

Brazilian cultural diplomacy in Europe in the early 21st century: bridging the gap between nations with international events

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ABSTRACT

At the turn of the 21st century, Brazil gained ground within the international scene due to its new outward facing stance. Cultural plurality became the flagship of Brazilian foreign policy, designed to achieve positions of prestige internationally. By taking the theoretical concepts of cultural diplomacy, this case study analyses the strategies deployed in international events for cultural diffusion promoted by Lula da Silva's (2003-2011) & Dilma Rousseff's (2011-2016) administrations, especially the Year of Brazil in France, 2005. The policy processes within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture supported the emergence of a particular decision regarding the development of Brazilian cultural internationalisation. Therefore, the active role of Brazil in the field of cultural diplomacy could be considered as a benchmark for governments, practitioners and policymakers from 2003 to 2016.

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The authors would like to dedicate this work to the memory of the National Museum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which was destroyed by fire and the freezing of public expenses that will last until 2027 in the area of education. The largest collection in Latin America has been lost; a work of memory that begun exactly 200 years ago. Without the past, we can lose track of the future.

Keywords:

Cultural
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Introduction

The last decades have seen an increased interest in the dialogue between international relations and public culture management fields (Dewey & Wyszomirski, 2004; Zamorano, 2016). In Brazil, the recent period demonstrating this increased interest was inaugurated with the establishment of the Ministry of Culture in 1985. The Constitution of 1988 was also marked by debates on public cultural policies (Calabre, 2007; Rubim, 2007; Calabre & Lima, 2017). This debate was intended, both domestically and internationally, to enhance the dialogue between civil society and Brazilian global projection (Mapa, 2009; Lessa, Saraiva & Mapa, 2011), promoted particularly strongly by da Silva & Rousseff's governments.

Brazilian international projection in the 21st century, due to the incorporation of cultural policies, is regarded as an emerging research area in the field of international cultural management (Mapa, 2009; Menezes, 2015). The Brazilian cultural diplomacy strategies during Lula da Silva & Dilma Rousseff's administrations (2003-2016)¹ have brought about new opportunities for emerging power countries (Hurrell, 2009; Lima, 2010; Schweller, 2011) to grow and thrive through the use of strategic partnerships in the cultural sector². If the strategy is not new (it can be seen still in the 19th century, in France, and even in Brazil since the 1930s), it is at the end of the 20th century that it becomes a really valid tool for articulation by developing countries.

Foreign policy practices in the last years reveal changes in countries' international projection, so that they have been rethought to reach greater efficiency and dynamism in the current conjuncture. Cultural diplomacy, therefore, consists of using the power of a state through soft power, because it builds influence through the projection of values, principles, customs and the whole set of non-military apparatuses (Nye, 2002, 2004; Montiel, 2010). The challenges of globalism reveal that culture becomes a tool that consolidates a country's brand abroad (Zamorano, 2016: 169-174). To do so, countries need to position themselves with their brand, seeking to be aware of when the maintenance of their brand will be feasible, or in some cases necessary (Olins, 2005). By enabling a projection of their culture within the international field, states reach an important

audience with the aim of facilitating international understanding and cooperation.

Cultural diplomacy, through the leadership of the state, becomes a tool of foreign policy used to enhance the relationship between countries by creating bonds of affinity through cultural exchange, as well as providing economic and commercial benefits. To date, scant attention has been paid to cultural management in international relations and how they have been practiced so far. In the present study, an attempt is made to shed light on the cultural representations, practices and policy making within a case study about the biggest Brazilian international events in the early 21st century.

The dynamics of soft power are seen with increasing frequency in the formulation of the international projection of Brazil in the first decade of the 21st century (Chatin, 2016; Pinto, 2012). The country gained notoriety during the Lula era not only due to presidential diplomacy (Cason & Power, 2009; Lessa, 2017: 8), but also due to the new perspectives of Brazilian foreign policy (Mapa, 2009; Lessa, Saraiva & Mapa, 2011) and the direct action of the Ministry of Culture which spread Brazilian culture abroad, making the flags of pluralism and diversity the hallmarks of the period. These actions brought about a greater participation in international cultural exchange events (Pardo, 2014) and broadened international projection by means of major sports events hosted in the country (Menezes, 2013). This approach also supported the domestic position of Lula's government as a multicultural and multiracial country (Bernal-Meza, 2010), whose credentials were used as a strategic discourse to show Brazil emerging at an international level, as affirmed on several occasions by the president himself in official statements (Mesquita & Medeiros, 2016; Moreira, 2016: 81-84). It is important to note that this discourse was built within the Workers' Party since its creation by theorists and cultural articulators, being, in a way, present in the Party's theses and declarations about Brazil in the 1990s.

This paper provides an overview of the foreign policy strategies that were designed as the basis of a new diplomacy, guided by neodevelopmentalist political thought (Bresser-Pereira, 2010) that consecrated different Brazilian actors and departments in diverse international scenarios and approaches

¹ Dilma Rousseff's second term finished earlier due to her impeachment in August 2016.

² Throughout this paper, the term cultural diplomacy will refer to forged relations between states, from the use of traditional diplomacy in conjunction with cultural relations approaches. This definition was based on the work of Pierre Milza (1980), John Mitchell (1986) and Denis Rolland (2004) about international cultural relations generally and cultural diplomacy specifically.

“THERE HAS BEEN AN ATTEMPT TO REORGANIZE BRAZIL'S IMAGINARY EXTERNALLY SINCE THE EXPANSION OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. (...) BRAZIL HAD TO ADJUST ITS FOREIGN POLICY TO INTERACT WITH THE WORLD, RESTRUCTURING IT TO ADAPT TO THE INTERNATIONAL SCALE”

during the presidencies of Lula da Silva & Dilma Rousseff. It was a new interministerial action of Brazilian administration that joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (also known as Itamaraty), Ministry of Culture (MinC) and the Ministry of Education (MEC) to position the country in the international spotlight (Lessa, 2013; Menezes, 2013; Novais, 2014). From the Year of Brazil in France, 2005, to the Summer Olympics in 2016, the country has organized and was honoured by several cultural events³; it was presumed that the country could achieve political, economic and socio-cultural partnerships by staging them abroad.

The framework for this analysis was structured around existing research, so that the case study method of this article involves the combination of within-case analysis and cross-case comparisons to produce new knowledge about the topic (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012). The present study explored bibliographical sources, newspapers and official reports to examine the origins of the decisions made regarding the internationalisation of Brazilian culture between 2003-2016.

This paper is divided into four parts. Part One considers the basis of the new projection of the country's image abroad during the Lula government (2003-2010) as well as tracing the processes behind cultural action and expansion of the ministries concerned. Part Two offers analytical insights and quantitative descriptions of the cultural events abroad. Part Three is dedicated to the implementation and institutionalisation of soft power as one of the guiding goals of Brazilian cultural policies. The final part opens up the debate on the reformulation of the Brazilian image, taking into account the limits of this debate. An extended discussion of other events beyond the Year of Brazil in France is not within the scope of this paper, nor is a comparison between the Brazilian case and other developing countries.

Building a new strategy: Brazilian cultural diplomacy (2003-2010)

Given the history of Brazil, there has been an insistent attempt to join the International Society since the end of Portuguese colonization in 1822. As noted by Monique Goldfeld (2012), that attempt can be seen as the keynote of the whole 19th and much of the 20th century. Historically, Brazilian bids within international events based their stance on the European model: first, the Empire – in which the figure of the Emperor Dom Pedro II (1831-1889) stands out as a civilized ruler and even ahead of his time, participating in international events and testing novelties such as the telephone; and, then, the Republic – with Baron of Rio Branco's (1845-1912) historical participation to the conciliatory diplomacy at the beginning of the 20th century, which sought to define the country's borders with its neighbours during the Republican governments between 1902-1912 (Doratioto, 2000), or Osvaldo Aranha (1894-1960) as chancellor in the Brazilian performance in 1947 during the first General Assembly of the United Nations (UN). Since 1955, the country has always made the first speech at the Assemblies based on the Brazilian tradition of historic impartiality, attributed after its participation in the creation of the state of Israel in 1948⁴. By such actions, Brazil could be considered a sort of "Neo Europe" (Watson, 1984: 127-141). The rulers intended, in one way or another, to create a favourable perception of the country internationally.

This aspiration has, as a basic principle, the construction of a moral impression of the country (state ethos) on behalf of its action vis-à-vis other states⁵. An example would be the historic attempt of the Brazilian representatives to participate at international level in most of the decision-making bodies that have peaceful negotiation as their main axis (Santos

³ The Year of Brazil in France (2005), Paleo Festival Nyon (2008), Europalia Brazil.Brasil Festival (2011), Italy-Brazil Moment (2011-2012), the Year of Brazil in Portugal (2012), MixMax Brazil (2012), the Brazilian Month in China (2013) and the Frankfurt Book Fair (2014) and International Theater Festival of Bogota (2014).

⁴ Traditionally, Brazil has a prominent place in the order of speeches – Brazil first, the United States second, and then the other countries.

⁵ For more information, see Charaudeau (2007).

& Cravo, 2014; Ipea, 2017: 151-156). That is, in an effort to create a good reputation, Brazilian representatives have participated in discourses that emphasize the maintenance of peaceful relations on the basis of social justice and equitable development (Cervo, 2008; Mesquita & Medeiros, 2016), and have assumed the role of negotiators and judges in international disputes. This would establish, until 2016, the main principles of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which were those of sovereignty, political stability and relationships of trust with any state. These can be seen in the performance of Brazilian officers in forums like the UN, whose stance was conciliatory and non-interventionist (Santos & Cravo, 2014). To that extent, there was a coordination of national and international values enacted in multilateral forums at the beginning of the 21st century.

Before going deeper into the subject, it is convenient to reflect on the meaning of the expression "social imaginary". By taking the theoretical framework of Robert Frank (2012: 345-370), each society lies under a capital of representations and images – ideas, values, beliefs, opinions, etc. – that are accumulated over time and change with it. Two characteristics should be analysed in this discussion about the self-perceived image of a nation: (i) these representations are received differently in relation to the groups, the space and the society in which they are integrated; (ii) they have a complex relationship with reality and with the events of the present moment. In this way, the presentism can modify the system of representations of a nation, at the same time that these images themselves can modify the reality⁶.

Conforming to Frank (2012: 345-370), there are two ambivalences to understanding the image "of the other" abroad: (i) the concomitance between the positive and the negative, for example, in the creation of an emotional and unstable France in opposition to the strong and stable United States; (ii) and the mirror effect in the construction of the image of the self and the other, when the representations of the other are the result of a projection of the self. Therefore, no matter what the divergences or dualities between them are, the whole set is part of a broader system of representations, of a social imaginary linked to public space, that is, a national imaginary. This suggests that Brazil, in pursuit of a leading international role, has

made use of strategies that combine representations that other actors make about the country, as well as of those that the country makes about itself.

There has been an attempt to reorganize Brazil's imaginary externally since the expansion of partnerships with other countries. During the period under review, the so-called "commuting" policy, between unilateralism with the United States and multilateral openness, swung in the direction of a strong propensity for multilateralism, in which developing countries were the key. Therefore, rulers had to deal with several new themes. This meant that Brazil had to adjust its foreign policy to interact with the world, restructuring it to adapt to the international scale. As mentioned by Leila Bijos (2016: 418), "Brazil saw the need to adapt to the new international reality and seek a more relevant role in the international scenario through the use of soft power relationships". This, we argue, is part of the historical choice made by the country in the version preserved by Brazilian history: violent conflicts disappear internally and externally as a result of a conciliatory strategy.

This new orientation brought about a reshaping of Brazilian identity, restructuring it as would facilitate, even further, the country's projection internationally, without denying the issue of miscegenation and national identity (Schwarcz, 1995)⁷. The discourse of Brazilian multiculturalism is not new, it was influenced by the cultural and political life that emerged in the 1930s. Gilberto Freyre, anthropologist, wrote that the Brazilian population was formed of three different races – African slaves, Europeans and indigenous people – within which there was some sort of peace⁸. The discourse of racial democracy came to light after a series of encounters with Pixinguinha, one of the most famous Brazilian musicians and composer within the choro and samba musical genres. While racial democracy would reduce domestic tensions and provide the basis for the construction of a national identity, externally it would enable Brazil to play a new role: that of a representative of peaceful national unity in its coexistence contract. However, the principle of racial democracy came under serious criticism in the 1980s, when a search for the representation of minorities in the political, social and cultural fields emerged.

The past two decades have seen the rapid development of the multi-identity discourse by

⁶ For more information about the "regimes of historicity", see Hartog (2002).

⁷ In the Brazilian case, the racial theme is a constant in the definition of national identity in literature, social sciences, written and audiovisual media – undergoing constant reframing within the society, or even (and perhaps mainly) by the state.

⁸ However, domestically, throughout the years "racial democracy" was considered a myth, as it is possible to see in many laws implemented in the country to decrease the socioeconomic gap between miscellaneous groups, including quotas in public universities, federal schools and civil services.

the Brazilian government in many international interventions, such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XI); the World Intellectual Property Organization's Development Agenda (WIPO); the UNESCO Cultural Diversity Convention and UNESCO World Heritage Centre – 34th session of the Committee (Novais & Brizuela, 2010: 222). Those expositions emphasised the affirmation of a discourse marked by cultural and ethnic pluralism, which led to debate about the government's actions. Diversity was no longer confined to racial democracy, and the Brazilian official rhetoric stated, then – in terms that were to be projected internationally – that the country was a step forward in global debates on diversity and multiculturalism. Domestic policies during the period, recognising problems arising from a certain "denial of Brazil", also helped transform the country's image.

In diplomatic action, efforts have been made to understand how official discourses around miscegenation have tended toward its celebration as the expression of a multicultural society. As Schwarcz (1995) observes, there is no recreation of the Brazilian imaginary, but an extension of identity discourse within narrative forms that are fluid, relative, contrasted, and situational (Cunha, 1985 apud Schwarcz, 1995). Thus, considering the question of miscegenation as an inherent part of the country's identity, Brazilian decision makers were able to expand it into a genuine multicultural discourse. This discourse gained relevance in 2005, in the international scenario, either by Brazilian participation in international organizations, such as UNESCO, or in the dialogues within other countries that also pleaded for the proposal of cultural exception⁹ and preservation of diversity in the composition of their internal domestic policies. If the acknowledgment of crossbreeding is directly linked to historical identity in Brazil and public policies around diversity continue to maintain it, what can be the role of international events in the creation of an imaginary of diversity in Europe at the beginning of the 21st century?

Over the past century, even though Brazil was better placed in international dynamics, it still occupied a peripheral place due to the unequal distribution of power between countries (Hurrell, 2007). The search for a more effective participation and, indeed, a leading

position started with Lula da Silva (2003–2010) and the governments of his successor, Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016). So, from the beginning of his first term, Lula da Silva urged that Brazil should not assume a subservient stance towards more developed countries, power holders and creators of the rules of international society. To reach a better position in the international community, the country would base its image on the recent political and economic rise, encouraging alliances with multiple nations¹⁰. Brazil, therefore, tried to rearticulate identities and promulgate images designed to elicit political empathy abroad via global governance mechanisms (Fraundorfer, 2017). Drawing upon these strands, one of the strategies was the adoption of cultural diversity at international level by means of cultural diplomacy.

Historically, Brazilian cultural diplomacy occupied a place of limited importance for the country's administrations, with some periods of projection (Dumont & Fléchet, 2014: 205–206). We emphasise that Lula da Silva's government and the strategy of co-work between the foreign affairs, education and culture ministries can be stated as the Brazilian's momentum of cultural diplomacy. This is because Brazilian cultural projection, from its origins at the beginning of the Republic, underwent changes in the 21st century, from the direct action of a group of thinkers and political articulators, to meeting the common demands of the domestic administration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This occurred in favourable domestic and external environments for this type of policy coordination. Internally, the Brazilian identity moved towards a "defense of cultural and ethnic diversity" derived from proposals approved in the Workers' Party Resolution in 1999.

At the beginning of the century, the increasing instances of Brazilian international projection were based on the widest exposure of Workers' Party propositions and high visibility of Brazilian politics in the international sphere¹¹. Domestically, the period was marked by the recognition of ethnic diversity as well as the expansion of social policies to overcome structural inequalities that affected groups considered minorities, like black or indigenous people, women, etc. (Calabre, 2014: 150). Investment in the cultural

⁹ This concept means that cultural goods must be protected from the "hegemony" of the markets, the state being the regulator, the sponsor of a cultural policy and, when necessary, subsidize cultural activities with public money. In other words, it refers to the fact that cultural goods and services should not be considered regular goods in trade agreements and it allows countries to create indirect trade barriers.

¹⁰ The foreign policy strategy during Lula government was based on: the country's positioning in multilateral forums; fight for the democratization of international organizations; emphasis on South-South cooperation; attempt to balance the power differences on the North-South axis; and, self-denomination as a regional power (Albanus, 2015; Saraiva, 2013; Vizentini, 2011; Bandeira, 2008).

¹¹ In 2009, Lula was the first Brazilian to be considered by *Le Monde* newspaper as Person of the Year. The former president was also once referred to as "the man" by US President Barack Obama.

sector proved to be fundamental and strategic, largely due to the work of Gilberto Gil from 2003 to 2008 as Minister of Culture¹². Gil's management prioritised the diversified and democratic nature of cultural affairs. The resulting internal cultural policies seemed to present possible solutions for international policy issues, reopening the debate around the relationship between race, gender, justice, and social equality, based on the Brazilian Constitution of 1988 (Guimarães, 2006).

In this scenario, there was a need to create two new sectors to support the expansion of the Ministry of Culture: the Secretariat of Identity and Diversity (SID) and the Commission of Brazilian Culture in the World. In accordance with Kauark (2010), it is evident that, while the SID was created to promote and subsidise Brazilian multiculturalism, the Commission of Brazilian Culture in the World, through the economic and political dimensions, was created for the purpose of improving access to Brazilian culture abroad. The creation of the Commissariat in 2006 made it possible to make better use of Brazilian participation in international events, relying on specialised teams to meet the demands of these topics.

The *Cultura Viva* program, for example, created by the Ministry of Culture in 2004, played the role of encouraging associative processes between groups within Brazilian society, from the perspective that culture is a "living organism" (Lima, 2013: 73). As Lima (2013) notes, the aim of this project was to promote direct, open and decentralised activities, crossing all cultural modalities under the direction of the creative hub of the *Ponto de Cultura*. That is, through this mechanism, institutions were chosen by public notices that would receive, for three years, investment for the realisation of activities

proposed, in an exercise of self-organization. The creation of such public policy indicates the engagement of the administration with the democratic promotion of culture in the domestic space without it being defined by the central administration. The evidence presented thus far supports the idea of cultural democratisation and its ability to promote cultural decentralisation from

various cultural manifestations of Brazilian society (Ipea, 2010; Turino, 2014). More than 2,500 "points of culture" were created between 2004-2009 and the budget for the program was approximately 185 million euros (Ministry of Culture of Brazil, 2010; *Le Monde Diplomatique Brasil*, 2017). In 2006, the Brazilian model began to be replicated: first in Italy, with the creation of the *Officine dell'Arte* in the Lazio region, followed by Austria and other Latin American countries, mainly Mercosur (Ministry of Culture of Brazil, 2010).

Soon after, this re-articulation of multiple identities within these representations of the country could be seen in cultural activities promoted by Brazil abroad, in a way that national public policies would organise themselves to establish an active role in international events, such as the cultural festival of Brazil in France in 2005. The new Brazilian multiculturalism

and affirmative action policies appeared to France as possible topics in the debate on citizenship and social integration among the French themselves¹³. Internationally, the realisation of the Year of Brazil in France had an indirect but tangible influence in the UN and the Alliance Against Hunger and Malnutrition (AAHM), in 2003. The discourse of diversity acceptance was well received by its partners and ultimately gave to the country the possibility of exercising leadership in the area of cultural interlocution.

The innovation of Gilberto Gil's management

"AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY, INVESTMENT IN THE CULTURAL SECTOR PROVED TO BE FUNDAMENTAL AND STRATEGIC, LARGELY DUE TO THE WORK OF GILBERTO GIL FROM 2003 TO 2008 AS MINISTER OF CULTURE. GIL'S MANAGEMENT PRIORITISED THE DIVERSIFIED AND DEMOCRATIC NATURE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS"

¹² Gilberto Gil is a Brazilian singer, known internationally for both for his musical innovation and engagement with political activism.

¹³ France was experiencing crises related to the banlieues in this period.

continued into the next term of Juca Ferreira, who assumed an active role, participating in and realising meetings, forums, congresses, fairs and festivals that raised the intensity of Brazilian cultural diplomacy. It is clear, therefore, that the focus given to South-South cooperation – especially with Latin America – and the rapprochement with developing countries, promoted the establishment of alliances that favoured the economic, social and political development of Brazil. These data reveal much more than a simple intensification of Brazilian exchange, they also show the character of a global player and trader in the formulation of foreign policy, in which the approximation made between peripheral and developed countries expresses the participatory, democratic and, especially, plural character of the Brazilian government with the world. This was followed by the international insertion based on the logic of self-determination of people, the fight against cultural standardisation and the increase

of national exports by the creative industries (Mapa, 2009: 50). These policies were directed to diversify the Brazilian participation in a changing and connected world, which received more attention in the Lula administration (Lessa, 2013: 188-189) and gained an aspect of continuity, with some retraction, in Rousseff's government.

The Year of Brazil in France (2005)

The promotion of world cultures in France is part of the policy of supporting cultural diversity. Every year, since 1985, a foreign country is invited officially to present the different aspects of its culture through a series of cultural events in a wider ongoing festival. These events are organised by the Ministry of Culture and Communication in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, together with the French Institute. In this section, an analysis of the strategies of

Country hosted	Year	Number of events labelled
Brazil	2005	700
Russia	2010	350
Korea	2015	250
Colombia	2017	400

TABLE 1. FRENCH FOREIGN FESTIVALS: A FEW EXAMPLES

Source: French Institute (2018).

Types of events	Number of events	Public
Major events	41	6.800.000
Cinema	429	200.000
Performances / Theatre	26	210.000
Architecture exhibitions	09	1.600.000
Colloquiums / literature	67	4.500.000
Photography exhibitions	20	880.000
Contemporary art	45	3.600.000
Concerts	61	450.000

TABLE 2. THE YEAR OF BRAZIL IN FRANCE: EVENTS LABELLED

Source: Menezes (2015: 132-133).

“THE YEAR OF BRAZIL IN FRANCE, TITLED ‘BRÉSIL, BRÉSILS, FROM SINGULAR TO PLURAL’ WAS A SERIES OF EVENTS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE BRAZILIAN CULTURE IN FRANCE. THE AFFIRMATION OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY, AS EVIDENCED IN THE TITLE, BECAME A STRATEGIC ASSET TO AWAKEN THE INTEREST AND CURIOSITY OF THE PUBLIC”

identity re-articulation of Brazil is proposed, based on two main events: (i) the Year of Brazil in France and (ii) the Year of France in Brazil¹⁴.

In 2005, Brazil was selected to be the one in the spotlight. The Year of Brazil in France, titled “Brésil, Brésils, from singular to plural” was a series of events designed to promote Brazilian culture in France. The affirmation of cultural diversity, as evidenced in the title, became a strategic asset to awaken the interest and curiosity of the public. Starting in March 2005, and having its official end in November of the same year, this festival had more than 700 events¹⁵ spread across 161 cities throughout the French territory officially (see TABLE 1 and 2)¹⁶. The Year of Brazil in France received a financial contribution of US\$28 million (Menezes, 2015, p. 145-146)¹⁷.

It was estimated that at least one quarter of the French population actively attended the festival's events, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France: an exceptional festival of cultural mobilisation. The Year of Brazil in France is still considered, by the French Institute, the most important cultural festival in France since the project's creation in 1985 (French Institute, 2018). Aiming to overcome the country's circulating imaginary in France – such as the country of football, samba, beaches – the country organized events that would make a portrait of Brazil today. In this present research, we will designate these events created in 2005 in France as different spaces for opening to Brazilian culture as “territories of Brazilianness”.

The first “territory” on display was at the exhibition of indigenous Brazil set up at the Louvre Museum. The exhibition, which included 400 indigenous works, exalted the cultural continuity of the ethnic minorities in Brazil in two areas. The first, of archaeological and

historical character, described the heritage of the past via the cultures of the indigenous people in Brazil. The second, with an ethnological character, dealt with the importance of aesthetics in Amerindian culture. As a way of breaking with the idea of a Brazil trapped in the past, with no possibility of real development. This specific exposition showed that indigenous culture also undergoes change, and showed that development has a great effect on the lives of the original communities that survive. Today indigenous people attempt to preserve their cultural heritage and traditions, threatened by the changes in everyday life, but also in adapting their lives to new realities of the modern society.

The second of these “territories” was dedicated to Brazilian popular art, in particular to Brazil's musical heritage. The event – in the City of Music, located at the north-eastern of Paris, Parc de la Villette, presented the historical roots of Brazil's rhythms. The exhibition invited you to follow the history of Brazilian popular music, from its origins in choro, samba and baião, for example, to the most current trends, such as rap, soul and funk. It also showed how music is confused with the political history of the country. In this sense, the exhibition highlighted the various clichés associated with Brazilian music. According to the curator, Dominique Dreyfus, Brazilian music should not be seen either as neutral – so-called “elevator music” – or as music of constant erotisation, since it is much richer than the stereotypes that permeate the French imaginary. The exhibition intended to end with the clichés about Brazilian music: deconstructing them and demonstrating how Brazilian Popular Music (MPB) should be perceived as the meeting of the various ethnic groups and populations that make up Brazil. The diversity of Brazilian music was demonstrated through its mixture of genres, born

¹⁴ It was a double, reciprocal festival taking place in France and Brazil.

¹⁵ Between events labelled by French and Brazilian governments or organized by French associations and local administrations.

¹⁶ The findings were organised according to the documentary analysis carried out at the National Library of France (BnF) and the documentation provided by the French Institute to the Brazilian Embassy in Paris in 2014. It can be seen that several domains of Brazilian culture were presented during the nine-month period of its duration. These figures refer strictly to projects made by the Brazilian and French governments, composing the official program of the Year of Brazil in France.

¹⁷ The Brazilian government has invested US\$24 million and the French government almost US\$4 million. Generally, the invited country has a wider commitment to project costs.

from the meeting of the three continents and the various waves of immigration, in a purely iconographic exhibition. This plurality of styles would deconstruct the Brazilian carnival from a specific place and aesthetic – Rio de Janeiro and the spectacularisation of carnival in Sapucaí. Dreyfus then did field work in search of the history of carnival in the city of Recife and other similar manifestations in the North and Northeast.

The third “territory” dealt with the issue of recycling and recreation. One of the cultural representations of Brazil in France of great impact concerns the ability to recreate the new from the old, being the reuse of scrap as a source for art. The fourth “territory”, the fruit of the historical interbreeding between Brazil and France, is the role of iconography in the various representations of “Brazils”. The main theme focused on revolts that took place in Brazil, as demonstrated by the exhibition in Montpellier about Canudos, entitled *Traces et mémoires d'une révolte dans le Sertão brésilien: 1897-1946-1997*¹⁸. This exhibition, which lasted from May 20th to September 3rd, had 15,699 visitors, thus showing that there was a public in France very interested in escaping old clichés to familiarize themselves with other stories from Brazil.

The fifth “territory” of Brazil to be exhibited was perhaps the most important: Espaço Brasil (Brazilian Space), a multidisciplinary cultural centre inaugurated on June 24th, 2005, during the festivities of the Brazilian festival in France. As we will see, unlike other centres of artistic manifestation, the Espaço Brasil was what we could call an autonomous territory of Brazilian culture in France. With an ample program that involved art exhibitions, recitals, parades, theatre and dance performances, seminars, workshops and business fairs, the Brazilian government sought to create an attractive environment to increase interest in Brazil among the French, during the months of the summervacation (July-September). To this end, the activities offered ranged from exhibitions, cultural presentations and attractions to economic and commercial ventures. It is pertinent to highlight the great interest of the Brazilian government in creating a platform for trading Brazilian products and in promoting the country's economic development internationally. The discursivity of President Lula was marked by the need to show Brazil's industrial value and by the use of the French market as a gateway to a wider market. This not only meant taking into consideration economic and cultural differences, but also the necessity of making a proclamation regarding

the need for coexistence, learning and sharing of national cultures. The maxim, valid for industrialists, also applied to brands capable of internationalising at that time. We observed, for example, the entry and possible consolidation of two major brands, already established in the Brazilian market: Havaianas and Natura.

The sixth and last “territory” to be treated was related to the others and, in a particular way, to the second: it is the concert “Viva Brasil”, which took place in Paris's Place de la Bastille on July 14th, 2005. The chosen singers pointed out an understanding of the *mestizaje* as the richness of a Brazil that is, at the same time, white, black and indigenous. In so doing, they exercised the office of ambassadors of Brazilian culture. During their performances in France they had, therefore, the necessary profile to promote the message of multiculturalism required for the new image desired by Brazil in the international plan¹⁹.

The increase in exports and opening to new products, both in France and Brazil, even during the period of a decreasing French economy (affected by the 2008 crisis), made the climate of optimism of the relations established between the two countries at the turn of the 21st century persist. Based on French customs data, we have some indicators of the trade relations between the two countries in the period between 2002 and 2008. In figure 1, the evolution of exports of French products to Brazil in the determined period is shown with the red bars, while, in grey, the movement of French imports from Brazil is represented.

The Year of Brazil in France also drew recognition from the French government of Brazil's active participation in international contemporary affairs. Internally, Brazil was trying to solve problems like the withdrawal from the “hunger map” and the search for an internationally effective participation – in which Brazil had claimed the reform of the UN Security Council (Stuenkel, 2010)²⁰. The two countries were committed to strengthening their bilateral cooperation when the interest of the Year of France in Brazil took place in 2006, as a demonstration of reciprocal courtesy by the Brazilian event held in France in 2005.

On May 25th 2006, Presidents Jacques Chirac and Lula da Silva met during the visit of the French President in Brazil to evaluate the activities of the Year of Brazil in France and to reflect on the continuity of common actions, with the establishment of a strategic partnership between the two countries. Two years later, in December 2008, his successor, Nicolas Sarkozy met

¹⁸ Traces and memories of a revolt in the Brazilian Sertão: 1897-1946-1997.

¹⁹ Among the singers were Seu Jorge, Maria Rita, Gilberto Gil, Daniela Mercury, Lenine and Milton Nascimento.

²⁰ It was thought that France would support the Brazilian claim to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

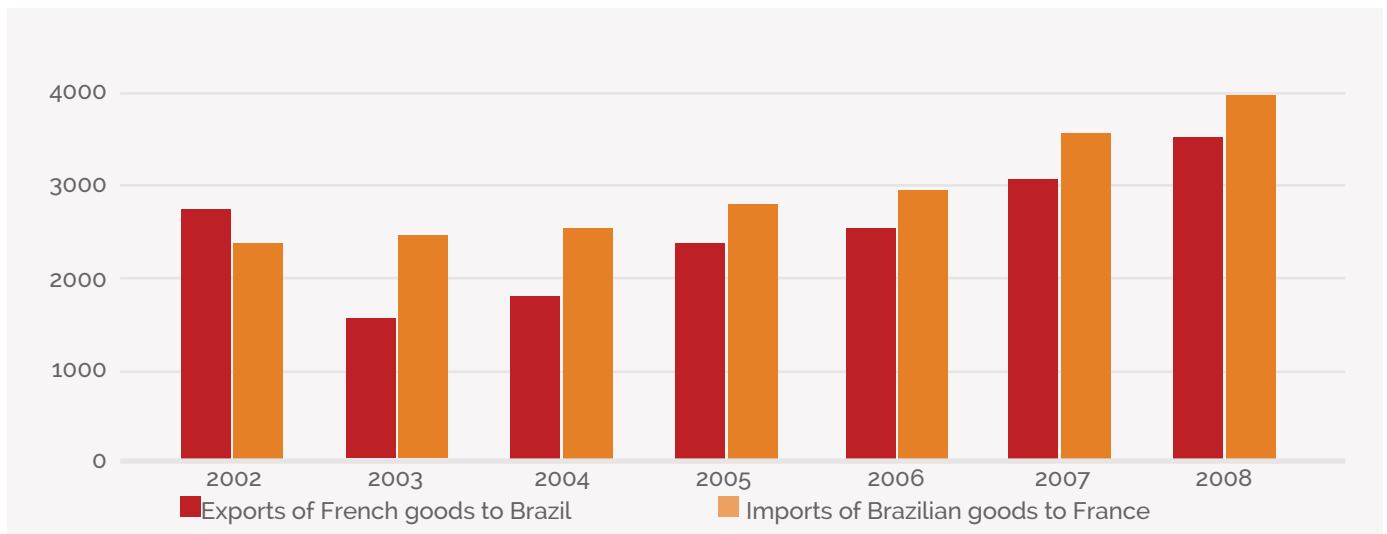


FIGURE 1. EVOLUTION OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF GOODS BETWEEN BRAZIL AND FRANCE 2002-2008 (MILLION EUROS)

Source: Menezes (2015: 245).

with the Brazilian president to continue the diplomatic dialogue. During the brief meeting, the date for the celebration of the Year of France in Brazil appeared²¹. The interest of President Chirac, as well as that of President Lula, seemed to consist in strengthening the existing ties and preparing the ground for new relations that could arise, in particular, actions and agreements that would help the two countries to build greater autonomy vis-à-vis the United States in issues related to industrial and nuclear development.

In short, there were several alliances in this period and the Year of Brazil in France was one of them (Menezes, 2015). In the trade balance, the result was also favourable for both countries in the period between the two cultural festivals 2005-2008 (figure 1). Like never before, concern for the international image of the country made the Brazilian government invest so much in the cultural area that it was possible to host seven major sports events in Brazil by the year 2016²². Hence, the country achieved a significant international presence by applying for and hosting the two largest sporting events in the world: the FIFA World Cup in 2014 and the Summer Olympics in 2016. The investments made were intended to project the country's image, specifically with regard to the media coverage attracted by these events.

Challenges to enhancing Brazilian cultural diplomacy: from policy to implementation (2010-2015)

The global financial crisis and the widespread mistrust that marked the passage of the first decade of the 21st century also impacted Brazilian politics. There was a reorientation of domestic government spending and, as a result, foreign policy was no longer a priority. President Dilma Rousseff tried to follow, at first, the inherited orientation of Lula da Silva's administration, but important changes meant that it came to be considered a period of Brazil's decline in international relations (Cervo & Lessa, 2014; Cornetet, 2014, Saraiva & Gomes, 2016, Lessa, 2017). However, Brazil's efforts were adjusted towards the inclusion of new topics, such as the central countries' responsibility for the economic crisis, internet governance and human rights, and, mostly, the development of science, technology and innovation with the program Science without Borders (*Ciências sem Fronteiras*)²³ (Albanus, 2015). Despite the fact that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was left aside, Rousseff's administration was marked by the central role given to the Ministry of Culture in maintaining the continuity of the initiatives

²¹ In the realm of cultural patronage, as in the case of the Year of Brazil in France, there was a strong participation of companies and organizations in both countries. However, France investment was shorter than the Brazilian one, about 10 million euros against 23 million euros from Brazil. This shows a certain imbalance in the reciprocal cultural festivals (Menezes, 2015: 255-258).

²² XV Pan American Games (2007), III Parapan American Games (2007), V Military Games (2011), Confederations Cup (2013), Soccer World Cup (2014), XXXI Summer Olympic Games (2016) and XV Summer Paralympic Games (2016).

²³ Science without Borders was a program promoted by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and the Ministry of Education of Brazil to promote the consolidation, expansion and internationalization of science and technology, innovation and Brazilian competitiveness through exchange students. It granted between 2011 and 2016 almost 104,000 scholarships, 78,900 of them to bachelor students. According to CAPES, between 2011 and 2017, the Program invested, approximately 2.8 billion euros. The countries that received most Brazilian students were the United States (27,800), the United Kingdom (10,700), Canada (7,300), France (7,200) and Australia (7,000) (Marques, 2017).

from the previous government, that sought to expand the country's international image (Boy, 2017).

The agents of the internationalisation of Brazilian culture

The term "soft power" has become widely used by Brazilian scholars and authorities engaged in cultural management and the country's international projection. Between 2012 and 2014, the Minister of Culture of Brazil, Marta Suplicy, in her functions, used the term during speeches in seminars, forums and meetings, emphasising the importance of the concept to improve Brazil's position internationally.

Brazil is a country of emerging economies with no military power, but it is discovering another form of insertion in the world, through its ideas, culture and practices, which are primordial sources of soft power. Nye himself, in a book published in 2004, acknowledged that Brazil has the potential of soft power to be exploited by its foreign policy, due to the attraction aroused by its vibrant culture. (...) The great challenge of Brazil is to go beyond what we are already known for. Show our diversity, our culture, our music, our dance. We have an immense cultural wealth and we want to share with the world. We want to strengthen our image of warm and cheerful country, but we are more than that. We want to bring investments to our country and exercise our soft power in the best possible way (Suplicy, 2013; par. 11 & 40).

One of the most ambitious projects of the Ministry of Culture was the institutionalisation of the National System of Culture (NSC), which began implementing laws that would avoid the discontinuity of cultural policies in future governments, seen by local observers as one of "absences, authoritarianisms and instabilities" (Rubim, 2007). The system was developed through

a process of listening to people involved directly in the cultural field from all over the country, where reflections were compiled as goals for the National Culture Plan (Plano Nacional de Cultura – PNC) in 2010. One of the main criteria was to develop Brazilian soft power. According to the base text, four programs were chosen to achieve cultural goals and objectives for the country, among them: 1) to create and decentralise cultural facilities through the construction of the Unified Arts and Sports Centers (CEUs)²⁴; 2) implementation of the cultural vouchers (Vale-Cultura)²⁵; 3) *to strengthen the position of Brazil in the world through soft power*; 4) implementation of the National System of Culture (NSC) (Ministry of Culture of Brazil, 2013: 1-2).

The Ministry of Culture of Brazil sought dialogue with various segments of the population, business and local public management for the development of the NSC. Among the goals related to investment in cultural diplomacy were the stimulus given for the development of the creative economy and the promotion of the internationalisation of Brazilian culture. Thus, the Ministry started to formulate and institutionalise "soft power" approaches through cultural policy based on measures that would hold the state accountable for achieving its goals. The proposals of the 2013 National Conference of Culture included increasing the cultural diffusion activities in national and international exchange between 2010 and 2020 by 70%. The goal was elaborated to meet the demands of Brazilian cultural diffusion abroad through partnerships with the main agents of formulation of the Brazilian foreign policy. The proposal also involved the collaboration of domestic decision makers, such as municipalities.

As it can be seen in table 3, the Ministry of Culture together with the National Council of Cultural Policy assesses and monitors the goals of the PNC through an annual report. In addition to checking whether the goals are being achieved, the sector is also responsible for the effectiveness of the actions

Indicator	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2020 Goal
Number of cultural diffusion activities	637	500	783	852	613	672	1.080
% increase in cultural diffusion activities		-22%	22,9%	33,8%	-3,8%	5,5%	70%

TABLE 3. HISTORY OF THE CULTURAL DIFFUSION GOAL, 2010 to 2015.

Source: Ministry of Culture of Brazil (2015 Goal Monitoring Report) (2016: 141).

²⁴ Originated in Sao Paulo in 2001, it is an open centre for the community which aims to integrate sports and cultural activities in the same space.

²⁵ Vale Cultura, implemented in 2013, has the objective of ensuring that Brazilian workers have additional benefits besides their salary to invest in books, plays, movies and concerts.

and the content of what is being implemented to make sure it is in accordance with established principles. The periodic conference, through the Annual Action Plan, is essential for improvements and aid in the attainment of the goals. It is possible to perceive the satisfactory performance of cultural diffusion in 2012 and 2013, whereas in the years 2011 and 2014, there is a certain decrease, although it did not impair the attainment of the goal in general. In relation to the 2015 Goal Monitoring Report, the bodies that had more activities related to the image of Brazil abroad between 2010 and 2015 were, in increasing order (TABLE 4): the National Library Foundation (NLF)²⁶, the Secretariat of Cultural Policies (SCP)²⁷, National Cinema Agency (Ancine)²⁸, National Art Foundation (Funarte)²⁹, and International Relations Directorate³⁰ (Ministry of Culture of Brazil, 2016: 141).

They are among the main priorities of the Ministry of Culture in terms of cultural diplomacy, together with the Integrated Program for Exchange and Residence;

the Integrated Project for Digitisation and Translation of Content; the calendar of festivals, fairs and major international events held in Brazil; market events and sector business rounds; the promotion of Brazilian sites and events recognized as World Cultural Heritage and Mercosur; the promotion of Brazilian audiovisual; and the proactive action in multilateral organizations and international forums (Ministry of Culture of Brazil, 2015). It is also evident that the Ministry of Culture, under the coordination of the International Relations Directorate, developed initiatives to support the main demands of Brazilian cultural diplomacy abroad from the Plan for Internationalisation, having as its axis the relationship with border countries and the dissemination of the Portuguese language abroad.

Institution	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
National Film Agency (Ancine)	94	105	101	109	130	122
National Library Foundation (NLF)	62	33	64	99	213	167
Book, Reading, Literature and Library Directorate	-	-	-	-	8	14
National Art Foundation (Funarte)	204	172	171	273	73	67
Secretariat of Audiovisual (SAV)	55	32	152	170	22	9
Secretariat of Promotion and Incentive to Culture (Sefic)	222	158	295	201	51	70
Secretariat of Cultural Policies (SCP)	-	-	-	-	65	161
International Relations Directorate	0	0	0	0	51	62
Palmares Cultural Foundation	0	0	0	0	0	1
Totals	637	500	783	852	613	673

TABLE 4. NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CULTURAL POLICY: PERFORMANCE OF PARTICIPATING BODIES

Source: Ministry of Culture of Brazil (2015 Goal Monitoring Report) (2016: 141).

²⁶ The role of the National Library Foundation (NLF) is related to the translation services and dissemination of national authors abroad, such as the Frankfurt Fair in 2013.

²⁷ Secretariat of Cultural Policies (SCP) has, among its roles, the subsidy and coordination of the formulation, implementation and evaluation of public policies of the Ministry of Culture.

²⁸ Created in September 2001, the National Film Agency (Ancine) contributes to the regulation, promotion and monitoring of the audiovisual industry in Brazil as well as its competitiveness at national and international levels.

²⁹ The National Art Foundation (Funarte) was established in 1975 with the object of developing the artists' production, formation, research and preservation of the nation's memory in the cultural domain.

³⁰ The International Relations Directorate (DRI) has the objective of coordinating and authorising cultural projects within the Ministry.

Europalia.Brazil.Brasil Festival (2011-2012)

Since 1969, the year of its first edition, a festival called Europalia has been organised in Belgium and neighbouring countries. It is a biennial event of international arts in which countries present their culture for a period of four months (Europalia, n.d.). The festival has experienced regular and steady growth since its creation, leading to professionalisation and further development. In 2009, due to the great success of the Year of Brazil in France and the Year of France in Brazil, the country was chosen to be honoured by the festival in 2011. It is important to underline that Brazil was the first country in South America to be exhibited (Funarte, 2012: 14). The festival received a financial contribution of 23 million euros³¹ with approximately one million visitors (Le Monde, 2011). Between October 2011 and January 2012, about 71 Belgian cities and some others located in France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands held the event.

The festival was entitled "Brazil.Brasil – Europalia. Brasil.Diversidade" and sought to explore and celebrate the formation of the Brazilian people and the ethnic and cultural mixtures that gave birth to the country. Kristine De Mulder, director of Europalia, affirmed that Brazilian culture contains resonant themes for Europeans. This is due to European cultural plurality, which is given the opportunity to be perceived in positive, meaningful ways in relation to Brazil, since diversity is intrinsic to the identity of both civilisations (Gihousse, 2011). As shown previously, the discursive aspect goes back to the construction of the image of Brazilian culture abroad based on multicultural elements (Volpe & Dimitrov, 2016).

On 4th October 2011, President Dilma Rousseff underlined the following point at the opening of the Europalia Festival: "The dialogue we have established today (...) is yet another step in deepening mutual understanding that is fundamental for the construction of more democratic, open and plural world we all want" (Rousseff, 2011). In this sense, the Brazilian government pursued defined objectives:

to promote the country's image in Europe, with the appreciation of Brazilian culture in its many aspects and genres; expand dialogue with the European Union, strengthening relations in areas such as tourism, education, new technologies and commerce, whose activities have a strong interaction with the cultural sector; and generate

new opportunities for Brazilian artists, with the opening of markets, the establishment of exchanges, the promotion of artistic creation and the incentive to participate in international festivals, exhibitions and fairs (Funarte, 2012: 15).

For this reason, policy makers in Brazil were trying not only to show what the Brazilian culture is about, but to change the manner of cultural production in such a way that, worldwide, clichés are overcome. It was important in this event to demonstrate an image of Brazil that Europeans do not usually have access to, showing the diversity in Brazil that would open new ways of thinking in Europe. Art and culture, therefore, would be used as a political tool to create an imaginary of the richness and complexity of Brazil. During the event, a project was signed to expand cultural exchange between both regions with the implementation of cultural public policies to protect heritage and develop creative industries.

During 103 days, there were 24 exhibitions, 37 concerts, 105 literary encounters and conferences, 62 dance performances, 31 theatrical and 4 circus performances, 208 cultural partners, 1,033 artists and cultural experts, as well as more than 2000 press articles and reports (Europalia, n.d.). The event addressed the various facets of Brazilian culture in great artistic presentations. The concerts covered the miscegenation of society, dance (such as forró, maracatu), musical style (choro) and instruments (accordion and guitar). *The Festa popular* (popular feast) was one of the great attractions that marked the event, showing the mosaic of Brazilian food and culture from its different regions. There were 2,600 works of art, among which 812 were heritage-listed. It was the first time in the history of Brazil that a project took so many important pieces of art abroad (Funarte, 2012: 13).

During documentary analyses, the event was acclaimed by cultural managers and the international media. Interestingly, however, it was considered politically irrelevant by the Brazilian media, which even questioned whether it was worth promoting the image of the country (Le Monde, 2011). In terms of foreign trade (figure 2), it can be seen that the impacts were less significant than those observed in relation to the France-Brazil trade balance in 2005. It should be considered, however, that the festival took place in a post-European crisis period and amid the Brazilian economic crisis. Nonetheless, what is apparent from

³¹ About 13 million euros from Brazil and the other amount from Belgium.

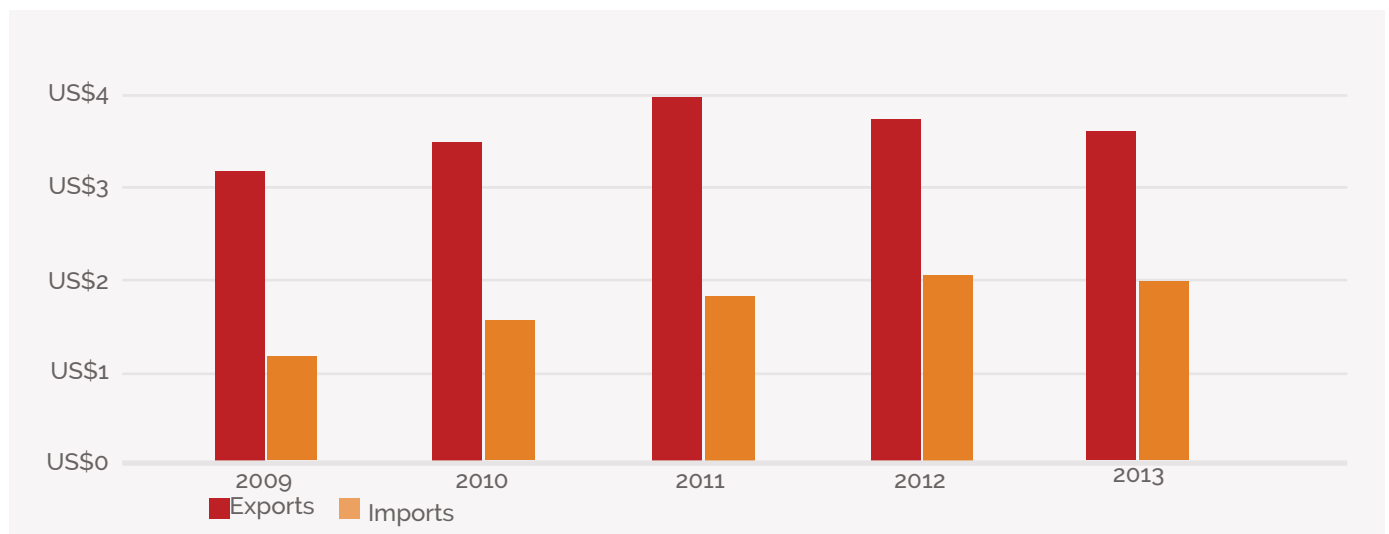


FIGURE 2. EXPORTS AND IMPORTS OF BRAZILIAN GOODS TO BELGIUM (US DOLLARS BILLIONS).

Source: Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade of Brazil (MDIC) (2018).

figure 2 is a particular growth of Brazilian exports to Belgium in 2011 as compared to the previous and the following years' values.

The Year of Brazil in Portugal (2012-2013)

The strategy of Brazilian cultural projection continued with the celebration of the Year of Brazil in Portugal and the Year of Portugal in Brazil, which took place between 2012 and 2013. This time, the two events were parallel, taking place in both countries since September 2012, to disseminate artistic and cultural manifestations, and intensify scientific and technological exchange. The events, as well as the French project, aimed to create a sense of proximity beyond culture, facilitated by linguistic and historical proximity. Brazil's action plan also highlighted the strengthening of international trade between them.

There had never been an event of this size in the area of Brazilian culture in Portugal, the budget was more than 6 million euros (Funarte, 2013: 63). The Year of Brazil in Portugal was financed by the Government of Brazil through Funarte, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Embratur – Brazilian Tourism Institute.

According to Viana (2014), after studying the image of Brazil in the Portuguese press during the festival, he emphasised that the theme of "culture" was the subject that received the most mentions with regard to Brazilian characteristics in newspapers. This illustrates that the country was and continues to be represented by the cultural aspects that disseminate national productions, attractions and artists.

There were 294 events, 2,140 Brazilian artists involved, 563 technicians, 119 musical shows, 16 literature meetings, 87 concerts, 26 popular art presentations, 56 theatre performances, 51 plastic or visual arts exhibitions and 11 dance performances (Funarte, 2013). The event had a total audience (direct and indirect) of 6 million people. On social networks, the Year of Brazil in Portugal reached 3,648,614 people on Facebook; there were 549,436 site views and 136,900 blog views (Funarte, 2013: 185).

Conclusion

Efforts to construct an image of proactivity on the international scene seem something inherent to Brazilian foreign policy since its earliest formulations. For this to be maintained, it was necessary for the nation state to articulate and re-articulate internal and external factors in order to formulate a palatable national identity at the domestic level and to guarantee the country's acceptance of and admiration for the other countries of the international community.

A report published by the European Union in March 2014 called for the development of a common EU strategy in terms of culture in EU external relations. This covered 54 countries, among which Brazil was between the 10 strategic partners outside of the EU. The document consists of an extensive mapping and consultation process with stakeholders in the cultural sector. As stated on that report, Brazil is an ethnically and culturally diverse country, which makes it difficult to promote Brazil as a whole. However, handling cultural diversity and different regions is a subject of

great importance to the EU. Therefore, the interest shown by European countries in Brazilian diversity recently could be directed into a model for overcoming the cultural differences of Europe, especially at a time when migration is considered an international issue (European Union, 2014).

The construction of an image of crossbreeding has since been re-articulated several times, always serving the governmental purposes internally and externally. In this process of identity reworking, the multiculturalism presented in the text of the Federal Constitution of 1988 became a common perspective during the Lula and Rousseff administrations, seen in the creation of bodies and mechanisms practicing affirmative action for the protection of minorities, for example. The construction of a pluralist Brazilian ethos – or “Brazils” – in the most recent period was based on old identity attributions, such as the *mestizaje*, which positivised to serve the diplomatic intention. These were transformed in the portrait of a possible Brazilian matrix. In this re-articulation of meanings, the Brazilian racial theme underwent significant changes when building, also for the country – following the example of countries such as France and China – a framework of cultural exception.

It can be concluded that the miscegenation factor was politically used in the most recent period by the Brazilian government, not to elide racial differences, but to make room for declarations about “the Brazilian cultural exception”. After the event in France, the Brazilian government tried to copy the French model of festivals, using “the Year of” as a new way of dealing with public diplomacy. In these events, the country supported its discourses on multiculturalism and cultural diversity, even if, internally, the issue still generated great dissension between theory and practice.

According to Lucia Campos (2014), the Eldorado of diversity in various manifestations in Europe seems to work. However, such promotions do not yet seem to have opened space for a deeper knowledge of Brazil and, much less, a more lasting dialogue between cultural producers on both sides of the Atlantic. The big question revolves around how to make the cultural events described in this paper more pragmatic, how to fabricate a coherent image of Brazilian culture and how to make them more than mere one-off events. According to Ribeiro (1989), this is one of the great limitations of cultural diplomacy, once it is no longer merely a strategy that seeks immediate results: it depends on the development of shared knowledge about the other and the formation of an intercultural

dialogue, and any mechanism based on culture must seek lasting objectives, possible to be achieved in the long term. It seems important to us to observe, then, in the case of Brazilian cultural diplomacy and its soft power, the sustained search for an identity that Brazilian representatives could use abroad. This elaboration was produced in the 1930s with great support from the government, based, in a way, on the pacifist contract of Gilberto Freyre, founded on the themes of racial democracy and the capacity to deal with alterity. Thus, the improvement of the image of Brazil would not be achieved through the abandonment of the image of the “country of football”, but by the incorporation of other attributes that would demonstrate how the new image of the country should emphasise other skills, in the creation of an identity more in tune with the changes in the social and economic order recently experienced by the country.

Therefore, there is a difficulty in deconstructing circulating stereotypes about the country, especially in the light of how the information has been disseminated. As an example, according to this research, the media in France in 2005 produced and circulated more than 15,000 items in the format of news, notes, reports, quotations, bulletins, articles, advertising pieces, and more; 40 special editions of magazines (weekly, monthly, bimonthly, quarterly); and 100 special television broadcasts about Brazil. On the one hand, all of these indicate the success of the event, but also a certain lack of mastery over which are the identities to be privileged or deconstructed by the media. Soft power seems, then, a difficult tool to measure and control with regard to the impact in the country it has been projected. On the other hand, Brazilian press did not pay due attention to the Brazilian international events in Europe – mainly due to the predominantly private character of the Brazilian media, showing a gap in coverage between the international and the local press.

In fact, one of the conclusions reached in our work is that cultural diplomacy in Brazil cannot and should not be considered a state policy: it is, above all, a government policy. However, during the early 21st century, it has developed new approaches through coordinated activities that have used evaluation and programs of lasting impact within public diplomacy. This approach would be followed at a global level by means of speeches by the authorities to make domestic practices increasingly public at the international level.

Additionally, Brazil's population suffered as a result of the hosting of the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Summer Olympics. Those events were conceived

as top-down, without the participation of the wider society. As the years have passed, protests among the population have begun to surface because the construction of the stadiums were deemed more important by the government than investment in healthcare or education. The political classes and the media believed that hosting these major sporting events would bring more capital, exposure and visitors, as if they would be once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to draw international political attention, which would in turn bring international influence and economic benefit. In the second term of Dilma Rousseff, the country faced a downturn, since it began to suffer with the international economy, some embassies were shut down and the state-owned energy company Petrobras was involved in corruption issues that affected all government structures. Therefore, the image that the Brazilian administration was trying to construct internationally was put aside by its leaders in favour of domestic reforms.

Finally, this period should also be considered an exception in the construction of Brazilian cultural diplomacy, especially in view of the country's direction after Dilma Rousseff's impeachment. In fact, most recently there has been a re-articulation of the domestic proposal in which one perceives, on the one hand, the attempt to silence perspectives of diversity, by means of a discourse that points, again, to a culture without great differences, in a return to the idea of racial democracy. At the same time, there is the end of the Ministry of Culture, a very contested fact in the country. Lastly, the new actions of the federal government point to strategies for linking to the interests of the United States in the international field and, judging by the actions taken, with a strong propensity to conservatism, thereby legitimising force instead of soft power and cultural diplomacy.

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