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International tourism and cultural diplomacy: A new conceptual approach towards global mutual understanding and peace through tourism

Abstract

Peace is commonly considered as 'absence of war'. Nevertheless, peace - the so called 'positive peace' (Galtung, 1996) – implies a lot more than this. It implies the creation of a society based on social justice through equal opportunity, a fair distribution of power and resources, equal protection and impartial enforcement of law, and above all, mutual cultural understanding and respect. Thus, far from the pessimistic view of classical realists, which assume that the conflict is an intrinsic part of the human nature, we claim that peace is an architecture requiring firm, specific foundations such as a widespread education to peace and the promotion of intercultural dialogue. In this context, social scientists speculate on the causal relation between tourism and peace. In the present article we deepen this topic to propose more concrete arguments about the existence of a relationship between tourism and the construction of a positive peace. We thus offer a pioneering approach by proposing an association between international tourism and the practices of cultural diplomacy. We also analyse one of the most important conditions for this alliance to be created, that is, the implementation of cultural heritage management policies based on public participation and, at the same time, the promotion of intercultural dialogue (paideia approach to cultural heritage management). In this sense, we finally propose a definition for 'cultural heritage quality management'.

Key words: tourism; cultural heritage management; cultural diplomacy; intercultural dialogue; peace through tourism

Introduction

Socio-political instability is alarmingly growing worldwide. We are witnessing geopolitical turmoil and processes (often violent and dramatic) of redefinition of an international equilibrium. We are as well powerless spectators of the consequent epochal migration flows, not to label as a temporary crisis anymore, but as a structural phenomenon as a result of which "refugees and migrants" (Crawley, Duvell, Jones & Skleparis, 2016, p. 1) swell the population of the so called "fifth world"[1] (Franco, 2016, pp. 101-102). In the meantime, terrorism and islamophobia, as well as global economic crisis and a dangerous global rise of populist rhetoric in politics, are some of the characteristics of a complex and challenging reality. In this context, scientists are called to take up the challenge of contributing to the definition of a political agenda for global positive peace, through a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research effort within the framework of the 'peace studies'. The present work fits in this context, and this is where its relevance relies.

Intercultural dialogue and understanding among communities represent a beneficial practice, not only on the ethical point of view, but also as potential vehicle for socio-economic development, global security and stability. This notion was already clear to the ancient people. The Greek idea of democracy

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was based on the knowledge of their cultural identity and, simultaneously, on dialogue with other cultural groups. The Romans had the constant cultural exchange with the communities with whom they were in contact among the reasons of their greatness. Today, the situation of economic, social and environmental instability, in which the world has fallen, evokes again the debate on the importance of intercultural dialogue. The enhancement of culture as a component of international relations through the adoption of the soft power is an extremely contemporary topic within the new politics and approaches regarding cooperation, development and coexistence in a multipolar world. Cultural diplomacy, in particular, is a long-term measure but it has already proven to have positive effects even in conflict zones.

In short, the objective of the cultural diplomacy is to use culture and intercultural dialogue to build positive relations, peaceful and highly constructive at the international level. All those circumstances that provide access to different cultures potentially represent vehicles of cultural diplomacy. In this perspective, one of the human activities that best reflects this characteristic – the opportunity to meet different communities and cultures - is tourism. Many voices have been already raised to argue that tourism is a vehicle for global understanding and peace. This article aims to give a further step within this debate, through the creation of a conceptual bridge between cultural diplomacy and tourism towards a more effective contribute of tourism activity within the promotion of intercultural dialogue and global mutual understanding.

Next sections present the path towards the conceptual connection between tourism and peace within the literature. Then the article will proceed to the concept of cultural diplomacy and highlight its points of convergence with the concept of tourism activity. These points of convergence represent the pillars of the bridge we aim to build between tourism and cultural diplomacy that leads us to the final proposal of a model of tourism as a vehicle for cultural diplomacy.

Culture and soft power: The evolution towards the connection between tourism and peace

In the course of their evolution the paradigms underlying the international relations have given a role more and more important to Culture (Mazzei, 2012). In this time of global changes in terms of economic paradigms, geopolitical stability and international security, it exists the urgency of considering "culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability" (Carbone, 2011, p. 113), matter on which global institutions are already working on. Culture is indeed evocated as essential resource within the new paradigms of international relations and soft power, and "cultural diplomacy is seriously taken in consideration by the most prominent nations" (Mazzei, 2012, p. 35) as we will see ahead. Particularly important is the parallel debate on intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. One of the more recent contribution in this regards were an ideal model of cultural heritage management towards intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding among local communities and visitors (Carbone, Oosterbeek & Costa, 2012), as well as the analysis of the role of culture and cultural heritage within local sustainable development (Malek & Costa, 2014; Oosterbeek & Pollice, 2014). Additionally, there are other studies that focus on multicultural societies (Colombo, 2011).

In 1964, the "'Venice charter for the conservation and restoration of monuments sites" has claimed (art. 5) that "the conservation of monuments is always facilitated by making use of them for some socially useful purpose" (ICOMOS, 1964, p. 2). Later, in 1990, the "Charter for the protection and management of the archaeological heritage" has affirmed that 'the presentation of the archaeological

heritage to the general public in an essential method to promoting understanding of the origins and development of modern societies' (ICOMOS, 1990, p. 5). More recently, the Faro Convention has claimed the value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Council-of-Europe, 2005).

The enhancement of culture is crucial within the most recent debate about sustainability and global mutual understanding. In this context, one of the human activities that promotes the encounter of cultures and the fruition of cultural heritage for the 'self' as well as 'mutual' understanding, both for individuals and communities, is tourism. In 1999 it was indeed officially defended a "dynamic interaction between tourism and cultural heritage" (ICOMOS, 1999, p. 5) and UNESCO (2006) proclaimed tourism as vehicle for intercultural dialogue and cross-cultural understanding. Scholars are focusing these issues, creating new perspectives in the field of cultural tourism research (Richards & Munsters, 2010). The approach to tourist activity itself (from both demand and supply side) was shifting from the *3-S' Tourism* (Sun, Sand and Sea) to the *3-L' Tourism*: Leisure, Landscape and Learning (Carbone, 2011). All these considerations have put tourism in connection with different sectors and development agents worldwide, giving tourism activity a greater and more complex role than ever before in the context of global development, including in the context of the world peace building.

Peace through tourism: The state of art

As discussed above, there was an evolution that lead scholars, practitioners and supranational bodies to believe that tourism, when based on the experience of cultural heritage, can be a great vehicle of intercultural dialogue. The hope for a large contribution that could come from tourist activities to solve huge social problems on the global scale is institutionalized by UNWTO Manila Declaration on World Tourism and, later, by the first World Conference "Tourism: a vital force for peace" in 1988. The main purpose of the conference was a debate on how the global phenomenon of international tourism could better contribute to the world peace. At the same time, D'Amore (1988) described tourism as a great vehicle of peace and mutual understanding among different communities, through its capacity of putting people with different cultural background (visitors and host community) in contact with each other. In 1997, UNWTO also reaffirmed the importance of social impact of tourism (WTTC, WTO & EarthCouncil, 1997). As the Earth Summit and Agenda 21 inspired the tourist sector in the 1990s, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals are having the same effects, since UNWTO (2010) defends that tourism has an important role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. More recent contribution points at tourism and peace as an "emerging field of action and research" (Wohlmuther & Wintersteiner, 2014, p. 17). Tourism is thus claimed as "the world's peace industry" (D'Amore, 1988, p. 35) and actually "the issue 'tourism and peace' in itself is not a new invention and tourism, from its very beginnings, has constantly been defined as a way of promoting peace and mutual understanding" (Wohlmuther & Wintersteiner, 2014, p. 17). However, facing the annual growth of tourism in developed and even more in developing countries, the question is whether tourism is actually contributing to peace (and how). Nevertheless, if on the one hand tourism does need peace for its development, on the other hand it is incorrect to assume that tourism *per se* could automatically, 'naturally' generate peace. In other words, a more complex and structured argument should underlie the idea of tourism as a vehicle of peace.

In this context, we found attempts to better explain the latter, over-simplified concept. Such attempts include considerations about "tourism as an agent for peace", as defined by Wintersteiner and Wohlmuther (2014, p. 31), or definitions such as "peace tourism" (Van Den Dungen, 2014, p. 62), getting by the way far from the real matter, as the latter concerns a particular niche of tourism

(tourists motivated to visit specific cities and places related to a fight for freedom). De Villiers (2014, p. 79) affirmed that "responsible tourism and peace are partners – the one strengthens the other – they belong together", attempting a more pragmatic link between tourism, sustainability and peace. A remarkable contribution were given by Blanchard and Higgins-Desbiolles (2013) providing theories and philosophies, case studies and an agenda for research related to the main topic of 'peace through tourism'. Finally, literature provides several case studies in which tourism has played, or could play, a role in political stability or peacebuilding. However, we keep arguing there is a need for more complex, pragmatic arguments underlying the conviction that tourism can actually bring its effective contribution to mutual understanding and peace. Our study aims to fulfil this gap and strengthen these arguments by bridging the tourism activity with the practices of cultural diplomacy within the international system. This is a proposal to find a constant and systematic relation – theoretical and practical - between tourism and peace. Cultural diplomacy, as the "exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their people to foster mutual understanding" (Cummings, 2003, p. 1), seems to us to be a right bridge connecting tourism and peace, in theory and practice. Next section will introduce the concept of cultural diplomacy, as a basis for the construction of a theoretical model on how tourism can lead to mutual understanding and peace.

Cultural diplomacy: An overview

As part of the paradigm changes in the approach to the analysis (theoretical and practical) of international relations, many scholars have recently emphasized the changes in the nature of power, particularly emphasizing "the lower tendency to the use of military power" (Mazzei, 2012, p. 35). According to the realist paradigm approach, in fact, the international agenda has in first place the issue of security: military strategy and national security represent, the so-called high politics, while culture, human rights and even economy are the object of 'low politics'. But the paradigm of complexity (Licata, 2011) starts to influence the evolution of the approach to international relations. Namely, within the 'theory of international integration', in addition to variants such as the 'functionalism' and 'neo-functionalism', is to emphasize the 'theory of complex interdependence' (1977) by 'Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, fathers of neoliberalism' (Mazzei, 2012, pp. 39-40). The 'theory of complex interdependence' in international relations is based on the following innovative principles:

1) The growing importance of transnational relations, beyond interstate and intergovernmental;

2) A varied agenda, in which 'security' is not necessarily put in the first place, overcoming the distinction between 'high' and 'low' politics elaborated by the realists;

3) Military power has less relevance, on behalf of a growing importance of economic interdependence among states and the importance of international institutions.

In this context, the concept of 'soft power', a kind of power that is significantly based on intangible factors, such as the system of values, lifestyles and cultural models not imposed coercively has been developed. After Cox (1987), the notion of 'soft power' has been popularized by Nye (2008). This new form of power "relies significantly on intangible factors" (Mazzei, 2012, p. 35) and cultural diplomacy represents its major example.

Cultural diplomacy is defined within the context of international relations as "the skill to persuade through culture, values and ideas rather than through military means" (Nye, 2002, pp. 8-9). In other terms, cultural diplomacy represents "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their people to foster mutual understanding" (Cummings, 2003, p. 1).

Nevertheless, such a practice is as old as the history of the relationship between human groups, and Arndt (2007) states its first attestations date back to the Bronze Age. In this context, the Socratic concept of 'paideia', according to which 'self-knowledge' and 'dialogue with the others' guarantee democracy and peace among peoples, it is where we find the embryonic concept of cultural diplomacy. Accordingly, we consider the Socratic idea of 'paideia' as applicable to cultural heritage management practices on behalf of local communities and intercultural dialogue (Carbone, 2016).

With regards to the more recent developments within the practice of cultural diplomacy, the period between the end of the modern age and the beginning of the contemporary one, saw the birth of institutes dedicated to cultural diplomacy - more or less tied to governments - in different countries. Schools and institutes aimed at promoting their national culture and language abroad, such as the 'Alliance Francaise' (1883), the Italian 'Societá Dante Alighieri' (1889), the 'Deutch Welle' (1924), 'British Council' (1934), the 'Goethe Institute' (1951) and the 'Japan Foundation' (1972) represent with their practices the so-called 'classical cultural diplomacy'. According to the analysis of Schneider (2006b) and Finn (2003) it is important to highlight the relation between the development of cultural diplomacy and the Cold War. The latter has also represented, indeed, a clash between different ideas and values, a clash of historic proportion, as it was the war between the Macedonians of Alexander the Great and the Persians of Darius III, over two thousand years before. And it was right during the Cold War, thus, when the opposite "blocks" realized the urgency to spread positively the respective cultural elements. For instance, in that time 'policymakers (…) considered cultural diplomacy vital to U.S. national security" (Finn, 2003, p. 15).

Coming back to the conceptual development of cultural diplomacy, birth of institutions which represent the 'classical cultural diplomacy', it is now important to report the rise, as an alternative to the 'classical cultural diplomacy', of the 'new school cultural diplomacy'. The latter has its spotlights on facilitating access to cultural diversity, promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding. This new trend has one of its historic representatives in the German Academic Exchange Service, 'DAAD' ('Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst', 1925), which is a German institution with the main aim to facilitate the entrance of people in the country to study in a full immersion context. Another remarkable example is the Institute for cultural diplomacy (1999), an international organization with headquarters in Berlin (since 2003) and the USA, with the ultimate goal of promoting 'global peace and stability by strengthening and supporting intercultural relations at all levels' (http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en_abouticd). Each of these organizations has its own peculiarities and a bond more or less close to the government of the countries they belong. The analysis of the practice of cultural diplomacy is based on common and well-defined key aspects and principles, as we shall see in the next section.

Key aspects of cultural diplomacy

"Public diplomacy consists in all the efforts and activities that a nation does to explain itself to the world, and cultural diplomacy supplies much of its content" (Schneider, 2006a, p. 191). The effectiveness of the latter in its main aim to build dialogue, understanding and trust among international actors, is based on well-defined principles. Among others, the "independence of cultural diplomacy" is one of the essential principle to guarantee its credibility (Schneider, 2006a, p. 194), thus the difference from 'propaganda' (and/or advertisement) is fundamental. Cultural diplomacy is all about mutual understanding that leads to trust, as the basis on which one can start cooperation, business, peace, etc. In this sense, it should be noted the difference between cultural diplomacy and propaganda, which is an

activity especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view. On the contrary, cultural diplomacy is based on values and beliefs such as respect and recognition of cultural diversity and heritage; global intercultural dialogue; justice, equality and interdependence; protection of international human rights and global peace and stability.

The modality of action of cultural diplomacy has changed along the years, adapting from a bipolar international system to a multipolar one. However, by analysing the outstanding work of Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (2010), we can found out that the main characteristic components of cultural diplomacy are four, and it is crucial to have full understanding of them for an analysis of all phenomena related to international relations and cultural diplomacy. The four components are: 1) the agent; 2) an agenda; 3) a vehicle and 4) a target audience.

Agent

The first component in the activity of cultural diplomacy is the presence of an agent. The latter is the one that is the promoter of the action undertaken within cultural diplomacy. The agent of cultural diplomacy could be a governmental organization as well as a nongovernmental, or still a company or a non-profit organization. Typical examples of cultural diplomacy agents are those already mentioned in previous section, such as the 'Alliance Francaise', 'Deutch Welle', 'British Council', 'Goethe Institute' and the 'Japan Foundation'. From the historic point of view, it is to remember an example of the connection between cultural diplomacy and governmental aims in specific political contexts: "early in the Cold War, America efforts at cultural diplomacy were funded by the CIA as well as the State Department's Division of Cultural Relations" (Finn, 2003, p. 15). In this case the agent of cultural diplomacy could be represented by several bodies of different nature combined together.

In order to better exemplify the nature of an agent of cultural diplomacy, we analyse here two Italian institutions which, on the one hand, share the same mission (the promotion of culture and Italian language), on the other hand, they differ for their relation with the government. The institutions to which we are referring are the 'Societá Dante Alighieri' and the 'Istituto Italiano di Cultura'. The first is a non-governmental organisation founded in 1889 by a group of intellectuals led by the Italian poet Giosué Carducci, while the second is an Italian institutional body which refers to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Italian Republic, which covers its expenditures related with staff, annual activities, normal costs, etc. These two cases show the different nature of the organizations that can be considered as agents of cultural diplomacy. Moreover, in today multipolar world, supranational governance institutions such as United Nations and European Union may also be considered as agents of cultural diplomacy. Nowadays, the idea of a cultural diplomacy completely dependent on the government is thus overpassed: the partnership between public and the private sector, in cooperation with civil society, is the basis for the contemporary practices of cultural diplomacy.

Agenda

The agenda of an agent of cultural diplomacy represents its 'mission', the purpose of its initiatives. Without any doubt, the disclosure of values and cultural expressions of its country and the promotion of intercultural dialogue (following the principles outlined in previous section) represent the mission of an agent of cultural diplomacy, in general. We could still say, through the definition of Cummings (2003, p. 1) of cultural diplomacy itself: "the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their people to foster mutual understanding". On the other hand, it is equally clear that each agent has its own peculiarities and there are many variables (not the capacity

of analysis of the historical period in which you put your work) that may affect the contents, the approach and the mode of transmission (always keeping in mind the difference between 'propaganda' and 'cultural diplomacy').

In order to better exemplify the concept of cultural diplomacy agenda, we will continue to analyse the example mentioned in the previous subsection, the 'Dante Alighieri Society'. The mission of this institution was clear to its founders since the very beginning, and it was 'tutelare e diffondere la lingua e la cultura italiane nel mondo, ravvivando i legami spirituali dei connazionali all'estero con la madre patria e alimentando tra gli stranieri l'amore e il culto per la civiltà italiana'[2] (http://ladante.it/it/chi-siamo). Once defined an agenda, an agent must therefore reflect about the best way(s) in which it will pursue its objectives. As we will see in the further subsection, for every agent to achieve its goals it is necessary to define a means, a vehicle to reach the chosen target, the defined audience.

Vehicle

The means through which an Agent transmits the cultural expressions or values of a nation represents the "vehicle" of cultural diplomacy. As it has been frequently stated during the lessons and as it is widely quoted by Schneider (2006a, pp. 192-193) we can consider as a vehicle of cultural diplomacy the decision –in the case of US - of sending jazz Ambassadors to a foreign country in order to represent the nation through one of its more well-known cultural expression. Cultural expressions, especially artistic ones, are powerful vehicles of cultural diplomacy, on which many governments significantly invest, directly or indirectly. In European states, for instance, we have many cases of cultural expressions that internationally represent more than others do the country of origin. This is the case of the Portuguese 'fado', or the case of the Spanish 'flamenco' and the Italian 'opera' or, still, the Italian 'Canzone Napoletana' (Napolitan song) with interprets such as Massimo Ranieri, Renzo Arbore e l' 'Orchestra Italiana' and Andrea Bocelli, among others, which travel the world representing Italy through the music. In this context, it has remained in the history the performance of Bocelli with a concert at the 'John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts' in Washington, D.C., (1998): the day after the concert, the US President Bill Clinton welcomed Bocelli at the White House.

Cinema, sports, as well as academic exchanges can be considered vehicles of cultural diplomacy. Institutionally speaking, the academic interchange programme ERAMUS for the mobility of students abroad, represent a vehicle of cultural diplomacy, and in this case the agent is represented by the European Union. Finally, we can consider tourism as a vehicle of cultural diplomacy, as we will deepen discuss in the next section, focusing on the modalities and the required conditions for this to happen.

Target audience

The definition of the fourth component of the activity of cultural diplomacy, the target audience, is not always an easy task. The initiatives undertaken within cultural diplomacy are usually directed to a cross section of civil society or to certain targeted elites such as academics, journalists and politicians. There is no single answer, as it depends on many factors, even because several categories (not necessarily one) could represent the target audience. First, it should depend on the agenda: the audience must be consistent with the mission statement, and, according to set of goals, the target audience should be identified. The ability itself to establish contact with the target audience is not a task to be underestimated. Finn (2003) traces brilliantly the skills a cultural diplomat should have to establish and maintain an efficient and effective relation with the chosen target audience:

First-rate local knowledge and linguistic expertise should be a precondition of a U.S. diplomat's posting overseas. Public and cultural diplomacy will be successful only if executed by skilled and committed people willing to spend many years abroad. Diplomacy is always a two-way street. To be effective, a diplomat should know the language, culture and history of the country to which he or she is posted. He or she must be able to listen (Finn, 2003, pp. 19-20).

The same author highlights the importance of finding the right audience but also to maintain a constant relationship with it: she highlights the strategic mistake of the United States when, at the end of the Cold War, they wrongly thought that cultural diplomacy was no longer a priority. The negative effect of this decision has contributed to the large loss phenomenon accepted throughout the Middle East, Eastern Europe and beyond. If it is true that the cultural diplomacy cannot erase the mistakes of politicians of a country, at least it is a strong tool to keep alive the feeling of sympathy towards the fundamental cultural values of the country itself.

Bridging tourism and cultural diplomacy

Once the concept of cultural diplomacy has defined, we thus present our theoretical considerations and speculations regarding the necessity of its association with tourism within the debate about 'tourism as a vehicle of peace'. In this section we outline the points of convergence among cultural diplomacy and tourism, in order to use these points as 'pillars' of the bridge that we are going to build between the two concepts. As we saw in the previous section, the enhancement of cultural expression such as music or gastronomy, visual art or archaeology is considered a vehicle of cultural diplomacy. The latter facilitates access to different cultures through direct experience and adopts culture as a basis for international dialogue.

Now, one should consider the core of the tourist experience is also based on the opportunity of having access to different cultural expressions. According to Ashworth (1995), visiting museums, art galleries, musical events, theatre and opera, represent the main activities realized by tourists within a destination. The formula 'art & tourism' has been recognized, for instance, by the international hotel chain Raddison, which has encouraged its members to carry out partnerships with local historical, heritage, cultural, artistic and theatrical associations through a project called "Raddison Partnering with The Arts", with the aim of adding value to the product offered (Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Sheperd & Wanhill, 1998, p. 327).

Ashworth (1995) outlines the relationship between tourism and cultural manifestations of a community. In a touristic sense, culture refers to both 'peoples' and their ordinary social characteristics, traditions and day-to-day patterns of behaviour which mark them out as 'different', as well as to more exceptional representations of creative and artistic endeavour (UNESCO, 2006, p. 19). Culture provides a set of material and symbolic resources to tourism supply. Few places have escaped the interest and the curiosity of the tourists: tour operators demonstrated that they can package even the most remote (or dangerous) location - also contributing for the process of internationalization of destinations (Lanfant, 1980) – and the tourism economies of some places are based entirely on cultural heritage (Timothy, 2011). It is possible therefore to say that any tourist can be consider a consumer of cultural products, having whether or not culture and places of heritage value as main motivation for the trip (Cooper et al., 1998; Greg Richards, 1996). In certain localities the distinction between mass tourism and cultural tourism begins to be complex to outline (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000). Such evidence have clear implications: the domestic and (overall) international promotion of each destination become an indirect vehicle of promotion of one or more specific tangible or even intangible cultural expressions, as a primary tourist attraction. Simply by visiting international fairs such as the World Travel Market of

London, the BIT in Milan or the FITUR in Madrid, one realizes that such appointments for tourism marketers become indirectly huge events of promotion of (more or less authentic) worldwide cultures.

We deduce that tourism is by vocation a potential vehicle for cultural diplomacy, promoting substantially experiences related to knowledge of peoples and cultures. The meeting of cultures produced by tourism is a topic discussed and studied. With regard to the meeting between visitors and hosting communities, for instance, European-Commission (2000, p. 47) proposed the figure of 'destination ambassador'. On the other hand, several voices have been raised to argue that tourism is a vehicle for world peace through the promotion of intercultural dialogue (see subsection 1.2). However, we have to consider the conditions for this to happen. The effectiveness of tourism as a vehicle of cultural diplomacy is to be found in an explicit, multilevel engagement in the practice of cultural diplomacy, preferable aligning with national and international policies in this area. To this end, however, one of the preconditions is the awareness of the stakeholders involved in the tourism sector about their potential role as agents of cultural diplomacy. In this sense, we present our conceptual considerations about the topic, in order to bridge effectively cultural diplomacy with international tourism as a vehicle for global understanding and peace.

Conditions for an effective cultural diplomacy through tourism

If, on the one side, we can affirm that peace is a precondition for tourism, on the other side, we need to admit that conventional tourism does not automatically bring peace. An effective way to reach this goal - global mutual understanding through tourism – is represented by a multilateral and multilevel engagement of tourism agents in well-defined processes that go beyond tourism and become part of countries' cultural diplomacy. Figure 1 represents schematically this process.

Figure 1
Ideal condition to implement the role of tourism in the process of global mutual understanding through its association with practices of cultural diplomacy
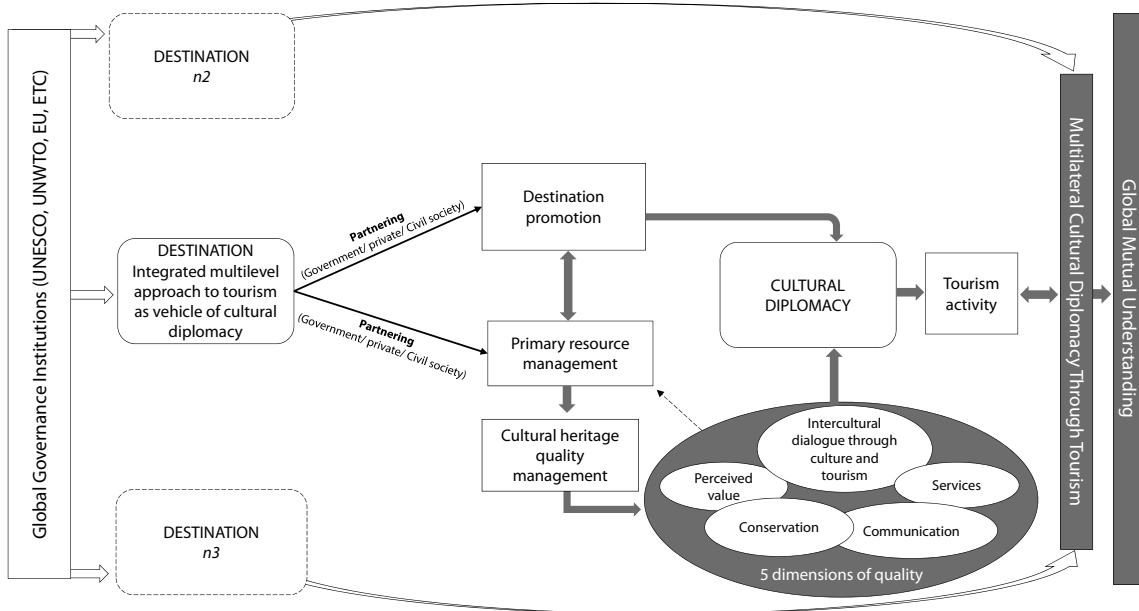
Firstly, supranational institutions provide guidelines that every destination should implement through a multilateral partnership involving public sector, private sector and civil society. The promotion of the destination abroad should be in line with the national agenda of cultural diplomacy. At the same time, inside the destination, the importance of the awareness raising about local cultural values turns the "paideia approach to cultural heritage management" (Carbone, Oosterbeek & Costa, 2013) into a way to strength the identity of the hosting community and prepare them to the encounter with the visitors. In this regard, this practice should represent standard of quality. The only international 'Quality Evaluation System for the Cultural Heritage Management', recognized by UNESCO and UNWTO, is the HERITY Global Evaluation System, considering four dimensions for the assessment:

• Perception of cultural significance (value);

• State of maintenance, preservation and restoration (conservation);

• Information provided to the visitor (communication);

• Quality of reception and services offered (services) (Quagliuolo, 2001, p. 251).

HERITY is representing not only a valuable tool for visitors, but also an inestimable framework for heritage managers worldwide, as it is raising awareness about the policy of quality and is sharing internationally common recognized standards. It would be thus recommendable the introduction of a fourth dimension of assess regarding the capacity of a place (museum, archaeological area, etc.) to promote intercultural dialogue, namely between visitors and local community. The visit to a tourist attraction would thus become an activity of cultural diplomacy, recognized as indicator of quality within cultural heritage management. Ideally, if all the destinations worldwide would implement this model, the results would be a multilateral, global engagement in cultural diplomacy through tourism, towards a global mutual understanding.

The multilateral level within the destination, involving public sector, tourism industry and civil society would ensure a participative process, reflected in each destination (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Multilateral involvement within the participative process in each destination
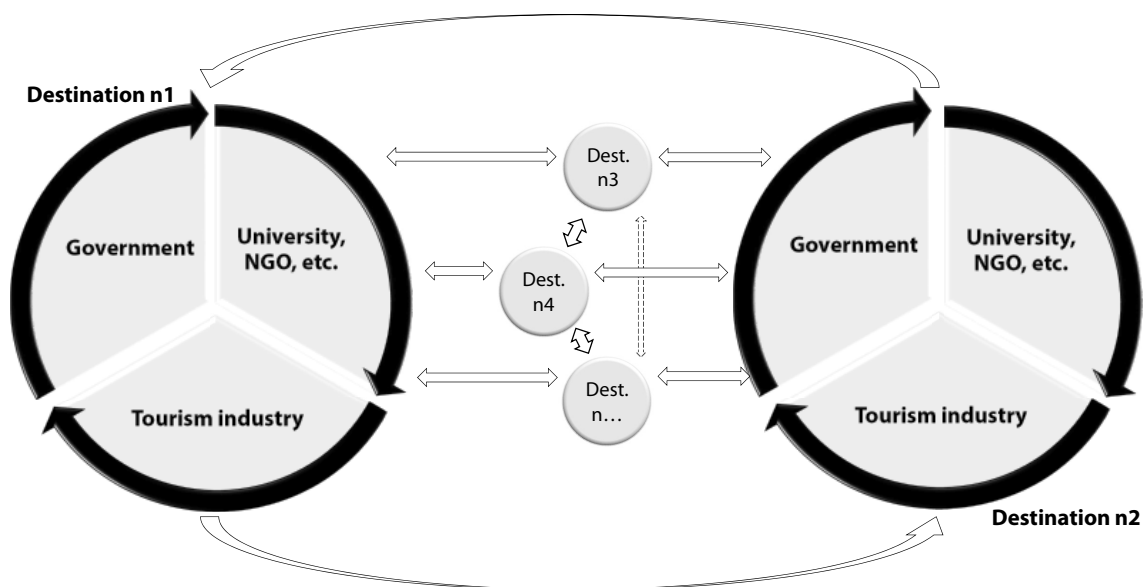
The role of cultural heritage management within the relation of tourism-cultural diplomacy: A definition of 'cultural heritage quality management'

The present work aims to provide recommendations towards an effective contribution for the promotion of intercultural dialogue through tourism, as a global vehicle of cultural diplomacy. If on the one hand, we indeed can consider tourism activity as an innate vehicle of cultural diplomacy, on the other hand we have to recognize that the lack of awareness and explicit engagement of operators represents an obstacle to this process. In this sense, one of the important aspects highlighted in the work was the crucial role assumed by the cultural heritage management practices within the destination. The implementation of the 'paideia approach to cultural heritage management' for the intercultural dialogue between tourists and hosting community should be one of the preconditions to turn tourism into a vehicle of cultural diplomacy. It would be thus recommendable to consider the capacity of the cultural heritage managers to enhance cultural heritage as a vehicle of intercultural dialogue as well as one of the dimension of quality within cultural heritage management. Such a dimension should thus be added to the four dimensions of cultural heritage quality management proposed by 'HERITY, international non-governmental and non-profit organization for the Quality Management of Cultural Heritage' (perceived value, conservation, communication and services provided).

The assumption of these five dimensions should underlie the idea of quality within the activities of cultural heritage management, and contribute to shape the idea of cultural heritage quality management itself. We would thus define cultural heritage quality management as the act of overseeing all activities and tasks needed to guarantee a desired level of excellence within the practice of cultural heritage sites and monuments management, which in turn essentially relies on these five dimensions; *a)* the visitors' perceived value of the cultural asset displayed; *b)* a proper conservation of the cultural heritage resources and their preservation on behalf of present and future generations; *c)* an efficient and effective communication of the cultural heritage meaning and its importance to visitors; *d)* conditions which guarantees a safe and pleasant visiting experience; *e)* the enhancement of cultural heritage as a vehicle of intercultural dialogue between resident communities and tourists, both domestic and international.

In order to adopt and implement these concepts on behalf of future policies, we also recommend the creation of a particular label by supranational institutions such as European Union or United Nations (namely UNESCO and UNWTO) to acknowledge the best practices in the effort to link tourism activities to cultural diplomacy. This practice can raise awareness among the agents of the tourism sectors. Other practices specifically directed to tourism sector agents should create the same goal as well. Tourism sector would be thus oriented not only to contribute with nation branding but also contributing to cultural diplomacy.

Conclusions

International diplomacy has always recognized the importance of culture. Many countries used it as an instrument of foreign policy, with different purposes according to the internal priorities and historical periods. Cultural diplomacy was born indeed, as government activities aimed to share abroad a favourable image of a nation and its main task. It is to ensure state alliances and influence through culture and promoting visibility through internationalization of its cultural life. Cultural diplomacy is one of the main activities of a new form of power – so-called, soft power - now also used for the resolution of serious ideological conflicts. It is becoming an effective tool in current dialogue and consolidation of relations with other cultural contexts. Every phenomenon related to cultural diplomacy can be analysed

based on the definition of four simple and at the same time fundamental elements: agent, agenda, vehicle, and target audience.

In this article, we proposed the idea of tourism as a vehicle for excellence of cultural diplomacy. The tourist sector has culture among its most important primary resources most important (perhaps the most important), or rather, the possibility of visitors to have access to cultures that are different from those of their place of origin. As implication, both the promotion of destinations abroad, as well as the visitor experience could represent a constant contribution to cultural diplomacy on a global scale. Within the international debate on the role of tourism within construction of peace, we recognize in the alliance tourism-cultural diplomacy a path that can actually bring tourism to an effective contribution to a greater inter-cultural dialogue and global mutual understanding. We theorized precondition for this to happen. First, the involvement of the public sector, private sector and civil society within each destination that would be at the base of tourism activities as a vehicle of cultural diplomacy, through an explicit engagement with the agenda of cultural diplomacy at national and international level. By following supranational guidelines, each country/destination would converge towards the same goal: the contribution of tourism to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding and, finally, peace.

The urgency of the definition and implementation of integration policies and multilateral global efforts towards a better multicultural coexistence, push each sector to question on its own role within this process. If one can consider peace a crucial prerequisite for tourism, on the other hand we cannot assume automatically tourism as peace builder. From the scientific and academic point of view, other researches - both quantitative and qualitative - should be conducted to provide new and valuable evidences to improve and make even more effective, the link between tourism and cultural diplomacy, both in theory and practice. Indeed, we must shape tourism so that it truly contributes, through a solid engagement with cultural diplomacy, better sociocultural and economic conditions within the single destinations and simultaneously contribute to – by facilitating access to different cultures – intercultural dialogue and global mutual understanding toward world peace.

Every geographic area regardless of its economic, social and geopolitical current situation, every person, every human activity is involved in this global process of *construction*. Tourism is by vocation one of these activities. This is the reason why we consider the present work particularly relevant and worthy to be continued and undertaken by other researchers. Within the creation of national and international political agendas, as well as whithin the definition of priorities by institutions of global governance, the role of science should be that of indicating the best choices and paths to follow. In this context, while there are scientists who are working to send tourists up into the space, we aim to bring them back to the Earth and build together a better world of mutual understanding and peace.

Notes

[1] An extension of the Three-World model, where the fourth world represents the countries affected by extreme poverty, and the fifth world is made up of entities or groups of people not officially recognized but made by such numerous groups which finally represent virtual states, normally constituted of poor and desperate people.

[2] 'Protect and spread the Italian language and culture in the world, reviving the spiritual ties of compatriots abroad with the motherland and feeding among foreigners love and worship of Italian civilization.'

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