

2015-01-01

# Cultural Diplomacy Strategies for Mexico in the XXI Century

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CULTURAL DIPLOMACY STRATEGIES FOR MEXICO IN THE  
XXI CENTURY

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## **Dedication**

To my parents, Arq. Felipe Siqueiros and Bertha Falomir de Siqueiros, M.A., for their love and example of perseverance, honesty and kindness. For their convincing belief on the value of culture.

To my wife, Magda Patricia Tijerina de Siqueiros, for your love, support and understanding. For being my “half orange” for 32 years. To my children, Alejandro and Patricia, for their inspiration.

To my grandson, Nicholas.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY STRATEGIES FOR MEXICO IN THE  
XXI CENTURY

by

ALEJANDRO SIQUEIROS, J.D., M.B.A.

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at El Paso

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Political Science

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

December 2015

## **Acknowledgements**

To Consul Generals Salvador Arriola and Jacob Prado, for their Diplomatic Innovation spirit and courage to improve Mexico's foreign relations. To Dr. Gaspare Genna, Chairman of my thesis Committee, for his guidance, advice, support, and especially, patience during this cultural expedition. To Dr. Taeko Hiroi, for her academic, and geographical, guidance. To Dr. Richard Pineda, for his support and for "baptizing" my thesis. To my brothers and sisters, Luis Felipe, Angela, Jose Ignacio, Fernando and Lupita, and their families, for being always supportive. To all people and friends who believed and participated on this journey

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# **Chapter 1: What is Cultural Diplomacy?**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This thesis analyzes cultural diplomacy (CD) and how the utilization of the strategies of inserting Mexico into foreign cultures, using cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expanding CD into other areas, may have the ability to positively influence Mexico's political, economic, social and cultural foreign policy objectives.

Such strategies were adapted to particular locations and involved four foreign policy objectives. The first objective was to consolidate or strengthen Mexico's bilateral relations with countries. The second objective was to fortify international cooperation, which aimed to both contribute to assist in other countries' challenges and to complement Mexico's strategy of national development. The third objective was to help strengthen Mexico's international presence through cultural, economic and tourist promotion in the foreign country. The last objective was to increase attention to Mexicans living, traveling or investing abroad.

The CD strategies, aside from scholarly research, are reflected in six case studies based on personal experiences I had at the Consulates of Mexico in Sao Paulo, Brazil (1997-2007) and Kansas City, Missouri (2007-2013). As a member of Mexico's Foreign Service for more than two decades, I served in those cities by working as a "Cultural Attaché" or Coordinator of Cultural Affairs. In each of the six case studies, the above mentioned Mexican foreign policy objectives were adapted to specific political, economic, and social environments in Sao Paulo and Kansas City.

We have to consider that modern diplomacy includes activities that go beyond actions of central governments or administrations to define and develop foreign policies. New "international actors", such as non-government organizations (NGO's), public and private cultural, economic,

and academic institutions, networks of creators and researchers, as well as public entities and local governments (municipal, county or state), are also intervening in the formulation and the implementation of foreign policies. These new actors could also provide useful and effective ideas or instruments to carry out cultural events or educational exchanges abroad. As Jan Melissen stated: “People have always mattered to diplomats, but this point has taken on a new meaning. The democratization of access to information has turned citizens into independent observers as well as assertive participants in international politics” (Melissen, 2005).

Based on above, the focus of most countries in the current interconnected world, where people from all countries exchange information with each other has also changed. They have realized that, in order to accomplish their national priorities, and more specifically, their political and economic foreign policy objectives, they have to approach the citizens, communities, and institutions of other countries, and not only the heads of state or high government officials. Consequently, to decide what cultural activities to present, it is necessary to research and analyze, not only what is available but also the existing cultural infrastructure of each posting. The first strategy to make CD more feasible to influence foreign policy requires inserting Mexico into the traditions, priorities, and characteristics of the host country or region.

CD strategies, developed by central governments and other international actors, must allow nations to provide for and receive from foreign countries. These strategies can be accomplished through cultural industries, a wider understanding of their nations` history, traditions, arts, policies and culture abroad. This would create a more realistic and positive image of their countries in the international arena. The discovery of such cultural differences and similarities between Mexico and the host country, when managed correctly, might constitute an opportunity to make CD more useful in terms of influencing foreign policy abroad. Through international cooperation programs

and educational and cultural exchanges, these programs help nations to acquire new technologies and resources in order to improve their standard of living and to learn more about other nations, which may enrich them academically, politically, economically and technologically.

Culture, in all its definitions, involves attitudes, beliefs, customs, institutions, language and arts amongst groups of people. Therefore, it is a broad concept that is within everybody's capacity to understand, which implicates all of us one way or another. In the case of Mexico, as stated by Jaime Nualart, culture has been used "to expose the values, the sensibility and the artistic creativity of Mexico...to show the world what we are, what we have achieved and what we are trying to become." (Lozoya; Nualart, et al, 1999). However, among others, CD has expanded its activities to different areas of international relations like cultural industries, immigration, human rights, cultural diversity, telecommunications, social media and intellectual property.

As a result, administrations are reassessing the role of culture, not as ornamental or secondary, but "as an essential element of foreign policy and as a bridge between nations that facilitates mutual understanding and cooperation between peoples" (Fierro, Alberto, 2008). This brings us to the third CD strategy. One of the challenges of CD nowadays is trying to get it to spread out in its roles of international cooperation and cultural promotion. The challenge is particularly in building stronger links with areas of economic development, science and technology, environment, education and tourism. When cultural strategies are well utilized, they may become a useful tool to influence the countries' foreign policy objectives, which are essential for the future development and viability as a nation. That is the "raison d'être" of Cultural Diplomacy.

There are other issues related to the above strategies that were studied. One questions asked how "influence" would be measured. Should Mexico continue limiting its CD to fine arts, crafts

and archeology or should it expand to other, more current and contemporary areas? Are there “schools of thought” or contending views concerning CD in Mexico, or in the world? Based on the historical background, what are the tendencies (economic, cooperationist, simply cultural) of recent governments concerning CD? Have the proposed CD strategies been experienced by other countries? What have been the results? What will Mexico accomplish with these changes? Those are some of the questions that this thesis will try to answer.

To conclude this introduction, it is important to point out that this thesis argues that CD or CD strategies have the ability to positively influence foreign policy objectives, not to achieve such objectives. Why? Among other reasons, this is because I could not approve achievement of the objectives using surveys or other scientific tools due to the time frame that passed since the case studies were developed while writing the thesis (4 to 10 years). There are also difficulties in measuring the impact or effectiveness of cultural diplomacy. Nonetheless, well-developed and executed CD strategies are able to exercise a positive influence on Mexico’s foreign policy objectives, at least in the short term.

## **1.2 Definition of Cultural Diplomacy**

It is not an easy task to define CD. This is especially true in Mexico, where CD is a relatively new concept that keeps changing every day. As I mentioned before, it has become more comprehensive and has widened its horizons by establishing closer links with the economy, environment, science, education, technologies, tourism and other areas. Thus, one of the most utilized definitions of CD is the one stated by Milton C. Cummings Jr., who defines it as “the exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding” (Cummings, 2005).

To this effect, it is to be mentioned that there are questions, among scholars and public officers, as to the goals of CD. Scholars wonder if its main purpose should be strengthening and promoting cultural relationships by connecting people, not necessarily governments or policy (“culture for culture`s sake” approach), as in the case of countries such as United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, France, and even Russia; or if it should be linked to support and pursue foreign policy, as in the case of Mexico and the United States (Schneider, 2004). Cummings’ definition is based on the belief that cultural manifestations are the ones that better represent a nation. This will not be adequate for the purposes of this paper because the objective of CD limits itself to “foster mutual understanding” and not to achieve foreign policy objectives.

In a report made at the Ibero-American Summit in Cádiz, Spain in 2012 (Cumbre Iberoamericana), the Secretary General (SEGIB) noted the active interaction between cultural policies, management and diplomacy, as well as their differences and definitions. Thus, “Cultural Policies are broad guidelines built jointly by the state and the society in various fields of culture; cultural management is the fulfillment and development of cultural policies; and cultural diplomacy is typified by cultural representation, circulation and exchanges between countries internationally” (Secretaría General Iberoamericana (SEGIB), 2012). Although this definition is useful in determining the interactions and interdependence between the three concepts, it leaves the concept of CD isolated from its methods and strategies and from civil society.

Another definition, more inclined toward foreign policy, and therefore to Mexico`s reality, is the one by Fabiola Rodríguez-Barba, who describes CD, as “a number of cultural or educational operations and works coordinated by the state with the assistance of diverse partners to assure a national cultural presence abroad, for foreign policy objectives” (Rodríguez Barba, 2008). This

definition limits the objectives of CD and of foreign policy “to assure a national cultural presence abroad”, which leaves out cultural and educational exchanges and cooperation.

César Villanueva, who is one of the main scholars on CD in Mexico, defines it as “a specialized field of diplomacy, which has as the key role of representing the symbols and identity of the nation and society abroad in order to achieve three possible goals: promoting cultural events; activation of cultural cooperation, especially in the intellectual field and educational exchanges; and the ability to build an attractive discourse on the nation, to attract the interest of international actors”(Villanueva, 2013).

This definition intrinsically encompasses some of the main functions and objectives of CD, according to the needs and traditions of most countries, including Mexico. In my opinion, this definition lacks the pursuit of foreign policy objectives, which the administration defines based on both its priorities abroad with specific countries or regions and on the existing and continually changing international environment. The administration also bases this definition on well-planned long term and comprehensive state cultural policies and regulations in order to achieve continuity and efficiency abroad.

For the purposes of this paper, cultural diplomacy will be defined as: The promotion of a country’s culture to reach foreign audiences and the exchange of culture, education, science, technology, and, in general, ideas and information among nations, their peoples and other international actors to foster mutual understanding and to project a positive image abroad in order to pursue foreign policy objectives.

I consider this definition superior to the others because it is comprehensive in its consideration of both the “culture for culture’s sake” approach and the pursuit of foreign policy objectives, which do not necessarily contradict each other. This paper is taking Mexico’s principles

and perspectives into consideration. It is also inclusive of CD strategies, the insertion of Mexico's culture to reach civil societies abroad and cultural, educational and scientific exchanges between nations and other sectors of foreign societies. Moreover, it includes the objectives, aside from fostering mutual understanding ("culture for culture's sake" approach), to project a good image abroad and to pursue foreign policy that are part of Mexico's legal and constitutional framework.

### **1.3. Map and Summary of Basic Questions**

This thesis will analyze how CD strategies of insertion of the country into foreign cultures, developing cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expansion of culture into other areas and aspects of international relations and cooperation, may have the ability to influence Mexico in terms of political, economic and social foreign policy objectives.

The second chapter, called "Making Cultural Diplomacy more Influential" is a literature review that will analyze the main proposals, proponents, strengths, and weaknesses of two contending views. The Doubtful View expresses several doubts about the need to utilize CD to influence foreign policy objectives and has its main scholars and proponents in the United States. The Positive Effects View, which basically represents most CD scholars in Mexico and abroad at varying levels, supports the important and positive role of CD and its ability to influence foreign policy objectives. In its last section, chapter two will also review the reasons why this thesis is mostly in agreement, in terms of its main arguments, with the Positive effects school.

The third chapter, "Cultural Diplomacy in Mexico," will review, in its first section, the historical background of CD in Mexico and the changing priorities and foreign policies of many administrations for almost a century. This section will show the lack of continuity, consistency and effectiveness of CD in Mexico over the years, and therefore, the need to make changes to its current status. The second section will review how such policies are determined by Mexico's legal



framework: the Constitution, the National Plan of Development and the Sector Plans by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE).

The fourth chapter, “Cultural Diplomacy Strategies,” will analyze, in its first and second sections, the experiences of France, Spain and Brazil. These sections will examine their cultural policies and strategies worldwide, their efforts in applying or implementing such CD strategies in Mexico and if their results were satisfactory. The third section will describe the characteristics and elements of the proposed CD strategies in this thesis. This includes the insertion of Mexico into foreign cultures, cultural activities based on similarities and differences and the expansion of CD to other areas (academic, scientific, technical and cultural industries and tourism).

The fifth chapter, “Case Studies of Cultural Diplomacy,” will review six cases of CD, four in Sao Paulo, Brazil and two in Kansas City, Missouri, carried out while I was served as the Cultural Attaché or Coordinator of Cultural Affairs. This chapter will also analyze the cases of Sao Paulo and the status of the diplomatic relations between Mexico and Brazil when those activities were developed. In the cases of Kansas City, this section will describe the position of Mexico toward that region of the United States. In both instances, the analysis will evaluate if Mexico’s foreign policy objectives were pursued and whether the CD strategies were applied in each of the case studies.

The final chapter will offer some conclusions and recommendations on how to make CD more useful and positively influential in Mexico.

## **Chapter 2: Making Cultural Diplomacy More Influential**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The research question of this thesis deals with how the proposed CD strategies of insertion of the country into foreign cultures, the development of cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and the expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations have the ability to influence Mexico in terms of political, economic and social foreign policy objectives. This chapter will demonstrate how scholars from two contending views of thought have examined the abilities of CD under different circumstances and scenarios. Such abilities will measure how successful or helpful the implementation of CD strategies were in influencing certain foreign policy objectives or goals for a specific country or region.

It is relevant mentioning that identifying different “schools of thought” in Mexico proved challenging, because although CD is widely practiced in this country, it is still a fairly new concept within academic and diplomatic contexts. The few scholars in Mexico that have researched CD primarily focus their studies on conceptual, economic and political priorities, and not so much on strategies which may influence foreign policies.

Also worth mentioning is that for the last century, CD in Mexico has lacked continuity and a clear definition of purposes and resources. Academic scholars in this area are usually not divided by ideological or cultural policies or strategies applied abroad but by they have preferences towards public measures carried out by foreign ministers, which are often based on the President’s political and economic priorities. For example, scholar Fabiola Rodríguez Barba (2008) favored policies adopted by Jorge Castañeda, former Minister of Foreign Affairs (2000-2003). In contrast, scholars Jorge Alberto Lozoya (1999) and Jaime Nualart (2000) primarily favored policies pushed by

former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Rosario Green (1994-2000). This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

In other cases, scholars tend to favor one of the two main components of cultural diplomacy in Mexico: promotion of culture (Rodriguez Barba, 2008; Luz Elena Baños, 2009) or international cooperation (Nualart, 2000; Villanueva, 2009). However, Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE), through its General Direction of Educational and Cultural Cooperation (DGCEC), "covers" both components of CD within the Ministry. There are no significant differences or serious disagreements among scholars in such respects that could form real "schools of thought", especially in regard to strategies aimed at influencing foreign policies. In general, most past and current Mexican academic and diplomatic scholars have proposed to strengthen and to widen the scope of CD in terms of foreign policy and resources, as well as to professionalize Mexico's foreign service within the cultural sector. For such reasons, and for the purposes of this thesis, I used the concepts of "Contending Views", instead of Schools of Thought.

I will proceed to analyze the so-called "doubtful view" and the "positive effects view". I will start with their main premises and representatives. Then I will describe their strengths and weaknesses, as well as their similarities in conjunction with the proposals of this thesis.

## **2.2 Contending Views**

### **2.2.1 The "Doubtful View"**

The "Doubtful View", in my opinion, expresses doubts about the effectiveness, justification, objectives, and funding of CD. It presents powerful arguments as to why CD should not be supported in the United States, which include axiological motives:

The United States "has a different perception of arts in society that has its roots in the national values of independence from government, democracy and free market...National

core values of individualism, democracy, cultural diversity, equal rights and free market are the most important components that shape the attitude of Americans toward the role of arts in society (Grincheva, 2010).

Others have objected based on sociological reasons. McNail and Hooker (1968) argue that Arts do not form part of the national identity of American society...and have never been the property of the whole nation; therefore, “people see little need for a unique national high culture that should be promoted at home or abroad” (Brown, 2006). Others have argued based on economic reasons and have said that “because of the free market...cultural diplomacy has been overshadowed by trade policy.” (Ivey, 2007).

Such arguments have been, it appears, very convincing to the different groups of U.S. citizens and administrations, at least since by the end of the Cold war. This is reflected in the fact that, the annual budget annual budget in the U.S. for cultural programming and exchange programs in 2006 was approximately US\$700 million dollars. This was equivalent to just a fraction of 1 percent of the budget assigned to the military (Schneider, 2006). The United States also ranked last in per capita spending in CD among nine countries in 2003 (Wyszomirski, 2003). The convincing power of the doubtful view to minimize the impact and to reduce the budget for CD in the United States is definitely its biggest strength.

The so-called “axiological reason” is based on the unique perception of arts in society within the United States, as well as on its values of independence from government, democracy and free market, among other things. This argument reasons that the private sector can, democratically and through its cultural or non-cultural entities (free market), establish a real image or influence of the country abroad. This can be achieved via cultural products such as movies,

music, and books independent from government involvement and without having to utilize public resources or taxpayers` contributions.

A response to the above arguments is the fact that leaving the cultural policies or strategies of a country exclusively in the hands of the private sector or the free market may not lead to an authentic representation or a positive image abroad. This could hurt the attempts to influence other countries in a favorable way, especially when cultural products (movies, music and books) have become, such as is the case of the United States, its number one export. Lastly, the private sector, or better said, certain monopolistic private sectors with particular commercial interests of their own that might not mesh with interests from the executive branch of the government, could be at the forefront by establishing foreign policy for the whole country.

According to Cynthia Schneider, based on foreign policy objectives, the free market of such products will not ensure that American artists or art exhibits will be presented in target countries, populations or at major international arts festivals. The challenge to shape a favorable world opinion is in finding the right balance of private and public sector forces that can invest in cultural products, to be implemented in strategic locations worldwide. It is precisely through CD, in all its forms, that the United States “can help to keep alive appreciation for American ideals, values and contributions to culture and learning” (Schneider, 2004).

There is also the “sociological” argument that “arts do not form part of the national identity of American society...and have never been the property of the whole nation...”(McNail and Hooker, 1968). This states that “people see little need for a unique national high culture that should be promoted at home or abroad” (Brown, 2006). I consider the notion of isolating art from “national identity” and “property” of the nation to be exaggerated and not necessarily true considering that American people are “independent, democratic and free-market oriented”.

National identity is defined as “the depiction of a country as a whole, encompassing its culture, traditions, language and politics” (Dictionary.com). Simply speaking, since art has always been part of a nation’s culture, traditions and language, the arts are part of national identity. Other scholars believe that “art contributed to creating the necessary shared identity, civil religion, and national narrative that allowed the United States to keep its republic in its formative years” (Howard & Hoffman, 2015). In most countries, including Mexico, culture defines their identity and values as a nation.

John Brown states that “people see little need for a unique national high culture” (Brown, 2006). This statement leaves out of the CD equation the concepts of “popular culture” and cultural products, which are very appealing to the majority of the population in most countries, although different scholars do not consider them as part of CD. Bill Ivey, researcher and former President of the National Endowment for the Arts, stated that “current art exchanges (by focusing only on “high art”) exclusively target elite populations. Cultural diplomats need to concentrate on reaching the vast majority of people (Ivey, 2007).

Related to the cultural industries is the economic argument of the Doubtful View, which asserts, “because of the free market...cultural diplomacy has been overshadowed by trade policy” (Ivey, 2007). This is a very strong argument because the United States (and several other countries) have pushed for individualism and free market values to grow. In turn, this has “caused” cultural industries, particularly movies and television shows, to become its main exports, which reflects the existing “dominance of international cultural trade policies over arts or cultural diplomacy” (Grincheva, 2010). Such cultural exports, which are transmitted worldwide by transnational corporations (not by the government), through well-managed marketing and profitable campaigns, have created a culture of entertainment. This industry fostered by the private sector, in the pursuit

of profits at any means, has convinced many United States citizens that there is no reason to promote CD abroad.

Nevertheless, those cultural products, especially films and television shows, project the corporations' unilateral, individualistic and free market values abroad. This is not always exactly an image of friendship, cooperation or solidarity towards the interests and needs of other nations. This environment explains the lack of effectiveness in the private strategies of cultural industries, since they may be presenting a distorted image of the country, one which does not reflect and even opposes the U.S. Administration's foreign policies abroad.

One important challenge is to find "the most effective interface between Government-sponsored CD and the free flow of popular culture...which is the greatest untapped resource in the cultural diplomacy arsenal" (Schneider, 2004). Depending on its distribution abroad, products of popular culture (TV, music, films, books) may or may not, effectively communicate the ideas and values expressed by people in the United States. It is my opinion that popular culture and certain cultural products must, in a well distributed and managed manner, be an important part of any CD strategy.

The doubtful view also expresses concerns about the difficulties involved in measuring the effectiveness and quantifiable success of CD. In other words, "how many hearts and minds are conquered through music concerts, dance or theater performances or art exhibits? How far can we predict influences of ideas over the minds of people?" (Szántó, 2003). Investments in CD usually do not produce short-term results and may require "significant amounts of personnel, financial resources and long term goals" (Grincheva, 2010).

In regard to such an argument, which may apply for this thesis, András Szántó, of the Sotheby's Institute of Art in New York, writes:

Beyond fanfare and symbolism, what can cultural diplomacy actually achieve? It is tempting to paraphrase American Department Store magnate John Wanamaker's famous quip about advertising, namely that he knew half the money he spent on it was wasted, but he didn't know which half. Yet, even if the direct impact of soft power is rather difficult to measure – as tends to be true for most cultural fields – it is undeniable and real (Szántó, 2011).

Therefore, the most important aspect is the impact that such artists have or have had abroad, especially during the Cold War, when American musicians traveled to the Soviet Union and other East European countries to “[introduce] listeners to, and [educate] them about ideas of freedom and democracy” (Grincheva, 2010). These government-sponsored efforts contributed to the downfall of the Soviet empire.

A final characteristic, which one might regard as a weakness of this view, is the fact that its “strong” arguments against CD relate only to the United States and can hardly be applied to other countries abroad, where culture, through its different expressions, represents the identity of a nation and more resources are awarded to CD. This view does not have any followers in Mexico or in most countries since, although in some cases cultural policies are not exactly consistent and well developed. There are not many well-known scholars that doubt the importance and effectiveness of CD in terms of foreign policy. The exception to this of course, is the “Doubtful View” in the United States,

### **2.2.2 The “Positive Effects View”**

In this modern, interconnected world, nations have realized that in order to accomplish their foreign policy objectives, they have to approach the citizens and the civil societies of other countries. The most important aspect of the Positive effects view is likely that CD (as well as



public diplomacy) has the ability to directly express the ideas, interests, and culture of the host nation to societies and individuals of other countries, regardless of its national characteristics or style (Villanueva, 2008). This exchange is done either through cultural expressions or academic and scientific exchanges.

Cynthia Schneider is one of the main proponents of the positive effects view and a strong supporter of strengthening CD in the United States and worldwide. She has stated that “Cultural diplomacy, in all its varieties, provides a critical, maybe even the best tool to communicate the intangibles that make America great: individual freedoms; justice and opportunity for all; diversity and tolerance” (Schneider, 2003).

In Mexico, Cesar Villanueva is probably the best-known scholar and researcher of CD and he says the following:

In the case of cultural diplomacy, there is widespread consensus that its scope corresponds to the representation of the national-cultural identity to people and audiences abroad in order to facilitate an understanding of its society and the nation as a whole, through exhibitions and cultural events, educational and scientific exchanges, etc. (Villanueva, 2009).

In the case of Mexican CD, Villanueva (2009) refers mostly to “projection strategies of Mexican culture abroad and to educational, cultural and scientific cooperation”.

Another argument by the positive effects view, exposed by Mexican scholar Carlos Ortega Guerrero, is that “Cultural diplomacy is not limited to the dissemination of art and its use as a friendly resource for negotiation” (2009). Its main objective is to present the culture and identity of Mexico to audiences throughout the world in order to foster an increased comprehension of its people and the nation in general.

Although this argument, in principle, appears broader in its objective, it is in fact limiting the scope of CD by not including the element of international cooperation. This includes the exchange of culture, education, science, technology, and other general ideas among nations, their peoples and other international actors, which is essential when pursuing foreign policy objectives. To that effect, Mexico has traditionally, although not consistently, carried out both objectives of CD. Mexicans have projected their culture through art exhibits, literary forums, musical concerts, film festivals, and other venues; other contributors have played a hand in this exchange via cultural and educational cooperation, by way of academic and scientific exchanges, scholarships, sister cities agreements, and other forms of collaboration (Villanueva, 2009).

A main strength or justification of the Positive effects view is that CD has demonstrated, throughout history and through a big variety of cultural strategies, an ability to influence foreign policies, and is sometimes an essential element of foreign policy in countries such as France. Whether designed to promote the nation`s cultural expressions, activate international cooperation through education, academic, scientific and technological exchanges or programs, or to achieve economic and political objectives, CD has been there to positively influence such foreign policy objectives.

The Positive effects view, through the arguments put forth by Mexican scholar Fabiola Rodríguez Barba, considers that culture in many countries, especially in Mexico, has been:

...a determinant factor for the development of countries, not just because of the important economic value of the cultural industries, but because culture is seen as a bridge of communication between nations that facilitates mutual understanding and facilitates economic and cultural cooperation (Rodríguez Barba, 2008).

This argument emphasizes the point that CD strategies should not be focused only on maximizing profits through cultural products and industries, which may mostly benefit transnational companies.

This positive effects view states that CD utilizes the promotion of cultural expressions in visual or scenic arts or in literature, such as art exhibits, musical performances, academic forums or other cultural events “not only as an instrument of national unity but also to internationally project its art and heritage” (Villanueva, 2013).

In terms of international cooperation and as part of their CD strategies, nations around the world have pursued foreign policy objectives through educational, cultural and scientific exchanges and programs. These objectives have allowed them to receive and to provide, new technologies and resources, which have helped improve their living conditions. This has also enabled many countries to learn more about other nations, which may enrich them economically, culturally, and technologically.

In the matter of influencing economic and political objectives through CD, the United States Government sent its greatest actors, musicians, artists, writers, and dancers abroad to the Soviet Union and its allies. Implemented between 1950 and 1975, these endeavors were intended “to showcase the values of a democratic society in juxtaposition to a totalitarian system” (Schneider, 2003). Mexico, as it was mentioned, has also utilized its CD to start or to strengthen diplomatic relations with many countries, as is the case with the administration of President Luis Echeverría. By presenting impressive artistic caravans abroad, along with other political strategies, Mexico established diplomatic relations with 64 new nations, basically doubling the number of countries since the beginning of his term (Ejea Mendoza, 2008).

In the case of economic objectives, Mexico also has employed its CD strategies to promote bilateral or multilateral trade agreements. During the administration of President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, the country presented the magnificent and comprehensive exhibit “*Mexico: Esplendores de 30 siglos*” (Mexico: Splendors of 30 Centuries) at important museums across the United States. Such cultural events were enacted with the clear purpose of promoting Mexican society within American public opinion prior to the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Therefore, the Positive effects view utilizes CD strategies to project its art, culture, and heritage abroad and to promote economic, social and political objectives of foreign policy, either by presenting national artistic and cultural expressions, by developing international cooperation projects with other countries through educational, technological and scientific exchanges and scholarships, and by utilizing cultural instruments to promote Mexico, which eventually may lead to negotiations of different economic, political or educational bilateral or multilateral agreements.

I would argue that most of the weaknesses within the Positive effects view derive not so much in its characteristics and objectives since (with the exception of the proponents of the Doubtful view in the United States), almost nobody questions the importance of culture in foreign policy. Rather, weaknesses run mostly in the understanding, design and implementation of the CD strategies within each particular country. Thus, CD “is one of the most utilized practices in foreign policy by nations, but, paradoxically, one of the least understood...in some areas it is perceived as an indirect, secondary or ornamental profession, which few diplomats appreciate because it requires time, resources and, especially, patience” (Villanueva, 2015).

Authors have analyzed the effective design of CD. Some believe that it must be flexible, creative, adaptable and opportunistic (Schneider, 2006) and “must be sensitive to intellectual,

religious, artistic and other ostensibly non-political developments abroad...” (Mulcahy, 1999). In Mexico, different scholars consider the design and implementation of CD to be some of its main weaknesses. This is because of their lack of consistency, vision, resources, and innovation, as well as a need of an “articulation between the education, economic, commercial, financial, cultural and foreign policies to conform a careful planned and executed strategy, that, in the end, results in social cohesion, economic development, commercial expansion and international political influence” (Ordoñez, 2008). Such deficiencies may be due to the changing priorities and foreign policies of the many administrations for almost a century.

In the case of the United States, scholar Cynthia Schneider provides examples of success of CD in several publications, but criticizes the lack of funding and leadership by the U.S. administrations for cultural strategies abroad. Schneider asserts, “American culture, in its various forms, has the potential to win the war on ideas, but without leadership that makes cultural diplomacy a priority, that potential will be squandered” (Schneider, 2003).

### **2.3 VIEW Most Related to the Proposals of This Thesis**

The focus of this thesis relies on the abilities of CD strategies of insertion of the country into foreign cultures; developing cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations to positively influence Mexico’s foreign policy objectives. Thus, this paper assumes the justification to develop and execute such CD strategies abroad.

Since the Doubtful view expresses doubts about the effectiveness, and even the justification of the existence of CD, it will not only clash with some ideas put forth, but its ideas run counter to my proposal. Although some of the doubtful view’s arguments explained in this chapter are rather strong and have “convinced” the United States public and administrations to modify its structure

and to transfer it from the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1965, to the State Department in 1999, as well as considerably reduce its budget resources in the last 15 years; such criteria and measures have not had a significant impact on either Mexico or most nations abroad.

Based on above, the position that relates most to my proposal, notwithstanding its deficiencies and weaknesses, would certainly be the Positive effects view. This is because of its comprehensive approach and its fairly well defined role of cultural promotion within the Embassies and Consulates of Mexico. As mentioned above, this view would be able to accommodate my proposed CD strategies within its framework, structure, scope and objectives,

It is important to mention that although such strategies may require a high level of planning and research, especially strategies for insertion into a foreign culture, they could fit into almost any system of CD since they are relatively simple and easy to implement. As will be examined in the next chapter, this is true as long as the proper conditions are met.

## **Chapter 3: Cultural Diplomacy in Mexico**

### **3.1 Historical Background**

In order to demonstrate the lack of continuity, consistency and effectiveness of CD in Mexico over the years, and therefore, the need to make changes to its current status, this first section will briefly review the historical background of CD in Mexico, throughout the changing priorities and foreign policies of many different administrations during the length of almost a century.

Based on its historical heritage, national diversity and artistic creativity, Mexico is a country with a rich culture, which help define prominent values in Mexico and its identity. As Carlos Fuentes once said, culture represents “our ways of being, of loving, of communicating...our ways of dreaming...” (Fuentes, 2002). For these reasons, culture has always been linked to Mexico`s foreign policies. This has been to either to strengthen political or economic relationships with other countries or to promote a positive image abroad.

However, up until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most of the population in Mexico was illiterate and the country was struggling with various political revolts as the country strived to become a sovereign nation. So, it became essential for the state to transform Mexico`s identity. A key figure in defining an integral strategy for education and culture for Mexico was undoubtedly José Vasconcelos who, during the Presidency of Alvaro Obregón (1920– 1924), simultaneously occupied the positions of Chancellor (President) of Mexico`s National Autonomous University (UNAM) and Minister of Education.

Considering that illiteracy had reached 73% of the population, Vasconcelos increased more than 50% of the number of teachers and elementary schools throughout the country; published massive amounts of books, both classics and works hailing from Mexican writers, and opened

public libraries all over the country. He also developed cultural agreements and exchange programs for students, especially with Latin American countries. Nationally, Vasconcelos promoted Mexican art, especially Muralism, as “a vehicle to reach the masses”, mainly through the works of Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros, whose works were also exhibited abroad, along with the ones of several other artists (Rodríguez Barba, 2008). According to a study by Eduardo Martínez, published by the UNESCO, Vasconcelos brought what at the time could “be considered the most complete and coherent project of cultural policy carried out by the state” (Martínez and Puig, 2008). ).

Unfortunately, according to Andrés Ordoñez, during this period “the official concept of culture was rigidly adhered to the fine arts or at best, to archeology, crafts and ethnology” (Ordoñez 2012). This concept and related practices have remained almost unchanged up until today as part of Mexico`s policies of cultural promotion and “has impeded CD to open to other areas to the extent required by the circumstances of the contemporary world” (Ordoñez 2012).

During the next decades, from 1930 to the 1970`s, Mexico developed a solid cultural infrastructure with the creation of several cultural entities and government agencies, such as the Economic Culture Fund (FCE, 1934), the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH, 1939), the Seminar of Mexican Culture (1942), the National Institute of Fine Arts (INBA, 1946), the Under Secretary of Culture (1958), which was part of the Ministry of Education and three years later became part of the SRE as a General Direction of Cultural Affairs (DGAC), the National Museum of Anthropology (MNA, 1964), and the National Museum of Modern Art (MAM, 1964). These institutions, along with the Golden Age of the Mexican film industry (1934-1969) and the presentation of several art exhibits in many countries in Europe, Asia and North America, helped promote Mexico`s rich art and culture at home and abroad (Rodríguez-Barba 2008).



Taking into consideration the richness and variety of Mexico's cultural manifestations, every new Federal government has attempted to accomplish their own foreign policy objectives since the 1970's, with variable levels of success and utilizing different strategies of "Cultural Diplomacy". Under the Presidency of Luis Echeverría (1970-1976), several art exhibits as well as music and dance presentations were held throughout the world. President Echeverria also promoted academic and cultural exchanges with many countries, especially from Latin America and the Caribbean. This was done in order to develop a "new foreign policy". This new policy carried the following priorities: to diversify markets for trade, to favor relations with "Third World Nations" (developing nations), to promote and be more involved with multilateral diplomacy, and to increase international relations with new countries. In this aspect, during Echeverria's Presidency, Mexico established diplomatic relations with 64 new nations, thereby doubling the number of allied countries since the beginning of his term (Rico 1991).

Due to various economic crises, the cultural activity of Mexico slowed down during certain periods (1976 – 1988). This was especially true in regard to the promotion of big art exhibits or cultural trips to far away countries. However, in those years the country concentrated its foreign policy objectives, although with more limited resources, on establishing closer political, cultural and economic relationships with the increasing number of Mexican communities. This included Hispanic groups of Mexican origin living abroad. In the area of cultural diplomacy, the focus marked the opening of Mexican cultural centers, which were established in strategic cities (Madrid and Paris) or in those with large Mexican communities, to promote Mexican culture and to present art exhibits to the public (Rodríguez Barba 2008).

Another period of intense Cultural Diplomacy was implemented under the Presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994). This was when Mexico decided to rapidly open up its

protectionist economy. The aim was once again to strengthen relationships with developed countries and to negotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States and Canada, which became three of the most important objectives of foreign policy during his presidency. So, in order to present an image of a modern and attractive country for visitors and investors, especially to its trade partner, the United States, Mexico started to emphasize its rich culture by promoting important art exhibits. Masterpieces such as “México, Splendor of 30 Centuries”, along with almost 300 other cultural events, were exhibited in a variety of cities, including San Antonio, Los Angeles and New York between 1991 and 1993. In the words of Jorge Alberto Lozoya, the coordinator of that particular project, “Such cultural events had a clear strategic purpose: to familiarize the United States public opinion with the society with whom they were going to sign a Free Trade Agreement” (Villanueva 2009).

It was also during this period that Mexican cultural entities began to be reorganized, when the most important cultural coordinating institution in Mexico was founded, in December 1988: The National Council for Culture and the Arts (Conaculta). Its main purpose was (and still is) to coordinate cultural and artistic policies, organizations, and agencies, as well as to promote, support, and sponsor events that foster culture and the arts (CONACULTA 2013). According to Andrés Ordoñez, the creation of Conaculta was a disaster for the SRE, since it further diminished its power and influence on the cultural sector of Mexico (Ordoñez 2012).

The successor to Salinas, President Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000), faced a financial crisis. Thus, he focused his foreign policy objectives on diversifying Mexico`s business partners and more specifically, on signing other Free Trade Agreements (FTA`s). The Mexican Institute of International Cooperation (IMEXCI), the antecedent of the Mexican Agency of International

Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID), was founded in 1998 within the SRE to promote bilateral agreements in technical, scientific, economic, educational and cultural cooperation.

During Zedillo`s administration, several important art exhibits were promoted. These exhibits combined pre-Columbian, folk, and modern art, as well as works of contemporary artists that were presented, either individually or in art biennales. These art exhibits were promoted in France, Spain, Portugal, Colombia, Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Japan, Canada and the United States (Nualart 2000).

The Presidency of Vicente Fox (2000-2006), hailing from the National Action Party (PAN), meant the end of more than 70 years of government rule under one political party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). One of the main foreign policy objectives, especially at the beginning of the administration, was to present to the world a new image of Mexico as a free, democratic, modern country that was respectful of human rights. To that effect, with Dr. Jorge Castañeda as Minister of SRE, there was a decision to link cultural diplomacy and cultural promotion to foreign policy, which involved actions such as the restructuring of the General Direction of Cultural Affairs (DGAC), depending directly on the office of Dr. Castañeda. The aim was to reform and to strengthen the existing Cultural Institutes of Mexico abroad by transforming them into a decentralized entity from the SRE, called “Instituto Mexico”.

This institute had locations in the USA, France, United Kingdom and Brazil. Its main purpose was to promote and disseminate Mexico`s culture, language, arts, education, science and technology, tourism, and cultural industries. These aims were similar to those implemented by the Instituto Cervantes of Spain or the Goethe Institute of Germany (Rodríguez Barba, 2008). However, Dr. Castañeda resigned in early 2003. The new Minister of SRE, Dr. Luis Ernesto Derbez, reversed many of these actions. Even though “Cultural Promotion” was among the six

strategies of foreign policy, it was mostly directed toward the role of cultural industries, both as levers of economic development and as carriers of the country's identity and values.

Under President Felipe Calderón (2006-2012), the main foreign policy objectives were to underpin Mexico's economic and social development, to defend the human rights and interests of Mexicans living abroad, and to reposition Mexico in its rightful place in the global and regional scenarios. One of its strategies was to "Actively promote exports, attract investments, spread the tourist and cultural attractions of the country and identify new opportunities for global Mexican corporations" (Primer Informe SRE, 2008).

A new institutional change by President Calderón, especially in regard to the field of CD, was the creation of the Mexican Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID), which was established in September 2011. This agency would exercise control over the former DGAC, the General Direction of Educational and Cultural Cooperation (DGCEC), and other entities within the SRE. It is important to mention that the term "Cultural Diplomacy" appeared for the first time in the history of the SRE's Annual Reports in 2012. Thus, the Sixth (and last) Report states:

Cultural diplomacy is one of the axes for the policy of international cooperation for development that contributes to a better position for Mexico in the world, responds to regional priorities, promotes a positive image of the country and strengthens political and economic relations with other nations (Sexto Informe SRE, 2012).

The cultural highlight of President Calderón's presidency was the celebration of the 100<sup>th</sup> and 200<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Mexico's Revolution and Independence, respectively. This celebration included more than 2,300 cultural, academic and artistic events worldwide.

Under the current Presidency of Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018), his National Development Plan (PND), on its First Annual Report of the SRE, states that foreign policy was designed to:

...widen and strengthen Mexico`s presence worldwide by strengthening our bilateral relations and expanding our capacity to influence the formation of a more prosperous and equitable international order, increase our international cooperation, promote the value of Mexico in the world and protect the interests of our country abroad. (Primer Informe SRE, 2013).

The term “Cultural Diplomacy” appears, again on the SRE`s Second Annual Report, as it states:

Mexican cultural diplomacy has a recognizable and specific profile; it seeks to project a true and fair view, in accordance with the historical legacy and traditions of Mexico: a democratic, rich, plural and vibrant nation (Segundo Informe SRE, 2014).

It should be mentioned that under the Peña Nieto administration, many government entities, including the cultural sector, are currently going through a substantial transformation that is in the process of being defined. Thus, within the AMEXCID, early during January 2015, the General Direction of International Economic Cooperation and Promotion (DGCPEI) and the General Direction of Bilateral Economic Relations and Cooperation (DGCREB) were merged into one entity.

The DGCEC, according to its new structure within the SRE, is divided into three different sections: Cultural Promotion; Special Projects, and Tourist Promotion. It excludes the areas of

“Programs and Agreements” and “Academic Exchanges”, which were deemed to be more in line with “Educational Cooperation”. They are now assigned to the General Direction of Technical and Scientific Cooperation (DGCTC). It is not known whether it will continue to be a part of AMEXCID.

Two scholars that summarize, from their point of view, how the different Mexican governments have handled its CD for almost a century are Fabiola Rodríguez-Barba and Carlos García de Alba. According to Rodriguez Barba, the above historical background of CD and its foreign policies in Mexico:

...shows how the country lacks a foreign cultural strategy with the characteristics of continuity and permanence which are typical of a state policy. The actions and strategies developed so far have depended on the personality of the foreign ministers and on the political and economic priorities of the President, so there are periods in which the potential of culture and the role that it should play in its foreign policy is clearly understood and others that simply cultural diplomacy has been relegated (Rodríguez-Barba 2008)

In the opinion of Ambassador Carlos García de Alba, who refers to CD in his article “Public Diplomacy, propaganda and soft power” states the following:

Throughout our history there are repeated, successful and very significant examples of this desire to place Mexico in the international arena based on a cultural diplomacy far-reaching; what has been lacking is consistency, not for lack of sensitivity to the importance of this work, but in several occasions, for lack of

vision, resources, and inability to find innovative schemes and to include other new international social actors (García de Alba, 2009).

The above section shows that, for almost a century, the country has implemented its CD internationally, sometimes successfully to achieve particular economic or political priorities of foreign policy of a particular administration. However, CD has often been implemented with a lack of continuity, consistency and, unfortunately, effectiveness. There is a need to establish State cultural policies that transcend the temporary priorities of each administration, toward more durable permanent objectives, such as to disseminate Mexico's culture, language, arts, tourism and traditions and to promote international cooperation in science and technology, education and other areas. It is also important to develop new CD strategies that are more influential in achieving such goals. The purpose of this thesis is to further this discussion in an attempt to propose more consistent and effective CD strategies.

### **3.2 Legal Framework of Foreign Policy in Mexico**

Since the aim of the proposed CD strategies will be based on their ability to influence national objectives of foreign policy toward a specific country or region, I consider it necessary to provide information on the legal framework of foreign policy in Mexico. Mexico bases its foreign policy on three main instruments: the Mexican Constitution, the National Plan of Development, and the Sectorial Program of the Ministry of Foreign Relations (PSSRE). Such instruments of foreign policies are also enriched by the rights and obligations established previously on the bilateral or multilateral agreements signed by Mexico with other countries and in areas such as trade, science and technology, as well as cultural and academic exchanges. Certainly, these foreign policies, regulations and legal instruments are the basis on which Embassies and Consulates throughout the world have to act upon institutionally.

### **3.3 Constitution**

Mexico's foreign policy is determined by the demands of the evolution of the country in an ever-changing international environment, while still retaining the basis of the following constitutional principles of foreign policy: 1) self-determination of peoples; 2) non-intervention; 3) peaceful settlement of disputes; 4) prohibition of the threat or use of force in international relations; 5) legal equality of States; 6) international cooperation for development; 7) respect, protection and promotion of human rights; and 8) struggle for peace and international security (Article 89, Fr. X).

### **3.4 The National Plan of Development (PND)**

The National Plan of Development (PND) is drafted every six years, once a new presidential administration takes office. The PND defines the objectives, strategies and priorities of the new government, including, in general terms, those related to foreign policy. Under the current Presidency of Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018), his National Development Plan (PND) states that foreign policy was designed to:

...widen and strengthen Mexico's presence worldwide by strengthening our bilateral relations and expanding our capacity to influence the formation of a more prosperous and equitable international order, increase our international cooperation, promote the value of Mexico in the world and protect the interests of our country abroad (Programa Nacional de Desarrollo, 2012).

Institutionally, the term cultural diplomacy was not used much until recently, when the current federal government of President Enrique Peña Nieto included both public and cultural diplomacy within the new PND 2013-2018, found under area "Mexico with Global



Responsibility”, Objective 5.2: “To promote the value of Mexico in the world through economic, touristic and cultural promotion” (Programa Nacional de Desarrollo 2013-2018, 2013).

On this objective, the PND establishes, among others, two primary strategies. The first is to consolidate the network of Mexico’s representations abroad as an effective instrument of coordinated and efficient economic, touristic and cultural diffusion and promotion. This reformation of representation abroad is aimed at encouraging quantifiable benefits for the country. The other goal is “to define agendas in matters of public and cultural diplomacy, which improve the image of Mexico abroad. This will increase the flows of trade and investments and tourism will elevate and democratize productivity in both regional and sector levels” ((Programa Nacional de Desarrollo 2013-2018, 2013). In her report to the European Union, Mirjam Schneider writes that:

...the worldwide perception of Mexico as a nation primarily defined by violence, has led the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) to formulate new strategies in this respect. One of the five areas in the new administration's National Development Plan is ‘México en Paz’ (Mexico in Peace), within which culture is considered to be an important tool in the fight against violence (Schneider, 2014).

In order to comply with such strategies, the current PND also mentions actions such as “to promote the image of Mexico abroad through a wide strategy of public and cultural diplomacies, and to “utilize culture as an instrument for the projection of Mexico worldwide, based on the strengths of the country” (PND 2013 – 2018, 2013). Certainly, or at least, theoretically, the above inclusion of public and cultural diplomacies within the plans of the current administration illustrates how these terms have become instruments of foreign policy, especially when promoting economic goals.

### **3.5 Sector Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PSSRE)**

The Sector Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PSSRE), based on the Constitution and the PND, and the attributions of the SRE, defines the objectives and the strategic and action lines to be followed by the administration in order to carry out its foreign policies.

In the current PSSRE 2013-2018, there are three international general priorities. The first is to contribute to the prosperity of the Mexican population, which requires promoting Mexico as an attractive destination for tourism. It also requires attracting investments by making Mexico appear trustworthy and valuable as trade partner. This is supposed to act as a platform to other markets. It should also make the world recognize Mexico as a dynamic country because of its values and cultural richness are being respected by other societies. The second is to promote inclusive and sustainable development by pursuing cooperation, education and the mobility of people through the exchange of knowledge in order to increase the standard of life of Mexican society. The third is to strengthen the rule of law, peace and security.

The PSSRE pursues the following five objectives that are aligned with the PND: The first is to promote bilateral relations in order to expand the presence of Mexico in the world. The second is to actively contribute in multilateral forums on issues of interest to Mexico and the world. The third is to promote a policy of international development cooperation for the benefit of Mexico and other countries. The fourth is to promote Mexico by spreading their strengths and opportunities in economic matters, tourism and culture. Finally, the fifth is to protect the interests and rights of the Mexican people abroad, thus encouraging inclusion in the country.

In terms of cultural diplomacy, the PSSRE states that it should have “a significant budget in accordance with the (economic) potential that cultural richness provides; and to consolidate and strengthen cultural promotion activities” (PSSRE, 2013). In the fourth objective, the PSSRE

pursues an integral strategy in order to promote Mexico through its economic, tourist, and cultural strengths and opportunities. It also establishes different strategies to strengthen and to train Mexico's Foreign Service in terms of economic, tourist and cultural promotion (Strategy 4.1.1) and to assist in the dissemination of culture through high-impact activities and available resources (Strategy 4.2.5). However, since all cultural activities should be quantifiable, those strategies will be measured in accordance with the number of people attending such events, "which is an indicator of the presence and interest that Mexico generates abroad" (Programa Sectorial de SRE, 2013-2018).

## **Chapter 4: Cultural Diplomacy Strategies**

### **4.1 Experiences of CD Strategies Worldwide**

Most States utilize their culture as an important tactic to facilitate and to influence national political, economic, social, and educational objectives, and, to that effect, develop cultural strategies and exchanges according to current priorities, traditions, or identities. Many countries have founded important national institutions abroad. France established the Alliance Française, Spain has the Instituto Cervantes, the United Kingdom created the British Council, and China founded the Confucius Institute; to name a few examples., These institutions have historically been utilized to promote the rich culture and languages of each nation, to foster international cooperation, to establish educational and academic exchanges, and to strengthen diplomatic relations throughout the world. An Embassy or Consulate, which is already located abroad, could certainly widen its diplomatic scope by expanding the cultural and educational activities that are offered, aimed at promoting the country it is representing.

On this Chapter, I aim to briefly analyze past and current experiences involving CD in France, Spain and Brazil. Why these countries? France is and has been, since the XVI century, with Cardinal Richelieu, a world reference of how a country values culture and has used it, diplomatically, to achieve political and economic success. The director of the French Institute in London stated it very clearly: “En France, la culture, c’est la politique” (Montiel, 2007). Also, “Cultural Diplomacy is the uniqueness of foreign policy in France, its brand image is linked to its culture, it is a legacy of history (Durieux, 2010)”.

Spain was selected due to its historic and cultural linkages with Mexico and with all Ibero-American countries and due to its promotion, not only of its culture, history and heritage, but also, as the case of France, of its language, through the Instituto Cervantes. Brazil was chosen because

of its historic similarities with Mexico, of being conquered and colonized by a European power, its political and economic importance and influence in Latin America, and its geographic location, between Spanish speaking nations.

#### **4.1.1 France**

According to Claire Durieux, “for centuries, France’s CD has been pedagogical to defend its language, its ideas, its scientific and technical advances, its influence and its prestige as a nation or to promote its economy. We refer to culture in a wide sense, of the diversity and modernity of our identity” (Durieux, 2008). When, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, King Louis IV assigned 10% of the annual budget to the arts, the promotion of culture has been a priority for France, both within its territory and abroad. Its international country image brand is based on its culture.

During the Enlightenment, the first famous French “cultural advisors” became prominent figures, such as Denis Diderot for Catherine II of Russia, Voltaire for Frederick the Great (Prussia), or Beaumarchais, in London (who favored the American Independence). These advisors were important not only for political purposes, but to promote the country’s language and culture. In the beginning of the 20th Century, France and other countries started to develop certain CD strategies to exercise influence through the founding of schools and universities, the offering of scholarships, and the technical assistance offered at their Embassies or Consulates, especially in countries based on Africa and the Middle and Far East. The Alliance Française was established in 1883 to promote French Language and Culture abroad and within a few years, received financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1913. This allocated 13% of its total budget to “works abroad”. (Durieux, 2008).

France, through its CD policies, created several important cultural institutions, as well as hundreds of cultural centers located in important cities throughout the world. This was especially

true in the 20th century, where these cultural centers continued to promote French culture, arts, and language. Such implementation of CD has helped establish French as a prominent language that is used extensively in international organizations and on European institutions. In 1985, this attracted more than 250,000 foreign students to France.

In recent decades however, French started to lose ground to other languages, especially English. Due to the economic crisis that affected most European countries, France had to make severe budget cuts on its cultural services, which affected the effectiveness of its CD.

That said, France reinvented itself in the early 2000's and in 2006, created the agency "Cultures France". This agency was tasked to promoting French culture through education of the language and artistic exchanges, as well as being a point for receiving foreign cultures and integrating them into the country. Those projects were under the responsibility of both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Culture, who developed the model known as 'public-privé'. On this model the government shares responsibilities and expenses with private corporations in regards to different cultural areas (Montiel, 2008).

But the main change, according to Claire Durieux, was that the country changed its system from cultural diplomacy to cultural policy, on which it established a new cultural "spirit" towards the strengthening of two objectives: French language and International Cooperation. The country also developed methods to carry out such goals, such as the professionalization of cultural personnel, by seeking out experts and specialists in cultural areas and management. Another endeavor was the formation of personnel within the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs who were experienced not only in culture-related areas, but also with areas such as political science, international law, economy, and others. Another method was the implementation of programming based on geographical zones, centered on the cultural priorities and activities for each region as

well as the coordination between embassies and cultural agents. These are just some of the strategies implemented by France during this time. (Durieux, 2008).

In 2011, Cultures France was replaced by the Institut Français which, under the sole supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, carries the objective of providing support for cultural action to diplomatic strategies in order to promote French influence abroad through greater dialogue with other cultures within the framework of French governmental policies and priorities. According to its site, the creation of a common brand “...lends coherence and visibility to France`s cultural diplomacy” (Institute Francais, 2015). As to the economic impact of CD through international cooperation, it is easy to understand that if France provides technological assistance and investments to other countries, they will become more interested and invested in such technologies and products, which would amplify France influence and markets throughout the world.

One of the main functions of the Institut, is the promotion of international artistic exchanges, the sharing the French intellectual creation, dissemination of French film heritage and media, the support for the cultural development of the southern cone countries, dissemination and learning of the French language, and training and career monitoring network of cultural agents worldwide, to name some examples.

L`institute works to coordinate efforts with new international actors in the cultural, educational, academic, scientific and media sectors, actors with whom agreements have been signed. France is opening more than 150 institutes throughout the world. These institues will work closely with the approximately 900 existing Alliance Françaises in 161 countries in the world 27 research centers in social and human sciences, 33 development agencies, and more than 400 registered academic institutions. (<http://www.institutfrancais.com/fr/>).

#### **4.1.2 Spain**

As Spain started to experience its transition from a long dictatorship with Francisco Franco as its head (1939–1975) to a parliamentary democracy in the mid 1970`s, the new political leaders, as part of their new internal and foreign policies, started to quickly open up their economy and join European and International organizations. The entire nation was interested in changing the negative perceptions that existed toward Spain, and to present itself to the world as an attractive, reliable, competitive and interesting country, and partner. How could the Spanish hope to achieve that, and attract visitors as well? Their solution was cultural diplomacy.

According to Jaime Otero Roth, the main objective of Spain is “to become a cultural power worldwide through its language and its culture”, which are considered by the main political parties (left and right) as essential elements of foreign policy and development. With this strategy:

...the country has obtained two relevant accomplishments: tangible results, with economic benefits through its cultural industries and a better image for its export products; and intangible results, in the form of international influence in the field of ideas and values, thus favoring the political positions of Spain (Otero Roth, 2008).

Spain has invested a significant portion of its Federal budget (10%) on cultural diplomacy, in order to foster development and equilibrium within its international relations, as well as to strengthen relationships with partner countries. Such strategies of promoting the Spanish culture and language have not only had a positive impact on foreign policy, but also benefited economic development, since industries related to language and culture produce around 15% of Spain Gross Domestic Product and employ a million people (Montiel, 2008). In regards to “international marketing”, through CD, Spain organized the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. The event, which was transmitted to almost 70 countries, increased the number of visitors to the city from 1.7 million per year in 1990, to 7.5 million on average per year, since 1992. Spain also hosted the



World Expo in Seville, which saw more than 40 million visitors, and the European Cultural Capital in Madrid. In addition, Spain was in charge of the V Centennial of the Discovery of America. These are some examples of how CD strategies and events involving tourism and sales can have a significant economic impact.

In the last 20 years, Spain also improved its cultural institutions through the reinvention of the Organization of Ibero American States (OEI), which has its headquarters in Madrid and has 23 members in Europe and Latin America. Spain also established the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AECID), which is part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, has 51 branches in 34 countries, and is divided into technical cooperation offices, cultural centers, and formation centers ([www.aecid.es](http://www.aecid.es)). However, probably the most important cultural organization to be created by the Spanish Government was the “Instituto Cervantes”, whose mission is to promote the Spanish Language and to work towards the advancement of the cultures of all Spanish-speaking countries. It currently consists of almost 90 cultural centers in 43 countries.

However, as it was the case of France, Spain has suffered alongside other countries in Europe in recent years from a tremendous economic crisis. This left the country with high levels of unemployment and severe financial problems. But, through the framework of its *General Strategic Plan 2012-2015* of the State Secretariat for Culture, the country discovered and implemented ingenious cultural strategies aimed at “not only a greater autonomy in the management of the country's principal cultural institutions, such as the Reina Sofia Museum and the National Library, but also seek to promote their financial sustainability through a greater public-private collaboration.” (Council of Europe, 2014).

#### **4.1.3 Brazil**

Ever since the regime of President Getulio Vargas (1930-45) with the incorporation of popular culture into his nationalist “Estado Novo” Brazil has always dedicated importance to culture and to the creation of its cultural institutions (King’s College of London, 2014). Some of these institutions include the National Historic and Artistic Heritage Service (SEPAHAN, 1937), Embrafilme (1969), the Cultural Action Program (PAC, 1973), and the Cultural National Plan (1975), which later transitioned into the Ministry of Culture. As was the case of other countries, Brazil started to leave its isolationist political and economic policies after the end of the Cold War, and of the different dictatorial regimes that prevailed in the country for several decades.

The country started to get involved in international matters like human rights, climate change, cooperation abroad, fight against terrorism, United Nation (UN) Operations in the late 1980’s. From those activities, Brazil started establishing new cooperation and cultural exchanges with other countries. In 1985, the Ministry of Culture and the National Foundation for the Arts (FUNARTE) were created under the Presidency of Jose Sarney, and in 1991, the “Law for the incentive of culture”, or lei Rouanet, was promulgated under the administration of Itamar Franco (1992-1993). The lei Rounaet promoted sponsorships of several economic sectors in cultural projects through tax incentives. It was strengthened by the administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995-2002). This was, according to Lila Bojos mainly “on matters related to financing, taxing, tax incentives, and corporate marketing”, but not “on development ideals or on representing the reality of the Brazilian people.” (Bijos, Leila, 2013).

In regards to cultural diplomacy, in 1995, President Cardoso worked with the other MERCOSUR countries, which at that time included Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, to create a “Meeting of Ministers and Officers in charge of Culture” and a Cultural Parliament (PARCUM), with the attempt to harmonize cultural legislations of the member countries (1996), Other

endeavors included establishing the Protocol of Cultural Integration of MERCOSUL, which was signed into law in Fortaleza, Brazil in 1996.

Under the Presidency of Luiz Inácio Lula de Silva, the Brazilian government established cultural links with developing countries and those with closer connections to Brazil (BRIC countries). The country organized, as part of its CD and in coordination with France, the “*Ano do Brasil na Europa em 2005*” in Paris, which Brazil presented from March to December 2005. The festivities included almost 335 projects, which extended to more than 2,500 official Brazilian cultural activities, plus many others organized spontaneously by State entities, municipalities and cultural associations. Such an event attracted almost 15 million people and was considered Brazil’s biggest cultural promotion in a foreign country (Amaral, 2008). This example illustrates the connection between a CD strategy and the outcomes it generated in terms of public and image, as well as on the promotion of Brazilian products and co-sponsoring Brazilian corporations that operated abroad. During Lula’s Administration, Brazil also promoted different cultural initiatives within international organizations like the Intellectual Property World Organization (OMPI), MERCOSUL, UNESCO, Organization of American States (OEA), and others.

Finally, a very important component of Brazil’s cultural diplomacy is the establishment of 24 *Centros Culturais Brasileiros* in four continents: Africa (6), America (13), Europe (3), and the Middle East (2). These cultural institutions teach and promote the Portuguese language, promote Brazilian music and literature, organize artistic exhibits of Brazilian artists, and promote tourism through informative materials, among other things (Ortiz Mena, et al, 2005).

#### **4.2 Analysis of CD Strategies by Other Countries in Mexico**

Although it is very difficult to establish with precision the level of effectiveness that cultural diplomacy has played in achieving the various foreign policy objectives of France, Spain

and Brazil, it is my belief that CD, in its various programs and strategies, has played an important role in presenting a more complete image of such nations internationally, or at least among certain influential sectors of other civil societies abroad. Such CD strategies have also helped the above nations to establish exchange programs and agreements in several areas with other countries, and therefore to expand their culture and education throughout the world.

As to the impact or effectiveness that such CD strategies may have had on other countries, a larger and more rigorous study might be in order. This becomes apparent when one considers the number of countries on which they have diplomatic relations with, as well as individual cultural and educational objectives. Nonetheless, and only for illustrative purposes, at the end of each experience, a small analysis will be made to gauge the impact that foreign CD strategies may have had within Mexico.

#### **4.2.1 Analysis of France CD Strategies in Mexico**

France, has taken extensive efforts to promote cultural diplomacy in Mexico, through its embassy and other institutions. In terms of educational and academic exchanges, more than 2250 visas are granted every year to Mexican students to study in France, of whom 57% study bachelor and graduate degrees at French Universities. In turn, approximately 1500 French Students study at Mexican institutions every year, being the largest group of foreign students studying in Mexico.

In Mexico, France has several educational and academic institutions such as the Center of Mexican and Central American Studies (CEMCA), the French – Mexican College of Social Sciences, a branch of the Research Institute for Development (IRD), and the Casa de Francia (media and Information center about Contemporary France). France has also established three educational institutions located in México City, Guadalajara, and Cuernavaca. These institutions

serve more than 4,500 and depend on the Agence pour l'enseignement français à l'étranger (AEFE), an institution of the French Government.

In promoting the French language, France established a network of 38 Alliances Françaises throughout different cities in Mexico. It is estimated that more than 250,000 Mexican youth study French at local schools and Universities.

The government has also taken steps to promote French culture. For decades, the French Institute of Latin America (IFAL), has hosted various cultural events in Mexico City, such as important art exhibits and other occasions celebrating literature, cinematography, history, architecture, and other topics. In regards to recent bilateral cultural activities, France presented several art exhibits in Mexico during 2013-2014. The exhibits were crafted by French artists and included a presentation of thirty major art works by impressionists, lent by the French government to the Museo Dolores Olmedo, as well as a series of exhibitions of patrimonial photography entitled “Mano a Mano. France – Mexico. Photographic crossed glances”.

France was invited to the Guadalajara Film Festival as a Guest country of Honor in May of 2013. The country has co-sponsored various events celebrating journalism, architecture, history and literature, presenting artists from both countries. France has also sponsored various French writers at major, prominent Book Fairs of Mexico. Promoting French literature, the country funds French writers who are published in Mexico.

In regards to research cooperation, France has established several bilateral programs and associations between French organizations, such as the *Institut national de la santé et de la recherche médicale (INSERM)* and the *Pasteur Institute*, and Mexican institutions who specialize in mathematics, chemistry, and social sciences. It is worth mentioning that more than 40 Presidents

of Mexican Universities visited France in October, 2013 in order to establish agreements in regards to various areas, such as aeronautics, renewable energy, and the food industry.

In terms of bi-national cooperation, France has spent the last 10 years developing training programs in partnership with French companies who specialize in mechatronics, automotive technology, aviation, hospitality, catering, and other areas. In addition, the French Agency for Development has invested more than \$1 billion US dollars to fund research in sustainable development, becoming the first bilateral partner of Mexico in seeking to address the problem of green growth.

According to previous data and information, and based on the French foreign policies aimed at promoting the French Language, encouraging educational exchanges, and fostering international cooperation, France has been successful in its approach to CD within Mexico, exercising a notable influence and gaining tangible benefits from these efforts..

#### **4.2.2 Analysis of Spanish CD Strategies in Mexico**

According to the Embassy of Spain in Mexico, ever since Mexico and Spain renewed Diplomatic Relations in 1977, both countries have established bi-national commissions which deal on a yearly basis with political, economic, defense, cultural, educational, and legal and consular affairs.

Aside from those commissions, Spain has established a technical office for cooperation in Mexico City, aimed at encouraging bi-national cooperation. The office is part of the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation for Development (AECID), and is funded by both countries, where each government provides 50% of the funds for cooperation programs and projects on a yearly basis. Also, the Center for Industrial Technological Development (CDTI), which depends on Spain's Minister of Sciences and Innovation, recently opened an office in Mexico City and has

developed cooperation partnerships between Spanish corporations and federal and state government entities in Mexico.

Spain has partially funded and implemented, through government agencies and private corporations, several cooperation programs in different States of Mexico. These programs are designed to address areas such as potable water, entrepreneurship and commercialization of artisans, micro energy, and the formation of skilled technicians within the water, gas and electricity industries.

On educational and academic exchanges, the Fundación Carolina (FC) established a branch in Mexico in 2003. This organization pursues the formation of professionals, as well as the strengthening of academic institutions and specialization of professors and researchers. Between 2002 and 2013, the FC has granted 2229 scholarships, with over €19 million euros disbursed to students since the founding of the program. To promote Spanish culture, the Spain Cultural Center (CCE) was established in Mexico City in 1989, which has showcased art exhibits by Mexican and Spanish contemporary artists, as well as lectures and academic forums on a variety of topics. This branch is the biggest CCE that Spain has established worldwide (Embajada de España en México, 2015).

Based on this brief summary, it is clear that Spain has developed a strong CD in Mexico in the areas of international cooperation, academic and educational exchanges, and cultural programs. It is worth mentioning that the common language, political and economic relevance, and mutual interests may have helped foster this close relationship between the two nations.

#### **4.2.3 Analysis of Brazil CD Strategies in Mexico**

Brazil has a Cultural and an Educational sector within its Embassy in Mexico City. These sectors promote Brazilian culture, organizing and supporting events that reflect the diversity and

richness of its culture. Brazil has concentrated its efforts in projects that illustrate both contemporary and traditional cultural activities of high quality, especially toward Mexican students. Many educational institutions receive historic, artistic, cultural, and social information about Brazil directly from the Embassy.

The Embassy also features a Cultural Center Brazil-Mexico (CCBM), which offers Portuguese classes to the Mexican public, and presents Brazilian art exhibits, films, literature forums and musical events. The CCBM also has a library and lends artistic material for exhibits. During May of 2011, Brazil opened a division of education to promote international educational cooperation as well as its academic institutions by offering information about its educational system, scholarships, courses, and other related topics. The Brazilian Embassy also hosts a technical and scientific cooperation sector that pursues a closer dialogue with Mexican government entities to look for opportunities of mutual interest.

Throughout history, neither Brazil nor Mexico have reached an acceptable political, economic, or cultural relationship yet, largely due to their regional rivalry caused by their geopolitical location and desire to become the “leader” in Latin America. Although both countries have improved their tourist and economic relationships through immigration regulations (visas) and partial trade agreements (which have caused a rise on Brazilian exports to Mexico and several Mexican investments in Brazil), both countries are always “competing” against each other in different international arenas, such as the United Nations, Mercosur Vs Pacific Alliance, World Trade Organization, and others. Several authors coincide that there is an enormous potential for cooperation among Mexico and Brazil in different areas, including cultural diplomacy. This could encourage wider familiarity and knowledge of each other’s culture, values and perspectives, fostering a closer relationship between the two (Palacios, 2001).



### **4.3 Proposed Cultural Diplomacy Strategies**

#### **4.3.1 Insertion of Mexico into Foreign Cultures**

This first strategy proposes that in order for any country to achieve a better insertion into a foreign culture, it is highly advisable to take into consideration and utilize the existing local cultural environment and infrastructure. Mexico's exposure to the host country could be higher and larger in terms of audience, by inserting our culture into the new or traditional activities that are carried out every one or two years by the city or renowned organizations, rather than by introducing isolated Mexican events with no local involvement, something that might not be well liked or received.

In other words, this strategy proposes that if the host city presents a yearly Carnaval, Mexico should become involved in the Carnaval. If there is an Art Biennial, Book Fair, or Literature Forums; a Film, Jazz, or Electronic Art Festival, we ought to get involved in those events as well, by including the participation of Mexican artists representatives. The same criteria applies to the yearly programs hosted by public and private cultural entities, such as museums, galleries, theaters, performing arts centers, or academic institutions, which are usually more focused on specific audiences.

Mexico certainly has the cultural and artistic capacity to provide talented dancers, painters, musicians, writers, creators, or innovators into any international cultural event. There are also several opportunities not only for artists of different disciplines, but for academic scholars, scientists, or executives of Mexican corporations to take part in these international events.

A very important part of this strategy is the negotiation of the future cultural project with the local organizing entities, or with other cultural institutions, as well as their involvement on the project. To such effect, it is recommendable to research and consult those in charge of cultural

entities in the host country or region. It would prove valuable to understand what they would like to see, showcase, or present from Mexico in a cultural project in addition to what the Mexican Embassy or Consulate could offer.

This strategy may have a double positive effect: since the cultural executive “proposed” the idea, he/she becomes involved in the event and indirectly co-responsible for its success. This could prove beneficial in getting people involved or when seeking for sponsors that could fund the project. Cynthia Schneider has stated that: “A best practice (in CD) is being attuned to the tastes and interests of counterparts from other countries and using that knowledge strategically.” (Schneider, 2006).

#### **4.3.2 Cultural Activities Based On Cultural Connections: Similarities and Differences**

This strategy emphasizes the relevance of designing activities based on cultural connections, which could be historic, ethnic, religious, artistic, or touristic in nature. The idea is to illustrate the similarities and differences that exist between Mexico and the host country or region. Of course, such activities have to be appealing to society.

Such cultural connections could derive from admiration to Mexico’s folk art and popular celebrations, from its revolutionary heroes like Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata, from its colorful murals, from its music (especially boleros and mariachis) from its iconic artists, like Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, and from tourism attractions, films, or even “soap operas” (telenovelas) which are shown throughout the world. In other instances, the connections could also make reference to the warm reception extended by the Mexican people to the Brazilian team when it won its third title at the soccer world cup in Mexico in 1970.

As the case studies will illustrate, it is important to research and analyze three possibilities under this strategy: 1. The proposed Mexican event has similarities with activities that are

appealing in the host nation (such as is the case with the parallels between folk music and dances, and Vale Tudo (No Holds Barred) and Lucha Libre (free wrestling), 2. Such event has common historic roots that are relevant in the host country, which could strengthen relationships between Mexico and sectors of the civil society (Afro Mexico), 3. The Mexican event, due to its conceptual differences with the uses and traditions of the host country, causes curiosity and appeals to society (Day of the Dead).

#### **4.3.3 Expansion of CD to Other Areas of International Relations and Cooperation**

This third strategy is based on the need to expand Mexico's cultural diplomacy to different aspects of international relations and cooperation, which involve science and technology, environment, education, cultural industries and tourism, and others. This expands past just the arts, crafts, archaeology, and folklore (which Mexico has been promoting for several decades). The objective of this strategy is to approach societies of other nations more in-depth by diversifying the cultural approaches which, although utilizing different means, all pursue foreign policy objectives.

The expansion of CD may involve the promotion of scientific, technical, and academic exchanges between Mexican universities, research centers, and high tech corporations, as well as their counterparts in the host country or region. Because of their proximity with such entities abroad, the Embassies or Consulates could certainly facilitate the interaction, development, and conclusion of such exchanges.

Also, the execution of Sister City agreements between Mexican and foreign cities of similar characteristics have proven to be an effective and comprehensive method of international collaboration when carried out. These deals should involve not only the typical reciprocal visits by the Mayors of both cities to sign their new partnership, but a well-regulated, comprehensive

and long lasting agreement as well, supervised by the foreign ministers of both countries. They could include public projects among the cities, cultural and educational exchanges between schools and universities of both cities, agreements between chambers of commerce and industry to promote trade missions and, if possible, joint ventures between corporations of both cities, as well as other collaborative projects..

Because of their increasing importance worldwide, the promotion of Mexican cultural industries abroad must certainly be included as part of the expansion of CD. Such promotion could include events such as literature forums with Mexican or Latino writers in the host country, film festivals or presentations featuring Mexican contemporary films, short films and documentaries; and popular Mexican TV series, including soap operas (telenovelas). These could be brought over to the host country in coordination with the producers, the stars featured in the shows, or simply by working with the fan clubs of Mexican characters or shows who are based on the host country or region.

In that last regard, it was interesting to see the enormous impact of Mexican soap operas (telenovelas) in Brazil, as well as the popular comic series titled “El Chavo del 8” (Chaves). While I was posted in Sao Paulo as Cultural Attaché in 2005, the Consulate was approached by a fan club dedicated to Mr. Roberto Gómez Bolaños (El Chavo). They sought to get involved on a nonprofit event in a small school, on which they expected about 1,500 people. Ultimately, the event had a participation of over 8,000 people, many of whom were dressed up as popular characters from the comic series.

Another area of expansion of CD could be in the promotion of educational and cultural cooperation with schools or community centers based on the host country or region. These endeavors could be carried out by an embassy or consulate, in coordination with Mexican

communities abroad. The case study of the Escola Estadual Mexico in Sao Paulo, Brazil is a clear and successful example of this CD strategy being implemented effectively.

It is to be mentioned, that although this was not included on the case studies, I was involved, directly or indirectly, with all the above mentioned areas during my postings in Sao Paulo and Kansas City, through academic exchanges, sister city agreements, film presentations, literature forums, and educational cooperation programs.

The next Chapter will review six different cases of cultural events or projects, four in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and two in Kansas City, on which the previous CD strategies were applied. The outcomes are discussed at length which, in my opinion, prove the ability of CD to positively influence Mexico's proposed foreign policies towards such cities.

## **Chapter 5: Case Studies of Cultural Diplomacy**

### **5.1 Case Studies of CD Introduction**

I will proceed to describe how the CD strategies of inserting Mexico into foreign cultures, using cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expanding CD into other areas, were executed in the cities of Sao Paulo, Brazil and Kansas City, Missouri. The cases will demonstrate how CD was used as a tool with the real ability to positively influence Mexico's political, economic, social, and even cultural foreign policy objectives toward and within those regions.

The first section of this chapter, titled "Case Studies in Sao Paulo", will begin with a brief background analysis of the bilateral relations between Mexico and Brazil, focusing on the effects that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) had on both countries. Based on the status of such relationship, we will review the economic, political and social objectives of Mexico's foreign policy towards Sao Paulo, as well as the strategies set out to accomplish them.

Case number 1 is the Carnival of Brazil. This section will make a brief introduction on the characteristics and importance of the Carnival throughout Brazil and more specifically, in Sao Paulo. I will attempt to explain why three Samba schools have selected Mexico as the theme of their presentations. Since the Consulate General of Mexico helped organize two Carnivals, one in Batatais, State of Sao Paulo and the other one in the city of Sao Paulo, both will be described at length, as along with the conclusions of such events.

Next, case number 2, "Escola Estadual Mexico", number 3, Day of the Dead, and number 4, Lucha Libre, will be described. This will be followed with a discussion of how the different strategies were utilized on each situation, concluding with the analysis of the effects that these cases had.

The second section, called “Case Studies in Kansas City, Missouri”, will begin with a brief analysis of the status of the consular jurisdiction (States of Kansas and Missouri), followed by a rundown of Mexico’s economic, political and social specific objectives towards this region as well as the strategies used to accomplish them. Cases 5, “Atlantic Diaspora” and 6, “Jazz Festival”, will be described and my conclusions for the utilization of CD strategies in both cases will be evaluated in detail.

## **5.2 Case Studies in Sao Paulo, Brazil**

### **5.2.1 Diplomatic Relations**

Certainly, the relations between Mexico and Brazil throughout history have not been easy. According to Guillermo Palacios, “they have always been involved in a complex network composed of various ingredients, ranging from the geopolitical environment and its determinants, to the difficulties resulting from being competitive economies but that complement each other very little” (Palacios, 2001).

The integration of Mexico to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1992 created tensions in the diplomatic relations of both countries, the two economic giants of Latin America, especially on behalf of Brazil. This was primarily for two main reasons: 1. Its foreign trade with the United States was going to be affected by Mexico, due to its geographic location and now for being “a partner” under NAFTA, and 2. Brazil, along with other countries in the region, felt a “sense of betrayal” against Latin America, when Mexico joined “the other side”. Mexico had always been a promoter for the integration of the region, and its actions were deemed by many as hypocritical. Brazilian Ambassador Santos Neves stated at that time that “NAFTA is equivalent to a historic divisor, to the elimination of the economic concept of Latin America, forcing us to return to the geographical concept of South America” (Palacios, 2001).

In 1991, the NAFTA negotiations and their potential effect on the region also caused the formation of a new Economic Block, the MERCOSUR, which was integrated by Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. In addition, due to the financial crisis which originated in Mexico at the end of 1994, the stock markets of Brazil and Argentina dropped significantly, down to 34% and 37%, respectively (*the Tequila effect*), during the first three months after such a crisis (Musachio, A., 2012).

Thus, diplomatically, Mexico had many challenges to overcome in Brazil, and still does, when the author arrived in Sao Paulo at the end of 1997.

### **5.2.2 Objectives and Strategies**

The Consulate General of Mexico in Sao Paulo has jurisdiction over eight Brazilian States: Acre, Mato Grosso do Sul, Mato Grosso, Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Rondônia, São Paulo, y Santa Catarina. The personnel at the office works with such States, offering all kinds of consular services, especially tourist visas to Mexico, which were required between 1997 and 2007.

But aside from those services, Mexico had foreign policy objectives, which pursued the strengthening of our bilateral relation; the increase of international cooperation, which would aim to both, contribute to solve challenges of Brazil and to complement Mexico's strategy of national development; strengthening Mexico's international presence through the cultural, economic and tourist promotion of the country in Brazil; and to increase attention to Mexicans living, traveling or investing in Brazil.

Within such objectives, it was necessary to soften the above mentioned tensions (maybe derived from NAFTA) with Brazil, by emphasizing the importance of establishing closer economic ties, which would eventually could lead to new bilateral negotiations for trade agreements and promotion of investments. To that effect, the Consulate designed an economic program, along with



the Mexican Office of Trade in Sao Paulo, which would approach economic public and private entities, chambers of commerce and industry, and private corporations to present them with the advantages of doing business with Mexico. It was also agreed that due to the increasing number of Mexican investments in Sao Paulo, an Association of Mexican Executives of Corporations should be established in Sao Paulo.

Within the above foreign policy objectives, other political and social goals were designed to fortify the relations with the different levels of government, and to establish social, cultural and educational connections with the many entities and communities of society, especially in the metropolitan area of the city of Sao Paulo.

Now, in order to develop the above objectives through cultural diplomacy, the Consulate, in coordination with the SRE, decided to implement strategies which would insert Mexico's presence into the local cultural environment by expanding its activities, establish alliances with Brazilian entities, and get people involved in the projects of their choice, which obviously, had to have a connection with Mexico, promote international cooperation in social, economic and academic projects in Sao Paulo through cultural endeavors, in coordination with the small but active and powerful Mexican communities. These strategies were also designed to diversify the image of Mexico abroad by presenting a less traditional and more contemporary look at our culture, a point of view that might be appealing to different sectors of Brazilian society.

To insert Mexican culture into a metropolitan city that is considered the financial and economic center of Brazil and houses more than 25 million people would not be an easy task. Sao Paulo has the largest Italian, Arab, and Japanese diasporas in the world, and features almost 98 Consulates (34 Honorary) from the roughly same number of countries. In addition, the city that has a very rich cultural environment and infrastructure and a wide variety of international

influences. What could we offer to a city like Sao Paulo, something that would be appealing to its diverse population?

### **5.2.3 Case No. 1. Carnaval do Brazil, Importance and Characteristics**

What is the Carnival and how does it work? The Carnaval do Brazil is an annual celebration festival, with Roman Catholic and African Brazilian roots, that takes place throughout Brazil for six days prior to the fasting season of Lent. This takes place 51 days before Easter and ends on Ash Wednesday at noon. Whether held in the streets of the Northeastern cities of Olinda, Recife, or Salvador, located in the States of Pernambuco and Bahia with featured musicians playing Axe, Frevo or Maracatu, or on the Sambodromos of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo through samba schools, the Carnaval in Brazil is, without a doubt, the most important popular cultural event in the country.

The samba schools are composed of large groups of performers, based on the size of the city, who usually belong to different neighborhoods. Some of the neighborhoods are very poor (known as favelas), and spend months practicing different types of samba (an Afro Brazilian dance) in preparation for the Carnival. Each school has to appoint a “Carnavalesco”, or carnival director who, for several months, designs the costumes, organizes choreography, and finalizes the order and sequence of the cars and wings featured in the Carnival parade.

The school also has to submit and compose the lyrics and the samba music (through a contest) based on the theme that will be presented at the Carnival. In general, all samba schools have to present the following elements to the parade, which are judged by a jury: front commission, allegorical floats or cars, evolution and harmony, theme (enredo), wings of performers, wing of the Baianas, and interpreter (puxador).

The Carnival in Sao Paulo is organized and mostly subsidized by the City of Sao Paulo through two different nonprofit associations: The Independent League of the Samba Schools of Sao Paulo (Liga SP), which represents the top 14 Samba Schools (S.S.) of the “Special Group”, as well as the “Access Group”, and the “Union of Samba Schools in the City of Sao Paulo (UESP), which represents approximately 45 S.S., of Groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 within the smaller Samba Schools and Carnival blocks. The winners of the competition for each category jump to the next level (from 4 to 3, from Access Group to Special Group, etc.), while the losers are brought down to the lower level. Since 1991, the Carnival has taken place at the Sambodromo Anhembi, which has the capacity to seat 33,000 people. The Sambodromo holds more than 30 different sports and cultural events throughout the year.

It is important to mention the essential role that the samba schools play, especially in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, contributing social and economic benefits to their local communities. These schools are sponsored and financed by private or community entities that usually help their neighborhoods by involving hundreds of poor residents in the preparation of the theme of their school, either by hiring them as seamstresses for the thousands of costumes, as dance trainers on the rehearsals, or for building the enormous floats.

Not one, but three samba schools selected Mexico as the theme of their presentations, which is not very common at the Carnival since they usually select more local topics to display. It is important to remember that although economically and politically, as mentioned before, Mexico and Brazil are fierce competitors, culturally, their peoples and civil societies have held empathy and certain level of admiration for each other`s history, culture, and traditions.

Historically speaking, both countries share many things in common. They were discovered and colonized in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century by European empires: Mexico by the Spaniards and Brazil by

the Portuguese. Their original populations were harshly exploited and relegated by their conquerors. Religiously, although both were “forced” to become Catholic, nowadays they are the two biggest catholic countries in the world. Among their religious beliefs, each country has its own “Patroness”: in Mexico, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and in Brazil, Our Lady of Aparecida, who are devotedly celebrated by millions of followers on December 12 and October 12, respectively.

Brazil and Mexico share some African and pre-Columbian indigenous roots, reflected on certain ethnic groups. Elements such as music and an attraction to vivid and strong colors, which is showcased on traditional clothing, folk and contemporary art; cheerful celebrations are just some of the shared traits between the two. As it is known, Mexico also celebrates its own Carnival in more than 200 cities throughout the country, with the most famous ones hosted in Veracruz and Mazatlán, as well as others in Ensenada and La Paz, in Baja California, and Merida and Campeche.

Currently, both countries share their love for soccer, “soap operas” (telenovelas) and certain Mexican Television comic series, such as “El Chavo” (The Lad) or Chaves in Brazil and “Chapulín Colorado” (Red Grasshopper), played by Roberto Gomez Bolaños, who has had a tremendous popularity in Brazil. Such cultural mutual admiration for each other certainly played a big role on the selection of Mexico as a theme of the Carnivals, both in Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, which is part of the second CD strategy of this thesis; using cultural activities based on similarities and differences.

#### **5.2.4 Imperio do Samba in Batatais**

Interestingly, in our case study of the Carnaval in Brazil, the first insertion of Mexico into the most important popular cultural event of the country did not start in the city of Sao Paulo, where I lived, but in a small city called Batatais, located 350 kilometers North-west of the city of Sao Paulo. In June, 2002, as Cultural Attaché of the Consulate General of Mexico in Sao Paulo, I

was contacted via phone by Carlos Henrique Zeri, the President of a Samba school called “Grêmio Recreativo Escola de Samba Império do Samba” (Imperio do Samba). He mentioned that his school was in the process of deciding to select Mexico as a theme for their Carnival, but needed additional information, especially in regards to history books and tourism material that could be used in the preparation of their “enredo”. A meeting was arranged two weeks later to further discuss this project.

During the meeting, Mr. Zeri and two of his colleagues mentioned that a few of their members had traveled to Mexico and had enjoyed the beaches, colonial cities, and archaeological sites. Others had visited some of the exhibits presented by the Consulate in Sao Paulo, and they had become personally impressed by Mexico’s cheerful celebration of the Day of the Dead in Sao Paulo. The Consulate shared a tourism documentary with them and provided them with history books, tourism brochures, disks, and posters of Mexico. Both the Consulate and the “Imperio do Samba” agreed to work with each other to carry out this project once the Board of Directors from the school approved.

A few days later, their board decided to select Mexico as theme of their presentation, but to focus more on the wonders of its tourism and its relationship with the festive celebrations of Brazil, so the theme of the Imperio do Samba was called “Do Misticismo ao seu turismo nacional, é Mexico no Brasil do Carnaval” (From Mysticism to its national tourism, it is Mexico in Brazil of Carnival). Since the school had also requested some funding from the Consulate, we were able to negotiate some sponsorship from a few Mexican corporations doing businesses in Sao Paulo.

At the end of February, 2003, after two trips to Batatais, several emails and phone calls with different officers of the school, as well as a tremendous amount of work that was put forth by the samba school in Batatais in designing the costumes, floats, music and lyrics, Imperio do Samba

paraded with approximately 300 dancers and 70 musicians at the Carnival on the streets of Batatais. They were accompanied by a Mexican Delegation, formed by the Consul General, executives of Mexican corporations, and the Mayor of the City of Batatais, cheered on by the large audience of more than 5000 people that attended the celebration.

As a conclusion, the Carnival of Imperio do Samba in Batatais event developed the three proposed CD strategies of this thesis: The CD strategy “to insert Mexico’s presence into the local cultural environment”, in this case, establishing alliances with Brazilian entities and getting local people involved in the project of their choice worked well since the Consulate established such an alliance with the school “Imperio do Samba”. Approximately 400 members of the school, (including a few Mexicans who traveled to Batatais), many of whom were dancers, performers, and musicians, participated on the Carnival. Dozens of people worked as seamstresses on the costumes, on the floats, and as samba leaders during the several rehearsals, and more than 5,000 people attended this important event. Attendees learned, in their own city, and through their own people, about the history, traditions and attractions of Mexico.

The second and third strategies of “using cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expanding CD into other areas” were also fully applied into this project, since the motivation to present Mexico by Imperio de Samba came from our cultural differences and similarities with Brazil. Certainly, the traditional Mexican CD was “transformed” and expanded to new areas, which in this case is the Carnival.

At the same time, the foreign policy objectives for Brazil were also carried out since the Consulate presented a cultural promotion to strengthen Mexico’s presence in the region. This increased international cooperation, through educational and cultural assistance offered by the Consulate to the samba school and some financial sponsorship by Mexican corporations, who also

became involved with this cultural project and established connections with the members of the samba school. Those actions, through CD, likely helped the strengthening of our bilateral relation with Brazil.

#### **5.2.5 Imperador do Ipiranga in Sao Paulo.**

Coincidence or not, one year later I received a call from Mr. André Machado, who was the “carnavalesco” (artistic director) of the samba school “Imperador do Ipiranga”, which was part of the “Special Group” of the Carnaval of Sao Paulo. As mentioned before, this group represents the 14 best samba schools in Sao Paulo. Mr. Machado expressed his interest in portraying Mexico as the theme of his samba school for the Carnaval do Sao Paulo in 2005.

“Imperador do Ipiranga”, which was founded in 1968 by Mr. Laerte Toporcov, is located on Vila Carioca, right next to Heliopolis (nowadays called Cidade Heliopolis), in the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo. With over 100,000 inhabitants and one million square meters, this was at the time regarded as one of the largest “favelas” in Brazil. Vila Carioca is a district within the neighborhood of Ipiranga, the place where Emperor Dom Pedro I proclaimed the independence of Brazil, on September 7, 1822 (Ipiranga News, 2007).

Consul General Salvador Arriola and I realized that, because of the size and magnitude of the Carnival, it was a big commitment. It was also an opportunity that, if well performed, would promote Mexico everywhere within the country. Just to start, the enredo, or theme of presentation included 2,500 performers in more than 20 wings plus approximately 250 percussionists (bateria).

Fortunately, the Consulate was able to involve the two Mexican-organized communities in this project: the “Association of Mexican Women in Sao Paulo” (MESP), with almost 100 members, and the “Association of Mexican Entrepreneurs”(AME), in Brazil (mostly their husbands), integrated by executives of Mexican corporations in Sao Paulo. Although they had been

recently formed, as an initiative of the Consulate, they also provided some sponsorships to the samba school. As we mentioned before, most of the funding for the samba schools (60 or 70%) comes directly from the city of Sao Paulo.

I had several talks and meetings with André Machado and his team, discussing what they were trying to show from Mexico and after a few weeks, on which they also received advice from many history teachers at schools in Vila Carioca along with books and documentaries from the Consulate, they informed us that the name of their “enredo” was going to be: “Mexico: Uma Viagem Introdutória ao Paraíso dos deuses” (Mexico: an introductory trip to the paradise of gods). Such theme was based, Mr. Machado said, on the rich and amazing pre-Columbian history of Mexico: its passages through the Conquest, Independence and Revolution and its wonderful culture, expressed in vivid colors, ancient traditions, folk, modern, and contemporary art, flora and fauna, and other aspects.

They informed us that it would be the first time in the history of the Carnaval of Sao Paulo in which a samba school would dedicate its theme completely to an individual country, so they had to obtain authorization to do so from the judges. Since the theme had to have a “connection” with Brazil given its importance and popularity in Sao Paulo, they decided that it was going to be the 1970 Soccer World Cup, held in Mexico, where the Brazilian team obtained its third world title.

The experience of working together with the members of the “Imperador do Ipiranga” from the beginning to the end was rich and intense. The community work carried out by the president, directors and staff of the samba school was impressive. They organized seamstresses who crafted thousands of costumes; designers and mechanics who worked on the allegorical cars; talented musicians who composed the samba music, lyrics, choreography, dance trainers, and many others.



Mr. Machado was at the forefront of the whole enredo, taking care to always utilize historic and true elements of Mexican culture in all aspects.

A small exception was when one of his assistants asked me if we would be fine to include depictions of Zorro, Speedy Gonzalez or Panchito Pistolas in one of the floats or allegorical cars. The answer was no, because those characters are not part of our history or culture. They are an invention from the United States. They were not included.

At the day of the Carnaval, the samba school Imperador do Ipiranga showcased an impressive overview of Mexico`s history, traditions, arts, and flora and fauna. The presentation included 20 wings and 5 allegorical cars, plus 250 samba musicians dressed as “mariachis”. The cars featured the following:

**Car I.- Precolumbian Civilizations: God Quetzalcoatl:** Wings: 1.-Olmecs; 2.- Maias: God Sun; 3.- Toltecs: Eagle Knights; 4.- Aztecs; 5.- Baianas: Mothers of the Gods; 6.- Spanish Soldiers

**Car II.- Spaniard Invasion: Our Lady of Guadalupe;** 7.- Battery (Musicians) Mariachis; 8.-The Spanish Elite; 9.- The Independence; 10.- Kids dressed as “Periquillo Sarmiento” (The Mangy Parrot);

**Car III.-Mexican Revolution: Honors to the Heroes and Leaders (Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata);** 11.- Revolutionaries; 12.- Tierra y Libertad (Land and Liberty);

**Car IV.- Traditions of Mexico: Day of the Dead (kids);** 13.- Wing of the Catrinas (skulls); 14.- The icons of Mexican Films; 15.-Colorful Arts and Crafts; 16.-Fauna and Flora; 17.- A dive into Crystal Waters; 18.- Mexican Cuisine; 19.- Welcome Brazilian Friends; 20.- Old Guard (Soccer Uniforms);

**Car V.- Mucho Gusto, Brazilian Friends: World Soccer Cup 1970!**

According to the samba critic, Pedro Migao:

“Imperador do Ipiranga, presented the theme "Mexico – An introductory trip to the Paradise of the gods." The carnival man André Machado once again surprised everyone by an irrepressible development of the plot and the amazing taste in the design and finish of the floats ... the school made a very interesting presentation .The beginning of the show was dedicated to the Mexican gods, some with different names for different tribes. The open wings impressed by the exquisite workmanship, with huge golden serpents who moved ahead of a crown, school symbol, which revolved and showed typical figures of different Mexican tribes. The second sector talked about these tribes, and given the Mexican diversity in this sense, was filled with Olmecs, Aztecs and other tribes with good and creative costumes. The carnival knew how to explore the peculiarities of each of these tribes, thus avoiding a repeat. It was, however, a parade of very interesting moments. The battery came dressed as mariachis and came to public attention, as well as the last car, which recalled the Brazilian tri championship World Cup 1970, held in Mexico (Migao, Pedro, 2005).

As a conclusion, I consider that the presentation on Mexico organized by the Samba School, Imperador do Ipiranga in Sao Paulo was a relevant, innovational, educational and multitudinous event. This event was relevant, because it was inserted and presented at the biggest and most important cultural popular event in Brazil, the Carnival. It was innovative because it was the first time, in the history of carnivals in Sao Paulo, that a samba school dedicated its enredo (thematic compendium) to a foreign country (Mexico), naming it “Mexico: An introductory trip to the Paradise of the gods”. The celebration was educational because it showcased many aspects of the rich culture present in Mexico, such as archaeology, history, arts, literature, and traditions.

According to the broadcasters of Rede Globo (the most important TV station in Brazil), Imperador do Ipiranga “taught the best lesson on Mexico in the history of Brazil to more than 50 million people”. Finally, the event was multitudinous because, since the Carnival was transmitted via Television through Rede Globo, it reached more than 50 million people throughout Brazil and other countries around the world, plus, the 33,000 people that attended the Sambodromo. Even a journal in Chandigarh, India called “The Tribune”, published a picture of the allegorical car featuring the Mexican tradition of “Day of the Dead”.

As it with the “Imperio de Samba” do Batatais in 2003, the three CD strategies proposed in this thesis were successfully applied at the Carnaval do Sao Paulo at a larger scale, in 2005. Also, the foreign policy objectives of strengthening Mexico’s bilateral relation with Brazil were pursued and carried out by the Consulate. These included: international cooperation, through cultural and financial assistance, the fortification of Mexico’s presence through cultural promotion of the country abroad, and to support Mexican communities living in Brazil through their involvement and participation in the most important popular cultural event in the country. .

As mentioned, CD does not produce immediate effects in terms of foreign policy. Despite this, because of the above reasons, I do believe that Mexico’s presentation by the Samba School, Imperador do Ipiranga in Sao Paulo, was able to positively influence Mexico’s presence in Sao Paulo exposing the content to many people in Brazil and worldwide, at least in the short term.

It is interesting to mention that the Imperador do Ipiranga may have influenced another very important samba school called “Viradouro”. This school participated in the Carnaval do Rio de Janeiro five years later, in 2010. The theme was called: “Mexico: O Paraíso das Cores sob o signo do Sol” (Mexico: the color’s paradise under the sign of the Sun”). The Carnavalescos were Junior Schall and Edson Pereira. It was an even bigger event than the one in Sao Paulo, since it

featured 3,600 performers in 34 wings plus approximately 350 percussionists (bateria) and 9 allegorical cars.

Although the theme included several historic and traditional aspects, it focused primarily on Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, as well as more contemporary aspects of Mexican culture, including environmental and social problems, TV characters such as “Chaves”, Chapolin, popular icons like “luchadores” (wrestlers), and catrinas (skulls). According to Mr. Schall, they decided to select Mexico as the topic of their theme because they identified the soul of the school with the colors and happiness that exist in Mexico.

### Case study No. 1- Carnival do Sao Paulo



**Figure 5.1** Precolumbian Civilizations: God Quetzalcoatl (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005) **Figure 5.2** Spaniard Invasion (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005)



**Figure 5.3** Toltecs: Eagle Knights (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005)

**Figure 5.4** Baianas: Mothers of the Precolumbian Gods (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005)

### Case study No. 1- Carnival do Sao Paulo



**Figure 5.5** Mexican Traditions: Day of the Dead (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo 2005)



**Figure 5.6** Revolutionaries: Tierra y Libertad (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005)



**Figure 5.7** Battery (Musicians) as Mariachis (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005)



**Figure 5.8** Mucho Gusto, Brazil: World Soccer Cup 1970! (Photograph by Adriana Beretta, Sao Paulo, 2005)



### **5.3 Case No. 2 Escola Mexico in Sao Paulo, Background and Development**

The program “Escuelas Mexico” was initiated as part of the agreements reached at the “II Reunion of Chiefs of State and Government of the Tuxtla’s Mechanism of Dialogue and Concertation”, held in San José, Costa Rica, in February 1996. This reunion was held in order to develop educational regional projects that promote the development of children and women. This pilot program, designed to be applied to schools named after Mexico, or featuring the name of a Mexican hero or city within the seven Central American countries, was initiated by Mr. Salvador Arriola, who was Ambassador of Mexico in Guatemala (1996 -2000). He began by “adopting” one school in Guatemala as he provided financial resources and donated books and school materials.

Ambassador Arriola was appointed as Consul General of Mexico in Sao Paulo in March of 2001. The cultural conditions differed from those in Guatemala due to the language barrier and lack of knowledge of Mexico. After a few weeks of searching, the consular officers located an “Escola Estadual Mexico” in Sao Paulo, based in a very poor neighborhood called “Vila Joaniza”. This neighborhood became well known by the mid 1990’s due to high levels of violence and crime.

The Consulate approached the Principal of the school, Professor Suely Tiburcio, and offered to “adopt” the institution and help the students acquire a more in-depth understanding of Mexico and its culture through different educational and cultural projects. We offered history books, maps, and posters depicting Mexico, which were well received and, with the assistance of the “Association of Mexican Women in Sao Paulo” (MESP), the students at the school were taught how to make sugar skulls, catrinas, and even piñatas, among other Mexican folk art expressions.

Artist Felipe Ehrenberg, who was appointed as the Cultural Attaché of Mexico in Brazil, put together a group of art students from the school and after a few weeks, painted a mural at the

entrance of the “Escola Mexico”, symbolizing different aspects of Brazil and Mexican cultures and traditions.

The program did not stop there. Through the Consulate’s proposal, the “Association of Mexican Entrepreneurs”(AEM) organized a “Mexico Golf Tournament”. All of the profits collected at the event were given to the Escola Mexico. In addition, through the Banco Santander, the Consulate donated 50 personal computers, which the school lacked, and hired a computer instructor. Several repairs and renewals were implemented in the school, including a new computer room, and 700 shirts were donated by the MESP in a ceremony attended by Mexico’s Ambassador to Brazil, Andrés Valencia. During this event in 2007, the student chorus at Escola Mexico sang the Mexican Anthem in Spanish.

Taking this program as a model, different Consuls in Sao Paulo formed the Latin America and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), presided by Amb. Arriola. GRULAC signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Secretary of Education of the State of Sao Paulo on May 2007. The main objective of this endeavor was to promote cultural exchanges between schools from Brazil and each of the participating countries, as well as to promote the teaching of Spanish in the school network in Sao Paulo.

By 2007, most of the 25 countries registered as members of GRULAC had “adopted” a State school in Sao Paulo, naming the institution after each nation. On May 27, the “inauguration” of the school “Republic of Panamá” was attended by the then First Lady of Panama, Vivian Fernández de Torrijos. The school received a donation of books and 15 new personal computers for their classes directly from the Consulate General of Panama in Sao Paulo. (Secretaria da Educação do Estado de São Paulo, 2007). Similar donations and cultural exchanges occurred with the other 24 schools. Through the Federal Government, the SRE has continued and extended



Program “Escuelas México”, which now spans over 145 schools in countries such as Chile, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Guatemala, Peru, and several others in Latin America. The total number of students that attend these schools is at 59, 248. The Program, run by the Mexican Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID), organizes Writing and Drawing Contests every year, where those students who are chosen as winners visit different cities in Mexico. The SRE also donates US \$1,000.00 for each school that is registered under the Program.

In the case of the Escola Estadual Mexico (EEM) in Sao Paulo, the proposed CD strategy of inserting Mexico’s presence into the local cultural or educational environment rendered very good results. These strategies expanded to other Consulates and schools in the region, following the same model. Students at the EEM were taught not only Mexican history, traditions, crafts, and art expressions, but also learned about Spanish and took computer classes. The EEM also exchanged educational information with the “Escuela República de Brasil” in Mexico City. Other “adopted” schools at different levels also acquired cultural knowledge and educational materials from the adopting countries.

The CD strategy of expanding to other areas was applied, through the promotion of educational and cultural cooperation, to Escola Mexico by the Mexican Consulate, in coordination with the Mexican communities in Sao Paulo, AEM and MESP. As mentioned, this case study is a clear and successful example of this CD strategy.

It is important to mention that both the AEM and the MESP, as well as the Consulate General of Mexico in Sao Paulo, have continued to support the “Escola Estadual Mexico” in Sao Paulo through different activities. This includes the “Golf Tournaments”, which are currently on their 8<sup>th</sup> edition and sees the profits channeled to improve the conditions of the EEM. A year after

the Consulate initiated its program with the EEM, the educational and material improvements were so remarkable that, according to Professor Tiburcio, there was a waiting list of students hoping to attend the school.

The GRULAC program in Sao Paulo has adopted more than 30 schools since 2007, and several country members have continued to support their schools with educational materials, financial resources, and the promotion of the Spanish language.

In conclusion, I consider that the project Escola Mexico was and still is an effective project that, through cultural diplomacy and community work, improved the educational and economic conditions of thousands of students in several schools. It also set up an example to more than 20 countries, through their Consulates, to “adopt” schools in Sao Paulo and to promote a more “globalized” view of the world among countless students.

The foreign policy objectives of international cooperation in education, the strengthening of Mexico’s presence through cultural activities with entities of civil society of Sao Paulo, particularly with teachers and students, and the involvement of the Mexican communities (AEM and MESP) with the local entities and institutions were also duly pursued. The signing of the Agreement between GRULAC with the Secretary of Education of the State of Sao Paulo, and the involvement of this entity with the activities of the Escola Mexico, was also an important political achievement of strengthening relations with Government institutions.

## Case No. 2 Escola Mexico em Sao Paulo



**Figure 5.9** Students of the “Escola Mexico” in Sao Paulo, with the shirts donated by the MESP, after singing Mexico’s and Brazil’s National anthems (Photograph by Gabriela Nava, Sao Paulo, 2006)



**Figure 5.10** School Principal with teachers, Mexican entrepreneurs and members of MESP (Photograph by Gabriela Nava, Sao Paulo, 2006)

**Figure 5.11** Visit to premises of Escola Mexico by Mexican Delegation (Photograph by Gabriela Nava, Sao Paulo, 2006)

### **5.3.1 Case No. 3 Day of the Dead**

In the month of August, 2002, the Consulate General of Mexico in Sao Paulo was contacted via phone by an officer of the entity “Serviço Social do Comércio” (Social Service of Commerce), or SESC. They requested that the Consulate organize different cultural activities surrounding the Day of the Dead at the “Mostra SESC de Artes. Ares & Pensares” (SESC Art Show. Airs & Thoughts).

SESC is a powerful, private Brazilian institution, sponsored by entrepreneurs involved in the commerce of goods, services, and tourism. The institution was established in 1946 to offer a wide variety of cultural and social activities to their employees, and to the public in general. SESC has branches in all Brazilian States, reaching more than 2,200 municipalities throughout the country, where it promotes educational, health, culture, and leisure and social services. SESC has more than 30 units in Sao Paulo, mostly consisting of cultural and sport centers.

The cultural program presented by the Consulate of Mexico to the SESC a few weeks later included an Altar of the Dead, designed by Kharla Ruiz and Patricia Siqueiros, with the participation of several members of the AMSP. The program also portrayed tributes to Mexican icons, Maria Felix and Mario Moreno “Cantinflas” and hosted a photographic exhibit called “Offerings”, created by Ricardo Ramírez Arriola. Through several different images, this presentation illustrated how death is “celebrated” in different regions of Mexico. There was also a drawings exhibit called “Onceava Hora” (Eleventh Hour), created by renowned artist Felipe Ehrenberg. This exhibit presented 35 drawings of “catrinas” (funny skulls), made in ink and all related to different aspects of death.

Also, the Mexican Consulate presented a musical performance by the Mexican quartet group “Zenzontle”, who hail from the State of Veracruz. The performance featured traditional

“Jarocho” music, with popular songs played with typical instruments such as “Quena”, sampoña, charango and harp. There was also a lecture on “the Concept of Death in Mexico”, held by Dra. Simone Andrea Carvalho da Silva as part of the presentation at the SESC (Hirszman, 2002).

In conclusion, I assert that the Day of the Dead event applied two of the CD proposed strategies of this thesis. It “inserted” an important cultural aspect and tradition of Mexico into the Brazilian society, reaching an audience of more than 10,000 people via the SESC Ipiranga in Sao Paulo, which took place from November 1-10, 2002. The event also illustrated the attraction that the people of Brazil hold towards a Mexican celebration that showcases both similarities and differences between Mexican and Brazillian cultural traditions. In fact, interestingly enough, the brochure of the SESC advertised this event as follows:

Day of the Dead in Mexico. Series of events about the peculiar form of how death is celebrated in Mexico. The SESC Airs & Thoughts proposes avenues for artistic enjoyment, seeking to attract their gaze to differentiated spaces, times and consumptions. An invitation to internal displacement: a time of pause, interval and suspension (SESC, 2002).

Regarding similarities, both Mexican and Brazilian cultures share strong religious beliefs (they are the two biggest catholic nations worldwide), the result of two types of catholic syncretism, with Pre Columbian in the case of Mexico, and with African and indigenous civilizations in Brazil. It is important to remember that from 1528 until 1850, between 4 and 5 million African slaves came to Brazil and brought their spiritual belief systems (religion) with them to the Americas. Here. they had to keep their practices hidden, as were the cases with the Candomblé, Umbanda, Batuque and Xangó religious traditions, whose followers, mostly slaves,

used the images of Christian saints revered by the Portuguese to pay homage to their own orixás (gods and goddesses) (Guevara, B. 2004).

These Afro-Brazilian religions, particularly Candomblé, whose name means “dance in honor of the gods”, share with certain religious or traditional beliefs with other nations, such as tributes to their deceased ancestors “who help to protect and guide the descendants who take care to maintain connection with them” (Guevara, B., 2004). This closely resembles the Day of the Dead. Other similarities on festive celebrations through music and dances can be demonstrated, such as the Carnaval, which are also very common in different regions of Mexico. Such events may include a certain level of popular sarcasm toward deceased political characters or simply, toward death, as in the case of the usually elegantly dressed catrinas (skulls), which were popularized throughout Mexico and the world by 19<sup>th</sup> Century Mexican artist, Jose Guadalupe Posada.

Similarities aside, the Day of the Dead celebration also attracted the attention of Brazilians because of how differently death is “celebrated” in Mexico. Unlike their *Dia de Finados*, where locals visit cemeteries and churches in a day that is dedicated to mourning and grief, Mexico celebrates the “return”, where the souls of our deceased loved ones are celebrated joyfully, through gatherings of family and friends, and with offerings of food, drinks, music, and pictures in altars dedicated to them. This day has its origin on the Aztec festival dedicated to the Mictecacihuatl, goddess of the underworld, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, before the Spanish conquest of Mexico, and its original date was moved to November 2, so it would coincide with the catholic holiday of All Saints Day. In 2008, this holiday was registered in the UNESCO’s *List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*.

The Day of the Dead event in Sao Paulo continued to have an impact after it was presented at the SESC: There was extensive media coverage and a documentary on national television about the SESC exhibit, comparing specifically such differences about the significance and celebration of death between Mexico and Brazil. Two visual Arts exhibits, created by Ricardo Ramírez Arriola and Felipe Ehrenberg, were shown in several forums and schools throughout Brazil, for promotional and educational purposes. The images of the catrinas were shown at the Carnivals of Sao Paulo (2005) and Rio de Janeiro (2010), since both samba schools, “Imperador do Ipiranga” and “Viradouro”, dedicated an allegorical car each to such theme.

Such interest on the Day of the Dead continued in 2006, when the Consulate General of Mexico presented a big exhibit called “Zincografías de Jose Guadalupe Posada” (1852-1913), author of the catrinas, at the Gallery Tomie Ohtake. in Sao Paulo. The exhibit ran from December 13, 2006 until February 11, 2007, and it received over 18,000 visitors.

As to foreign policy objectives, I would say that through the cultural promotion of our traditions to significant entities within society, such as the SESC, the presence of Mexico was strengthened. Again, the involvement of the MESP in coordination with the Consulate in developing cultural event, and the relationship of Mexican corporations with executives of the SESC were also important for economic purposes.



### Case No. 3 Day of the Dead



**Figure 5.12** Altar of the Dead, honoring artists Maria Felix and “Cantinflas” at the SESC  
(Photograph by Alejandro Siqueiros, Sao Paulo, 2002).



**Figure 5.13** Lithograph of Catrinas by José Guadalupe Posada. Colección de la SRE.  
(Photograph by Instituto Tomie Ohtake, Sao Paulo, 2006)



**Figure 5.14** “Três Escadas e um cara surpreso”, of the collection Décima Primeira Hora, by  
Felipe Ehrenberg, 2002



### **5.3.2 Case No. 4 Luta Livre Sem Limite de tempo (Lucha Libre)**

At the beginning of 2006, the Consulate General of Mexico in Sao Paulo decided to present a cultural event called “Luta Livre. Sem limite de tempo” (Free Wrestling. With no time limits) in Sao Paulo. This was based on the popularity of Vale Tudo (No Holds Barred or Anything Goes) in Brazil, which is a full contact, almost no rules freestyle fighting. This style of fighting is similar to our popular “Lucha Libre”, which is free-style wrestling that is known widely in Mexico and in other Latin American countries. Both use different martial arts techniques and have similar roots in Mexico and in Brazil, not only as a sport-show but also as a movie and television show theme. It seemed to be a perfect match.

In Brazil, Vale Tudo began to be practiced in circuses during the 1920`s in Sao Paulo. It was introduced to the United States in the 1970`s and in 1993, it became part of the “Ultimate Fighting Championship” (UFC). During the 1990`s, Vale Tudo was extremely popular in Brazil and fights were commonly televised throughout the country.

With Lucha Libre, fighters (or luchadores) usually wear colorful outfits and ingenious masks. They utilize:

...choreographic punches, plastic moves, jumps and acrobatic falls, (which) make it evident that it is not a conventional fight. The logic of a manichaeism, to some extent childish, and the rivalries between the fighters are the dramatic elements that drive the show. (Monstros do Ringue, 2013).

In Mexico, Lucha Libre is a passion that goes back to the 1930`s and is an important part of Mexican culture. Probably the most iconic “luchador” in Mexico`s history was El Santo, who with his silver mask, was not only a professional wrestler for almost fifty years but also a famous movie star who starred in dozens of very popular films.

Lucha Libre, or Luta Livre, had been very popular in Brazil and “was one of the pillars of mass culture at the height of popularity in the 1960s and 70s, leveraging the audience of TVs, with characters as Ted Boy Marino and Achilles” (Monstros do Ringue, 2013). Ted Boy Marino, who was born in Italy, lived in Argentina and arrived to Sao Paulo in 1953. He was one of the most popular pro-wrestlers of Luta Livre in Brazil. Like “El Santo” in Mexico, Marino also became an idol, actor, and a TV presenter for more than 25 years.

“Luta Livre. Sem limite de tempo” was presented at the Centro Cultural Sao Paulo, from April 24 until May 21, 2006 and featured a discussion on “Lucha Libre in the Movies”. The discussion was host by former pro-wrestler, Ted Boy Marino and Mexican artist, Felipe Ehrenberg, who had painted several works that depicted Mexican “luchadores”. There was also an art exhibit on Lucha Libre titled “Arena México”, featuring 66 prints and oils on canvas by Mexican contemporary artist Demián Flores, and a photomontage and video installation by Brazilian artist Felipe Nepomuceno at the Galeria Olido (Gioia, 2006). Finally, a series of films, featuring 8 movies starring “El Santo”, and one with Ted Boy Marino, was displayed from May 9 -21, 2006 (Saia, 2006).

It is to be mentioned that about a dozen former wrestlers, friends of Mr. Marino, attended the discussion and the opening of the film festival, dressed in their old masks and costumes. Some of them became very emotional during the showing of the movies. The film series and the art exhibit, Arena México, had been previously shown in Rio de Janeiro at the Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, during the months of March and April, 2006.

In conclusion, and based on the response by the different sectors of Sao Paulo`s civil society as well as by the attendance by the Brazilian public to the three events aimed at promoting Mexican culture within Brazil, I would conclude that such cultural activities were neither

satisfactory nor helpful to effectively accomplish the foreign policy objectives that had been established for Sao Paulo, even though the promotion efforts implemented by the media were extensive.

The Consulate should have spent more time researching the apparent relationship or connection between the fights of Vale Tudo and the Mexican Lucha Libre. The real fact was that although both started in the 1920`s and dealt with wrestling, martial arts, and fighters, the “connection” between the two was vague or non-existent. Vale Tudo is a combat sports with almost no rules, mostly targeted at younger generations who want to see “real action” and violence between the fighters. It was, in the late 1990`s, and early 2000`s, and still continues to be, very popular in Brazil, with the fights being televised throughout the country.

On the other hand, Lucha Libre had been popular within popular culture since the 1960`s and 70s. As a result, its popularity in Brazil had been declining during the last 20 years, and to a less extent, in Mexico as well. At the time, the aim was to create masked heroes or icons that, could entertain guests not only on the ring, but also on films and television as they fought for justice or to save the world against monsters, cruel villains, and even zombies. So for the fans of Vale Tudo who pursued other goals, there was no reason to attend the discussion or the film series of “El Santo” and Ted Boy Marino, which did not have a significant cinematographic value.

What we presented on this cultural activity within the Arena México art exhibit, the film series and the debate or discussion that the Consulate wished to promote, had no “connection” with the Vale Tudo, and was simply not appealing to the majority of the Sao Paulo society who mostly had no idea of who the Santo was. Although a documentary called “Monstros no Ringue” told the history of Lucha Libre (Telecatch) in Brazil, it was produced in 2013 (seven years later).

Such a theme was relevant only for historic purposes and certainly had no relation with Mexico or with the Santo`s films.

Because of the above reasons, I consider that neither the discussion nor the film series of El Santo and Ted Boy Marino should have been presented in 2006, since neither were particularly appealing; seemed outdated to Brazil`s population, and most importantly, they were not helpful in effectively accomplishing the foreign policy objectives that had been established for Sao Paulo, like the improvement of Mexico`s image abroad or the strengthening of political and economic connections. Maybe the art exhibit Arena México by Demián Flores, due to its social proposals and high quality, could have been promoted and presented, for its artistic and sociological value.

**Case No. 4 Luta Livre Sem Limite de tempo (Lucha Libre)**



**Figure 5.15** Serie Arena México, by Demián Flores (oil on canvas, 2000. Galeria Olido, Sao Paulo, 2006)

**Figure 5.16** Serie Arena México, by Demián Flores. (oil on canvas, 2000. Galeria Olido, Sao Paulo, 2006)



**Figure 5.17** Santo vs. the Mummies of Guanajuato (1972) Film Series “Santo, the Silver Masked Man”, SRE. Promotional Poster

**Figure 5.18** Santo vs. the Invasion of Martians (1967) Film Series “Santo, the Silver Masked Man”, SRE Promotional Poster

#### **5.4 Case Studies in Kansas City, Missouri**

I arrived to the Consulate of Kansas in Kansas City on September 2007. Jacob Prado took office as new Consul of Kansas City a year later, in July 2008 and appointed me as Vice Consul for Cultural and Economic Affairs.

After reviewing and checking the cultural and economic environment and infrastructure available in the jurisdiction of the Consulate of Mexico in Kansas City, which covered the States of Kansas and Missouri, and more specifically, the Kansas City Metropolitan Region, we both agreed to concentrate the efforts of the Consulate to the following foreign policy objectives: to increase and to strengthen Mexico's international presence through the cultural, economic and tourist promotion of the country abroad in a region that was not very open to foreign influences neither politically, artistically or culturally, to promote trade and investments by informing possible stakeholders about the advantages of doing business in Mexico (which was part of the economic promotion) and by improving corporate and political connections, and to promote international cooperation and attention to the Mexicans living in the region by promoting more community involvement via Mexican and Latino culture.

In order to accomplish such objectives, we decided to carry out the following CD strategies: To insert Mexico into the region by making Kansas City and other important cities part of the cultural itinerary of the SRE and, as a result, bring several Mexican artistic exhibits to a region where, according to a museum officer, "the main and only priority were the artists from the Midwest". We also aimed to approach, through cultural projects based on similarities and differences, other minorities in order to strengthen relationships with the Latino entities and communities, and to promote Mexican and Latino artists by exhibiting their art works. This strategy would also insert Mexico's culture into the local environment.

#### **5.4.1. Case No. 5 Atlantic Diaspora**

This case was initiated by following a very different pattern. After developing dozens of cultural events in the Kansas City region for more than two years during 2008-2010, Jacob Prado and I approached the Director of the Mattie Rhodes Center (MRC), Mr. John Fierro, with the purpose of doing a joint cultural event. Some of the earlier events included itinerary artistic exhibits from Mexico, art shows from Mexican and Latino artists from the region, musical performances, and lectures and forums where distinguished Mexican scholars participated. With more than 125 years of existence, the MRC was and still is, according to its site, “the only fully bilingual/bicultural, nationally accredited, and state-certified behavioral health care provider in the Greater Kansas City region, which provides social services and artistic education and presents art exhibits and collections”(Mattie Rhodes Center, 2011).

Mr. Fierro and the MRC were initially reluctant to organize joint events with other entities and did not seem to be interested on the art exhibits or cultural proposals that the Consulate had available. So, we changed the approach and instead of emphasizing what the Consulate could offer, I asked him what the MRC would like to see, show, or present from Mexico. A few days later and much to my surprise, Mr. Fierro answered “Black Mexico”, and nothing else.

That was the beginning of this case study, which encouraged the Consulate to join forces with the “American Jazz Museum of Kansas City” (AJM) and its Executive Director, Mr. Greg Carroll, who indirectly represented the Black artistic community in Kansas City. Obviously, the Consulate perceived a great opportunity of not only presenting the not-so-well known “Mexico’s Third Root”, or Afro Mexico, to Kansas City, but to initiate a partnership and to strengthen the relationships between the Latino and the Black communities in Kansas City as well by involving both groups in the design, logistics, and implementation of all the programs. That purpose was

fully achieved. Besides, because of the bicultural character of the project, we were able to obtain funding from the *Sprint Foundation* and the *Neighborhood Tourist Development Fund* in Kansas City.

After several meetings between the three entities and other artists, the program was widely announced as follows:

Atlantic Diaspora: The Musical and Social Influences of Africans in Mexico and the United States” is part of an expanding cultural diversity project between the American Jazz Museum (AJM), the Mexican Consulate, and the Mattie Rhodes Center, dedicated to showcase and analyze the importance of African roots in Mexico and the United States, as well as its influence on society and music in both countries” (American Jazz Museum, 2010). [This program included six cultural events]

June 4 through September 30, 2010. Changing Gallery of the AJM. Photographic Exhibit, “*Atlantic Diaspora: The Musical and Social Influences of Africans in Mexico*”, by Mexican photographer José Manuel Pellicer: This exhibition featured a collection of 80+ works consisting of photographic digital compositions on canvas and photographs created by Pellicer from 1965 until 2010. These works present the life and culture of the Afro-mestizo populations of the Mexican people from the Costa Chica, in the southwest coasts of Mexico, which covers the States of Tabasco, Campeche, Veracruz, Guerrero, and Oaxaca. The “Atlantic Diaspora” exhibit confronted the aesthetic, political and economic questions of origins.

June 4, 2010, 6:00 pm. Atrium of the AJM. *Marimba concert (instrument that also has its origins in Africa) by the worldwide famous Nandayapa Trio of Mexico* and a panel discussion featuring the artist José Manuel Pellicer, Greg Carroll (CEO, American Jazz Museum), John Fierro



(CEO, Mattie Rhodes Center), Javier Nandayapa (musician/leader, Nandayapa Trio) and Barbara Peterson (Black Archives of Mid-America).

July 13, 2010, 6:00 pm. The Gem Theater. Movie Night and Talkback. “*The Third Root in Mexico, documentaries*”: Celebrated Mexican director Rafael Rebollar showed and discussed the historical and social significance of several documentaries, including “La Raiz Olvidada” (The Forgotten Root), “De Florida a Coahuila” (From Florida to Coahuila), and “Correrías en el Monte” (Incursions into the Mountains), as well as “La Tercera Raiz” (The Third Root).

August 12, 2010, 6:00 pm. American Jazz Museum Atrium. *Panel Discussion: “Roots, Remembrance, and Revolution”*. For nearly 500 years, the presence and the accomplishments of Africans in Mexico and the United States have been either overlooked or misunderstood. This panel discussion explored this important history while also addressing its current significance. Panelists included Dr. Clovis Semmes (UMKC Professor of Sociology & Black Studies Director), Xanath Caraza (UMKC & Rockhurst Spanish Professor & Poet), Dr. Mary Emma Graham (KU Professor African American and 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature), and Socorro Herrera (Kansas State University Professor, Dean of Education & ESL Program Director). The Atrium concert featured Latin Jazz group Makusa.

August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 7:00 pm. Blue Room American Jazz Museum. “*Primera Página*”. A *special session of Jazz Poetry Jams* featuring the Latino Writer’s Collective and Black Poets: This was an evening of phenomenal poetry and Latin jazz.

September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 10:00am. Atrium American Jazz Museum. *Caliente!*: Children between the ages of 2 and 7, from different schools and ethnicities, enjoyed a special session of *Jazz Storytelling*, which explored the roots of Latin Jazz.

In conclusion, the above program, composed of five cultural events, attracted a significant amount of visitors, including people from different backgrounds within Kansas City's civil society, such as scholars, musicians, artists, writers, film producers, movie-goers, and children. It was a classic example of a strategy of cultural activities based on similarities. In this case, the similarities were on certain common African roots in Mexico and the United States and more specifically, the region of Kansas and Missouri.

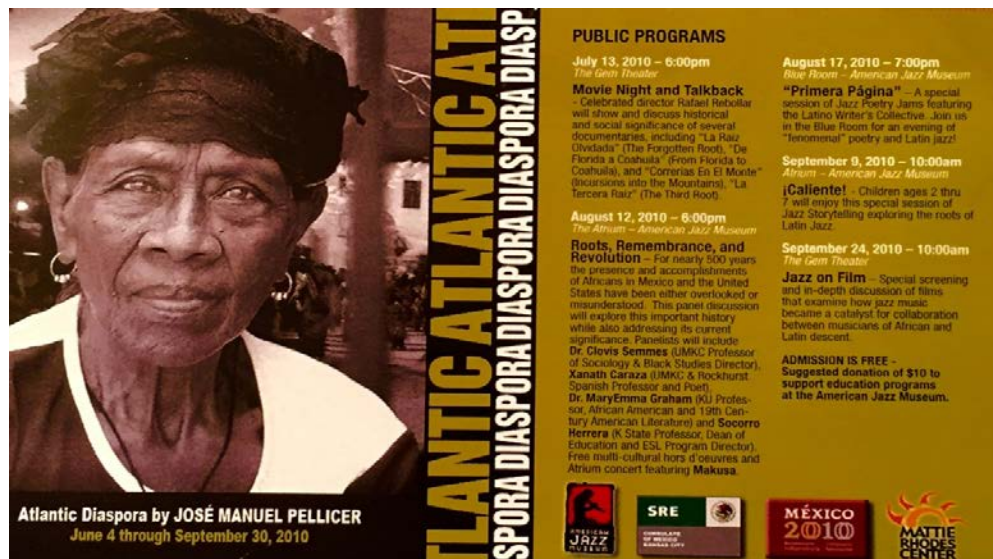
The initial approach of asking cultural local entities what they would like to see or show from Mexico, or the attempt to discover out what aspects of Mexican culture were most appealing to the civil society of the host city, worked much better than attempts to "impose" cultural activities that might not have been well received. Also, the fact that the Director of the Mattie Rhodes Center, John Fierro, had "proposed" the idea of a "Black Mexico", made him indirectly "co-responsible" for making it a success, and that proved helpful when getting people involved or seeking sponsors for the project.

It was interesting that, when the three entities first met, the Director of the AJM, Mr. Carroll, stated that in more than 25 years living in Kansas City, they had never organized a single cultural event with Mattie Rhodes, or with any other Latino association, so this marked the beginning of an artistic relationship. In fact, three years later and by initiative of the AJM, both entities joined forces again and presented the traveling bilingual exhibit, "American Sabor: Latinos in U.S. Popular Music." at the AJM. This exhibit was on display from August 1 through October 27, 2013, and was funded by the Ford Motor Co. Fund and coordinated by the Smithsonian Institution.

I consider that the Atlantic Diaspora was effective on its CD strategies, since it helped accomplish both the political objective of expanding the presence of Mexico in Kansas City, and

the social objective of promoting more community involvement by activating Mexican and Latino Culture in a mixed environment with other cultures and minorities. The response of the public to all of the events, as well as the media coverage, was extremely satisfactory.

### Case No. 5 Atlantic Diaspora



**Figure 5.19** Post Card of the cultural program “Atlantic Diaspora”, with photograph “Llamada”, by Artist Juan Manuel Pellicer. (Kansas City, Missouri, 2010)





**Figure 5.20** Comienza la trifulca” (Begins the brawl) (Photo by Juan Manuel Pellicer. Kansas City, 2010)

**Figure 5.21** Orgullo combatiente (Pride fighter) (Photo by Juan Manuel Pellicer. Kansas City, 2010)

### Case No. 5 Atlantic Diaspora



**Figure 5.22** Parientes (Relatives) (Photo by Juan Manuel Pellicer. Kansas City, 2010)

**Figure 5.23** Herencia (Heritage) (Photo by Juan Manuel Pellicer. Kansas City, 2010)



**Figure 5.24** Event “Caliente” – Jazz Storytelling at AJM (Photo by A. Siqueiros, Kansas City, 2010)

**Figure 5.25** Event “Caliente” Learning Latin Jazz at AJM (Photo by A. Siqueiros, Kansas City, 2010)

#### **5.4.2 Case No. 6 Jazz Festival in Kansas City**

One of the most important yearly events in Kansas City is the *18<sup>th</sup> & Vine Jazz and Blues Festival*, formerly known as the Rhythm & Ribs Jazz & Blues Festival. It is a one day music festival and educational event, held usually in October and produced by the American Jazz Museum (AJM) in coordination with the Jazz District Neighborhood businesses, as well as the greater Kansas City region.

Mexico is famous throughout the world for presenting traditional folk dances, mariachis, pop and classical music, and opera singers, among others. Jazz generally does not fall under this scope. Since the organizers of the Festival already had access to several famous groups, mostly from the United States, they were reluctant to experience with new groups, much less if they were from abroad.

By applying the strategy of inserting Mexico into the local cultural environment, the Consulate insisted with the Director of the American Jazz Museum, Mr. Greg Carroll, to accept a Mexican Jazz Group into that Festival for two years. We presented various potential Jazz groups provided by the SRE and other cultural entities to the organizers of the Jazz Festival, who, finally selected the group “Sr. Mandril”. According to their website, Sr. Mandril “mixes electronic elements with acoustic and electrical instruments such as guitars, bass, percussion, sax, trumpet, and voice, creating colors, sounds and influences that go from funk and acid jazz to ambient, and from lounge to Latin with a progressive rhythm and a slice of house” (Sr. Mandril, 2013).

The strategy of illustrating similarities and differences between cultures was also implemented in this case, which helped the Consulate convince the American Jazz Museum and

the organizers of the Festival to follow up with our proposal. The similarities between jazz in the United States and different types of music in Mexico, derive from common African origins and influence. Jazz first popped up in New Orleans, Louisiana during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century as a "form of art music which originated in the United States through the confrontation of the Negro with European music" (Berendt, 1964). Jazz has its roots on the musical traditions brought by the Atlantic trade slaves in 1808, with their "single line melody and call and response pattern and the rhythms [that] had a counter metric structure and reflected African speech patterns" (Cooke, 1999).

Well, according to different scholars, there was a strong African musical influence during the colonial period (1525-1821) in Mexico. This influence was exerted on musical rhythms such as the son jarocho, jarabe, huapango, chilena, the zapateado, the fandango and others, derived from the influx of African slaves to the "Nueva España" from the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Although such influences cropped up in several regions of Mexico, they were mostly located in the State of Veracruz and in the so-called Costa Chica, in the States of Guerrero and Oaxaca (Saldívar, 1934; Chamorro, 1984; Pérez – Fernández, 1986). Among the musical instruments with African origin, the marimba, the marímbola, the friction drum, the bule palmoteado, cajón de tapeo (tapas drawer), la jícara de agua (water gourd), equine jaw, the horn bule and the musical bow are some prominent examples. (Contreras, 1988).

Other elements that "helped" argue our case was the Marimba Concert performed by the world-renowned Nandayapa Trio of Mexico, which took place in June, 2010 at the Atlantic Diaspora event. The panel discussion on which the participants emphasized the African origin of the marimba contributed as well. These were some of the "similarities" present on the African origin and influence between the jazz and various Mexican musical rhythms, which were presented to the American Jazz Museum.

After some negotiations with both the Jazz group and the organizers of the event, headed by Mr. Greg Carroll, Sr. Mandril performed at the *18<sup>th</sup> & Vine Jazz and Blues Festival* on October 12, 2013. Specifically they performed at the Blue Room with success, enjoying a positive reception from the audience. The audience for the Festival reached almost 10,000 visitors. Sr. Mandril had the opportunity to participate in an important music festival, which was beneficial to their professional development as well.

The CD strategies of inserting Mexico into one of the most important traditional cultural activities of the Kansas City metropolitan area, of presenting cultural activities based on similarities or differences (in this case, of the common African musical roots of jazz and other Mexican rhythms), of expanding and diversifying Mexico's Cultural Diplomacy to less traditional or well-known areas, such as Mexican jazz. and of promoting Mexican artists like Sr. Mandril, were applied, in my opinion, with overwhelming success.

As to the foreign policy objectives, we certainly tried to increase and to strengthen Mexico's international presence in Kansas City through this cultural event, and fortified international cultural cooperation by promoting Mexican artists abroad and more community involvement by activating Mexican culture.

## Case No. 6 Jazz Festival in Kansas City



**Figure 26** Sr. Mandril - Kansas City's Jazz Museum "The Blue Room". October 12, 2013 – 8 pm. For the first time in Kansas City!! Jazz & groove! - 1616 E 18th St, Kansas City, MO 64108 (USA)



**Figure 27** Mexican Jazz Group "Sr. Mandril" (Photograph extracted from Sr. Mandril's photos. Mobile Uploads)

**Figure 28** Jazz Group Sr. Mandril in Kansas City (Photograph extracted from Sr. Mandril's photos. Mobile Uploads)

*Ads:*



*On this weekend, October 12 (2013) Sr. Mandril will be at the Blues and Jazz Festival in Kansas City, organized by the American Jazz Museum!! Do not forget to follow us by Twitter@sr mandril...and share our facebook page so there will be many mandriles!!*

*Tonight the GEM Theater of Kansas City will become the jungle of Sr. Mandril, with Germán González, Pablo Delgado Ramsés Ramírez and Jesús Lomelí Buyoli.*

## **5.5 Summary**

The purpose of this chapter, and indirectly of the whole thesis, was to demonstrate how the CD proposed strategies of inserting Mexico into foreign cultures, using cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expanding CD into other areas, have the ability to positively influence Mexico`s foreign policies abroad.

The above six case studies, four in Sao Paulo, Brazil and two in Kansas City, Missouri, showed that, with the exception of the Case No. 4, of “Lucha Libre”, such strategies were useful in influencing positively the political, economic and social objectives established by Mexico towards those regions, when planned and implemented properly. Every case involved a completely different scenario and conditions so the strategies had to be adapted to the different circumstances.

Although most cases were based on the insertion of our culture into the local cultural environment (Carnivals, Day of the Dead, and Jazz Festival) and on requests to or from specific organizations to carry out specific cultural events (Atlantic Diaspora or Lucha Libre) or bi-national cooperation (Escola Mexico), it is important to mention that during our stay there, the Consulates of Mexico in Sao Paulo and in Kansas City carried out, in average, more than 15 cultural events per year. These events involved several art exhibits, musical presentations, film series, and literature forums that were planned in advance by the SRE and coordinated with different cultural entities in those regions.

The final chapter will offer a comprehensive review of the whole thesis, discuss final conclusions, and offer practical proposals as to how, aside from the CD strategies, Mexico could develop a more influential cultural diplomacy.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusions and Proposals**

### **6.1 Comprehensive Review**

#### **6.1.1 Scope and Definition**

This thesis dealt with different aspects and case studies of cultural diplomacy (CD) and how certain CD strategies have the ability to positively influence political, economic and social foreign policy objectives. Those strategies are: Insertion of the country into foreign cultures, the development of cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations and cooperation.

For the purposes of this paper, cultural diplomacy was defined as the promotion of a country's culture to reach foreign audiences and the exchange of culture, education, science, technology, and in general, ideas and information among nations, their peoples and other international actors in order to foster mutual understanding, to project a positive image abroad and to pursue foreign policy objectives.

This definition considers that both the “culture for culture`s sake approach” and the pursuit of foreign policy, takes Mexico's principles and perspectives into consideration. It includes, as CD strategies, the promotion of Mexico`s culture to reach civil societies abroad, and cultural, educational and scientific exchanges between different countries. Its objectives are also comprehensive since they pursue the fostering of mutual understanding, the projection of a good image abroad, and the fulfillment of foreign policy objectives.

#### **6.1.2 Historical Background**

Because of a rich culture that has defined its identity and values as a nation, Mexico has always incorporated cultural diplomacy within its foreign policies. This has allowed the country to expand and diversify its political presence worldwide, such as during the administration of

President Luis Echeverria (1970 -76), when by performing cultural caravans worldwide; Mexico established diplomatic relations with 64 countries. Other efforts have facilitated the signing of important economic agreements, like the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) during the Presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-94), or to promote a positive image abroad through the exhibition or presentation of art exhibits, musical presentations, film festivals, and other events.

Despite the historic importance attributed to cultural expressions in Mexico`s society, ever since the comprehensive project of cultural policy implemented in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, which was developed by José Vasconcelos, Mexico has failed to develop continuity, consistency and effectiveness on its approach to CD. In my opinion, such failures are due mostly to deficiencies in the understanding, design, and implementation of the CD strategies and to the changing priorities and foreign policies of constantly-shifting administrations for almost a century. There is definitely a need to establish State cultural policies that transcend such temporary priorities toward more durable permanent objectives. Examples of these objectives are the dissemination of Mexico`s culture, language, arts, tourism and traditions, the promotion of international cooperation in science and technology, education and other areas, and the development of new CD strategies that are more effective in achieving such goals.

### **6.1.3 Contending Views**

In order to change the current status described above, it becomes important to review, from a theoretical perspective, if CD is really necessary as an element of foreign policy and, if that is the case, what type of cultural policies or strategies would be more effective in Mexico. To that effect, this thesis analyzed two contending views: the Doubtful View and the Positive effect view

along with their main premises, representatives, strengths, weaknesses, and similarities, within the proposals in this thesis.

The Doubtful View, which has its base in the United States, basically expresses several doubts about the need to utilize CD as a foreign policy objective. The Positive effect view, on the contrary, supports CD at different levels, arguing for the important and effective role of CD in achieving or helping to influence different Mexico's foreign policy objectives. This represents most scholars of CD in Mexico, each with different notions of scope, definition, political affinities, and cultural priorities. Certainly, the Positive effect view relates more to my proposal in this thesis, because, despite its deficiencies and weaknesses, its comprehensive approach is able to accommodate my proposed CD strategies within its framework, structure, scope and objectives.

#### **6.1.4 Instruments of Foreign Policy**

Once the theoretical framework was defined through the Positive effects view, and since the effectiveness of any proposed strategy is based on the its ability to influence positively national objectives of foreign policy toward a specific country or region, the three instruments on which such policies are based were reviewed. These instruments are the Mexican Constitution and its eight principles of international policy, the National Plan of Development (PND), which is drafted once a new presidential administration takes office and defines the objectives, strategies, and priorities of the new government( including those related with foreign policy), and the Sector Program of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (PSSRE), which defines the action lines to be followed by the administration to carry out its foreign policies.

A quick review of the current PND and PSSRE allows us to determine that all cultural activities developed abroad should be “quantifiable”, therefore those strategies will be measured solely in accordance with the number of people attending such events. They also pursue the idea

of creating a “brand” for Mexico in order to promote economic development and to counteract the image of violence. Because of their several omissions, inconsistencies, and deficiencies, such two foreign policy instruments certainly deserve a wider and more profound analysis that goes beyond the scope of this work.

Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, it is important to emphasize that the Constitution, the PND, and the PSSRE, enriched with other regulations and bilateral or multilateral agreements signed by Mexico with other countries in areas such as trade, science and technology, culture, and academic exchanges are the basis on which Embassies and Consulates throughout the world have to act institutionally.

#### **6.1.5 Strategies of Cultural Diplomacy**

As mentioned, this thesis proposes that the following three CD strategies have the ability to positively influence the objectives of foreign policy determined by the State: Insertion of the country into foreign cultures, development of cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations and cooperation.

The insertion into foreign cultures derives from the fact that, in order for any country to accomplish its political and economic foreign policy objectives effectively, it has to utilize the existing local cultural environment and infrastructure and to approach and to take into consideration the opinions of the citizens, communities, and institutions of other countries. There are several successful examples of Mexico’s participation on international Art Biennials, Book Fairs, and Film or Music Festivals that are very famous worldwide, but there are also unlimited cultural events organized by the local public and private cultural entities or academic institutions

of the host countries or cities where Mexico has not participated yet, even though the country has the cultural and artistic capacity to do so.

The strategy of developing activities based on similarities and differences has its support on the current existing cultural and educational exchanges between nations as well as on the relevance of cultural connections which, according to each country, could be historic, ethnic, religious, artistic, or touristic. Such connections could derive from admiration or curiosity with regards to Mexico's folk art, history, music, films, and even television shows or "soap operas", which are very popular worldwide. The cultural activities to be carried out, if appealing to the civil societies of the host country, could provide the visitors with a wider understanding of Mexico's history, traditions, arts, and even scientific advancements and institutions abroad, and perhaps a more realistic and positive image of their own countries within the international arena.

The third proposed strategy refers to the expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations and cooperation, such as cultural industries, immigration, human rights, cultural diversity, telecommunications, social media, and intellectual property, among many others. The strategy is based on the fact that CD in Mexico has been, for the most part, extremely connected to fine or visual arts for almost a century, especially in regards to endeavors aimed at cultural promotion. Such attachment has not "allowed" CD to explore, develop, or increase other areas to the extent that may be required in today's world. Since the role of culture is being reassessed throughout the world as an important element of foreign policy used to facilitate understanding and cooperation between nations, building stronger links to the above areas has become one of Mexico's CD main challenges.

### **6.1.6 CD Experiences in Other Countries**

In proposing the above CD strategies for Mexico, it becomes important to analyze the experiences of other countries and their cultural policies, and whether they rendered the expected results in influencing their foreign policies. This thesis reviewed the cases where France, Spain, and Brazil designed, developed, implemented, and applied their cultural strategies abroad, or more specifically, in Mexico.

France has always been a world reference of CD in terms of how a country values culture and uses it effectively for diplomatic purposes, in order to achieve political and economic success. However, its biggest strengths in this field have been the consistency to promote its culture and its language, as well as its powerful capacity to reinvent itself and to adapt to the changing circumstances of the contemporary world, through the creation and strengthening of its cultural institutions. France's CD toward Mexico has been remarkable not only because of its intense and extensive activities and programs in both cultural promotion and in international cooperation, but also when one considers the impressive number of educational, academic and research institutions in different cities of Mexico.

Since 1975, Spain has changed its negative global image by becoming a cultural power worldwide through the promotion of its culture, history, heritage, and language. Spain has also engaged in strong regional and international cooperation as essential elements of its foreign policy. As in the case of France, Spain has developed a strong CD in Mexico in regards to international cooperation, academic and educational exchanges, and cultural programs, especially through the Fundación Carolina and Spain's Cultural Center.

Although certainly not to the same extent as France and Spain, Brazil has also dedicated importance to culture and to the creation of its cultural institutions, especially the Ministry of



Culture. Internationally and as part of its CD, France established a Cultural Parliament, a Meeting of Ministers of Culture, and a Protocol of Cultural Integration within the Mercosur, as well as 24 *Centros Culturais Brasileiros* in four continents in order to expand cooperation and cultural exchanges. In Mexico however, its cultural presence is limited to culture and education and, recently, a technical and scientific cooperation within its Embassy and a cultural center. This is likely because Mexico is not within Brazil's top priorities of foreign policy and vice-versa, due to their regional rivalry caused by their geopolitical location and desire to become the "leader" within Latin America.

#### **6.1.7 Case Studies**

After reviewing the experiences of France, Spain, and Brazil, this thesis analyzed six case studies of CD, on which the strategies above were utilized on behalf of Mexico and more particularly, on behalf of the Consulates of Mexico in Sao Paulo, Brazil and Kansas City, Missouri. A key element for the success of the application of the CD strategies was to perform an intense research on the cultural infrastructure, civil society, and relevant sectors of the population and the Mexican Diasporas existing in each place.

The first case study analyzed the Carnival do Samba no Brazil, particularly in the cities of Batatais and Sao Paulo, in the State of Sao Paulo, Brazil. As mentioned, the three proposed strategies of this thesis of inserting Mexico's presence into the local environment, of using cultural features based on similarities and differences, and expansion into other areas of CD, were fully utilized at the Carnival. Because of its impact, the participation of Mexico at the Carnival, in my opinion, helped to influence positively the political objectives of strengthening the relations with the different levels of government, especially the Municipal. In addition, these strategies helped expand the presence of Mexico in Brazil by presenting a diverse portrait of Mexico and by

establishing alliances with different entities and sectors of Brazil's society as well as with the Mexican communities of professional women and entrepreneurs in Sao Paulo.

The second case involved the “Escola Mexico Sao Paulo”, on which the strategy of insertion of Mexico into a local entity through transfer of knowledge, traditions, and resources worked well. Certainly, the expansion to other areas of CD such as educational exchanges and international cooperation that included music, arts & crafts, painting, and other cultural elements was another strategy that was implemented in this case. On foreign policy objectives, it helped to strengthen institutional relations with entities like the Secretaria da Educacao do Estado de Sao Paulo (Secretary of Education of the State of Sao Paulo), with whom an educational agreement was signed.

The third case, exploring the “Day of the Dead” celebration, applied at least two of the proposed strategies by inserting this important aspect of Mexican culture and traditions into a relevant institution of Sao Paulo's society, the SESC, and by presenting an activity that illustrates the similarities and differences on the Day of the Dead celebration that exist between Mexico and Brazil, which attracted multiple audiences. This activity also established an alliance and strengthened the relationship with the SESC and with the Mexican association of professional women in Sao Paulo.

The fourth case, Lucha Libre, was not very successful because it attempted to portray, through films, discussions, and the art exhibit Arena México, the apparent similarities between the “Vale Tudo” (No holds barred) and the “Lucha Libre” (Free Wrestling) traditions in Brazil and Mexico, respectively. The response by the different sectors of Sao Paulo's society to the three events was fairly poor, so more research may have been in order before the implementation of such activities, which were not very appealing and seemed outdated to the public in Brazil. It did

not establish either strong links with relevant social entities in Sao Paulo or with the Mexican associations.

The fifth case in Kansas City dealt with the “Atlantic Diaspora. The Musical and Social Influences of Africans in Mexico and the United States”, which was composed of six cultural events. These included photographic exhibits, musical concerts (marimba), film festival (documentaries), panel discussions, poetry jams, and children`s storytelling. This activity encompassed the three proposed strategies of this thesis, since it helped the Consulate insert the not so well-known “Mexico`s Third Root” in a wide and diverse context to audiences in Kansas City. It was a classic example of performing cultural activities based on similarities, based on our common African roots in Mexico and the United States, particularly in regards to ethnicity and music. This obviously expanded the concept of CD to other lesser-known areas, such as musical marimba, poetry, and documentaries.

The “Atlantic Diaspora” also helped to influence certain foreign policy objectives positively, directed to the region of Kansas City in order to expand the presence of Mexico in a region not very open to foreign influences, neither politically, artistically, nor culturally. This endeavor also helped improve corporate and political connections, and promote community involvement by activating Mexican Culture. Among the strategies we planned to approach, through cultural projects based on similarities and differences, other minorities in order to strengthen relationships with the Latino entities. In this case, the Latino community, coordinated by the Consulate through the Mattie Rhodes Center, worked together in all phases of this project (design, logistics and implementation) alongside one of the main representatives of the Black community in Kansas City, the American Jazz Museum. That particular relationship continued for the next three years.

The sixth and last case was the Jazz Festival in Kansas City, or the *18<sup>th</sup> & Vine Jazz and Blues Festival*. This event utilized the three proposed strategies of this thesis. It inserted Mexico, that is a Mexican Jazz Group *Sr. Mandril*, into one of the most important yearly cultural events in this region. The presentation was based on similarities (and differences) of the common African musical roots of jazz and other Mexican rhythms. It also expanded CD by introducing less traditional cultural areas abroad, such as Mexican Jazz.

## **6.2 DISCUSSION**

There is a great need to explore, academically, diplomatically and institutionally, new Schools of Thought and views, with innovative policies, methods, and strategies that explore and further develop the potential of CD as a way to foster understanding and cooperation among nations in all areas. Cultural Diplomacy has “arrived to remain” as an essential and influential element of foreign policy of any nation desiring to pursue political, economic, social or cultural objectives abroad.

The experiences of countries with cultural policies abroad, such as France and Spain have proven to be extremely satisfactory to pursue and influence their foreign policy objectives that are directed to the promotion of their culture and international cooperation. They could be an example for Mexico to follow.

Brazil's policies of CD have served to improve their image and to promote its political, economic, and even their ethnic interests abroad (in the case of various countries within Africa), especially with their closer allies, like the MERCOSUR countries. Although there is a great potential of cooperation on Brazil's CD towards Mexico, neither of the two countries has maintained a big profile, probably because of their regional, economic, and political rivalries. This is in addition to the fact that Mexico is not a top diplomatic priority for Brazil, and vice versa.

The three proposed strategies on this thesis, which are insertion of the country into foreign cultures. Development of cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations and cooperation, proved to have the ability to influence political, economic, and social foreign policy objectives for Mexico positively, at least in the short term. This is especially apparent when considering the analysis of the six cases in Sao Paolo and Kansas City.

The only exception was the case of the “Lucha Libre” event, which might require more intensive research. The decision to present the film festival, the discussion panel, and the art exhibit, Arena México, did not yield the positive effects that were desired. Some reason for failure include the facts that there was no insertion of Mexican culture into a local cultural event, the connection (similarities) between Vale Tudo and Lucha Libre did not exist anymore, or at least, was very outdated, there was no expansion of CD into other areas, the theme was not appealing to any sector of Brazilian society, and it was not helpful in helping accomplish Mexico’s foreign policy objectives towards Brazil.

### **6.3 Proposals**

Although the main purpose of this thesis is to include the above mentioned CD strategies into the cultural programs of all Mexican Embassies and Consulates abroad, I also consider it important to include the following proposals:

#### **6.3.1 Instituto Cultural de México**

Most of the main cultural powers of the world have cultural institutions such as the Goethe Institute (Germany), the British Council (United Kingdom), Instituto Cervantes (Spain), or the Alliance Françoise (France), to promote not only the government’s short term foreign policies, but long term State cultural policies. It is my belief that, in accordance to the suggestion extended by

scholar Carlos Ortega Guerrero, an “Instituto Cultural de México”, could be formed within any Embassy or Consulate, which would be integrated only with a Cultural Attaché and a well-trained cultural assistant. All cultural activities could be adapted to different scenarios, like a gallery, a museum, an auditorium, a theatre, etc. (Ortega, 2009).

The Cultural Attaché would be in charge of designing, proposing, negotiating, and coordinating cultural activities, as well as promoting educational and academic exchanges, as well as international cooperation.

### **6.3.2 Cultural Attachés or Officers**

It is important to point out that most Mexican Embassies or Consulates develop a certain number of cultural activities per year, depending on the decisions of either the Ambassador or Consul in charge, or on Mexico’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE). However, such events are usually done by officers or employees who do not always have the preparation or the experience to decide or to present them properly, especially on smaller Embassies or Consulates. They carry them out by following instructions from people at SRE, who are probably not familiar with the local cultural environment.

Despite their efforts, these individuals usually do not have a proper knowledge of Mexico’s art and culture, or of its foreign policy objectives. They often lack information surrounding the main cultural aspects of the country where they are posted, and have no experience on initiating, proposing, or negotiating cultural activities.

Thus, one of the first steps in these proposals is to assign qualified people as cultural attachés/officers, and/or to train them in these aspects. To that effect, it is essential that the cultural functions must be professionalized within Mexico’s foreign service and given the importance that they deserve. In the opinion of Luz Elena Baños, cultural attachés of the SRE should:

“have a wide and updated knowledge on Mexico and its objectives, as well as interests in the country where they are assigned, have training on public administration laws that regulate their work, have a clear awareness of the goals of foreign policy in which their work is moving and junctures that can modify it, and work with integrated vision and long term goals (Baños, 2009).

To the above list, I would consider it necessary to add the following requirements for the cultural attachés to comply: to have negotiation skills to promote Mexican culture before private and public cultural entities and be able to effectively obtain sponsors, to have knowledge of history, traditions, culture, and foreign policy of the host country or region in order to determine what aspects of Mexican culture and art would be most suited to them, and to have abilities to interact with the local media in order to promote Mexican cultural events. They also need to have experience to work on database lists as well as to promote marketing campaigns so that they may attract the public, have academic (or acquired) knowledge of the art exhibit or cultural activity to be presented as well as its relationship (if any) with the local artists, possess abilities to establish long-lasting relationships through CD between Mexican or Latino Communities with other “diasporas” in the host country or region. In addition, cultural attachés should have a certain set of artistic knowledge in order to select, curate, or set up, the works of art to be presented in the host country or region, and to have the writing skills required to effectively present reports, speeches, and/or presentation materials.

## **6.4 Conclusion**

From its inception, development, discussion and conclusion, this thesis was based in two simple but fundamental premises: The first is communication. That is to say, the more we know and understand each other, the less problems that we will have, since there will always be a

possibility of establishing a dialogue, which is a synonym of diplomacy. Certainly such answers would not only apply on our own countries, but in our international relations as well. Fortunately, modern diplomacy encourages countries to direct their efforts not only towards the heads of state but towards the citizens, communities, and institutions as well in order to accomplish their national priorities. Such a new approach encourages communication and dialogue with a wide number of new international actors, which provides a better knowledge of our fellowmen.

But how do we approach them and learn more about each other? The second premise answers such a question. By promoting our culture and learning theirs, which as mentioned, is a concept so broad that it is within everybody's reach. I consider that one of the main reasons that Cultural Diplomacy has become so important in today's world is because, through culture in its many forms and expressions, has been able to effectively approach the societies of other countries and therefore, increase dialogue and international cooperation.

This thesis attempted to demonstrate how, in applying such principles to the three proposed strategies of CD, which are insertion of Mexico into foreign cultures, development of cultural activities based on similarities and differences, and expansion of CD into other areas and aspects of international relations and cooperation, Mexico would not only influence its foreign policy positively, but would also foster mutual understanding with other countries and therefore project a more positive image abroad.

It is my belief that through the different case studies in Sao Paulo, Brazil and in Kansas City, Missouri, such objectives were achieved, at least for a certain period of time. The challenge to Mexico and probably to other countries is to pursue not only short-term foreign policy objectives, but, as in the case of France and Spain, more permanent State cultural policies with new CD strategies for the 21st Century, and for the times ahead.



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## **Vita**

Alejandro Siqueiros was born in Chihuahua, Mexico. He holds a law degree from the University of Chihuahua and a specialization degree in Foreign Trade from the same University. He also has an MBA in International Cooperation from the University of Sao Marcos, in Sao Paulo, Brazil. He practiced Corporate Law at a Law Firm from 1983-1987 and worked as a Legal Regional Manager for an Insurance Company that covered four States in Mexico (1987-88). Mr. Siqueiros has been a career member of the Mexican Foreign Service since 1991. He has represented Mexico as Coordinator of Economic Affairs at the Consulates General of Mexico in El Paso, Texas (1990-93) and Vancouver, Canada (1993-97); Cultural Attaché and International Cooperation Coordinator at the Consulate General of Mexico in Sao Paulo, Brazil (1997-2007); Coordinator of Cultural and Economic Affairs at the Consulate of Mexico in Kansas City (2007-2013); and Vice Consul for Economic, Political and Border Affairs at the Consulate General of Mexico in El Paso (2013-2015). Mr. Siqueiros has written “Eleven Frequently Asked Questions about Doing Business in Mexico (1995-97); “Mexico in Western Canada (Co Editor) (June, 1996); “A Geopolitica no Seculo XXI. Chapter Comercio e Finanças Internacionais” (Nov., 2004). He is married to Patricia Tijerina de Siqueiros, has two Children, Alejandro and Patricia, and one grandson, Nicholas.

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