Germany will still want to work with the UK and vice versa. We will always be a smiling face through good and bad times. I think looking beyond politics is the key.

⑤ Niemeyer:

Yes, no doubt. We're working so closely together. These are two different stories. Our good relation to the British Council will find its way in the future.

Platforms for emerging local artist in the international scene

Question from the audience:

How can we raise the profile of local artists who may not have the spotlight on them? How can we contribute to making them acknowledged on the international or global stage so we can contribute to good relations between Thailand and other countries?

④ Niemeyer:

In 2020 we started an artist residency program that supports young artists in their beginning stage. We believe it is very important for an artist's life to have such exchange with other artists at this stage, and I hope we can develop this more in the future.

④ Dr. Poshyananda:

BAB also offers an open call program which allows international and Thai artists to submit their proposals to our platform as an international stage. We also curate young artists from other countries such as Lu Yang from China. Our curators work directly with them, not through cultural institutions.

④ Glass:

Young craftsmen and designers who we've previously worked with have exhibited their works in Scotland and some have already established a brand. That was an indirect effect. Now we formally focus on building this kind of connection. Two years ago we set up a programme called 'Connections through Culture', aiming to give young emerging artists a platform to international links.



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SYMPOSIUM REPORT ON CULTURE AND DIPLOMACY IN THE CHANGING WORLD ITS RELATIONS, VALUE AND PRACTICES

OF DIPLOMACY IN THE CHANGING WORLD: ITS RELATIONS AND PRACTICES

Symposium Report of Culture and Diplomacy
in the Changing World: Its Relations, Values
and Practices

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