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**Коллективные игры ЕС  
и европейская культурная дипломатия:  
театр как инструмент «мягкой силы»  
в отношениях ЕС — Россия**

В исследовании фокусируется внимание на значении межкультурного диалога между Россией и ЕС, который может сформировать новые формы доверия. Использован новый подход в культурных отношениях с двусторонним взаимодействием, включающим совместные театральные выступления.

Ключевые слова: политика «мягкой силы»; Европейский союз; Россия.

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## **EU Collective Plays and European Cultural Diplomacy: Theater as a Soft Power Tool in the EU — Russia Relations**

The article focused on the statement about inter-cultural dialogue between Russia and EU can build a new form of trust, using a new approach in cultural relations with a two-way engagement that involves collaborative performances.

**Key words:** Soft power; European Union; Russia.

The inevitable results of cultural diplomacy and cultural exchange may resonate closely with one another.

But, they are two very different paths towards a common goal of mutual understanding and respect.

*Roberta Levitow*

Cultural diplomacy has played an increasing role in the European diplomatic story in recent years, and the European Union (EU) has improved its strategies for cultural relations with third countries, as a part of its external relations and foreign policy. On 8 June 2016, two weeks before the UK voted to leave the EU, Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, together with Commissioner Tibor Navracsics, put forward a proposal to develop an EU strategy to international cultural relations called *Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations* [1].

Their aim was to put cultural cooperation at the centre of the EU's diplomatic relations with countries around the world, expressing the ambition of still being a strong global actor. With a bottom-up perspective which includes cultural actors and through the concept of “smart complementarity”, the EU institutions work together with private associations, in order to create a cultural bridge between EU and extra-EU countries, even when diplomatic relations are poor. This paper aims at analysing how EU is shaping its new strategies for culture outside its borders [2; 3].

In particular, the paper introduces as a case study EU — Russia cultural relations through a specific project for theatre called *EU Collective Plays!*, which promotes and supports the creation of plays, as a result of the collaboration of playwrights of different nationalities [4; 5]. The first theatre project ever developed with Russia authors took place in Italy, in the frame of the Viterbo International Contemporary Theatre Festival *Quartieri dell'Arte*, which in 2015 the Italian newspaper, *La Repubblica* defined “the Silicon Valley of Dramaturgy”. Director and playwright Gian Maria Cervo invited the Presnyakov brothers from Yekaterinburg to join the 2018 edition of the festival. The performance of the three authors was unique in its genre. *Contemporary pastoral* n. 1 is a hybrid between a performance and a writing workshop [6].

In Civita di Bagnoregio, Gian Maria Cervo and the Presnyakov brothers wrote and discussed for a week on various topics. Occasionally experts in Russian history and culture joined the conversation *en plein air* with the playwrights. Sometimes the three authors involved passing tourists or the spectators of the performance in the discussion, who otherwise would not have been able to interact with them, considering that around the table of the playwrights had been placed signs in Italian, English, Russian, Chinese, Arabic and Japanese with the writing “Do not talk to the playwrights”. The stage of their performance was the main square of Civita, a small Italian village suspended on a thin strip of land and inhabited by only ten people, connected with the rest of the region only through a long pedestrian bridge, but visited daily by thousands of tourists from around the world. The n. 1 in the play title alludes to possible new stages of the project in which the three playwrights will find themselves developing creative ideas within connoted environments, like a soup kitchen or a luxury boutique, two locations that well represent the contradictions of our time. In this sense, cultural diplomacy as “public diplomacy” or “citizen diplomacy” can be analysed as a phenomenon associated not only with nations [7].

This form of cooperative diplomacy can reduce the gap between the fields of politics, civics, science, and the arts. This new interpretation of diplomacy confirms that non-State actors are increasingly becoming political players in the global sphere. We have assisted in recent years

to a proliferation of non-State actors, which has transformed international relations including the circulation of ideas.

Like in early modern times, today European countries form an atomized Europe, divided by competing national interests, where playwrights could mirror a sort of proto-diplomatic corps and reflect the fluidity of the diplomatic identity, like in the Renaissance period. In fact, in the European courts of the Sixteenth Century entertainment was a backdrop to diplomatic negotiations, for which perception and imagination are just as important as in arts. In the post-Cold War world, culture and identity have been progressively recognized as key forces, which can shape global order more than ideologies. World's politics has entered a new phase, where conflicts will be not primarily ideological or economical, but cultural, according to Huntington's "clash of civilizations" and where religion has filled the vacuum created by a loss of political ideology. In parallel, we observe the effects of globalization, which can enrich cultural exchanges or increase cultural tensions. In this socio-political context, cultural diplomacy is an expression of dialogue not of monologue, contrary to cultural propaganda. Inter-cultural dialogue can build a new form of trust, using a new approach in cultural relations with a two-way engagement that involves collaborative performances. Cultural diplomacy, along with economic diplomacy and energy diplomacy, represents in our interconnected world a new field of joined-up external action of both State and non-State actors [8].

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### **Европейские выборы 2019: региональный аспект**

Проанализированы особенности политического развития стран ЕС. Рассмотрено распределение сил в Европарламенте, указано представительство различных политических партий в нем. Дан прогноз результатов грядущих выборов в Европарламент.

**К л ю ч е в ы е с л о в а:** Европейский союз; Европейский парламент; выборы; евроскептики.

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### **European Elections 2019: Regional Aspect**

The article analyzes the features of the political development of the EU countries. The distribution of forces in the European Parliament is considered, the representation of various political parties in it is specified. Studied the prediction of future elections in the EU.

**K e y w o r d s:** EU; European Parliament; elections; евроскептики.

В мае 2019 г. в странах Евросоюза пройдут выборы депутатов Европейского парламента (ДЕП). Они вызывают интерес по ряду

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