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Music as cultural diplomacy.  
The case of the introduction of Western  
music in Meiji Era Japan

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## INTRODUCTION

The idea to develop this thesis originated from a great passion for music combined with that for the Eastern Asian world, and in particular for the Land of the Rising Sun. A musical education that began at an early age and a Bachelor's degree in Japanese Studies, combined with a Master course in International Relations and an internship at the Cultural Office of the Italian Embassy in Tokyo led us to ask ourselves a question: *is music a valid tool of cultural diplomacy?* In order to answer this question, we decided to structure our research into three chapters, which respectively focus on cultural diplomacy, music, and Japan.

*Chapter I* will provide the reader with a general overview of cultural diplomacy, including its origins, definition, history, features and implementation. The first chapter will allow us to get the reader settled it, so as to enter more into the heart of the discourse. *Chapter II* will focus on music, starting with the theories concerning its origins, followed by the analysis of its function in ancient societies, which will allow us to define music as a universal language, thus able to overcome barriers by building a bridge between different cultures and ideas. Some practical examples of musical diplomacy from different eras and historical contexts will then be presented, in which music has proved to be an instrument capable of influencing the outcome of diplomatic negotiations, both in a positive and negative sense. Finally, *Chapter III* will be devoted to the case of the introduction of Western music in Japan, which we believe to be of particular importance in relation to musical diplomacy. We will begin by presenting the country, whose main geopolitical factor is particularism, and then we will attempt to offer the reader a taste of Japanese aesthetics through the words of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. After briefly comparing the Japanese, Russian and Turkish styles of modernization, we will explain the reason why we chose to analyze the case of Japan. We will continue by providing the reader with a brief historico-musical background of Japan, so as to better understand the later developments. We will then describe the encounters between Japan and Western music, focusing on the second one, finally getting to the actual introduction of Western music in the context of the Meiji Restoration (1868) in two different spheres, namely the military and the educational. We will stress the great efforts needed to harmonize Western music with the traditional one, the attempt made to create a compromise between the two, whose result will be the assimilation of Western music within Japanese society. We will end by

providing the evidence of this assimilation through the review of the content of certain products of Japanese popular culture - *manga* and *anime*.

## CHAPTER I. DEFINING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

### *Cultural diplomacy: an historico-etymological analysis*

Providing a definition of a word or a concept is a process which entails a deep understanding of the “*thing*”. Our classical education taught us that if we wish to grasp the significance of anything, there is no better way than to go find its roots. In the specific case of a word, this means investigating its origins, that is, searching for its *etymon*. It is with this in mind that we consider it appropriate to present to the reader an historico-etymological analysis of the words *diplomacy* and *culture* before giving any definition of “cultural diplomacy”.

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, diplomacy is “the management of the relationships between countries”<sup>1</sup> or the “skill in dealing with people without offending or upsetting them”.<sup>2</sup> In order to trace back to the original term, three steps are necessary. Diplomacy is derived from the French “*diplomatie*”, which indicates the art of dealing with state affairs at the international level. It is relevant to stress that the “art of diplomacy”, as we understand it today, dates back only to the beginning of the modern era, and more precisely to the Italian Renaissance (14<sup>th</sup> century - 17<sup>th</sup> century); certainly, we cannot fail to mention the works of the Florentine Niccolò Machiavelli, including *Il Principe*, “The Prince” (1513) and *Dell’Arte della Guerra*, “The Art of War” (1519), to historically frame the very principles that underlie relations between a State and other nations. However, diplomacy is not an art of recent formation, since already in ancient times certain peoples knew and used it, as can clearly be deduced from the example below.

The Romans, the warrior people *par excellence*, had purposely created a *collegium* of special priests, the *Fetiales*,<sup>34</sup> who among other duties, had to manage foreign affairs and

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, meaning of *diplomacy* in English, Cambridge Dictionary Online <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/diplomacy>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> From the Latin *fetialis*, *fecialis*. Priest belonging to the ancient Latin corporation, repository of the sacred right relating to the treaties of alliance and declarations of war (*ius fetiale*). In Rome the fetiales formed a collegium of 20 members elected by co-optation; they went on missions in two: the *pater patratus*, who spoke on behalf of the Roman people, and the *verbenarius*, who carried a clod of vervain from the Capitoline Ara (vervain had an apotropaic value against bad influences).

*Dizionario Enciclopedico Italiano*, voce “feziale”, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1970, Roma – Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, p. 718.

<sup>4</sup> These magistrates-priests had the duty of representing Roman people in all acts of international legal significance: “*Fetiales apud veteres Romanos erant qui sancto legatorum officio ab his, qui adversum*

treaties. When disagreements or real disputes with other populations occurred, they went to them as qualified ambassadors to deal with the matter. If an agreement was reached, they drafted the terms of the peace treaty; on the contrary, if there was no agreement, they had the power to declare a state of war in the name of the Roman people. The Fetiales, as it seems evident, were culturally prepared magistrates, capable of administer with "competence", "ability" and "caution" (= with diplomacy) extremely important matters such as peace and war.

The figure of the Fetiales makes an appearance in Titus Livius' *Historiae*:

*“Eo anno, quia tempus indutiarum cum Veiente populo exierat, per legatos fetialesque res repeti coeptae. Quibus venientibus ad finem legatio Veientium obvia fuit [...]”.*<sup>5</sup>

*“In that year, since the term of the truce with Veii had run out, steps were taken to demand restitution, through ambassadors and fetials. Arriving at the frontier, these men were met by an embassy of the Veientes [...]”.*

As proven by the example above, diplomacy has very ancient roots. To go back to its origin, we need to take a further step. French, as all Romance languages, evolved from Vulgar Latin between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries; therefore, the lexical and grammatical similarities among French and Latin are numerous. We need only think of the conjugation of the verb *to be* in the present indicative in the two languages:

FRENCH	LATIN
<i>Je</i> suis	<i>Ego</i> sum
<i>Tu</i> es	<i>Tu</i> es
<i>Il /Elle</i> est	<i>Is/Ea</i> est
<i>Nous</i> sommes	<i>Nos</i> sumus
<i>Vous</i> êtes	<i>Vos</i> estis
<i>Ils/Elles</i> sont	<i>Li/Eae</i> sunt

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*populum Romanum vi aut rapinis aut injuriis hostili mente commoverant, pignora facto foedere iure repetebant: nec bella indicebantur, quae tamen pia vocabant, priusquam id fuisset Fetalibus denuntiatum”.* *Novissimo Digesto Italiano*, voce “Fetiales”, vol. VII, Terza Edizione a cura di Antonio Azara – Ernesto Eula, UTET, 1957, Torino, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, p. 254.

<sup>5</sup> Titus Livius, *Ab Urbe Condita*, IV, 58, 1. B.C. 27-9.

Thus, it should surprise no one that *diplomatie* derives from the Latin word “*diploma*”,<sup>6</sup> which literally means “*written document folded in two*”. The name *diploma* is given, in a generic sense, to the written document drawn up on any material – bronze tablets, waxed tables, papyrus - which appears, externally, folded in two. It is in this sense, for instance, that the term is related to the utilization of closed diptychs, with reference to the oracular responses of Jupiter Heliopolitan. In a more specific meaning, the word indicates the letter of the prince, senate or republican magistrate, folded in two, containing the confirmation of rights or concessions, such as citizenship or the remission of a punishment. There also existed a very specific type of diploma, the military diploma, by which the soldier received the discharge (*missio*). The proliferation of concession documents led to the establishment of a special section of the imperial chancellery *a diplomatibus*. The latter term was used to indicate both the section of the chancellery in question and its officials, while the archive in which the originals were kept was called *diplomarium*.<sup>7</sup> The word came back into use in the Renaissance to indicate the solemn documents of sovereign or public authorities (the so-called “*diplomatica*”).<sup>8</sup> In ancient times the ambassador, in order to prove the legitimacy conferred on him by his sovereign to deal in his name, carried with him a diploma. It is from the art necessary to the ambassador that comes the common meaning of diplomacy, that is a set of virtues such as balance, ability to speak, tact, and ability to mediate, which in the life of states can mark the difference between flourishing and peaceful interdependence and ruinous and bloody wars.

Conquering Greece and the East, Rome came into direct contact with the Greek-Hellenistic world and its culture, which was already known and admired thanks to the relations with Magna Grecia. It was, however, starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. that the Greek cultural influence became so profound and widespread that the poet Horace (1<sup>st</sup> century A.D.) wrote: “*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio*”,<sup>9</sup> “The (militarily) conquered Greece (culturally) conquered the crude winner and brought the arts to rural Lazio”. Works of art and entire libraries flocked from Greece and the

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<sup>6</sup> *Diplōma* -ātis (pl. -i). *Vocabolario della Lingua Latina Castiglioni-Mariotti*, voce “*diplōma*”, Quarta Edizione a cura di Piergiorgio Parroni, 2009, Loescher Editore, p. 368.

<sup>7</sup> *Novissimo Digesto Italiano*, voce “*Diploma*”, vol. V, Terza Edizione a cura di Antonio Azara – Ernesto Eula, UTET, 1957, Torino, Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, p. 650.

<sup>8</sup> *Dizionario Enciclopedico Italiano*, voce “*diplōma*”, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1970, Roma – Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> Quinto Orazio Flacco, *Epistulae*, II, 1, 165.

Orient, and with them artists, men of letters, philosophers, actors and Greek slaves came too. Many of these slaves were one of the most effective vehicles for the affirmation of Greek culture: in fact, they served as teachers of the rich Roman families' children, forming their education in the light of the new values. The study trip to the capitals of Hellenistic culture (Athens and Alexandria) and the knowledge of Greek, the second language of all educated men, became fashionable. Literature and art underwent the fascination of Greek works; religious customs and beliefs opened up to the Greek and oriental ones, and luxury spread in homes and clothing, oriental religious cults and mysterious rituals, sparking the violent opposition of those who, like Cato the Censor (234 B.C. - 149 B.C.), defended the values of the Roman tradition against the new Greek values, which were considered a source of corruption and consumption. In light of these considerations, we can finally reach the end of our backward search of the origin of the term “*diplomacy*”. The etymon of diplomacy is the Greek word *διπλωμα, τος, τὸ*, “folded written”, derived from the verb *διπλῶω* “to double”.<sup>10</sup>

The term “*culture*” has been attributed with several definitions. *First*, culture is “the set of intellectual cognitions that a person has acquired through study and experience. A distinction is generally made between erudition and culture, since the latter word designates a deeper reworking, not only intellectual but also spiritual, of the notions acquired in the various branches of knowledge, which results on one hand in the formation of the moral personality of man, and on the other hand in the education of taste”.<sup>11</sup> *Second*, culture may indicate “cultivation, farming, breeding”.<sup>12</sup> *Third*, culture refers to a “complex of social, political and economic institutions, artistic activities, spiritual and religious manifestations, which characterize the life of a given society in a given historical moment, *i.e.* the Italian culture of the 15<sup>th</sup> century”.<sup>13</sup> *Fourth*, in ethnology, sociology and cultural anthropology, culture is the set of values, symbols, conceptions, beliefs, behavior patterns, and even material activities, which characterizes the way of life of a social group, *i.e.* the culture of the indigenous peoples of Australia”.<sup>14</sup> In this last meaning, the term has been influenced by the German *Kultur*, a positive, vital

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<sup>10</sup> *Vocabolario Greco Italiano*, Lorenzo Rocci, voci “*διπλωμα*”, “*διπλῶω*”, Quarantunesima Edizione, Società Editrice Dante Alighieri, 2008, p. 493.

<sup>11</sup> *Dizionario Enciclopedico Italiano*, voce “*cultura*”, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1970, Roma – Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, p. 689.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Treccani, vocabolario on line, voce “*cultura*”, <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/cultura/>.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*



culture, not without a healthy barbarity, indicating the cultural complex of an entire civilization.<sup>15</sup> The official definition of culture provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a “*set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs*”.<sup>16</sup> Culture is often associated with the concept of art, thus indicating music, art, literature and other products of human genius.

*Culture* is a term of Latin origin, which derives from the verb *colĕre*,<sup>17</sup> literally “to farm”. Its meaning has expanded and extended to all the activities and situations that required assiduous care, from the “care” towards the gods, that is, worshipping, to the cultivation of human beings and their education. From this last meaning derived the value of culture in its modern sense: the complex of knowledge and traditions that people consider fundamental and worthy of being transmitted to subsequent generations. The concept of culture is eminently characteristic of the modern era; however, it is possible to find a correspondent of it in classical antiquity, the so-called *paidèia*. The term *paidèia* (in ancient Greek παιδεία, “education”, from παῖς, παιδός, “young boy”) in old Greece denoted the pedagogical model in force in Athens in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.; it referred not only to the school education of children, but also to their ethical and spiritual development in order to make them perfect and complete citizens, thus indicating a high form of culture capable of guiding their harmonious insertion into society. According to the model of classical Athens, the education of young people should be divided into two parallel branches: the physical *paidèia*, including care and strengthening of the body, and the mental or spiritual *paidèia*, aimed at the interiorization of those universal values which constituted the ethos of the *polis*. The high reputation enjoyed by Greek culture during Hellenism (B.C. 323 - 21) meant that the Romans adopted many of its principles, among which they drew inspiration from the *paidèia* to organize their educational system,

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<sup>15</sup> According to Thomas Mann, Kultur is tradition, and art and metaphysics are proper of Kultur. He claimed that Germany is the nation of Kultur, and considered himself as the last representative of a great national tradition which has in the triad Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Wagner the highest expression (“the trinity of eternally united spirits”, Mann, T., *Reflections of a nonpolitical man*, Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, 1983.).

<sup>16</sup> UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV at the 20<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting, on 2 November 2001, Annex I, p. 62.

<sup>17</sup> *cōlo*, *is*, *cōlūi*, *cultum*, *ĕre*, 3 tr. “to farm”, “to cultivate”, “to take care”, and “to worship the gods”. *Vocabolario della Lingua Latina Castiglioni-Mariotti*, voce “*cōlo*”, Quarta Edizione a cura di Piergiorgio Parroni, 2009, Loescher Editore, p. 221.

resulting in its spreading throughout the Mediterranean. On the cultural level, the Greek ideal of the *paidèia* was identified with the Latin ideal of *humanitas*. What brought *paidèia* and *humanitas* together is the fact that both had as their ultimate goal the achievement, through education and training, of a fully realized man.

This notion of culture from Greek and Roman antiquity reached the Christian Middle Ages, and its pedagogical methods changed from classical *bonae artes* to medieval liberal arts. Despite the profound differences corresponding to the affirmation of Christianity, these paths of culture have a common denominator in their aristocratic quality: classical culture, *paidèia* or *humanitas*, aimed at the realization of the humanity of free man, and was thus precluded to slaves; medieval Christian culture was the fruit of liberal arts, which were reserved for “free” men, who were able to dedicate themselves to theoretical-contemplative activities. Both in the ancient and in the medieval periods, the two ideals of “active life” and “contemplative life” were rigidly opposed; the man who lived the practical everyday life was opposed to the one who, immune from the passions of the other, aspired to the knowledge of eternal truth. And the more the spirit of transcendence and of the otherworldliness of immutable values is accentuated in the medieval Christianity, the more the motif of “technique” - mechanical knowledge useful for the needs of earthly life, which, albeit on a lower level, in the ancient world constituted a link between the ideal of knowledge and that of doing - is attenuated. In the modern age, a new principle was increasingly affirmed, that is, the idea that if a form of knowledge is not useful to earthly life, then it is worthless. The ideal of “erudite” man is thus replaced by that of “cultured” man, who drew from the knowledge and experience of the past what he considered useful to concretely enrich his personality and to enable him to better operate on the present. If the Renaissance has challenged the notion of culture as contemplative and esoteric knowledge, the sharpest criticism of an aristocratic ideal of culture was formulated by the Enlightenment, which affirms that reason is the instrument of education, and since every man is endowed with reason, culture can become a universal heritage rather than being reserved for the erudite men.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *Dizionario Enciclopedico Italiano*, voce “cultura”, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1970, Roma – Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, p. 689.

## ***Cultural diplomacy: definition and history***

Now that we have clarified the historico-etymological origin of the term “diplomacy” and “culture”, we shall move to the definition of “*cultural diplomacy*”. Cultural diplomacy may best be described as “*a course of actions, which are based on and utilize 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*”.<sup>19</sup>

Cultural diplomacy has existed as a practice for centuries; whilst the term *cultural diplomacy* has only recently been established, it is possible to observe the evidence of its practice throughout history. Explorers, travelers, traders, teachers and artists can be all considered living examples of early “cultural diplomats”. The interaction with different cultures facilitates a form of cultural exchange, which can take place in various fields, *i.e.* art, sports, literature, music, science, economy and beyond. An early example of cultural diplomacy can be identified in the establishment of regular trade routes, which facilitated the interaction of peoples, the exchange of language, religion, ideas, arts and societal structures, and enabled a frequent exchange of information, cultural gifts and expressions between traders and government representatives. The most striking example of regular trade route is what we call the “*Silk Road*”.

The Silk Road was an ancient network of trade routes, crossing all of Asia and leading to Byzantium, which linked the regions of the ancient world in commerce between B.C. 130 and A.D. 1453. It was formally established during the Han Dynasty of China, and it takes its name after the most popular good traded, silk. The silk industry is originally from China, which was known by the Greeks and Romans as the “land of silk”. For several centuries silk was imported in the form of ready-made fabrics, thread or skeins. In the Roman world - the first to mention silk was Horace - silk fabrics, pure or mixed with other yarns, had a considerable diffusion as a kind of luxury good, especially for women (in Latin *matronae*). However, Chinese silk increasingly became associated with licentiousness, and conservative Romans decried it as immoral dress for women and

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<sup>19</sup> ICD - Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, definition of Cultural Diplomacy. <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en>

effeminate attire for men. But despite the criticisms, neither the silk trade with Rome, nor the fashion of silk stopped, and this trade continued to be carried out by the *sericarii* or *negotiatores sericarii*. The purchase of large amounts of luxury goods from the Orient resulted in an unfavorable balance of trade; this is clearly illustrated by Plinius Secundus, who in his encyclopedic treatise *Naturalis Historia* wrote:

*"[...] minimaque computatione milies centena milia sestertium annis omnibus India et Seres et paeninsula illa imperio nostro adimunt: tanti nobis deliciae et feminae constant."*

*"[...] and according to the lowest estimate, every year the Indians, the Seris and the inhabitants of that (the Arabian) peninsula take away one hundred million sesterces from our empire: that's what luxury and women cost us."*<sup>20</sup>

In 552 the Byzantine emperor Justinian, tired of paying the exorbitant prices the Chinese demanded for silk, sent two emissaries, disguised as monks, with the task of learning the secret of silk production. Eventually, they succeeded in bringing back cocoons, and sericulture was artificially planted in the Mediterranean area.

Among the many explorers, travelers and traders who have always contributed to establishing a cultural dialogue around the world, to the point that they can be considered true ambassadors and the first cultural diplomats, the figure of the Venetian Marco Polo undoubtedly stands out. Marco Polo, son of the merchant and explorer Niccolò, while still a young man took part with his father and uncle Matteo in the great embassy to the great Khan Qubilay, undertaken on behalf of the Pope Gregory IX. In 1271 he departed from Laiazzo, and thus made a long journey through Asia in regions which were still unknown to Europeans, such as the Pamir Mountains, Lop and Gobi Desert, and many more, arriving after three and a half years to the borders of "Cathay" (China), and finally to Beijing. Having gained the sovereign's trust, during his seventeen years of stay in that country he had been entrusted with important missions, which led him as far as Yunnan, Tibet, Annam and Cochinchina, and that allowed him to deepen his knowledge of the living conditions, the languages and traditions of most of East Asia, and especially of "Mangi" (central China). He returned to Venice after twenty-five years of absence, while

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<sup>20</sup> Gaius Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis Historia*, XII, 84.

the city was engaged in a violent conflict with Genoa. Three years later, in 1298, he was captured in the naval battle of Curzola and imprisoned in Genoa. During his imprisonment, he told the story of his travels to a cellmate named Rustichello, a writer of short stories, who transcribed it in French and called it “*Livre des merveilles du monde*”. This record, which was very rich in details and observations collected with acute critical spirit by Marco Polo in his long journey, soon became famous and was diffused all over Europe. Eventually, it was renamed “*Il Milione*” – *The Million*, and in this travelogue it is clearly visible the cultural-diplomatic approach that many travelers and explorers have adopted over the centuries.<sup>21</sup>

As underlined by Erik Pajtinka in his article “*Cultural Diplomacy in Theory and Practice of Contemporary International Relations*”,<sup>22</sup> cultural diplomacy is a specific dimension of diplomacy and represents an integral part of diplomatic activities of almost all states. Despite the fact that it has been subjected to a growing interest in the last decades, still today we can consider it as the most underestimated area of diplomatic activities, especially if we compare it with fields such as economy and defense. As demonstrated by the example of Marco Polo, cultural diplomacy is not a new concept, as diplomacy between different cultures has always existed. However, if we want to identify the beginnings of cultural diplomacy intended as a specific instrument of foreign policy, we must go back to the first attempts by states to implement the idea of utilizing culture in order to achieve foreign policy objectives. If we understand it in this sense, then it is possible to find signs of cultural diplomacy already in the activities of medieval Byzantine missionaries, who “*deliberately disseminated not only [Christian] religious doctrine, but along with it, the [Byzantine] view of the world, its ideas, beliefs and customs*”,<sup>23</sup> with the purpose of strengthening the influence of the Empire abroad.

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<sup>21</sup> *Dizionario Enciclopedico Italiano*, voce “Polo, Marco”, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1970, Roma – Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, pp. 596-597.

<sup>22</sup> Pajtinka, E., “Cultural Diplomacy in the Theory and Practice of Contemporary International Relations”, in *Politické vedy*, December 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Hamilton, K. R. and Langhorne, R., *The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory and Administration*, New York, 1995, p. 17.

### *The origins of modern cultural diplomacy*

According to Pajtinka, the origins of modern cultural diplomacy are to be found at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in parallel to the establishment of the first specialized cultural-diplomatic institutions. The very first example is the of *Alliance Française* (originally *l'Association nationale pour la propagation de la langue française à l'étranger* – National agency for the dissemination of French language abroad), which was founded in 1883 in Paris on the initiative of the French diplomat Pierre-Paul Cambon with the aim of promoting French language abroad. It is relevant to stress that Alliance Française was a non-governmental organization, and thus did not constitute a diplomatic body of state. Similarly, we find the *Società Dante Alighieri*, appeared in 1889 with the task of disseminating the Italian language. The first national diplomatic bodies specialized in cultural diplomacy date back to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and among them we find the *Directorate General for Cultural Affairs* (DGCA), the *British Council*, and the *Division of Cultural Relations*. The DGCA was created within the French Foreign Ministry, while the British Council was the result of British effort to counteract German propaganda. The *Division of Cultural Relations* was founded in 1938 at the United States (U.S.) Department of State under the request of President F. D. Roosevelt, and starting from 1940 it was supplemented by the new *Office of Inter-American Affairs* (OOIA),<sup>24</sup> which was led by Nelson Rockefeller with the purpose of promoting American culture in Latin America. The United States of America developed an intense cultural-diplomatic activity, which culminated in the setting of the *United States Information Agency* (USIA), as a result of the aftermath of World War II. At the end of the conflict, the U.S. felt that they were invested with a mission, that is spreading throughout the world the ideals of freedom and democracy, considered to be fundamental elements of American cultural identity.

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<sup>24</sup> Campbell, J. L., “Creating Something Out of Nothing: The Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (1940-1941) and the Inception of a Policy for Musical Diplomacy”, in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 29-30.

## ***Cultural relations between the United States and the Soviet Union***

The emerging of the Cold War had a huge impact on the development of cultural-diplomatic activities; in fact, it was driven by ideologies, and their propagation was one of the principal methods of conduct. In the very beginning of the Cold War, just after the breakdown of wartime cooperation, the first form of conflict that arose between the two superpowers, the U.S. and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.), was a “war of ideas”. The strategy which emerged was, indeed, characterized by the transmission of ideas, so as to weaken the other’s ideological influence and, thus, change its intentions. The competition between the two superpowers took place in indirect military and nonmilitary forms and direct nonmilitary forms. The former included the efforts to expand its own influence and preventing the other superpower to do the same; the most striking examples of indirect military action were conducted in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. Regarding the nonmilitary form, it referred to “*the battle for what both sides called the “hearts and the minds” of the undecided, attracting through the exertion of economic and cultural influence rather than coercing through the use of force*”.<sup>25</sup> The importance of soft power was understood well before the Cold War by Lenin and his followers; in fact, “*words and pictures have played a more continuous, and perhaps more vital role than bullets or rubles in Moscow’s struggle to undermine the social order of capitalism and to reconstruct society on Marxist-Leninist foundations*”.<sup>26</sup>

Cultural relations between the United States and the Soviet Union have developed discontinuously. In the 1920s and 1930s, the All-Union Society for Cultural Ties (VOKS) was in charge of managing cultural relations on the Soviet side, while on the America side little enthusiasm was shown by the U.S. State Department with regard to the development of cultural relations with the Soviets. With the coming of Stalin, the contacts declined until the entry into World War II of the Americans. In order to promote the Grand Alliance, cultural exchanges in the fields of the arts, cinema, and sport exponentially increased, and they were now actively supported by both the American and Soviet governments. The efforts of strengthening the alliance can be traced also in some posters of Soviet propaganda, which depict, for instance, British and Soviet servicemen

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<sup>25</sup> Gould-Davies, N., “The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy”, in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 27, No. 2, April 2003, Oxford University Press, p. 195.

<sup>26</sup> Barghoorn, F. C., *Soviet Foreign Propaganda*, Princeton University Press, 1964, p. 3.

over the body of a swastikaed dragon. However, as soon as the urgency of victory over Nazism disappeared, Stalin revoked all those cultural concessions which had served to encourage a real national mobilization during the war, and the new priority became that of eliminating alien ideas at home and control foreign influences. Cultural relations started to be seen as an obstacle to the efforts made by the regime to reestablish full ideological control after the relaxation of the war years, and a ferocious campaign to restore orthodoxy in Soviet Union was unleashed. The critical point for the U.S.-U.S.S.R. cultural relations was reached in the 1950s when, due to growing McCarthyism,<sup>27</sup> the Republican Congress started to perceive these relations as a means of Soviet Union to spread communism and conduct espionage. The result was a rejection in principle of cultural relations by both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The resistance was grounded on the fear that Soviet visitors may engage in espionage and propaganda, whereas American tourists in the U.S.S.R. would be exposed to “*selective and misleading impressions of similar propagandistic benefit*”,<sup>28</sup> and the result of such relations would be the legitimization of Communist regimes. This is clearly demonstrated by the agenda of psychological warfare endorsed by the National Security Council in 1951, which included efforts to promote the transmission of information to the peoples of the Soviet bloc, and eventually to achieve its “*ultimate liberation and identification with the free world*”.<sup>29</sup> The growing of American propaganda efforts and intelligence activity was paralleled by Soviet attempts at ideological attack, to the extent that it is appropriate to talk about a real struggle for the transmission of values. At that point, the “*objective of each side was to maximize the penetration of the other’s society and to minimize the exposure of its own. In the absence of direct military conflict, this became the primary front of the Cold War*”.<sup>30</sup>

The advent of Nikita Khrushchev marked a turning point for the Soviet Union’s cultural policies. *First*, the Soviets understood the key role that cultural relations could play in consolidating their control of Eastern Europe. *Second*, they applied cultural influence also to the Third World, where the U.S.S.R. began to support the nationalist regimes. Soviet

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<sup>27</sup> From Joseph McCarthy (1908-1957), Wisconsin senator. He came to symbolize anti-Communist paranoia.

<sup>28</sup> Gould-Davies, N., “The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy”, in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 27, No. 2, April 2003, Oxford University Press, p. 205.

<sup>29</sup> NSC– 114/2, October 1951.

<sup>30</sup> Gould-Davies, N., “The Logic of Soviet Cultural Diplomacy”, in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 27, No. 2, April 2003, Oxford University Press, p. 199.



exhibitions were thus organized in India and Middle East (especially in Cairo and Damascus), while the Soviet Union started a cooperation with China to propagate cultural influence. Apart from forging cultural relations with the allies and the non-aligned countries, the Soviets sought to expand these relations with capitalist countries, too, and in particular with the United States. The first “diplomatic act”<sup>31</sup> in this sense is embodied by the visit to the Soviet Union of the Comédie Française in April 1954, followed by the performance of “*Porgy and Bess*” in Leningrad and Moscow by a New York company in 1955.

A first concrete step forward in the discussion of U.S.-U.S.S.R. cultural relations is represented by the 1995 Geneva summit, which led to the beginning of a Soviet-American cultural negotiation era, with both sides aiming to take advantage from these relations. In order to better comply with this new development, in 1957 the VOKS was replaced by the Union of Soviet Societies of Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (SSOD), and the State Committee for Cultural Ties (GKKS) was created with the task of systematically conducting cultural relations. The new approach materialized in January 1958, with the signing of the first U.S.-Soviet accord of the Cold War, the “Agreement on Exchanges in Cultural, Technical and Educational Fields”, known also as the Lacy-Zarubin agreement. It consisted in a broad agreement, with several limits linked to the resistance on the part of the Soviets in regard to free flow of information, *i.e.* uncensored radio transmission and TV broadcast, and distribution of books and magazines without restrictions.

The expansions of cultural relations between the two superpowers created new problems, as well as opportunities. On the one hand cultural relations could be used for purposes inimical to the other superpower and vice-versa, so it became necessary to resist the adversary’s exploitation of them. On the other hand, these relationships opened the door to unprecedented scientific, technical and educational exchange. However, this was a disproportionate exchange, as backward Soviet Union did not have as much to offer, at least on a technical and scientific perspective, as the advanced United States. In addition to scientific and technical exchanges, the Soviet Union promoted artistic and sporting ones, and encouraged the development of tourism, too. Tourism, in particular, was seen

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<sup>31</sup> Khrushchev, N., *Crises and rockets: a view from within in two volumes*, Moscow, 1994, I:54.

by the U.S. as a means of conducting propagandistic work beneficial to the United States among tourists, and they seek to attract Soviet visitors who, of course, constituted a special target.

In December 1961, at a major conference on ideological work, Leonid Ilyichev Khrushchev's chief ideologist, defined radio and tourism as means of American attack on Soviet public opinion. Regarding tourism, Ilyichev claimed that it was a "*new nonnuclear, nonballistic but intercontinental weapon. Well aimed and cleverly used*",<sup>32</sup> and then he added that "*when people [came] to [them] from abroad it [was] necessary not only to display vigilance and even more to defend [themselves], but [their] strongest weapon [was] to attack*".<sup>33</sup> The Soviet Union and the U.S. agreed upon another form of cultural exchange, that is, the holding of exhibitions in each other's countries. The most stunning example is represented by the 1959 simultaneous exhibitions in New York and Moscow, and the displaying of consumer goods and images aroused curiosity and admiration, but it also provoked a hostile reaction from the regime. According to Hixson,<sup>34</sup> for the United States the exhibitions "*arguably offered a greater return than any single Cold War initiative since the Marshall Plan*".<sup>35</sup>

To summarize, cultural relations played a key role in the confrontation between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Being mainly a war of ideas, the Cold War was characterized by both sides' attempts to advertise their respective systems, with an emphasis on national cultural traditions on the Soviet side and consumer abundance on the American one. One of the most visible U.S.-Soviet Union exchanges was that of performing arts, which began in 1955 with the performance of "*Porgy and Bess*". Following the 1958 Lacy-Zarubin Agreement, performing arts exchanges, and in particular musical exchanges, became a recurring feature in U.S.-Soviet Relations.<sup>36</sup> The *musical diplomacy* between the two superpowers in the context of the Cold War will be further analyzed in the specific chapter.

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<sup>32</sup> "Stenogram of All-Union conference on questions of ideological work" 25-26 December 1961, RGANI f. 5 op. 30 d. 346 II. 93-95.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Hixson, W. L., *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture and the Cold War, 1945-1961*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1998, p. 212.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Raising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, pp. 123-124.

## ***Cultural diplomacy ≠ Public diplomacy***

According to the lexicon guide by Mballa and Michaud, “*the importance of culture in international relations goes back a long way, notably to the ancient tradition of town-twinning, and it is confirmed by today’s information society. [...] Cultural diplomacy is defined as the use of cultural elements, such as knowledge and works of knowledge, works of art, beliefs and all that a society can produce in order to build bridges that transcend national borders and cultures. As an instrument at the service of public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy fulfils various functions, including education, exchange, information and representation. Its basic function is to put culture and cultural works at the service of foreign policy, and it can become a gateway to forms of multi-sectoral diplomacy, particularly in the contemporary context of globalization and continentalization [...]*”.<sup>37</sup>

Cultural diplomacy is associated with public diplomacy, but they cannot be equated. The term “public diplomacy” indicates a “*set of activities undertaken or coordinated by diplomatic authorities of the (implementing) state, which are aimed at general public abroad and which are intended to influence public opinion in a foreign (target) state in line with foreign policy objectives of the implementing state*”.<sup>38</sup> The confusion between the two terms stems from the fact that usually most of the activities carried out within the framework of cultural diplomacy is focused on the public abroad; for this reason, it can be regarded as a part of public diplomacy, too. This is also why cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy sometimes are used interchangeably in practice. Notwithstanding this, there are two main reasons why the two terms do not represent the same concept. *First*, there are some activities which fall within the scope of cultural diplomacy but are not carried out in relation to the public abroad and, therefore, cannot be regarded as part of public diplomacy. An example of that can be the negotiation of international treaties regulating cultural relations among states, which entails the involvement of state diplomats, while the public is left out. *Second*, public diplomacy can include activities which belong to the framework of cultural diplomacy, but it can also carry out activities within other fields of diplomacy, too. For instance, a presentation at the chamber of commerce aimed to the promotion of investment or trade is part of economic diplomacy,

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<sup>37</sup> Mballa, C. & Michaud, N., *La politique étrangère contemporaine en bons termes. Guide lexical*, “Diplomatie culturelle”, Presses de l’Université du Québec, 2016, p. 21.

<sup>38</sup> Pajtinka, E., “Cultural Diplomacy in the Theory and Practice of Contemporary International Relations”, in *Politické vedy*, December 2014, p. 101.

but since it is a public-oriented activity, it can also be considered as part of public diplomacy.

### ***Cultural diplomacy and its implementation***

Cultural diplomacy involves the implementation of various activities, which are performed whether by diplomatic or non-diplomatic subjects in cooperation with the diplomatic bodies. Pajtinka has identified five main activities which are part of cultural diplomacy. *First*, the assistance of cultural subjects in the dissemination of national and cultural identity of the sending state in the receiving state represents a key practice. This includes providing logistical, technical, and organizational support to artists, NGOs, cultural institutions etc., depending on the local conditions in the receiving states and of individual needs of the subjects involved. Usually, diplomatic missions actively participate in the organization of their own cultural event, *i.e.* concerts of classical music, exhibitions. *Second*, promoting dissemination of the national language of the sending state in the receiving state is specific of cultural diplomacy. An example is that of Institutes of Culture, which most often hold language courses of the sending state. *Third*, cultural diplomacy involves the promotion and explanation of cultural values of the sending state in the receiving state. This may entail the participation of diplomats on public debates, lectures and seminars held at universities, where various issues of culture are analyzed and discussed. Apart from informing the host country about the different aspects of the sending country's culture, the benefits of this kind of activity include the creation of favorable conditions for a better understanding of political positions and interests. *Fourth*, the cultural-diplomatic work also involves the negotiation of international treaties on cultural cooperation. An example of cultural cooperation is the implementation of academic exchange programs or treaties regulating the conditions for the recognition of degrees among two states. *Finally*, Pajtinka lists the support and the maintaining of contacts with expatriate communities in the receiving state, which consist in organizing cultural events for the members of these communities or attending such events.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103-106.

### ***Cultural diplomacy as a form of soft power***

In a definition provided by the UNESCO, cultural diplomacy is described as “*a form of soft power*”.<sup>40</sup> The term “soft power” was coined by the American political scientist Joseph Nye, and it appeared for the first time in one of his articles published on *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1990. Soft power refers to a nation’s ability to create consensus through attraction and persuasion, rather than coercion. Before explaining what soft power is, Nye clarifies the meaning of power, that is, “*the ability to influence the behavior of others to get the outcomes one wants*”.<sup>41</sup> He identifies three ways to affect others’ behavior, (1) coercion them with threats; (2) induction with payment; (3) attraction and co-option. As it has been already pointed out, soft power is about attracting the others and shaping their preferences, and that is what distinguishes soft power from mere influence.<sup>42</sup> Soft power rests on three resources: a country’s culture, its political values, and its foreign policies.<sup>43</sup> If a country has developed a culture rich in universal values, and it develops policies which promote values and interests shared by the others, the result is an increase in the probability of obtaining the desired outcomes. On the contrary, if a country’s culture is not attractive, then soft power is not produced, and the outcome may be the opposite: repulsion.

The focus on the adjective *soft* presupposes the existence of *hard* power, and the two are indeed related. Hard and soft power share their purpose, which is affecting others’ behavior, but they differ regarding the means to achieve that. Hard power is based on command power, which is “*the ability to change what others do*”,<sup>44</sup> and rests of coercion or inducement; whereas soft power is based on co-optive power, that is, “*the ability to shape what others want*”,<sup>45</sup> and rests on, for instance, on the attractiveness of one’s culture and values. If hard power of a country corresponds to a synthesis of military and economic power and it is thus expressed through military or economic threats and incentives, soft power uses charm, admiration, and it is based on the presence and definition of shared goals.

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<sup>40</sup> UNESCO - *The Soft Power of Culture*, Culture Sector Knowledge Management, info sheet.

<sup>41</sup> Nye, J. S. Jr., *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*, PublicAffairs, 2004, p. 2.

<sup>42</sup> Soft power is not a mere influence, but it is a source of influence.

<sup>43</sup> Nye, J. S. Jr., “Public Diplomacy and Soft Power”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616, *Public Diplomacy in a Changing World*, March 2008, Sage Publications, Inc. in association with the American Academy of Political and Social Science, pp. 94-109.

<sup>44</sup> Nye, J. S. Jr., *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*, PublicAffairs, 2004, p 7.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

Remaining in the American perspective, during the Cold War the United States developed a set of cultural and intellectual instruments with the purpose of spreading American values behind the Iron Curtain and pleading the U.S. case to non-aligned nations. These efforts have undergone a relaxation after the fall of the Berlin Wall, but the issue of soft power became again a matter of urgency following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Now, the priority was “*persuad[ing] reluctant allies in the Muslim world that the war against terrorism is not a war against Islam*”.<sup>46</sup> However, the means that have been employed in this attempt to win hearts and minds proved ineffective, and indeed, it can be said that they have led to a result which was opposite to the desired one. In regard to this diplomatic failure, Marl Leonard wrote: “*Forget the airdrops of anti-Osama leaflets and windup radios tuned to the BBC and Voice of America. Try using Britney Spears, Amnesty International, and a little truth, empathy, and understanding*”.<sup>47</sup>

The above examples of soft power are all relatively recent, since they date back to the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. However, it can be observed that already in ancient times a form of soft diplomacy was practiced, and perhaps one of the most relevant cases in this regard is that of imperial China. This great and ancient civilization blossomed in the valley of the Yellow River, and spread throughout the nearby countries, *i.e.* the Korean peninsula, the Japanese archipelago and Vietnam. These countries, which were profoundly influenced by Chinese civilization, constitute the “Sinic world”, a very extended area characterized by a strong geographic, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity, but with common socio-political institutions, values systems, philosophical and religious doctrines originating from China. The main factors of cultural unification were two, Confucianism and the Chinese writing system. China’s geopolitical factor is centrality, and this tendency of considering itself as the center of the world is evidenced by its self-determination, that is *Zongghuo*, literally “Country of the Centre”.<sup>48</sup> This self-representation of centrality has a dual implication, political and cultural. From the political point of view, we can distinguish two perspectives, the internal one, which implies a tension towards the unity of the state, and the one towards the outside world, which leads to perceive centrality as a factor of vulnerability. With regards to culture, the representation of centrality is

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<sup>46</sup> Leonard, M., Diplomacy by Other Means, *Foreign Policy*, No. 132, September – October 2002, Slate Group, LLC, p. 48.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup> The Western denomination, “China”, derives from *Qin*, the name of the first imperial dynasty.

associated with the notion of universality, and it is expressed by the concept of “Tianxia”, meaning “all that lies beneath Heaven”, indicating a potentially universal empire radiating the values of civilizations, values that neighboring states can absorb in order to become part of the Tianxia and enjoy the order guaranteed by the Emperor, the “Son of Heaven”. This harmonious order between the world of man and that of nature is ethico-cultural, and the very legitimacy of power is based on the moral conduct of the sovereign and the consequent consent of people, rather than on military force, law or heredity, as in the case of Japan.<sup>49</sup>

For many centuries, the world order in this East Asian region was dominated by the so-called tributary system, which was articulated through a network of hierarchical relationship regulating the contacts between China and the external populations. This system was based on a model known as *huayi*, which expressed a worldview according to which the degree of “barbarism” (*yi*) increased as the distance from the center of “civilization” (*hua*) grew. It is fundamental to note that the distance was not only understood in spatial terms but was determined above all by the level of sinification reached by the peripheral populations. This concept progressively imposed itself outside China, too, as enlightened by the fact that the character “hua” - in the meaning of “splendor”, as well as “civilization” - was exported to Japan and started to be used there as a synonym for China. Being part of the tributary system meant sharing the way of conceiving the world order, and this became a characteristic feature of diplomacy in East Asia. The diffusion of Chinese culture towards the peripheral areas was not a spontaneous phenomenon, as it fell within a process which saw, on the one hand, the building of an imperial government in China and the definition of a sinocentric system, and on the other hand, the active participation to this world order by other countries of the region.

The very transmission of the Chinese writing system in East Asia cannot be considered simply as the fruit of the willingness of peoples who were devoid of a written language. Chinese writing, founded on the meaning of signs and not on their phonetic value, represented the vehicle through which contacts were established and information and ideas passed between different linguistic contexts. This instrument made it possible to establish a form of communication between the countries of the region, which could not

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<sup>49</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, V., “La centralità della Cina”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, pp. 35-38.

have been created by verbal language.<sup>50</sup> Chinese writing was a powerful element of unification, as it was Latin for the Roman-Christian world; however, the influence of Chinese culture operated primarily through its particular type of writing, a cultural loan, and not through the language, which is generally imposed by the conqueror, as was the case with Latin. Moreover, being ideographic, Chinese writing directly conveys ideas and cultural values, transmitting to those who adopted it not just the writing system itself, but also the Chinese way of thinking.<sup>51</sup>

In the case of Japan, Chinese writing was acquired around the 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and since then they proceeded on a linguistic track that saw on the one hand Chinese as the language of the literati, the cultured language in which documents, chronicles, official poetry and treatises were written; on the other hand the native language, which was considered to possess magical-sacral evocative power – 言霊 *kotodama*, “the spirit of the word”.<sup>52</sup> Therefore, Japanese language was superior, and it was preferred in the writing of private poems; in particular, it was acquired by feminine writing as more ductile and fuller of nuances. The adaptation of Japanese language to the Chinese one was neither easy nor quick; in fact, it took centuries and required the invention of two phonetic syllabaries, *hiragana* and *katakana*. The kana signs – derived from a simplification of kanji, Chinese characters – are still used today to represent the flexible parts of the language, to integrate the writing in kanji, or to render the sinograms into sounds. The use of kanji also posed serious problems, since they could be used either for their meaning regardless of sound, or to express a sound regardless of the meaning (*man'yōgana*). This problem is clearly exposed in the memorial that Ō No Yasumaro placed before the oldest chronicle existing in Japan and the earliest written work to reach us, the *Kojiki* (A.D. 712). He wrote:

*“In ancient times, to be understood by speaking was simple. How to put words in writing remains a dilemma. If the characters are used for what they mean, in narrating they do not touch our most intimate chords, but if you use them all according to their sound, the text results too long. So, in some cases I choose to mix in the*

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<sup>50</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

<sup>51</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, V., “La centralità della Cina”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, p. 38.

<sup>52</sup> Bienati, L. & Boscaro, A., “Un millennio di narrativa”, *La narrativa giapponese classica*, Venezia, Marsilio Editori, 2010, p. 10.



*same sentence characters used for what they mean with characters used to express sounds; in other cases, I only use characters according to their meaning”.*<sup>53</sup>

The hierarchical model of the tributary system reflected the Chinese vision of the outside world as well as the social order, a vision intimately linked to the Confucian tradition, which had a great influence on the history of China. Confucianism was born in China around 2,500 years ago, and it was one of the many philosophical schools that developed in China during the period of the “Warring States” (B.C. 475-221). Its founder is Confucius,<sup>54</sup> whose principles are enunciated in *The Analects (Lun-yu)* and compiled in form of dialogues with his disciples. Confucianism can be considered as a moral, social and political doctrine, with norms that regulate the behavior of the community, aiming to ensure order and the good functioning of society by guiding human relations in a hierarchical and harmonious way. It conceived a coherent social order, where the ruler was required to behave in an exemplary manner that would serve as a moral guide for the people, while the governed were bound to respect the rules of conduct appropriate to their position. Social harmony was guaranteed on condition that the established order was not altered, thus prefiguring a society with a high degree of immobility and conservatism. Social and interpersonal relations were expressed on the basis of differentiated roles and the approach was a vertical one, as expressed by the moral precepts that governed the conduct of the individual. The idea was that the governor should work for the sake of the people by resorting to benevolence and paternalism, rather than to the effectiveness of the laws, and that the governed should be bound to respect and obedience to the superior. This established a mode of relationship applied to the family sphere, too, regulating the relations between father and son, husband and wife, elder and younger brother.

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<sup>53</sup> Villani, P., trad. e a cura di, *Kojiki. Un racconto di antichi eventi*, Venezia, Marsilio, 2009, p. 35, cited in Bienati, L. & Boscaro, A., “Un millennio di narrativa”, *La narrativa giapponese classica*, Venezia, Marsilio Editori, 2010, p. 11.

<sup>54</sup> Confucius (C.) (Shandong, about 551 B.C. – Qufu 479 B.C.), was a Chinese philosopher. His surname was Kong, and he became known as Kong Fuzi, “Master Kong”, from which the Jesuits of the 16<sup>th</sup> century created the Latin form *Confutius*. According to tradition he had a poor childhood and later held some modest administrative positions. At the age of fifty he was called by the Prince of Lu and appointed Minister of Justice. The sovereign, however, did not want to follow his advice, that is, to conform to his doctrines, and C. abandoned the office. For thirteen years he led the life of a wandering philosopher, offering his services to various feudal princes. He was unsuccessful, and finally retired to Lu, his country of origin, devoting his last years to the teaching of his doctrine, which best transpires from the “Dissertations” (Lun Yu). The Prince of Lu, after C.’s death, dedicated a temple to him and instituted sacrifices. Later, under the Song and Ming dynasties, temples were erected in every city in which C. and his disciples were honored. The evaluation of Confucianism as cultural heritage went through several phases; the most violent condemnation was expressed during an ideological campaign in 1974, while the 1980s saw a revival of Confucian studies and the restoration of monuments related to C.’s memory.

Transferred to the “world order”, this concept inspired the tributary system, where the “barbarians” were granted a condition of subalternity, which was however compensated by a series of benefits of a political, economic and cultural nature. The Chinese Emperor, in fact, presented himself as a source of legitimization of power, and many local leaders turned to him to obtain confirmation of their hegemony; in this way they expressed a formal recognition of the moral and cultural primacy of China. The tributary states offered to the Chinese Imperial Court homages as a sign of submission, which were generally rewarded with generosity. Moreover, the relations with a civilization that appeared extremely advanced regarding the political, economic, social and cultural institutions allowed the tributary states to benefit from the progress made by China in various fields. The guarantee of peaceful diplomatic relations in the region derived from the observance of ritual conduct and terminology that expresses the differentiation of individual roles and positions. Numerous expressions were coined to designate the position of an individual with respect to a social or family context, including disparaging (with self-referential value) and honorary expressions (to be addressed to the interlocutor). The premise of differentiated relationships in the world, but also in society and the family, represented a unifying element in East Asia, supported and strengthened by the affirmation of the tributary system and the spread of Confucianism in the region. If the affirmation of a new model of international relations introduced by the West during the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to the overcoming of tributary diplomacy, the persistence of the Confucian conception is still perceptible in various attitudes, behaviors and practices which can be found in the societies of the region.<sup>55</sup>

In this chapter we have provided the reader with an historico-etymological analysis of the two terms “diplomacy” and “culture”, and then continued with the definition and history of “cultural diplomacy”, specifying its distinction from public diplomacy and identifying its main areas of implementation. Finally, we have associated cultural diplomacy with soft power, and given a description of the latter, adding an example from the ancient world. At this point, it is natural that a question arises: how does music fit into this context of international relations?

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<sup>55</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

## CHAPTER II. MUSIC: A COSMIC LANGUAGE

### *The origins of music*

To introduce the theme of music, once again, we will resort to etymology, and a brief history of its origins and functions in antiquity will be outlined, without neglecting the mythological element, expressed here by the figure of Orpheus. The term “music” derives from the Latin word *musica*, which in turn comes from the Ancient Greek μουσική,<sup>56</sup> the feminine substantivized form of the adjective μουσικός, “related to the *Muses*”. Μουσική implies the term τέχνη, “art”, indicating thus the “Art of the Muses”. In the ancient and primitive sense, music was not a particular science, as μουσικός could indicate science, poetry, art, literature, and music, that is, every science and arts with the capacity to awaken the idea of something pleasant and orderly. The Muses, daughters of Zeus, the king of the gods belonging to the Greek pantheon, and Mnemosyne, the *Memory*, are the personification of art and science. The ancient mythology enumerated nine Muses, each one assigned to a particular discipline: *Polyhymnia* (sacred poetry), *Euterpe* (flutes and lyric poetry), *Calliope* (epic poetry), *Clio* (history), *Erato* (love poetry), *Thalia* (comedy and pastoral poetry), *Terpsichore* (dance), *Urania* (astronomy), and *Melpomene* (tragedy).<sup>57</sup>

The definition that interests us is the current one, which describes music as the art that consists in conceiving and producing structured sequences of simple or complex sounds. These sounds can vary in pitch, intensity and timbre, and can be produced through the human voice, instruments or the combination of both these sources. From a historical and anthropological point of view, music represents a form of cultural expression normally integrated with the various social activities, *i.e.* work, worship, rituals, dance etc., contributing to the connection between knowledge and expression, social and ethnic cohesion, as well as cultural transmission. More concretely, the term can also refer to a set of musical compositions of a nation, a historical period, a culture or an author, due to the fact that they have common characteristics that distinguish them from others (*i.e.* the

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<sup>56</sup> *Vocabolario Greco Italiano*, Lorenzo Rocci, voce “μουσικός, ή, όν, Quarantunesima Edizione, Società Editrice Dante Alighieri, 2008, p. 1255.

<sup>57</sup> There was a disagreement about their names and number. It seems that in origin they were three, as the Graces; in other places it was four, seven or eight. Their actual number and names were fixed by Hesiod in his poem “*The Theogony*” (Θεογονία, *Theogonia*), composed c. B.C. 730-700.

music of the 18<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>58</sup> But why, out of all the instruments available, did we choose music? What is it that makes it unique and, consequently, particularly effective on the diplomatic level? To answer this question, it is necessary to go back to its origins, so as to identify the heart of the matter.

The question of the origins of music has remained unresolved and insoluble for two main reasons, (1) it is a complex and universal artistic phenomenon, as no people or societies are known to be completely deprived of it, so it is certainly not possible to assign a single root to it, and (2) it concerns remote times that escape any possible verification of historical documentation. Although some archaeological finds from prehistoric periods (Paleolithic and Neolithic), such as sculptures and drawings on cave walls depicting musical instruments and the circumstances of their use have come down to us, these sources are not sufficient to help us solve the problem of the genesis of music. In the last two hundred years, numerous naturalists, anthropologists, sociologists and musicologists have formulated conjectures and hypotheses regarding the origin of music, but none of them was able to offer us a theory based on certain data and concrete documentation. It should also be noted that most of the research developed on this subject in the western world between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries shares a biased ideological matrix, which tends to be prejudicial in favor of the European tradition. The historical vision of “progress” - material and intellectual -, inspired by the philosophy of the Romantic era, was based on the concept that “new” or “later” meant “superior”, that historical facts were linked by rigid connections of cause and effect, and that history possessed unchanged and uniform “laws”. Hence the assumption that “primitive” means “savage”, and therefore “inferior”, that “non-European” is equivalent to “primitive”, *i.e.* subordinate peoples, colonized or to be colonized because lacking civilization. This arrogant attitude towards remote and non-European culture was overcome by Sachs,<sup>59</sup> who proposed to replace the epithets “savage” and “primitive” with the term “archaic”.

The interest of the West for non-European cultures dates back to the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and was developed in the context of the Enlightenment movement, which

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<sup>58</sup> *Dizionario Enciclopedico Italiano*, voce “musica”, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana fondata da Giovanni Treccani, 1970, Roma – Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, p. 193.

<sup>59</sup> Curt Sachs (1881-1959), German musicologist, authoritative scholar and one of the pioneers of modern ethnomusicology.

initiated the discovery of the archaic, the exotic, the “primitive”, in an attempt to propose a broader vision of history (with the aim of explaining the evils of the present and indicating the features of a happier future society). It was above all Jean-Jacques Rousseau who developed the concept of the common origin of music and language as parallel expressions that communicated the passions, feelings and emotions that agitate men.<sup>60</sup> Rousseau’s theories on the problem of the origins of music constituted a solid point of reference throughout Europe, in particular for evolutionist scholars who, in an attempt to build a bridge between the natural sciences and the humanities, hypothesized a linear development of music from simple and primitive origins to an increasingly complex and perfect art. Herbert Spencer, an English positivist philosopher, describes the birth of singing as an expressive intensification of spoken language.<sup>61</sup> According to the naturalist Charles Darwin, the original purpose of music was, instead, to accompany and facilitate the courting and the mating, phenomena linked to the animal world.<sup>62</sup> Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century many other theories on the nature and origins of music were elaborated, which were largely based on ethnographic and sociological research. In Carl Stumpf’s view music, just as language, was born out of the need to emit sound signals to communicate at a greater distance than the one allowed by the spoken language. Music would therefore be born in response to a practical necessity, and only later would it be enriched with melodic developments.<sup>63</sup> This theory was later refuted by other scholars but given the common choice of timbre tone and rhythm, it is certain that some relationship between music and spoken language must have existed.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to the above-mentioned theories, there is also one based in part on anthropological data, which underline the magical or divine origin of music. It is believed that music in many pre-literary societies has always played a fundamental role in the magical incarnations practiced by man to exert control over the forces of nature. At a later stage of civilization music would become something accessory to the religious rite, and then acquire autonomy from worship and be appreciated as art. This theory, influenced by Darwinian evolutionism, was developed in a systematic way by the Frenchman Jules

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<sup>60</sup> Rousseau developed this concept in the “*Essai sur l’origine des langues*”, “Essay on the origin of languages”, written between 1756 and 1762.

<sup>61</sup> Spencer, H., *The origin and function of music*, London, 1857.

<sup>62</sup> Darwin, C., *The expression of the emotions in man and animals*, London, 1872.

<sup>63</sup> Stumpf, C., *Die Anfänge der Musik*, “The origins of music”, Leipzig, 1911.

<sup>64</sup> <sup>64</sup> Surian, E., *Manuale di Storia della Musica*, Vol. 1, Dalle origini alla musica vocale del Cinquecento, Quinta Edizione Riveduta, Rugginenti Editore, 2006.

Combarieu.<sup>65</sup> However, there is no doubt that there has always been a close correlation between music on one side and magic-religion on the other. Some peoples of antiquity had in fact designated one of the divinities as the inventor, or at least as the protector of music, i.e. Thot in Egypt, Narada in India, and Apollo in Greece. All the theories on the genesis of music formulated so far have not found empirical verification, and none of them is based on certain and irrefutable data. Nevertheless, these theories have a common denominator, that is, they all highlight the fact that music, in its most archaic manifestations, was certainly not produced to satisfy aesthetic and intellectual needs, but was instead considered as something functional to the salient moments of the social life of man and the community, including the communicative necessity, the role played in the magical and religious rituals, the courting and the mating, etc. Starting from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these speculative theories on the music of the archaic ages, elaborated by naturalist scholar and positivist musicologists, were started to be replaced by a form of autonomous study based on objective scientific observation, thus initiating a new discipline, *ethnomusicology*.<sup>66</sup>

### ***Music in ancient societies***

From the analysis of music at the time of ancient civilizations, it appears clear that music began to be systematically organized and ordered, as it was subjected to astrological and mystical speculations. It is very likely that the typical organization of more mature societies contributed to overcome the concept of music that prehistoric man had, that is an activity closely related to the practical needs of existence. The division of labor and social ranks led to the formation of classes and castes, and the upper classes started demanding luxurious, sumptuous and solemn forms of entertainment, thus favoring the gradual establishment of a class of singers and specialist performers. These ancient musicians generally held a privileged position in society; this is evident, for example, in the custom of the pharaohs of ancient Egypt, who used to invite court musicians to build their own sepulcher in the royal tomb. Those musicians linked to the temples had a privileged position, too, especially because they could maintain contact

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<sup>65</sup> Combarieu, J., *La musique et la magie; étude sur les origines populaires de l'art musical; son influence et sa fonction dans les sociétés*, "Music and magic; study on the popular origins of the musical art; its influence and function in the societies", Journal des Savants, 1910.

<sup>66</sup> Surian, E., *Manuale di Storia della Musica*, Vol. 1, Dalle origini alla musica vocale del Cinquecento, Quinta Edizione Riveduta, Rugginenti Editore, 2006, pp. 21-23.

with learned priests who had knowledge of philosophy, astrology and mathematics, and helped them to give a theoretical basis to music. The ancient peoples certainly did not produce written music, but we have received finds of various instruments, drawings on vases, reliefs on stones and other everyday objects that allow us to know and evaluate the important role that singing and instrumental performance played in religious rites and social activities.

The ancient Egyptians believed that music was of divine origin, had a magical power, and thus played a fundamental role in religious rituals. But the oldest musical traditions are those of the Chinese, which are mythologically dated back to B.C. 2697, although the first archaeological evidence cannot be dated before about B.C. 2000. The Chinese, too, believed that music was of divine origin and had the magical power to dominate the laws of nature and influence man's mood. Throughout the course of the ancient dynastic periods, the theorists of China put musical sounds in relation to the order of the stars and the universe, giving rise to the cosmogonic and philosophical conception of musical language. Besides dedicating themselves to the formulation of ethical and spiritual theories of music, erudite theorists acquired important knowledge in the field of acoustic studies. Time, space, matter and sound constituted for the Chinese the congruent aspects of the unity of the world, which was believed to follow ordered and unalterable laws. The musical language is therefore something that goes beyond the human being, because it is the fruit of the divine Nature which, benevolently, has transmitted it to man through its manifestations. It is a concert that comes out of Nature, a wonderful concert, you just need to know how to listen to it. Zhuang Zhou<sup>67</sup> wrote:

*“You have heard the sound of people, but you haven’t heard the sound of Earth. You have heard the sound of Earth, but you haven’t heard the sound of Heaven. The great Nature pushes out its breath and there is the wind. Now it is not blowing, but when it does all the perturbations resound violently. Have you not yet heard this moan? The steep precipices between the forests of the mountain, the hollows and holes of the centuries-old trees are like noses, mouths, ears, rings, mortars. The wind whispers, whistles, grumbles, affirms, calls, complains, threatens, rumbles. It rises strident in the beginning, high-pitches and yearning sounds, breathless, follow it.*

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<sup>67</sup> Zhuang Zhou, Chinese philosopher who lived around the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. during the Warring States period. He is credited with writing one of the foundational texts of Taoism, “*The Zuangzi*”.

*And when it goes gently, there is slight harmony, and when it bursts into storm, there is strong harmony”.*<sup>68</sup>

The idea that music contributed to the balance of time and space is well expressed in the book *Yo-ki*, “The Book of Music”, comprehended in the *Li-ki*, “The Book of Rites”, which according to tradition was dictated by the philosopher Confucius. According to him, music was supposed to arouse feelings of serenity and grace rather than restlessness and passion in man’s soul. Confucius considered it appropriate to separate “good” music from “bad” music, religious from profane. He also believed that music had the capacity to change man’s customs, that is, to make him better or to corrupt him.

The civilizations of ancient Mesopotamia, *i.e.* Sumerians, Babylonians and Assyrians, exerted a very wide influence on the culture of the Western world, and therefore also on music, especially with regard to theoretical and numerical speculative aspects. For example, Plutarch<sup>69</sup> attributes to the Babylonians the merit of having established the rules that made it possible to link musical intervals with the seasons of the year. The history of Western music has its beginning in ancient Greece. The Greeks were in fact the first to try to solve in a systematic and rational way the fundamental problems of the musical experience by regulating its links with the other arts, philosophy, mathematical sciences and society. It is known that in the archaic age (10<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) music occupied a very important role in the social and religious life of the Greeks. However, there is a lack of direct sources for this period; the testimonies we possess are of a literary nature and belong to a later period. The abundance of myths about music indicates the importance given to this art in the Greek world, such as the myths of Apollo, Marsyas, Dionysus, and perhaps the most famous of all, the myth of Orpheus.

Son of Oeagrus, the King of Thrace, and of one of the Muses (Calliope or Polyhymnia), Orpheus is a legendary musician and poet. He is considered the artist par excellence and was the first who in ancient times relied on the captivating power of music. He was taught by the Muses to play the lyre, received as a gift from Apollo. His music and his verses were so gentle and fascinating that the water of the streams slowed its pace, the woods

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<sup>68</sup> Zhuang Zhou, *The Zhuangzi*, about 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.

<sup>69</sup> Plutarch (Πλούταρχος), about 50 AD and 120 AD. Greek writer, biographer, and priest; his main works are the “*Moralia*” and the “Parallel Lives”.



moved, the birds were so touched by the music that they did not have the strength to fly and fell, the nymphs came out of the oaks and the beasts from their dens to listen to him. Orpheus' fame is linked above all to the tragic love affair that saw him united with Eurydice, known as the myth of the *katabasis* (from the Greek κατάβασις "descent", κατα- "down" and βαίνω "to go"),<sup>70</sup> that this, his descent - while being still alive - into Hades. In an attempt to escape the unrequited love of Aristeus, one of Apollo's sons, Eurydice set foot on a snake, which killed her with its bite. Orpheus, torn by grief, then descended into the Underworld with his lyre to bring his wife back to life. When he reached the Styx, he was first stopped by Charon; in order to cross the river Orpheus enchanted the ferryman with his music. Once again, he managed to appease Cerberus, the guardian of Hades, with the help of music. He then reached the prison of Ixion, condemned by Zeus to be tied to a wheel that would turn endlessly; Orpheus, yielding to the pleas of the man, decided to use the lyre to momentarily stop the wheel which, once the musician stopped playing, began to turn again. Having passed the prison of the cruel demigod Tantalus, Orpheus descended a one thousand steps staircase and found himself at the center of the Hades, face to face with the demons. Once he reached the throne room of the Underworld, he finally met Hades and Persephone. Orpheus' lyre and voice moved the Gods of the Underworld, who felt pity for the heartbroken story of the two lovers, to the point that Hades decided to allow him to take Eurydice back with him, but on a pact: Eurydice had to follow him along the dark road of the Underworld and he had to precede her all the way to the gate of Hades without ever looking back. When Orpheus arrived exactly on the threshold of the Underworld, believing that he had already left the Kingdom of the Dead, Orpheus could no longer resist and broke his promise, seeing Eurydice disappear instantly and return to the Darkness for all eternity. According to one of the versions of the myth, Orpheus was mauled by the Maenads and his head, thrown into a river, kept singing beyond death.<sup>71</sup>

The Homeric poems (8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.), the Iliad and the Odyssey, contain numerous references to the musical practice of the time, in particular to the power of music to move, delight and appease the souls of men. An example of that is the episode of Achilles who, in order to alleviate the torments of his own soul, sings accompanying himself with a

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<sup>70</sup> *Vocabolario Greco Italiano*, Lorenzo Rocci, voce "κατάβασις", Quarantunesima Edizione, Società Editrice Dante Alighieri, 2008, p. 976.

<sup>71</sup> Publius Ovidius Naso, the *Metamorphoses*, XV.

string instrument (the *phorminx*).<sup>72</sup> Another episode is linked to the story of Odysseus, who during a banquet was so deeply moved by the singing of the poet Demodocus, that he shed tears in secret.<sup>73</sup> It is also relevant to note the ability to seduce and enchant the soul that Homer assigns to singing; and in fact, the singing sorceress Circe<sup>74</sup> and the demonic sweetness of the sirens' singing had the power to intoxicate the minds of sailors.<sup>75</sup>

Starting from the 6<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., music became part of the Greek educational system (*paidèia*, see above) and was linked to the sphere of numbers and planets. It was the Pythagorean philosophers (5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) who conceived music as an element which, together with mathematics, involved the whole cosmos. It can be affirmed that the concept of music as a science of reason and as something immutable is their true salient discovery. According to legend, it was Pythagoras himself who first put music in close relation with mathematics. Pythagoras' theory compared music to the movement of the planets which, like music, was governed by precise numerical laws and harmonic proportions, which in turn had a particular power over the soul. Music, as a mirror of the harmony of the cosmos, had to be brought back to simple numerical proportions by mathematical measurement of the intervals that compose it. For the Pythagoreans, music had the capacity to influence the soul and character of men. Plato certainly took from the Pythagoreans the idea of giving music an educational value as an art linked to the harmony of the universe. In the *Laws* and the *Republic*, he urged to give music a fundamental role in the education of young people; it should serve to enrich the soul in the same way in which gymnastics helped to educate the body. In Platonic thought music is considered not only in its hedonistic aspect, but also as an object of reason, and therefore capable of influencing man's customs and behavior. Such duplicity associated with the concept of music, seen whether as a transient distraction practiced by performers, or purely intellectualistic speculative activity cultivated by mathematicians and philosophers, will persist throughout the Middle Ages and beyond.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Homer, *Iliad*, IX, 185.

<sup>73</sup> Homer, *Odyssey*, VIII, 696-697.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, X, 285-295.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, XI, 240-265.

<sup>76</sup> Surian, E., *Manuale di Storia della Musica*, Vol. 1, Dalle origini alla musica vocale del Cinquecento, Quinta Edizione Riveduta, Rugginenti Editore, 2006, pp. 46-47.

The educational virtues of music should also be seen in the context of the *ethos* doctrine developed by the Platonists. Greek thinkers believed that the distinctive character of man is the fact that he leads his life not by following the constraints of instinct but by obeying reason. The concept of *ethos* indicates behavior and habits, which lies in one's innermost self and are common and shared by all. The art of sounds, being related to mathematics and the harmony of the spheres, can affect the character of the soul and act on it in a negative or positive sense. The Platonists theorized that each "harmony" possesses its own specific *ethos*, meaning that it can arouse virile and strong thoughts, but also pacify and persuade souls. Some melodies, however, can arouse in man emotions and passions that can upset his rational balance, and their use may lead to the subversion of the laws and institutions of the State. Aristotle, a pupil of Plato's, broadened and deepened his master's thought about the ethical values of music. He reaffirmed the fundamental importance of music in the education of the individual and accepted the classification of "harmonies" according to their *ethos*, but with a more flexible attitude, as he approved them all for the benefit of education, intellectual enjoyment, distraction and recreation, purification of the soul.<sup>77</sup> It is worth noting the special attention given by Aristotle to the therapeutic qualities of music, which was called by the Greeks *katharsis*, "catharsis", that is the healing of the mind through purification of the soul.

Unlike the Greeks, the Romans did not seem to have given much importance to the ethical and formative value of music, even though they believed in its magical and therapeutic virtues. It is known that the most important ceremonies of public and private life, i.e. weddings, funerals, solemn banquets, sacred rites, were accompanied by music; however, numerous restrictions were imposed on musicians and singers in the exercise of their activities. The reason for this is that music was considered to be a source of flabbiness and moral depletion.<sup>78</sup> The Roman world was greatly influenced by the Etruscan world; in fact, the ancient Romans were ruled by Etruscan kings and they learned from them the use of currency, the weapons, the cult of the dead and, perhaps, the alphabet, which the Etruscans in turn had derived from Greek civilization. As for other ancient historical peoples, for the Etruscans, too, music was largely connected with ritual and social events. The important role played by singing and instrumental performance in

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<sup>77</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, VIII.

<sup>78</sup> Surian, E., *Manuale di Storia della Musica*, Vol. 1, Dalle origini alla musica vocale del Cinquecento, Quinta Edizione Riveduta, Rugginenti Editore, 2006, pp. 53-55.

religious and social life is attested by ancient iconographic sources such as vases, funerary urns, drawings on the walls of tombs depicting scenes of banquets, dances, games, and musicians. A legend says that the Etruscans used to capture wild boars and deer with nets and dogs, but an expert flute player took also part in the hunt. The flute's sound reached the tops of the mountains, valleys and woods, eventually penetrating all the dens of the wild beasts, which remained fascinated, and under the charm of the melody came to fall into the nets, victims of the music. In relation to that, Aelian<sup>79</sup> wrote:

*“There is an Etruscan story going around that says that the wild boars and stags of Etruria are caught using nets and hounds, which is usually the way hunting is done, but also with music - which may be the more important tool. They do it this way: they set the nets and other snares in a circle, and a man who is good at playing the pipes stands in the middle and tries to play as gently as he can, without ever hitting a shrill or loud note. The still air carries the tune off into the forests and into the hills and canyons, just where these animals live. When the sound reaches them they are at first terrified, but then they are filled with inexplicable delight, and they forget all about their children and homes, even though wild animals pay great attention to these things and do not easily wander away. Still, the creatures are enchanted, and eventually they blunder into the nets, overcome by song”.<sup>80</sup>*

Every civilization on Earth has produced musicians, musical instruments and traditions; not only does music unite all men, but it involves the whole of Creation, from the natural elements that give rise to a real concert of Nature, to the animals, which have inspired the singing in man, and in turn let themselves be enchanted by the music performed by him. We, ourselves, are music: if you enter an anechoic chamber, a room designed to be echo-free, after a few minutes you can hear the noises of your body, the heartbeat and the blood circulating in your ears. Music does not belong to someone in particular, but to everyone. Unlike spoken language, an artificial instrument created by man, music is a *natural* language, which has the capacity to reach anyone and to be understood universally; thus, one can say that music is a *universal language*. Perhaps this is precisely the reason why it is a powerful means of communication, as it is able to

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<sup>79</sup> Claudius Aelianus, commonly Aelian, about 175-235 AD. He was a Roman author and teacher of rhetoric; he spoke Greek so fluently that he was called “honey-tongued” and wrote in Greek himself.

<sup>80</sup> McNamee, G., *Aelian's On the Nature of Animals*, Book XII, Trinity University Press, 2011, p. 198.

overcome any kind of barrier. In conclusion, it is reasonable to affirm that music is a more than suitable instrument to be used in international relations.

We have defined music as a universal language that potentially everyone can understand. Music, by moving something in people's souls, have an emotional impact on men. It represents an element of extraordinary power, which stimulates the sphere of feelings, moves people and leads them to see themselves for what they are, men and women absolutely equal. Music, therefore, is an instrument able to build a bridge between different cultures and ideas; even in situations where finding a compromise seems impossible, it can find a point of contact. We only need think of the musical tours organized in the Soviet Union by the United States during the Cold War: for the first time Soviet citizens had the chance to deal directly with American citizens, musicians who performed on stage and, once finished playing, came down to talk to the audience. It was under these circumstances that the Soviets realized that after all the enemy was not so different from them. In the light of what has been said so far, it is obvious that in the course of history music, precisely due to its characteristics, has been an instrument of diplomacy. The rest of this chapter will be devoted to musical diplomacy, and practical examples from different eras and historical contexts will be given.

### ***Musical diplomacy in practice***

One of the earliest examples of musical diplomacy can be found in Eastern Asia, in particular in the foreign relations between Imperial China and Korea. In the *Song Shi*, "The History of Song", it is possible to read about the great importance that music had in relation to the ruler and his mission. It is stated that "*the second of the four mainsprings of kingly government is music, which brings the minds of the people into harmony and transforms the world*".<sup>81</sup> The idea was that music had a vital function, that is, the balancing of the two principles of Yin and Yang, and that was believed to exercise a practical effect on government. In the preface of the oldest collection of Chinese poetry,

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<sup>81</sup> *Song Shih* 164, p. 2939, cited in Pratt, K., Sung Hui Tsung's Musical Diplomacy and the Korean Response, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 44, No. 3, 1981, p. 509.

the *Shijing*, the “Book of Odes”, the “*positive power of music to change behavior*”<sup>82</sup> is expressed, and it is believed that the Song Emperor Hui Tsung drew inspiration from tradition when he decided to start a real musical diplomacy. The form used by him, the exchange of gifts, is the one already discussed above, typical of the relationship established between China - center of power, knowledge and culture - and the tributary states. The opportunity to test the principles set out in the Classics came twice, in 1114 and 1116, when he sent two enormous musical gifts to King Yejong of Koryŏ. His plan was to influence interstate relations in northeast Asia, especially in view of the rivalries from the Khitan and Jurchen peoples. In 1114 Hui Tsung sent 167 instruments, accompanied by music and instructions, while in 1116 his gesture was even greater, as not only did he send King Yejong 428 instruments, but he also included vestments and everything needed for the civil and military dances. Notwithstanding these magnificent gifts, the willingness of the Korean Kingdom to protect itself prevailed, the approaches of Hui Tsung were rejected, and the mission failed. This is a clear example of how, sometimes, diplomacy may not succeed. However, evidence of the success of cultural, and in particular musical exchanges during the Tang Dynasty has come down to us. According to the historical records of that time, after 668 there was an acceleration in the appreciation of Chinese culture in the Kingdom of Silla, to the extent that Koreans began to imitate Chinese music, which they called *tangak*, “music of Chinese origin”, and it is recorded that they did their best to make sure that the *tangak* at their court was as up-to-date as possible.<sup>83</sup>

In order to explore the following example of musical diplomacy, it is necessary to move a few centuries and several miles away, as we are going to talk about the role of trumpeters in the diplomacy of the 17<sup>th</sup> century central Europe. The importance of trumpet music in the indicated context is well described by Stephen Rose. In his article,<sup>84</sup> he underlined the essentiality of music when diplomatic encounters took place. First of all, trumpeters displayed their ruler’s magnificence; in fact, when travelling through foreign territories, a prince always took his trumpeters with him, as they symbolized his authority and power. The reason why trumpeters and no other instrument players were chosen for

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<sup>82</sup> Pratt, K., Sung Hui Tsung’s Musical Diplomacy and the Korean Response, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 44, No. 3, 1981, p. 510.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 512-516.

<sup>84</sup> Rose, S., Trumpeters and diplomacy on the eve of the Thirty Years’ War: the “album amicorum” of Jonas Kröschel, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 379-392.

these particular occasions is that trumpet-calls represented one of the loudest sound that men could produce in the pre-industrial era; so, when trumpeters played, the passage of the prince drew everyone's attention, thus immediately dominating the foreign spaces through which he passed. Rulers also used the services of trumpeters when they hosted diplomats; this was considered as a sign of favor forwards the visitors. In his article, Rose reports the visit of the French ambassador, the Maréchal de Boisdauphin to the Emperor Rudolf II in Prague in 1600. During the dinner, he states, the diners enjoyed the performance of eighteen trumpeters and ten drummers. The involvement of the whole imperial trumpet corps, apart from being a spectacle that no doubt must have aroused a certain awe, contained also an implicit message: The Emperor was taking the visit of the French delegation seriously. Finally, trumpeters covered the role of envoys in both peacetime and wartime. In the former case, they had the duty to carry messages or gifts between princes, whereas in the latter event their role became even more important, as they were among the few who were able to take messages to the enemy or to escort neutral parties through battle zones. This was, of course, a dangerous task, and in fact many trumpeters were killed or assaulted in their missions. In order to protect trumpeters in such situations, starting from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, German legal codes guaranteed this figure by "*grant[ing] him the rights and privileges of higher ambassadors. International law g[ave] him more freedom than other envoys, since the trumpeter may advance to the enemy army without a passport, upon sounding a signal with his trumpet. Any other ambassador [was] forbidden to proceed without a passport, as this would lead to immediate arrest*".<sup>85</sup>

The next example sees protagonists a European state, France in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and an Asian country, Thailand, which was then called Siam.<sup>86</sup> The exchanges between France and Siam, aimed at forging a trading partnership and military alliance, started in the 1660s and materialized in 1684, when a representation from Siam arrived in France, initiating a period of sustained diplomatic negotiations. The diplomatic dialogues between the representatives of French and Siamese cultures involved, inter alia, music. The degree of musical interaction during these exchanges was researched by

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<sup>85</sup> *Allgemeines juristisches Oraculum*. III Band, Leipzig, 1747, p. 891, cited in Rose, S., Trumpeters and diplomacy on the eve of the Thirty Years' War: the "album amicorum" of Jonas Kröschel, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, p. 379.

<sup>86</sup> The country changed its name in 1939. The word Thailand comes from *Thai*, an adjective that in the Thai language means "free" or "independent".

David Irving who, in his article on French-Siamese cultural exchanges,<sup>87</sup> underlined the significant role played by musical performances, as music was bound to cultural identity and represented a means to illustrate the social position on a hierarchical scale. It is recorded that the Siamese reception of the French visitors in 1685 influenced the way in which Siamese ambassadors were welcomed to France in 1686. In fact, King Louis IV decided to receive the guests in the Hall of Mirrors, and they were accompanied by the sound of thirty-six drums and twenty-four trumpets, constituting “*the most spectacle reception the Sun King ever granted to an embassy*”,<sup>88</sup> with the aim of “*present[ing] the French monarch [...] as an omnipotent Asian despot, equal to [the Siamese king] Phra Narai in power, wealth, remoteness from his subjects and even personal divinity, to give the Siamese ambassadors an exalted idea of Louis’s greatness and magnificence according to Eastern expectations*”.<sup>89</sup> This emulation of the sonic context of Siamese trumpets and drums was definitely exceptional, if compared to more conventional uses, such as the Siamese receiving French envoys with ceremonial music, or the French taking their visitors to see the opera. Despite the genuine curiosity about local musical practices and the fruitful discussions about music and musical instruments between members of the two cultures, Irving pointed out the asymmetries in this exchange. In fact, we are sure of the fact that French music was performed in Siam, whereas there is no evidence of Siamese music performed in France. In the same way, there is proof of the import of French musical instruments into Siam, while it has not yet been established how many Siamese instruments were introduced to France in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. To summarize, intercultural exchange in the early modern period involved the use of music as means of diplomacy, and in the particular case that we have considered the entertainment of the Siamese court and ambassadors implicitly contained the French crown’s true desire: the control of Asian ports and the institution of trading monopolies.

As we have already seen in the case of the foreign relations between Song Emperor Hui Tsung and King Yejong of Koryŏ, diplomacy does not always succeed. One of the most remarkable examples of unsuccessful diplomacy is that of the British embassy to China in 1792-1794, whose primary objective was the expansion and improvement of the

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<sup>87</sup> Irving, D. R. M., Lully in Siam: music and diplomacy in French-Siamese cultural exchanges, 1680-1690, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 393-420.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 400.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*



conditions of trade with Britain. This mission is now remembered above all because of the (fruitless) meeting between Lord George Macartney on behalf of King George III and the Qianlong Emperor. Regarding the reason of the embassy's failure, this has been largely attributed to Lord George Macartney's unwillingness to kowtow<sup>90</sup> to the emperor. Macartney missed the meaning and tradition of the emperor's birthday, which together with the winter solstice and the lunar New Year constituted one of the three great festivals, and whose celebrations foresaw the kowtowing to the emperor by honored guests from other land. However, as explained by Joyce Lindorff, "*it was the absence of a mutual political and cultural language that ultimately made it impossible for either side to realize its desired aims with regard to the other*".<sup>91</sup> With a Eurocentric view, Macartney failed to understand the Chinese perception of centrality and the expectations derived from it. As explained above, Imperial China saw itself as a center of power and civilization, and the relationship established with the surrounding states was a hierarchical one, forming the so-called tributary system. In Qianlong's view, the British embassy's purpose was to pay respects to him on his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday and he was honored by the great distance that these foreigners travelled; this was demonstrated by the graciousness and generousness with which the guests were treated, following the guest protocol. The relationship that Qianlong had in mind was of a tributary nature, thus believing that the sailing of the embassy from England was aimed at paying tribute to the Emperor, and he himself annotated this comment:

*"Barbarians from afar coming to pay tribute is a form of reverence and obedience. This is certainly praiseworthy. Since I do not cherish exotic things, there is nothing wrong with bringing little presents. The only important thing is that they should bring little and are rewarded generously. This is the principle of how our celestial empire treats men from afar".*<sup>92</sup>

The cultural misunderstandings on both sides of the encounter are also evident in the musical exchanges. It is clear from Lindorff's work that Macartney hoped that music

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<sup>90</sup> Kowtow is an act of deep respect shown by prostration, meaning kneeling and bowing so low as to have one's head touching the ground. In East Asia the kowtow is considered as the highest sign of reverence.

<sup>91</sup> Lindorff, J., Burney, Macartney and the Qianlong Emperor: the role of music in the British embassy to China, 1792-1794, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 441-453.

<sup>92</sup> Ye, 'Ascendant peace in the four seas', p.104, cited in Lindorff, J., Burney, Macartney and the Qianlong Emperor: the role of music in the British embassy to China, 1792-1794, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 441-453.

would be a major tool in his effort to establish favorable diplomatic and trade ties with China, and following the suggestions of his friend Charles Burney, he decided to include musicians among the listed members of the party. After all, it was known that music had already played a central role in establishing missionary access to the Chinese court; in fact, in 1061 Matteo Ricci presented as a gift to Wanli Emperor a small harpsichord. According to Macartney, Western music - and in particular his band of music - attracted Chinese listeners in Beijing, and the chief Mandarin of the Emperor's orchestra made some painters reproduce on paper the exact copy of Western instruments, in order to have similar instruments made by Chinese workmen. Music played an important role also in the occasion of the first meeting with the emperor; Macartney proceeded with his band, and the emperor's approach, too, was announced by drums and music. However, as we understand it, the Chinese "*seemed wholly unmoved by the perfect execution of the best pieces, of the best composers, in Europe*",<sup>93</sup> and they regarded Western music as barbarian. The Europeans' comments on Chinese music are certainly not more flattering. John Barrow, member of the Macartney's entourage, commented: "*Their instruments, it is true, are sufficiently varied, both as to shape and material, but I know of none that is even tolerable to a European ear*".<sup>94</sup> In addition to that, the valet Aeneas Anderson said: "[...] *Their music, being destitute both of melody and harmony, was of course, very disagreeable to our ears, which are accustomed to such perfection in those essential points of music [...]*".<sup>95</sup> Another thing that escaped Macartney was the Qing dynasty protocols governing the reception of guests. In occasion of the arrival of barbarian visitors, music was played for them with the purpose of controlling and pacifying. A special drama was composed for the Macartney's embassy, the "*Ascendant Peace in the Four Seas*", which described the sailing of the embassy from England to pay tribute to the emperor, and how he safely and peacefully sent his guests away after they fulfilled their duty. In conclusion, the British embassy was doomed to fail before its arrival, and the fruitless musical exchanges contributed to aggravate the state of relations between the two parties.

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<sup>93</sup> Burney, '*Chinese music*', cited in Lindorff, J., Burney, Macartney and the Qianlong Emperor: the role of music in the British embassy to China, 1792-1794, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 441-453.

<sup>94</sup> John Barrow, *Travels in China*, cited in Lindorff, J., Burney, Macartney and the Qianlong Emperor: the role of music in the British embassy to China, 1792-1794, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 441-453.

<sup>95</sup> Anderson, *A narrative of the British embassy*, pp. 76-77, cited in Lindorff, J., Burney, Macartney and the Qianlong Emperor: the role of music in the British embassy to China, 1792-1794, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 441-453.

The above-mentioned examples help us to understand that in different eras and contexts, music has been an integral part of diplomacy, and while in some cases it has fostered the establishment of inter-state relationships, in other cases poor musical diplomacy has contributed to aggravate the situation. Now, we would like to introduce what we consider as the most remarkable and successful example of musical diplomacy, that is, the U.S. government's exportation of American culture through music and dance in the Cold War period. To be able to analyze the American music diplomacy during the Cold War in depth, a whole thesis on this subject would be necessary. We have decided to structure our research so as to focus on the particular case of Japan, but in any case, we are going to do our best to summarize the characteristics and the highlights of U.S.-U.S.S.R. musical diplomacy in the Cold War era, hoping to provide the reader with a general, but at the same time comprehensive overview on the matter.

However, before doing that, we find it appropriate to discuss a topic that most scholars neglect, but which is relevant since it preceded the cultural Cold War, and thus furnished a model for future American musical diplomacy: the initiation in the 1940s of a program of cultural propaganda by the State Department and the Office of Inter-American Affairs (OOIA) with the aim to strengthen alliances between the United States and South America. The 1930s saw a deterioration of the relationship between the United States and Latin America, mainly due to economic reasons, as Latin America's prosperity depended substantially on the financial stability of the United States. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the 1929 crisis followed by the economic depression and a general havoc of the economic infrastructures generated distrust and hostility toward the United States. The anti-American sentiment united with the need to counter Nazi propaganda led President Roosevelt to launch a plan called "*Good Neighbor Policy*", with the aim to rebuild the relationship with Latin America and strengthen trade and cultural ties. Following the failure of a first attempt by the State Department to implement a kind of cultural propaganda, the Office for Coordination of Commercial and Cultural Relations between American Republics (OCCCRBAR), which later became the OOIA, emerged in 1940, and Nelson Rockefeller was placed at the head of this new entity, whose tactics included the exportation of music, art and film, and he decided to establish advisory committee in each there areas. The composition and functioning of the OOIA Music

Committee has been explored by Jennifer Campbell in one of her articles<sup>96</sup>. From her work we learnt that initially the OOIA Music Committee had a budget of \$100,000 (corresponding to today's 1.5 million dollars) to subsidize music projects, and it turns out that this was the first committee of its type to have a dedicated funding to implement its projects. As underlined by Campbell, cultural diplomacy was a new phenomenon in the United States, so there were no clear objectives and protocol for the committee to follow, apart from the instruction that "*the musicians and music sent to represent the United States abroad must be the "best" of what the United States had to offer*".<sup>97</sup> The Committee consisted of five members, three of whom worked in the musical field. The Committee's members decided to focus on the promotion of American art music to bolster American cultural prestige and to refute the belief that the US were culturally and musically impoverished. They believed that musical tours would increase understanding of North-South American music, and this would facilitate friendship through the recognition that they all shared an emotional affinity for music. What brought all the members together was the idea of reputation; and in fact, the main criterion according to which performers or ensembles were chosen was the Committee's perception of the national prestige. Another element that was highly taken into consideration was the repertoire. The OOIA Music Committee had the power to shape the type of American musical identity to send abroad. The five members decided to export serious music by American composers combined with "*at least some representative compositions or folk music on practically every program*";<sup>98</sup> this representative music did not include jazz, as it was considered too commercial. Moreover, European classical music was kept to a minimum. The members of the Committee aimed, rather than a one-way relationship, at a form of reciprocity, which would include commissioning and performing of South American music and bringing Southern musicians North. However, they were unable to achieve their goal due to several obstacles, first and foremost the opposition by labor unions. An important aspect that complemented the musical tours was the person-to-person interaction, according to

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<sup>96</sup> Campbell, J. L., Creating Something Out of nothing: The Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (1940-1941) and the Inception of a Policy for Musical Diplomacy, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2012, Oxford University Press, pp. 29-39.

<sup>97</sup> Address of the Honorable A. A. Berle, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State, in the "*Conference on Inter-American Relations in the Field of Music: Digest of Proceedings*", cited in Campbell, J. L., Creating Something Out of nothing: The Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (1940-1941) and the Inception of a Policy for Musical Diplomacy, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2012, Oxford University Press, p. 31.

<sup>98</sup> "*Minutes*", January 2, 1941, CCLC, 10/335, cited in Campbell, J. L., Creating Something Out of nothing: The Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (1940-1941) and the Inception of a Policy for Musical Diplomacy, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2012, Oxford University Press, p. 33.

which performers were expected to carry out off-stage activities, such as attending diplomatic functions and parties, play free concerts, and reaching out to the public. Essentially, performers were required to become ambassadors for the United States, and being a good ambassador became as important as being a good musician. Although the experience of the OOIA Music Committee was brief, as it was dissolved by October 1941, its legacy remained; in fact, it “*confirmed to the U.S. officials that music could provoke a response in the international community. The creation and financial security of the OOIA Music Committee had allowed, for the first time in the U.S. government history, state and nonstate actors to experiment how music might accomplish objectives in international relations*”.<sup>99</sup> The OOIA Music Committee’s experience can be summarized as a small program within the broader New Deal. Although the Committee has existed for less than a year, it has suggested that music has power, and that its power could be harnessed to achieve a country’s goals. Eventually, the OOIA Music Committee set a model for American music diplomacy, which reached its peak during the Cold War.

As already mentioned, the Cold War also had a cultural dimension, so much that we can talk about a real and true “cultural Cold War”. To outline the most salient aspects of the musical diplomacy implemented by the U.S. government in this period, we will rely on the research of some authors, mainly Emily Abrams Ansari, Lisa E. Davenport, Yale Richmond and Sarah J. Bittner.

The fall of the U.S.S.R. has been attributed to various factors, from Reagan’s “evil empire” speech, to the visit of Pope John Paul II to Poland, the role of U.S. military buildup and the “Star Wars”, or the international radio broadcasts. Some scholars claim that the Soviet Union has ended up crumbling due to its internal problems, *i.e.* mismanagement at home and failure to manage the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. An important role has also been attributed to the *glasnost*, which shed light on the horrors of the past and the realities of the present. According to Richmond, Mikhail Gorbachev’s “new thinking”, followed by Boris Yeltsin’s pro-Western reform movement, was driven by Soviet contacts and exchanges with the West occurred during the Cold War, and “*the exchange of scholars and other exchanges played a very important role in Soviet politics*

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<sup>99</sup> Campbell, J. L., Creating Something Out of nothing: The Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (1940-1941) and the Inception of a Policy for Musical Diplomacy, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2012, Oxford University Press, p. 38.

*because through these exchanges Russian intellectuals were westernized*".<sup>100</sup> Cultural exchanges, among which musical ones, influenced Soviet elites and public at large, helping to prepare the way to ideas that led to the new thinking. A first effort by the United States to establish cultural exchanges with the Soviet Union was already made during WWII, in particular in 1943, when Averell Harriman, the U.S. ambassador to the U.S.S.R., proposed to Foreign Minister Molotov a program of cultural exchange "*that included the distribution in the Soviet Union of two bimonthly magazines designed to explain to the Soviet public the nature of the American war effort and aspects of American life, includ[ing] proposals for direct contact with Soviet news editors and the distribution of American films*".<sup>101</sup> The answer was rather cold, and the Soviet Union began to open cautiously to the West only after Stalin's death in 1953. The post Stalin era saw the performances of the Soviet musicians Emil Gilels, David Oistrakh and Leonid Kogan in the U.S., and the tour of the U.S. company of *Porgy and Bess* in Leningrad, Moscow, and Kiev, followed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, delegations of the U.S., medical specialists, scientists, engineers, and American tourists, causing some cracks in Stalin's Iron Curtain. One of these cracks is represented by the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival, which saw tens thousands of Western youth arriving in Moscow, bringing with them their Western styles made of jeans, jazz, boogie-woogie, rock and roll, and free speech, infecting the Soviet youth and triggering a mechanism that would irreparably change the Soviet Union. The encounter with jazz and rock and roll resulted in the inability of Soviet officials to control the "*wave of Western music sweeping the Soviet republics*",<sup>102</sup> and their advance had devastating consequences for communist ideologists. A proof of how these cultural exchanges have changed the U.S.S.R. is what one Russian cellist said, as he explained that they were raised on propaganda which depicted the West as decadent, and the Soviet society as the wave of the future. However, when symphony orchestras from Boston, Philadelphia, New York, Cleveland, and San Francisco performed in the Soviet Union, they turned out to be great, and the Soviets started to ask themselves how could the decadent West produce such a high artistic level, coming to the conclusion that their media were not telling them the truth.

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<sup>100</sup> Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>102</sup> Ryback, T. W., *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990, cited in Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, p. 12.

The cultural exchanges established during the Cold War served as means to break barriers while promoting free exchange of people, ideas, and information. Music represented a critical tool in presenting the positive aspects and advantages of the American lifestyle, and popular music *i.e.* jazz and rock and roll, which were chosen since they are American-born forms of art, “*brought a breath of fresh air and new artistic concepts to the U.S.S.R.*”.<sup>103</sup> Being a black cultural product, jazz music helped reshaping the American cultural landscape and making a deep impact on the image of race relations of the United States of America. And in fact, “*through music, blacks and whites at home and abroad assuaged social tensions by sharing a common social and cultural experience, thereby transcending racial boundaries*”.<sup>104</sup> The cultural phenomenon of jazz comprehensively illustrates American culture and society; it was structured around improvisation within a set of commonly agreed-upon boundaries, and this could implicitly be related to the values of democracy and freedom. Thus, jazz music represented a perfect metaphor for the United States in the eyes of the State Department, and it became a component of U.S. diplomacy. The jazz producer and broadcaster on the *Voice of America* (VOA) Willis Conover in an interview said:

*“Jazz is a classical parallel to our American political and social system. We agree in advance on the laws and customs we abide by, and by having reached agreement, we are free to do whatever we wish within these constraints. It’s the same with jazz. The musicians agree on the key, the harmonic changes, the tempo and the duration of the piece. Within these guidelines, they are free to play what they want. And when people in other countries hear that quality in the music, it stimulates a need for the same freedom in their lives.”*<sup>105</sup>

Soviet citizens embraced the value of freedom embodied by the American jazz, and secretly listened to the radio program “Jazz Hour” aired by VOA. In 1956 the U.S. State Department created the Jazz Ambassadors program, initiating the so-called *jazz diplomacy*. This program consisted in hiring the leading American Jazz musicians - Louis Armstrong, Benny Goodman, Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington - to perform as

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<sup>103</sup> Bittner, S. J., *Pop in the Bloc: How Popular Music Helped the United States Win the Cold War*, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 2012.

<sup>104</sup> Bertrand, M. T., *Race, Rock, and Elvis*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000, cited in Davenport, L. E., *Jazz Diplomacy. Promoting America in the Cold War*, University Press of Mississippi, 2009, p. 28.

<sup>105</sup> Willis Conover, interview by Cliff Groce, Information Series, cited in Bittner, S. J., *Pop in the Bloc: How Popular Music Helped the United States Win the Cold War*, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 2012, p. 28.

“ambassadors” for the United States abroad, with the aim of improving the U.S.’ public image in the light of criticism from the U.S.S.R. regarding the racial inequality and tension. American Jazz music was initially rejected by Soviet officials, who wanted to preserve the purity of Soviet art, and viewed jazz as “*bedlam from the decadent West*”.<sup>106</sup> Despite the opposition by the Soviet elites, Jazz’s popularity beyond the Iron Curtain grew, as witnessed by Benny Goodman’s highly successful thirty-two concert tour in 1962. However, suspicion persisted, and two year later the *Izvestiya*, the government daily newspaper, suggested that “*four of the band’s musicians were really secret agents*”.<sup>107</sup>

The fact of having made black and white jazz artists ambassadors of the United States hid some irony, which emerges from the analysis of Davenport’s work. From Ansari’s examination of the beginnings of American musical diplomacy, we learnt that jazz was marginalized by the OOIA Music Committee, as they preferred to export other musical genres. Despite the globalization of jazz, many there was a snobiness towards it, and it seems that Americans were ashamed of that kind of music. The main reason is that jazz was associated with margins of American society, that is, lower-class African Americans.<sup>108</sup> In addition to that, American jazz represented black cultural nationalism and could be interpreted as a revolutionary challenge to the status quo. Notwithstanding this, jazz was eventually catapulted into Cold War cultural exchange, and not only did it increasingly appeal to people, but it also “*gave the world a more positive view of the United States’ containment policy by revealing a softer, more nuanced version of Americans*”.<sup>109</sup> As far as rock and roll is concerned, it was introduced into the Soviet Union on a specific occasion, namely the Sixth World Youth Festival, which was held in Moscow in 1957. Rock and roll music was totally new to the Soviet citizens, who had absolutely no idea what to expect. It turned out that the more conservative Communists were shocked by the performances of rock and roll groups at the Moscow Festival, and what particularly baffled them was “*the visiting performers’ “bizarre” way of dressing,*

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<sup>106</sup> Davenport, L. E., *Jazz Diplomacy. Promoting America in the Cold War*, University Press of Mississippi, 2009, p. 33.

<sup>107</sup> Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, p. 126.

<sup>108</sup> Minutes of Music Advisory Panel, *International Exchange Program*, May 3, 1955, cited in Davenport, L. E., *Jazz Diplomacy. Promoting America in the Cold War*, University Press of Mississippi, 2009, p. 44.

<sup>109</sup> Davenport, L. E., *Jazz Diplomacy. Promoting America in the Cold War*, University Press of Mississippi, 2009, p. 25.



their “wild” haircuts and their “offensive” music”.<sup>110</sup> However, the effect that rock had on young people was quite the opposite, with devastating consequences for ideologists of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe’s communist parties. The one who probably best grasped the significance of the introduction of rock and roll into the Iron Curtain was the rock historian Timothy W. Ryback, who wrote:

*“The unifying force among the youth of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union did not emerge from a carefully engineered socialist education: it came through the speaker of a gramophone, blaring the latest boogie woogie or rock and roll. . . Rock music, despite the claims of Communist leaders, was, for Soviet and East European youths, a visceral rather than political experience. The “heated rhythms” of rock and roll elevated them among the mundane; it allowed them to escape, not engage in, political activity.”<sup>111</sup>*

The soft-propaganda made of jazz and rock and roll used by the United States to demonstrate the positive aspects of the American system during the Cold War has proved extremely effective, as it demonstrated to the citizens beyond the Iron Curtain that the U.S. valued the dignity of man and the individual rights, triggering their desire to be free to listen to whatever they wanted and behave however they liked. Despite Soviet officials’ efforts to contrast the diffusion of American popular music in the Eastern Block because they were convinced that this kind of music would corrupt the younger generation, jazz and rock and roll have become widespread, and together with their rhythms and notes they brought along American way of life. As a result, *“Soviet citizens soon wanted to not only listen to the music they loved, but also to be free to imitate their idols and peers in the West. They wore American blue jeans, cut their hair in “mop-tops” and sometimes even adopted Western names. Before officials in the USSR fully realized it Lennon - not Lenin - was an idol of their citizens”*.<sup>112</sup>

In conclusion, music represented a critical tool in the context of the cultural Cold War, and apart from bringing a breath of fresh air, it helped to create a breach in the Iron Curtain,

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<sup>110</sup> Bittner, S. J., *Pop in the Bloc: How Popular Music Helped the United States Win the Cold War*, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 2012, p. 70.

<sup>111</sup> Ryback, T. W., *Rock Around the Block: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 30.

<sup>112</sup> Bittner, S. J., *Pop in the Bloc: How Popular Music Helped the United States Win the Cold War*, Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., 2012, p. 2.

creating a mutual understanding between the enemy parties and laying the foundations of a bridge that would eventually be crossed after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the consequent fall of the Soviet Union.

In this chapter we introduced the theme of music, by presenting its etymon and the theories around its origins, in particular those elaborated by Rousseau, Spencer, Darwin, Stumpf, and Combarieu. We then explored the role and functions that music performed among the ancient populations, how Egyptians believed in its magical power, whereas Chinese gave rise to the cosmogonic and philosophical conception of musical language. Through episodes of literature and mythology, we saw that Greeks considered music as a fundamental component in the personal development of young, and they included it in their educational system. They were the firsts to put music in relation with mathematics, thus laying the foundation of musical harmony. As witnessed by the author Aelian, music played a practical role among the ancient Etruscans, facilitating the hunting of deer and wild boars. Music does not belong to a particular civilization, but to every living being on the Earth. Music can, therefore, be defined as a universal language, a powerful means of communication able to overcome barriers among people, and for this reason it represents a valid instrument of diplomacy. We have presented some examples of musical diplomacy; the following chapter will be devoted to a more detailed analysis which sees as a protagonist an East Asian country, Japan.

### CHAPTER III. CASE STUDY: THE INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN MUSIC IN JAPAN

#### *Japan: a country of particularism*

As we have already discussed in chapter one, Japan belonged to the tributary system, which was based on the recognition of the supremacy of Imperial China by the surrounding states. The tributary system represents an early example of soft power, as China did not conquer other countries with the use of force, they simply fell under Chinese influence due to two main factors of attraction, the ideographic writing system and Confucianism. Although the tributary system was overcome with the affirmation of a new model of international relations introduced by the West during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the persistence of Confucianism is still perceptible in various attitudes behaviors and practices found in the societies in the region, albeit with different relevance and forms. Extending beyond the borders of China, Confucian conceptions interacted with the autochthonous cultural substratum of other East Asian societies, which showed great interest in Confucianism, but not for this reason they were incapable of making selections, modifications and, in certain cases, even refusals. In fact, the mediation between the contribution of Chinese civilization and indigenous cultural elements resulted in original, distinct, and sometimes even exclusive solutions. The most significant example in this sense is ancient Japan, which was inspired by the theories developed in China in relation to the State and the imperial institute, and this is also evidenced by the fact that it decided to adopt part of the terminology. However, ancient Japanese thought it appropriate to avoid accepting the principle of the “Heavenly mandate”, according to which it was Heaven’s prerogative to assign to the sovereign the task of governing with benevolence and for the benefit of the people, but also to revoke the mandate if the Emperor proved incapable of fulfilling his duty. This doctrine embodied the idea of the transience of the power of a reigning house, and this is evident in the succession of different dynasties in China, two of which - Yuan and Qing - were even of foreign origin. On the contrary, Japanese attributed to the sovereign divine origin as descendent of a heavenly ancestor, Amaterasu Ōmikami, the Shinto sun goddess. According to Japanese mythology, the Emperor of Japan is considered to be direct descendants of Amaterasu, and this legitimized a priori his right to govern, conferring stability, immutability and continuity to the Japanese imperial lineage; indeed, the Yamato Dynasty is claimed to be the oldest continuous hereditary monarchy in the world. The favor that Japanese accorded to

descendants and heredity is also demonstrated by the scarce success of the attempt to emulate the Chinese meritocratic system, which attributed a high value to the moral and intellectual qualities of the individual, constituting the main criterion for the assignment of public tasks and office. Instead of promoting the potential dynamism that meritocracy could introduce within the social order, in Japan the consolidation of a system of hereditary transmission of power and privileges was preferred.<sup>113</sup> The adoption of the Chinese writing system, too, underwent a process of adaptation to the local language, and the result was an original solution, that is, the development of two phonetic alphabets to be used in conjunction with Chinese ideograms.

As highlighted by Mazzei and Volpi,<sup>114</sup> the origins of Japanese particularism can be traced in the mythological reconstruction of the birth of the archipelago. According to the *Kojiki* (see chapter one), Japan was created upon the command of all the Heavenly Deities by two kami (deities), Izanagi - the Male-Who-Invites - and Izanami – the Female-Who-Invites -, who had the order to make, consolidate, and give birth to this drifting land. In order to accomplish their mission, they were granted a heavenly jeweled spear, and while standing upon the Floating Bridge of Heaven, they pushed the spear down in the sea below, and after having stirred the brine, they drew it up. The sea water dripping from the tip of the spear piled up and formed a kind of platform, where the two gods planted a pillar and erected a pavilion. There, they followed a ritual which involved exchanging some appreciations about the differences of their respective bodies, pronouncing the words “*What a fine boy!*” and “*What a fine girl!*”,<sup>115</sup> and making a turn around the pillar, whereupon they joined sexually. However, the children they made were no good: they made a “*limbless Leech Child, placed it in a reed boat, and set it out to sea. Next they made Froth Isle, [which] too they did not count among their children*”.<sup>116</sup> Izanami and Izanagi returned to Heaven and asked the Heaven’s Spirits for advice, who explained to the two mighty ones what the mistake was: the female goddess had spoken before the male god, and this the reason for their failure. Once they learnt the error, they repeated

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<sup>113</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

<sup>114</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, IV., “Il particolarismo nipponico e la sfida occidentale”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, pp. 69-75.

<sup>115</sup> Ō No Yasumaro, translated by Heldt, G., *Kojiki. An Account of Ancient Matters*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2014, p. 70.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

the ritual, this time letting Izanagi speak first; this union was successful and resulted in the birth of the islands of Japan, the kami, the mountains, the rivers<sup>117</sup> and all the rest.

By reading this passage of the Kojiki, it is possible to discern the particularistic character of the genesis, as it involves the creation of the islands and the gods of Japan, not of the entire world. Particularism is so intrinsic to the development of Japan that it is considered to be its main geopolitical factor; notwithstanding this, Japan also experienced brief periods of universalism. The first universalistic phase occurred in the ancient times, when Japan was a tributary state and leaned toward China, the center of culture and civilization of the East Asian region. In modern times, Japanese universalism has instead turned towards the Western world, and in particular towards Europe first and the United States afterwards. We find it appropriate to point out that the opening that took place in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was not the first between Japan and the Western world; in fact, contacts had already taken place at the end of the Muromachi period (1338-1573), and had seen Jesuit missionaries as protagonists. This particularistic feature of Japanese civilization has significantly influenced the conduct of the country and, in particular, the approach it has developed in response to contacts with the outside world. What is typical of Japan is the choice of an external model to follow, which is usually the greatest power of the time; however, this is not a blind acceptance of an external model, but rather a well thought-out choice of what to import and what to discard, so as to preserve its cultural particularities. We have already observed that Japan, in its relationship with China, has accepted to import the Confucian conception and the writing system - not without making it its own, adapting it to local needs -, while it has refused to adopt the theory of the Mandate of Heaven and, in general, the meritocratic system characteristic of China. If we move forward a few centuries, and more precisely in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we can confirm that this typical particularistic approach of Japan has not only been maintained but has also been perfected. The slogan that was coined on the occasion of the Meiji reform (started in 1868) is a perfect summary of this approach: 和魂洋才,<sup>118</sup> *wakon-yōsai*, literally “Japanese spirit with Western learning”.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, IV., “Il particolarismo nipponico e la sfida occidentale”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, pp. 70-71.

<sup>118</sup> 和 (= Japan, Japanese style), 魂 (=spirit), 洋 (=Western style), 才 (=genius). Jisho Online Vocabulary, “和魂洋才”, <https://jisho.org/search/和魂洋才>.

<sup>119</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, IV., “Il particolarismo nipponico e la sfida occidentale”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, p. 79.

The operation of synthesis between East and West was not easy, and in fact it brought about a tangible change in the lives of the Japanese, a change that was not welcomed by everyone. The import of Western technology has completely overturned the habits and aesthetic sense of the country of the Rising Sun, and if in some cases the result is barely acceptable, in others the forced insertion of Western elements, such as electricity, into everyday Japanese life gave rise to monstrous hybrids. This aspect of modernization was addressed by many intellectuals, but among them Tanizaki Jun'ichirō<sup>120</sup> undoubtedly stands out. In his essay on aesthetics titled *In'ei raisan* (陰翳礼讃),<sup>121</sup> “In Praise of Shadows”, Tanizaki addresses some of the problems that an accelerated modernization generated, and in particular how the beauty created by shadow has been swept away by lighting, the clarity of which had revealed secrets which, once revealed, have inevitably lost their charm. The use of electricity on the Kabuki stage exposed its true nature, bringing to light the artificiality of costumes, make-up and female roles played by men, thus making it lose its fascination. With regard to architecture, Tanizaki described the struggle to “*make electric wires, gas pipes, and water lines harmonize with the austerity of Japanese rooms*”.<sup>122</sup> The typical element of Japanese architecture - but also of life in general - is the shadow, which represents the principal element of decoration of traditional houses. The play of light and shadow is created by the construction of roofs of heavy tiles with eaves designed to act as a parasol, the addition of verandas, and the use of shōji, paper-paneled doors, which let the sunlight in dimly, an indirect light that is the charm of a room. The effect is then accentuated by the presence of tokonoma, that is an alcove, a recessed space where the shadow becomes darker, decorated with a hanging scroll and a flower arrangement. It can therefore be stated that “*the beauty of a Japanese room depends on a variation of shadows, heavy shadows against light shadows - it has nothing else*”.<sup>123</sup> This principle is totally opposed to the typical construction methods of Western houses, whose roofs are built in such a way that they create as few shadows as possible, and the interior is exposed to as much light as possible.

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<sup>120</sup> Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1956) was one of the major writers of modern Japanese literature. His work focuses on two main themes; one the one hand it presents a shocking world of sexuality and destructive erotic obsession, on the other hand it provides the reader with a portray of the dynamics of family life in the context of the rapid changes in 20<sup>th</sup> century Japanese society. His stories are often narrated in the context of a search for cultural identity in which constructions of the West and Japanese tradition are juxtaposed.

<sup>121</sup> 陰 (=shade), 翳 (=hold aloft), 礼 (=salute, thanks, ceremony), 讃 (=praise). Jisho Online Vocabulary, “陰翳礼讃”, <https://jisho.org/search/陰翳礼讃>.

<sup>122</sup> Tanizaki, J., translated by Harper, T. J. & Seidensticker, E. G., *In'ei raisan*, “In Praise of Shadows”, Leete's Island Books, 1977, p. 1.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The shadow is proper of the Japanese toilet, too, which is traditionally separated from the main building, located at the end of a corridor, “*in a grove fragrant with leaves and moss*”.<sup>124</sup> It is made of wood, and is dimly lit. The vagueness, cleanliness and absolute quietness ender the toilet “*the perfect place to listen to the chirping of insects or the song of the birds, to view the moon, or to enjoy any of those poignant moments that mark the change of the seasons*”.<sup>125</sup> This atmosphere, of course, favor meditation, and the author suspects that this was the place where the haiku poets had many of their ideas. The aesthetics of shadow applied to all spheres of life, and also to food. It was tradition to use dark lacquerware with gold decorations, which served precisely to reflect the soft light present in the room. The dark container tenuously lit by a candle conceals its contents, which can be vaguely intuited when the bowl is brought closer to the lips, and the rising vapor carries the fragrance that gives an anticipation of what is on the bottom. This beauty when ceramic tableware is used which, combined with the artificial lighting, immediately reveals to the diner the dish in front of him, eliminating the inexpressible aura of depth and mystery belonging to lacquerware. The food itself is a representative element of Japanese aesthetics. In his essay, Tanizaki describes a typical Japanese confection, the *yōkan*, of which he highlights the “*cloudy translucence, like that of jade, the faint, dreamlike glow that suffuses it, as if it had drunk into its very depths the light of the sun, the complexity and profundity of the color*”.<sup>126</sup> Compared to the *yōkan*, Western candies such as cream-filled chocolates can only appear simple and insignificant. The author explains that it is precisely the Japanese aesthetic sense that is different from the Western one, and this is perfectly exemplified by the passion of the Orientals for the patina that tableware made of tin acquire with repeated use. This patina creates a dark surface, which renders the object elegant, since in this cloudiness they seem to find the accumulation of the long past. Thus, there is a real passion for the “impure”, which from a Japanese point of view becomes perfection, and it cannot be denied that “*among the elements of the elegance in which [they] take such delight is a measure of the unclean, the unsanitary*”.<sup>127</sup> What the Orientals carefully preserve and idealize is instead considered *filthy* by Westerners, who tend to “*expose every speck of grime and eradicate it*”.<sup>128</sup> Regarding the import of Western technology, the author states that if only the Orientals had developed

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

their own physics and chemistry, no doubt the techniques and industries based on them would have taken a different form, and their everyday gadgets, medicines, and products industrial art would certainly have suited their national temper better than those imported from the West. If it had been the Chinese or the Japanese who invented the fountain pen, they would undoubtedly have taken inspiration from their writing brushes, and the resulting product would have better adapted to their needs. Likewise, if the Japanese had invented the phonograph and the radio, perhaps these instruments would have been able to reproduce much more faithfully the special character of Japanese voices and music, which is “*above all a music of reticence, of atmosphere. When recorded, or amplified by a loudspeaker, the greater part of its charm is lost*”.<sup>129</sup> But despite the author’s words, all these things were developed by Westerners, and the Japanese could do no more than surrender in the face of such evidence and adapt, coping with numerous missteps and inconveniences caused by the lack of that moving forward in ordered steps experienced by the Westerners. In the face of the differences in customs and temperament, Japan chose to follow the West, and the United States in particular. According to the writer Takebayashi Musōan, “*no two countries in the world waste[d] more electricity than America and Japan, [...] for Japan was only too anxious to imitate America in every way it could*”.<sup>130</sup>

In conclusion, Tanizaki describes to the reader a Japanese sensibility which is unique in its kind, and whose uniqueness he traces to basic sources, not to a national character. He affirms that architecture developed the way it did due to climatic conditions and the nature of available building materials; gold serves as an ornament as well as a reflector of light. In general, he states that “*the quality that we call beauty [...] must always grow from the realities of life*”.<sup>131</sup> And by life he means the full range of human experience, “*the base as well as the noble, eating and defecating as well as playgoing and the contemplation of calligraphy*”.<sup>132</sup> The aesthetic expressed in his essay is essentially pessimistic, as has no hope for the survival of a sensibility that grew from a way of life now about to pass out of existence, as glittering Western inventions were replacing traditional materials, electricity had rendered lacquerware garish, and floodlamps had

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<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.



turn the Kabuki into a “*world of sham*”.<sup>133</sup> However, Tanizaki concludes by claiming that according to him there is still one place where this vanishing world of shadows could survive, where something could be saved, that is, literature.

### ***Modernization styles in comparison***

We have stated that Japan, given the pressing demands of an increasingly globalized world, decided to opt for a selective approach, *i.e.* selecting what to import and what not to import, in order to maintain its own cultural identity. The transition of Japan to modernity is clearly described by Mazzei and Volpi, who state that Japan made a clear distinction between two dimensions, *institutions* and *functions*. Institutions can be visible - public and private organizations, primary groups such as family -, or symbolic - shared cultural content -; they are based on historical values and are specific to a given culture, meaning that they are particularistic. On the other hand, functions, that is, changing needs, are linked to the evolution of knowledge, and are universalistic, since they can be valid for all people. A discrepancy can arise between these two levels, which is given by the different pace of evolution of the two dimensions; in fact, institutions are long lasting, while functions tend to vary much faster. One need only think about a scientific discovery, which in a relatively short time can change the way of producing a good; on the contrary, changing people’s way of thinking requires a much more difficult and long process.<sup>134</sup> Japan, of course, was not the only country to be confronted with the need to modernize, and other countries, too, had to make a decision about what to import and what to preserve. Japan’s choice to preserve its own institutions while changing functions can be found also in the case of tsarist Russia. As it is written in Richmond’s work,<sup>135</sup> Russia has been isolated from the other major centers of civilization for great part of its history. Surely a primitive and hazardous transport system has contributed to keeping it at a distance from the rest of the world; however, Russia’s isolation from the West was also a self-imposed one. The West was perceived as hostile, and indeed Russia had been invaded several times by it: in the 17<sup>th</sup> century by Sweden and Poland, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by France, and

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<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>134</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, IV., “Il particolarismo nipponico e la sfida occidentale”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, p. 80.

<sup>135</sup> Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, pp. 1-3.

twice by Germany in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Over the ages Russia has been faced with a crucial question, namely whether or not it was possible to learn from the West and at the same time preserve its uniqueness. This issue gave rise to two opposing schools of thought, the pro-Western and the Slavophile. The former was constituted mostly by political reformers, liberals and socialists, who recognized Russia's backwardness and tried to borrow from the West to modernize. According to them, Russia would have benefited from Western enlightenment, rationalism, technology, rule of law, and manufacturing. The Slavophiles, on the contrary, were mainly philosophical conservatives, nationalists and the Church, who preferred Russian mysticism to Western rationalism. They too sought to borrow from the West, but with the difference that they were determined to protect and preserve Russia's unique cultural values and traditions. They rejected individualism and considered the Orthodox Church the main historical and moral force of Russia, not the state as in the Western conception. They also wished to preserve the *mir*, which was Russia's traditional agricultural commune, so as to prevent the growth of proletariat. According to Hugh Seton-Watson, it was this controversy between Westernizers and Slavophiles that "*split Russian socialism between Marxists and Populists, Russian Marxism between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, and Bolsheviks between opponents and followers of Stalin*".<sup>136</sup> Russia's first great modernizer was Tsar Peter the Great, who at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century led the modernization of the country, laying the foundations for an imperial Russia that would last almost two centuries after his death. But it was Tsar Boris Godunov who initiated the cultural exchanges with the West in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, when he sent thirty Russians to study in Western Europe, *i.e.* Paris, London, Oxford, and Cambridge. The result was, however, unsuccessful, as only two of them returned, while the others became "*Russia's first defectors to the West*".<sup>137</sup> We cannot help but notice a certain resemblance to the Iwakura Mission (岩倉使節団 *Iwakura shisetsudan*), which was named after Iwakura Tomomi, the plenipotentiary ambassador who was in charge of it. He was accompanied by some of the most influential men in the Meiji government, including Ōkubo Toshimichi (Minister of Finance), Kido Takayoshi (Counselor), Itō Hirobumi (Deputy Minister of Industry), Yamaguchi Naoyoshi (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs), all with the position of Deputy Ambassadors. They were also joined by

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<sup>136</sup> Seton-Watson, H., *The Decline of Imperial Russia, 1855-1914*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1951, p. 24, cited in Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, p. 2.

<sup>137</sup> Von Eckhardt, H., *Ivan the Terrible*, New York, Knopf, 1949, p. 49, cited in Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, p. 3.

forty-six government officials with eighteen members of staff and forty-three students, including eight girls, for a total of one hundred and seven people. This mission consisted of an important diplomatic trip around the world organized by the Meiji government while Japan was going through a decisive phase of modernization, and in fact it was part of the government's series of measures aimed at renewing the country. The main objectives of this diplomatic effort were three; *first*, the start of negotiations for the revision of the unequal treaties in July 1872, *second*, the study of the administrative, educational, and industrial systems of the Western powers, *third*, the presentation of Japan's diplomatic credentials to the Heads of States of the Western powers with whom the unequal treaties had been signed. The mission left Yokohama on December 23, 1871 on the steamship *America* on its way to the United States and Europe. In total the delegates visited twelve countries and the trip lasted a year and ten months. On the diplomatic level, the Iwakura Mission represents a failure since none of the treaties with the Western powers were renegotiated. Despite the great progress in the modernization of the country, it was still too early for the Westerners to recognize Japan on an equal term. Consequently, the men of the government, aware that it would be difficult for them to obtain a revision of the unequal treaties, sought to take advantage of their long stay abroad to test the willingness of the powers to amend the treaties, as well as to study the systems of the various Western countries. So, one result of the mission was to enable Japan to understand what steps to take to change the unequal treaties, and in particular that before the revision could be achieved, it was necessary for Japan to adopt a Western-style political, judicial and administrative system so as to be recognized on a par with the other powers. Hence, the first objective of the mission became the study and analysis of the different development models proposed by Western countries. Another objective was to project a positive image of Japan abroad. To this end, Japan participated in the Universal Expositions, such as the South Kensington Exposition in 1862 and the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1867, which was particularly significant for the diffusion of Japanese art in Europe.<sup>138</sup>

Finally, we can affirm that there are similarities between the modernization style adopted by Japan and the one followed by Russia. In history, though, we find diverse approaches; for instance, there are countries which have preferred to import both

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<sup>138</sup> Gordon, A., *A Modern History of Japan. From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 73-74, 88, 91.

functions and institutions from abroad, and this is certainly the case with Mustafa Kemal's Turkey, which was clearly described by M. Şükrü Hanioğlu. Mustafa Kemal is considered the Turkish national hero, and the father of modern Turkey. It is no coincidence that in 1934, by means of a specific decree of the Parliament of the Republic under the "Law on the Surname", he was exclusively assigned the surname Atatürk, which means "Father of the Turks". Mustafa Kemal carried on one of the greatest projects of intellectual and social transformation with the aim to reshape the Turkish state and society according to European culture and values. He believed that if the Turks did not embrace modernity, *i.e.* science and new ideas, they would be attacked by Western powers; thus, it was necessary to become an integrated part of the West and transform culture and society. Kemal's reform project had two very ambitious goals, namely, to convince the Turks that Turkey was part of Europe, and to persuade Western public opinion that the West shared the same culture as the Turks. He embraced the "Turkish History Thesis", one of the Turks' efforts to prove to Western nations that they were equal, according to which the Turks had migrated in several waves from Central Asia to China, India, the Balkans, the Middle East, and Northern Africa, populating and bringing civilization to the areas in which they arrived. The intent of this theory was to reject the claims of Western Europeans that the Turks belonged to the "yellow or Mongol" race, and instead create a cultural link with Europe. Kemal was able to build his project on the foundations laid by the reformers of the Late Ottoman Empire, who had introduced a hybrid legal system which was a mixture of Western legal principles and Islamic jurisprudence, created a Western-style bureaucracy, and facilitated the emergence of private companies, a socialist movement, trade unions, suffragettes, materialist journals, cinema etc. It should be noted, however, that these changes only affected the elite. Kemal's reformist ideals clashed with the conservative and less modern reality of some parts of Turkey, particularly Anatolia. He wrote that he "*would like to carry out the social revolution in our social life in the form of a sudden coup*",<sup>139</sup> and so he did after gaining power. According to him, "*the Western way of life was not a result of the socioeconomic dynamics prevalent in certain societies, but rather was itself a determinant of those*

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<sup>139</sup> M. Kemal Atatürk '*ün Karlsbad Hatıraları*, cited in M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, "Turkey and the West", *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton University Press, 2011.

*dynamics; [therefore], [the] adopti[on] [of] Western ways would bring about a transformation in social and cultural life which went far beyond cosmetic changes”.*<sup>140</sup>

From an ideological point of view, Kemal attempted to minimize everything that made the Turks appear as non-European, and the biggest obstacle was undoubtedly Islam. He abolished the Caliphate and put aside the Sharia, and in 1926 adopted the a modified Swiss Civil Code, thus guaranteeing rights to women, who were granted access to education and public office; polygamy was prohibited, and in general the ideal of educated women in the European style - also with regard to clothing – was promoted. Kemal prohibited traditional Turkish clothes, such as the fez and the veil, because he thought that clothes should also be civilized and international. Another change that was introduced under Kemal’s regime, and which had significant cultural repercussions, was the abandonment of the two Hijrī and Rūmī calendars and the adoption of the Gregorian one. This added further to the de-Islamization of time, insofar as the time of day was no longer related to the times of Muslim prayers; moreover, in 1935 the weekly holiday was changed, too, and was switched from the Muslim Friday to the Christian Sunday. His desire to eliminate another “*religiously loaded symbol of the past*”<sup>141</sup> is demonstrated by the introduction of the Latin alphabet in place of the Arab-Persian script, which according to him was “*a collection of incomprehensible signs that [Turks could] not understand and that squeezed [their] minds in an iron frame*”.<sup>142</sup> So, he ordered an immediate shift to the “international” letters, moving further away from the Muslim world and closer to Europe. Finally, to change utterly the social character of the modern Turks, Kemal asked to adopt new familial identities, that is, adopting a surname. As many Muslim societies, in fact, the Ottomans did not have surnames, but were known by an array of appellations. This situation was reversed in 1934 with the issuing of the “Surname Law”, through which the Turks were endowed with Western-style identities. For the purposes of our research, it is worth mentioning another facet of Kemal’s reform project, which is his desire to assimilate international culture, by encouraging the Turks to listen to music produced in Western styles. He claimed that Oriental music was primitive, “*not sufficient*

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<sup>140</sup> M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, “Turkey and the West”, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton University Press, 2011.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Türk Yazı İnkılâbı Hakkında Konuşma, cited in M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, “Turkey and the West”, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton University Press, 2011.

to express the Turk's spirit and intense feelings",<sup>143</sup> but it was not a matter of individual taste, since Mustafa Kemal himself enjoyed traditional Turkish songs and was not a very good connoisseur of the opera; rather, it was a matter of progress. Many talented young musicians were sent to Europe for training, and the famous German composer Paul Hindemith was invited to visit Turkey with the purpose of reforming Turkish music. In order to render the reform of music more successful, in 1936 the regime decided to ban the broadcasting of traditional music and concluded that programming should be dedicated whether to Western music or to the new Turkish imitation of it.<sup>144</sup>

So far, we have defined Japan as a country of particularism, which since ancient times has selected what to import or not from foreign models, being it Imperial China or the Western powers. This particularistic approach, which consists in modifying the functions while preserving the institutions and aims at gaining access to the sciences and technologies developed by others while maintaining its own cultural identity, was also embraced by Russia, and in particular by the Slavophiles, who feared that opening up to the West would lead to the loss of Russian identity. On the contrary, other countries decided to change both functions and institutions, as in the case of the reforms implemented by Mustafa Kemal to make Turkey a modern nation in line with Western culture and values. At this point, it is legitimate that a question arises: why among all the countries one should choose Japan as an example of successful musical diplomacy?

### ***Why Japan?***

To answer the above raised question, we will provide the reader with data on the performance, consumption and popularity of Western classical music in Japan. We are positive that this information will be helpful to allow a better comprehension of the role that Western classical music occupies in this country, which according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) Global Music Report 2019 is the world's second largest music market, with a recording industry revenue of USD 2,627 in 2018.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> "Türk Yazı İnkılâbı Hakkında Konuşma, 8.VIII.1928," in *Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri*, vol. 2, 255, cited in M. Şükrü Hanioglu, "Turkey and the West", *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton University Press, 2011.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> IFPI Global Music Report 2019. <https://www.ifpi.org/media/downloads/GMR2019-en.pdf>.

There are currently about 1,600 professional and amateur orchestras in Japan, and the city of Tokyo alone hosts almost half of them. The peculiarity is that there are numerous “specialized” orchestras, such as civic orchestras, youth orchestras, railway orchestras, bank orchestras and many others. All this is part of the impressive - but at the same time conservative - Japanese musical scene. Tokyo supports at least eight full-size, full-time and fully professional orchestras, which are at the top for salary and budget, and in total provide more than 1,200 concerts a year. They are the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo City Philharmonic, Japan Philharmonic, New Japan Philharmonic, Tokyo Philharmonic, and Tokyo Symphony. Although the names are similar, they represent very distinct entities.<sup>146</sup> But even outside Tokyo it is possible to enjoy orchestral excellence, notably through the performances of the Bach Collegium Japan, Fukushima Youth Sinfonietta, Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra, Hyogo Performing Arts Center Orchestra, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra, Kanagawa Philharmonic Orchestra, Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, Osaka Philharmonic Orchestra, Saito Kinen Orchestra, and Sapporo Symphony Orchestra. Among these, the Saito Kinen Orchestra, formed by Seiji Ozawa and Kazuyoshi Akiyama in 1984 in commemoration of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hideo Saito’s death, has been ranked among the world’s 20 greatest orchestras.<sup>147</sup> If these figures are not sufficient to understand the great passion of Japanese audiences for Western-style symphony orchestras, perhaps it will help to know that the concert halls, even the largest ones - the NHK Hall has a capacity of 3,800 seats - are generally 85-95% full, and the age range of audiences is evenly distributed, meaning that many young people attend classical music concerts. Western music influence was confirmed by Iwaki Hiroyuki, former conductor of the NHK Symphony, who affirmed that “*In Japan [they] were for a long time influenced by the West*”.<sup>148</sup>

Music - and Western music in particular - occupies a consistent role in Japanese education system, and in fact music (音楽 *ongaku*) is one of the compulsory subjects

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<sup>146</sup> Markow, R., Tokyo’s Big Eight Orchestras Flash Bigtime Qualities, *Classical Voice North America*, Journal of the Music Critics Association of North America, October 21, 2015. <https://classicalvoiceamerica.org/2015/10/21/japanese-orchestras-2015/>.

<sup>147</sup> The World’s Greatest Orchestras, *Gramophone*, March 23, 2010. <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/features/article/the-world-s-greatest-orchestras>.

<sup>148</sup> Quoted in Matthias Kriesberg, “Japan’s new Generation of Composers”, *New York Times*, 6 February 2000, cited in Thornbury, B. E., *America’s Japan and Japan’s Performing Arts. Cultural Mobility and Exchange*, The University of Michigan Press, 2013, p. 122.

studied in elementary school and junior high school.<sup>149</sup> Children already sing and become acquainted with simple musical instruments in preschool, but it is in elementary school that music is an integral part of the core curriculum, including singing, instrumental performance, and appreciation of both Western and Japanese music. Starting from the first grade, students learn to play melodies and simple harmonies on small keyboard and wind instruments, receiving formal instruction in reading music, too, and it is not uncommon that “*elementary schoolchildren are able to perform their sight reading with a degree of accuracy which might well arouse the envy of conservatory or even academy students in other parts of the world*”.<sup>150</sup> Musical expression and improvisation of simple accompaniments are encouraged through the use of various percussion instruments. Although all children are exposed to a common core of Japanese and Western classical works, Western music prevails, and students learn to enjoy and play the compositions of authors such as Bach, Handel, Beethoven, and Schubert. In lower secondary school music curriculum continues to emphasize vocal and instrumental performance and appreciation; students learn to sing in a chorus and play musical instruments in an ensemble. Music appreciation includes a broader acquaintance with classical Japanese music, world folksongs, and classical and modern Western orchestral and solo music. The curriculum also covers basic music theory and history, and students compose simple works for voice or instruments and perform them as a group. It is common that concerts are organized in Japanese schools, and sometimes foreign artists too are invited to perform. It is only in high school that the study of music is no longer compulsory, as students are required to take an art course and are free to choose music, but they can also opt for calligraphy or painting.<sup>151</sup>

The popularity of Western classical music in Japan can also be seen in broadcasting, and it is common to find television films of the world’s major orchestras, chamber ensembles and solo performers on their tours of Japan. Nowadays Japan hosts some of the world’s finest classical music orchestras, artists and stages such as ballets or operas; for instance, the *Teatro alla Scala* has already performed seven tours in Japan and another

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<sup>149</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), *Guide for foreign students to start school. Procedures for Entering Japanese Schools*, [https://www.mext.go.jp/component/english/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/06/24/1303764\\_001.pdf](https://www.mext.go.jp/component/english/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/06/24/1303764_001.pdf)

<sup>150</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Edwin Mellen Pr, 1994.

<sup>151</sup> <sup>151</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), *Guide for foreign students to start school. Procedures for Entering Japanese Schools*, [https://www.mext.go.jp/component/english/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/06/24/1303764\\_001.pdf](https://www.mext.go.jp/component/english/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/06/24/1303764_001.pdf)



one is planned for September 2020 with the staging of *Tosca* and *La Traviata*. The Japanese public is accustomed to attending live performances by the great names of classical music of the international scene, and the involvement of some of the world's leading musicians has even resulted in the establishment of music festivals and foundations in Japan, such as the *Beppu Argerich Music Festival* organized by the *Argerich Arts Foundation* and directed by world-famous pianist Martha Argerich.<sup>152</sup> And while foreign artists had and continue to dominate Japanese stages, the opposite has also become true. Japanese musicians - performers as well as composers - take part in international contests, where they are regarded as serious competitors. Japanese musicians have in fact placed high or won all of the recent major music competitions, and "their seemingly sudden appearance on our concert stages has been so remarkable that it has prompted tongue wagging in lay circles as to whether performers from the Far East can really understand or play Western music".<sup>153</sup> Below we will list the names of some of the most prestigious international music competitions and the prizes won by candidates of Japanese nationality.

***International Chopin Piano Competition:*** initiated in 1927 and held every five years since 1955, it is one of the oldest and most prestigious international piano competitions and is devoted entirely to the works of the great Polish composer. ***Japanese winners:*** Nakamura Hiroko, 4<sup>th</sup> prize, 1965; Uchida Mitsuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1970; Ebi Akiko, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 1980; Koyama Michie, 4<sup>th</sup> prize, 1985; Yokoyama Yukio, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1990; Takahashi Takako, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 1990; Miyatani Rika, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 1995; Sato Mika, 6<sup>th</sup> prize, 2000; Sekimoto Shohei & Yamamoto Takashi, 4<sup>th</sup> prize, 2005.<sup>154</sup>

***Leeds International Piano Competition:*** it is one of the most prestigious piano competitions in the world and takes place every three years in Leeds. It was founded in 1961 by Countess Marion of Harewood and Dame Fanny Waterman and its first edition was held in 1963. ***Japanese winners:*** Uchida Mitsuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1975; Terada Etsuko,

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<sup>152</sup> Music Festival Argerich's Meeting Point in Beppu, <https://www.argerich-mf.jp/en/>.

<sup>153</sup> Leslie Rubinstein, "Oriental Musicians Come of Age", *New York Times*, 23 November 1980, cited in Thornbury, B. E., *America's Japan and Japan's Performing Arts. Cultural Mobility and Exchange*, The University of Michigan Press, 2013, p. 122.

<sup>154</sup> International Frederick Chopin Piano Competition, <https://web.archive.org/web/20051210065846/http://www.konkurs.chopin.pl/index.php?Lang=en>.

6<sup>th</sup> prize, 1978; Otake Junko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1984; Ogawa Noriko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1987; Osaki Yuma, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2003; Kitamura Tomoki, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 2015.<sup>155</sup>

***Queen Elisabeth Competition:*** founded in 1937 and named after Queen Elisabeth of Belgium, it is an international competition for career-starting musicians held in Brussels and is considered one of the most challenging and prestigious competitions for instrumentalists. ***Japanese winners:*** violinists Fujiwara Hamao, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1971; Ishikawa Shizuka, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 1976; Horigome Yuzuko, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1980; Shimizu Takashi, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1980; Tsukahara Ruriko, 4<sup>th</sup> prize, 1980; Suwanai Akiko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1989; Toda Yayoi, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1993; Tamai Natsumi, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 1997; Matsuyama Saeka, 4<sup>th</sup> prize, 2005; Narita Tatsuki, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2012. Pianists Wakabayashi Akira, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1987; Nakamichi Ikuyo, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 1987; Matsumoto Kazumasa, 5<sup>th</sup> prize, 2003. Cellist Okamoto Yuya, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2017. Composers Fujikake Hiro & Nishimura Akira, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1977; Sakai Kenji, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2001.<sup>156</sup>

***International Franz Liszt Piano Competition:*** it is a long-standing competition held in Budapest since 1933. ***Japanese winners:*** Narata Tomoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1966; Okada Masaru, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1999; Goto Masataka, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2011.<sup>157</sup>

***Maria Canals International Music Competition:*** it was founded in 1954 and is held yearly in the Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona. ***Japanese winners:*** pianists Ikeda Yoko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1959; Imai Akira, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1974; Sugimoto Yasuto, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1976; Kikuchi Ruriko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1978; Fujii Kazuoki, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1981; Okada Hiromi, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1982; Matsuzawa Yuki, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1982; Koyama Kyoko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1983; Konishi Rie, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1984; Sakai Chiharu, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1986; Nagaoka Nobuyuki, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1986; Nakai Keiko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1987; Saito Junko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1988; Hori Yukiko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1989; Nakamichi Yuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1991; Kato Akiko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1992; Doi Tomoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1992; Takemura Yoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1994; Serizawa Keiji, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1995; Wada Kiyo, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1996; Hata Elina & Kawai Ayako, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1997; Mita Takahiro, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1998; Takeda Miwako, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1998; Kimura Ayako, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1999; Kikuchi Yusuke, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2000; Miura Yurie, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2001; Asada Mayako, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2001; Niino Yosuke, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2003; Akagi Yukiko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2005; Kawamura Fumiyo, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2005;

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<sup>155</sup> Leeds International Piano Competition, <https://www.leedspiano.com>.

<sup>156</sup> Queen Elisabeth Competition. <https://concoursreineelisabeth.be/cgi?lg=en>.

<sup>157</sup> International Franz Liszt Piano Competition, <https://www.liszt.nl>.

Ishimura Jun, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2008; Nakagiri Nozomi, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2012; Yoshida Tomoaki, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2013; Sato Hiroo, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2016; Kuwahara Shiori, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2016. Duo-Sonatas Komoriya Izumi & Yamashita Taisuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1980; Numata Senoko & Tadenuma Akemi, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1996; Okabe Akiko & Aragaki Yuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1999; Sasaki Kyoko & Iso Eriko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1999. Flutists Enokida Masayoshi, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1978; Kato Motoaki, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1983; Koga Atsuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1994; Fujii Kaori, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1998. Guitarists Fukuda Shin'ichi, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1981; Fujii Keiko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1985; Suzuki Daisuke, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1992. Percussionist Ueno Shin'ichi, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1982. Violinists Tate Yukari, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1975; Saburi Kyoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize 1989; Ito Ryotaro, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1993. Singers Ishii Kiyoko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1969; Hibi Keiko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1977; Taguchi Kuniko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1979; Bamba Chihiro, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1985; Yamamoto Fumi, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1987; Fujimura Mihoto; 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1995.<sup>158</sup>

**ARD International Music Competition:** founded in 1952, it is the largest international classical music competition in Germany and is held once a year in Munich. **Japanese winners:** oboist Inoue Jeiko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2002; violist Akasaka Tomoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2004; violinists Okasaki Keisuke, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2005; Yamada Akiko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2005; Shirai Kei, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2009; pianist Kawamura Hisako, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2006; Hisasue Wataru, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2017; clarinetist Taira Kaneko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2008; string quartet Verus String Quartet, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2008; Quartet Amabile, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2016; cellist Yokosawa Gen, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2010; flutist Akimoto Mayuko, special Alice-Rosner-Prize, 2015; harpist Kageyama Rino, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 2016.<sup>159</sup>

**International Tchaikovsky Competition:** started in 1958 and named after the Russian composer Pyotr Ilych Tchaikovsky, it was the first international music competition held in the Soviet Union. It takes place every four years in Moscow and Saint Petersburg. **Japanese winners:** pianists Koyama Michie, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1982; Uehara Ayaho, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2002; Fujita Mao, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 2019; violinists Kubo Yoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1962; Ushioda Matsuko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1966; Sato Yoko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1966; Fujikawa Mayumi, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1970; Kato Tomoko, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1982; Suwanai Akiko, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 1990; Kamio Mayuko, 1<sup>st</sup> prize, 2007; cellists Yasuda Ken'ichiro, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1966; Iwasaki Ko, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1966; Kanno Hirofumi, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, 1970; Fujiwara Mari, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, 1978.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Maria Canals International Music Competition, <https://mariacanal.org/en/>.

<sup>159</sup> ARD International Music Competition, <https://www.br.de/ard-music-competition/index.html>.

<sup>160</sup> International Tchaikovsky Competition, <https://tchaikovskycompetition.com/en/>.

We only mentioned seven of the most prestigious international music competitions, yet the reader will have noticed how long the list of Japanese winners is. The list could continue a lot longer, but our aim is not to list the names of all Japanese musicians who have won a prize in an international competition, but rather to show how significant the Japanese presence in these competitions is and how outstanding their achievements are.

Finally, the extent to which Western classical music has settled in Japan is symbolized by the presence of the Yamaha Corporation, a Japanese multinational corporation and conglomerate, which is also one of the constituents of Nikkei index. The origins of the Yamaha Group date back to 1887, when Yamaha Torakusu completed the first reed organ to be built in Japan. In the 1960s Yamaha experienced a major leap as a comprehensive musical instrument manufacturer by expanding product domains to include acoustic musical instruments and digital instruments, adding various instrument types, from wind instruments to string instruments and drums, thereby becoming a globally unique and comprehensive musical instrument manufacturer. Today Yamaha Corporation, established in 1897 with the name *Nippon Gakki Co., Ltd.* with a capital of 100,000 yen, is the world's largest piano manufacturing company. Yamaha accelerated its business growth through the acquisition of overseas companies, and today develops business on a global scale in three domains: musical instruments, audio equipment, and others (*i.e.* industrial machinery and component business), with a net sales amounting to ¥437.4 billion. The Yamaha's musical instrument business, focused on the manufacture and sale of musical instruments, occupies two-thirds of the whole business, and alone generates a revenue of ¥282.0 billion, which corresponds to 64.5% of total sales. By the analysis of the sales composition by region, it turns out that Japan represents the biggest market for Yamaha musical instruments absorbing 26.7% of production, followed by North America (21.0%), Europe (18.1%), China (16.6%), and other regions (17.6%). In addition to that, Yamaha is also involved in a diverse range of other activities, including the management of music schools and the production and sale of music and video software.<sup>161</sup> In conclusion, Yamaha Corporation's products are consumed worldwide and it is far from uncommon for internationally renowned pianists, for instance, to perform on Yamaha grand pianos, and in general for Western music to be performed on Yamaha instruments, *i.e.* Japanese manufactured instruments.

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<sup>161</sup> Yamaha Group Annual Report 2019, <https://www.yamaha.com/en/ir/publications/pdf/an-2019e.pdf>.

What emerges by all these data is the assiduous presence of Western music in Japan, the passion that the Japanese public has for it, the large number of Japanese musicians who enter international competitions and manage to win the highest prizes, and Japanese manufacturing excellence in the field of musical instruments, with Yamaha representing the world's largest piano manufacturing company and whose instruments are played by musicians all over the globe. Having reached this stage, we are now able to respond to the question "Why Japan?". The answer is that this extraordinary vast list of phenomena attesting to the fact that Western-style music has become an integral part of musical life in Japan, and that Japanese musicians have become an integral part of international musical life, represents achievements stretching over not so much more than a mere hundred and forty years, at the beginning of which Western music was still unknown in Japan. Western music was imported in Japan only in the Meiji Era (1868-1912), and the first Western music heard was that performed by the musicians on board the ships of Commodore Perry.<sup>162</sup> Although Perry's diplomacy is nowadays referred to as "gunboat diplomacy", he also used a softer form of diplomacy, which had precisely music as its instrument. Subsequent to that event, it was decided to import Western music as part of the broader reform project enacted by the Meiji oligarchy, and over a relatively short period of time Western-style music has gone from being an imported foreign element to become a major component of Japanese life, being fully assimilated by society. So, ultimately, this is what renders Japan an example of successful musical diplomacy, and consequently an ideal candidate for our analysis. The rest of this third and last chapter will be dedicated to the detailed description of the encounter - which took place in two phases - between Japan and Western music, highlighting the main characteristics of its import during the Meiji Era. A final paragraph will be devoted to the perception of Western music that emerges from the products of Japanese popular culture (*i.e.* manga and anime), which indicates a complete assimilation into Japanese society. Before going into detail and examining the form in which the encounter took place, we think it may be useful to provide the reader with a brief historico-musical background of Japan, so as to better understand the successive dynamics. To do so, we will rely mostly on the research carried out by the following authors: Rosa Caroli & Francesco Gatti, William P. Malm, and Eta Harich-Schneider.

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<sup>162</sup> To be precise, the first Western-style music to arrive in Japan was that brought by Jesuit missionaries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century but following the Tokugawa shogunate's ban on Christianity in 1620 it has practically disappeared.

### *An historico-musical background of Japan*

The pre-history and proto-history of Japan are marked by two periods, namely the Jōmon period and the Yayoi period. The Jōmon period (about B.C. 10,000 - 200) represents the transition phase towards the Neolithic and coincides with the beginning of a ceramic manufacture. Jōmon, in fact, means “cord-marked”, and indicates the signs of rope or straw mats that decorated the surface of much of the ceramics produced during this period. The mythical date of the founding of the Japanese Empire with the ascent of the first Emperor Jinmu - 11 February 660 B.C. - and the introduction of rice-growing around 300 B.C. are placed within the Jōmon period. It was the arrival of rice cultivation that initiated the passage to a new era called Yayoi (B.C. IV-III cent. – A.D. III-IV cent.). The Yayoi period was named after the Tokyo area where the first specimens of a new type of pottery were found which, although decorated in a less elaborate way, was turned on a lathe and produced in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, thus resulting of a higher quality than the Jōmon one. The Yayoi culture reflected a continental influence and is considered a synthesis between the external contribution and the pre-existing elements. This period is characterized by primitive Shintoism, a cult of nature that identified mountains, rivers, waterfalls, trees, rocks and volcanoes as *kami*, and rhythmized the vital phases of production, such as sowing and harvesting. The first mentions of Japan in Chinese written sources date back to the Yayoi period, as well as the sending of a tributary mission from the “land of *wa*” to the Chinese Court in 57 A.D., the spread of *kofun* funerary monuments, the gradual rise of the *uji* (clan) Yamato, and the introduction of the Chinese writing system.<sup>163</sup> From a musical point of view, in Japan there is evidence over a period of nearly two millennia for both continuity and change, with a great deal of experimentation and variety in music-making and a continually changing attitude towards music. Changes in music often turned out to be the logical consequences of political, religious, and social developments; in fact, musical history cannot be isolated, as it forms part of social and political history. Archaeological evidence for musical activity in Japan is found in the Yayoi and *kofun* (tumuli) periods, including whistles, bells of various sizes with indications of their use for rituals and magical purposes, clappers and similar percussion instruments of various type made of earthenware, metal, bamboo, and wood, drums, stringed instruments of two types, a) the East-Asian oblong zither with a varying

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<sup>163</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

number of strings, and b) the lute. We are also aware that dances were performed by men and women, whose profession was indicated by the dress, *i.e.* shrine dancer or court jester, shrine maiden or sorceress. There is evidence of solo dances, dances in pairs, dances combined with song or song and rhythmic percussion. However, to date no trace has been found of pan pipes, flutes, double-reed pipes, or mouth organs, all instruments which were in use many centuries earlier in China and Korea. Particularly surprising is the fact that the flute, one of the oldest instruments of mankind, is not represented; however, this may be incidental, as flutes were made of perishable material.<sup>164</sup> The proto-history ends with a transition period of about 200 years, in which the following events are fixed: the conventional date of the introduction of Buddhism in Japan (552), the reign of Empress Suiko (529-628), the first woman to ascend to the throne, and the Taika edict of 646, which inaugurated a season of reforms.

The actual history of Japan begins with the establishment of the imperial capital in Heijōkyō, today's Nara, in 710, which marked the beginning of the homonymous period. The Nara period (A.D. 710-784) saw the initial struggles to establish a national government and impose a Chinese-style social and intellectual order on the rustic clans, and it is in general characterized by the use of Chinese models in every category of life, including a “*wholehearted embracing of the doctrines on Buddhism and Confucianism*”;<sup>165</sup> even the city of Nara was built in accordance to Chinese geomancy. The “eye-opening” ceremony of the Great Buddha in Tōdai-ji in 752 and the compilation of the oldest Japanese chronicles, the *Kojiki* (712) and the *Nihon shoki* (720) also took place. It is precisely in these first native narrative products that we find information about the places occupied by music in early mythology. The most famous tale is the one that has as its protagonist the sun goddess Amaterasu who, due to the insults received by her brother Susanoo, retired to a cave, leaving the world in darkness. In order to persuade the sun goddess to return, Ama no Uzume placed herself near the entrance of the cave and began to dance half naked, continuing to lose her clothes while dancing. Intrigued by the music, the dance and the laughter of the other gods, Amaterasu decided to go out, thus ending the eclipse of the sun. According to this legend, Ame no Uzume is the patroness of music and dance. In general, the music of the Nara period belongs to the first

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<sup>164</sup> Harich-Schneider, E., *A History of Japanese Music*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973.

<sup>165</sup> Malm, W. P., *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, Kodansha International, 2000, p. 33.

international period in Japanese music history; in fact, the Nara court musicians were all from China or Korean, and the court music, *gagaku*, was of Chinese, Korean, or Indian origin and was played primarily by foreign musicians in its original style. This is also evidenced by the fact that the term *gagaku* is merely a Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese characters used for *yayue* and for *a'ak* in Korea, both referring to ritual music.<sup>166</sup> Contemporaneously, the music of Buddhist ritual became known throughout Japan, influencing the native vocal style. The main feature of the music of the Nara period was, therefore, the importation of foreign musicians of both sacred and secular nature, as neither the native genius seems to have had influence on this music, nor did the native musicians enjoy particular respect.<sup>167</sup>

The following period, Heian (794-1185), which takes its name from the capital of the time, Heian-kyō, the present Kyōtō, was unquestionably very rich culturally, and represents a period of apogee both for the assimilation of Chinese culture and Buddhism, for literary production, and for the development of a very refined aristocratic culture. The favorite courtier was “*the men who could improvise the best poem in Chinese, while the women made use of a phonetic script [hiragana] to produce Japanese literary works of great acumen and vitality*”,<sup>168</sup> and among the literary production of the period are some of the classics and masterpieces of Japanese literature, such as the *Genji monogatari* by Lady Murasaki Shikibu, and the *Ise monogatari*. Many changes occurred at the governmental level, with a weakening of the Emperor’s power accompanied by a gradual rise of the Fujiwara clan. The Fujiwara clan occupied the positions of *sesshō*, *i.e.* regent who took care of imperial affairs in the presence of minor Emperors, and *kanpaku*, advisor to the Emperor. Over the course of the Heian period, the Fujiwara family came to hold all political power, remaining influential in subsequent periods. The Heian period also saw the clash between the Minamoto and the Taira clans narrated in the *Ise monogatari*, which ended with the defeat of the Taira in 1185. It was at that time that the concept of *samurai*, the faithful warrior who gave more importance to loyalty than to his own life emerged. All these dynamics favored the rise to power of the military class (*bushi*), which would dominate Japan until Meiji Restoration (1868). As far as music is concerned, a

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<sup>166</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica, “Japanese music”, <https://www.britannica.com/art/Japanese-music/Predominant-musical-traits>.

<sup>167</sup> Malm, W. P., *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, Kodansha International, 2000, pp. 33-34.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.



host of Chinese instruments and forms were still employed, but the musicians themselves were more often Japanese. Music was taken up by the people of the court with a passion, resulting in a gradual development of distinctly Japanese characteristics. Japanese music almost always contained some poetry; in general, it can be said that the Japanese fine arts were inseparable from literature. While Heian *gagaku* court music came closest to a pure instrumental form - even though the presence of a chorus was rather common - instruments such as the *biwa* lute served as a mere supporting vehicle for poetry and sagas. The principal instruments of this period were the *koto*, the *shō* (a free-reed wind instrument), the *biwa* (a stringed instrument), the *gaku biwa* (a four-stringed plucked lute), flutes, the *shōko* (a small hanging gong), the *tsuri daiko* (a large hanging drum), and the *kakko* (a barrel drum). Regarding purely vocal music, many Buddhist hymns and secular songs were produced, and among the latter some were composed especially for banquets. In sum, the Heian period “represents the heyday of court music and the beginnings of native influence on imported music and instruments”.<sup>169</sup>

The Kamakura period (1185-1333) was inaugurated by the victory of the Genpei war<sup>170</sup> by the coalition led by Minamoto no Yoritomo, who was initially conferred the office of chief of the military police, and later in 1192 was assigned by Emperor Go Toba the office of *sei tai shōgun*, thus becoming the true ruler of Japan.<sup>171</sup> The warrior was now the dominant figure both in the government as well as in battle, and to avoid the maneuvering of the Kyōtō court, the military established a separate headquarters in Kamakura. In this period Buddhism gained popularity, notably among the common people. The warrior’s ethics was imbued with philosophy and was strongly influenced by Zen Buddhism, perhaps because of its austere character that in us Westerners recalls the austerity proper to the Spartan warrior. In terms of music, most traces of the international character of Japanese music had disappeared; court music was in decline, while we witness a growth of theatrical arts aimed at entertaining both the court and the military headquarters. The dances of *dengaku* (literally “music of the rice paddies”) became very popular, and sagas of military glory such as the *Heike monogatari* were accompanied by lute or *biwa*. Buddhist singing became widespread, too, exerting an increasingly strong influence on the secular music of the time, thereby giving rise to a mixture of sacred and

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<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>170</sup> The Genpei War (1180-85) was the civil war between the Taira and Minamoto clans.

<sup>171</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

secular elements that characterize Kamakura music. Overall, it can be concluded that this period experienced an emphasis on vocal and more dramatic music.<sup>172</sup>

The Kamakura period ended with a schism between the Southern and Northern Courts, a fracture between the two branches of the imperial dynasty that was healed in 1392, during the following era. The new period, called Muromachi or Ashikaga (1338-1573), underwent a degeneration of socio-political unity, and the centralized government of the Ashikaga became increasingly fragmented and was eventually replaced by the rule of powerful independent land barons. The warriors who had gained power in the Kamakura era made the fatal mistake of moving to Kyōtō, where they began to lead a life of luxury. The result was that while they were occupied in tea ceremonies or theatrical entertainments especially created to amuse them, the local officials started to acquire neighboring fiefs. The period was hence distinguished by numerous wars and revolts, the impoverishment of the Imperial Court, the luxurious lifestyle of the military class, and the appearance of a merchant class. The most outstanding feature of this period's music is certainly the growth of the theatrical arts, with a rising popularity of public and private performances of dance-dramas and acrobatics, preparing the way for the development of the *noh* drama. On the contrary, court traditional music suffered greatly, while references to folk music can be found, with the record of *kouta* (short ditties). Moreover, the presence of itinerant storytellers who told their stories on the streets, often accompanied only by the beating of a fan, prepared the way for what would become one of the greatest musical forms of Japan, the *jōruri*, "a type of chanted recitative that came to be used as a script in bunraku puppet drama".<sup>173</sup> Moreover, the *shakuhachi* - a simple bamboo flute played by wandering priests - started to be heard. The Muromachi period represented, in short, "*a time of musical potential, a material and psychological buildup for a flood of activities that was soon to burst upon the artistic world in a torrent of color and sound*".<sup>174</sup>

The last years of the Muromachi period coincide with what is called the Azuchi-Momoyama period (1568-1598), which saw the unfolding of a series of military campaigns led by Oda Nobunaga, Japan's first "reunifier", and his associate Toyotomi

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<sup>172</sup> Malm, W. P., *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, Kodansha International, 2000, pp. 36-37.

<sup>173</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica, "Jōruri", <https://www.britannica.com/art/joruri>.

<sup>174</sup> Malm, W. P., *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, Kodansha International, 2000, p. 38.

Hideyoshi, aimed precisely at reunifying the fragments of Japan and recreating a central unity. At that time, Christian missionaries arrived in Japan, and those were warned by Hideyoshi that he was tolerant of all religions, provided that they did not threaten the uneasy security of the state. In this period, we are witnessing the emergence of the *noh* drama and a general improvement in instrument construction, including the diffusion of the *sanshin* (a three-stringed guitar), which was later transformed into the *shamisen* (the long-necked fretless Japanese lute).<sup>175</sup> In addition to that, the level of the art of drum-making was incredibly raised, to the extent that “*a Momoyama drum is prized in Japan much as a Stradivarius violin is in the West*”.<sup>176</sup>

The Edo or Tokugawa period (1603-1867) was inaugurated by Tokugawa Ieyasu's victory at the Battle of Sekigahara (1600) and represents one of the most resolute attempts to maintain the status quo in all world history. While the Imperial Court was relegated to a life of ceremonies, the feudal lords, who were contingent on obedience to the shogun, were relocated as a way to neutralize their power and prevent any conspiracy on their part. During the Edo period, the power of religion was ended through the splitting of the Buddhist sects, and the suppression of the Christian movement. The country thereby moved towards *sakoku*, that is, the voluntary isolation aimed at preserving peace and internal stability under the Tokugawa military dictatorship. In the course of these events a bourgeois art developed, which reached the zenith in the time frame defined as Genroku era (1688-1704), during which the pleasure districts of Tōkyō, Ōsaka and Kyōto became the very center of Japanese life, where merchants and samurai spent their days “*in the blandishments of paid companions, wine, and the distractions of a host of kabuki and puppet theaters*”.<sup>177</sup> The Edo period saw a thriving of traditional arts, and indeed it was at that time that what is considered to be the traditional Japanese music developed, namely the *koto*, the *shakuhachi*, and drama music. The scene was largely dominated by puppet and *kabuki* theaters, while the aristocracy continued to patronize the *noh* theater. This “floating world” continued to exist in its own isolation until 1853, when the black ships of Commodore Perry forced the reopening of the country which would never be the same.

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<sup>175</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica, “Shamisen”, <https://www.britannica.com/art/samisen>.

<sup>176</sup> Malm, W. P., *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, Kodansha International, 2000, p. 39.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

### *The encounter(s) between Japan and Western music*

As previously mentioned, the encounter between Japan and Western music took place in two phases; therefore, it is not correct to refer to an encounter in the singular. The first introduction of Western music occurred between the end of the Muromachi period and the beginning of the Tokugawa era, in particular between 1549 - coinciding with the arrival of Saint Francis Xavier<sup>178</sup> in Kagoshima - and 1638 - the year in which the Shimabara Rebellion ended. The Shimabara Rebellion was an uprising of Japanese Catholics against the government of the Tokugawa Shogunate, which had carried out a strong religious persecution of Catholic Christians; it ended with the massacre of Christians and their defeat. The repression of Christians by the government, combined with the definitive expulsion of Portuguese merchants and missionaries in 1639<sup>179</sup>, led to the disappearance of the musical heritage that these Westerners had brought with them.

Although the blend of Japanese and European music resulting from the arrangement of the liturgy is extremely interesting, we have deliberately decided to overlook this part in order to focus on what interests us most, that is the so-called second encounter, which was undoubtedly much more successful than the first one and according to us represents a remarkable example of musical diplomacy.

The long period of self-isolation (*sakoku*) of Japan came to an end on 7 July, 1853, with the arrival in Edo Bay of the U.S. naval squadron led by Commodore Matthew Perry, who was the first to (re)establish diplomatic relations with Japan, by employing a strategy known as “gunboat diplomacy”. Gunboat diplomacy is defined by James Cable as “*the use or threat of limited naval force, otherwise than as an act of war, in order to secure advantage or to avert loss, either in the furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own state*”.<sup>180</sup> In other words, it is a foreign policy practice which entails demonstrations of military power involving or implying a threat of war if no agreement is reached. And in fact, Perry

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<sup>178</sup> St. Francis Xavier (Navarre, 1506 - Shangchuan, 1552) is the greatest Roma Catholic missionary of modern times who was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in India, the Malay Archipelago, and Japan. Encyclopædia Britannica, “St. Francis Xavier”, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Francis-Xavier>.

<sup>179</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

<sup>180</sup> Cable, J., *Gunboat Diplomacy 1919-1991*, Palgrave Macmillan in association with the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Third Edition, 1994, p. 14.

succeeded in his mission partly because of his imposing fleet of warships, including steam frigates that were renamed “the black ships” and with which he could destroy the Japanese capital by cannon fire. This attitude - characterized by more or less explicit threats - is clearly illustrated by two episodes. The first took place during a diplomatic meeting, during which Commodore Perry informed the *Bakufu* officials of the war he had recently conducted and won in Mexico (1846-1848), by attacking and capturing its capital; the Commodore concluded his story by affirming that circumstances could lead Japan to the same fate as Mexico. On the other hand, the second threat was presented in the form of a gift: among the presents delivered to the Japanese officers, two books were included, precisely “History of the War With Mexico” by Roswell S. Ripley’s and “The War Between the United States and Mexico” by George W. Kendall.<sup>181</sup> We can easily understand from the title of these volumes which intentions Perry wanted to convey, and with no doubt at that time the Japanese understood it, too. The attitude of Perry and his crewmen, defined by many Japanese officers as “*arrogant and discorteous, their actions an outrage*”,<sup>182</sup> was based on a biased perception of the Japanese in favor of the supremacy of the white - but the Anglo-Saxon in particular - race, American exceptionalism, according to which the United States were a rising star ready to take the place of a Europe succumbing to decadence (notion of *translatio imperii*), and the primacy of institutions such as free-market capitalism, Protestant Christianity, and republican governance. The main goal of the mission, *i.e.* to procure a coaling station for an American steam route to China,<sup>183</sup> was linked to the above mentioned racist perceptions, and if initially the agenda in Japan was one of commercial nature, the opportunity to pursue a project of civilization of the “semi-barbarous” Japanese also emerged. In their imperialistic perspective, Perry and his crew adopted a rhetoric that referred to the Japanese as “children”, therefore inferior to Westerners, but with a potential to reach maturity under the guidance of the elder guardian, *i.e.* America.

Although it is undeniable that Perry made use of a form of hard power in diplomatic negotiations with Japan, thus managing to obtain the signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa

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<sup>181</sup> Keith, J. A., Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, pp. 179-188.

<sup>182</sup> Tokugawa Nariaki, “Memorial on the American Demand for a Treaty”, cited in Keith, J. A., Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 200.

<sup>183</sup> Keith, J. A., Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 182.

on March 31, 1854 largely as a result of the demonstration of U.S. military power and strength, it is also true that the majority of scholars fail to analyze what is perhaps the most remarkable element of the expedition, that is, “*its reliance upon a highly symbolic style of cultural diplomacy*”.<sup>184</sup> In fact, Perry employed parades, technological expositions and musical performances, as he was firmly convinced that these were a fundamental component for the success of his mission. Before his departure, he had been advised by the State Department to “*do everything to impress them [the Japanese] with a just sense of the power and greatness of [the United States]*”,<sup>185</sup> and he indisputably implemented what had been suggested to him, by orchestrating impressive ceremonies which symbolized American power. Perry first enacted a strategy of self-isolation by refusing to leave his cabin and meet with the Japanese officials. This tactic was intended to create an aura of respect around his figure; however, his personal policy of seclusion was entirely at odds with his public appearances, which were grandiose, imperious, and pompous. The first official American landing on the Japanese mainland took place on July 14, 1853, and we know from Hawks and Perry’s *Narrative* that “*a diligent attention [was paid] to the minutest and apparently most insignificant details of word and action*”.<sup>186</sup> The element that caught the eye most was the use of African Americans in the course of ceremonial events. In particular, Perry’s bodyguards, placed on either side of the Commodore, were “*tall, well-formed negro, who, armed to the teeth, acted as his personal guard. These black, selected for the occasion, were two of the best looking fellows of their color that the squadron could furnish. All this, of course, was but for effect*”.<sup>187</sup> The message sent out was, of course, that of white supremacy, as the African Americans, despite their darkness, physical strength and weaponry, were subordinate to Perry and his crewmen, so deeply that they could be armed to the teeth without any fear of betrayal. This racial message was also conveyed by the presence of Chinese coolies, who were in charge of carrying Perry’s palanquin in the occasion of the landing at Lew Chew on June 6, 1853. Their role, serving the Westerners, combined with the fact that

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<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 180.

<sup>185</sup> Dobbin, “*Message of the President of the United States*”, 8, cited in Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 189.

<sup>186</sup> Hawks, F.L. and Perry, M. C, *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, Performed in the Years 1852, 1853, and 1854, under the Command of Commodore M. C. Perry, United States Navy, by Order of the Government of the United States*, Mineola, NY, 2000, 238, cited in Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, pp. 189-190.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

they were literally placed below a Westerner, was a clear representation of Western hegemony over the East.

Western cultural superiority was also witnessed by science and technology, and according to Schwartz, “*science may perhaps have gained more than commerce, diplomacy, and religion from this expedition*”.<sup>188</sup> The astonishment of the Japanese at the display of technological instruments was interpreted as another sign of the intellectual superiority of the West. In describing the reactions of the Japanese, once again, the rhetoric of infantilism was used, for example by recounting an episode in which apparently the Japanese were so enchanted by the sight of a pocket watch that they began to imitate its “tick-tock”, as if they were children playing with a toy”. Beyond science and technology, Perry also considered music to be a testament to the primacy of Western civilization and was convinced that it would play an important role in his diplomatic agenda. For this reason, he recruited several military bands for his mission to the Pacific and insisted that his expedition include several bands and performers, for “*the success of his treaty depended upon the success of the entertainment*”.<sup>189</sup> Music was seen as a reflection of the system of thought that had produced it, and Western music was considered the most sophisticated ever composed by man. On the contrary, Asian music was perceived as noise; it was discordant, devoid of harmony, archaic, barbaric, it could only damage Western sensibilities. In short, “*Westerners believed their music symbolized rationality, reason, and superiority; Eastern “noise” signified irrationality, unreason, and inferiority*”.<sup>190</sup> Once again, the West supposed itself to be the elder guardian, and music was another means by which Japanese people could be led towards civilization. The curiosity that the Japanese addressed to Western musical instruments was the same addressed to foreign technologies, but they also found the choir fascinating. Two episodes in particular are recalled in which the Japanese were very impressed by the choir aboard Perry’s ships, first when the Americans arrived in Shimoda, then in Hakodate. Perry’s

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<sup>188</sup> Schwartz, W. L., “Commodore Perry at Okinawa: From the Unpublished Diary of a British Missionary”, *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 51, No. 2, January 1946, p. 273, cited in Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 192.

<sup>189</sup> Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 195.

<sup>190</sup> Moon, K. R., *Yellowface: Creating the Chinese in American Popular Music and Performance, 1850s-1920s*, New Brunswick, NJ, 2005, 5, 10-13, 88, cited in Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 195.

crewmen believed that music could help them promoting Christianity in Japan, and concerning this we mention an episode occurred on July 10, 1853, when the Episcopal liturgy accompanied by a brief sermon was conducted by Chaplain George Jones. According to what Sewall reported, “[T]he hymn... was [Isaac] Watts’ solemn lyric: “Before Jehovah’s awful throne, Ye nations, bow with sacred joy. It was sung to the tune of “Old Hundred” and was led by the full band [...]. The Japanese listened with wonder.”<sup>191</sup> Whether or not the Japanese paid attention to the hymn, that is not certain; however, it sure made an impact. What undoubtedly remained most impressed in the memory of the Japanese was the squadron band, which performed during Perry’s first landing. All the descriptions of the performance agree that the band played with such force that “made the Japanese open their ears”<sup>192</sup>; Sproston wrote that “the bands sounded their martial strains to impress the Japanese with American power [...], America’s audible presence presented a very imposing aspect”, and “their music made an effect upon the minds of the Japanese that the United States was a great nation.”<sup>193</sup> Finally, we would like to point out that the aspect of white racism and imperialism were also present in the musical sphere, for example with the exhibitions of blackface minstrelsy, whose performance was presented also in the eve of the signing ceremony of the Treaty of Kanagawa. The minstrel show presented some ambiguity, as the guests sitting in the front row almost seemed to be part of the spectacle, and Perry and his crewmen at certain times looked like they were laughing along with the minstrels and the audience, while at others they seems to make fun of both. In overall terms, it can therefore be argued that these performances reflected the theme of Anglo-American supremacy.

Now that we have described the second encounter between the Japan and the West, we would like to emphasize two points. *First*, in conducting the diplomatic negotiations between the two countries - the United States of America and Japan - it was assumed that music had a no less important role than other elements for the success of the mission. *Second*, in the course of the second encounter the Japanese came into contact with various forms of Western music, *i.e.* choir, Episcopal liturgy, minstrel’s performances, but with

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<sup>191</sup> Sewall, J. S., *The Logbook of the Captain’s Clerk: Adventures in the China Seas*, Palala Press, 2015, p. 180, cited in Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 197.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>193</sup> Sproston, J. G., *A Private Journal of John Glendy Sproston*, Catalogue of the Anderson Galleries, New York, 1926, 6-7, 3, cited in Keith, J. A., *Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854*, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 198.



no doubt what most left its mark were the grandiose and powerful military band, symbol of a nation's power. The strength of these bands was recognized by the Meiji reformers, who decided that Japan, too, should equip itself with these in its effort to become a modern nation on a par with the Western powers.

### ***Meiji Restoration: the struggle for modernization***

The signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa<sup>194</sup> on March 31, 1854 marked the beginning of the disintegration of the isolationist politics of *saikoku*, projecting Japan towards the *kaikoku*, meaning a progressive, rapid and complete reopening. In the last phase of its existence, the Tokugawa *bakufu* experienced several problems, mainly of economic nature. The financial difficulties were caused by the huge gap between expenditure and income, and the situation was further aggravated by the famines that occurred in the 1780s, leading to food shortages and rising prices. With the idea of alleviating the severe crisis, the *bakufu* cancelled the debts contracted by the daimyō who, in order to maintain a luxury lifestyle, had started to borrow from merchants and increase the imposts on the peasants, creating a widespread discontent. The crystallized society made up of four castes and the *hinin*, an outcast group, and the resulting social immobility, was also a source of malcontent. In this trouble context, the arrival of Western powers acted as a catalyst, as it hastened the occurrence of the national crisis and led to the subsequent Meiji Restoration. The fall of the Tokugawa *bakufu* was caused by the alliance of two major outside *han* (domains), Satsuma and Chōshū, whose leaders challenged the shogunal forces in the open field and defeated them mainly due to two factors, namely the large samurai population and the possession of a modern army and naval forces built after having experienced first-hand the power of Western forces, and in particular the British navy. On November 9, 1867 the *bakufu* officially came to an end with the resignation of the last shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, and power was handed back to the Emperor Meiji (Mutsuhito), who in January 1868 established the Imperial Court in Edo and re-named it Tōkyō, which literally means “Eastern capital”. Although formally the young Emperor

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<sup>194</sup> The treaty provided for the opening of the ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to the supply of ships and the assistance of American shipwrecked sailors, in addition to the sending of a U.S. Consul to Shimoda. In addition to that, it also granted the United Nations the most-favored-nation status and allowed American citizens free movement in certain areas of the open ports. Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006, p. 131.

(he was fifteen years old in 1967) had regained power, he was actually manipulated by some of the leaders of the Satsuma-Chōshū clans, who formed *genrō*, “principal elders”, an extraconstitutional oligarchy that dominated the Japanese government from the promulgation of the Meiji Constitution (1889) to the early 1930s. After the constitution was promulgated, these men became personal counselors to the throne, a position that allowed them virtually to run the bureaucracy.<sup>195</sup> Among them were Itō Hirobumi (Chōshū) and Yamagata Aritomo (Chōshū).<sup>196</sup> The first step in their agenda was to restore and instill in the population a sense of respect and reverence for the Emperor, by implementing a process aimed at identifying him as a “living god”, thus indoctrinating people to be loyal and submissive to the Emperor. Afterwards, the oligarchs began their program of reforms in the political, social, economic, and educational spheres. The motto that sums up their objectives is 富国強兵<sup>197</sup> *fukoku kyōhei*, “rich nation, strong military”, an expression that conveys what was the priority at the time, that is to prevent the nation from succumbing to the fate that other Asian nations had undergone, *i.e.* control by the Western powers.<sup>198</sup> To succeed in this, they realized that it was necessary to adopt Western science and technology, and in fact they sent students abroad to obtain this knowledge. Hence, education became a major tool to bring Japan into the modern age, since it was not possible to create a “rich nation, strong army” without literate soldiers, factory workers, business employees, and government employees. Initially four years of compulsory education were scheduled, which were then increased to six and further extended to nine after the Second World War. The elementary school curriculum was largely based on the Western one, especially American, and the introduction of scientific knowledge was strongly accentuated. The education was also open to girls because they were seen as the mothers of tomorrow, thus future educators of the children. The early pragmatic Western-style education was criticized by the more conservative, who believed that Confucianism should remain at the heart of schooling. The curriculum was then revised, and a greater focus was put on traditional morality and national history, with the

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<sup>195</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica, “Genro”, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/genro>.

<sup>196</sup> Gordon, A., *A Modern History of Japan. From Tokugawa Times to the Present*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003, p. 92.

<sup>197</sup> 富 (=wealth); 国 (=country); 強 (=strong); 兵 (=army). Jisho Online Vocabulary, “富国強兵”, <https://jisho.org/search/富国強兵>.

<sup>198</sup> Hane, M., “Establishment of the Meiji Regime”, *Japan. A Short History*, Oneworld Publications, 2013, p. 69.

aim of inculcating in the students the sentiment of loyalty to the Emperor, patriotism, sense of duty, filial piety, and obedience.

As far as political reforms were concerned, the oligarchs abolished the *han* system, which was replaced by a system of prefectures (forty-six) subordinate to the national government. The former *daimyō* were persuaded to voluntarily return the domains to the state, and in return they were appointed governors. Another major change was the adoption of a constitution, which was promulgated on February 11, 1889. In order to draft it, Itō Hirobumi travelled to Europe to study European constitutions, and decided to take Bismarck's Germany as his model, thus favoring a constitution with a strong monarchy.<sup>199</sup> In 1885 Itō introduced a Western-style cabinet, and a bicameral Diet made up of the House of Peers and House of Representatives was also established. The Emperor was "*the supreme commander of the armed forces and had authority to declare war, make peace and conclude treaties*";<sup>200</sup> he also appointed cabinet members and other government officials. So, basically, the Diet had only one real power, the fiscal one. The oligarchs implemented social reforms, including the abolition of the rigid class system and the adoption of a legal system, specifically the French one. They also established a Western-style police system, but they maintained the traditional concept according to which the main task of that body was the preservation of the order, and not the protection of people's rights. For Japan to become a modern nation with a strong army, a military reform was necessary, and universal conscription was established in 1873, with the aim of creating an army like the Prussian one. Another division of the armed forces was created, the navy, modeled on the example of the British navy. Finally, in order to sustain the expenses arising from the implementation of all these reforms, it was necessary to reform the economy as well, and transform Japan from an agrarian to an industrial economy. In the early Meiji the industries that grew the most were textiles - especially silk industry - and food production, while heavy industry developed later in conjunction with the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). The economic growth was largely fostered by the modernization of transportation and communication systems. The government started the construction of railways, and in 1872 the first Tokyo-Yokohama line was inaugurated; telegraph lines began to be built in 1869, and a postal system was

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<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

established in 1871.<sup>201</sup> It is precisely in this climate of modernization and reform that the introduction of Western music into Japanese society took place.

### ***The importation of Western music in Japan***

To address the issue of the introduction of Western music in Japan, we will rely on the research of two authors, Ury Eppstein and Eta Harich-Schneider. The former in his thesis on the beginnings of Western music in Meiji Era Japan<sup>202</sup> focuses on the pragmatic function of music, considered as a necessary element for modernization, not a form of art, and identifies two different approaches towards Western music in the Early and Late Meiji period. In her manual on the history of Japanese music,<sup>203</sup> Eta Harich-Schneider stresses the complex and strenuous task carried out by the *gakunin*, the court musicians, which consisted in the study of Western music and the effort to adapt it to Japanese music, or rather, to fit Japanese music into the Western musical framework.

According to Eppstein, the beginnings of Western-style music in twentieth century Japan can be traced back in two different spheres, namely the military and the educational.<sup>204</sup> However, before describing how the first importations occurred, he points out two aspects that distinguish Japan in this process and render it unique. *First*, he defines the motivation, *i.e.* “*the national goal of catching up with the West*”,<sup>205</sup> meaning that the policy aiming at the modernization of Japan and the consecutive introduction of Western cultural achievements was not dictated by a genuine admiration for Western cultural values, but it was the result of merely practical considerations: in order to reach the West, it was necessary to acquire Western science and technology, and to better understand them, they extended the study to the philosophy and arts of the West, thus including also music. *Second*, he emphasized that the Japanese case was a modernization without colonization, as Japan was not subject to foreign rule, and therefore did not experiences the pressures suffered, for instance, by India or China. Therefore, it is

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<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>202</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982.

<sup>203</sup> Harich-Schneider, E., *A History of Japanese Music*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973.

<sup>204</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, p. 6.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

possible to speak about a “Westernization by free choice”, which then gave the Japanese a chance to be selective about what to import and what not.

With regard to the importation of military music, he mentions an episode involving the rulers of the Satsuma clan. In 1862 a British subject was killed by Satsuma clansmen, and the following year Kagoshima was shelled in retaliation by a British warship. Besides the stupor in the face of such a naval power - which would lead them to create their own navy - the Satsuma clan was fascinated by the sound of English-style military music emanating from the British warship, to the point that they decided to introduce it in their army. This was of course part of a modernization program, thereby a pragmatic approach was adopted. However, he claims that the first importation took place even before the arrival of Commodore Perry in Japan, and in particular sustains that is linked to *Rangaku*, Dutch studies.<sup>206</sup> Apparently, in 1839 Takashima Shirodayū, who had studied Dutch military science, was given the task to introduce - for the first time - Western-style military training, complete with military march music, which was considered indispensable and included the Western trumpet, transverse flute and a drum. Following the Dutch lines for the organization of a modern navy, one drummer was required among the personnel for one warship, and he had to perform the *Reveille*, “wake up drum” at 5 or 6 a.m., the *Roffel*, when hoisting the flag in the morning and lowering it at the sunset, and the *Taptoe* at 8 p.m., as a signal for the crew to retreat to the sleeping quarters. So, it is no wonder that *Seiyō kōgun kofu*, “Western Military March Drum Score”, published in 1856 is considered to be the first instance of Western music published in Japan, while the first instance of Western-style music being used in actual practice as a part of military training is deemed to be the sending of two shogunate retainers from Edo to Nagasaki in 1864 with the purpose of learning military music from the Dutch.<sup>207</sup> What Eppstein stresses is the particular basic attitude of considering music

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<sup>206</sup> *Rangaku*, (“Dutch learning”), represents the concerted effort by Japanese scholars during the late Tokugawa period (late 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> century) to learn the Dutch language so as to be able to learn Western technology; the term later became synonymous with Western scientific learning in general. With the exception of the Dutch trading post on the island of Deshima in Nagasaki Harbour, Japan remained inaccessible to all European nations for some 150 years after 1639, when the Tokugawa government adopted the policy of *sakoku*. The Dutch language was therefore the only medium by which the Japanese in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century could study European technology. The *rangaku* scholarly tradition heightened Japan’s later, wide-ranging responses to the West in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and *Rangaku* scholars studied European medicine, military science, geography, and politics. Encyclopædia Britannica, “Rangaku”, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/rangaku#ref208627>.

<sup>207</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, pp. 17, 19.

as a utility and not as a form of art, “*a practical means to a desirable and not an end for its own sake*”,<sup>208</sup> and in this case the end was military training.

Moving on the topic of musical developments in the field of education, in 1872 the Ministry of Education instructed that music be included in all primary and middle school. Music instruction was designated as a “regular subject”, and according to the Government Order of Education singing should be part of the elementary school curriculum, while instrumental music became part of the middle school curriculum. Among the available models - Dutch, French, and American -, the American system certainly had a great impact on the Japanese system, both for the success obtained by David Perkins Page’s “Theory and Practice of Teaching”, where he express a pragmatic attitude, advocating music as a useful means for a worthy end, which Japanese educators must have found attractive, and for the special bond that Izawa Shūji - defined by Eppstein as “*the founder and then the Grand Old Man of Western-style music education in Japan*”<sup>209</sup> - had with the United States. Izawa Shūji was sent to the United States by the Ministry of Education with the aim to study teachers’ training in 1874. So, it was by coincidence that he learnt music, as it was part of the school curriculum. However, his learning of Western music was mainly due to his accidental encounter with Luther Whiting Mason, a music teacher of the Boston Public School, who made Izawa’s unhearing ears to hear and the unsinging voice to sound.<sup>210</sup> When Izawa returned to Japan in 1878, he submitted a document, titled “Plan for Launching a Project of Music Investigation regarding School Songs” to the Vice-Minister of Education to formally propose the introduction of music in school education. The “Plan” was accompanied by a “Report to the Authorities”, in which theoretical considerations for regarding music instruction in school as something highly recommendable were exposed, and in particular direct advantageous and indirect effects of music education were discussed. According to the “Report”, music was able to exercise psychological and physiological benefices on the students; in particular its direct advantages included the “*refresh[ing] of the mind of schoolchildren, provid[ing] relaxation from the efforts of hard study, strengthen[ing] the lungs, promot[ing] the health, clear[ing] the voice, correct[ing] the pronunciation, improv[ing] the hearing, sharpen[ing] the thinking, pleas[ing] the hearth well and form[ing] a good character*”,

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<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

and the indirect benefits functioning with regard to society were “*its capacity for providing recreation profitable for society, for turning it naturally toward the good and removing it from evil, for the advance of society in civil manners, for elating the people, for praising royal virtue and for the enjoyment of peace*”.<sup>211</sup> In order to establish the course of singing a teacher had to be appointed, and Izawa recommended the invitation of a foreign expert with knowledge of the science of the Western music, who would “*assimilate [Japanese] music with theirs and compile a good Japanese collection of songs and work toward the establishment of the national music*”.<sup>212</sup> According to him “none [was] better than Mr. Mason”, and on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1879, Mason signed the contract, thus officially becoming a foreign advisor in charge to introduce Western classical music into the Japanese educational curriculum. In the meantime, a positive response from the Vice-Minister also arrived, and the Music Investigation Committee was established. Izawa worked closely with Mason, and the result was the “Shōgaku Shōka-shū Shonen”, the first school songbook published by the Music Investigation Committee in 1881. However, a fracture emerged between the two, which led to the end of Mason’s stay in Japan and his return to the United States. This rupture was due to a rethinking on the part of Izawa, who had initially embraced Western music with enthusiasm and had favored its indiscriminate introduction, criticizing traditional Japanese music to the extent of stating that “*in foreign relations it damage[d] the prestige of the country*”.<sup>213</sup> Nevertheless, Izawa’s positions on the matter changed, and he pronounced himself in favor of a “*compromise between both European and oriental music*”.<sup>214</sup> Izawa’s dilemma concerned *gagaku*, the court music, as he wanted to exempt it from the wholesale rejection of traditional Japanese music, and to succeed in his intent gave rise to an interesting - as well as bizarre - theory. Izawa wrote that *gagaku* was to be traced back not only to Korean and Chinese, but also Indian origins. The reason for doing this is that Hindoo origin was considered likewise the source of European music. Therefore, He stated that *gagaku* and the highly respected European music had the same ancestor, and

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<sup>211</sup> Megata Tanetarō & Izawa Shūji, *Jōshinsho*, “Report to the Authorities, 1878, cited in Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, pp. 37-38.

<sup>212</sup> Megata T., “*Commentary*”, 1878, cited in Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, pp. 41-45.

<sup>213</sup> Izawa, S., *Zokkyoku kairyō-no koto*, “Improvement of Popular Music”, 1883, cited in Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, pp. 86-87.

<sup>214</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, p. 68.

this was his argument in favor of the rehabilitation of *gagaku*. Later on, he decided to save other forms of Japanese music as well, *i.e.* Noh theatre music, *biwa* music, *Nagauta*,<sup>215</sup> and *koto* music. On the contrary, he continued to despise *Ha-uta* and *Ko-uta*. *Ha-uta* and *Ko-uta*, literally “little songs”, are compositions which appeared during the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and were popular throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century and even later. They are important not only as a popular form of art song, but also as the source of much instrumental music which developed later.<sup>216</sup> The reason behind Izawa’s contempt is that these “little songs” were associated with the pleasure districts, and hence were approached with snobbishness and a moralistic reticence regarding the erotic implications of the texts.<sup>217</sup>

In general, one can observe a certain discordance between what Izawa said and what he did. Despite all his statements about the need to create a compromise between Western and Japanese music, he never achieved a real implementation of his theories. This fact is highlighted by Eppstein’s analysis of the three songbooks published by Izawa, as he found out that the great majority of the songs are from Western sources and are in Western tonality. His attempt to merge Western music with *gagaku* was of little success, most likely because *gagaku*, being an aristocratic music, was no more alien to the Japanese than Western music. The Izawa’s so coveted - at least in words – compromise was finally put into practice by Tamura Torazō, the originator of *Genbun’itchi shōka*, which called for a simplification of Japanese language, mainly through the unification of spoken and written Japanese. During 1900-1902 Tamura published ten volumes of songs titled *Kyōka tekiyō yōnen shōka*. Not only were Tamura’s songs made up of simple texts related to the children’s own experiences, but they were also composed by building characteristic Japanese tonal units into the framework of European tonality, thus constituting a first example of balance between Western music and Japanese musical tradition.

Eta Harich-Scheider confirms that the first Western music to arouse Japanese interest and be eagerly demanded was military music. She first mentions the military academy in

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<sup>215</sup> Nagauta (“long song”), is the basic lyric musical accompaniment of Japanese Kabuki and classical dances (*buyō*). The genre is found in the Kabuki plays by the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. Encyclopædia Britannica, “Nagauta”, <https://www.britannica.com/art/nagauta>.

<sup>216</sup> Cunningham, E., The Japanese “Ko-uta” and “Ha-uta”: The “Little Songs” of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, January 1948, Oxford University Press, pp. 68-83.

<sup>217</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982, pp. 92-93.



Nagasaki, which had tried to form a music band in Dutch style, and then described the occasions in which the Japanese came into contact with Western music, presenting two examples related to the diplomatic sphere. The first concerns the embassy that the kingdom of Prussia had established to the *Bakufu* in Edo in 1860, and in particular the military march that accompanied the arrival of Count Eulenburg, the first Ambassador. The second episode has as protagonist the daimyō of Fukui, who in 1866 approached the French embassy with the request of hiring a French officer to teach French military music to the band of his private army.

Harich-Schneider tells us that the first to confront with Western music immediately after the Restoration were the *gakunin*, the court musicians, who were entrusted with a double task, *i.e.* to repolish their traditional music and to take up the study of Western music. The music in the repertory of *gagaku* was originally imported from China and Korea as a natural human development, and the situation with respect to European music was the same. It was established Western music was to be introduced not only in the army and navy, but also at court ceremonies and banquets. On November 3, 1876, on the occasion of the Emperor's birthday, the court musicians offered a concert whose program included both Japanese music in classical style and the newly acquired Western music, "*the first standing for Imperial prestige and unbroken tradition, the second for progress and a happy future in free competition with the Western world*".<sup>218</sup> The concert obtained great success, and it was decided that from now on every Emperor's birthday should be celebrated by a concert in Western style. The difficulties faced by the *gakunin*, their "*strenuous effort made to blend two alien musical traditions, and [...] the transition from awkward first attempts to final acceptance of Western forms*"<sup>219</sup> were revealed by the numerous attempts made to arrange *Kimi ga Yo*, the Japan's national anthem, whose final version was the result of teamwork between the German Franz Eckert, teacher of the Satsuma army since 1880, and the *gakunin*, although it was ascribed solely to Hayashi Hiromori.

An interesting aspect covered by Harich-Schneider's research is constituted by the different Western and Eastern attitudes to music and teaching methods. The author makes

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<sup>218</sup> Harich-Schneider, E., "The Re-introduction of Western Music", *A History of Japanese Music*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973, pp. 536-537.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 538.

a comparison between the acceptance of Chinese culture at the beginning of Japanese history and the acceptance of Western culture after the Meiji Restoration. In the first case the acceptance was made by the Japanese ruling class under favorable conditions, and it was *in toto*, including the Buddhist religion, Chinese thought and philosophy, Chinese writing system, Chinese arts and crafts. On the contrary, Western cultural products were “*abruptly forced upon a highly developed country with its own strong and deeply rooted concepts of philosophy and the arts*”.<sup>220</sup> What according to the author represents the most radical difference between the Western and the Eastern approach to the creative act as such is the fact that “*the West believes in the personality*”, while “*the East believes in school*”.<sup>221</sup> The author explains that the Confucian teaching method is based on imitation, therefore the teacher sets the example with great authority and expects obedience, fidelity, and attention in every way from the disciple.<sup>222</sup> The Western teaching method, on the other hand, is based on an internalization of the message and the subsequent personal reworking; the teacher has the task to provide his student with the principles and “*expects [him] to develop these principles in an individual manner in his own, independent, artistic utterance*”.<sup>223</sup> These basic differences gave rise on the one hand to the frustration of Western music teachers, who were exasperated by Japanese mimicry, and on the other hand to the disappointment of Japanese students in the face of such fickleness in a teacher.

To summarize, the first Western music imported in Japan was military music, with which the Japanese came into contact through real warfare, *i.e.* the shelling of Kagoshima by a British warship in 1863, or through diplomacy, *i.e.* contacts with the Prussian and French Embassies. The used approach was a pragmatic one, which saw music merely as a means to modernize the army and society on a larger scale, without considering its hedonistic aspect at all. Military marches were the first form of Western music to be imported, followed by the introduction of Western-style songbooks printed specifically for musical education in primary and middle schools. The import of Western music was considered as a matter of great importance, because it was closely linked to the prestige of the nation: if Japan wanted to reach the Western power, it necessarily had to equip itself - *inter alia* - with a “civilized” music system. Although initially this deliberate

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<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 545-546.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 547.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 548.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*

adoption of a music system so distant from its own was perceived by the Japanese as something alien, in a later stage, partly due to the work of adaptation and “compromise” carried out by the *gakunin* and figures like Tamura Torazō, this perception of extraneousness was loosened, until a complete assimilation of Western music within Japanese society was reached.

### ***Western music in Japanese pop culture***

The evidence of the assimilation of Western music within Japanese society is furnished by the fact that it is present in, and in certain cases has inspired some local artistic products, and in particular Japanese popular culture. Japanese pop(ular) culture consists in “*music, TV, cinema, books, etc. that are popular and enjoyed by ordinary people, rather than experts or very educated people*”,<sup>224</sup> and in the singular case of Japan it includes Japanese cinema, cuisine, television programs, video games, music, manga and anime. In this final paragraph we are going to focus on the last two genres.

The term *manga* (漫画)<sup>225</sup> is currently used to denote all comic art in Japan, but the original meaning, based on the Chinese word *manhua*, was “impromptu sketches”.<sup>226</sup> The word “manga” was popularized by Katsushika Hokusai, who in 1814 published the first of a whole series of popular volumes of caricatures and studies from everyday life under the name of *Hokusai Manga*. These volumes contained many subjects - humans as well as animals - in varying poses, such as people engaged in hunting, farming, sports and games, but also figures drawn from fantasy, *i.e.* demons, gods, and ghosts. However, Hokusai’s manga were aimed at promoting his style of drawing and attracting students, without telling any story. The word “manga” was associated to storytelling with pictures only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, although the concept had already existed in Japan for centuries. The earliest popular printed graphic narratives in Japan originated from the caricature and erotic prints which were collected and sold as sets during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the first print series that told an original story was the tale of *The Elegant and Horny*

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<sup>224</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, meaning of *pop culture* in English, Cambridge Dictionary Online, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/it/dizionario/inglese/pop-culture>.

<sup>225</sup> 漫(=cartoon); 画(=picture). Jisho Online Vocabulary, “漫画”, <https://jisho.org/search/漫画>.

<sup>226</sup> Petersen, R. S., “Graphic Narratives in Japan”, *Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels. A History of Graphic Narratives*, Praeger, 2011, p. 41.

*Maneemon* by Suzuki Harunobu, appeared between 1768 and 1770.<sup>227</sup> In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century popular narrative art evolved, the original stories became longer and for an educated audience, published in multivolume series with closely linked sequential actions. There were the *kibyoshi*, “yellow books”, so called because of their garish yellow covers, and Santō Kyōden is considered to be the most famous author-illustrator. The similarities between *kibyoshi* and modern comic book are surprising; both are mass-produced popular serial publications containing original stories which included caricature, romantic adventure, and satire. All was accompanied by written narration, dialogue and sound effect. The only element which is not comparable is the sequential relationship between the pictures, as in the past one picture per page was typically used. The invention of manga as we know them dates back to the Meiji period, an era of turmoil and transformation, which saw the merging of Old-World aesthetics and Western-style caricature and satirical prints. The first to bring comics ashore was Charles Wirgman, who began the self-production of *Japan Punch*, whose humor focused on the many weird and ironic ways Japan was adapting to modern Western culture, thus establishing a cartoon genre in Japan. In 1874 *Eshimbun Nipponchi* (“Land of Japan”) was published by the artist Kawanabe Kyōsai and the novelist Kanagaki Ronbun and constitutes the first Japanese comic magazine. Another foreigner who influenced the early Japanese comic industry was George Bigot, who in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century went to Japan to study art and worked as a cartoonist at *Marumaru Chimbun*, a political comic magazine. It was in the 1920s when comics in Japan started to be called “manga”, which until after World War II was wholly associated with funny children’s stories, being affected by American influence. In 1957 a new term was coined by the artist Yoshihiro Tatsumi, *gekiga* (“dramatic pictures”), to indicate the world of more mature adventure themes. The decisive turning point of this genre occurred with Osamu Tezuka (1928-1989), who earned the moniker of “God of Manga”. Tezuka created a manga that owed more to film animation than to book illustration, by experimenting with visual storytelling that deemphasized words and employed gesture and composition to create vivid dramas; his signature style introduced the “luminous anglo eyes”, which remain the notorious hallmark of manga today.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

Nowadays manga represent one of the leading sectors in the Japanese publishing industry and are exported and translated all over the world. Manga, along with anime - Japanese style of motion-picture animation, characterized by highly stylized, colorful art, futuristic settings, violence, and sexuality, often based on a pre-existing manga<sup>229</sup> - are the most famous products of Japanese pop culture. Manga are divided into different categories according to age and sex of readers; the main categories are *kodomo* (written for children under 10 years, with very simple plots and clear and clean drawing), *shōnen* (addressed to an adolescent male audience of thirteen to eighteen years old, the preponderant element is action, often inserted in a context of fantasy or sport), *shōjo* (these manga are the female equivalent of the *shōnen*, the dominant element here is the psychological-loving one, the stories are usually set in schools), *seinen* (addressed to a mature - not necessarily male - audience, the action continued to be a dominant element, but it is instrumental to the theme of the story and very rarely an end in itself), *jōsei* (the protagonists are young women, and here the adolescent love leaves room for the problems of real everyday life, *i.e.* wedding, family, work, children), *shōnen-ai* (they treat homosexual male love, the sensual element is present only in a very platonic and muffled form), *yaoi* (they treat male love in terms of its physical component, with explicit scenes of intimacy between the protagonists), *shōjo-ai* (these manga are the exact equivalent of *shōnen-ai*, but starring young female lovers), *yuri* (they are the female equivalent of *yaoi*), and *hentai* (pornographic manga). There is also a literary classification of manga, based on the subject of the plot; the main categories are *cyberpunk mecha* (manga with robots), *spokon* (manga about sport), *romakome* (romantic comedies), *aniparo* (comic manga and parodies), *gekiga* (particularly violent manga), *meitantei* (detective manga), and *suriraa* (psychological-thriller manga).

Within this large variety, there are also manga which revolve around the world of Western classical music. These manga focus on the appreciation of the art form or on classical musicians themselves, whether they are amateurs or professionals, and they may blend well with other genres such as romance. The most striking examples are *Nodame Cantabile*, *Shigatsu wa kimi no uso* (“Your Lie in April”), and *Kin’iro no Chord* (“The Golden Chord”). *Nodame Cantabile* is a manga - which was made into an anime and a live action - that describes the relationship between two aspiring classical musicians,

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<sup>229</sup> Online Dictionary.com, meaning of anime, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/anime>.

Noda Megumi “Nodame” and Chiaki Shin’ichi, as university students and after their graduation. Chiaki is a musical genius, he dreams of studying in Europe and becoming a conductor. Nodame, on the contrary, is a shabby girl, incredibly messy and a bit dumb - the exact opposite of Chiaki - but with a really extraordinary talent for piano. It is thanks to her that Chiaki will learn that the important thing about music is to be able to convey emotions, and with these new intentions he will continue to pursue his dream. The topic of the series can be easily deduced from the title: “*Cantabile*” refers in fact to the second movement - *Adagio Cantabile* - of Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor, Op. 13, commonly known as *Sonata Pathétique*. The title “Your Lie in April”, on the contrary, reveals very little, but it is still centered on Western classical music. The protagonist of this manga is Kōsei Arima, a child piano prodigy who used to be taught music by his strict mother. After the latter’s death he suffers such a psychological trauma that during a performance he becomes unable to hear the sound of its own piano. As a result, he can no longer play the piano, and thus his world becomes monotonous and colorless. Eventually, he will be rescued by the encounter with the violinist Kaori Miyazono, a free spirit whose playing style reflects her personality, who helps the protagonist to re-enter the world of music, and at the same time leads away from the rigid style to which he was accustomed. “The Golden Chord” also revolves around the world of music, and tells the story of the student Hino Kahoko who, in extraordinary circumstances, receives from a music leprechaun a magic violin whose peculiarity lies in the last golden string (hence the title): whoever is able to play it beautifully, even if one completely lacks musical training. This is the starting point for the adventures of Kahoko, who will begin to understand the beauty of being able to express one’s feelings through music. In all three cases the emotional aspect of music is emphasized; music cannot be mechanical, it is not a mere display of technical virtuosism, but becomes a means to express one’s sentiments.

A more or less explicit trace of Western music can be found in the animation films produces by Studio Ghibli, a founded in Japan in 1985 by the famous director Miyazaki Hayao together with his colleague Takahata Isao. The studio’s *anime* are known and appreciated all over the world, they have being acclaimed by critics and have received many awards. *Spirited Away* won the Golden Bear for Best Film at the Berlin Film Festival in 2002 (it was the first animation film to compete at the Berlin’s Festival and the first Japanese film to win the Golden Bear), and later it received the Academy Award for Best Animation Film; *Howl’s Moving Castle* won the Osella for Best Technical

Contribution at the Venice Film Festival in 2005; *Porco Rosso* and *PomPoko* won Best Film at the Chicago International Children's Film Festival in 1988. The animation films produced by Studio Ghibli have a common denominator, that is, the soundtracks composed by Hisaishi Jō.<sup>230</sup> Hisaishi's compositions are memorable as they tell stories, creating an empathic understanding of characters' emotions. His composition style, made of melodic, polystylistic scores, is influenced by Western classical, Japanese classical, and electropop-minimalism.<sup>231</sup> Whereas in the case of Hisaishi's orchestral music the reference to Western music is more subtle, in other cases it is much more evident, as in the film "*Whisper of the Heart*", which narrates the story of two young people, Shizuku and Seiji, who both have a dream, respectively to become a novelist and to perfecting himself in playing and building violins. A recurring element is represented by the various attempts to adapt John Denver's song *Take Me Home, Country Roads* by Shizuku, who translates it to Japanese for her school's chorus club.

In the previous paragraph we explored the features of the importation of Western music in Japan, and we could observe that it was a free and pragmatic choice made by the Meiji oligarch with the wider perspective of building a rich nation with a strong army, so as to catch up with the Western powers. If we look at the artistic-cultural phenomena developed in the following century, we can see how Western music - and classical music in particular - began to appear in Japanese creations, especially in those belonging to the world of popular culture, such as *manga* and *anime*. We can therefore affirm that Western music has been completely assimilated by society to the point of pervading even the new Japanese artistic expressions. It is precisely for this peculiarity, *i.e.* the assimilation of the foreign model (Western music) following its importation for reasons related to the modernization of the country, which was aimed at obtaining international recognition and the revision of the unequal treaties - therefore for foreign policy and diplomatic reasons - that we considered it appropriate to present the case of Japan as a successful example of musical diplomacy.

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<sup>230</sup> Studio Ghibli, <http://www.studioghibli.it>.

<sup>231</sup> Slattery, J., "Orchestrating the Dream Worlds of Studio Ghibli: A Short Flight Through the Music of Joe Hisaishi", *Bachtrack*, 23 May 2017, <https://bachtrack.com/feature-joe-hisaishi-film-game-music-month-may-2017>.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to demonstrate that music is a valid tool of cultural diplomacy. We therefore found it appropriate to begin by defining cultural diplomacy, starting with an historico-etymological analysis of the two terms “diplomacy” and “culture”. We have then defined cultural diplomacy as “*a course of actions, which are based on and utilize 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*”, and after exposing the origins of modern cultural diplomacy we presented a brief history of cultural relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. In order to better grasp the meaning and role of cultural diplomacy, we underlined the differences between the latter and public diplomacy and provided some examples of its implementation. We then highlighted the fact that cultural diplomacy is a form of soft power, which is rooted in history, and in fact we find traces of it already in the tributary system of Imperial China.

In *Chapter II* we introduced the theme of music, starting with the theories concerning its origins. By the analysis of the function of music in ancient societies, we found that whereas the prehistoric man conceived music as an activity closely related to the practical needs of existence, more complex societies began to systematically organize and order music, which was considered to be of divine origins and occupied an important role during religious rituals, besides being a form of entertainment for the dominant classes. Music began to be linked to philosophy, astrology and mathematics; the Greeks laid the foundations of modern harmony and recognized the educational potential of music. The Chinese, on the other hand, put musical sounds in relation to the order of the stars and the universe, giving rise to the cosmogonic and philosophical conception of musical language. At the end of the chapter we were able to affirm that not only music not belongs to all men, as every society has produced its own musical tradition, but it also involves the whole Creation, from the natural elements to the animals. Music is, therefore, a natural language, which has the capacity to reach anyone and to be understood universally, thus it is a universal language. It is precisely its ability to overcome barriers by building a bridge between different cultures and ideas that renders it a powerful means of communication, and consequently a suitable instrument of cultural diplomacy. We have



then provided the reader with some practical examples of musical diplomacy from different eras and historical contexts, *i.e.* the foreign relations between Imperial China and Korea in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the role of trumpet music in the 17<sup>th</sup> central Europe, the musical diplomacy between France and Siam in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, the British Embassy to China in 1792-1794, the cultural (musical) propaganda initiated by the U.S. State Department to strengthen the relationship with Latin America in the 1940s, and the musical relations between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War period. In the above-mentioned examples music has proved to be an instrument capable of influencing the outcome of diplomatic negotiations, both in a positive and negative sense.

We devoted the last chapter to the presentation of the case of the introduction of Western music in Japan, which we believe to be of particular importance in relation to musical diplomacy, and in order to explain why we proceeded by presenting the country, whose main geopolitical factor is particularism, and we tried to offer the reader a taste of Japanese aesthetics through the words of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. After briefly comparing the Japanese, Russian and Turkish styles of modernization, we explained the reason why we chose to analyze the case of Japan, that is, the presence of an extraordinary vast list of phenomena attesting to the fact that Western-style music has become an integral part of musical life in Japan, and that Japanese musicians have become an integral part of international musical life. This represents achievements stretching over not so much more than a mere hundred and forty years, since Western music was imported in Japan only in the Meiji Era (1868-1912), and the first Western music heard was that performed by the musicians on board the ships of Commodore Perry. We continued by providing the reader with a brief historico-musical background of Japan, so as to better understand the later developments. We described the encounters between Japan and Western music, focusing on the second one which took place in 1953 with the arrival in Edo Bay of the U.S. naval squadron led by Commodore Matthew Perry. Although Perry is nowadays associated the gunboat diplomacy, during his expedition to Japan he also made extensive use of cultural diplomacy, including music. The introduction of Western music started in the years immediately preceding the Meiji Restoration (1868) and was carried on with great enthusiasm in the wave of modernization. Initially, the oligarchs focused on the pragmatic function of music, considered as a necessary element to achieve “*the national goal of catching up with the West*”, and not as a form of art. The beginnings of Western-style

music in twentieth century Japan can be traced back in two different spheres, namely the military and the educational, and in the case of Japan it is appropriate to talk about a “Westernization by free choice”. Great efforts were needed to harmonize Western music with the traditional one, and whereas at first Western music was imported indiscriminately, at a later stage an attempt was made to create a compromise between the two, thus rehabilitating certain genres of traditional Japanese music. The result of this process of finding a compromise eventually ended in the assimilation of Western music within Japanese society, and the evidence of this is furnished by the fact that it is present in, and in certain cases has inspired some local artistic products, and in particular Japanese popular culture. This peculiarity, *i.e.* the assimilation of the foreign model (Western music) following its importation for reasons related to the modernization of the country, which was aimed at obtaining international recognition and the revision of the unequal treaties - therefore for foreign policy and diplomatic reasons – is precisely the reason why we considered it appropriate to present the case of Japan as a successful example of musical diplomacy.

To conclude, music is one of the many areas of cultural diplomacy and given the universality of its language and the role it has played and continues to play in diplomatic negotiations, we hope having convinced the reader that music is a valuable instrument of cultural diplomacy.

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Music as cultural diplomacy.  
The case of the introduction of Western  
music in Meiji Era Japan  
*(Executive Summary)*

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CANDIDATE

Academic Year 2019/2020

## INTRODUCTION

The idea to develop this thesis originated from a great passion for music combined with that for the Eastern Asian world, and in particular for the Land of the Rising Sun. A musical education that began at an early age and a Bachelor's degree in Japanese Studies, combined with a Master course in International Relations and an internship at the Cultural Office of the Italian Embassy in Tokyo led us to ask ourselves a question: *is music a valid tool of cultural diplomacy?* In order to answer this question, we decided to structure our research into three chapters, which respectively focus on cultural diplomacy, music, and Japan.

## CHAPTER I. DEFINING CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

### *Cultural diplomacy: an historico-etymological analysis*

Providing a definition of a word or a concept is a process which entails a deep understanding of the “*thing*”. Our classical education taught us that if we wish to grasp the significance of anything, there is no better way than to go find its roots. It is with this in mind that we consider it appropriate to present an historico-etymological analysis of the words *diplomacy* and *culture* before giving any definition of “cultural diplomacy”. *Diplomacy* is “the management of the relationships between countries”,<sup>230</sup> and is derived from the French “*diplomatie*”, indicating the art of dealing with state affairs at the international level. Diplomacy is an old art, as it is attested by the existence of the Fetiales, special priests who had to manage foreign affairs and treaties in Ancient Rome. The French word *diplomatie* derives from the Latin word “*diploma*”,<sup>231</sup> which literally means “*written document folded in two*”<sup>232</sup>, and indicated the letter of the prince, senate or republican magistrate, folded in two, containing the confirmation of rights or concessions. *Diploma* in turn comes from the Greek word *δίπλωμα, τος, τὸ*, “folded written”, derived from the verb *διπλῶω* “to double”.<sup>233</sup> *Culture* is a term of Latin origin, which comes from

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<sup>230</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, meaning of *diplomacy* in English, Cambridge Dictionary Online <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/diplomacy>

<sup>231</sup> *Diplōma* -ātis (pl. -i). *Vocabolario della Lingua Latina Castiglioni-Mariotti*, voce “*diplōma*”, Quarta Edizione a cura di Piergiorgio Parroni, 2009, Loescher Editore, p. 368.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> *Vocabolario Greco Italiano*, Lorenzo Rocci, voci “*δίπλωμα*”, “*διπλῶω*”, Quarantunesima Edizione, Società Editrice Dante Alighieri, 2008, p. 493.

the verb *colĕre*,<sup>234</sup> literally “to farm”, but its meaning has expanded and extended to all the activities and situations that required assiduous care, from the “care” towards the gods to the cultivation of human beings and their education. From this last meaning derived the value of culture in its modern sense: the complex of knowledge and traditions that people consider fundamental and worthy of being transmitted to subsequent generations.

### ***Cultural diplomacy: definition and history***

Cultural diplomacy is “a course of actions, which are based on and utilize 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”.<sup>235</sup> Explorers, travelers, traders, teachers and artists can be all considered living examples of early “cultural diplomats”, and among them the figure of Marco Polo undoubtedly stands out. An example of cultural diplomacy is represented by trade routes, which facilitated the interaction of peoples, the exchange of language, religion, ideas, arts and societal structures. The most remarkable example is the *Silk Road*, named after the most popular good traded, silk, which crossed all of Asia and leading to Byzantium, linking the regions of the ancient world in commerce between B.C. 130 and A.D. 1453.

### ***The origins of modern cultural diplomacy***

According to Pajtinka, the origins of modern cultural diplomacy are to be found at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in parallel to the establishment of the first specialized cultural-diplomatic institutions. The very first example is the of *Alliance Française*, a non-governmental organization founded in 1883 to promote French language abroad; while first national diplomatic bodies specialized in cultural diplomacy date back to the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, i.e. *Directorate General for Cultural Affair* (DGCA), the *British Council*, and the *Division of Cultural Relations*.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> *cōlo*, is, *cōlūi*, *cultum*, *ĕre*, 3 tr. “to farm”, “to cultivate”, “to take care”, and “to worship the gods”. *Vocabolario della Lingua Latina Castiglioni-Mariotti*, voce “*cōlo*”, Quarta Edizione a cura di Piergiorgio Parroni, 2009, Loescher Editore, p. 221.

<sup>235</sup> ICD - *Institute for Cultural Diplomacy*, definition of Cultural Diplomacy. <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/index.php?en>

<sup>236</sup> Pajtinka, E., “Cultural Diplomacy in the Theory and Practice of Contemporary International Relations”, in *Politické vedy*, December 2014.

## ***Cultural relations between the United States and the Soviet Union***

The emerging of the Cold War had a huge impact on the development of cultural-diplomatic activities. Ideology played a key role, and its propagation was one of the principal methods of conduct. Cultural relations between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. have developed discontinuously; they increased during WWII in order to promote the Grand Alliance, but as soon as the urgency of victory over Nazism disappeared, Stalin revoked all those cultural concessions to control foreign influences. The critical point was reached in the early 1950s, when the growing McCarthyism resulted in a rejection in principle of cultural relations. The first “diplomatic act”<sup>237</sup> is embodied by the visit to the U.S.S.R. of the *Comédie Française* in 1954, followed by the performance of “*Porgy and Bess*” in 1955. A concrete step forward was the first U.S.-Soviet accord of the Cold War, the “Agreement on Exchanges in Cultural, Technical and Educational Fields” (known as the Lacy-Zarubin agreement) signed in 1958.

## ***Cultural diplomacy ≠ Public diplomacy***

Cultural diplomacy is associated with public diplomacy, but they cannot be equated. The confusion between the two terms stems from the fact that usually most of the activities carried out within the framework of cultural diplomacy is focused on the public abroad, and thus can be regarded as a part of public diplomacy. However, they do not represent the same concept for two reasons, 1) some activities fall within the scope of cultural diplomacy but are not carried out in relation to the public abroad; 2) public diplomacy can include activities which belong to the framework of cultural diplomacy, but also others within other fields of diplomacy.

## ***Cultural diplomacy and its implementation***

Cultural diplomacy involves the implementation of various activities, which are performed whether by diplomatic or non-diplomatic subjects in cooperation with the diplomatic bodies. Pajtinka has identified five main activities, which are “*assisting cultural subjects in the dissemination of national culture and cultural identity, promoting dissemination of the national language of the sending state in the receiving state,*

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<sup>237</sup> Khrushchev, N., *Crises and rockets: a view from within in two volumes*, Moscow, 1994, I:54.

*promoting and explaining cultural values of the sending state in the receiving state, negotiating international treaties on cultural cooperation and, finally, supporting and keeping up contacts with expatriate communities in the receiving state”.*<sup>238</sup>

### ***Cultural diplomacy as a form of soft power***

In a definition provided by the UNESCO, cultural diplomacy is “*a form of soft power*”.<sup>239</sup> The term “soft power” was coined by Joseph Nye, and refers to a nation’s ability to create consensus through attraction and persuasion, rather than coercion, and rests on three resources: culture, political values, and foreign policies.<sup>240</sup> If a country has developed a culture rich in universal values, and it develops policies which promote values and interests shared by the others, the result is an increase in the probability of obtaining the desired outcomes. Already in ancient times a form of soft diplomacy was practiced by Chinese civilization, which spread throughout the nearby countries, *i.e.* the Korean peninsula, the Japanese archipelago and Vietnam, which constitute the “Sinic world”, sharing common socio-political institutions, values systems, philosophical and religious doctrines originating from China. This world was organized according to the so-called tributary system articulated through a network of hierarchical relationship regulating the contacts between China and the external populations.

## **CHAPTER II. MUSIC: A COSMIC LANGUAGE**

### ***The origins of music***

The term “music” derives from the Latin word *musica*, which in turn comes from the Ancient Greek μουσική.<sup>241</sup> In the ancient and primitive sense, music was not a particular science, but indicated every science and arts with the capacity to awaken the idea of something pleasant and orderly. From a historical and anthropological point of view,

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<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 103-106.

<sup>239</sup> UNESCO - *The Soft Power of Culture*, Culture Sector Knowledge Management, info sheet.

<sup>240</sup> Nye, J. S. Jr., “Public Diplomacy and Soft Power”, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616, *Public Diplomacy in a Changing World*, March 2008, Sage Publications, Inc. in association with the American Academy of Political and Social Science, pp. 94-109.

<sup>241</sup> *Vocabolario Greco Italiano*, Lorenzo Rocci, voce “μουσικός, ή, όν”, Quarantunesima Edizione, Società Editrice Dante Alighieri, 2008, p. 1255.



music represents a form of cultural expression normally integrated with the various social activities, *i.e.* work, worship, rituals, dance etc., contributing to the connection between knowledge and expression, social and ethnic cohesion, as well as cultural transmission. Even though the question of the origins of music has remained unresolved and insoluble, numerous naturalists, anthropologists, sociologists and musicologists have formulated conjectures and hypotheses. Rousseau developed the concept of the common origin of music and language as parallel expressions that communicated the passions, feelings and emotions that agitate men.<sup>242</sup> Spencer describes the birth of singing as an expressive intensification of spoken language.<sup>243</sup> According to Darwin, the original purpose of music was, instead, to accompany and facilitate the courting and the mating, phenomena linked to the animal world.<sup>244</sup> In Stumpf's view, music - just as language - was born out of the need to emit sound signals to communicate at a greater distance than the one allowed by the spoken language. Music would therefore be born in response to a practical necessity, and only later would it be enriched with melodic developments.<sup>245</sup>

### ***Music in ancient societies***

The ancient peoples certainly did not produce written music, but we have received finds of various instruments, drawings on vases, reliefs on stones and other everyday objects that allow us to know and evaluate the important role that singing and instrumental performance played in religious rites and social activities. The ancient Egyptians believed that music was of divine origin, had a magical power, and played a fundamental role in religious rituals. The oldest musical traditions are those of the Chinese, put musical sounds in relation to the order of the stars and the universe, giving rise to the cosmogonic and philosophical conception of musical language. The history of Western music has its beginning in ancient Greece, where for the first time we find an attempt to solve in a systematic and rational way the fundamental problems of the musical experience by regulating its links with the other arts, philosophy, mathematical sciences and society. Music became part of the Greek educational system and was linked to the sphere of numbers and planets.

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<sup>242</sup> Rousseau developed this concept in the "*Essai sur l'origine des langues*", "Essay on the origin of languages", written between 1756 and 1762.

<sup>243</sup> Spencer, H., *The origin and function of music*, London, 1857.

<sup>244</sup> Darwin, C., *The expression of the emotions in man and animals*, London, 1872.

<sup>245</sup> Stumpf, C., *Die Anfänge der Musik*, "The origins of music", Leipzig, 1911.

Not only music belongs to all men, as every society has produced its own musical tradition, but it involves the whole Creation, from the natural elements to the animals. Music is a natural language, which has the capacity to reach anyone and to be understood universally, thus we can define it as a *universal language*. It is precisely its ability to overcome barriers by building a bridge between different cultures and ideas that renders it a powerful means of communication, and consequently a suitable tool of diplomacy.

### ***Musical diplomacy in practice***

One of the earliest examples of musical diplomacy is that of the foreign relations between Imperial China and Korea. The Song Emperor Hui Tsung decided to start a real musical diplomacy through the exchange of gifts, and in 1114 and 1116 he sent two enormous musical gifts to King Yejong of Koryŏ, with the aim to influence interstate relations in northeast Asia.<sup>246</sup> Another example regards the diplomatic role of trumpeters in 17<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Trumpet music was essential when diplomatic encounters took place, as it served to display a ruler's magnificence, symbolizing his authority and power.<sup>247</sup> The following example sees as protagonists late 17<sup>th</sup> century France and Siam. Their exchanges, aimed at forging a trading partnership and military alliance, began in 1684, when a representation from Siam arrived in France, initiating a period of sustained diplomatic negotiations which involved musical performances. Music played a significant role, as it was bound to cultural identity and was a means to illustrate the social position on a hierarchical scale.<sup>248</sup> One of the most remarkable examples of unsuccessful diplomacy is that of the British embassy to China in 1792-1794, which is remembered above all because of the (fruitless) meeting between Lord George Macartney on behalf of King George III and the Qianlong Emperor. The cultural misunderstandings on both sides of the encounter are also evident in the musical exchanges, which contributed to aggravate the state of relations between the two parties. The most remarkable and successful example of musical diplomacy is represented by the U.S. government's exportation of American culture through music and dance in the Cold War period, anticipated by the initiation in the 1940s of a program of cultural propaganda by the State

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<sup>246</sup> Pratt, K., Sung Hui Tsung's Musical Diplomacy and the Korean Response, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, Vol. 44, No. 3, 1981.

<sup>247</sup> Rose, S., Trumpeters and diplomacy on the eve of the Thirty Years' War: the "album amicorum" of Jonas Kröschel, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press.

<sup>248</sup> Irving, D. R. M., Lully in Siam: music and diplomacy in French-Siamese cultural exchanges, 1680-1690, *Early Music*, Vol. 40, No. 3, August 2012, Oxford University Press.

Department and the Office of Inter-American Affairs (OOIA) to strengthen alliances between the U.S. and South America.<sup>249</sup> The fall of the U.S.S.R. has been attributed to various factors, and cultural exchanges, among which musical ones, influenced Soviet elites and public at large. Soviet Union began to open cautiously to the West only after Stalin's death, and this caused some cracks in the Iron Curtain. One of this cracks is represented by the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival, which saw tens thousands of Western youth arriving in Moscow, bringing with them their Western styles made of jeans, jazz, boogie-woogie, rock and roll, and free speech, infecting the Soviet youth and triggering a mechanism that would irreparably change the Soviet Union. The encounter with jazz and rock and roll resulted in the inability of Soviet officials to control the “*wave of Western music sweeping the Soviet republics*”,<sup>250</sup> and their advance had devastating consequences for communist ideologists.

### CHAPTER III. CASE STUDY: THE INTRODUCTION OF WESTERN MUSIC IN JAPAN

#### *Japan: a country of particularism*

In the past, Japan belonged to the tributary system, but it was able to mediate between foreign contribution and indigenous cultural elements, creating original solutions. The Japanese did not accept the principle of the “Heavenly mandate” and favored heredity to meritocracy. The adoption of the Chinese writing system too underwent a process of adaptation to the local language, with the development of two phonetic alphabets to be used in conjunction with Chinese ideograms.<sup>251</sup> Particularism is so intrinsic to the development of Japan that it is considered to be its main geopolitical factor; notwithstanding this, Japan also experienced brief periods of universalism.<sup>252</sup> Japanese approach can be perfectly summarized by the slogan *wakon-yōsai*, literally “Japanese

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<sup>249</sup> Campbell, J. L., “Creating Something Out of Nothing: The Office of Inter-American Affairs Music Committee (1940-1941) and the Inception of a Policy for Musical Diplomacy”, in *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January 2012, Oxford University Press.

<sup>250</sup> Ryback, T. W., *Rock Around the Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1990, cited in Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, p. 12.

<sup>251</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

<sup>252</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, IV., “Il particolarismo nipponico e la sfida occidentale”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014.

spirit with Western learning”.<sup>253</sup> The operation of synthesis between East and West was not easy, and in fact it brought about a tangible change in the lives of the Japanese, which was not welcomed by everyone. The import of Western technology has completely overturned the habits and aesthetic sense of the country of the Rising Sun. This aspect of modernization was addressed by Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, who in “In Praise of Shadows” addressed some of the problems that an accelerated modernization generated, and in particular how the beauty created by shadow has been swept away by lighting, the clarity of which had revealed secrets which, once revealed, have inevitably lost their charm.

### ***Modernization styles in comparison***

Japan, given the pressing demands of an increasingly globalized world, decided to opt for a selective approach, thus maintaining its own cultural identity. In order to do that, Japan made a clear distinction between two dimensions, *institutions* and *functions*, and decided to import only the latter.<sup>254</sup> Japan's choice to preserve its own institutions while changing functions can be found also in the case of tsarist Russia, where the modernization issue encountered two opposing schools of thought, the pro-Western and the Slavophile.<sup>255</sup> A totally different approach can be found in Mustafa Kemal's Turkey. He carried on one of the greatest projects of intellectual and social transformation with the aim to reshape the state and society according to European culture and values.<sup>256</sup>

### ***Why Japan?***

To answer the question “Why Japan?” we will provide the reader with data on the performance, consumption and popularity of Western classical music in Japan, which according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) Global Music Report 2019 is the world's second largest music market, with a recording industry revenue of USD 2,627 in 2018.<sup>257</sup> There are currently about 1,600 professional and amateur orchestras in Japan, among which the Saito Kinen Orchestra has been ranked

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<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>254</sup> Mazzei, F. & Volpi, IV., “Il particolarismo nipponico e la sfida occidentale”, *Asia al centro*, Seconda Edizione, Università Bocconi Editore, 2014, p. 80.

<sup>255</sup> Richmond, Y., *Cultural Exchange & The Cold War. Rising the Iron Curtain*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, pp. 1-3.

<sup>256</sup> M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, “Turkey and the West”, *Atatürk: An Intellectual Biography*, Princeton University Press, 2011.

<sup>257</sup> IFPI Global Music Report 2019. <https://www.ifpi.org/media/downloads/GMR2019-en.pdf>.

among the world's 20 greatest orchestras.<sup>258</sup> The great passion of Japanese audiences for Western-style symphony orchestras is confirmed by the fact that the concert halls are generally 85-95% full, and the age range of audiences is evenly distributed. Music occupies a consistent role in Japanese education system, and in fact music is one of the compulsory subjects studied in elementary school and junior high school.<sup>259</sup> The popularity of Western classical music in Japan can also be seen in broadcasting, and nowadays Japan hosts some of the world's finest classical music orchestras, artists and stages such as ballets or operas. Japanese musicians - performers as well as composers - take part in international contests, where they are regarded as serious competitors; in fact, they have placed high or won all of the recent major music competitions. The extent to which Western classical music has settled in Japan is symbolized by the presence of the Yamaha Corporation, which is currently the world's largest piano manufacturing company, with a net sales amounting to ¥437.4 billion and a worldwide consumption.<sup>260</sup>

### ***The encounter(s) between Japan and Western music***

The encounter between Japan and Western music took place in two phases. The first introduction of Western music occurred between 1549 - coinciding with the arrival of Saint Francis Xavier<sup>261</sup> in Kagoshima - and 1638 - the year in which the Shimabara Rebellion ended, leading to the definitive expulsion of Portuguese merchants and missionaries in 1639<sup>262</sup> and the disappearance of the musical heritage that the Westerners had brought with them. The second encounter was undoubtedly much more successful than the first one and according to us represents a remarkable example of musical diplomacy. In fact, it occurred in 1853, when the arrival in Edo Bay of the U.S. naval squadron led by Commodore Matthew Perry put an end to the long period of self-isolation (*sakoku*) of Japan, (re)establishing diplomatic relations with Japan. Perry employed a strategy known as *gunboat diplomacy*. However, the most remarkable element of the

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<sup>258</sup> The World's Greatest Orchestras, *Gramophone*, March 23, 2010. <https://www.gramophone.co.uk/features/article/the-world-s-greatest-orchestras>.

<sup>259</sup> Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), *Guide for foreign students to start school. Procedures for Entering Japanese Schools*, [https://www.mext.go.jp/component/english/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/06/24/1303764\\_001.pdf](https://www.mext.go.jp/component/english/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2016/06/24/1303764_001.pdf)

<sup>260</sup> Yamaha Group Annual Report 2019, <https://www.yamaha.com/en/ir/publications/pdf/an-2019e.pdf>.

<sup>261</sup> St. Francis Xavier (Navarre, 1506 - Shangchuan, 1552) is the greatest Roma Catholic missionary of modern times who was instrumental in the establishment of Christianity in India, the Malay Archipelago, and Japan. Encyclopædia Britannica, "St. Francis Xavier", <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Francis-Xavier>.

<sup>262</sup> Caroli, R. & Gatti, F., *Storia del Giappone*, Editori Laterza, 2006.

expedition perhaps was “*its reliance upon a highly symbolic style of cultural diplomacy*”.<sup>263</sup> In fact, Perry employed parades, technological expositions and musical performances, as he was firmly convinced that these were a fundamental component for the success of his mission. Perry considered music to be a testament to the primacy of Western civilization and was convinced that it would play an important role in his diplomatic agenda. For this reason, he recruited several military bands for his mission to the Pacific and insisted that his expedition include several bands and performers, for “*the success of his treaty depended upon the success of the entertainment*”.<sup>264</sup>

### ***Meiji Restoration: the struggle for modernization***

The signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa on March 31, 1854 marked the beginning of the disintegration of the isolationist politics of *saikoku*, and in 1868 power was handed back to the Emperor Meiji (Mutsuhito), who established the Imperial Court in Edo and re-named it Tōkyō: this was the beginning of the Meiji period, whose spirit is summed up by the motto *fukoku kyōhei*, “rich nation, strong military”, and a program of reforms in the political, social, economic, and educational spheres to reach this goal was initiated.<sup>265</sup>

### ***The importation of Western music in Japan***

According to Eppstein, the beginnings of Western-style music in 20<sup>th</sup> century Japan can be traced back in two different spheres, namely the military and the educational. The two aspects that distinguish Japan in this process and render it unique are the motivation, *i.e.* “*the national goal of catching up with the West*”,<sup>266</sup> and the method, *i.e.* “Westernization by free choice”.<sup>267</sup> With regard to military music, he mentions an episode involving the rulers of the Satsuma clan. In 1862 a British subject was killed by Satsuma clansmen, and the following year Kagoshima was shelled in retaliation by a

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<sup>263</sup> Keith, J. A., Civilization, Race, and the Japan Expedition’s Cultural Diplomacy, 1853-1854, *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 35, No. 2, April 2011, Oxford University Press, p. 180.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

<sup>265</sup> Hane, M., “Establishment of the Meiji Regime”, *Japan. A Short History*, Oneworld Publications, 2013.

<sup>266</sup> Eppstein, U., *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Thesis Submitted for the Degree “Doctor of Philosophy” to the Senate of Tel-Aviv University, February 1982.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*

British warship. Besides the stupor in the face of such a naval power, the Satsuma clan was fascinated by the sound of English-style military music emanating from the British warship, to the point that they decided to introduce it in their army.<sup>268</sup>

With regard to education, in 1872 the Ministry of Education instructed that music be included in all primary and middle school. Among the available models - Dutch, French, and American -, the American system certainly had a greater impact on Japan, mainly for the special bond that Izawa Shūji - defined by Eppstein as “*the founder and then the Grand Old Man of Western-style music education in Japan*”<sup>269</sup> - had with the U.S., and in particular with Luther Whiting Mason. Izawa was responsible for the establishment of the Music Investigation Committee, which published the first school songbook in 1881. Although Izawa struggled to find a compromise between Western and Japanese traditional music, it was only during the Late Meiji with Tamura Torazō that this goal was achieved. Harich-Schneider tells us that the first to confront with Western music immediately after the Restoration were the *gakunin*, the court musicians, who were entrusted with the task of taking up the study of Western music. The difficulties faced by them are revealed by the numerous attempts made to arrange *Kimi ga Yo*, the national anthem.

To summarize, the first Western music imported in Japan was military music, with which the Japanese came into contact through real warfare, *i.e.* the shelling of Kagoshima by a British warship in 1863, or through diplomacy, *i.e.* contacts with the Prussian and French Embassies. The approach was a pragmatic one, which saw music merely as a means to modernize the army and society on a larger scale, without considering its hedonistic aspect at all. Military marches were the first form of Western music to be imported, followed by the introduction of Western-style songbooks printed specifically for musical education in primary and middle schools. The import of Western music was closely linked to the prestige of the nation: if Japan wanted to reach the Western power, it necessarily had to equip itself - *inter alia* - with a “civilized” music system. Although initially this deliberate adoption of a music system so distant from its own was perceived by the Japanese as something alien, in a later stage, partly due to the work of adaptation

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<sup>268</sup> Harich-Schneider, E., “The Re-introduction of Western Music”, *A History of Japanese Music*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

and “compromise”, this perception of extraneousness was loosened, until a complete assimilation of Western music within Japanese society was reached.

### *Western music in Japanese pop culture*

The evidence of the assimilation of Western music within Japanese society is furnished by the fact that it is present in, and in certain cases has inspired some local artistic products, and in particular Japanese popular culture. Japanese pop(ular) culture consists in “*music, TV, cinema, books, etc. that are popular and enjoyed by ordinary people, rather than experts or very educated people*”,<sup>270</sup> and in the singular case of Japan it includes Japanese cinema, cuisine, television programs, video games, music, manga and anime. The term *manga* is currently used to denote all comic art in Japan, but the original meaning, based on the Chinese word *manhua*, was “impromptu sketches”.<sup>271</sup> The word “manga” was popularized by Katsushika Hokusai, who in 1814 published the first of a whole series of popular volumes of caricatures and studies from everyday life under the name of *Hokusai Manga*, but it was associated to storytelling with pictures only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The decisive turning point occurred with Osamu Tezuka, who earned the moniker of “God of Manga” and created a manga that owed more to film animation than to book illustration. Nowadays manga represent one of the leading sectors in the Japanese publishing industry and are exported and translated all over the world. Manga, along with anime - Japanese style of motion-picture animation, characterized by highly stylized, colorful art, futuristic settings, violence, and sexuality, often based on a pre-existing manga<sup>272</sup> - are the most famous products of Japanese pop culture. Within a large variety, there are also manga which revolve around the world of Western classical music. These manga focus on the appreciation of the art form or on classical musicians themselves, whether they are amateurs or professionals, and they may blend well with other genres such as romance. A more or less explicit trace of Western music can be found in the animation films produced by Studio Ghibli, which *anime* are known and appreciated all over the world. The soundtracks are composed by Joe Hisaishi, whose composition style,

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<sup>270</sup> Cambridge Dictionary, meaning of *pop culture* in English, Cambridge Dictionary Online, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/it/dizionario/inglese/pop-culture>.

<sup>271</sup> Petersen, R. S., “Graphic Narratives in Japan”, *Comics, Manga, and Graphic Novels. A History of Graphic Narratives*, Praeger, 2011, p. 41.

<sup>272</sup> Online Dictionary.com, meaning of anime, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/anime>.



made of melodic, polystylistic scores, is influenced by Western classical, Japanese classical, and electropop-minimalism.<sup>273</sup>

In the previous paragraph we explored the features of the importation of Western music in Japan, and we could observe that it was a free and pragmatic choice with the wider perspective of building a rich nation with a strong army, so as to catch up with the Western powers. If we look at the artistic-cultural phenomena developed in the following century, we can see how Western music - and classical music in particular - began to appear in Japanese creations, especially in those belonging to the world of popular culture, such as *manga* and *anime*. We can therefore affirm that Western music has been completely assimilated by society to the point of pervading even the new Japanese artistic expressions. It is precisely for this peculiarity, *i.e.* the assimilation of the foreign model (Western music) following its importation for reasons related to the modernization of the country, which was aimed at obtaining international recognition and the revision of the unequal treaties - therefore for foreign policy and diplomatic reasons - that we considered it appropriate to present the case of Japan as a successful example of musical diplomacy.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis was to demonstrate that music is a valid tool of cultural diplomacy. We began by defining cultural diplomacy, starting with an historico-etymological analysis of the two terms “diplomacy” and “culture”. We have then defined cultural diplomacy, and after exposing the origins of modern cultural diplomacy we presented a brief history of cultural relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. In order to better grasp the meaning and role of cultural diplomacy, we underlined the differences between the latter and public diplomacy and provided some examples of its implementation. We then highlighted the fact that cultural diplomacy is a form of soft power, which is rooted in history, and in fact we find traces of it already in the tributary system of Imperial China. In *Chapter II* we introduced the theme of music, starting with the theories concerning its origins. By the analysis of the function of music in ancient

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<sup>273</sup> Slattery, J., “Orchestrating the Dream Worlds of Studio Ghibli: A Short Flight Through the Music of Joe Hisaishi”, *Bachtrack*, 23 May 2017, <https://bachtrack.com/feature-joe-hisaishi-film-game-music-month-may-2017>.

societies, we found that whereas the prehistoric man conceived music as an activity closely related to the practical needs of existence, more complex societies began to systematically organize and order music, which was considered to be of divine origins and occupied an important role during religious rituals, besides being a form of entertainment for the dominant classes. Music began to be linked to philosophy, astrology and mathematics; the Greeks laid the foundations of modern harmony and recognized the educational potential of music. The Chinese, on the other hand, put musical sounds in relation to the order of the stars and the universe, giving rise to the cosmogonic and philosophical conception of musical language. At the end of the chapter we were able to affirm that music does not belong to all men, as every society has produced its own musical tradition, but it also involves the whole Creation, from the natural elements to the animals. Music is, therefore, a natural language, which has the capacity to reach anyone and to be understood universally, thus it is a universal language. It is precisely its ability to overcome barriers by building a bridge between different cultures and ideas that renders it a powerful means of communication, and consequently a suitable instrument of cultural diplomacy. We have then provided the reader with some practical examples of musical diplomacy from different eras and historical contexts, in which music has proved to be an instrument capable of influencing the outcome of diplomatic negotiations, both in a positive and negative sense. We devoted the last chapter to the presentation of the case of the introduction of Western music in Japan, which we believe to be of particular importance in relation to musical diplomacy, and in order to explain why we proceeded by presenting the country, trying to offer the reader a taste of Japanese aesthetics through the words of Tanizaki Jun'ichirō. After briefly comparing the Japanese, Russian and Turkish styles of modernization, we explained the reason why we chose to analyze the case of Japan, that is, the presence of an extraordinary vast list of phenomena attesting to the fact that Western-style music has become an integral part of musical life in Japan, and that Japanese musicians have become an integral part of international musical life. This represents achievements stretching over not so much more than a mere hundred and forty years, since Western music was imported in Japan only in the Meiji Era (1868-1912), and the first Western music heard was that performed by the musicians on board the ships of Commodore Perry. We continued by providing the reader with a brief historico-musical background of Japan, so as to better understand the later developments. We described the encounters between Japan and Western music, focusing on the second one which took place in 1853. Although Perry is nowadays associated with

the gunboat diplomacy, during his expedition to Japan he also made extensive use of cultural diplomacy, including music. The introduction of Western music started in the years immediately preceding the Meiji Restoration (1868) and was carried on with great enthusiasm in the wave of modernization. Initially, the oligarchs focused on the pragmatic function of music, considered as a necessary element to achieve “*the national goal of catching up with the West*”<sup>274</sup>, and not as a form of art. The beginnings of Western-style music in twentieth century Japan can be traced back in two different spheres, namely the military and the educational, and in the case of Japan it is appropriate to talk about a “Westernization by free choice”. Great efforts were needed to harmonize Western music with the traditional one, and whereas at first Western music was imported indiscriminately, at a later stage an attempt was made to create a compromise between the two, thus rehabilitating certain genres of traditional Japanese music. The result of this process eventually ended in the assimilation of Western music within Japanese society, and the evidence of this is furnished by the fact that it is present in, and in certain cases has inspired some local artistic products, and in particular Japanese popular culture. This peculiarity, *i.e.* the assimilation of the foreign model (Western music) following its importation for reasons related to the modernization of the country, which was aimed at obtaining international recognition and the revision of the unequal treaties - therefore for foreign policy and diplomatic reasons - is precisely the reason why we considered it appropriate to present the case of Japan as a successful example of musical diplomacy.

To conclude, music is one of the many areas of cultural diplomacy and given the universality of its language and the role it has played and continues to play in diplomatic negotiations, we hope having convinced the reader that music is a valuable instrument of cultural diplomacy.

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<sup>274</sup> Hane, M., *Japan. A Short History*, Oneworld Publications, 2013.