

## Thailand's Cultural Diplomacy: Development Scheme in the 21st Century

Vittayapol Rattanakul Seriroengrit \*

### Abstract

Various countries use it in many ways such as cultural exchanges in sports, food promotions, tourism, arts and cultural shows, and many more. This paper examines how the cultural diplomacy of Thailand can be used effectively and continues to highlight how Public Diplomacy, which is a major branch of cultural diplomacy, is selected effectively. All of this falls under the umbrella of soft power and is a concept that aims to help Thailand progress. Firstly, by identifying 'cultural diplomacy' as a key discourse offering a counter-formulation of what the aim of soft power policy should be, and analyzing uses of this term, it highlights a need to conceptualize cultural opportunity more effectively. Secondly, Thai cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and soft power lacks 'potential policy'. Thirdly, Thailand's cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and soft power is still lacking potential for a 'new opportunity'. There has been sustained critique of the conceptual and normative foundations of Thailand's cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, and soft power, which are used for international relations and economic policy potential.

**Keywords:** Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power, Thailand, Countries

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\* Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies, Rangsit University

Email: Vittayapolrs@hotmail.com

Received: October 23, 2024 Revised: December 1, 2025 Accepted: December 30, 2025

## Introduction

As we can see, cultural diplomacy or soft power has become significant in Thailand during the current government of Thailand. But actually, this public policy or foreign policy has been discussed since 1990 by Nye (2004). However, it recently became a trend in Thailand. The application of this paper points out that Thailand still lacks direction in their knowledge and utilization of soft power policy. Thailand undergoes its current use of soft power can be best illustrated by its current soft power ranking, which has decreased from 35th to 40th place (Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau [TCEB], n.d.).

As Mark (2009) pointed out, “Cultural diplomacy is made to support foreign policy and diplomatic goals (or both)”. Despite the semantic confusion, it is cultural diplomacy that serves as a diplomatic practice of governments, nevertheless, to conceive of it. It is directly or indirectly the government’s foreign policy, which the government represents, involving a wide range of manifestations of the culture of the state, as “elites and wider population were targeted”. Cummings (2003) has defined cultural diplomacy as “the exchange of ideas, information, values, systems, traditions, beliefs, and other aspects of culture, with the intention of fostering mutual understanding”. Cultural diplomacy may be best described as a course of actions, which are based on and utilizes the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation, promote national interests and beyond; cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either the public sector, private sector or civil society.

## Literature Review

### Cultural Diplomacy

Each country can deploy cultural diplomacy for promoting and strengthening the relationships between with each other. It is one example of a ‘smart way’ to formulate close-ties with each state and it can be deployed on either a state level or sub-national level. Cultural diplomacy has existed for many centuries; however, the aspiration of ‘cultural diplomacy’ has only been known recently. For example, explorers, travelers, traders, teachers and artists are “informal ambassadors” or early “cultural diplomats”. A person who interacts with other cultures (at present or from the past), cultural exchanges may act as a formal facilitator of diplomacy in fields which can take place, such as art, sports, literature, music, science, business, and the economy. The exchange of gifts and information about trade routes stands as an example of early cultural diplomacy communication exchanges.

The significance of cultural diplomacy is the ability to “break the ice” between two countries. It can help transform countries' relationships from “tense” to “normal” status. The two countries then, can then begin to “make up” with each other. First, cultural diplomacy is the beginning of better relationships between two countries. Second, if the countries have a ‘tense’ relationship with each other, they could return to a good relationship. Relationships can be normalized or reconsidered through cultural exchange. The modern world uses cultural diplomacy comes from the Oxford Handbook of Cultural Diplomacy (Cooper et al., 2013), which acts as one of the beneficial sources of how to respond to foreign policy. Countries are represented by direct and indirect foreign policies as part of their ‘policy agenda’. Cultural diplomacy can bring the understanding of both parties through the potential reduction of negative stereotypes. In this case, stereotypes used in propaganda can be dispelled by using cultural diplomacy. Propaganda is used when people want to use stereotypes to create a better perception for audiences. Cultural diplomacy can reach out to a nation with which it has not yet established a relationship (Seriengrit & Sukontasap, 2017).

Cultural diplomacy is everywhere, from trade tourism to student flows, communications, book circulation, migration, media access, inter-marriage and millions of other daily cross-cultural exchanges (Arndt, 2005). To understand cultural diplomacy is to communicate across cultures, a communication exchanged in both directions to hit a desired “target.” A primary example of this is the US government’s attempts to impress democratic ideas on the people of the Soviet Union through cultural means, such as literature. In the same manner, the Soviets sent their own cultural diplomats to the United States.

Cultural diplomacy is one of the effective tools for diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is a subset of public diplomacy and consists of every nation in the world explaining their self- thought culturally. (Schneider, 2006). To understand local people is the most important objective of cultural diplomacy; cultural diplomacy aims to reach people through understanding both perspectives, enhancing their knowledge about their mind and feelings, therefore reaching out for their own culture (local culture). Cultural diplomacy reaches out to people—for example, in Afghanistan, reaches out to their cultural norms, for understanding the local people (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, 2012).

During her time in the Netherlands, Schneider (2003) hosted the White House Millennium Project It included oral accounts of World War II with two goals in mind: 1) to preserve as many as possible of the stories of Dutch World War II survivors and U.S. veterans who had fought there and 2) to forge links between Dutch teenagers and the World War II generation. Succeeding in cultural diplomacy is not only a stand-alone event or just a huge outlay of funds, embassies can plan activities

around an appearance or event appropriate for the local climate (what local people want to see or are interested in (Schneider, 2003). In this context, as highlighted by Pajtinka (2014), “the nature” of cultural diplomacy was aptly described by Enders (2005), as he pointed out in one of his observations, cultural diplomacy should be seen as “the instrument that serves political purposes” and although it “establishes its own objectives ... these are derived from the general foreign policy objectives”. In Similarly, the term cultural diplomacy is precisely defined by Hubinger (2006), who regards it as “an important instrument of state foreign policy, associated with the presentation, promotion and positive image building of a state, by means of cultural activities” (Pajtinka, 2014). Additionally, Kurucz (as cited in Patjinka, 2014) defines cultural diplomacy as “a specific activity oriented on exchange of cultural values, in line with the goals of foreign policy”. Lastly, the current definition of cultural diplomacy was further cemented by Berridge and James (2003), who regard cultural diplomacy as “the promotion abroad of state’s cultural achievements”. Based on the Arndt’s (2005) analysis of cultural diplomacy as identified earlier, if that is correct, cultural diplomacy can only be said to take place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flow to advance national interests (Pajtinka, 2014). Therefore, the “linchpin” of public diplomacy has various meanings and uses, as shown in the examples where it can act as a foundation of trust to create political, economic, and military agreements (U.S. Department of State, 2005). It builds trust in states to share interests and establishes a new image. If policy agendas differ, it will provide a positive influence by creating an exchange of ideas for people. As flexible as it is, it is universally accepted as a vehicle where diplomatic relations between any countries have been strained or are absent. Moreover, young audience can reach out and bring down language barriers, educate states and understand other societies, counterbalances misunderstanding, hatred, and terrorism, as well as lead debate on foreign international cultural the side of openly and stand on (U.S. Department of State, 2005) The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy (Cooper et al., 2013) states that, cultural diplomacy represents one type to help support foreign policy. From direct and indirect foreign policy used to represent a country, cultural diplomacy can bring benefits of mutual understanding, alleviate the negative stereotypes, and help establish relations with a nation with which relations have not been established yet.

### **Public Diplomacy**

Public diplomacy is the attempt by international actor’s to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public. (Cull,J,N,2009)

### **Relevant Soft Power, Public Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy**

These three worlds are similarly and can be put in the same category but Soft Power is a whole subset of Public Diplomacy, while Cultural Diplomacy is a subset of Public Diplomacy.

## Concept framework/Research

Hard power has been used mostly as an inducement (carrot) and threat (stick). But sometimes, you can get something out by not using inducement or threats, which is defined as the 'second face of power'. Moreover, the concept behind hard power and soft power is the ability to get what you want by attraction, for example, hard power can be represented by the coercion of physical actors, whereas soft power highlights the importance of ideas and how it can influence others, even stemming from controversial figures, such as Osama Bin Laden, a terrorist who acted against Western powers.

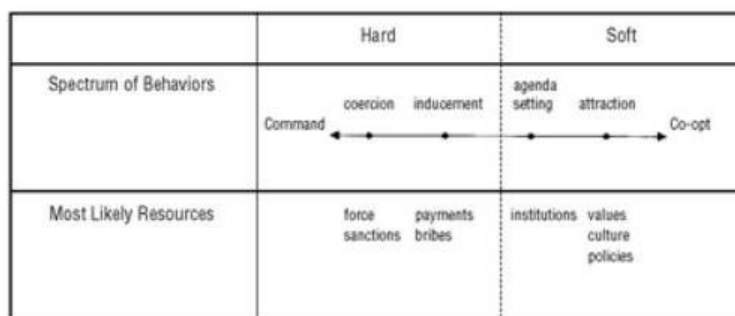


Figure 1. Illustration of Hard and Soft Power

Source: Joseph S Nye Jr (2004)

### Three Type of Power

By power, Nye (2004) has pointed out that there are three types of power in this world. The first type is hard power, which uses strength or military power. The second type is economic power, which can be used to sanction other countries or bargain with others, often referred to as the 'stick'. Meanwhile, soft power is a type of power which has the ability to shape the preferences of others. At a personal level, we are all familiar with the power of attraction and seduction. In a relationship or a marriage, power does not necessarily reside with the larger partner, but in the mysterious chemistry of attraction (Nye, 2004).

To understand soft power, we have to clarify and understand the other two types of power (hard and economic power), where its comparison to soft power is illustrated in Figure 2.

	Behaviors	Primary Currencies	Government Policies
Military Power	coercion deterrence protection	threats force	coercive diplomacy war alliance
Economic Power	inducement coercion	payments sanctions	aid bribes sanctions
Soft Power	attraction agenda setting	values culture policies institutions	public diplomacy bilateral and multilateral diplomacy

**Figure 2.** Three Types of Power

**Source:** Joseph S Nye Jr (2004)

### Thailand Concept Soft Power

Thai Prime Minister General Prayut Chan-o-cha has seen the importance of creating laws and establishing policies to support the Thai creative industries to respond to the global market and has made government agencies work more closely with private sector producers, artists, and behind-the-scenes personnel to push more soft power to achieve most economic benefits. According to the policy, it aims to make Thailand's cultural resources benefit more according to the "5 Fs": food, film, fashion, fighting (Thai martial arts), and Thai traditional festivals (TCEB, n.d.).

### Research Methodology

The primary sources of this research have been used in qualitative research. The researcher had used these two methods of primary and secondary sources, which allowed the researchers to learn about important issues, key informants' views, and complete coverage of the research content (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Bowen, 2009), secondary documents, government documents, academic studies, new reports, and commentaries. This research used a research design supported by secondary data sources. The data were collected from documents and informational interviews, by in-depth interviews with 7 people, which were conducted in the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand. Key information was selected about the cultural diplomacy of Thailand, how it works and how it was used, supported with relevant studies and relevant theoretical/philosophical frameworks. Some examples were from the documents of the Ministry of Culture of Thailand, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Tourism and Sport of Thailand and the Ministry of Education. The researcher used reports, books, newspapers, periodicals, magazines, and journals with relevant

information from reliable sources of information. The limited information of this paper is to only Thailand's political periods of time, starting from Anand Panyarachun to Chavalit Yongchaiyudh and ending with Prayut Chan-o-cha's government (at that time).

### Data validation

In this research, triangulation was applied to validate the data collected from the in-depth interviews. There were five steps of conducting the data triangulation (Carter et al., 2014). It starts with how to evaluate the data, and how it was valid. Secondly, when the quality of data was tested and replaced if it was unclear, this falls under the investigator's triangulation. Thirdly, the data was tested by different theories to assess the results through theory triangulation. Fourthly, methodology triangulation was performed to measure the use of different techniques to collect data on the same issues. In this research, observation, questions (in-depth interviews), and document sources were the techniques of methodology triangulation. The last step was to draw conclusions and verify the data. By using concepts and theories, it was applied to make conclusions from the valid data.

## Results

### Thailand Cultural Diplomacy Practices (Sources by Politic)

**Table 1.** List of Cultural Diplomacy by Thai Government

Cabinet	Period	Use for	Used by
Anand Panyarachun & Chavalit Yongchaiyudh	1992 - 1996	By signed cultural bilateral agreements the issues concerned the: promotion of arts and cultural exchange at national and international levels and 15 countries signed cultural bilateral agreements. These activities had cultural persons including the exchange between Thailand and the People's Republic of China, Republic of Korea, and Japan. Cultural exchange in various forms of art as paintings, sculptures, handicrafts and dances were also carried out - Thailand restored relationships ,during this period, with neighbors and other countries.	Ministry of Education, Ministry Foreign of Affairs
Chuan Leekpai	1997 - 2001	Thailand-China cultural exchange on all levels. Princess Sirindhorn studied Chinese language between 1998 and 2000; more than 1500 exchanges at all levels, ranging from government, business, to local visits (Snitwongse, 2001).	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Thaksin Shinawatra	2001 - 2006	The Thaksin administration created a programme called "cultural diplomacy" with the main objectives shown in the following: 1) Promoting active cultural diplomacy in order to support the Thai strategy of increasing international competitiveness. 2) Promoting visits to foreign countries by the Prime Minister and members of the Cabinet in order to reify the country's good image overseas, and to use as a tool to foster Thailand's trade with its partners 3) Building trust and confidence in Thailand, especially among its immediate neighbors. (Chachavalpongpun, P, 2010. p 23)	Thaksin Administration, Ministry of Commerce

Cabinet	Period	Use for	Used by
Surayud Chulanont	2006 - 2008	Iran: Stronger education ties, education exchange, and more scholarships to more students who want to study at the Cairo base (The Secretariat of the Cabinet, n.d.)	Ministry of Culture
Samak Sundaravej	2008	Agenda from the house representative 6.5. Working forward to create engagements for people, culture, and education by “people-diplomacy”, which aims to build more exchanges between locals and foreign communities from developed nations, including cooperation with developing countries to create close ties and understanding with other religious organization (Sundaravejm, 2008)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Somchai Wongsawat/ Chavarat Charnvirakul	2008	None	
Abhisit Vejjajiva	2008 - 2011	Under the government of Abhisit Vejjajiva, several projects were drafted to implement the policy of “Creative Thailand”, which aimed to make Thailand the hub of creative industries in Southeast Asia and to raise the economic regenerations in the creative sector from 12 percent of GDP to 20 percent by 2012 (Disatapundhu & Phuttitarn, 2014).	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture
Yingluck Shinawatra	2011 - 2014	Increased policy of “Thailand kitchens throughout the world” and Halal food businesses in foreign countries. This policy included networking by publicity, such as the case of 28 projects including festivals, Thai food, Thai food books, and network channels. Efforts were also made to increase business for halal food in Malaysia, Pakistan, and Azerbaijan, although the former was targeted to enhance trade between both nations (Investment Promotion, 2013)	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture
Prayut Chan-o-Cha	2014 - 2023	There were many examples of Thailand using cultural diplomacy because of Thailand’s rich culture heritage. For example, Thailand used ‘Kitchen World’ to promote Thai food. As Ayutthaya flooded, the ancient section of the city was rebuilt with bricks and stones from the exact period by exchanging glue from Germany. Other examples include the Royal Barge Suphannahong was integrated in the ceremony of the late King Rama 9 along the river, which can be interpreted as part of cultural exchange. At the Royal Cremation Ceremony, other foreigners were invited to watch the ceremony ritual and to see Thai culture. In addition, there was a theatre with high royal ritual dancing, which was promoted around the world, similar to the ballet from Russia. Lastly, the Ministry of Culture has promoted the 5Fs, which promoted business around the world, such as film, boxing, and others, which is derived from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Goodwill Ambassadors, and United Nations representatives	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Tourism

In the beginning, it is used to promote culture between selected countries. There are many ways to try to promote cultural diplomacy, such as cultural exchange, education exchange, gastronomy diplomacy, religion exchange and others (referring to Table 1). However, all of these platforms are only placed in the term of “cultural exchange”, which is only a normal platform for cultural diplomacy. Only Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva was trying to “Creative Thailand”, which aims to make Thailand the hub of creative industries in Southeast Asia, which might be a new idea.



## Comparative cases of Cultural Diplomacy by Countries

### New Zealand's Cultural Diplomacy

New Zealand has used cultural diplomacy for images tied to the nation's branding, with Maori culture used for Cultural Diplomacy by New Zealand's foreign ministry, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). In WWII, New Zealand used cultural diplomacy in the Te Maori exhibition in the mid-1980s and in the cultural diplomacy program of the New Zealand High Commission in London, between 1988 and 1991. In 1970, a cultural exchange program was established. Its goal was to fund an exchange and improve bilateral relations with close countries and to develop New Zealand art. The program was also meant to project New Zealand image abroad. This was an art exhibition tour held in the US, which was very successful in 1970. First, this exhibition was to raise 'Mana,' a spiritual concept of Maori culture, which New Zealand is very proud of. Second, the exhibition shared experiences from New Zealand to make Americans aware of Maori culture. The third aspect involved trade, investment, and tourism. The exhibition was a success, with 917,500 people in attendance. This exhibition fostered a sense of the importance of Maori culture both domestically and abroad. This committee commemorated the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi between Britain and the Maori people. This involved many New Zealanders and British in as many activities as possible. Moreover, it raised awareness of New Zealand – its products, achievements, and prospects. It also considered changes in the UK and the potential created by these changes. Finally, it strengthened ties between Britain and New Zealand, such as increasing the number of exchange students.

The Cultural Diplomacy International Programme (CDIP) approved the program on May 31st, 2004. As a CDIP program, it was not only a cultural exchange, it also promoted New Zealand's image as well. First, there was a little doubt from the government about seeing national identity, the arts, and culture as playing a key role in New Zealand's economic growth in the 21st century. Through creativity and its own identity, though, New Zealand has shown its economic creativity. The Labour Government in 2002 supported New Zealand artists at international festivals and investigated the establishment of an artist touring fund. Having a diverse heritage, New Zealand has a distinctive profile as a targeted setting. The CDIP has targeted overseas senior government and business leaders and representatives of creative culture to understand how to proceed. The cabinet has agreed on "underpinning," a policy which came from the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. For example, the CDIP wanted to add value to New Zealand, fund cultural activity, and construct a message consistent with the New Zealand nation brand. China, Japan, and Korea were the primary focus for the first three years, and the impact of cultural diplomacy in that region is of great interest to New Zealand. CDIP first operated for a year in Asia in places like Taiwan, Korea, and Singapore through film festivals. There

were also performances by a New Zealand dance company called Black Grace and by the New Zealand String Quartet in Japan. The CDIP also put on a tour of Korea by the Patea Maori Club, the production of a youth-focused music DVD for distribution by New Zealand posts in South East Asian countries, a New Zealand Festival in Singapore by World of Wearable Arts, and performances by the New Zealand theatre group Indian Ink in Singapore. These events consisted of five factors. The first factor was promoting cultural activity with interested countries. The second is to project the distinctive profile of New Zealand's cultural heritage abroad. Third, cultural activity was experimented with before sending it abroad (in this first year, the target was Asia). Fourth, the target countries received the events that suited them best. Fifth, if a country is overloaded with cultural activity, the CDIP determined that there would be diminishing returns.

#### India Cultural Diplomacy

India has used cultural diplomacy as a tool domestically and abroad, represented by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), which has hosted festival programs abroad. India is not concerned with cultural sovereignty. In the postcolonial era, India has presented itself through cultural diplomacy, old-fashioned, with an old heritage. After India gained independence, their foreign policy changed in important ways. India believed in co-existing. Firstly, the government focused on international cultural interactions and international cultural cooperation. It also took economic advancement and trade into consideration, as colonialism had deprived India of active contact with other countries. The program was established in 1950, which established the nation's culture and education as part of a post-independence program of nation-building.

Azad had the idea of making the world a place of peace and cultural cooperation. Since 1960, the ICCR has essentially been a division of the foreign ministry. Firstly, the program was related to cultural relations, in formulation and implementation. Secondly, it promoted cultural exchange. Third, it strengthened cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries. Fourth, it established cultural organizations. An exhaustive list of all the festivals put on by the ICCR is not possible because the program of festivals was of such a size that it constitutes arguably the largest manifestation by any state of a standard cultural diplomacy event: the cultural festival. The festivals represent India's cultural diplomacy. Moreover, these festivals present the image of the state. The festivals of India have achieved two main objectives. First, they project India's image abroad. Second, they encourage investment, technological development, commerce, industry, and the growth of tourism (Mark, 2008).

Thailand uses Cultural Diplomacy like New Zealand and India in similar ways. Thailand and New Zealand have exactly the same way of using cultural diplomacy for business branding, and India uses it for cultural relations (traditional ways). The differences exist in how New Zealand uses cultural diplomacy for national branding, and while India uses ICCR for cultural exchange both Thailand doesn't use or have (national branding or cultural organization).

### Interviewing by practices

**Table 2.** List of Interviewees from the International Relations Field

No	Participants	Gender	Nationality	Position	Organization	Note
1	Participants A	Female	Thai	Officer A	Ministry Culture of Thailand	
2	Participants B	Female	Thai	Head of Director	Ministry of Foreign Affair Thailand	
3	Participants C	Female	Thai	Officer A	Ministry of Foreign Affair Thailand	
4	Participants D	Male	Thai	Director A	Ministry of Foreign Affair Thailand	
5	Participants F	Male	Thai	Director	Idis Rangsit University	

In ministries outside of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there is still a lack of knowledge and expertise on Cultural Diplomacy (Participants A). For the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, there are 99 embassies around the world used for cultural diplomacy. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been cooperating with other ministries that use cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy for Thailand is 'Thainess' and an opportunity to show the importance and prevalence of Thai generosity for others, as illustrated in natural disaster events (tsunamis) or the 13 soccer team players who were stuck in the Tham Luang cave. Other cases show understanding each country can help to not to mislead each other, as shown in the events leading up to the recent Thai-Cambodian conflict. History shares value, but it has to move forward. Moreover, for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the mechanism relies on the 10-year foundation for cultural promotion, where sustainability has created progression for cultural promotion and upgraded its production to showcase in foreign countries, such as green products and reducing heavy plastic usage. Furthermore, when we work with the Ministry of Culture, we have to speak with the Embassy for the place and performance, how large performances are, what kind of performance, what we will be performing, and this happens every year to celebrate the Anniversary for two nations (and there is a road show for more than two countries). The performances include the Khon performance, Royal Bangkok Symphony Orchestra band, and the Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra. Meanwhile, the Royal Kathin ceremony remains optimal for the religious department, where Dr. Surin Pitsuwan's policy remains to donate and attain merit by hosting Royal Kathin ceremony to other foreign Buddhist majority countries (13 countries in total – where I have to go to Cambodia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Kota Kinabalu, Bhutan, India, and others) (Participant B).

Other exchanges of cultures to other countries include Thai fabric, Thai boxing and gastronomy diplomacy. There is an idea to use new technology for management to bring more people to Thailand and promote Thailand by using a street food application. Participant F stated that from the beginning, Thailand did not have other sources of power, like hard power, so it has to use the resources it had, which is culture. Thai communities have been built in foreign countries and have made an impression. Then, the process continues on how it works by developing from the beginning. This can be a project such as using Thai costumes, Thai food, Muay Thai and others (Participants C; Participants D).

Moreover, for using cultural diplomacy, cultural diplomacy has a long history in Asia. Historically, people use 'people cultural exchange' with the use of Hinduism and Brahmins for non-state exchange, or Western nations used state exchange in WWII via fighting with Fascism and Marxism. Yet in Asia, cultural diplomacy has been a natural way that has happened for a long time by people, not states, where ambassadors send gifts to other countries, as shown by the evidences where Thai people used porcelain china, noodles and Udon with the aid of merchants. Another observation is that Thailand has a problem with the budget allocation of using cultural diplomacy (Participants F).

## Discussion

### Opportunity Cultural Diplomacy for Thailand

Cultural diplomacy is developing. It has been used in national, local, and private partnerships. However, cultural diplomacy is just one tool, and it is a subset of public diplomacy. On the other hand, Thailand cannot use public diplomacy fully as Thailand ranks 88 in the world for public diplomacy (Prasirtsuk, 2024), as public diplomacy requires long-term relationships, which use two-way media channels, and it remains currently harder to compare to cultural diplomacy. Public diplomacy's goal is to support Thailand's foreign policy in a modern way. If public diplomacy is used in a correct way from many perspectives, will foreign audiences gain 'trust' in that country and be willing to help follow that country if someone asks? Public diplomacy in Thailand has both successful and unsuccessful examples. For a successful example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has given scholarships to foreign students to come to study in Thailand. This way, when students finish studying, they will take with them Thai culture. Another successful example for Thailand was as the leader of the G77 summit, which was a very good chance to gain the trust of other countries and establish partnerships. This is a good example to help foreign communities. However, there have been unsuccessful examples too. Thailand failed the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) vote bid in 2014– 2015 (Lahidji, 2016).

During the UNSC bid, the budget was increased for public diplomacy, using it to promote Thailand to be a selected country among other countries, such as Kazakhstan. Thailand held an event for exchanging culture, which was promoted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and supported by the Ministry of Culture. Even though Thailand failed, it had to adopt a better foreign policy to attract a better foreign audience, which this policy must exclude by foreign policy (Nye, 2004). Another reason is because of the politics at that time. Thailand was unstable; however, even if it failed, Thailand still continues to use public diplomacy through government channels. In the current situation, public diplomacy is a very important tool for using technology for communications. Public diplomacy is an important tool for public audiences to learn information and to gain trust. Another tool is for perception. The current competitiveness for soft power and public diplomacy will be intense and highly competitive, as many countries are trying to gain power. The solution is for Thailand to develop public diplomacy because now it may not only rely on cultural diplomacy alone, it has to use both cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy to gain the greatest effectiveness.

There are many examples of using cultural diplomacy, such as exchanging religion – Buddhist exchange (Theravada and Mahayana), Islam, and Christianity – as shown in the Songkran festival, theater (e.g. Phi Ta Khon) and others. Another example is when Thailand came up with a policy of sister city, which aims to exchange culture between both cities and highlight their similarities, to exchange borders between two countries like Thailand and Laos to both economically, and to exchange religion and culture. However, Thailand must seek more opportunities to be a leader in this world, such as helping or following the United Nations' criteria. For example, when an earthquake happened in Nepal, Thailand's Ministry of Culture sent its Fine Art Department to help restore historic places. Other policies use common heritage sites like United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) projects. For example, the Ministry of Culture invite every ambassador in every country to travel to historic buildings and learn their history in areas of Thailand like Ayutthaya, which is one of the three UNESCO sites in Thailand.

Other examples of an UNESCO sites are the Route Khon in Europe. Italy, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Germany and Belgium, local people, members of the diplomatic corps, governmental and private sectors, and foreign tourists are a great exchange for Thailand and the European Union on a people-to-people level (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). And another example is the 'Prawn Tom Yum' soup, which is a famous Thai food. It has been sent to space for astronauts to eat for survival, it is another way for to build Thailand's soft power (public diplomacy way) (Bangkok Post, 2024).

	Type of PD	Timeframe	Flow of Information	Typical Infrastructure
I	Listening	Short & long-term	Inward to analysts and policy process	Monitoring technology & language trained staff
II	Advocacy	Short term	Outward	Embassy press office, foreign ministry strategy office
III	Cultural diplomacy	Long-term	Outward	Cultural Center and/or library
IV	Exchange diplomacy	Very long-term	Inward & outward	Exchange administrator, Educational office
V	International broadcasting	Medium-term	Outward but from a news bureaucracy	News bureaus, production studios, editorial offices, and transmitter facilities
	PsyWar	Short-term	Outward	Printing facilities, covert. Broadcasting facilities, covert network

**Figure 3.** Types of Public Diplomacy

**Source:** Nicholas J. Cull (2009)

### How can Cultural Diplomacy create efficiency on Public Diplomacy

Ultimately, all aforementioned examples explain how Thailand uses Cultural Diplomacy, which is a subset of public diplomacy, and public diplomacy is a subset of soft power; all of this helps to improve public diplomacy for Thailand more effectively.

### Public Agencies have a role in improving Cultural Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy

There are many ways in which public agencies play a crucial role in cultural diplomacy, like the examples from the Section 5.1 (Thailand Cultural Diplomacy Practices (Sourced by Political Events) and 6 (Discussion Opportunity: Cultural Diplomacy for Thailand), from the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Tourism and Sport of Thailand, and the Ministry of Education. There is an idea appointed commissioner ‘soft power’, which the Ministry of Culture is in charge of, which is the head of the “team” for Thailand. However, public diplomacy is a different case, as referred to within the discussion of Section 6, in which Thailand heavily uses in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, remaining somewhat effective, but some still lack potential.

## Conclusion

The development of Thailand's cultural diplomacy has been furthered and fruitful. For Thailand, cultural diplomacy has been used mainly in four Ministries, namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport of Thailand. With the help of many private and public institutions, Thailand now ranks 17th for cultural influences in the world, which is currently ranked 40th in the world for soft power, coming down from 35th (TCEB, n.d.).

### Policy Recommendation

- 1) To combine cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy as Thailand has not utilized a combination of both factors in practice
- 2) Placing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the head of committee and establishing a working committee with knowledge and expertise in cultural diplomacy
- 3) Highlighting the importance of people diplomacy to enhance Thailand's image globally
- 4) Establishing the "Thai Foundation" as the main method to work faster and be more successful in helping government jobs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

### Policy Recommendation

- 1) Enhancing Brand Thailand Through Syntetic Ecosystem for Cultural Economy.
- 2) Placing People at the Heart of Transformation.
- 3) Craving Anything Thai a Global Phenomenon.
- 4) Thailand as a Globally Trusted Brand. (action-planning economic and cultural to international 2024 - 2030)

### Public Policy Implementation

Public diplomacy is mostly used in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through diplomatic channels; however, it can be used by any government, business, non-government or others for more effectiveness. Currently it is not well known, so it is used mostly through diplomatic channels, media and other related channels.

### Soft Power

The previous government tried to combine all government, business, non-government and other organizations to make a soft power policy, such as making a committee and One Family One

Soft Power initiative. However, it was not effective and slow on implementation, although there were successful cases such establishing committees, passing through the budget, developing C-Pot, and much more.

### **Acknowledgements**

The author would like to thank the anonymous references. The author would also like to acknowledge the research project and conferences, which was supported by the information gathered from interviews with the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Director of Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies (IDIS – Rangsit University). I would also like to thank the Graduate School of Public Administration from the National Institute of Development Administration for the provided expertise and knowledge as part of the author's current journey as PhD student.



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