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**Dance as a Socio-Political Tool: The Historical Developments into
Contemporary Dancing Diplomacy and the Portuguese Testimony**

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Master's Degree in International Studies

Supervisor

PhD. Vera Borges, Invited Assistant Professor

ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

October, 2024

Department of History

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Dance can “communicate, entertain, inform, educate and mobilize a society towards achieving social cohesion or togetherness” (Odunze, 2021: 81).

Acknowledgments

To dance, for always being a joyful part of my life that allowed me to grow immensely by embracing a passion with dedication and compromise. It made who I am today.

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Abstract

This master dissertation intends to explore the intersection of cultural diplomacy and dance, considering its ability to coerce, influence and impact international relations. Dance is a *sui generis* art form and has been historically used as a powerful instrument that not only is relevant for artistic expressions and cultural sharing but also as a soft power tool in cultural diplomacy. As such, dance can wisely be a tool for different purposes in foreign affairs due to its holistic dimension.

This field of research emerged as a vital way to increasingly promote cultural understanding, empathy, and respect by empowering communicative environments between nations. Through the analysis of some the historical international examples, especially inherent to the Cold War period but not exclusively, its intended to create a robust base for the study of dance in cultural diplomacy. This enables an understanding of its impacts and capabilities to specify for the analysis of dance as soft power tool in Portuguese cultural diplomacy. As primary examples, Ballet Verde Gaio, Ballet Gulbenkian and the National Ballet of Portugal, have shown to display the ability to reinforce Portuguese cultural identity and establish its presence in the international arena. Despite the evidence of this practice in Portugal, dance diplomacy is still a very underexplored field of research, and this study also intends to evoke the urgency for that more positive transition.

Keywords: Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power, Dance, Dance Diplomacy, International Relations, Portugal.

Resumo

Esta dissertação de mestrado pretende explorar a interseção da diplomacia cultural e da dança, considerando a sua capacidade de coagir, influenciar e impactar as relações internacionais. A dança é uma forma de arte *sui generis* e tem sido historicamente utilizada como um instrumento poderoso, que não só é relevante para expressões artísticas e partilha cultural, mas também como uma ferramenta de *soft power* na diplomacia cultural. Como tal, a dança pode, sabiamente, ser uma ferramenta para diferentes fins nas relações externas devido à sua dimensão holística.

Este campo de investigação surgiu como uma forma vital de promover cada vez mais a compreensão cultural, a empatia e o respeito, fortalecendo ambientes comunicativos entre nações. Através da análise de alguns exemplos históricos internacionais, especialmente inerentes ao período da Guerra Fria, mas não exclusivamente, pretende criar-se uma base robusta para o estudo da dança na diplomacia cultural. Isto permite uma compreensão dos seus impactos e capacidades para especificar a análise da dança como ferramenta de *soft power* na diplomacia cultural portuguesa. Como principais exemplos, temos o Ballet Verde Gaio, Ballet Gulbenkian e a Companhia Nacional de Bailado, que demonstram capacidade para reforçar a identidade cultural portuguesa e estabelecer a sua presença no cenário internacional. Apesar das evidências desta prática em Portugal, a diplomacia da dança é ainda um campo pouco explorado e este estudo também pretende evocar a urgência para essa transição positiva.

Palavras-chave: Diplomacia Cultural, *Soft Power*, Dança, Diplomacia da Dança, Relações Internacionais, Portugal.

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Glossary

BG – Ballet Gulbenkian

BR – *Ballet Russes*

BVG – Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio or Ballet Verde Gaio

CD – Cultural Diplomacy

CGF – Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

CNB – National Ballet of Portugal or *Companhia Nacional de Bailado*

EU – European Union

IR – International Relations

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

PRC – People's Republic of China

USA – United States of America

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialists Republics

Introduction

Throughout history, several forms of art have notoriously been more relevant, contrarily to what may be thought, to different society's dimensions than exclusively culture. In a globalized world, political and social environments are increasingly connected and impacted by a wide variety of factors present, considerably art. Cultural diplomacy has emerged as a vital tool in international relations that is able to promote mutual understanding and communication among actors (Schneider, 2003). Extensively, dance has shown to be a powerful tool in the artistic expressions and dimensions but also a meaningful mechanism for cultural exchange, being a *sui generis* form of art (Giurchescu, 2001). Hence, for this present Master dissertation in International Studies I intend to explore this complex relation between cultural diplomacy and dance by analysing how can it be a vehicle for conveying national identity, ideologies, and heritage on the international stage. Moreover, scrutinise how has it been historically used through international examples from the Cold War period to more contemporary dynamics. In order to establish a theoretical base to dissect the Portuguese testimony in this practice.

"(...) dance structure may be considered as a culturally determined 'program' where social, historical and environmental factors interlock with the physical, psychological and mental features of the individual" (Giurchescu, 2001: 109).

However it may be thought, dance is rather complex and has the ability to produce meaning in each performance into capturing the audience's attention and achieve some goal, perceivable or not to each part involved. Dance becomes a powerful icon because not only can implode change, but it can also be a crucial instrument to it. The dancer can express or transmit a variety of feelings, ideas, or experiences with a deep and untranslatable meaning, allowing dance to become more than a culturally based entity with cultural purposes. As Anca Giurchescu characterizes, dance is a multidimensional and holistic tool thus it can variate the type of content that it delivers. Not only is used amongst communities for cultural or traditional causes but can also be a tool with political-ideological, educational, religious or, even, economic purposes. As a consequence, dance acquires a social function as a non-verbal communication mechanism and powerful tool towards personal or governmental goals. It can be used to alter, restructure, or reinforce social systems according to a certain group's ideology or political drive, through placement of this soft power. Although, dance can be also a unifying factor with the power to integrate different social groups, individuals, or political/ideological and religious affiliations. By acknowledging the differences, it may have the ability to become a connecting tool that focuses on sharing common features, that enable the creation of a stronger and profound relationship (Giurchescu, 2001).

Due to dance's complexity and way to produce a message, it started to be used for social-political contexts as a soft power toll in cultural diplomacy. Especially during the Cold War, where alternatives

methods of diplomacy were used to engage in international relations. Dance was utilized as another way to display opposite power between the two superpowers, United States and Soviet Union. Not only to spread the supposedly superior ideology as political propaganda, but also to establish diplomatic relations through, since dance is more accessible and less distant (Gonçalves, 2019). But it was dance diplomacy, how it has been established since that time, is not something exclusive from this time period nor for the two superpowers.

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the relevance that dance still has on contemporary diplomacy but also focusing on analyzing Portugal. Dance was something present on the country from the early 17th and 18th century, but its practice completely changed with the visit from the '*Ballet Russes*'. In the earlier 20th century, Portugal was still exploring the multidimensions of dance, however its use for political, diplomatic, and international relations purposes has clearly been more noticeable with the establishment of the Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio. They were founded through a government organism during the Portuguese fascist regime that had the intent to promote the Portuguese culture through a mixture of contemporary and traditional folklore dance. Consequently, this vanguard inspired 'movements' that were truly interesting to observe as the artistical changes inherent to this period occurred. A few years later, dance moves to the private sector by the appearance of Ballet Gulbenkian, first known as Experimental Ballet Group, subsidized by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. During the 20th century, this company achieved national and international prestige being effectively the first professional ballet company (Guerreiro, 2017). Eventually, in a new democratic context and to replace BVG, the National Ballet of Portugal comes to be effective in 1977, where the beginning of its establishment was complicated and unstable in terms of resources and legitimacy (Laginha, 2008). Its main purpose is to promote and disseminate Portugal's dance patrimony - from dancers, choreographers, technics, and repertoire. Nowadays, CNB is the official professional dance company since its financed by government and it's allied with its cultural objectives and dynamics (Guerreiro, 2017). Through these three examples, it became easier to conclude that ballet (dance) was and is actually a facet of soft power in Portuguese cultural diplomacy. Dance is a very powerful and relevant tool in socio-political dimensions in the international arena and mustn't be disregarded as is a considerable diplomatic tool for cultural diplomacy between nations – "Dancing Diplomacy".

The interest for this topic emerged as a consequence of my enthusiasm in merging two inherent long-time passions. Dance has always been a constant in my life, since I began to practice at only three years old. This path impacted immensely and shaped the way I perceived commitment, professionalism, and passion for something that you do. Therefore, ballet has been existent for 'most of my life' – almost 22 years – and I'm a true believer of its complexity and enormous potential to shape the world's society as well as a communication mean for any message or purpose entitled. Later, as I was struggling to find the correct start for my academic journey, the field of International Relations appeared to be a world of

possibilities as I was fascinated to better comprehend the international dynamics and everything it entails. Finished my bachelor's degree with enormous interest in diplomacy and its organisms, hence decided to continue my studies in ISCTE-IUL with the Master in International Studies. Through it, I developed several competences, and ended discovering the reality and possibility of connecting diplomacy and dance within a course. During the second year of the master's degree, I began an internship in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to pursue my diplomatic passion in order to comprehend its operative behaviour as well as get acquainted to the variety of mechanisms through which Portugal dynamizes its international relations. It led me to understand that in fact dance can "(...) communicate, entertain, inform, educate and mobilize a society towards achieving social cohesion or togetherness" (Odunze, 2021: 81).

Through this investigation, the main purpose is to answer in the clearest and truthful way possible to the following questions of: how is dance a soft power tool capable of establishing diplomatic and political relations through cultural diplomacy, especially in contemporary Portugal? And how and why is it (still) relevant nowadays?

And in order to achieve that I propose the following objectives: 1) conceptualize and theorize about the key concepts of the study to better understand their meaning, impact and functioning; 2) scrutinize the historical developments of this practice in the international arena, by reflecting on some examples encountered; 3) thoroughly analyze Portugal's dance history to perceive its developments and afterwards study some historical and contemporary examples of its usage; 4) confront the qualities and fallacies of dance as cultural diplomacy in Portugal.

The first chapter starts with the literature review about the three main concepts measured to be the most relevant for the study: soft power, cultural diplomacy, and dance. Considering the importance to understand and analyse the existent literature on the topic as a starting point, the detailed explanation of the three concepts is to outline what guided the study. Hence, understand what is the concept of power and its different influence mechanisms that differentiate types of power – hard power and soft power, being the later the primary focus. To better understand cultural diplomacy, it's firstly briefly defined diplomacy and its importance for international dynamics as well as the concept of culture. Then, the combination of both as to what is considered cultural diplomacy and to what extent it's an applicable and interesting practice. Finally, the concept of dance as a multidimensional form of art that, through non-verbal communication, can not only establish different meanings and share messages but also be considered a political and diplomatic tool.

The second chapter is where the research and methodological choices are clarified for the present dissertation. Being a qualitative research with a carefully structured analysis for pertinent findings about individual perceptions of the world – not depending on statistical analysis nor large unit samples. The research question and selection of the relevant subjects for the study is the starting point for every

research and the present dissertation intends to explore how dance can be a soft power tool in diplomacy, the relevance of dance in cultural diplomacy and the advantages and disadvantages of using dance in diplomatic contexts. Hence the research question is *Dance as a Socio-Political Tool: The Historical Development into Contemporary Dancing Diplomacy and the Portuguese Testimony*. Additionally, this chapter intends to share the data collection methods utilized as well as explaining their application.

The third chapter is a case study, considering it to be “(...) an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to the environment” (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 301). Thus, it firstly depicted and explained the international panorama on dance as a soft power tool for cultural diplomacy through providing a brief historical context as well as some examples of its practice. Not only from the Cold War period, a very imperative time for establishing dance diplomacy, but also more contemporary and geographically different examples to showcase its current usage and weight in international relations. Then, focus on Portugal’s testimony by contextualizing the emergence of the art’s practice and cultural diplomacy in the country dating after a very impactful moment – the visit from the ‘*Ballet Russes*’. Following, it is provided an outline of the three crucial and emblematic dance bodies in Portuguese (diplomatic) history: the Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio (1940), Ballet Gulbenkian (1965) and the National Ballet of Portugal (1977). As they deliver rich examples of Portugal’s dance diplomacy. Yet, adding more contemporary examples of the practice as well to prove its contemporary relevance.

Lastly, the fourth chapter is an intermediate discussion about the results and discoveries of the present dissertation as a mean to clarify and resume what has been analysed throughout the dissertation. In a way, I considered it to be a ‘pre-conclusion’ to reaffirm and briefly reexplain the facts gathered of dance as a soft power tool in cultural diplomacy as well as providing the answers that the study intended to uncover. Hence, dance is an extremely relevant art form that impacts our societies’ functioning and have the power to coerce and influence, directly or indirectly, international relations through cultural diplomacy.

Despite the purposes shared throughout this introduction on the desirable findings, I intended to make this study to be pertinent beyond this scope. Dance diplomacy is still an understudied field and this current project is also an attempt to cultivate and bring more attention to the topic.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

According to the author Alan Bryman, the literature represents a very important part in the research, thus the existing literature has to be the starting point when considering a topic. Therefore, there are a few things that must be considered about the topic beforehand as what concepts and theories are applied, research methods utilized, controversies, empirical evidence, and key contributors (Bryman, 2012).

Therefore, throughout the reading and analysis process in the literary review for this master thesis, I began to understand that some concepts were mentioned repeatedly. These were key concepts on theories of International Relations, that highly impact the organization and dynamics in the international systems, such as Power and Diplomacy. The relevance of these broader concepts enables a more specific analysis on the ability of dance as socio-political tool in diplomatic dynamics. By better perceiving two individual concepts as 'Soft Power' and 'Cultural Diplomacy', it becomes easier to understand the third concept 'Dance' – which enables the perception of dance's capacity and position in the diplomatic and international systems. In addition, it was a crucial point to understand dance as a multidimensional form of art, which has a rather complex structure and may have a vast variety of impacts.

1.1 Concept of Power & Soft Power

The concept of Power has been in discussion in International Relations since the earliest political ideologies and it consists in perhaps the most important yet misunderstood concepts in IR, as evidenced by Steven Rothman (Rothman, 2011). It is something that the world and its dynamics depend on, especially considering in Realism, an IR theory where power is the central issue. However, it also became integrated in other theories in international relations by adjusting the multidimensional concept to other forms of power (Sousa et al, 2022).

“At a basic level, power is the ability for one actor to influence the actions of another actor that would not have occurred otherwise (Dahl 1957). Types of power have appeared in various writings throughout international relations, including in the earliest realist writings, where attempts were made to discount the importance of norms, morality, and world opinion as forms of power (Morgenthau 1948, pp. 235-280, Carr 1956)” (Rothman, 2011: 49).

As stated by the more classic definitions in the field, power is the ability to impose a behaviour. In other words, is capacity to influence others in a determinate behaviour, providing strength to this actor that can implode relations of domain, order and obedience. Power also provides the capability to

achieve the actor’s objectives, goals, or finalities, which constrains the definition or measurement of the concept (Sousa et al, 2022). Though it may not have a straightforward definition, its perceived to include power over nature, dynamics as well as people. In international Relations and defined by the key author on the topic Joseph Nye, power is the capacity itself to do something in social situations to achieve a certain outcome, that inevitably affect others. However, there are several factors that affect and need to be considered in regards power (Nye, 2021). In order to pursue those interests mentioned before, the subject in the international law can utilize different mechanisms available at his extent. By using these means, the actor is using the power means available to him to achieve a perceivable goal. This is what establishes the type of power applied, thus the resources available or used (Nye, 2004). Therefore, there are two extremely relevant subcategories inside power that are structural in International Relations known as Hard Power and Soft Power.

Both Hard Power and Soft Power can be difficult to define. The first one becomes easier when comprehended as an extend to a more ‘physical, material and coercive type’ of resources, as more perceivable and palpable means. Such as population, territory, natural resources, military, and economic assets. By resorting to these means, its intended to influence other actors in the international system, leading to certain purpose (Sousa et al, 2022). In the late 1990s, traced by the academic Joseph Nye, Soft Power becomes a form of power used by international actors in international and political relations. It emerged to explain the importance of considering other dimensions on the contrary to the traditional hard power. Although it intends to inflict, soft power applies different practical means and mechanisms for its influence but has certainly become more relevant and decisive in international politics (Sousa et al, 2022). Therefore, it’s very different from hard power and coercive force isn’t present nor it is based on material items. Soft power utilizes a variety of resources that have been discussed by some authors such as information, philanthropy, diplomacy, and culture but it can also include rhetoric, persuasion and agenda-setting (Rothman, 2011).

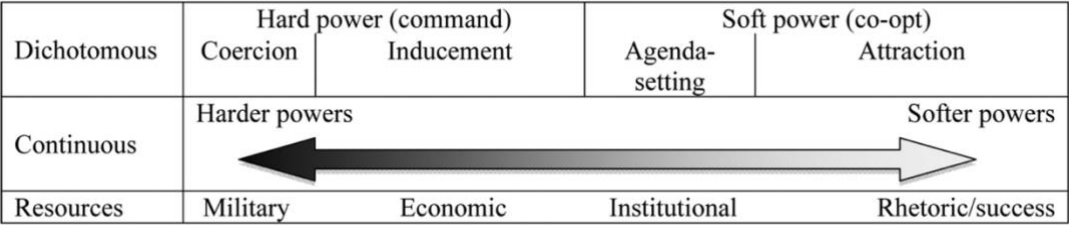


Figure 1 – ‘Dichotomous and Continuous power’ by Steven B. Rothman (2011)

As stated by Steven B. Rothman, Soft Power still has some misconceptions due to its complexity and nonlinear definition. However, the figure above helps to better explain and comprehend the major differences between hard and soft power in international relations. Hence, by relying on more basic

categories as in figure 1, it illustrates and differentiates more clearly the conceptualization of the topics. As opposites, we have harder powers on the left and softer power on the right, considering to be dichotomous – this meaning, presence of a bifurcation on the concept of power. Additionally, through the figure, it's perceivable the contrary differences between hard and soft power to expose how they diverge. As mentioned, when used more coercive and inducement resources, it's perceivable the utilization of hard power. Harder powers tend to be more materialistic and depend on military, economic, territory and population resources (Rothman, 2011). For example, by applying economic sanction or military threats to an actor that prevails defection actions in the international system, it's an attempt to coerce into changing that behaviour through threats of physical or economic force. So, it can be classified as a 'command act' because it is intended to have impact and impose order through physical manipulation. On the other hand, if it is more to appeal and attract a certain behaviour, it's related to soft power mechanisms. Soft power is dependent on more institutional, rhetoric and intangible resources to prevail impact. It's intended to pass a certain message in order to make a certain goal and perspective more attractive to follow. For instance, with political propaganda, the goal is to make everything sound very appealing to implore behavioural change. Or even with culture, by spreading and connecting the world's cultures, it sometimes is intentional to pass a certain message about a country's culture, be it of strength, importance or relational. So, soft power is reliant on attraction and agenda setting, more of a co-opt dynamic. However, agenda setting is not clearly related to the concept of attraction, but it's in fact evidence of the concept of non-militarization. Consequently, the non-use of material or physical forms of power (Rothman, 2011).

Therefore, soft power appears to counterpose the concept of hard power to try to solve 'disciplinary and policy' puzzles in international relations of the world during and after the Cold War. Thus, the ideas and concepts in social science are always affected by the contemporary political debates. Joseph Nye characterizes soft power as a spectrum of behaviours that include positive attraction, agenda setting, morals and persuasion. It even assimilates soft power with a magnet that pulls together something. Since soft power uses morals and ideas, it tends to depend on the minds of the target audience. For example, a certain cultural resource cannot be used to approach and persuade every country, Hollywood productions may be appealing and impactful in Brazil or European countries but, most evidently, won't be to Saudi Arabia or Iraq (Nye, 2021).

However, sometimes the question that prevails is what is in fact soft power's capability and how does it impact foreign policies and relations. As stated previously, soft power is considered to enable "getting what you want" through attraction, and that includes culture, values, ideas, and others. Joseph Nye also affirmed that soft power affects others through co-optive means as agenda setting, persuading and eliciting positive attraction into preferred outcomes. The more sceptical academics think of hard power as more effective in terms of results as a foreign policy tool, thus it remains a relevant mechanism

in international relations. Additionally, they believe soft power to be more limited with its reach but more relevant in terms of establishing and perceiving a country's foreign policy. Throughout agenda setting it becomes easier to understand and perhaps predict their posture, goals, and actions in the international arena (Trunkos, 2013). Apart from the limitation in both powers, it is concluded that both are extremely relevant and necessary as policy tools and that consensus allowed 'smart power' to emerge, once again by Joseph Nye. This concept consists in the successful usage of both soft and hard power towards foreign policy purposes. As this author describes, by combining hard power's coercion and soft power's ability to attract, a state can set more effectively their agenda, shape their preferences, save a lot of 'carrots and sticks' and achieve their goals. But, in fact, one cannot efficiently replace the other, thus smart strategies are the combination of the two powers (Nye, 2009).

To conclude, and for the purpose of this study, it mustn't be forgotten the importance of soft power in creating an enabling context for policy and demarcate a state's identity. Hence, the three pillars of a country's soft power are its culture, its values and its policies, which allow it to exert impact in international dynamics and diplomatic relations (Nye, 2009).

1.2 Diplomacy, Culture & Cultural Diplomacy

Diplomacy consists in a very important conduct in international relations which allows international affairs to be conducted by peaceful means, which depend on techniques of persuasion and negotiation. This has become a key process in characterizing the international system and defining the system of sovereign states, known as the 'Westphalian System' after the Peace of Westphalia in 1684. But only after the Vienna Congress (1814-1815) it was officially regulated with the appearance of the modern state. Currently, diplomacy is often used, particularly at a state level, as a synonym for foreign policy and the means that such policies are implemented. But also, diplomacy is perceived as an international institution that has a set of norms and structures through which these processes are conducted (Lee & Hocking, 2011). It's considered one of the most important instruments in foreign policy that seeks to establish peaceful and cordial plurilateral relations between states. Other roles that diplomacy embodies are: foreign representation, that aims to reinforce the existence, rules, and characteristics of the state; promote communication between political power holders; negotiation, by international multi or bilateral agreements; promotion and protection of the interests of the state and embodies as public service (Sousa et al, 2022).

Since the purpose of diplomacy is to conduct dialogue and negotiation to form constructive relations between states, modern diplomacy has become more open and transparent in comparison to traditional diplomacy. Throughout time, it has evolved to be more bewildering to international and domestic politics through different types of diplomacy such as (Mamchii, 2023):

- Public diplomacy

- Economic diplomacy
- Cultural diplomacy
- Regional diplomacy
- And others.

Despite the relevance of the different types of diplomacy exemplified ahead, the present thesis only intends to highlight the importance of cultural diplomacy in establishing foreign policies and demarking a state's identity in the international dynamics. In order to better understand how art and cultural behaviors dispose immense impact towards the capability and efficiency of diplomacy and policy making.

The concept of culture is considered to determine norms, values, and material goods that characterize and are typically associated to a determinate group, hence those individuals share a common ground or a 'collective system'. It additionally portrays a group of values and representations of a society such as ways of thinking and living. This concept is also defined by the Council of Europe as '(...) everything that allows the individual to situate himself regarding the world and towards its natal heritage (...) (Sousa et al, 2022: 201). In a broader sense, culture includes an immense variety of systems, values and symbols that mediate social interactions such as cultural traditions, humanities, myths, literature, religious representations, artistic forms, beliefs or faith, entertainment, ethical values, design, and others. Therefore, culture actively contributes to the existence of identity. So, culture becomes a determinant factor for how people perceive each other and discuss their differences in the world dynamics. Throughout time, cultural exchange has been highly connected to foreign relations, thus its relevance obtained a bigger perspective (Odunze, 2021). In international relations and politics, the concept of culture even achieves a more considerable role as a new instrument of diplomacy, policy making and negotiation and a symbol of foreign policy, hence the relevance of the concept of cultural diplomacy (Sousa et al, 2022).

"Cultural diplomacy plays a fundamental role in presenting the 'soul' of a society, establishing a relationship of trust directly with other people, regardless of changes in government"¹ (Sousa et al, 2022: 219).

¹ Free translation cited from the book "Dicionário de Ciência Política e Relações Internacionais": "A diplomacia cultural desempenha um papel fundamental de apresentação da 'alma' de uma sociedade, estabelecendo um relacionamento de confiança diretamente com os outros povos, independentemente das mudanças de governo" (Sousa et al, 2022: 219).

As perceived previously, culture has a very important role not only to establish a state's diplomatic relations and position in the world dynamics but also to define and present the beliefs and ideology of a state. Through cultural diplomacy, a state intends to project, to the other international system actors, its culture, art, and education. It also allows cooperation and exchange through several educational and artistic institutions as orchestras, cinema, actors, music, painters, sculptors, writers and dance or dance companies (Sousa et al, 2022). However, cultural diplomacy wasn't always accepted, and its capacity was often neglected. But it eventually gained its relevance after some successful strategies and efforts, especially during the Cold War, that could potentially be revolutionary for the future. Considering this to be a period of ideology dispute and a time of crisis, cultural diplomacy developed more popularity towards an effective policy response. Artists of all kinds were 'acting' as some sort of national conscience that intended to reflect society. Thereby, gaining a whole new purpose of significance to cultural diplomacy after being considered quite obsolete (Schneider, 2006). So, Cultural Diplomacy is described by Cynthia Schneider as "(...) the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples to foster mutual understanding" (Schneider, 2003: 1). Through mutual respect and connection, CD is able to empower the creation of links and 'bridges' between nations, especially in moments of crisis. In such moments it may be a very important mean of communication. Additionally, cultural diplomacy helps to perceive how differently cultures and societies operate that could eventually allow a better understanding between nations. Because, by understanding the possible differences, it creates more tolerance and respect (Schneider, 2006). So, effective cultural diplomacy tries to form connections through similarity between the local cultural or historical traditions of the countries in question because this initiative shows respect and makes the two actors feel appreciated and valued. However, each initiative should be wisely considered and properly analyzed, since important characteristics of a cultural diplomacy program should be adjusted to its remittee. To be effective and successful, a cultural diplomacy program should (Schneider, 2003):

- Communicate values (diversity, opportunity, individual expression, freedom of speech and thought, or others);
- Consider the interests of the remittee country (i.e., architecture or design in Denmark);
- Offer information or expertise to exchange and mutual respect;
- Open diplomatic doors (channels for dialogue, strengthen the diplomatic relations, cultivate ties, and others);
- Provide alternative to official presence;
- Be creative, flexible, and opportunistic.

These types of programs allow a country to show its capacity to respect the traditions and culture of others as well as its intent to preserve that heritage by developing beneficial relations based on 'what they have in common'. Therefore, despite some reductions of government budget, cultural diplomacy

became a relevant channel for foreign policy to foster stronger and long-lasting relations with other international actors (Schneider, 2003). Several projects were developed that are still extremely relevant such as 'Art in Embassies' in the EUA Embassy in Portugal, that celebrated last year their 60th anniversary, which promotes art diplomacy through iconic American and Portuguese artists, art exhibitions and public events (US Mission Portugal, 2023). Or the 'US' Jazz Ambassadors' in 1950/60s, where jazz musicians were sent abroad for the first time, instead of symphonies or orchestras, to share the American soul that could be understood and appreciated by others. Even the Eurovision Contest can be considered a cultural diplomacy program that appeared as an attempt to rebuilt and reintegrate Europe after the World War II and still has been carried out throughout the years with emphasis in appreciating the songs from different cultures (ICD, 2024).

Hence, cultural diplomacy enhances the 'soul' of the society or state considering what it projects. Culture, that can vary through beliefs, ideology, art, or education, tends to be a crucial outlet in demarking and characterizing a state and can eventually be what detaches or brings countries together. By being able to mobilize actors in the international dynamics, cultural diplomacy opens a whole new door and expectation to how diplomacy should be conducted and can be used as a mean to achieve concrete objectives (Sousa et al, 2022). Empowering new socio-political tools such as Dance.

1.3 'Dance as a Multidimensional Tool'

As explained, in order to try to find better and improved mechanisms to promote communication, endure relationships and avoid or resolve conflicts, diplomacy has found several forms of interaction between states. Edward Warburton considers that exists 'three tracks' for diplomatic efforts: number one, the more formal and official track, coordinated by diplomats, high-level politicians, and military leaders; number two, considered more informal thus it relies in unofficial actors such as nongovernmental organizations; and number three, 'people to people', taken by individuals and/or private groups (Warburton, 2017).

Some scholars believe that dance has evolved into a more meaningful and capable system that credibly enables communication and cooperation between 'like-minded' groups. Therefore, throughout time, dance has been characterized by many as complex structure and form of art where impact and change can be imploded (Warburton, 2017). In fact, as stated by Anca Giurchescu, dance can transform people, their patterns, and the surrounding world. Dance is characterized as multidimensional tool by the same author, since it is capable to empower different meanings and goals is a complex form of art. Everything has or can have meaning, since it may not only transmit tangible/perceivable values but also intangible (Odunze, 2021).

“(...) dance structure may be considered as a culturally determined ‘program’ where social, historical and environmental factors interlock with the physical, psychological and mental features of the individual” (Giurchescu, 2001: 109).

Differently to what everyone may think, dance is rather complex and has the ability to produce meaning in each performance in order to capture the audience's attention and achieve some goal perceivable (or not) to each part involved. It is centered around the person who creates the culture, thus the person who transforms, organizes, and gives context to a collection of gestures has the dominant role in the meaning behind dance. Therefore, dance becomes a powerful icon because not only can it change, but it can also be a crucial instrument to change. According to the author, the power of dance consists in the capability of a dancer to remove himself of the quotidian and transport to a different time or space. This allows the dancer to express or transmit a variety of feelings, ideas, or experiences with a deep and untranslatable meaning (Giurchescu, 2001).

As I mentioned, dance is a very complex mechanism that cannot be reduced or explained to any other form of human activity. Dance is also characterized, by the author, as multi-dimensional cultural text which classifies dance “(...) as a coherent and dynamic factor of culture and bring together the anthropological and ethnochoreological perspectives (...)” (Giurchescu, 2001: 110). So, this means that according to the concept of cultural text, dance has deeply socio-communicative relevance integrated in each performance, classifying the quality of “dance-text”. A performance expects certain social interactions and impressions through a collection of specific dance elements, as ritual, art, educational, folklore or, even, political. In fact, all practices inherent in a performance are communication processes that dance couldn't isolate itself from, such as music, staging, costumes, props, facial expressions, or social rules. They interact in hierarchy and have the ability to produce diversified meanings within different social and political frameworks in constant change. Therefore, dance changes in consequence to the world's view, from socio-political and environmental conditions or the necessity to express. However, every little detail in a performance may not be of primary importance in order to pursue a specific message or purpose, but only to reinforce other more important elements. Dance has been known to have different usages amongst the communities such as pre-marital interaction, social integration, reinforcing traditional costumes and ethnic identities, to show prestige or status and as entertainment. Therefore, dance is used in holistic and multi-dimensional ways as a mean to spread or deliver political-ideological, educational, religious, or even economic messages (Giurchescu, 2001).

Through the abilities mentioned, dance acquires a social function as a non-verbal communication mechanism and powerful tool towards personal or governmental goals. Yet, considering this social dimension in dance and its element constitutions, the relationships between individuals and groups (ethnic, social, or religious) are enabled by this symbol that respects differences in criteria, as in age,

gender, profession, religion and others. And certain movements may translate into power relationships or struggles as superiority/inferiority, dominant/subordinate or public/private type. Given this instrumental power, dance can be used to alter, restructure, or reinforce social systems according to a certain group's ideology or political drive, through the placement of certain dance aspects. However, dance can also be a unifying factor with the power to integrate different social groups, individuals, or political/ideological and religious affiliations. By acknowledging the differences, it may have the ability to become a connecting point that focuses on sharing a new common feature, that enables the creation of a stronger and profound relationship (Giurchescu, 2001).

Due to its complexity, dance actually has different dance styles associated as identity symbols, and to each correspond distinct meanings. The identity concept is polysemic, which means that it can have multiple possible meanings and each person may self-identify with more than one identity, a personal or group one. A group identity describes how an individual identifies with others. And dance, is also a good instrument to accurately express or mediate the relationship between personal or psychological identities and social dynamics (Giurchescu, 2001). For example, traditional folk dancing is characterized by its homogeneity and synchronism towards the integration of individuals into groups whereas Hip Hop has shown to have more common inside gender and age groups with affirming functions. There are two ways to identify a group: subjective and objective modalities. The first one focuses on ideology or common origins and the objective refers to material markers as language, religion, food, dance, costumes, or others. For this perspective, tradition takes a very important role that provides stability and belonging to a determinate group. Therefore, due to the socio-political dimension, dance can also be identified as a national symbol for nation-states since it provides the stage to spread the sense of community, social rules, and habits (Giurchescu, 2001). However, at the same time, it may be used to manipulate symbols or alter messages, being seen as a deceiving mechanism.

The evolution that transported dance to diplomatic affairs is in the grey area between 'track one' and 'track two', mentioned before. Because although, dance organizations and companies aren't always considered official representatives of the state nor they tour as such, they also are not mere independent citizens. But the interesting fact is that they can eventually transit from one track to another if needed when struggle for cultural and political influence. However, more recently, in the twentieth century, dance has been increasingly employed for 'track three' diplomacy and cultural exchange. Dance can be a more relational and gentle approach to diplomacy which allows to ease tension and decomplex issues by rebuilding connection and relations. It promotes a behavioural shift from a competitive and confrontational posture to a more collaborative and dynamic one. The author, Edward Warburton, utilizes a curious metaphor of the act of marking in dance, which is when dancers replicate the choreography as an intentional way of thinking and memorizing it. Diplomatic processes should be thoughtful and enable an environment of idea sharing and mutual comprehension for them

to be more effective (Warburton, 2017). Cultural exchange ceased to be something exclusive for the elites' access, where traditional and static cultural settings for ambassadorial and political elites was replaced by a fast-moving and efficient cultural dynamic that directly or indirectly affect public diplomacy. Dance and other cultural activities are now more accessible to the communities and these art forms are an efficient, competent, and resourceful way to express and endure national and international relations. Considering the globalized era where the world is all connected and highly values travelling, cultures are constantly meeting, connecting, and morphing (Odunze, 2021).

'Dance for diplomacy can operate as a form of political protest or a kind of etiquette. It can be exported or exchanged. It can be a colonizing force or a vehicle for dialogue and understanding. It can be many of these things simultaneously.' (Warburton, 2017: 136).

Hence, dance is actually a multifaceted symbol. Not only has a significant cultural purpose, as a way to share cultures, identities and tradition but it also can be a social-political tool. Therefore, dance acquires a more complex function as non-verbal communication mechanism being a powerful tool of display personal or governmental purposes when used for those purposes. So, dance becomes rather diplomatic when representing cultural norms and values for a community (Odunze, 2021).

1.4 Conclusive Remarks

To summarize, as stated, the concept of Power has been a constant but very important point for discussion in International Relations. It consists in a central issue, especially in the Realism theory of IR but not exclusively, that coordinates and influences the international dynamics. Considering the classic definition, it is the capacity to influence others into a determinate behavior by a relation of order and obedience, according to concrete objectives and finalities. However, in order to achieve those goals, the subject in international law utilizes different mechanisms to his extent for his benefit (Sousa et al, 2022). The usage of a specific resource enables the distinction of the type of power – Hard Power and Soft Power, the two extremely relevant subcategories structural to International Relations (Nye, 2004). Soft power emerges in the late 1900s to remember the importance of widening the mechanisms of power. Despite having the same purpose, to influence a behavior, soft power utilizes more intangible and agenda-setting resources that attract and persuade. Those can vary from information, philanthropy, culture, diplomacy, morals, and ideas. Therefore, contrary to the materialistic and coercive hard power, soft power intends to appeal and attract a certain behavioral change, which is why amongst its mechanisms are culture, values, ideas, and others (Rothman, 2011). Although its efficiency is questioned by the more skeptical academics, it's a very important tool in international relations since it is crucial for policy making and demark a state's identity, considering culture, values and policies are the three pillars

of a country's soft power (Nye, 2009). Therefore, the concept of soft power appropriately appeared to oppose hard power and as an attempt to solve dynamical and political structures in international relations. However, soft power still remains with a complex and nonlinear definition due to these misconceptions and the constant influence from the contemporary political debates, as any social science (Rothman, 2011).

Diplomacy is an essential instrument in international relations as some kind of mediator since it allows peaceful dialogues and negotiations between states. But it is also perceived as an 'international institution' that is conducted by norms, processes, and structures (Lee & Hocking, 2011). And the concept of culture is described by Sousa et al as a set of shared norms, values and symbols that have an essential role in representing a society's identity as a collective and ways of living and thinking (Sousa et al, 2022). So, culture mediates social interactions through cultural traditions, myths, literature, religious representations, artistic forms, beliefs, entertainment, ethical values, and others. Becoming a determinant factor for how people perceive each other in the world dynamics (Odunze, 2021). Later in time, the concept starts to interact in international relations and politics as it becomes a considerable instrument in diplomacy, policy making and negotiation in foreign policy. Despite its initial roots in 1640s, modern diplomacy has evolved to be more open and transparent, bewildering to international and domestic politics via various types of diplomacy: public, economic, cultural and others (Mamchii, 2023). And considering the thematic of the dissertation, the focus is naturally on cultural diplomacy. It is extremely relevant to shape a state's identity in the international dynamics since it uses cultural assets and tools not only to foster relationships, connections, and negotiations but also to convey values and ideologies. Art exhibitions, concerts, dance shows and educational programs are able to promote understanding for a state's image and connection reinforcement. Therefore, CD shapes foreign policy by 'building bridges' between nations that are based on cultural common values and those exchanges occur through educational and artistic institutions as orchestras, cinema, actors, music, painters, writers, and dance(rs) or dance companies (Schneider, 2003). However, cultural diplomacy eventually gained more recognition and acceptance as a legitimate and effective policy tool after some successful outcomes, especially during the Cold War, a period highly demarked by ideological dispute. Through mutual understanding and respect, which enables a tolerant and comprehensive environment, CD helps to connect nations, especially in moments of crisis (Schneider, 2006). Hence, effective cultural diplomacy is able to develop cultural initiatives according to properly analyzation of important characteristics and adjustments to its remittee in order to 'open diplomatic doors' and communicate values (Schneider, 2003).

By accomplishing all mentioned, CD is able to provide a new dimension to how diplomacy should be conducted and what means can be used, such as empowering new socio-political tools like dance. Traditionally, it is seen as an art form, but it is rather complex since it is able to potentialize (non-verbal)

communication and cultural exchange, both important in influencing diplomatic relations and social structures. As characterized by Anca Giurchescu, dance is a multidimensional tool that can impact and shape society's behavior, succeeding in unifying or dividing different social or political groups. It is also associated with the concept of identity since it helps characterize a community, values and group or personal identities. Due to its complexity, dance became a powerful tool that not only can implode change but also be an instrument for it (Giurchescu, 2001). Usually, dance in diplomacy, as Warburton studies, is placed between formal and informal diplomacy but, throughout time, has gained prominence in 'people-to-people' diplomacy by enabling cultural exchange and assuage possible tensions (Warburton, 2017). And as beautifully stated by Edward Warburton:

Dance diplomacy rejects the road rage mentality. When we dance together, we embody ideas and ways of physical relanguaging that move between boundaries and beyond borders. When we rehearse intercultural exchange, we breathe more easily, reducing the pressure to compete. Moving and solving and collaborating together has always represented a more relational kind of effort outside diplo-matic tracks and beyond political rage. What is unique and unusual about dance marking diplomacy is the way marking operates as a kind of metaphor for a slow-moving, more subtle process of diplomacy: Through cognitive reduction, marking distributes the load of intense mental activity so that hard problems can be approached incrementally, perso-nal relationships can creep back into the process, and shared understandings can be built "like traces in the air." (Warburton, 2017: 137).

CHAPTER TWO

Methods and Methodology

The present chapter intends to clarify the research and methodological choices taken throughout the development of this dissertation. Due to the complexity of the topic and being a little understudied, it becomes even more relevant to carefully consider its structure of analysis. For the methodological strategies, it is more pertinent to elaborate qualitative research, considering that it is intended to understand individual perceptions of the world. Therefore, this doesn't seek statistical analysis nor provide a large sample of units.

"Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than qualification in the collection and analysis of data. As a research strategy it is broadly inductivist, constructionist, and interpretivist (...)." (Bryman, 2012: 380).

Qualitative research intends to do an in-depth and continuous information analysis, more flexible towards decision making in data collection and use of non-standardized research methods. This method is the perfect design that enables the answer to the research question and fulfilling the objectives. The research design is the framework for the data analysis and it allows to determine priorities in decisions towards the dimensions of the research process. Usually, according to Alan Bryman's description of a published study, there are six main steps that exemplify the outline of a qualitative research, which was the structural starting point for this present study (Bryman, 2012):

1. General research question(s)
2. Selection of relevant site(s) and subjects
3. Collection of relevant data
4. Interpretation of data
5. Conceptual and theoretical work
6. Writing up findings/conclusions

Naturally, any research, quantitative or qualitative, starts with a general research question to establish the thematic and purpose of the research because it has to be considered what is intended to find and the importance of achieving the searched answer (Bryman, 2012). As Green characterizes, a "good research question" has to be articulated in order to respond to personal, specific, scientific, practical, and ethical dimensions, hence considering a set of important boundaries. Such as considering the researcher's interest, scientific relevance, feasibility² and others important dimensions (Green, 2008). For the current dissertation, in order to find and establish my research question, I opted to not

² By contemplating the timeframe and resources available for the research (Green, 2008).

only find the general thematic but also determine the main objectives towards conducting this research project. Considering, I setted some main objectives:

- Better understand the soft power's role in establishing diplomatic relations between international actors;
- Better comprehend the relevance of dance as soft power tool;
- Recognize how has dance been used in international dynamics as soft power and cultural diplomacy mechanisms and how does that influence the present policies;
- Recognize why it may be interesting and indispensable to consider dance as a political-diplomatic tool as well as recognize the possible advantages and disadvantages to it.

Since the topic of this research project revolves around the connection between the concepts of diplomacy, dance, and soft power, as mentioned, it intends to comprehend how is dance a soft power tool used for diplomatic and political means. Therefore, the question that I aim to clarify and answer throughout this master thesis is "In contemporary Portugal, how is dance a soft power tool capable of establishing diplomatic and political relations, besides its inherent social and cultural impact". Most of the qualitative researchers, as stated by the author, consider that concepts are a very crucial point to landscape the research (Bryman, 2012). And considering that importance, the research began by searching reliability and validity in established concepts for the study. In addition, stated by Alan Bryman, "Concepts may be viewed as something we start out with and that represent key areas around which data are collected in an investigation" (Bryman, 2012: 9). In other words, by acknowledging the key concepts and theories in a research study, we are establishing guidance points that will connect through the development of the dissertation. Therefore, I considered soft power, cultural diplomacy and dance the three key concepts to conduct my study, theorize and outline the analysis to answer the objectives in the research question. The data collection is also a crucial point, according to Bryman, for any research project to generate insights, knowledge about the topic and establish the base for your study (Bryman, 2012). More specifically, the data collection methods present are articles, books, official documents and legislation and media and propaganda. But to better conceptualize and analyze the given information on the thematic, in an early stage of the research, I used the program MAXQDA to collect and organize the data and enable a more thorough analysis. This is a program that allows the storage of all your data in one place and it allows you to write notes, separate, paraphrase and summarize information through a coding system that is personally developed (MAXQDA, 2024). I was acquainted to the program in a curricular unit during my second year of this master's degree, Content Analysis with Informatic Programs, where I learned how this program is used and how it would benefit my research for the master dissertation.



Figure 2 – MAXQDA analysis conducted in the early stage of the research project.

The graphic attached in Figure 2 was made in MAXQDA with the first eight documents that I read and analyzed for the dissertation, whilst doing that course. It helped better set my purpose and understanding on the topic as well as define the more appropriate approach and structure for my research, considering the information I might find. I established a code, as requested in the program to organize the documents, where I tried to divide and perceive what was mentioned more frequently – from the key concepts, time period, geographical location (for exemplification) to the most repeated words, to find the key words for the research. Considering the information collected in this early stage, I rapidly perceived that cultural diplomacy is highly mentioned, and a crucial concept for this study, similarly to culture as a soft power tool, being present in every document. It is also understandable that some of the examples mentioned are primarily during the Cold War and practiced mostly by USA, Russia (or USSR at the time) and Europe. Through this premature analysis, I could understand the correlation and connection of the concept cultural diplomacy and soft power, as a mechanism to promote international relations, and the exponential of this study. Nonetheless, a more in-depth analysis and a more diversified collection of data was needed not only to base the research but also to link it to contemporary times, as a pertinent instrument. So, I expanded my investigation to broader my knowledge and the bibliography for this research. Throughout this study, I encountered a variety of authors, that can be consulted at the bibliography in the end, which influence my research and are cited through it, but some specifically distinguished themselves, by achieving a core dimension as interpretations for the present research. The following table specifies some authors, being divided by concepts they influence in defining, the year wrote and the titles of the articles, books, or investigations they oriented/made:

Year	Concept	Title(s)	Author
2001	Dance	"The Power of Dance and Its Social and Political Uses"	Giurchescu, Anca
2003 2006	Cultural Diplomacy	"Diplomacy That Works: 'Best Practices' in Cultural Diplomacy" "Cultural Diplomacy: Hard to Define, But You'd Know It if You Saw It"	Schneider, Cynthia
2004 2009 2021	Soft Power	"Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics" "Get Smart: Combining Hard Power and Soft Power" "Smart Power: The Evolution of a Concept"	Nye, Joseph
2011	Soft Power	"Revising the Soft Power Concept: What are the Means and Mechanisms of Soft Power"	Rothman, Steven B.
2014	Dance	"The Dance Dilemma: The Importance of Dance for Diplomacy during the Cold War"	Mehta, Anjali
2017	Cultural Diplomacy Dance	"Dance Marking Diplomacy: Rehearsing Intercultural Exchange"	Warburton, Edward
2021	Cultural Diplomacy Dance	"Dance as Cultural Diplomacy"	Odunze, Josephine Awele
2022	Defining Concepts	"Dicionário de Ciência Política e Relações Internacionais"	Souza, Fernando et al

Table 1 – Main concepts and authors on this master dissertation

Initially, I intended to conduct semi structured interviews with relevant people connected to the topic, be it directors of the companies or organizations, policy makers, dance artists or ambassadors. Also, thought about semi-structured interviews for a better balance between programmed and determined thematic interview with concrete objectives when asking something but, at the same time, maintaining some spontaneity, flexibility and liberty when approaching the interviewees (Bryman, 2012). However, and unfortunately, it was extremely hard not only to find the proper means to communicate with any of those entities but also to get them to answer a few questions for my study,

considering that some are more closed and can't share 'private' information. After acknowledging that, I decided to investigate into some metadata as an alternative resort to obtain testimonies and examples for the contemporary period, more specifically about Portugal. Metadata is 'data about data' as characterized by Filipa Paixão, where you use existent information that corresponds to the topic in analysis to circumscribe some point – inference from other data. They enable a better understanding to a perspective by identifying, describing, or locating something (Paixão, 2023). So, I found a few interviews conducted by other different people as well as some journalistic information that, after some analysis, project an interesting perspective that can exemplify and help me to achieve a more detailed and thorough answer to the research question.

Considering this heterogenic approach on data collection and a more theoretical towards the analysis, the method Triangulation became relevant. According to Alan Bryman, this concerns a study that uses more than one source of data but as also been employed to studies that consider multiple observers, different theoretical perspectives, variety of sources and methodologies³. Firstly, this method was more associated and utilized for quantitative research but eventually became a qualitative research strategy (Bryman, 2012). Research triangulation allows a more effective validation of the results through the use of different methods, but it mustn't be mistaken for mix methods research. Mix methods combines qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer the study, whilst research triangulation is (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021):

'(...) describes how the researcher makes use of all the multiple approaches in the study to extract the required information as well as critically analyzing findings, thus establishing validity and credibility.' (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021: 1).

Within research triangulation there are six ways to utilize it such as methodical triangulation, data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theoretical triangulation, environmental triangulation and multiple triangulation. However, for this dissertation, is relevant to consider multiple triangulation because it relies on two or more triangulation types (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021). Being them:

- Data triangulation, which is the use of different data sources in the study.
- Theoretical triangulation, that relies on several theories towards analyzing the contents.

³ According to Denzin (1970:310), cited in Alan Bryman's book, Triangulation '(...) refer to an approach that uses 'multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies', but the emphasis has tended to be on methods of investigation and sources of data.' (Bryman, 2012, p. 392).

Being them: cultural, dance, diplomacy, power, states, policy, and others. But if you look closely there are also other words that immediately caught my attention for the purpose of the study such as identity, values and national. Being able to connect them to a facet that dance may personify.

Doing a research project of this dimension is extremely challenging, hence it's more than natural to possibly encounter limitations, difficulties, or bias throughout the process. Some emerge right at the start, which helps us to better prepare for the topic and find the 'dos and don'ts'. But most adversities, I believe, will appear when doing the work during the different stages of the process, from the research question, literature review, research design to writing drafts. However, for my master's dissertation and considering the thematic, these are the main complications I consider probable to encounter:

- Dance may be an 'understudied' subject in correlated with diplomacy and public policies, so it was tough to find appropriate and opportune bibliography.
- On one hand, by establishing my case study in Portugal, it helped to narrow down the focus of analysis and thought to be more likely to have access to Portuguese documents and interviewees to conduct interviews. But, on the other hand, it was certainly hard to approach possible interviewees nor I found the correspondent people to my search and encounter more official diplomatic or political sources.
- Considering some lack of information on dance as a soft power tool in cultural diplomacy and, even more, specific to Portugal, it was extremely challenging to find the reliable and interesting documents to answer to my research question.
- Other difficulties were confronted but were effectively tackled with time and dedication.

On conclusive note, a master's dissertation constitutes a complex and extensive challenge where its structure and research design have a crucial role. Considering the urge to better perceive individual and social insights instead of statistical or numerical analysis, qualitative research is the most adequate approach. According to Alan Bryman, the methodology for qualitative research involves six main steps, beginning with the research question and selection of the relevant subjects to end with encountering answers and conclusions (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, the present research project intends to explore how dance can be a soft power tool in diplomacy, particularly in contemporary Portugal. And the key objectives include understanding the role of soft power in diplomacy, the relevance of dance as a soft power tool and recognizing the possible advantages and disadvantages of using dance in diplomatic contexts. Then, it is emphasized the importance of key concepts in establishing a research study and here it's integrated soft power, cultural diplomacy, and dance as well as perceiving how they may connect with each other. The data collection was made through articles, books, and documents, initially analyzed in MAXQDA to better organize and code information. However, some difficulties throughout

the study included finding relevant Portuguese sources and interview subjects as well as being an understudied topic. The chapter is concluded noting that triangulation of data and theory was essential for research findings validation on a broader level, to specify on Portugal's use of dance in diplomacy through institutions such as Ballet Gulbenkian, National Ballet Company, and others. Hence, I believe that the research design described in this chapter provides a solid framework to explore the role of dance as a multidimensional soft power tool in diplomatic and political contexts.

CHAPTER THREE

Case Study: Historical Examples & Contemporary Portugal

As stated previously, a case study is '*an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment*' (Flyvbjerg, 2011: 301). Hence, the present chapter intends to depict and explain thoroughly the panorama established on the previous chapters on dance as soft power tool for cultural diplomacy specifically in contemporary Portugal. However, since a case study relies on 'developmental factors', I thought it would be crucial for the analysis to not only include developments through time but also geographical. Therefore, initially providing an historical contextualization about how dance has been utilized as a soft power tool in the world dynamics from a recent past to more present times, providing some exemplifications. And then, emerging on analysing Portugal by first, once again, clarify frame context to cultural diplomacy in Portugal and outline the three considered emblematic dance institutions in Portugal: Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio (terminated in 1977), Ballet Gulbenkian (which nowadays ceased to exist as a ballet institution) and The National Ballet Company. Yet, in order to enable a more reliable and consistent answer to the research question, offer some examples through the metadata interviews and information but not exclusively.

3.1 History & the World, '*Developmental factors*'

As mentioned, during different time periods and around the world, dance has shown to be an important tool used by individuals, governments, or elites towards achieving significant purposes and change or coarse the discourse of some policies (Gonçalves, 2019). Dance has the ability to promote communication and establish bridges of understanding disparities between the different international actors. However, Russia was a core character into enabling this diplomatic and political dimension to ballet. Since Russia has shared a legacy for ballet in foreign policy present in their cultural interactions with European countries - essentially France and Italy, but others as well (Slovakenko & Velikaya, 2021).

Ballet has been considered to be from and for elites, since it emerged in the Italian and French Courts as court entertainment and, as a consequence, associated with power and high class. Eventually, the ballet stopped being present in the French court as separation from the arts but the *Académie Royale of Danse and Musique* were established later on. France was a pioneer into spreading this art form as well as presenting the developments and changes influenced by epochs, from the 17th to the 19th century as romanticism, baroque, and others. However, despite it being disassociated and not present as court entertainment, it still was something with more elitist and exclusive access. But in the 1900s the center of ballet activity slowly moved to St. Petersburg in Russia and facilitated the creation of diversified, iconic, and timeless repertoire that are still relevant today. Not only from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, and Nutcracker but also La Bayadere and Raymonda with Marius Petipa, a French

Russian dancer and choreographer (Guest, Kant et al, 2024). During this time, the Soviets helped to popularize this art even more, by having it available in common places for the masses at cheap prizes, from the 1950s (Gonçalves, 2019). So, considering the Russian application of dance, it changed from being exclusively a 'track one' instrument of diplomacy to a more common practice among different society characters. Coming to evolve through time to achieve a very important and prominent role in diplomacy that enabled a new field: dance diplomacy. It is a very powerful non-verbal soft power tool integrated in cultural diplomacy that can be used alternatively to traditional means of diplomacy (Martinez, 2020). However, considered by academics, the turning point for dance diplomacy was during the Cold War. Since dance does not depend on language, it became a highly used cultural exchange mechanism that multiple international audiences understood. And it can transmit cultural values, unique messages, and occasional propaganda (Williamson, 2022).

The Cold War was a period of immense tension between the Western and Soviet blocs, that was sensed all over the world. Both superpowers tried, through a variety of acts, to influence some kind of aggregation or support towards one of the polar sides. Therefore, one of the different methods used by the soviets or the Americans as propaganda for their ideology was dance, thus ballet was started to be considered a powerful cultural and diplomatic tool (Giurchescu, 2001). Art in general was usually a source of tension and disagreement but dancers and choreographers had the possibility to perform freely. In a way, dancers had a unique cultural exchange platform that impacted diplomacy during Cold War – dance companies were able to perform on 'enemy territory' in representation of their own government and their interests. In addition, besides the current tension environment, the world had been not only through two World Wars but also was facing continuous and immense change due to globalization and modernism. Therefore, as characterized by Sebreana Williamson, it was a period of artistic innovation where artistic diversity for cultural context was exponentially rising and eventually was bounded with political movements and messaging (Williamson, 2022). 'The arts represented political ideology (...)' (Williamson, 2022) and some were perceiving as constituted threats, such as jazz and rock n roll music that were banned by the Soviet Union. But, despite the international tension that dance might also provoke, it was not banned nor prohibited but was actually 'exported' quite freely – and naturally became an adversarial tool for both (Williamson, 2022).

A very interesting example is the visit of the Bolshoi Ballet to London almost 70 years ago that became known as 'The first Soviet Invasion' considering all the drama that surrounded the soviet ballet troupe's first visit to the west. The Bolshoi's Russian Ballet is internationally known for its immense dance quality and professionalism since it's perceived as an icon in the ballet world. However, their connection to the government is generally notorious since it is a state-sponsored academy and, during the Soviet period, it was kind of a political convention center while a significant part of the seats belonged to party (Saxon, 2016). In September 1956, Bolshoi Ballet arrived in London for their first tour, and it was historic

sui generis moment, like the soviets were “raging London”, as Stéphanie characterized. Despite all the anti-communist propaganda, this tour ended up being an unprecedented success that enthused everyone, since there were queues to buy tickets for days. However, it ended up abruptly, before expected, and the dancers returned to the USSR just a few hours before Russian tanks invaded Budapest (Gonçalves, 2019). These all started months earlier, in May 1956, with a visit to London by Bulganin and Khrushchev with the purpose of reopening and reestablishing the British-Soviet diplomacy. Some intense diplomatic negotiations led to the Bolshoi Ballet’s tour, thus being a step forward into inducing the relations. In a way, this tour was perceived as a two-way exchange where the ballet would perform in London in October of 1956 and the Sadler’s Wells Ballet would tour in Moscow after, in the same year. This was the typical form of negotiating during the Cold War, relying on the reciprocity principle for each part. The author Stéphanie Gonçalves affirms that this also had the intuition to state internationally that the Iron Curtain wasn’t as strict when art was involved. Ballet was interpreted, in a sense, as soft power weapon since the dancers constitute something real and tangible that may be overlooked as Soviet propaganda for their educational model or mastery of traditional ballet repertoire. A British dancer and choreographer even affirmed that it would be a privilege for the Western to see the Bolshoi at Covent Garden. However, this ballet exchange was supposed to happen a few years before in 1944 for the reopening of Covent Garden but the USSR Arts Committee declined the invitation due to increasing East-West tensions, nonetheless the British-Soviet relation was never ruptured or broken (Gonçalves, 2019).



Figure 4 - Galina Ulanova, the Bolshoi's prima ballerina, warms up at the BBC's Riverside studios before going in front of the TV cameras in 'Swan Lake' ⁴

⁴ Image from BBC's report on the Bolshoi's visit utilized by the Financial Times to characterize the 'Bolshoi's invasion'. Retrieved from <https://www.ft.com/content/e7335f00-36fd-11e6-9a05-82a9b15a8ee7>

Through meetings and press conferences with the Bolshoi dancers from the tour, the West met Soviets with a human face which was to perceive them as not only the “(...) frail ballerina(s) in her fluffy tutu”, as portrayed in figure 4, but also differently from the supposed antagonists and were actually seen as master’s to this refined art. Therefore, this encounter was highly political, seen as an official bilateral diplomatic exchange between USSR and the United Kingdom. When the Soviet embassy accepted the invitation for the ballet tour, they proposed to choose performances from all the classics: Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, Giselle, Coppélia, Don Quixote and Romeo and Juliet. The negotiations for the tour involved several parts as Royal Opera House, British Council, the new Soviet Relations Committee and the British Embassy in Moscow and Soviet Embassy in Moscow. They were all in constant contact with the Moscow authorities as well as Ministry of Culture. Lastly, the performance details were defined and the agreement between the Royal Opera House and the Soviet government determined the start of the tour by summer/autumn 1956 and had the duration of four weeks (Gonçalves, 2019). This was the perfect opportunity to communicate and image-building for the Soviet bloc, hence the foreign office accompanied every move. As they didn’t want the occurrence of any minor problems or something plausible of criticism or, even, unwanted politics. During the tour, four repertoires that reflected soviet history were performed, with two classics (Swan Lake, a classic Tchaikovsky, and Giselle) and also *dramballets* Romeo and Juliet and Fountain of *Bakhchisarai*. But the latter two envisioned a more polemic narrative, thus it was a typical Soviet style in 1930s/50s. The *dramballets* Romeo and Juliet was a re-enactment of the Shakespeare’s play and The Fountain of *Bakhchisarai* was based on a poem but both integrated perfectly the virtuous dancing with the dramatic expression (hence, *dramballets*), as critics affirm. The tour was a popular triumph, as it was described by some as “a total renewal of the perception of ballet”, and it was on the world’s popular eye due to the immense media coverage. Yet, it was broadcasted on BBC and watched by 9.5 million spectators (Gonçalves, 2019). Therefore, despite the huge cultural success for the Bolshoi Ballet, this wasn’t surely the only purpose, hence it was actually a way for USSR display propaganda. When the tour flew off, soviet tanks entered Budapest, explained the abrupt ending and leaving the night before the story broke in world’s press. The Sadler Well’s Ballet was supposed to arrive in Moscow briefly after the Bolshoi tour, but that was cautiously terminated due to the Hungarian crisis. And the canceling of the following Russian tour was a symbolic and political failure, along the statement that the monopoly of talent was not possessed by Bolshoi, despite what they’ve tried to make believe through the tour (Gonçalves, 2019).

Later, by Cold War studies, ballet was considered a veritable diplomatic tool, that expanded beyond the cultural turn – “dancing diplomacy” (Gonçalves, 2019). And, during the Cold War, whenever one of the blocs elaborated any kind of strategy or actual action, the other would most likely respond in a very similar way. Therefore, some years later, dance was used as a political and diplomatic tool once again by the western when Martha Graham Dance Company arrived in Finland. As a brief contrast, the

Martha Graham Company was used similarly to the Bolshoi's Ballet. The Martha Graham Dance Company is also a widely known American dance school in the evolving art form of modern dance, Martha's legacy actually altered the course of modern dance with future thinking and innovation, perceivable in figure 5 from a repertoire titled 'Night Journey' that was inspired to make the woman's experience central. The tour intended to introduce a new American modern dance style and share cultural dynamics, whilst a way to encourage their diplomatic relation. They added the cultural element to the United States diplomacy since it was perceived as another political tool. This exchange was received with enthusiasm and, several months later, modern dance gained immense popularity in Finland. Just as the Bolshoi's tour, the arrival of Martha Graham in Finland intended to influence and display western propaganda. Therefore, it was a visit motivated by cultural and political purposes. Finland, as it has been historically factual, has always tried to display a neutrality position throughout international conflicts, and the Cold War was not different. Yet, this exchange was a rather symbolic and a determining way to try to consolidate their diplomatic relation, to detriment Finland's relations with USSR. Hence, the United States (US) tried to influence or gain positive support of the neutral Finland. Probably the US thought was based on if Finland were to choose to cease their neutrality position, they would recall the diplomatic relations that were established. In the early 60s, Finland's international relations, as other several countries, were strongly influenced and impacted by political tensions between the US and USSR (Korppi- Tammola, 2010).

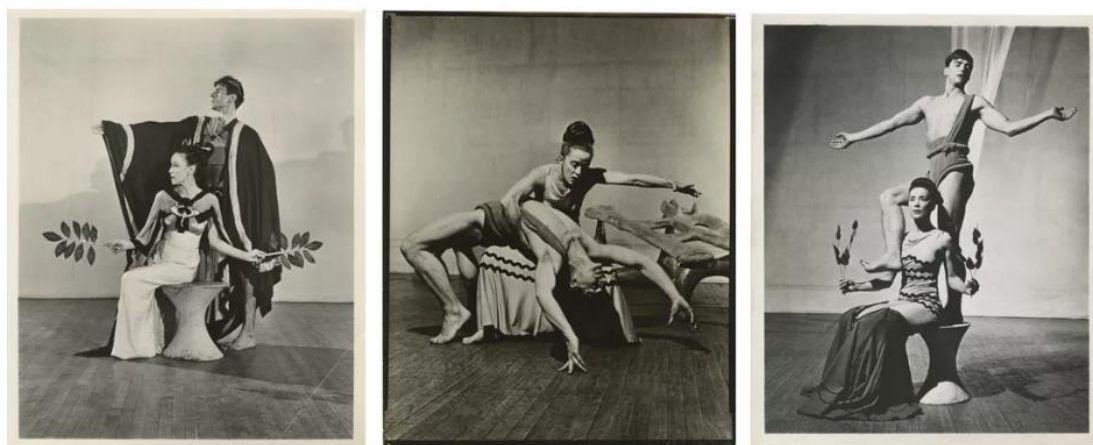


Figure 5 – Martha Graham in Night Journey 1947⁵

⁵ Pictures from Martha Graham Dance Company from Night Journey, a modern dance repertoire by Martha, where she duets with Bertram Ross and Erick Hawkins. Retrieved from <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-rare-photos-of-martha-graham-reveal-the-unique-legacy-of-the-world-s-most-famous-modern-dancer>

During the same time period, the focus and attention to dance in international diplomacy rose around the world, even beyond the two superpowers – USA and USSR. More countries around the world were using dance as a soft power tool in diplomacy and another example is People's Republic of China. It was very vitally crucial for PRC to establish diplomatic relations with other Asian countries during the 1950s-60s, after the Civil War that ended with the victory of the communist party. It was difficult for the Republic to absolve international recognition as a nation considering being a communist party-led country. And even lead to the United States blocking the PRC admission to the United Nations by imposing trade embargo and nuclear threats. In addition, as an anti-communist agenda, USA tried to strengthen the diplomatic and politic relations with some China's neighbor countries as Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, Pakistan and others. Considering this isolation efforts made by America, the emergence to create and establish new strategic allies was growing exponentially. Therefore, in addition to other policies, PRC used dance as a diplomatic tool to build relations based on cultural and political grounds with newly independent nations as India, Indonesia, and Burma. So, the Chinese foreign ministries decided to develop alongside with dancers for cultural exchange with these countries, where the main purpose was 'learn from' the other communities as well as show cooperation and mutual respect, as kind of an anti-imperialist ideal. In other words, performances sought to reflect foreign culture dance forms as Chinese dancer embodied these costumes that started in India with a six-week tour. This tour not only included cultural events and the sharing of Chinese dance repertoires as *Lotus Dance*, present in figure 6 below, but also learning the visiting countries' costumes and cultural dynamics (Wilcox, 2017).



Figure 6 – *Lotus Dance performed by Chinese Cultural Delegation in 1954 in India*⁶

⁶ Image of the Chinese Cultural Delegation performing Lotus Dance present in Emily Wilcox's 'Performing Bandung: China's Dance Diplomacy with India, Indonesia, and Burma, 1953-1962'. Retrieved from

Despite the Cold War being considered the turning point for dance diplomacy, it is still a recurrent a soft power tool in contemporary cultural diplomacy. Considering that we are inserted in an international dynamic that is highly connected and dependable, consequently to globalization (Williamson, 2022). In this post-Cold War era, dance diplomacy shifts to more 'track three' diplomacy, people-to-people, as non-state actors can use dance to give a political message, raise awareness, denounce injustices, or contribute to peacebuilding (Martínez, 2020). Therefore, dance remains extremely relevant as a diplomacy tool for evident reasons exposed earlier such as (Giurchescu, 2001):

- Being a universal language that transcends barriers and is comprehended and appreciated by different cultures despite their languages or other disparities;
- Being a proper mechanism for cultural exchange as well as demarking cultural identity considering that reflects and showcases a nations' costumes;
- Also, ensures interactions and connections that rely on common grounds, empathy and respect for others, which more likely will implode engagement between nations.

It is highly perceivable around the world but the following contemporary examples that I decided to highlight are in Europe and America, mainly to provide a general idea. The European Union actively shares its concern around cultural matters by setting agendas for culture and develop policies to protect and encourage cultural programs. The mission to promote Europe's diverse culture in its international relations is of great importance, considering it integrates the three mains objective of the European Agenda for Culture. And this mission was recently renewed in 2018. Across the member states, EU intends to establish proper cultural institutes and organization that serve as vehicles of sharing culture strategically. For example, in 2021 it was created the Creative Europe Programme which, through its large investments, intends to reinforce cultural diversity and respond to cultural challenges and necessities. The main purposes are to safeguard and promote European cultural diversity and heritage and increase the potential of the cultural sectors. This program has three strands and dance is included in the culture strand, as well as other art sectors (European Council, 2024). And, as mentioned, the European Agenda for Culture also establishes the cultural goals for Europe and plans missions to engage with different communities. EU plans a series of dance, but note exclusively, performances that will take place around member-states and outside the community to share Europe's cultural diversity and the variety of costumes it embraces. For example, *Le Monde en Scène* in 2005 was an ongoing dance project around Brussels that integrated around 250 artists from all over the world (Africa, Asia, South America, Europe, Balkans, etc) to share artistic dance practices and music from different countries and

<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/eewilcox/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2018/12/Wilcox-IACS-Performing-Bandung-China-s-dance-diplomacy-with-India-Indonesia-and-Burma-1953-1962.pdf>

promote intercultural meetings. Or projects that intended to develop the intercultural competences through cultural interactions as the Portuguese *Teatro Ibisco* that supported local migrant communities by providing dance training (European Agenda for Culture, 2014). In addition, there is the European Dance Network that was established in 2009 with the intent to create a place to meet and discuss new ways of cooperating for the promotion of dance (and mobility for dancers) in Europe. In this network were initially present seven dance houses from France, Norway, Sweden, Ireland, Deutschland, Austria, and United Kingdom but it eventually expanded throughout Europe and since then, EDN has been able to develop more dance projects as the Modul-dance project. Throughout time, EDN intends to focus on reinforce sustainability and relevance of dance along with cooperation projects (EDN, 2024).

As more of a track three example, during Covid-19, the American ballet dancer Misty Copeland, from the American Ballet Theater, gathered around 30 dancers from 14 different countries to launch #SwansForRelief to help raise funds to help ballet dancers around the world for the challenges during this uncertain time (Martínez, 2020). Another example, Dana Tai Soon Burgess is a widely known American choreographer and dancer that is seen as the 'diplomat of dance' and has founded a dance company for modern dance in 1992 in Washington D.C. He has served as a Cultural Ambassador for the United States State Department for over two decades and promotes the utilization of dance as propelling language for cultural dialogue. His artistic work explores dance as an 'cultural confluence' considering his mixed ethnic heritage for cultural acceptance, integration, and respect (The Kennedy Center, 2024). Considering America resorts more frequently to dance diplomacy, a recent initiative in USA was founded in 2006 with the New York City dance community with official political sponsors as Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and Department of State. The 'Dancing to Connect' intends to bring youth people together from both sides into engaging and bond through dance to tackle a variety of issues from exclusion/inclusion, conflict resolution/prevention, empower the less advantaged or people with disabilities and refugee integration. It has operated in several countries across the world for a wide variety of problematics, from Germany (Refugee Integration, 2016-2020), Romania (Down Syndrome, 2013), India (Human sex-trafficking, 2014), Dominican Republic (At risk youth, 2016), North Ireland (Protestants and Catholics conflict in Belfast, 2014) and France (Muslim immigrants and native French youth, 2014) or other (Battery Dance, 2024). There is also the International Dance Day established by the United Nations for the 29th of April as an homage to Jean-George Noverre, considered the creator of modern ballet. These impulses the celebration of this art around the world as well as recognizing its capabilities across political, cultural, and ethnic barriers as a universal language that dance is (International Dance Day, 2024).

“Cultural heritage and the arts are resources for marshalling attention to urgent concerns, addressing conflicts, reconciling former enemies, resisting authoritarian regimes, memorializing the past, and imagining and giving substance to a better future” (Martínez, 2020).

These are only a few examples that purely evidence that dance, especially ballet, is and has been used as more than a culturally based entity with cultural purposes around the world. It has been a long-time practice that became more evident with the Cold war, which enabled the stabilization of the ‘dancing diplomacy’ in Cold War, International Relations, and diplomatic studies. The Cold War turned out to be an ‘exotic battleground’ (Spencer, 2021) or, in another words, a *sui generis* war because it played out more in an ideological and moral field rather than armed fire conflict as World War I and II. However, this encouraged and got the world acquainted with this field in cultural diplomacy that still remains relevant to this day.

3.2. Portugal

Considering the general panorama provided by the historical development base in the previous topic, it is perceivable that the turning point to dance diplomacy is highly rooted to the Cold War era. However, it became a rather present soft power tool in cultural diplomacy around the contemporary world, hence this 'dance diplomacy wave' influenced the world's policy making and foreign affairs and Portugal couldn't be different. Portugal is considered to be the oldest nation in Europe, where dance did not have a very different emergent story from the other countries. But it is an important organism for the Portuguese culture and its presence dates to the 17th and 18th century. However, it densely started to detain a relevant significance and be looked upon around 1900s due to the visit of the '*Ballet Russes*' (Laginha, 2021).

a. From *Ballet Russes* to *Companhia Nacional de Bailado*

In 1917, Russia was experiencing a very tumultuous social and political moment that enabled a new reflection on their artistic and cultural life. These alterations were when the centre for ballet activity slowly changed to St. Petersburg that turned out to be the turning point for dance's role in the 20th century marked by '*Ballet Russes*', Imperial School and *Mariinsky* Theatre that formed successful dancers. They managed to convert ballet into a Russian art for excellence by achieving French technic, Italian virtuosity and adding national richness. Later, the best dancers were selected to perform on tour around the world, that would take '*Ballet Russes*' to a new international level. After touring some European cities, they eventually ended staying for longer periods of time by making these cities their 'European residences' such as Paris, London and Monte Carlo but also Lisbon (Castro, 2017).

"The great victory of the 'Ballet Russes' was to transform the disunited states of art into a great empire." (Castro, 2017: 37)

In cultural and artistic terms, Portugal had a very different and perhaps distant reality from the rest of Europe, considering that most of the artistic movements arrived later on. However, some of the vanguard movements started to be felt in Lisbon through groups of artists that formed two cultural magazines, *Orpheu* and *Portugal Futurista*. Both corresponded to significant importance in Portuguese cultural developments marks, where a character stood out in dance, Almada Negreiros. The interest in dance and the *Ballet Russes* was influenced by reports from Paris and Berlin as well as international

⁷ Free translation from an António Ferro quote on Maria João Catro's book "*Os Ballet Russes em Lisboa*" - "A grande vitória dos Bailados Russos foi a de transformar os estados desunidos da arte num grande império." (Castro, 2017: 37).

critiques and even resulted in a manifesto written in Portugal Futurista – ‘*Os Bailados Russes em Lisboa*’. And according to Almada, Diaghilev’s troupe was one of the most beautiful stages on European’s modern civilization. And in 1917 the Russian ballet from Serge Diaghilev arrived in Lisbon and it was enthusiastically communicated on Portuguese newspapers alongside with daily war news, ally actions and war developments and the Portuguese poor living conditions. In the figure 7 there some scraps from the announcement of the ‘*Ballet Russes*’ visit in Lisbon press, which is considered ‘the most complete world innovation’ and ‘performance of the most supreme art’. But the Portuguese excitement was noticed considering the high demand for tickets (Castro, 2017).



Figure 7 – Announcement scraps from Lisbon press retrieved from Maria João Castro’s book ‘*Os Ballets Russes em Lisboa*’

This visit turned out to be very influential and successful due not only to its artistic and ballet innovation but also because of the pioneering way to manage cultural means. And the 20th century proved to be demarked by dance since this art form has never been so widely communicated and appreciated and never had that many interpreters and creators before (Laginha, 2014). Later, highly inspired by the BR, a professional dance company was created by António Ferro as a new socio-cultural project and a very interesting example of dance as soft power for cultural diplomacy actually. It was known as Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio and it was established by the National Propaganda Secretariat from the Estado Novo, the Portuguese fascist regime. The strategy for the BVG was to relaunch Portugal by defining its artistic nature that projected the Portuguese costumes and society.

Antonio Ferro envisages modern Portuguese fascism and searches to represent the audacious and aggressive notes of the society as well as its rural side – the mixture of the modern aesthetic and the conservative folklore. Therefore, the National Propaganda Secretariat intended to promote this ideal Portuguese national identity – ‘*povo lusitano*’ - characterized by being a small country that shares greatness but was eminently rural. In a time of war and uncertainty, this Portuguese group debuts in 1940 in Teatro Trindade and is described by a representation of colour and life as dance remains an art to express joyful times. Therefore, inspired by the artistic and political revolution of the BR, Antonio Ferro similarly aimed to create a company that shared national roots through art. The choreographies were inspired by different historical periods and concepts from mystic-nationalist histories, middle age, the discoveries and maritime exploration, popular myths and optimist conservative and traditionalist costumes from Estado Novo. The Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio was a nationalist organ aligned with the regime’s ideals and intended to showcase a ‘greater’ Portugal to the world, to counter the idea of poverty, uneducated and ‘simplistic’ Portugal. So, it is understandable, considering the conceptualizations and explanations provided a priori, that this company constituted a cultural diplomacy tool to export Portuguese costumes and culture to the world, managed by the government. Yet, this was a project that started in 1940 and officially ceased in 1977 but had an immense decay from the 1950s with the absence of Francis Graça (Roubaud, 2013). However, it is considered to be a very relevant showcase of dance as cultural diplomacy in Portugal. The figure below is retrieved from the debut of the Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio in Rio de Janeiro, that exemplifies the tour intended for the company as a projection of the Portuguese culture to other countries and establish relations.



Figure 8 – Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio in 1965 debuting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil shared by RTP press⁸

⁸ RTP, Portuguese tv channel, shared the debut of the Portuguese dance company in Brazil in 1965. Retrieved from <https://arquivos.rtp.pt/conteudos/espetaculo-do-grupo-de-bailados-portugueses-verde-gaio/>

Some years later, a new project appeared called Ballet Gulbenkian, which was created by 9 ex-dancers from BVG and sponsored by the iconic Portuguese art foundation – Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. It was a private repertoire company with a more international purpose, considering its link to CGF (Guerreiro, 2017). Ballet Gulbenkian was firstly founded in 1965 as Gulbenkian Ballet Group with the artistic direction of Walter Gore, a British choreographer which established his renown in dance. Ballet Gulbenkian turned out to be considered the Portuguese dance company with utmost prestige, national and internationally. This notably impacted how dance was viewed, perceived, and managed in Portugal and it became a reference, especially due to being contemporary and eclectic. But, throughout time, the national dance community passed a period of some alterations and change in the artistic directions that were directly reflected in the company (Laginha, 2014). The foundation had a crucial role in dance since its purpose to support creativity and artistic creation through providing scholarships to form dancers abroad and support ballet schools and companies with ateliers, master classes or visiting teachers. Very importantly, also supported international ballet tours for Portuguese companies (Lusa, 2005).

The National Ballet Company of Portugal was instituted in 1977, after the extinguish of the *‘Grupo de Bailados Portugueses Verde Gaio’*, which similarly was created by the Portuguese state, but in a new and recent democratic context. In a certain way, some adjustments and modifications were made according to new political and social context, which was highly required for the development of dance. Therefore, it was created, financed, and implemented by governmental means as result of cultural policies that aimed to protect and project ballet not only as universal patrimony but also Portuguese. In other words, the maintenance of the BVG objectives, but adapted to current reality, its perceivable as well as its connection to cultural diplomacy (Guerreiro, 2017).

“The ownership of a national company also came to mean, as is natural and follows from the founding mission, that the repertoire commissioned from local artists took as priority themes and characters linked to Portuguese history, mythology and cultural identity”⁹ (Guerreiro, 2017: 21)

It is comprehensible that a national company would represent its nation as an organism that reflects its heritage, costumes and identity characteristics. Even so, that it has the responsibility to

⁹ Free translation from a Mónica Guerreiro quote on “A Companhia Nacional de Bailado”: “A titularidade de companhia nacional também veio a significar, como é natural e decorre da missão instituidora, que o reportório encomendado a artistas locais tomasse como prioritárias temáticas e personagens ligadas à história, à mitologia e à identidade cultural portuguesa” (Guerreiro, 2017: 21).

transmit and share Portugal to the world, through dance. The CNB had several purposes and goals defined that allowed to consider the Portuguese heritages as well as being attentive to the present and emergent cultural dynamics. It, most importantly, intends to (Guerreiro, 2017):

- Promote the ballet itself, even by promoting courses and seminars on ballet;
- Form properly new dancers, choreographers and technics by maintaining a training centre for professionalization;
- Actively produce new ballet yet prioritizing Portuguese patrimony of choreography and music.
- Enrich the Portuguese repertoire;
- Produce the most relevant ballet repertoire, classical or contemporary.

The first auditions rapidly start to form the company and it had mostly foreigners from Royal Ballet, Ballet Gulbenkian, and other collectives. A lot of dancers were provided by the French *Violette Quenolle* and the Basque *Pirmin Trecu* that had established schools in Portugal. Almost half a year later, CNB debuts in *Teatro Rivoli* (in Oporto), *Theatro Circo de Braga* and *Teatro Aveirense*. When CNB emerges, it has an official heritage 'stamp' as being a national company, however it didn't have the connections, means (funds, repertoires, dancers and others) and quality as the private company Ballet Gulbenkian had and relied on (Guerreiro, 2017). Since parallelly, the BG was continuing to grow internationally as a consequence to being modern, updated and well financed (Laginha, 2014). With that, BG was able to establish itself properly and be vastly recognized. However, the creation of CNB ended up being considered a victory and bend into the right path for a modern and democratic Portugal (Guerreiro, 2017). And eventually, BG stopped being a priority to the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation as the dance panorama in Portugal drastically changed. Several people, from artistic directors to dancers, considered this to be a very drastic decision that ceased the door for creation of Portuguese repertoire and lead to the immigration of several excellent performers and interprets. Despite the termination of BG, CGF intends to never deny help to the ballet constitution of this country. Nonetheless, the termination of the Ballet Gulbenkian was a great loss for dance culture in Portugal (Lusa, 2015).



Figure 9 – Ballet Gulbenkian performing, retrieved from RTP’s report to announce the beginning of the Ballet Gulbenkian tour in the North and Center of the country in 1977¹⁰

Nowadays, the National Ballet Company of Portugal is the most important organism for dance, despite the existence of other minor companies and schools for ballet. Its official status, connection to the government and importance for Portuguese ballet helps it remain relevant in cultural diplomacy.

b. Contemporary Dance Influence

As stated, throughout the process of establishing CNB, there were some difficulties and challenges encountered. Despite the fast pace in producing ballet for several seasons, they still did not have the same resources as the private company Ballet Gulbenkian. The best dancers and choreographers weren’t available and the public education directed for dances wasn’t yet developed and prepared to form new dancers or choreographers. But further investment along the years in the national ballet helped to establish and determine its future. And to tackle difficulties such as training resources and having good professionals in CNB, it was decided to start by altering and invest in proper education and training. Portugal already had a National Conservatory since 1839 but only in 1987 was established the School of Dance with a proper study plan and autonomy in order to provide for CNB a stable and growing cast in technical terms. Therefore, this constituted an incentive to invest in national training for dance. Yet, later in 1981, Armando Jorge created the training centre for CNB that successfully worked for 15 years. By creating and establishing these ‘schools’, they ended up dynamizing the dance culture in Portugal. Therefore, the contemporary situation is much more reassuring for dance due to the presence of numerous dance schools and the teaching of classical ballet throughout the

¹⁰ Image from the RTP’s report that shared a video of a small preview from Ballet Gulbenkian performance during the tour around Portugal. Retrieved from: <https://arquivos.rtp.pt/conteudos/grupo-de-bailado-da-fundacao-calouste-gulbenkian/>

country. Now there is also higher education's degrees available in national universities and polytechnic institutes to better form our artistic dancers, teachers, and choreographers. Which constitutes very important steps into developing the cultural and artistic dimension of Portugal. However, to integrate CNB is the 'official' and almost exclusive path to proceed as a professional ballet dancer and maintain contact with immense artistic resources as well as the possibility to represent the national repertoires (Guerreiro, 2017).

Nowadays, considering the almost 50 years of service, its success results from the safeguard and conservation of dance and artistic elements connected to performances over the years. And to better preserve these testimonies of dance, some countries in Europe as United Kingdom and France but also in New York in USA, it was decided to create museums to showcase some important artistic elements and other dance memorabilia as a cultural centre for the nation. In Portugal, it was created National Museum of Theatre that in 1982, influenced by CNB, started to feature dance costumes, posters, video, photography, and everything that help keep documented the Portuguese dance practices throughout time. Eventually, in 2015, the museum altered its name to National Museum of Theatre and Dance (Guerreiro, 2017). Therefore, the National Ballet of Portugal has a determinant role in integrating dance in Portuguese cultural diplomacy due to its capacity, interest, and ability to preserve, represent and showcase the national identity through dance. Despite affirming that dance is usually in a grey area between 'track one' and 'track two' in diplomatic efforts due to not usually being an official representative of the state, it isn't the case for CNB. Considering that CNB is an official government-oriented organization because of being a public company, state financed and aligned with national cultural diplomacy policies, it can be contemplated as an active 'track two' diplomacy effort.

"Excellent works that, on the one hand, give a vision of the transformations in the uses of the vocabulary of classical academic dance throughout the century, and, on the other, are the unequivocal testimony that the CNB has been able to outline an artistic project on the scale of the country and the functions of repertoire company"¹¹ (Guerreiro, 2017: 80).

¹¹ Free translation of something stated in 2001 by Maria José Fazenda that is cited in Mónica Guerriero's Book 'A Companhia Nacional de Bailado': "Excelentes obras que por um lado, dão uma visão das transformações dos usos do vocabulário da dança académica clássica ao longo do século, e, por outro, são o testemunho inequívoco de eu a CNB tem sabido traçar um projeto artístico à escala do país e das funções de uma companhia de reportório" (Guerreiro, 2017: 80).



Figure 10 – *Companhia Nacional de Bailado*, image from a repertoire presented by CNB.

In addition, CNB has been able to connect Portugal and the world through dance since the early tours, especially in 1998 after a restructuring period on CNB. The 'Lisbon Piece' was a repertoire created by a renown Belgian choreographer that helped Portugal reposition itself internationally, resulting from the singularity and extraordinary nature of the piece. And throughout time, CNB showcased numerous foreign ballet performance creations, but it didn't forget to consider the national choreographic and dance patrimony. The company, since its establishment, tried to remain the place that supports and incentives Portuguese repertoire and creations, that usually rely on collective memory from what 'characterizes' Portugal. This was evident through three iconic performances from CNB that truly highlighted the Portuguese talent and richness: *Cantoluso* (1997), *Pedro e Inês* (2003) and *Perda Preciosa* (2012). These art pieces beautifully share Portuguese past history and mythology that is imperative to protect for national identity and it was CNB's intent, given the purpose of the company to prioritize Portuguese creators and enrich our repertoire (Guerreiro, 2017). More recently, Luísa Taveira affirms that the *Companhia Nacional de Bailado* needs to open its horizons and focus on programming appealing performances and highlights the importance to internationalize even more the company. CNB needs to be more present worldwide. It's very important to have a company that develops unique repertoire and CNB is able to do so alongside with some Portuguese iconic ballet dancers as Olga Roriz, Vasco Wellenkamp, Rui Lopes Graça, Benvindo Fonseca, Clara Andermatt and others. And in addition, CNB must be connected with more theatres throughout the country and be present on dance festivals (Costa, 2011). As well as the emergent necessity for Portugal to have well-structured state cultural policies that are investment oriented and prepared to dynamize dance (Fazenda, 2020).

Despite some lack of clear information and shortcoming study records on dance as a soft power tool for cultural diplomacy in Portugal, its perceivable to understand its 'hidden' presence. As mentioned, BVG, Ballet Gulbenkian and CNB had a clear connection and concern about diffusing the Portuguese identity through dance on the world. Despite their differences, all of these dance companies mainly intended to share a point of view and characterize the Portuguese culture and identity costumes, and often represented the nation doing it. The three were clear examples of how dance can be utilized to share an idea, identity, morals, or any message intended. For starters, BVG was a diffuse mechanism of the *Estado Novo* to contradict the misconception about Portugal as well as highlights our achievements,

characteristics and culture. And differently, BG and CNB had, as main objective, to share Portugal to the world through dance by making it to be notice and heard. Through performances, both companies intended to communicate the Portuguese culture, establish relations with other countries and dynamize international cooperation (Guerreiro, 2017). So, they were and still are clear cultural diplomacy mechanisms.

Yet, Portugal is also connected to the cultural initiatives from European Union, considering it is a state-member of the organization. Portugal often engages in cultural diplomacy policies through dance when collaborating with other state-members for joint performances or festivals to celebrate dance. For example, in 1991, Portugal had actively participated in Europalia'91 due to its availability to produce dance work for this international event. It was intended to represent Portuguese dance in an art festival Brussels, as an international event that promotes cultural cooperation (Fazenda, 2020). And obviously other initiatives in partnering with EU, as shared concerns and policies on cultural diplomacy mentioned in the 'international' examples earlier as a state-member. Additionally, Portugal also participates in cultural exchanges with other countries, where ballet is featured, that are more focused on bilateral or multilateral relations. For example, through Instituto Camões, a government-oriented institution that has the responsibility to execute cooperation policies and coordinate activities that promote Portuguese cooperation. This organization is one of our foreign policy pillars that focuses on promoting, (co)financing and executing several programs including cultural initiatives with other countries, especially the PALOP, Brazil, Spain or other important bilateral relations for Portugal. Therefore, it has dynamized dance and performing arts cultural exchange programs that intended strengthen these relations as well as promote the cultural heritage share (Camões, 2024).

These are some relevant examples of cultural diplomacy through dance in Portugal but, as stated, it's truly difficult to encounter a wider network of examples considering it to be quite an unstudied field. And, it has also been affirmed by Paulo Ribeiro (a dancer and choreographer) that that Portuguese diplomacy needs to invest and dedicate itself more to culture, as of now it still lacks on that concern (Carita, 2021). And I, personally, believe that culture, especially dance, is a quite fascinating field when correlated with diplomacy and how it is emergent to perceive it as such.

3.3. Conclusive Remarks

Cold War was in fact a turning point for the consideration and new analysis on dance as a soft power tool in cultural diplomacy, helping to establish communication and understanding among nations (Gonçalves, 2019). And with time, it became a vital mechanism for cultural exchange due to its ability to share messages and values that go beyond language barriers (Williamson, 2022). The examples were briefly explained to evidence that dance, especially ballet, is and has been used historically as a tool with more than cultural impact. Yet, displaying the two opposite sides of the use of ballet as a diplomatic tool

in the Cold War. Despite having the common interest of displaying their power through the same or similar mechanisms, they symbolize two opposite sides in history. During the Bolshoi Ballet tour in London, which was a huge artistic success, the Soviet Union had the possibility to re-establish their diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom whilst exhibiting their immense quality in ballet field. Or maybe it was even used as a deceiving mechanism for the Budapest invasion that happened at the end of the tour (Gonçalves, 2019). As for the Martha Graham Company visit in Finland, it had precisely the same objective but produced by the opposite side in the Cold War. The United States intended to establish and reinforce their diplomatic relations with Finland to possibly influence or, even, alter their neutrality historically stand position (Korppi-Tammola, 2010). And PRC also exemplifies how cultural means can serve as powerful soft power instruments since this approach not only empowered cultural exchange but also helped establish strategic alliances during a tumultuous period in IR (Wilcox, 2017). And moving towards more contemporary times, dance remains present in several initiatives. These international examples from USA and Europe provided a structured base to considered that dance transcends artistic expression by becoming an instrument to shape diplomatic narratives and foster cultural exchange. As well as point and highlight different interesting initiatives and policies that really impact our international dynamics (Gonçalves, 2019).

The evolution of dance diplomacy in Portugal can be also traced to the Cold War, especially from the early 20th century, but its roots have more antique history (Laginha, 2021). The '*Ballet Russes*' had significant impact on revolutionizing ballet and their visit in Lisbon ended up being a turning point into bringing ballet to the public consciousness and foster a dance community (Laginha 2014). As a result, the Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio was created under the Portuguese fascist regime and aimed to project a strong national identity through dance by celebrating Portuguese history and culture. The choreographies reflected a mixture of modern aesthetics with traditional folklore that served as a cultural diplomacy tool to re-establish Portugal's image internationally (Roubaud, 2013). Later, the private company Ballet Gulbenkian was founded to be another representative of dance in Portugal that aimed for a more international reach. It became a prestigious company known for its eclectic appearance, professionalism, and contemporary repertoire that further elevated Portugal's spotlight in the dance world. However, despite it being considered a major success, it eventually ceased in 2005 due to some difficulties and miss interests. Before this, the National Ballet Company of Portugal was instituted in 1977 as a result to the new democratic environment in Portugal, coming to 'replace' the BVG. Currently, CNB constitutes the foremost dance institution in Portugal, integral to the country's cultural diplomacy as a consequence of its official government status. It relevantly showcases Portugal's heritage through dance and helps maintaining its purpose in international cultural exchanges (Guerreiro, 2017).

Today, Portugal disposes different initiatives around dance diplomacy such as CNB, the National Museum of Theatre and Dance, *Instituto Camões* or the EU initiatives and partnerships that are interesting examples to analyse cultural diplomacy. Nonetheless, dance as a tool for cultural diplomacy in Portugal remains an underexplored field. And the various efforts taken by CNB, the institutional support and international collaborations illustrate the potential of dance to convey national identity and foster international relations.

CHAPTER FOUR

Intermediate Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to boarder the discussion about the relevance of dance as a soft power tool in cultural diplomacy, more specifically in Portugal by analysing the key concepts and some proper examples. The previous chapters provide a thorough base that enables the development of an answer according to the objectives of the study. As mentioned, the study started by establishing the conceptual and theoretical base through the literature review. Therefore, this was the fundamental start into the path for finding the answer to the research question. This ‘first base’ helps to comprehend the panorama by means of analysing thoroughly the key concepts and the already existent studies.

“Cultural exchange gives us the chance to appreciate points of commonality and, where there are differences, to understand motivations and humanity that underlines them. As identity politics exert an increasing influence on domestic and international exchanges, these attributes make culture critical forum for negotiation and a medium of exchange in dignifying shared solution. Cultural contact provides a forum for unofficial political relationship-building (...). In the future, alliances are just as likely to be forged along lines of cultural understanding as they are on economic or geographic ones (Odunze, 2021: 91)

Soft power is characterized for resorting to positive attraction, persuasion, agenda setting, morals and ideas in order to achieve the actor’s goals. And the examples explained throughout the dissertation help to perceive and understand that to an extent soft power does in fact impact foreign policies and international dynamics. Through its mechanisms, it enables the establishment of ties between nations and create a more cooperative and positive environment in IR (Trunkos, 2013). Considering that it relies on attraction and communication, it includes culture, values, and ideas, hence being able to create context for foreign policy making and demark the state’s identity. And since one of the three pillars of a state’s soft power is culture (and its values and policies), its discussion becomes more urgent and necessary to understand international diplomatic relations (Nye, 2009). As stated in the quote, cultural exchange has a very important role into appreciating the commonality and differences between nations as well as provide an alternative, sometimes unofficial, path for negotiation, mediation, and political exchange. In the concept of culture is integrated a variety of systems, values and symbols that mediate social interactions and can be perceived in cultural traditions as myths, literature, religious representation, and artistic forms. Hence, culture is a constant contributor into forming the existence of identity for a state (Odunze, 2021). In IR, the concept of culture is able to achieve a ‘new’ perspective as an instrument for diplomacy, policy making and negotiation. As a soft power tool, culture becomes a symbol to be used in foreign policy – cultural diplomacy (Sousa et al,

2022). And cultural exchange guides identity politics and impact domestic and international dynamics (Odunze, 2021). In a way, cultural diplomacy can enhance the 'soul' of a society by being an outlet to demark and characterize a state through beliefs, ideology, art, education, or other features. It tends to be crucial to create deeper level connections that are based on common grounds and 'personal' characteristics and is able to mobilize the international relations actors (Sousa et al, 2022). Hence, cultural diplomacy empowers new socio-political tools and expectation for diplomacy with dance, more importantly for the study but not exclusively. Dance is a multifaceted symbol that can exert complex meaning and messages in every performance, even when it's not obvious to perceived. It has immense cultural purpose by being a mean to share cultural characteristics, identities, and tradition but it can also be a socio-political tool with great efficacy and impact. Dance acquires a more complex character considering its capability for non-verbal communication as representing cultural norms, community values or intended messages (Odunze, 2021). Hence, I consider the clarification and proper explanation of the concepts of soft power, cultural diplomacy, and dance very crucial. By comprehending their significance and utility, it enables a better understanding of how they're all connected to the present study. Dance is a form of art that may serve different purposes from entertainment, cultural expression, and social interaction. It also has the ability to communicate emotions, ideas and narratives that transcend language – being a soft power tool given this interesting faculty. And it is obviously integrated in the several cultural mechanisms in available for cultural diplomacy.

Through providing the international examples that occurred throughout time, its intended not only to explain how dance has been used in cultural diplomacy but also to evidence that it is current practice. Effectively, the Cold War period was a turning point for dance diplomacy due to facing 'exotic battlegrounds' – a period demarked by the constant ideological struggle. And it made "(...) ballet feel more important, more international" (Spencer, 2021) for ideological and cultural exchanges. Throughout these years, dance has evolved along with the contemporary phenomena and it gained this alternative dimension that has been impacting international relations for some time. But the establishment of the concept 'dance diplomacy' in international studies was only plausible after it became a more evident practice during Cold War (Martínez, 2020). The first three Cold War examples from Bolshoi's visit to London, Graham Company's visit in Finland and China's proximity to the Bandung Conference are to evidently showcase this practice and to establish a proper connection to this time period. When several soft power means were 'prohibited', dance always maintained a free pass and was able to (re)establish diplomatic relations through its *sui generis* communication and cooperation ability. Nevertheless, the examples after are to make understandable that this practice was not something exclusive from that period but that actually remained present in diplomatic relations ever since. In a 'post-Cold War' era, dance diplomacy shifted in to more 'track three' diplomacy where dancers and/or individuals also can be 'diplomats' (Martínez, 2020). So, dance still is a highly pertinent

culturally based soft power tool in cultural diplomacy but emergently needs the world to be more acquainted with it and should not overlook.

Moving towards Portugal, it was rapidly perceived that for the analysis of the dance diplomacy reality it would make sense to briefly understand the history of dance in Portugal and its connections to foreign affairs through cultural diplomacy. In other words, to better depiction dance as soft power tool for cultural diplomacy in contemporary Portugal. Despite the presence of ballet in Portugal in early 17th and 18th century, their perception truly changed in 1900s with the visit of the '*Ballet Russes*'. It impacted immensely by the growing interest in this art form and modernist ideas in the international environment (Castro, 2017). The Portuguese landscape was distinctively different from other European nations and in urgent need for bridging those gaps. But the course of dance diplomacy in Portugal truly changes, I believe, when their main dance companies and groups were established, from BVG to Ballet Gulbenkian and CNB. Through them, Portugal was able to showcase its identity, establish connections, share cultural costumes and meaningfully cooperate with other nations, and consequently always adjusted to the eras lived and aspirations. Ballet Verde Gaio really illustrated how dance was utilized for cultural diplomacy during this period, considering it reflected the regimes' ideals. It projected a curated vision of the Portuguese identity that mixture of modernity and folklore/traditional Portuguese narratives to reflect cultural aspirations as a 'state-sponsored' group (Roubaud, 2013). Later, considering the reflection of times changing, the Ballet Gulbenkian appeared to move to a more internationally minded repertoire. The BG was a private founded and supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation that eventually became a very prestigious dance company due to its diverse and contemporary approach. Ballet Gulbenkian had a huge influence in what ballet constitutes today in Portugal, and how it is practiced as a profession. CGF always had a backing role in art development, but despite BG's termination in 2005, the foundation still displays a very important role into support the Portuguese artists development, dance or other art forms, by facilitating scholarships to invest in their education and career, create workshops and share culture in exhibitions (Laginha, 2014).

The emergence of the National Ballet Company of Portugal was a little troubled as a result to the lack of resources and connections compared to the already established and running Ballet Gulbenkian. The absence of skilled dancers and choreographers combined with the underdeveloped educational structure for dance were the main obstacles for CNB. However, considering it to be a 'state-sponsored' company, more investments in national dance were made in order to tackle these difficulties by recognizing the need for better training and formation. It was created the School of dance as a training centre for dancers and choreographers as well as establish higher education degrees in dance available in universities and polytechnic institutes. Further investments were made to demark and preserve dance's legacy and importance for Portuguese culture as nation's dance heritage – through the establishment of the National Museum of Theatre and Dance in Portugal as resemblance of what

other European countries were doing. Eventually, throughout time and improvement, CNB positioned itself as a significant domestic and foreign diplomatic player as a result to state's support and CNB's alignment with national cultural policies. Therefore, it may even constitute a 'track two' diplomacy effort considering the connection with the Portuguese government as well as its role in representing Portugal's identity and cultural exchanges through dance. As perceived by the company's efforts in integrating national choreographic heritage combined with showcasing important international works to balance the cultural approach and reinforce national identity while fostering global connections (Guerreiro, 2017).

The few examples exposed are to evidence Portugal's more recent cultural initiatives that promote more cooperation, dynamize international relations and diplomatic representation. However, I believe that more investment is still required in order to fully harness the potential for art in cultural diplomacy. Despite CNB's and other entities' efforts, it's important to strategically plan and allocate resources in dance to lead to a more relevant presence in cultural landscape for representation in a nation's diplomatic relations. As António Laginha describes, dance has been shamefully considered to be a 'subtopic' or 'sub-chapter' in Portuguese culture and studies – it is often forgotten. Therefore, not only is there a deficiency in supporting cultural initiatives relying on dance but also it generates a lack of extensive research on dance as a tool for cultural diplomacy.

Conclusion

Once again, the present dissertation intended to understand dance as soft power tool in cultural diplomacy and elaborate a structure that enabled the encounter of: how, when, why and is it efficient - for dance diplomacy (in Portugal). As a starting point into achieving the purpose of the study, the key concepts were established and thoroughly analysed to better understand how dance can be a powerful soft power tool in cultural diplomacy. Across this analysis, I was able to conceptualize soft power, cultural diplomacy and dance as well as perceive their connections. Afterwards, the deeply establish the when and why by depicting and explaining the international panorama on dance as a soft power tool for cultural diplomacy through historical context and examples – since the Cold War period to more contemporary practices, that are geographical heterogeneous. Following with the Portuguese outline, the case study of this dissertation, by first contextualizing the emergence of dance's general practice as well as its connection to cultural diplomacy from earlier time. Moreover, adding some rich examples of Portugal's dance diplomacy from historical to contemporary dynamics to substantiate its contemporary relevance. In order to, after this, being able to effectively answer the concern of dance's efficiency and relevance in cultural diplomacy.

Thereby, here I state the main conclusion of this dissertation: dance shouldn't be overlooked because it is undoubtably contemporarily relevant for the international relations as a soft power tool in cultural diplomacy.

Dance is a complex form of art that has the power to produce a wide variety of meanings in each performance and, as a consequence, capture any objective intended and impact societies. It is a multidimensional and holistic tool, as characterized by Anca Giurchescu, since it can variate the type of content delivered, from only cultural or traditional to political-ideological, educational, religious or, even, economic. Due to dance's complexity and way to produce a message, it started to be used as a social-political tool whilst turning out to be extremely successful and effective (Giurchescu, 2001). Dance then becomes a powerful icon thus it can not only implode change, but also be the instrument for it – ballet as soft power. And despite the historical relevance of this art form, I rapidly perceived that the Cold War period was a vital turning point for the analysis (Gonçalves, 2019).

“Dance and politics intertwine, with all the shocks and strain of political events. Beyond Cold War's State-to-State relationships, the dancers proved to be true cultural and political ambassadors.” (Gonçalves, 2019: 173).

Dance diplomacy was more formally established during this period and the vital changes that enabled it were a shift of the diplomatic efforts. This means, in the earlier stages of its existence, dance was made by and for the elites, being considered more of a 'track one' diplomacy effort – formal and

official track that was mainly coordinated by diplomats, high-level politicians and military leaders. But during the Cold War, dance started to be also available for more actors as a 'track two' and even 'track three' diplomacy efforts. This alteration was what provided the spotlight to dance in cultural diplomacy as well as its undoubtable powerful capability for soft power and alternative conduction in international relations (Martínez, 2020). The further examples were very explicative of the practice and it helped understand the relevance of alternative diplomatic mechanisms during the Cold War, and eventually any time. When some international ties need reinforcing, dance can inarguably reaffirm its position in political and diplomatic environments.

As for Portugal's testimony, dance diplomacy has a complex legacy that is rooted in historical developments beyond Cold War. However, through my extensive analysis on dance in this country, the Portuguese turning point was with a doubt the visit of the '*Ballet Russes*' in 1900s. This tour, that was going around European countries, highly impacted the perception of the dance's position as the societies developed – public consciousness and a foster dance (Laginha, 2014). In Portugal, this revolutionary visit of the BR, resulted in the establishment of the Portuguese Ballet Group Verde Gaio under the influence of the Portuguese fascist regime that aimed to transmit the strong national identity through celebration of Portuguese history and culture. As mentioned, it was highly demarked by the traditional folklore, but a mixture of contemporary practices was present into demarking Portugal's image in the international arena (Roubaud, 2013). Around two decades later, a private dance company was founded through the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – Ballet Gulbenkian, firstly known as Experimental Ballet Group. The company was able to emphasize the Portuguese professionalism and eclectic performances in a more international ambience, becoming a very prestigious institution. Eventually, as a consequence to a variety of factors, the BG company ceased to exist in 2005, remaining only the National Ballet of Portugal.

The CNB emerged in 1977 as a result to the end of the fascist regime in Portugal and the establishment of a new democratic environment – coming to replace BVG. CNB is state oriented and is the current foremost dance institution in Portugal, integral to the country's cultural diplomacy but it had a rather unstable and fruitless start. Throughout time and investment, CNB has gained more prestige as well as demark it's positioning as an instrument to showcase Portugal's heritage and its stand in international cultural exchanges through dance (Guerreiro, 2017). Not forgetting the continuous influence for investments made in dance education and formation as a determinant objective, CNB also helps to execute cultural diplomacy policies aligned with the state. That is perceivable on the examples provided of the contemporary cultural diplomacy initiatives present in Portugal that rely on dance as CNB, the National Museum of Theatre and Dance, Instituto Camões or other EU programs that revolve around culture promotion. Yet, despite the acknowledgment of the potential and relevance of dance as a tool for cultural diplomacy, even its preceding practice in Portugal, dance diplomacy still remains an

unstudied and unexplored domain. Which strengthen one of my difficulties in encountering more extensive examples of the practice as well as official records of it from the diverse official organisms – from ministries to cultural entities to even independent actors. As stated by some Portuguese dancer and choreographers, Portugal should redirect cultural focus and invest in more cultural initiatives, given its pluralist and multi-purposed dimensions. And for a future study on the topic, I would like to establish effective communicative links with these entities in order to obtain more information and create even more extensive research.

As the globalized world continues to navigate complex international dynamics and be characterized by highly sophisticated geopolitical landscapes, recognizing, and enjoying the benefits of the cultural dimensions in diplomacy is truly transformative and, I personally believe, essential (Trunkos, 2013). Dance has the potential to embody a diplomatic facet that can enrich international relations between all actors through cultural exchanges that result into empowering peace, understanding and cooperation – truly important in an increasingly interconnected world.

“As society we need to look for new and innovative ways to create peace. Arts and culture are a powerful asset to strengthen bonds within a community. They give us the chance to appreciate points of commonality and resolve our differences. Art in general, and dance specifically can give us the sensibility we need in this world full of hate and violence. It can heal the wounds of war. This beautiful art makes us more human and give us the possibility to see the humanity the other.” (Martínez, 2020).

Therefore, in the world where war and conflict are unfortunately present in different fronts, I believe that alternative mechanisms that promote peace, empathy, communication, and cooperation are more than welcome. And considering that dance, more generally culture, is something that very purposely characterizes a nation's heritage, costumes, identity and ideas, the cultural exchange would most likely strengthen the community ties. By giving the world a way through which you're able to get to know a nation, it establishes the dialogue environment to appreciate and understand the differences, to promote knowledge and respect. But, more importantly, recognize the commonality it might be present, even when it's thought to be opposites. Dance enables this sensibility that a cooperative world needs. So, as a conclusive remark:

“Cultural diplomacy needs more advocates, more funding and needs to be delivered in such a way as to minimise the sometimes negative impact that officialdom has on the practice. (...) Cultural diplomacy can give substance to public diplomacy at a time when that practice has a large task ahead of it.” (Odunze, 2021: 92).

Highlighting the relevance of alternative tools in public diplomacy in an everchanging and interconnect world is imperative. Hence, dance, as a mechanism of cultural diplomacy, mustn't be underestimated – and the present dissertation pretends to be inspiring for further investigation on dance diplomacy.

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