

## Music Diplomacy: from the Concept of “Soft Power” to the Development of a Culture of Musical Peacemaking

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15421/172461>**Rusetsky Alexander<sup>1</sup>**Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2646-1625>, alex\_scirs@yahoo.com**Maric Valentina<sup>1</sup>**Bachelor of Cultural Studies, <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-3099-6260>, tinamaric2020@gmail.com**Kirakosian Svetlana<sup>2</sup>**Ph.D. Student of Political Science, <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-1636-9075>, svetlanakirakosian@ciu.edu.ge<sup>1</sup>*Caucasus Laboratory of Geopolitical Modeling, Caucasus International University (Tbilisi, Georgia)*<sup>2</sup>*Caucasus International University (Tbilisi, Georgia)*

### Abstract

This article presents the results of a study conducted at the Caucasus International University with the purpose of obtaining information on the possibilities of music diplomacy in preventing wars and violence and promoting peaceful, non-violent conflict resolution based on humanism and other common civilisational values that go beyond the ideas of anthropocentrism and similar ego-centred reductionist attitudes. Music diplomacy, on the one hand, is presented as a type of political communication, which is a subsystem of cultural diplomacy, which in turn is a subsystem of meta-diplomacy. The concept of meta-diplomacy is one of the fundamental pillars of the Theory of Meta-Cognitive Management being developed at the Caucasus Geopolitical Modeling Laboratory. On the other hand, music diplomacy is seen as an intangible capital that is not sufficiently utilised as a technological resource for musical peacemaking and the culture of peace in general. Therefore, the article presents the idea of the importance of the development of musical peacemaking as a special direction of the culture of peace.

The main purpose of this study is to assess the international experience in the field of music diplomacy and the potential of this area to strengthen modern peacebuilding processes. The authors of the article are aware of the fact that in the harsh phases of a military conflict, the parties are not ready to use such mechanisms to restore communication and trust, but on the other hand, military conflicts cannot continue endlessly and peacebuilding processes need to be prepared and implemented as early as possible.

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The conclusions and recommendations of the study are aimed at expanding the effectiveness of music diplomacy in promoting peaceful conflict resolution at the international level.

**Keywords:** musical diplomacy, “soft power”, musical peacemaking, meta-peace, meta-cognitive management

## Музична дипломатія: від концепції «м'якої сили» до розвитку культури музичної миротворчості

**Русецький Олександр<sup>1</sup>, Марік Валентина<sup>1</sup>, Кіракосян Світлана<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>*Кавказька лабораторія геополітичного моделювання, Кавказький міжнародний університет (Тбілісі, Грузія)*<sup>2</sup>*Кавказький міжнародний університет (Тбілісі, Грузія)*

### Анотація

У статті представлені результати дослідження, проведеного в Кавказькому міжнародному університеті з метою отримання інформації про можливості музичної дипломатії у запобіганні війнам і насильству та сприянні мирному, ненасильницькому вирішенню конфліктів на основі гуманізму та інших спільних цивілізаційних цінностей, що виходять за рамки ідей антропоцентризму та подібних егоцентричних редукціоністських установок. Музична дипломатія, з одного боку, представлена як вид політичної комунікації, що є підсистемою культурної дипломатії, яка в свою чергу є підсистемою метадиplomатії. Концепція метадиplomатії є однією з фундаментальних основ теорії метакогнітивного менеджменту, що розробляється в Кавказькій лабораторії геополітичного моделювання. З іншого боку, музична дипломатія розглядається як нематеріальний капітал, який недостатньо використовується як технологічний ресурс для музичної миротворчості та культури миру загалом. Тому в статті представлено ідею важливості розвитку музичної миротворчості як особливого напрямку культури миру.

Головною метою даного дослідження є оцінка міжнародного досвіду у сфері музичної дипломатії та потенціалу цієї сфери для посилення сучасних миротворчих процесів. Автори статті усвідомлюють той факт, що в умовах жорстких фаз військового конфлікту сторони не готові використовувати такі механізми для відновлення комунікації та довіри, але з іншого боку, військові конфлікти не можуть тривати нескінченно і миротворчі процеси потрібно готувати та впроваджувати якомога раніше.

Статтю створено в рамках наукового проекту “Метакогнітивний моніторинг Флавелла-Ласвелла та його роль у розвитку теорії метакогнітивного управління політичними кризами”. Проект реалізується за підтримки Фонду фундаментальних досліджень Кавказького міжнародного університету, а також Цхум-Абхазької академії наук, Академії Фазіса та Національного наукового фонду імені Шота Руставелі.

Висновки та рекомендації дослідження спрямовані на підвищення ефективності музичної дипломатії у сприянні мирному врегулюванню конфліктів на міжнародному рівні.

**Ключові слова:** музична дипломатія, «м'яка сила», музична миротворчість, мета-мир, метакогнітивний менеджмент

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**Introduction.****Problem statement.**

Music accompanies people in both war and peace. Since ancient times, military operations were provided with musical instruments, which had quite different functional purposes: communication between divisions; warning of enemy attack; command to attack; victory marches and mourning rituals. Musical works were one of the bases of psychological support and mobilisation of warriors, the development of patriotic feelings and education. Musical weapons are a variety of acoustic, sound weapons that can have both psychological and physical effects on the targeted object. It can have both defensive and offensive purposes. Although this type of weapon is often classified as non-lethal, its effects on the human body can be of many different types, including lethal. In the Middle Ages, there was even a kind of ‘sound execution’, the meaning of which was to put a person under a bell and then slowly kill him or her from the bell ringing (Kobilova, 2019).

In times of peace, the music stage often becomes a real arena for musical battles. Just as in sports, millions of spectators cheer for the victory of one or another subject of musical culture. This factor is actively used both for commercial advertising and political propaganda. Victory in musical competitions can be achieved through different methods. The objects of influence can be both musicians themselves and representatives of the jury making decisions. Everything is used, starting from blackmail, bribes and ending with psychological terror, blocking, or completely banning the participation of musicians in certain events.

A very striking example is the story of Eden Golan, a singer from Israel, who presented a song at Eurovision 2024, which she dedicated to the hostages held captive by Palestinian terrorists. Despite serious opposition and massive anti-Israeli protests, she managed to reach the final. On 7.02.2024, the same singer got into the database of the Ukrainian source ‘‘Peacemaker’’ (Mirotvorets) for her participation in ‘‘anti-Ukrainian propaganda events of Russia’’. In particular, the issue concerns her participation in one of the children’s music festivals organised on the territory of occupied Crimea when she was 13 years old (in 2015). The singer was included in this database even though after the outbreak of war in February 2022, her family left Russia and moved to Israel. Russian musicians of different genres have fallen under the double press. On the one hand, the international community, in order to influence the Russian leadership, restricts their participation in various international competitions, while those musicians (along with journalists, human rights activists, priests and citizens of other professions) who favoured a peaceful resolution of the conflict are subject to internal sanctions, including repression.

According to ‘‘ovd.info’’, between 24 February 2022 and 23 December 2023, criminal proceedings were initiated against 801 opponents of the war.

Of these, 297 were prosecuted under Article 207.3 of the Criminal Code of Russia (‘‘dissemination of deliberately false information about the actions of the Russian Armed Forces’’), 140 - under Article 280.3 of the Criminal Code of Russia (‘‘discrediting the use of the Russian Armed Forces’’), 122 - under Article 205.2 of the Criminal Code of Russia (‘‘justification, propaganda or calls for terrorism’’), and the rest were prosecuted under other articles (ovd.info). For example, Andrei Makarevich (recognised by the Russian Ministry of Justice as a foreign agent), the leader of the band ‘‘Mashina Vremeni’’, may face criminal prosecution and up to two years imprisonment for violating the legislation on foreign agents. This information was provided by sources in law enforcement agencies (Furmanov, ura.news). An interesting fact is that repression threatens not only individuals but also entire musical genres. For example, in the German newspaper Tagesspiegel, Jutta Sommerbauer in her article ‘‘Repression against musicians: the fight for culture in Russian’’ publishes information about the persecution of Russian rap, which apparently threatens the national interests of the Russian state (Sommerbauer, inosmi.ru). On the Ukrainian side, sanctions have been taken against Russian singers who with their performances support the Russian leadership’s policy of invading Ukraine. ‘‘The Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and Information Policy has prepared a sanctions list of Russian singers, musicians, actors and journalists who allegedly supported military operation of Russia. The sanctions list includes Russian singers Nikolay Baskov, Dima Bilan, Polina Gagarina, Oleg Gazmanov, Larisa Dolina, Sergei Zhukov, Grigory Leps, Nikolay Rastorguev and Timati (Timur Yunusov)...‘‘The SSU regularly adds to the list of representatives of culture those ‘‘whose actions pose a threat to Ukraine’s national security’’. By 25 March 2022, it includes 210 people, including Russian singers Nadezhda Babkina, Oleg Gazmanov, Alexander Buynov, Yegor Bulatkin (known as Yegor Creed), Denis Klyaver, Lev Leshchenko, Alena Apina, Valeria, music producers Iosif Prigozhin and Maxim Fadeev, actors Sergei Bezrukov and Dmitry Kharatyan and other representatives of culture (www.rbc.ru). A special category is compiled with singers born in Ukraine and working in Russia, who are presented in the RBC-Ukraine report ‘‘These Ukrainian artists enjoy the war. Remember their names - as traitors of Ukraine!’’ (Kopytko, www.rbc.ua).

Unfortunately, the actions of the international music community are spontaneous. First of all, against the backdrop of the discussion on the beginning of a full-scale process for a non-violent settlement of this conflict, the creation of a particular informal international format, where representatives of the music communities of Ukraine and Russia, which are divided by global contradictions, could take part. Naturally, such negotiations are impossible without goodwill on the part of the leadership of these two countries, as well as

without the support of the international music community, given the fact that this conflict has long gone beyond the bilateral framework, and the actions may be not bilateral, but multilateral in nature. The main purpose of this format could be for the music culture to take a real role not in the escalation of the conflict, but in strengthening the peacemaking platform for its peaceful resolution. The peace initiative should not be an internationalisation of the conflict, but an internationalisation of the peacemaking process. In modelling this format, the role of music diplomacy should be transformed from music diplomacy that serves the parties of the confrontation to 'musical peacemaking'. Given the fact that music diplomacy is a subsystem of cultural diplomacy, this format could provide an incentive to integrate representatives of culture and science into the peacebuilding process. International practice has sufficient experience in this regard, which can be concentrated in the direction of this conflict.

It is important to note that the research of music diplomacy is a relatively new field of study of cultural diplomacy in general. This is primarily due to the fact that the generalised definition of cultural diplomacy left little opportunity to focus on its specialised areas. Working with such spheres as music, art, theatre required profile knowledge, which, objectively, was not always available to historians (Golovlev, 2017). Significant research in this direction began in the '60-s-80-s during the Cold War. At that time, the struggle for the "minds and hearts of people" within the cultural policies of the two opposing ideological blocs was unleashed with particular strength and had real consequences, for example, within the peace movement.

The American researcher J. C. E. Gienow-Hecht, in a collection devoted to the role of music in twentieth-century international history, emphasises a deeper perspective of the study of the role of music in international relations and peacemaking, looking at geographical and social projects, the role of music in making or breaking contacts between people, regions and societies, "sound" as a form of cultural communication and networking in times of crisis (Gienow-Hecht, 2015). This compilation is one of the first combined studies on the impact of music on twentieth-century society, history, and politics. Music diplomacy as a soft power, first of all, plays the role of an instrument of cultural policy. Diplomacy researchers identify a different potential in Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, seeing it as a tool for masking real political intentions, where "hard power" acts as a backup lever of influence (Roselle, Miskimmon, & O'loughlin, 2014). In this context, it is interesting to use "soft musical power" to develop an alternative "culture of peace", of which "music diplomacy" is an integral part. On this basis, the question arises about the direct patronage of the process modelled by UNESCO as an active promoter of the Culture of the "Peace Concept". And as a subsystem, "musical culture of peace" or/and "musical peacemaking" can be singled out. In the article

"Culture of Peace", Polish scholar Jerzy Vyatr notes that the nature of peace, understood in this sense, is not only the conviction that conflicts at both the domestic and interstate level can be resolved non-violently, but also the search for unifying principles, respect for the other side, and overcoming the legacy of hostility. The culture of peace is a rejection of the culture of war with its glorification of armed struggle and justification of violence as a normal and socially acceptable means of conflict regulation. In this understanding, the culture of peace is a novation. As early as the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, war was seen as a generally recognised way of regulating relations between states, as a policy implemented by other means, in the words of the Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz (1780-1831)" (Vyatr, 2015).

In this regard, the authors of this article propose to consider the concept of "meta-peace" as a peaceful coexistence of different concepts of peace proposed by different parties involved in the confrontation between the parties of the conflict. It is the task of real peacemaking to create a derivative picture of a common world out of these often-incomparable models. This is why we propose the notion of "political syncretism" and the notion of "peacemaking syncretism", which differ in their essence from the Kantian ideal of perpetual peace, as well as from reductionist concepts that link the notion of peace to the hegemony of one of the geopolitical centres of power. Therefore, this approach represents a holistic understanding of the notion of meta-peace (Rusetsky, 2023).

Despite the proposed idealised and even absolute image of the "meta-peace", this approach is supported by the relativistic understanding of the ideal proposed by Hans Selye, who compares the "ideal" to a conditional lighthouse against which ships should move. In his opinion, if the captain of a ship steers his ship directly to the lighthouse, it will crash on the rocks on which the lighthouse is located.

In these realities, music is used as an instrument of political propaganda, and the music community is used as 'support staff' or "musical warriors". The confrontation takes the form of a musical war, and the stage is represented as the arena of musical combat. The approach proposed in this article is oriented towards changing the attitude and defining a new existential role of the musical community as an important capital for peacebuilding politics. Here too, the authors of the concept propose a separation of the notions of reductionist peacemaking from holistic peacemaking and introduce, the notion of quasi-peacemaking, along with the notion of peacemaking (Rusetsky, 2009).

This concept focuses on mobilising new audiences that are centred toward the construction of a strategically shared meta-peace, which is supported by a holistic "meta-peace emotion". Emotional interaction in the process of musical communication involves the establishment of

long-term connections between musically interested audiences (Gienow-Hecht, 2015). It is the achievement of a mutual sense of empathy that becomes the basis for the construction of syncretic models, which are the prelude to the restoration of stable communications (Rusetsky, 2020). This phenomenon cannot be formed in the realities without a precondition - awareness of common tragedy and common threats among the participants of the process, which is presented as one of the foundations of the Theory of meta-cognitive management - the Concept of awareness of common threats. From a practical point of view, the nuclear threat is considered as one of the threats (Rusetsky, & Dorokhina, 2020). It emphasises the obvious difference between this approach and the policy of “nuclear intimidation”, which aims to deliver a psychological blow to representatives of societies participating in conflicts that are not represented by nuclear powers, knowingly orienting them towards absolute defeat, although in international practice there are examples of successful resistance in such asymmetric conflicts.

In order to advance the conceptual ideas outlined above, additional research into the existing underutilised international experience of musical peacemaking is needed.

An interesting example is the project – European Mediterranean Academy for Peace. “When music speaks, everyone understands” is the motto of the academy, created in 2013 by Paolo Petrocelli, an Italian musician who also created the EMMA for Peace project, which promotes peace through music and education (EMMA for Peace, 2013). It is important to note that the peacemaking potential of music diplomacy can be realised in contexts where a musical performer or creative initiative has as its goal, exclusively peacekeeping, the reduction of the threat of conflict escalation, an impartial desire to promote the ideas of peace, humanity, and art for peace.

The Israeli experience is tragic in this context. The Music of the World is an International Music Festival in Israel, a case study of uniting the musical potential of all countries. Since 2017, it has brought together participants from all continents; the format involves a competition basis and a forum for musicians to get to know each other and find common values. Despite the tragic events after 7 October, the festival organisers encourage online participation in the festival format (Music of the World, 2018). The international festival “Together in the 21st Century” has been uniting about 70 countries since 2012; the festival's motto is “If we sing together – we don't shoot each other”. The Next Level Initiative is a project for hip-hop musicians that takes performers and educators in the fields of dance, music and arts to travel abroad to promote mutual understanding among young people and underserved communities (Next Level, n.d.).

One of the goals of music diplomacy is to be able to start a dialogue, exchange cultural information, express a desire for collaboration and “reach out” to people (Statler,

2012). The concept of cultural transfer (Espagne, 2018) within this study also provides an opportunity to draw attention to the fact that through musical peacemaking practices important cultural and political decisions have been realised, allowing creative groups from around the world to share experiences and music, to communicate valuable ideas and find common meanings. The very possibility of reception and perception of another culture is also an important basis for the effectiveness of music diplomacy as a resource for peacemaking. With the development of Internet communications, such musical polylogue is becoming more accessible to representatives of the global music community. Online projects are emerging that allow musicians to share their creativity and public position online, such as Stories from the World, the first blog community dedicated to collecting the most inspiring stories of music diplomacy from around the world, bringing together the experiences and reflections of musicians, academics, experts, diplomats, activists and journalists working in the field of music diplomacy from around the world (Stories from the World, 2021).

For the last 15-20 years, research on music diplomacy has been relevant in the contemporary academic community, showing a growing number of articles and monographs on the role of music and its genre styles in the “struggle for people's minds and hearts”. Some of the best-known cases in music diplomacy are the Peace Movement and Jazz Diplomacy in the 1950-s. The end of the Second World War, unfortunately, did not mark the absolute achievement of peace, as almost immediately a new – nuclear – threat appeared and the confrontation of two geopolitical blocs, which required the global cooperation of the entire world community in order to prevent a new war.

The confrontation between the two ideological camps – one led by the USSR and the other led by the USA - would later be defined by British historian David Caute as the “cultural Cold War” (Caute, 2010). The analysis of archival documents also confirmed the fact of rather close cooperation with the USSR and the USA in the 1960-s-70-s. In 1962, there was an exchange of “cultural ambassadors” between the USA and the USSR. Benny Goodman's jazz ensemble arrived in Moscow, and Soviet pianist Svyatoslav Richter travelled to the States. This took place against the backdrop of the escalating Caribbean crisis. “Cultural exchange” between Moscow and Washington became a kind of way to “defuse” the tense situation (Pasternak, 2020).

The fact that the potential of music diplomacy as a soft power tool is only growing is evidenced by recent initiatives by major states; in 2022, President Biden signed into law the PEACE Act “Promoting Peace, Education, and Cultural Exchange through Music Diplomacy” which calls for the creation of music diplomacy partnerships involving the private sector and the awarding of musicians who have contributed to peacebuilding, and Secretary of State E. Blinken stated that U.S. diplomats help “people

see each other as human beings, strive for common goals, change the minds of those who don't understand us well, and tell America's history better than any policy measure or speech could" (Global Music Diplomacy Initiative, 2023).

### Conclusions.

To summarise, we can say that in the current historical moment, in the context of an acute escalation of the conflict, peacekeeping in general is in crisis and disgrace. Talking about peace with the opposing side is equated with collaboration and betrayal of national interests. People who put forward peace initiatives are subjected to psychological and physical terror. The paradigm of development of musical diplomacy is directed towards the notion of "soft musical power" rather than "musical peacemaking" and this means that we have a huge unused resource for peaceful and non-violent settlement. Of course, it should be noted that in this article we are dealing specifically with music diplomacy, while other areas of cultural diplomacy may have no less potential, not to mention the possibilities of meta-diplomacy in general, which is one of the pillars of meta-cognitive crisis management.

Music diplomacy is a powerful instrument of peacemaking that can have a significant impact on international relations. The diversity of cultures and musical traditions of the world allows music to be a universal language of communication and cooperation between different nations and communities. However, it is important to remember that music, like any other form of art, can carry both the potential for harmony and mutual understanding and the possibility of conveying protest or even propaganda content. It is therefore necessary to use music as an instrument of diplomacy, especially for peacemaking, in a careful and balanced way.

Perhaps it is the comprehensive approach of studying this practice from the inside, that will help to formulate a universal approach to the implementation of cultural diplomacy in the field of music. The comprehensiveness of the approach lies in the continuous research of practices in music diplomacy, the formation of common approaches to its implementation in different countries, as well as in the search for the most effective forms of participation in this initiative.

In this regard, encouraging the search for common values and rejecting the destructive approach of destroying national cultures will be one of the most important steps towards promoting music diplomacy.

### Some recommendations for developing a culture of musical peacemaking.

In the context of social modelling and practice, it is proposed to hold a scientific and practical conference on this topic (under the auspices of UNESCO) with the participation of real active organisations and projects in this field.

The creation of the International Centre for Music Diplomacy as an accessible social practice in the field of music and peacemaking can be one of such solutions.

For the successful implementation of music diplomacy in the context of constantly changing socio-political realities, it is possible at the above-mentioned conference to present for consideration the Draft Music Charter for Peace, which would contribute to the expansion of the peacemaking potential of music diplomacy at the global level, to the formation of a sense of belonging to a common culture of the world.

These recommendations serve as an important basis for the development of music diplomacy as a strong peacemaking tool in today's world to promote peace, dialog and common understanding between different cultures and countries.

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