H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXIII-6

Victoria Phillips. ***Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN: 9780190610364 (hardcover, $47.95).

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Introduction by Damien Mahiet, Brown University

The "dance of American diplomacy" is the subtitle of Victoria Phillips's elegantly written history of U.S. dancer and choreographer Martha Graham's engagement in the Cold War. It is more than a nice turn of phrase: it is an everyday expression made into a significant conceptual claim and ambitious historical agenda. *Martha Graham's Cold War* challenges, lightly but steadfastly, preconceptions of diplomacy, dance, and what separates them.

Of course, in *Martha Graham's Cold War*, the "dance of American diplomacy" is first and foremost the choreographic style and corpus that a series of U.S. presidents, administrations, nonprofits, and companies understood and promoted as a fitting representation of American modernity in the twentieth century. The book contributes to a lively and excellent field of scholarship that invites us to think of "dancers as diplomats."[1] Graham's engagement through the Cold War was indeed extensive, with tours in countries ranging from Japan to Iran through Southeast and South Asia in 1955-1956, Israel in 1956 and 1979, West and East Berlin in 1957 and 1987, Europe in 1962 and 1979, and Egypt and Jordan in 1979.[2]

Why Martha Graham's art endured as cultural export to be deployed across the globe from the 1950s to the 1980s is the question that drives the chronological account of Graham's service in the Cold War. Phillips, in this light, explores the contested construction of modern dance as an American genre in the 1950s and 1960s and, in the face of time passing, as a classic in an international canon—the "forever modern" (chapter 6) of "the monumental Martha" (197) that sustained an "imagined community of international cultural sophisticates" (9).

But the "dance of diplomacy" also echoes a journalistic as well as a scholarly way of speaking about international relations.[3] If dance seems an apt metaphor for diplomacy, it is in part because its framing of bodies and motion in the spaces embraced by the spectator's gaze can oscillate between abstract physicality and embodied meaning. The "dance of diplomacy" not only foregrounds the 'grammar' or 'codes' that make political encounters a decipherable text for actors to interpret and respond to, but also suggests that improvisation, ephemerality, and—some might say—ineffability can play a role in that moment where encounters become relations and relations outcomes.

For example, the recent memoirs of former United States Chief of Protocol Capricia Penavic Marshall equate protocol with a kind of scenography or choreography where the actors set the tempo and style of the performance: "So when two leaders or delegates meet, they embark on the dance of diplomacy, and protocol sets the rules for that two-step. Depending on their relationship—new friends, old buddies, or frenemies—and the policy goals, that dance can be an easy, listing waltz or a fiery tango."[4]

Former U.K. diplomat and scholar Nigel Gould-Davies went further in a 2013 review of Iver Neumann's work when he invited readers to think of diplomats as dancers. While pointing to the "grammar," "forms," and "choreography" of diplomatic life, he also underscored the "extreme sensitivity, care, and precision" it required, and the role of embodiment as well as language in the "contest of meanings to establish a way of speaking about issues, and so of understanding and

[1] For an overview of this literature, see the reviews of Stéphanie Gonçalves (footnotes 2-5) and Lauren Erin Brown (footnotes 1-4).

[2] Photos 7 and 19 of the image portfolio are maps of Graham's tours as documented by government archives.

[3] Two examples might suffice to suggest a longer list: Mark Landler, "Kim, Trump and Xi to Resume a Shifting Dance of Diplomacy," *New York Times* (June 20, 2019) (print edition), A1; and William Wan, "Crisis Required Delicate Dance of Diplomacy," *The Washington Post* (May 20, 2012), A1.

[4] Capricia Penavic Marshall, *Protocol: The Power of Diplomacy and How to Make it Work for You* (New York: HarperCollins, 2020), 11.

therefore deciding them."[5] We should, Gould-Davies concluded, think of diplomats "as dancers . . . engaged in continuous, complex, intimate movement with one another."[6]

In the same way, Phillips also means to blur and query the distinction between dance and diplomacy. "I claim this book as a political, old-fashioned 'Big Women's' Cold War biography," she writes (28). As much as an artist of global appeal to "an 'imagined community' of international cultural sophisticates," Martha Graham is, for Phillips, "a women diplomat" and "political activist" who achieved power through her "charisma and detailed use of protocol" as much as her dance (28). *Martha Graham's Cold War* is at once the biography of a diplomat who danced and the history of the construction of Graham's dance into a diplomatic representation.

It is a more provocative perspective than it might appear at first, and in my reading of the roundtable contributions from international relations historians or dance scholars Lauren Erin Brown, Mark Franko, Stéphanie Gonçalves, and Camelia Lenart as well as the response from Phillips, the question of how to read this theoretical claim emerges as a productive thread.

One paradox, for example, is that, at the same time as the diplomatic labor of presenting choreographic work glorifies the artist, it also foregrounds the aesthetic work of diplomatic institutions and their audiences as they engage in the coproduction of choreographic meaning. *Martha Graham's Cold War* is thus in part the history of how actors reframe choreographic work to signify a political message. "Phillips," Gonçalves writes, "goes beyond conventional descriptions of Graham's choreographies to situate their content within the context of propaganda, deciphering the more or less subtle messages designed for foreign audiences."

Choreographic political messaging, of course, is neither consistent nor transparent. In her review, Brown elegantly sums up the transformation of iconic works like *Frontiers* (1937) and *Appalachian Spring* (1944) to signify, here, freedom from empire and borders, there, a national land project. Similarly, Lenart questions the significance of specific works with religions topics for audiences in Yugoslavia that she thinks likely differed from that reported by U.S. officials, and Gonçalves emphasizes the "role of local impresarios—who are often invisible in the historiography." Phillips does not disagree, and also highlights the fact that reconstructing past meanings can be puzzling, for example when she recounts the projection and embrace of the Orientalist *Frescoes* "with dancers seeming to 'do the Egyptian' in 1970s disco leotards" in Egypt in 1979.

Of course, reconstructing a plurality of intents and interpretations is a matter of both narrative and archive. All four reviewers highlight the distinctive contribution that the book makes to existing scholarship. Brown, Gonçalves, and Lenart convey admiration for Phillips's archival work, which encompasses a broad range of governmental, private, and nonprofit sources, (including Graham's file at the Federal Bureau of Investigation) and, in Brown's words, "will set the bar for future cultural diplomacy endeavors." All the while, Phillips readily acknowledges "deficits," for example when Gonçalves points to additional information Soviet sources could provide. Still, *Martha Graham's Cold War*, Phillips hopes, makes "the space wide enough for diplomatic, regional, cultural, and dance scholars" to launch further work.

In that space, what will it mean to think of Graham as a diplomat and of diplomatic institutions as artistic creators? With characteristic keenness, Franko suggests that we not forget important questions: What politics should one read in Graham's "choreography itself"? What "corroborations" do the words and actions of the artist offer? And perhaps as importantly: what agency does the individual have in diplomatic life, especially a twentieth-century artist whose very role and personality may seem to elevate creative individuality? "The diplomatic cliches about modernism—universality, freedom, psychological depth, etc.—flood the account. Why do we not feel the political presence of Martha Graham within this narrative?," Franko

[5] Nigel Gould-Davies, "The Intimate Dance of Diplomacy: In Praise of Practice," *International Affairs* 89:6 (November 2013): 1459–1467, here 1465.

[6] Gould-Davies, "Intimate Dance of Diplomacy," 1465.

ponders. Strikingly, Gonçalves offers a similar reading of the jacket image that portrays "a lonely *chiaroscuro* silhouette of Martha Graham": "Graham seems to be fading away, maybe like the personality of Graham in the book. Martha Graham disappears a bit in the narrative."

Phillips does not object to this concern, but she underscores that this complexity extends to governmental as well as individual agency. "I wonder who was manipulating whom," she writes as she reflects on where Graham's interests ended and those of the U.S. began. Who has demiurgic power in the partnership between art and politics? *Martha Graham's Cold War* and this roundtable invite us to dwell for a moment in the uneasy space where dance becomes politics and politics choreography.

Participants:

Victoria Phillips is a Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics in the Department of International History, director of the Cold War Archival Research project (CWAR), the History, Culture and Diplomacy project, and History OnLine. Her articles have appeared in such varied publications as the *New York Times*, *American Communist History, Dance Chronicle*, *Ballet News*, *Dance Research Journal* and *Grant's Interest Rate Observer*. She has curated several public exhibitions in the United States and Europe, and has lectured at renowned universities, colleges, high schools, and global institutes. At present she serves on the boards of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the European Institute at Columbia University, the British Society of Dance Scholars, the Global Biography Working Group, and chairs the SHAFR Committee on Digital Resources and Archival Sharing. She is on the editorial boards of *American Communist History* and *Dance Chronicle*. Before receiving her Ph.D. in history, she received an MFA in fiction and an MBA in Finance and International Business. While pursuing her B.A. in Literature and Writing, she worked as a Baroque and modern dancer on stage and television. Her favorite memory is performing *Diversion of Angels* in a studio showing for Martha Graham, with her father looking on. Her primary research is held at the Library of Congress as the Victoria Phillips Collection.

Lauren Erin Brown is an Associate Professor of History and Politics & Human Rights at Marymount Manhattan College. An expert on American cultural policy, she is the author of "Cold War, Culture Wars, War on Terror: the NEA and the Art of Public Diplomacy," in *Cold War History* (2020) and "'As Long as They Have Talent': Organizational Barriers to Black Ballet," in *Dance Chronicle* (2018). Her current research focuses on post-Cold War arts funding.

Mark Franko, Laura H. Carnell Professor of Dance, directs the Institute for Dance Scholarship at Temple University. He has published eight books including *Choreographing Discourses: A Mark Franko Reader* (Routledge, 2018) and *The Fascist Turn in the Dance of Serge Lifar: French Interwar Ballet and the German Occupation* (Oxford University Press, 2020). Editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Reenactment* and founding editor of the Oxford Studies in Dance Theory book series, Franko is recipient of the 2011 Outstanding Scholarly Research in Dance Award of the Congress in Research in Dance. He is recipient of a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial fellowship and a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship.

Stéphanie Gonçalves, a cultural historian, holds a Ph.D. from the Université libre de Bruxelles. Her research was published as *Danser pendant la guerre froide, 1945-1968* (Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2018). Her work explores the links between dance and politics in the twentieth century, particularly the transnational circulations of dancers and cultural diplomacy. She was a postdoctoral fellow at the Academia Belgica in Rome as well as at the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research at the Université libre de Bruxelles. Her latest research project on Maurice Béjart is entitled "Rethinking the Béjart Phenomenon: Artistic and Socio-cultural Perspectives on a Multifaceted Choreographer." In 2018-2020, she was the secretary of the French *Association des Chercheurs en Danse* where she is still a member of the scientific committee. Since October 2020, she has been a trainee curator at the House of European History, European Parliament, Brussels. She also teaches at the Université libre de Bruxelles, the Royal Conservatoire of Antwerp, and the Catholic University of the West (Université catholique de l'Ouest), France. Her research has been published in *Dance Chronicle*, *Cold War History* and *Relations Internationales*, among other journals.

Camelia Lenart is a Lecturer at the State University of New York at Albany. Her research, which is at the interface of dance, diplomatic, and cultural history, was supported by numerous fellowships and awards, including an Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship from the University College London. She has presented in conferences and published in journals around the world, and her article "Dancing Art and Politics beyond the Iron Curtain: Martha Graham's 1962 Tour to Yugoslavia and Poland" received one of the prestigious Dance Chronicle Founding Editors Awards. She is currently working on a book manuscript based on her doctoral dissertation "State of the Art/Art of State: The European Tours of Martha Graham and Her Dance Company, 1950-1967."

Review by Lauren Erin Brown, Marymount Manhattan College

One of the great challenges for dance history scholars is coaxing colleagues in other fields—political science, diplomacy and foreign policy, labor and economics—to pay attention to scholarship that at first blush puts the soft in soft power. Where the past twenty years have seen a boom in cultural diplomacy research, with outstanding work from scholars like Frances Stonor Saunders, Michael Krenn, Penny Von Eschen, and Laura Belmonte showing how art, movies, music, sport, and consumption shaped global conversations, few are conversant in the manifold ways dance figured in those discussions, beyond a famed Soviet ballet defector or two.[7] Canonical works like David Caute's wonderful and wide-ranging *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War*, only serves up a single chapter dealing exclusively with dance; ballet dancers make similarly brief appearances in Yale Richmond's *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War*.[8]

Fewer scholars are familiar with a work which predates these, Naima Prevots's *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War*.[9] Prevots's study was the first to explore the American National Theater and Academy (ANTA) Dance Panel meeting minutes, wherein dance representatives debated which artist to recommend for State Department exchange support and, with guidance from State, to where. Her work birthed a generation of dance historians—Victoria Phillips, Clare Croft, Anne Searcy, Stéphanie Gonçalves, myself, and others—all of whom are deeply focused on Cold War exchange, foreign relations, and cultural policy (Phillips and I met doing this research as graduate students and have remained friends and colleagues in the decades since).[10] There is rich work being produced in this area, which is still too often read by specialists only. With the publication of *Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy*, Victoria Phillips not only "firmly integrate[s] [modern dance] into Cold War political and strategic narratives," but does so in a manner which demands broader attention for its ambitious global approach over the entirety of the Cold War (18).

After all, center stage was wherever she was, as Graham liked to say (1). This is a statement which rings true when one realizes that "from Franklin Roosevelt through George H. W. Bush, every sitting president either sent Martha Graham abroad or received her at the White House" (294). As State Department emissary to more than 25 countries, Graham was deployed by administration after administration "as a cultural ambassador and her dances as cultural propaganda" (294). Her political alliances also came to include first ladies Eleanor Roosevelt, Jacqueline Kennedy, Betty Ford, and Barbara Bush, and her political utility carried all the way through the waning days of the Cold War, with gala events planned (though sadly unrealized) under Bush in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Soviet bloc countries in November 1989, as the Berlin Wall fell (11). Martha's final exit came in April 1991, at the age of 96 and—in one last act of truly theatrical timing—as the Soviet Union itself disintegrated (293).

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[7] Francis Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 2001); Michael Krenn, *Fall-Out Shelters for the Human Spirit: American Art and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); and Laura Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

[8] David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy During the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003).

[9] Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

[10] Clare Croft, *Dancers as Diplomats: American Choreography in Cultural Exchange* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Anne Searcy, *Ballet in the Cold War: A Soviet-American Exchange* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020); and Stéphanie Gonçalves, *Danser pendant la guerre froide, 1945-1968* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2018).

Documenting this arc, of a life within and of the Cold War, allows Phillips to "examine Graham's enduring influence as a female ambassador who performed American freedoms with modernism in dance on the global Cold War stage" (12). A series of explorations support this study; all the ways in which Graham's "modern dance" (itself a complicated term Phillips takes care to contextualize and unpack for those who are less familiar with either dance or Graham's place within the genre) interacted with "modernism," "universalism," "freedom" (particularly religious liberty), and to lesser degrees "racism" and "feminism," to become politically useful across such a broad sweep of time and locations. Altogether, Phillips argues that Graham "forms a lens through which to view the Cold War as a battle for the mantle of the politically modern," a battle within which dance was one of America's most powerful weapons (21).

Taking its structure from the company's tours, *Martha Graham's Cold War* unfolds over nine chapters and a coda. Chapter 1 situates Graham within modern dance history, from her early roots with Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn as a "Denishawn" dancer to the emergence of her own codified form, and the process by which this genre of dance, left-leaning as it and Graham were, evolved in the 1930s to find itself a useful government agent for Cold War deployment. Chapter 2 describes the Graham Company's tour of Bandung Conference nations in 1955-56, a whirlwind through Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaya, Burma, India, Ceylon, Pakistan, and Iran. Both the Prologue and Chapter 2, with their discussions of "trickle-down" or "cocktail circuit" diplomacy—and with a focus on elite interactions (ambassadors, dignitaries, and those of social, economic, or political influence) aimed at encouraging positive American impressions in the upper echelons of society, who would then influence the masses—introduce the reader to a formula which will guide most of the tours (and chapters) that follow in later years.

Chapter 3 is one of the few to dive deep into a specific locale—here Berlin in 1957 with Graham's solo performance in West Germany at the opening of Eleanor Dulles's Congress Hall, the planning and execution of which further entwined the artist with figures working with the Congress for Cultural Freedom (and thus the CIA). One of the strongest chapters of the book, it also delivers a fascinating look into how women—Dulles, Graham—wielded influence in a policy world still very much dominated by men. Phillips writes eloquently here (and in later discussions of Bethsabée de Rothschild and Betty Ford) about female relationships in a way that leaves the reader wanting even more. Chapter 4 spins us from President John F. Kennedy's America through the 1962 tour—Israel, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Poland, Sweden, West Germany, Finland, and the Netherlands. Chapter 5, which is deeply engaging, covers the late 1960s through the early 1970s as Graham grappled with aging, alcoholism, and both private and public patronage problems; her production of *Phaedra* in West Germany provoked intense Congressional debate at a moment when the formalized federal arts funding (the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts) was close but not yet assured.

Chapters 6 through 9 bring the reader back on the road for the company's tours from the mid-1970s through the late 1980s: the Asia tour route that is described in the beginning of the book and was revisited for Nixon, Ford, and Kissinger in 1974; the Carter-era "Egyptomania" which saw Graham's creation of *Frescoes*, a work set in the newly opened Temple of Dendur at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, before the troupe traveled to Israel, Egypt, and Jordan; and finally, to East Berlin in 1987. Threaded throughout are discussions of Graham's relationships with First Lady Betty Ford (a former Graham student), fashion designer Halston, and company manager Ron Protas. Phillips also explores Graham's working relationships with Russian defectors Rudolf Nureyev and Mikhail Baryshnikov, both of whom performed in *Appalachian Spring* (1944) for the 1987 New York season gala. The Russian dancers' embrace of Americana closes out the coda; plans for new works and a 1991 Russian tour (if unrealized) mark the triumph of Martha Graham's American modernism and Western frontiers as the Soviet Union dissolved.

In terms of archival research, this book will set the bar for future cultural diplomacy endeavors. Government documents from the State Department, the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, the United States Information Agency (USIA), the Operations Coordinating Board, the National Security Agency, and more are referenced against the papers of George Kennan, Eleanor Dulles, and Nelson Rockefeller as well as the archives of every pertinent Presidential library. For dance, Phillips relied heavily on the Graham collection at the Library of Congress and the Martha Graham Foundation, plus material at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Berlin's Mary Wigman archive, George Mason University's Robert Breen Theatre Collection, and FOIA requests for Graham's FBI file. Stateside documents are enhanced

by research abroad in Germany, Hungary, Israel, Poland, and Serbia, and official records are fleshed out via news coverage the world over as well as a variety of interviews with Graham company dancers.

Such ambitious research marks a shift in how many scholars have approached cultural diplomacy, focused as they are on the U.S.-Soviet dynamic or, alternately, on the experience of the Cold War in a specific region. Phillips is clear that she wanted to get away from these frames, providing a Graham's-eye view of the Cold War, landing in location after location, to demonstrate not only Graham's adaptability but also the savvy shifts in American diplomatic marketing that was happening in all corners of the world. She pulls this off by keeping the terms of the conversation consistent—by focusing primarily on the elite interactions her source base of diplomatic reports documents: the red carpets before curtains, the embassy parties, the presidential galas, the socialites and influential elites who provided funding, and the covert money that literally allowed for spies to mix at the theatre. For every stop the reader discovers in-depth coverage of the preparations and priorities that shaped the tour, artistic and political, though there are moments where it is slightly unclear if Graham or government officials were driving the decisions. (One gets the impression it was Graham, if for no other reason than her iron will.)

Abundantly clear, however, is how Graham's political savvy aptly matched her artistic genius. Phillips begins the book discussing what she identifies as "cultural convergences"—the ways in which Graham integrated host country culture "into her programming and publicity in order to promote mutual understanding" (23). Graham featured Japanese techniques in Asia (with her partnership with Japanese American artist Isamu Noguchi, for example), created works inspired by the Old Testament for Israel, and featured European mythology and history in Europe. While this analytical tool falls a little by the wayside in the second half of the book, the first half alone provides Phillips myriad ways by which to clearly demonstrate how the diplomacy linked to the dances themselves, taking the reader through Graham's choreography in detail and explaining why pieces were chosen.

Even more interesting in this light are the repeat analyses of Graham's iconic American works, *Appalachian Spring* (1944) and *Frontiers* (1937). *Spring* is the story of an American frontier couple on their wedding day; the dance wove abstracted square dance patterns with Graham's signature movements, all done to Aaron Copeland's musical riff on the old Shaker tune, "Simple Gifts." It personified joy, optimism, freedom, and American promise, and unsurprisingly, appears in almost every chapter. Over the course of the book readers watch this work deliver different meanings all over the world—"a celebratory story of the frontier after the pioneers ridded themselves of the British Empire" in Asia or an endorsement of national expansion in Israel (71, 84, 107). Phillips explains, "Of *Appalachian Spring*, Graham had said. . . 'You choose a piece of land; part of the house goes up. You dedicate it.' *Appalachian Spring*, to Graham, was 'essentially a dance of place'" (207). But by 1974 Graham would declare that it was "everyone's frontier," explaining, "'It is not a frontier you can find on an atlas'" (207). *Frontiers*, meanwhile, first performed for Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House in 1937, was a literal homage to the independence and promise of American women on the plains, in solo form. By the 1980s it had become a metaphorical homage to the "Frontiers of Freedom" which awaited those in Berlin, if they would just "tear down that wall" (294). Graham's mid-century Americana was packaged and repackaged, again and again, as Phillips explains throughout the book, in a smart appeal to political relevancy.

Of course, what bedevils both the practice and study of soft power, or cultural diplomacy, is impact measurement. The cheap and easy criticism of any such work simply muses, "but what *exactly* did the government gain from these efforts,"[11] as if the critic desires a smoking gun in the form of a letter from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to President Ronald Reagan proclaiming "I have seen *Appalachian Spring,* and I must accept defeat. Wall comes down Tuesday." Just as American educators have been drawn into elaborate assessment schemes in efforts to quantify learning's bottom lines, so too has the

[11] Victoria Phillips, "Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy," *Kirkus Reviews*, 1 July 2020, https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/victoria-phillips/martha-grahams-cold-war-the-dance-of-american-dipl/.

field of public diplomacy—all victims of American corporatization where marketing (or diplomatic propaganda) must be understood to deliver clear, documentable sales growth figures.[12]

Attempting to understand public diplomacy this way is missing the forest for the trees. Historically speaking, it does not have to be about American return on investment, it can be about understanding *why* the government made the choices it did to support *this artist*, and for that, Phillips has evidence aplenty. Graham and her work "demonstrated freedom of expression that was available only in a democracy in which artists were not tools of the state and thus not subject to totalitarian intervention or suppression, be it Nazi or Soviet" (294). Further her "Western modernism," was an "abstracted approach to humanism and 'universalism'. . . [that was] available only as a byproduct of the freedom of the individual. . . readable by all people despite cultural differences" (294). Finally, during all her international tours, "Graham promised to join elites in an imagined cultural community that served American diplomatic aims. She could persuade elite international leaders to join the American government to enact its foreign policy objectives, through her choreography and her company, but, most important, also through her own position at center stage" (294).

Beautifully researched, written with care and detail galore on the nitty-gritty of the planning of Graham's international tours, both in terms of dance as well as propaganda, Phillips's work sets a new watermark for both cultural diplomacy thinkers and Graham scholars. It will be exciting to see the next generation of works that her writing inspires—local audience research at tour locations, studies in the spread of the Graham technique internationally, and of course, more research into other dance artists similarly supported by the American government as cultural exports.

[12] Historical evaluations of the ever-shifting sands of public diplomacy assessment models are few, though reams of government and research center (University of Maryland's PIPA project, USC's Center for Public Diplomacy, etc.) reports exist, with practitioners positing new methodologies regularly. See Katherine Brown, "Challenges in Measuring Public Diplomacy," *Soft Power* 30 (2017), https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/challenges-measuring-public-diplomacy.

Review by Mark Franko, Temple University

In examining the engagement of a modern artist of the twentieth century with state political power the question arises as to whether the collaboration of art and politics can be explained by an artist's personal commitments. If scholars do not give precedence to the personal politics of the artist, they may well consider the appropriation of the artist by the state. So, for example, the debate has never really been resolved as to whether German modern dancer Mary Wigman was a fascist or whether she only adapted herself to the Nazi regime to continue practicing her art.[13] Conversely, I have presented a case for the authentic commitment of choreographer Serge Lifar to Nazi ideology under the German occupation of Paris.[14] Undergirding to some degree these sorts of considerations are analyses of the politics of particular choreographic works. The idea that choreographic performance has a politics is by now a well-established premise in the field of Dance Studies.

Whereas the artist herself may collaborate out of self-interest, opportunism, or a deep ideological commitment—one often concealed and, if necessary, denied after the fact—works of art themselves tend to be far more ambiguous yet also richer and more rewarding objects of analysis. The formal traits of art—particularly modernist art that minimizes or totally eliminates representation—lend themselves to interpretation only through understanding complex interactions between visual and movement style, music and costume, theoretical pronouncements and the rhetoric of critical reception. In the case of much objectivist modern art, the artist's disclaimer as to intent—political or otherwise—is to be expected and often helps us very little. In sum, the politics of art can be understood as the politics of the artist or the politics of the artwork.

The case of Martha Graham is quite interesting in this regard. To this day, her legacy is associated with an a-political stance. Yet when one looks closely at the evolution of her work a political position does emerge clearly in the course of the turbulent 1930s: anti-fascism. Graham became active in labor-related causes following the Soviet declaration of the Popular Front against Fascism in 1935. Her anti-fascist position is unmistakable in her solo *Imperial Gesture* (1935), and we know this thanks to the reconstructive work of Kim Jones.[15] Also, in 1935 she danced for the International Labor Defense at Carnegie Hall, and at the International Celebration under the auspices of the Workers Training School at the Venice Theater in New York City. In 1937 she premiered two solos in sympathy with the anti-fascist forces of the Spanish Civil War, *Immediate Tragedy* (1937) and *Deep Song* (1937). Her political commitment to anti-fascism reached a high point with the evening-length *American Document* (1938) sponsored by the Marxist magazine *New Masses*. It was featured on a national tour in 1939 which put Graham on the national map. This work both celebrated democracy and interrogated the meaning of being an American, envisioning democracy as an unfinished project.

Prior to its premiere, *The Dance Observer* reported on a meeting of the American Committee for Anti-Nazi Literature that was hosting presentations of Dr. George S. Counts of Columbia University and Martha Graham.

> The warning of Dr. Counts, that Fascism arose out of our western world and is therefore not entirely removed from this country, and Miss Graham's plea that dancers be watchful of their world

[13] See Susan Manning, *Ecstasy and the Demon: Feminism and Nationalism in the Dances of Mary Wigman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) and Lilian Karina and Marion Kant, *Hitler's Dancers: German Modern Dance and the Third Reich*, translated by Jonathan Steinberg (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2003).

[14] Mark Franko, *The Fascist Turn in the Dance of Serge Lifar. French Interwar Ballet and the German Occupation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[15] Kim Jones, "American Modernism: Reimagining Martha Graham's Lost *Imperial Gesture* (1935)," in *Dance Research Journal* 47:3 (2015): 51-70.

> and sincere in their art, carried over the emphasis that the very real and terrible developments taking place in the world leave no one unaffected. . . . America has its enemies within.[16]

Thus, Graham's political coming of age corresponded with the emergence of the Popular Front against Fascism.[17] My point here is that Graham's emergence to national prominence cannot be disassociated from the political interventions of her work between 1935 and 1944 (if we include *Appalachian Spring* not only as her final Americana work but also her final work to blend patriotism with Popular Front politics).[18] That is to say, her politics can be read in her choreography itself and then corroborated by her words and actions offstage.

Graham's diplomatic missions starting ten years later in a very different political climate seem to have been less motivated from a personal and/or choreographic perspective. Certainly, none of the works that toured under the auspices of the State Department were created in response to an anti-Communist agenda. What sort of political commitment do they represent?

Graham's first "Americana" solo—*Frontier*—had its premiere in 1935. *Frontier* can be interpreted in many ways, one of which would be as a hymn to manifest destiny. In the context of Graham's anti-fascist works, *Frontier* is politically ambiguous.[19] Nevertheless, as Victoria Phillips reminds us, Eleanor Roosevelt invited Graham to perform this solo at the White House in 1937. *Frontier* is in some ways the leitmotif of *Martha Graham's Cold War*. It seems to span the narrative from 1937 to the Berlin Wall. With the Roosevelt invitation, Phillips opines: "Graham had arrived on the American political stage" (55). This is clear if we understand the president and the first lady as themselves occupying the political stage and Graham's performance before them as a harbinger of her diplomatic missions to come. But Graham herself had already redefined the stage properly speaking as political. For Phillips, the White House invitation signifies Graham's arrival into the world of American diplomacy, and it forecasts her future activity as a cultural ambassador of dance to the world. This activity was only to begin in earnest, however, in 1955 with the State Department-sponsored Asian Tour. As for the political stage itself—the stage as a place of political consequence through its effects on an audience—Graham had already arrived.

Graham built on this impetus throughout the 1940s, as her notoriety continued to spread thanks to the cultivation of her image in the media. In 1941 Graham was addressed directly as an icon of American art in a Nazi radio broadcast:

> Political frontiers change all the time and Roosevelt's secretly extended American frontiers on the European continent will soon be meaningless and just the grotesque memory in history books. But your Frontier, Martha Graham, will remain unchanged and unaffected by political and social evolutions because your Frontier is not a political borderline, it is the eternal frontier between home and world outside. The borderline between security and adventure; between the known

[16] "A Dancer and an Educator on Fascism," *The Dance Observer* (March 1937), n.p., https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200154356.

[17] Mark Franko, *Martha Graham in Love and War: The Life in the Work* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). See especially Chapter One: "Myth, Nationalism and Embodiment in *American Document*."

[18] See Mark Franko, "Politics Under Erasure: Regionalism as Cryptology," in *Martha Graham in Love and War*, 45-65.

[19] I treat Graham's ambivalence toward the left in the early 1930s in Mark Franko, *Dancing Modernism/Performing Politics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

> and the unknown. The frontier which is at the same time protection and prison and temptation albeit a door that keeps you in and invites you to go out.[20]

Was the Nazi spokesman trying to win Graham over? During the Cold War the United States government was more interested in Graham's iconic status as a modern American artist, a talisman of the freedom found in American society as a bulwark against Communism, than in her abilities to make persuasive political statements through dance. But the Nazi broadcast is evidence that adversaries could read dance differently even within the terms of the much-vaunted a-political modernism. The broadcast was a sophisticated attempt to reverse those terms.

Instead, Phillips's thumbnail sketches of Graham works seem to mimic the brevity and pithiness of propaganda lingo in a government dispatch. She writes: "Her metaphoric message continues to ring clear in her solo work *Frontier*: she called for walls among people to be torn down in the name of American freedom" (13). It is not clear whether Philips is summing up Graham's intent or whether this is a way of indirectly characterizing governmental hype. There is a difference, presumably, between the works themselves and the diplomatic uses to which they were put. Such distinctions are often blurred in Phillips's prose. Clare Croft's recent book *Dancers as Diplomats*: *American Choreography in Cultural Exchange* deals with the same theme.[21] Phillips does not engage with Croft and what distinguishes their methodologies. For this reason, it is hard to see how *Martha Graham's Cold War* participates in an ongoing dialogue in dance studies on dance and diplomacy.

Nonetheless, learning of the many government sponsored tours of the Graham company between 1955 and 1989 undoubtably adds a facet of knowledge to Graham scholarship that is entirely new, and this is vastly to the book's credit. Phillips brings to our attention Graham's final act, an aspect of her long career that has until now passed relatively unnoticed. In some ways it is hard to frame this narrative within an encompassing problematic of dance and politics because the period covered is largely that of Graham's decline. *Martha Graham's Cold War* is about how Graham and her dance company became useful to the goals of American diplomacy during the Cold War and how the Company survived thanks largely to government sponsorship. What is fascinating in the analysis of the government's calculations and intent is the idea that modern dance was selected to appeal to the elites of various nations whom it was believed were destined to steer the course of the future.

The value of this book is not in its historical grasp of Graham herself as a politically motivated artist or in its analysis of the political import of her work (although this could be another outcome demanding knowledge of the critical reception in many languages), but in its account of the state-sponsored manipulation of Graham in the diplomatic context of the Cold War; the diplomatic cliches about modernism—universality, freedom, psychological depth, etc.,— flood the account. Why do we not feel the political presence of Martha Graham within this narrative? Perhaps it is because she was being willingly manipulated. The dance of diplomacy was to a large degree a dance performed between the dancer and the state. The author clearly does not take the ideological goals of American anti-Communism to heart. Did Graham?

Perhaps it is a moot question as we learn that starting in the early seventies Graham nearly died of alcoholism and was nursed back to health by benefactors of dubious credentials. It was at this time that First Lady Betty Ford reached out to Graham and the enduring cycle of Cold War touring began. This was luck and happenstance. There is not much of inherent interest to tell of Graham the artist in this third afterlife she sustained for another twenty years or so and through which she burnished her legend. It is a story of survival, but even in its providentially successful aspects it is also a story of decline. As Phillips remarks of *Frontier* in her conclusion: "It became a suspect product of a hegemonic empire" (294). The narrative of

[20] "Transcript of Talk," June 5, 1941, NBC shortwave monitoring service. Scrapbooks, Martha Graham Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[21] Clare Croft, *Dancers as Diplomats: American Choreography in Cultural Exchange* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

the artist's intent and commitment and the narrative of the Cold War seem paradoxically to part company here. Perhaps the Cold War is a fitting metaphor for the loss of true battles.

Review by Stéphanie Gonçalves, Université libre de Bruxelles

Martha Graham's Cold War is a book not to be missed. The publication is the fruit of her Ph.D. dissertation at Columbia University as well as the result of more than a decade of a worldwide research on the American modern dancer and choreographer Martha Graham (1894-1991). Victoria Phillips knows her subject very well. A child of the Cold War growing up in 1960s New York and a former dancer who took classes in the Graham company (13-14), she has published work on Martha Graham's tours in Asia in 2010—underscoring the phrase "dancing diplomacy"— and on Graham's autobiography, *Blood Memory*, in 2013.[22]

The research is part of the renewal of Cold War historiography known as the "New Cold War History." The cultural turn in Cold War studies more than twenty years ago has enriched the academic study of literature, art, music, cinema, theater, and dance. Frances Stonor Saunders, David Caute, Laura Belmonte, Michael L. Krenn, and many other historians have equipped us with a better understanding of the complex history of artistic actors and their works used as cultural diplomatic tools by the American governments.[23] In this context, Naima Prevots's *Dance for Export* paved the way to a new understanding of the strong yet sometimes forgotten connections between dance and diplomacy.[24] Researchers like Catherine Gunther Kodat, Cadra Peterson McDaniel, Clare Croft, Stacey Prickett, and most recently, Anne Searcy have followed in her footstep.[25] Martha Graham is a star of dance historiography and many projects have underscored the intersection of dance and politics in her tours.[26] Phillips's challenge was to go beyond the usual biography, analyzing the entanglement of Graham's repertoire and her international tours under the American flag during the long period of the Cold War, without falling into the trap of hagiography.

The book of more than 450 pages is subdivided into a prologue, an introduction, and nine chapters. In an echo of ballet vocabulary, it closes with a coda, the moment at the end of a performance when every soloist parades on stage once more. The *in medias res* prologue and the introduction outline key concepts in the journey to come: Americanism, freedom, modernism, feminism, religion, and so on. The chapters follow a chronological order from Graham's career in the 1920s to the end of the Cold War after 1989, with a particular focus on the period from the middle of the 1950s to 1989. The book offers an exhaustive account of different tours and spaces, from Asia to Israel and from Eastern Europe to West Berlin, in

[22] Victoria Phillips, "Dancing Diplomacy: Martha Graham and the Strange Commodity of Cold-War Cultural Exchange in Asia, 1955 and 1974," *Dance Chronicle* 33:1 (2010): 44-81; and Victoria Phillips, "Martha Graham's Gilded Cage: *Blood Memory—An Autobiography* (1991)," *Dance Research Journal* 45:2 (2013): 63-83.

[23] Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999); David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Laura Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: US Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); and Michael L. Krenn, *The History of United States Cultural Diplomacy: 1770 to the Present Day* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017).

[24] Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

[25] Catherine Gunther Kodat, *Don't Act, Just Dance: The Metapolitics of Cold War Culture* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014); Cadra Peterson McDaniel, *American–Soviet Cultural Diplomacy: The Bolshoi Ballet's American Premiere* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014); Clare Croft, *Dancers as Diplomats: American Choreography in Cultural Exchange* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Stacey Prickett, "Taking America's Story to the World": Touring Jerome Robbins's Ballets: U.S.A. during the Cold War," *Dance Research Journal* 52:2 (2020): 4-25; and Anne Searcy, *Ballet in the Cold War: A Soviet-American Exchange* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

[26] Riikka Korppi-Tommola, "Politics Promote Dance: Martha Graham in Finland, 1962," *Dance Chronicle* 33:1 (2010): 82-112; and Camelia Lenart, "Dancing Art and Politics Behind the Iron Curtain: Martha Graham's 1962 Tours to Yugoslavia and Poland," *Dance chronicle* 39:2 (2016): 197-217.

the footsteps of "the Picasso of the modern dance" (1). It highlights the construction of Graham's international aura and her appeal for Soviet defectors and international stars Rudolf Nureyev and Michael Baryshnikov.

The portrait that emerges of Martha Graham in the Cold War is complex. Well-versed in the codes and costumes of public diplomacy, she was a "savvy" cultural ambassador—a description that appears in the text twice (75 and 209). "Propagandist, modernist, missionary and feminist" (36), Graham was all four at the same time, even while claiming she was not. It is not a linear and smooth history though: Phillips describes the continuities and ruptures of Graham's long career and the ups and downs in Washington's plans to export her abroad as a pride of American modernism. Apolitical but close to the Communists at the time of the Spanish Civil War and in her opposition to the Nazi regime (60), promoting modernism and youth with a dance and a body that both suffered from the passage of time, Martha Graham embodied many contradictions.

Phillips delineates the realities, doubts, and compromises of Martha Graham and American diplomacy as they sought to conquer "hearts and minds." The diversity of primary sources, from nearly 50 archives, demonstrates the author's extensive quest for a wide variety of perspectives, including diplomatic papers (often neglected by dance historians but an incredible source to write its history), Presidential papers, FBI reports, the personal papers of diplomats, administrative documentation, Graham's writings and letters, and secondary sources that help provide context. All together, these sources offer a multifaceted history of the cultural Cold War, a detailed study of Graham's international tours and behind-the-scenes negotiations, and an in-depth account of her relationships with U.S. presidents from Franklin D. Roosevelt to George H. W. Bush. The delicate question of the restricted access to corporate papers, especially the Martha Graham Dance Company archives, is discussed in the acknowledgments (305). Beyond written documents, oral sources were also crucial in the research process: the cultural diplomacy of dance takes place in the cozy lounges of Washington, beautiful red and gold Opera houses abroad, quasi-improvised stages in some cities of Asia, and airport tarmacs across the world. Comparisons with Soviet actors on the field are particularly useful to understand the competition between dancing bodies during the Cold War. Soviet documents would have helped to deepen the subject. A comparison with other non-American companies also touring the world at the time would add complexity to the story.

The book weaves dance and Cold War histories gracefully, striking the right balance between repertoire analysis and international history, aesthetic life, and political negotiations. The narrative touches on many significant events in the chronology of the global Cold War: the Bandung conference in 1954, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, the Suez crisis in 1968, and the building of the Berlin Wall. The role of the mass media is epitomized by Martha Graham's multiformat communication through not only performances, but also lectures, press conferences, radio broadcasts, and television programs, in front of a more diverse public than one might imagine. Martha Graham's company constituted a mixed-race cast of African American, Asian, Asian American, *Mayflower* Americans, and international dancers presenting the symbolic picture of a diverse, open group of people dancing freely. They were far from the "ugly" (80) or purely consumerist individuals that anti-American propaganda foregrounded (64). Graham's dances helped to mediate the representation of a humanist, "modern," and "universal" American diplomacy. In the process, Phillips also puts the spotlight on the role of women in Cold War negotiations. The portraits of Virginia Inness-Brown, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Eleanor Lansing Dulles as Cold War combatants are inspiring for future research.

Through her study of Graham's repertoire, Phillips offers an analysis of transversal concepts like Americanism, modernism, feminism, and religion. She recounts the emergence of modern dance in the U.S. through the circulation and influence of German dancers like Mary Wigman. Phillips goes beyond conventional descriptions of Graham's choreographies to situate their content within the context of propaganda, deciphering the more or less subtle messages designed for foreign audiences. The very American question of the frontier is "universalized" through the famous *Appalachian Spring*; the religious dimension is mobilized for the Polish public with the *Seraphic Dialogue* (on the Catholic Saint Joan of Arc) and *Embattled Garden* (on the Garden of Eden); and so on.

A beautiful series of onstage and backstage pictures give a more tangible, bodily dimension to the often-cinematographic descriptions of galas and performances. The photos show Martha Graham at the "center of the stage" with people who

made Cold War history. The jacket image is particularly well-chosen, portraying a lonely *chiaroscuro* silhouette of Martha Graham, recognizable by her high bun and her endless lashes. Is she on a stage or on a tarmac, looking at the horizon in the clouds and turmoil of life? She seems to be fading away, maybe like the personality of Graham in the book. Martha Graham disappears a bit in the narrative, and one wonders whether aspects of her inner thinking and intimate life may have been useful for the reader. Yet the book also goes beyond the usual and all-too-familiar biography of the artist: Graham's struggles with alcoholism and depression are carefully distilled in the text.

There are a few small areas of criticism. The two maps ("photos" 7 and 19) summarizing the geographic paths of the tours could have been better highlighted, either in the text or at the beginning of the illustration booklet. They both give a comprehensive illustration of the battlefield of the American cultural Cold War and facilitate a comparison of the tours' destinations with military hot spots. It is also difficult for non-American readers to follow the complex layering of U.S. institutions that financed culture during the Cold War: a synthetic table would have been welcomed as well as a chronology of changes in these organizations' names. Some financial and logistical aspects of the tours could have been more developed to help the reader enter into the tour "factory." The role of local impresarios—who are often invisible in the historiography—could have been brought forward in order to avoid a U.S.-centered history and to explore two-way cultural exchanges where they took place. More generally, high-level actors rather than company dancers take the pride of place in the narrative.

Still, *Martha Graham's Cold War* is a meticulously written page-turner which adds to our understanding of the links between dance and diplomacy in general and the making of American dancing diplomacy in particular. It conveys a more embodied history of the American cultural Cold War on international stages. Both dance historians and international relations scholars need more books like this one.

Review by Camelia Lenart, State University of New York at Albany

In the thirty years since the death of legendary dancer and choreographer Martha Graham (1894-1991), her fame and legacy, as well as the scholarly interest focusing on her life, artistic innovation, and on the role she played in American cultural diplomacy during the Cold War has kept growing. One can imagine her, looking at us, audiences, dance lovers, and scholars, with a smirk on her face and with a twinkle in her eyes, amused and definitely pleased to see that she was right when she believed herself to be immortal. And she is. "The Priestess of dance" is arguably one of the most known and recognizable pioneers of American modern dance and U.S. cultural diplomacy around the world, across cultures and generations.[27]

During the last decade and at the beginning of the present one, research focusing on Graham has reached new heights, scope, and depth, thriving at a speed which has increased year after year. The existing work on Graham until the beginning of the millennium—an autobiography, biographies, analyses of the "evolution of her dance theory and training"[28] and her impact on the creation of the "modern bodies,"[29] and her dancers' memoirs, to name just some of the contributions to this topic—was enlarged and enriched. Reputed scholars brought in new perspectives and understandings of her creation, love, and work, during time periods and areas of her life unexplored before.[30] Most importantly, dance historians also followed in Naima Prevots' footsteps, and on her quest to discover how dance became one of the "soft powers" of American cultural exchange.[31] Approaching Graham's career as a cultural diplomat during the Cold War, they positioned her dancing agenda and role as a dance traveler in the context of the State Department's engagement in American cultural diplomacy, followed Graham across the world, and demonstrated the major role played by Graham's message of diverse modernism and freedom abroad.[32] Very recently a former Graham dancer published his book on being "onstage with Graham," while a new biography of Graham is expected to appear soon.[33]

In this expanding, vibrant, and "moveable feast" of "Graham studies" Victoria Phillips's book *Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy* brings an extremely well researched and powerful contribution to the fields of dance

[27] I lived in Paris during the summer of 2018, where Martha Graham Dance Company's upcoming visit to Palais Garnier in the Fall was announced and publicized all over the city which used to be one of the least welcoming ones during Graham's international touring.

[28] Marian Horosko, *Martha Graham: The Evolution of Her Dance Theory and Training* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2002).

[29] Julia L. Foulkes, *Modern Bodies: Dance and American Modernism from Martha Graham to Alvin Ailey*, new ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[30] Mark Franko, *Martha Graham in Love and War: The Life in the Work* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2012); and Victoria Thoms, *Martha Graham: Gender & the Haunting of a Dance Pioneer* (Bristol: Intellect Ltd., 2013).

[31] Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export: Cultural Diplomacy and the Cold War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

[32] Riikka Korppi-Tommola "Politics Promote Dance: Martha Graham in Finland, 1962," *Dance Chronicle* 33:1 (2010): 82-112; Victoria Phillips Geduld, "Dancing Diplomacy: Martha Graham and the Strange Commodity of Cold-War Cultural Exchange in Asia, 1955 and 1974," *Dance Chronicle* 33:1 (2010): 44-81.

Clare Croft, *Dancers as Diplomats: American Choreography in Cultural Exchange* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Camelia Lenart, "Dancing Art and Politics beyond the Iron Curtain: Martha Graham's 1962 Tour to Yugoslavia and Poland," *Dance Chronicle* 39:2 (2016): 197-217.

[33] Stuart Hodes, *On Stage with Martha Graham* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2021).

studies, American international relations during the Cold War, American modernism, and women's diplomatic history. The book enriches the historical record and sheds new light on a number of key issues and events of the collaboration between Martha Graham and the makers of the American foreign policy during the Cold War which, as the author proves, was not always linear, and never simple. Graham's artistic modernism, Phillips argues, threaded with American nationalism, was used as a weapon in the Cold War. But Graham was not sent abroad solely as an entertainer, "as entertainment which does not also carry a political message" was not viewed favorably by the American government strategists and politicians in the context of "trickle-down diplomacy." As Phillips shows, Graham's art and persona had to promote the American message of modernism, patriotism, democracy, and inclusion, and to demonstrate American superiority over the performances of their opponents, the Soviets and their allies (9).

I found most enthralling the story of the timely mélange of arts and politics in the performance of "orientalist choreography" in Israel, Egypt, and Jordan during the "Jimmy Carter Goodwill Tour" in 1979, the year of the Iranian Revolution, the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (253). In the wake of these events and the political tensions surrounding them, "the hardened Cold Warrior" Jimmy Carter halted the American participation in the 1980 Olympics and shut down cultural exchange (263). Looking at this specific momentum, the book reflects on the complexity of the power dynamics involved in the making and performing of American cultural diplomacy, in which the dancers' agendas would come second to politics. However, it also shows that Graham, who considered herself to be a genius, thought otherwise. After Carter lost the elections, she would not hesitate to collaborate with the charismatic Ronald Reagan and play her final act in the/her Cold War, "dancing along the Wall" (265).

The value of the book is multilayered. One of its biggest accomplishments lies in its courageous attempt at telling the story of Martha Graham and how she used dance modernism as pro-Western Cold War propaganda, during a time span lasting for more than thirty years, from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Ronald Reagan, and from her first State Department tour to Asia and the Middle East in 1955-1956 to "dancing along the Wall" in 1989, thus covering the contribution of "dancing diplomacy" around the globe during several major crises in American international history. Telling Graham's compelling story, from her emergence as a cultural diplomat to her proxy-performance in East Berlin (279),[34] would not have been possible without—here lies another strength of the book—the extensive rainbow of archival sources used by the author (11). Phillips's work in American and foreign archives resulted in findings which were recorded with minutiae, and led to a most impressive number of notes which strengthen the book's arguments. My favorite archival finding? Of course, Martha Graham's Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) file, or, as Phillips shares with us, what remains of it, as some of the records disappeared, are lost, or missing. But, one wonders, in a Foucauldian manner, if "the missing items" do not also tell a compelling story, even if we are not (maybe yet) able to decipher it?

Each of the nine chapters that analyze Graham and her company's presence around the world are anchored in the time's historical frame, generously presenting the readers with most abundant information about the historical context in which the tours took place. Phillips's astute account of the continuities and discontinuities of American foreign policy during the Cold War will engage not only dance lovers but also anyone interested in foreign policy. I loved the way in which the author debuted the first four chapters with short quotations—lyrics from Iola Brubek and Louis Armstrong's *The Real Ambassadors*, a diplomatic memo, or Graham's own words. They added a performing artistic quality to each chapter, and like the short summaries from a playbill, they announced the next historical scene, played on the world stage, with Graham and her Company as main characters, performing art and cultural diplomacy (I wish the author had kept using these introductions in the last five chapters, and wonder why they were not).

The archival findings from the Presidential Libraries, which are used to reveal Graham's very scrutinized and politicized agenda as a cultural diplomat, give readers the chance to glance inside the almost mythically powerful White House from a new perspective. The American presidents, their tenures in the Oval Office, their successes and failures have long been

[34] Graham did not dance at the anniversary celebration of the city of Berlin in 1987, as she already retired from the stage years before, but accompanied her Company.

scrutinized by historians, but their relationship with American culture has not been analyzed in similar depth. Looking at the American presidents' complex mechanism of "making international relations" during the Cold War, and the way they imagined the role of American culture in it, the book poignantly clarifies and illuminates their cultural diplomatic philosophy. As the book shows, in spite of the fact that none of the Presidents were dedicated lovers of the arts in general and modernism in particular, all those involved in "exporting Graham" during the Cold War were well aware of the power of the arts to capture "people's hearts and minds."[35] The degrees and nuances of financial and logistic support Graham received to perform American modernism and cultural diplomacy abroad differed from one president to another, but they shared the same pragmatic views on Graham's cultural diplomatic role, targets, and boundaries. Graham and her Company were sent where they were needed the most to advance American political interests in the world.

It was engaging to read the author's perspective on Graham's 1962 tour behind the Iron Curtain, covered in Chapter 4. My work on the topic of Graham's tours to Yugoslavia and Poland, and my recent contributions to the use of religion by modern dancers during Communism, combined with my own experience of practicing faith in a former communist country from the Eastern bloc, enhanced my interest in this topic. In this chapter Phillips states that Graham presented in Eastern Europe the works *Embattled Garden, Seraphic Dialogue,* and *Acrobats of God*, "in order to combat the specter of Soviet atheism" (133), and that the tours aimed to oppose the "Godless communists" by offering the "American civil religion" (135). I found it most interesting that the author looked at the tours beyond the Iron Curtain from a religious perspective, even though Graham claimed numerous times that she was not devout.[36] However, as the reputed scholar William Inboden III stated, referring to the Cold War, "religion functioned in two distinct yet related ways in a great conflict: as a cause and an instrument."[37] Graham and her dancers understandably refrained from making any religiously-leaning comments during press conferences or other public events. The bodies of the dancers and the works presented on stage thus transmitted religious messages, if there were any.

Reconstructing the dances from pictures, critics' reviews, and other scholarly contributions to the topic of Graham's choreographies, it was hard to decipher "freedom through religion" messages. *Embattled Garden* is described on Martha Graham Dance Company's website as a "tragi-comedy [which] explores sacred and profane love" in the Garden of Eden which "was a garden of highly charged amorousness rather than biblical solemnity."[38] In his biography of Graham, Walter Terry defined *Acrobats of God* as a work dedicated to the dancers' laborious efforts, which made them the "athletes of God," as Graham called them.[39] Another biographer, Russell Freedman, called the piece a "tribute to dancers" and "a humorous spoof in which Martha poked fun at classical ballet, at modern dance, and her own pretensions."[40] If Graham and those who organized the tour wanted to give them a religious dimension, I wonder why the work *El Penitente* was not used; it is danced

[35] Dwight D. Eisenhower, cited by Eric Foner, in Naima Prevots, *Dance for Export,* 1.

[36] Graham said that three things she would not talk about were "politics, religion, and sex." Marian Horosko, *Martha Graham: The Evolution of Her Dance Theory and Training*, 157.

[37] William Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy, 1945–1960: The Soul of Containment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 3.

[38] Martha Graham, "Embattled Garden (1958)," https://marthagraham.org/portfolio-items/embattled-garden-1958, n.d.; I also saw the dance *Embattled Garden* presented by Martha Graham Dance Company in Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, 2015.

[39] Walter Terry, *Frontiers of Dance. The Life of Martha Graham* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1975), 136.

[40] Russell Freedman, *Martha Graham: A Dancer's Life* (Clarion Books, 1998), 129.

as "a series of episodes from the Bible as enacted by a group of strolling players," including Mary: Mary as Virgin, Magdalene, and Mother, the Penitent, and the Christ figure.[41]

Similarly, how could the story of the canonized Catholic saint Joan of Arc from *Seraphic Dialogue* speak volumes to the audience in Belgrade, the capital of Yugoslavia, whose inhabitants were mostly Eastern Orthodox? The religious persecutions of the Stalinist era, continued during Khrushchev's time, did not transform the geographical and cultural space of Eastern Europe into one that was bare of religion. Religious denomination was and has remained "an important factor in defining one's social identity."[42] Besides, by 1962 Yugoslavia was a non-aligned country, and thus not in the Soviet sphere like other Eastern European countries, having its own religious policies and their use for nationalistic purposes. In this light, it would have been captivating and enlightening to compare and contrast the reception of the alleged religious messages of the works presented in Belgrade with their reception of the Company's two performances of the same program in Zagreb, where the majority of the population was Catholic.[43]

Though Graham claimed that she was not a feminist (as well as not a propagandist), she still contributed very much to the re-definition of womanhood, and while Phillips was not looking at Graham from the women studies' angle, feminism came as a vital corollary in her book (23). Reading *Martha Graham's Cold War* one hundred years after American women were granted the right to vote and during the days when my adoptive country elected its first woman as vice president of the United States, it felt inspiring to see how Phillips's research reveals intricate aspects of the "power meets power" process, when the main actors—in this case dancers and politicians—were women. This perspective, which brings into discussion the role of gender in the making of Cold War U.S. foreign policy, complicates the story of Graham's role as an American cultural diplomat. Even if enabled by the vision crafted by the State Department, which during that time was led by men, powerful women had "a league of their own" and contributed substantially to Graham's success overseas (8).

Phillips's book adds new pages to American women's history through the analysis of Graham's collaboration with women who exited the "domestic" forties and fifties, embracing careers in the public sphere. Phillips's attention to the support the dancer received from American female diplomats, such as Eleanor Lansing Dulles and Clare Booth Luce, contributes to the history of women in diplomacy. She also brings to light the contribution of the First Ladies to Graham's career and thus to American diplomacy during the Cold War.[44] Graham's relationships with the American presidents were complex, and so were her relationships with the First Ladies.

One of the most interesting and successful reconstructions of the "lucrative friendships" between Graham and the First Ladies is the one with Betty Ford, which is arguably one of the most complex characters who lived and worked in the White House, but (yet) not sufficiently researched. I admit that I have a special admiration for this First Lady. Living close to Bennington College, with its Library's fascinating dance collection and the inspirational lawn where (then) Betty Bloomer studied with Graham, sparked my interest in her. The picture—which speaks more than one thousand words, as they say—

[41] Martha Graham, "El Penitente (1940)," https://marthagraham.org/portfolio-items/el-penitente-1940.

[42] Kilp Alar, Review of "Miklós Tomka: Expanding Religion: Religious Revival in Post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe," *Religious Research* 55:1 (2013): 193-195.

[43] "Less philosophy and more dancing" were the words of the Polish dancer and writer Irena Turska, in an article signed by her, and not a conclusion of State Department summary as Phillips's narrative suggests (151). I am indebted and grateful to Dr. Melani McAlister, Professor of American Studies & International Affairs, George Washington University, and to Dr. Lucian N. Leustean, Aston University, who clarified and enriched my knowledge on American missionaries and religion in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, respectively.

[44] Even if most valuable, so far the contributions to the history of the FLOTUS focused mostly on the biographical details of their lives. Eleanor Roosevelt "the Engaged one," and "Jackie the Beautiful" were among those who received the most attention from historians, yet much is to be done in this fascinating research area.

of her "tabled resolution" during her last day as a First Lady, when she took off her shoes, and struck a dance pose on the Cabinet Table in the White House, I read as a bodily critique and subtle irony of the male power embedded in the White House. Her strength to talk about her physical and emotional struggles, during a time when it was not "fashionable" for a woman to be anything but perfect, only made my admiration grow.[45]

In "'Grahamized and Americanized': The Defector Joins the First Lady on the Global Stage" (Chapter 7), Phillips brings to life vibrantly the story of the special relationship between two first ladies, of dance and of politics, as well as its outcomes. Betty Ford's help kept Graham's company "on the government diplomatic resource list" in spite of financial problems and provided Graham with glittery publicity, culminating with the "Martha Graham Night," when she was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom (223). I found fascinating the story of the numerous interviews conducted by the FBI during the 1980s, in anticipation of Graham's nomination for the *National Medal* of *Arts (which she eventually received in 1985).* When one of the interviewees, Betty Ford, was asked about her former mentor and subsequent protégé Martha Graham's relationships with alcohol and drugs, which was an open secret, she answered negatively. Once a dancer and afterwards a First Lady, Betty Bloomer-Ford knew too well the price that comes with being in the limelight on center stage, artistic or political, as well as the invaluable importance of friendship on and off stage(s) (273). The chapter enriches the book with a significant contribution to the "history of emotions."[46]

Phillips's bountiful book demonstrates convincingly that Graham's dance was one of the most valuable commodities in the cultural exchange during the Cold War. It makes a powerful case for governmental evaluations of Graham's brilliance at "protocol affairs" (231). Graham embraced with determination, stamina, and style her role as a dancing diplomat traveler to the "Cold War hotspots where the United States sought to exert influence" (11). Phillips successfully recounts the story of how the dancer and envoy who thought herself immortal found in the world her favorite stage.

[45] William Booth "Betty Ford's Tabled Resolution," *Smithsonian Magazine* (June 2008), https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/betty-fords-tabled-resolution-47091868.

[46] Special thanks to the organizers of the 2016 SHAFR Meeting at the University of San Diego, to the presenters from the panel "What Do Emotions Do? Or How Emotions Made Us Rethink 'Agency' and 'Causality' in International History" chaired by Dr. Carol Chin, and the participants in the roundtable "Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, 3rd ed.: Structures of Power," chaired by Dr. Richard Immerman.

Response by Victoria Phillips, London School of Economics

I am deeply grateful to the four reviewers who engaged with my book, and for Damien Mahiet's guidance.[47] I appreciate the reviewers' calls for further historical investigation, and the opportunity they have offered me to delve into reflections on current-day, post-Cold War cultural diplomacy.

Martha Graham's Cold War: The Dance of American Diplomacy describes the push-me, pull-you of American cultural diplomacy during the long global Cold War through, as Lauren Erin Brown so aptly describes, "A Graham's eye view." Martha Graham, who was called "The Picasso of Modern Dance," famously denied that her work was political, yet she promoted the United States for every administration from President Dwight D. Eisenhower through President George H. W. Bush (2). Working for the State Department, she visited over thirty nations and spanned the globe. Government documents, oral histories, personal papers, and even the dances themselves demonstrate her promotion of freedom and the United States, and her value as an ambassadress. As noted in an opera about cultural diplomacy by Dave and Iola Brubeck and Louis Armstrong, "When they sensed internal mayhem, they sent out Martha Graham: That's what we call cultural exchange."[48]

The consistent White House deployment of Graham by Democrats and Republicans, generals and citizen Cold Warriors, funded overtly and covertly, demonstrates that her modernism was not chosen by happenstance.[49] The racially and ethnically diverse company led by a woman offered a demonstration of freedom in action, whatever the facts in the United States. With her choreography, Graham made a bid for international 'hearts and minds,' with abstract works about love or grief, followed by modernized, narratively fractured Greek myths, Biblical tales, or a nod to Shakespeare. Yet evenings always featured a work of Americana, the hummable "'Tis a gift to be free" in *Appalachian Spring*, or her solo work, *Frontier,* a nod to Frederick Jackson Turner and manifest destiny.

Having performed as the first modern dancer at the White House in her solo *Frontier* for President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1937, when Graham took *Frontier* to East Berlin under President Ronald Reagan, with both honoring the 750th anniversary of the city in 1987 (with his "Take down this wall"), Graham reflected in 1990: "I had the idea of *Frontier* in my mind as a frontier of exploration, a frontier of discovery."[50] Her grand declarations came with an enduring charisma, that indescribable something, a sense of import, which is all so vital to diplomacy. She remained organized and consistent to the core, with freedom as a 'universal' binding human principle; yet she adapted easily to contemporary battles and flexed her ideological muscles to partner with Washington's Cold War.

Graham's impact as an ambassadress was noted by President Gerald Ford when he gave her the Medal of Freedom after the 1974 tour, and she was memorialized on a postage stamp, but her reach was far more extensive and muscular than I imagined as the story moved backwards to Roosevelt and then looped forward to Bush. When I realized the scope of the project, with archives in many languages spanning nations and regions, and politics both local and international that shifted over decades, I worried. An advisor sternly urged me to write about all the tours, many of which were undiscovered at the start of the project. "But I'll be a dilettante," I said. He calmly replied, "You'll be a tourist." And thus I set off, suitcase and computer in hand, relying on the international hospitality of archivists, dancers, and those who remembered. Mentors saw something

[47] This response is dedicated to Dr. Otto Kernberg.

[48] Dave and Iola Brubeck, Louis Armstrong, "Cultural Exchange," *The Real Ambassadors* (New York: Columbia Recordings, released 1962).

[49] Thanks to Professor Anders Stephanson for this phrase.

[50] Martha Graham, *Blood Memory: An Autobiography* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 219.

that I did not: my job was to dig out the historical earth. In trying to make the space wide enough for diplomatic, regional, cultural, and dance scholars, I hoped to carve a road for future scholars who will be more than tourists. There is much I have left undone.

Stéphanie Gonçalves notes that the use of Soviet documents would have improved the project. This research deficit plagued me, particularly in the later stages of the writing when I discovered the Barbara and George H.W. Bush tour to the Soviet Union, 1989. I had already submitted the 'final' manuscript to Oxford and began the hunt for photos. With new search terms, I was taken to images I had never seen before: a series of Barbara Bush and Graham playing with the Bush puppies in the White House—a somewhat intimate moment between the two elderly women. The Bush Presidential Library archivists graciously expedited contact sheets; given the reams of photos, I asked for any related documents. They were classified, as Graham's files always seem to be. Although the archivists did not think they could get Trump White House approval for release, a few weeks later an envelope appeared in my mailbox. I flipped through letters, documents, and fantastical plans for a six-week tour of the Soviet Union with evenings of Americana, perhaps even featuring Soviet classical ballet defector Mikhail Baryshnikov as the lead American modern dancer in *American Document* in which he would speak lines from the Declaration of Independence. As I raced to write yet another final chapter, I realized that to do it correctly I needed to go to Russia. After thirteen years of research, I decided to leave this archival adventure behind, yet well-knowing that I had left a deep pothole in the road. I remained a tourist for this book, and I aspire to do better with the next one.

I hope that new historians will undertake geographically specific studies and a more interactive approach to broaden *Martha Graham's Cold War* through further local interviews and regional archives, a weakness of the book that is noted by Gonçalves and Camelia Lenart. Further comparisons with Soviet and Western international touring companies would have helped deepen and complicate the narrative. Local analyses would address Lenart's concerns regarding Graham's religious and biblical works performed in 1962 "Behind the Iron Curtain," as the tour was so framed by the State Department for the Graham dancers. I was able to qualify significant differences between the reception of Graham's tours in Poland and Yugoslavia, and hoped to reframe historical accounts of a single "curtain" blanketing Eastern Europe. George Kennan, known as the "father of containment," was ambassador to Yugoslavia and hosted both modern art and Graham's dance for the public in the early 1960s, so surely there is more to learn by examining Yugoslavia's complex politics in the context of modernism, as well as Kennan himself. My sources did not extend to the complexities of responses from Belgrade's Eastern Orthodox audiences and the Catholic people in Zagreb. Locations such as Berlin, 1957, were most appreciated by the reviewers because I was able to do detailed footwork.

Lauren Erin Brown neatly zeros in on an unevenness of the book, particularly the lack of a "cultural convergences" analysis in the later chapters. I define this concept using government documents: by adopting host country's cultural tropes, a 'translation effect' (150, 220) could be achieved according to some during the Cold War. The winning of 'hearts and minds' not only required an assertion of 'universalism' through modernism, but also the 'we are like you'—'melting pot' tropes particularly well-documented in embassy architecture and dance.[51]

In the context of the #BLM movement, issues of cultural appropriation, orientalism, and imagined communities have become even more vital to recognize within this construction, and my future works will grapple with the implications of "convergences" as a strategy.[52] This issue only grazes my 1979 chapter, and it should have been emphasized. While

[51] See Jane Loeffler, *The Architecture of Diplomacy: Building America's Embassies*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998).

[52] Shivani Persad, "You Can't Say Black Lives Matter if You're Still Appropriating Black Culture," *Cosmopolitan*, 18 August 2020 https://www.cosmopolitan.com/politics/a33470990/black-lives-matter-cultural-appropriation/ (accessed 1 May 2020); Rodney Symington, *The Nazi Appropriation of Shakespeare: Cultural Politics in the Third Reich* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2006); Pascal Nicklas and Oliver Lindner, eds., *Adaptation and Cultural Appropriation: Literature, Film and the Arts* (Berlin, Germany: DeGruyter, 2012); James O. Young and Conrad G. Brunk, *The Ethics of Cultural Appropriation* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012); Edward W. Said,

researching Graham's "Jimmy Carter Goodwill tour" through Israel, Egypt, and Jordan just after the Camp David Accords, I was personally concerned with the performance of *Frescoes* and its "Grahamized" Egyptian tropes, to borrow from Cold War journalists who called her Shakespearian story of Cleopatra in Egypt "Grahamized and Modernized." Both Graham's *Frescoes,* with dancers seeming to "do the Egyptian" in 1970s disco leotards, and Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* hit the public eye in New York, 1978.[53] I find it a bit chilling to think that Said and Graham both composed their works a year earlier with such diametrically opposed results.

In 1978 the Graham company premiered *Frescoes* at the Metropolitan Museum of Art for the opening of the Egyptian Temple of Dendur, enclosed in its glass modernist architecture with a squared off Nile river-cum blue-bottom painted pond at its entrance. Archeologists opposed to the venture threw floating paper-mâché crocodiles into the water when museum guards turned away. Yet even with the floating paper crocodiles, U.S. officials sipping champagne decided that it was a good idea to send *Frescoes* to Egypt. Although better than Washington's cultural officers in the 1950s who wanted to send a Cowboy and Indian show to India, *Frescoes* in Egypt seemed questionable to me as an onlooker.

With my twenty-first century perspective, I remained confounded to find that reviews of *Frescoes* in Egypt in 1979 were laudatory, even celebratory. Indeed, Graham's "Goodwill" tour through Israel, Egypt, and Jordan that challenged borders and checkpoints—a pilot test of sorts with Egyptomania, the Old Testament in Israel, and Americana on board—was followed by a larger cultural agreement between Egypt and Israel the following year, also brokered by U.S. diplomats. Graham's success with *Frescoes* paved the way. Thus discussions of convergences and appropriation demand nuanced understandings of orientalism and diplomacy, particularly when immediate successes that construct imagined communities become failures. Again, those with deep local knowledge will be able to fill in the gaps in the accounts I only began to reconstruct.

I echo concerns voiced by Gonçalves and other published reviews that "Martha Graham disappears a bit in the narrative." While attempting to describe moments such as Graham and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger speaking together - with Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, and soon to be thirteenth Chair of the Federal Reserve Alan Greenspan looking on - or Graham chatting like a schoolgirl with Reagan over lunch, then formally bowing to a Japanese minister on a White House receiving line, I realized that it is hard to write about Graham's mix of pure charisma and refined diplomatic protocol, which is a key factor in diplomacy. This should have been emphasized through deeper description.

With *Martha Graham's Cold War*, I purposefully did not write a biography of Graham except as her life affected the Cold War diplomatic narrative. A biography of Graham is clearly needed, particularly to sort through the myriad contradicting stories in early biographies, her autobiography, unpublished company member autobiographies, unauthorized biographies of Graham by her dancers, and particularly her private papers, which remain essentially closed or lost at present.[54] During my

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Orientalism (New York Pantheon Books, 1978); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 1983).

[53] Said, *Orientalism.*

[54] Trudy Garfunkel, *Letter to the World: The Life and Dances of Martha Graham* (Darby: Diane Publishing, 1995); Agnes de Mille, *Martha: The Life and Work of Martha Graham* (New York: Vintage, 1991) ; Walter Terry: *Frontiers of Dance: The Life of Martha Graham* (New York: Crowell, 1975); Don McDonagh, *Martha Graham: A Biography* (New York: Praeger, 1973); Graham, *Blood Memory*; Phillips, "Martha Graham's Gilded Cage: *Blood Memory—An Autobiography* (1991)," *Dance Research Journal* 45:2 (August 2013): 63-84; Bertram Ross, *A Call to Freedom, Clytemnestra, Martha, El Penitente, Miss Hush*, and "unidentified book," box 10, folders 12-25, The Bertram Ross Papers, 1910-2006, Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, New York City, New York; Susan Manus, "What's Old Is New: Martha Graham Project Includes Archives," *Information Bulletin, Library of Congress* 57:6 (June 1998); Irvin Molotsky, "Library of Congress to Buy Graham Dance Archive," *New York Times* (8 May 1998); Julie C. Van Camp, "Martha Graham's Legal Legacy," *Dance Chronicle* 30:1 (2007): 67-99; Gia Courlis, "For the New York Public

research, Graham's personal life or the inevitable Graham company dramas surfaced: rumors streamed out of inappropriate tour antics, sexual abuses, financial malarky, and physical and drug abuse, but I only used them if they could be corroborated and served the diplomatic narrative. Thus her alcoholism became vital when the State Department coded it as "exhaustion" (211) when it became a refrain in her FBI file, and particularly when its fallout coincided with government touring decisions. In addition to the life dramas, Mark Franko speculates that Graham was perhaps "willingly manipulated" by government. Since the Graham company might have gone bankrupt on several occasions, but certainly would have in 1974 (based upon the available financial statements I cited in *Martha Graham's Cold War* from the Rockefeller foundation archive), I wonder who was manipulating whom.[55] I bow deeply to any scholar who takes on a biography given the complexities of the woman whom I found to be both maddening and a remarkable genius.

Franko, as always, inspires conversations. The most complex issue raised by his review is the relationship between my book and Clare Croft's *Dancers as Diplomats: American Choreography in Cultural Exchange*.[56] Franko concludes, "Phillips does not engage with Croft and what distinguishes their methodologies. For this reason, it is hard to see how *Martha Graham's Cold War* participates in an ongoing dialogue in dance studies on dance and diplomacy." Croft is both a historian and a theorist-practitioner of dance, and thus my response to Franko is two-pronged.[57] As a historian, this is the by-product of my decision to discuss the relationship between my conclusions and those of other historians in footnotes.[58] In fn 63 of Chapter Five, "'Forever Modern': From Ashes to Ambassador in Asia, 1974" (379), I note that Croft's periodization of the Cold War did not match my own, and thus that she did not discuss any tours after the 1974 President Richard M. Nixon – Gerald R. Ford tour of Asia in the midst of the Nixon-Kissinger 'opening' of China and the Vietnam crisis. I could have expanded on this difference and also referenced one of my favorite discussions between Odd Arne Westad and Anders Stephanson regarding the periodization of the Cold War.[59]

I could have gone further with the comparison of a singular moment on that tour. I note that Croft and I both interviewed Graham company member Janet Eilber about her experience performing in Saigon, 1974, and a particular moment in Graham's work, *Diversion of Angels* (fn 67 and 70, 379-80). In a discussion with me in 2009 and one with Croft in 2011, Eilber recalled performing in the enduring work that personified human love through dance as the "Woman in White."[60] She described uninvited Vietnamese standing behind metal barriers that separated backstage from the street. They climbed

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Library, Martha Graham is the Missing Link," *New York Times*, 11 May 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/11/arts/dance/nypl-martha-graham-archive.html (accessed 1 May 2021).

[55] Phillips, *Martha Graham's Cold War*, Chapter 5, fn 191, 192, 374.

[56] Clare Croft, *Dancers as Diplomats: American Choreography in Cultural Exchange* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[57] Clare Croft, Associate Professor of Dance; Associate Professor of American Culture; Associate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies, *Faculty Profiles*, School of Music, Theatre and Dance, University of Michigan, https://smtd.umich.edu (accessed 1 May 2021).

[58] Here, my goal was to emulate Stephen Kotkin's approach in *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995)

[59] Odd Arne Westad, "Exploring the History of the Cold War: A Pluralist Approach," and Anders Stephenson, "Cold War Degree Zero," both in Duncan Bell and Joel Isaac, eds., *Uncertain Empire: American History and the Idea of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[60] Victoria Phillips Collection, 1914-2011, "Oral Histories and Interviews," box 18, folder, Eilber, Janet, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Croft, "Too Sexy for Export," fn 105, 145.

the grates trying to see the stage and rattled them in appreciation, even ecstasy, as Eilber performed. She did not know to whom to project her energy as a performer, the extremely staid Vietnamese and American diplomats seated in the theater or the joyful people outside.[61]

Regarding the practice of diplomacy and its history, Croft asserts that to understand Eilber's performance as a moment of joy in a shared understanding of human love "requires too much squinting."[62] Yet I challenge this, and could have gone further in my footnotes. During a phone interview with me in 2018, Wolfgang Lehmann, the *chargé d'affaires* who presented Graham in Saigon, recalled the immense value of the Graham troupe and particularly the joy brought by *Angels*.[63] Lehmann recalled the event within earlier attempts at cultural diplomacy in Vietnam by the Nixon-Kissinger White House that had led to the jailing of several United States Information Agency (USIA) personnel because of their pro-China missteps. When Graham arrived in Saigon, the U.S. ambassador had been called back to Washington due to concerns over the region, and despite the tense atmosphere, the performances "soothed internal mayhem," both in the audience and in the diplomatic corps, however short-lived. Lehmann was adamant.

Lauren Brown and I part ways with Croft's conclusion that "for international audiences and artists [the effect, indeed benefit of the diplomatic tours] is questionable."[64] Starting with the small details, Croft states that "there were not even Christmas cards to exchange afterwards," yet I have found cards in Graham's files at the Library of Congress, and many under the beds of dancers who were willing to endure me as a snoop.[65] On a political level, Brown challenges Croft when noting the difficulty of finding archival evidence that 'proves' a causal link between a dance performance and a political decision, or in her words, "a smoking gun in the form of a letter." Yet, while "[impact measurement] bedevils both the practice and study of soft power, or cultural diplomacy," Brown argues that "attempting to understand public diplomacy this way is missing the forest for the trees." In *Martha Graham's Cold War*, I demonstrate that the "translation effects," in Cold War parlance, are hard to count. They echo. During a recent book talk in Washington DC at the government's National Museum of American Diplomacy, a government official from Myanmar unexpectedly appeared as a guest.[66] He took me aside to recall fondly the two tours Graham made to Burma, 1955 and 1974. Open-jawed State Department representatives looked on as we chatted. Twenty years into a new century Graham offered an opening with a handshake, a memory

[61] Note that I published my reflections on Eilber's story in 2010, "Dancing Diplomacy: Martha Graham and the Strange Commodity of Cold-War Cultural Exchange in Asia, 1955 and 1974," *Dance Chronicle* 33 (2010): 44-81 (recipient of the 2010 Selma Jean Cohen Award, Society of Dance History Scholars), 70, fn 163, 81. Croft did not cite my 2009 interview with Eilber or my 2010 conclusions regarding the exact same moment published in Croft's 2015 *Dancers as Diplomats*.

[62] Croft, "Too Sexy for Export or Just Sexy Enough?: Martha Graham Dance Company on Tour," *Dancers as Diplomats,* 134, 136.

[63] Victoria Phillips Collection, 1914-2011, "Oral Histories and Interviews," box 18, folder, Lehmann, Wolfgang, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Phillips, Martha Graham's Cold War, fn. 68, 380.

[64] Croft, "Too Sexy for Export," 141.

[65] Croft, "Too Sexy for Export," 142; Martha Graham Collection, box 236, folders 3-7, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; see also collections of Ethel Winter and Charlie Hyman, Mimi Cole, and Helen McGehee at the Music Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[66] "NMAD Explores the Legacy of Dance Diplomacy," with Deputy Director Dr. Jane Carpenter-Rock moderating a discussion on the legacy of dance diplomacy with historian Dr. Victoria Philips, Diplomacy Center Foundation (DCF) Board member Ambassador Sally Cowal, and Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Director of Cultural Programs Nancy Szalwinski, 5 March 2020, Washington DC, https://diplomacy.state.gov/event-recaps/nmad-explores-the-legacy-of-dance-diplomacy/ (Accessed 1 May 2021).

accompanied by a smile, however politically fraught outside the confines of the museum. Graham's political biography demonstrates that in the cultural region, diplomacy is particularly and gloriously ephemeral. And lasting.

It is too easy for historians to harp on diplomatic failures, as I have found in responses to *Martha Graham's Cold War*. I recently received an angry email from a Lebanese dancer whom I interviewed about her group's experiences of Graham in Jordan, 1979. I had not, she explained, emphasized their joy and adoration with the human power of Graham technique, for their apolitical experience of the works, and even the Americana of *Appalachian Spring*, with the enduring power of hope that it held for them as civil war raged in their nation. On all Graham tours, extensive local and international reviews, articles, books in foreign languages, oral histories, and international government documents demonstrate the power of cultural exchange, shared joy and disappointment, for better or worse. As Graham famously declared, "Center stage is wherever I am" (1); she and her company were always memorable, particularly as ambassadors.

Franko's sharp critique also provides an opening to conclude this response for H-Diplo with a bow to the present, a welcomed opening for this historian who has dutifully stuck to an analysis of the past. Croft is a practitioner-theorist and thus critiques current-day events. My historical work does not quite meet the 50-year threshold for historic "objectivity," however challenged, but I purposefully do not cross the 1991 divide, however much I wanted to include a fuller discussion of the odd convergence of Graham and Donald Trump in Russia, 1987.[67] Graham and Trump had both sent their scouts to Moscow, and they met in an airport on their way home to New York (288). They both sought work: one spoke of diplomacy and raked stages in the historic theaters, the other of golf courses and a gleaming hotel in Red Square. I elected to leave the discussion of diplomacy and President Donald J. Trump for an op-ed, which I have not written. Franko requests in his review that I reply to him and to Croft's analysis of the twenty-first century.

While Croft concluded *Dancers as Diplomats* on a hopeful note in 2015, writing about new initiatives in the post 9/11 political world, I was not as optimistic in 2019 in the throes of the Trump presidency.[68] Particularly since my Graham speaks from the grave to President Donald J. Trump about walls. In Graham's deep voice of precise passion, just before her death in 1991 she recalled, "I have seen the [Berlin] Wall go up and I have seen it come down"; she celebrated the power of unity declaring, "It makes me feel triumphant to think that nothing lasts but the spirit of man and the union of man" (219).Yet just a few decades later, Trump insisted on fulfilling his popular campaign promise to "build a big, beautiful wall" around America.[69] In 1987, while behind the Cold War wall, Graham lamented that the East Germans struggled to understand her *Frontier* fence as anything but "a barrier" (219) because they lived while looking at the concrete and brick that divided the city. As president, Trump unknowingly evoked Graham's parallelisms when he demanded "a wall, a fence, whatever they'd like to call it. I'll call it whatever they want. But it's all the same thing." He concluded, forcefully and dramatic, "It's a barrier…"[70] Trump's fence, wall or barrier would be constructed of concrete, as in Berlin, or even rebar and see-through steel slats.[71] Graham has been dismissed for her 1940s dramatic Hollywoodesque declarations about metaphorical landscapes of freedom from barriers on her frontier, replete with a fence on the American Western plains. For Graham, this became a

[67] W. J. Van der Dussen and Lionel Rubinoff, *eds., Objectivity, Method and Point of View: Essays in the Philosophy of History* (Leiden: Brill, 1991); John H. Sprinke, Jr., "'Of Exceptional Importance': The Origins of the 'Fifty-Year Rule' in Historic Preservation," *The Public Historian* 29:2 (Spring 2007): 81-103.

[68] Croft, "Too Sexy for Export," 142.

[69] William Cummings, **"'**A WALL is a WALL!**'** Trump declares. But his definition has shifted a lot over time,**"** *USA TODAY,* 8 January 2019, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/onpolitics/2019/01/08/trump-wall-concept-timeline/2503855002/ (accessed 15 May 2021).

[70] Cummings, "'A WALL is a WALL!'"

[71] Cummings, "'A WALL is a WALL!'"

metaphor for human potential. It was her trope that became a meme. She seemed high-theater and old-fashioned even to the State Department officials exporting her in the 1960s. Yet in 2019 Trump countered with gritty TV-type theater when he called for an electrified fence with spikes on top, or a wall standing in front of "a water-filled trench stocked with snakes or alligators."[72] Trump aspired to a named wall, as in Berlin, dreaming, "Maybe one day they will call it The Trump Wall."[73] The Trumpian phenomena of outlandish proposals to "make America great" became familiar as "American exceptionalism on steroids," replete with fences on frontiers, barriers and walls that the U.S. would put up, not aspire to bring down.[74]

For me, two juxtaposed images haunt this imagined dialogue. In 1987, as Graham drove out of East Berlin with Peggy Lyman, another dancer who played *Diversion of Angels*' "Woman in White," Graham lamented in a personal moment that she could still see the blood soaked into the streets of Germany.[75] This was her "blood memory," the phrase later used as a title for the posthumously published autobiography. Along with the Holocaust, perhaps she also imagined the newspaper pictures of the body of a man at the base of the Berlin Wall in 1962 who had been shot and took an hour to die, cradled against concrete, barbed wire hanging over him like a cloud.[76] Graham's "blood memory" sits alongside Trump announcing decades later that if it was really illegal to shoot people dead at his wall, the border police could shoot them in the leg, "to slow them down."[77] Describing men, women, and children climbing over and digging under the American wall, seeking an imagined freedom, Trump declared, "These aren't people. They are animals."[78] Juxtaposing newsreels, the 1962 black and white film of German border police patrolling the wall after the dead man was carried away like a bride, yet with his head and limbs flopping like the newly killed, can be positioned opposite 2018 color footage of thousands of the Pentagon's troops at barbed wire U.S. borders and walls awaiting "caravans" of people, still walking, 700 miles away.[79] The moving

[72] Eugene Scott, "Trump's most insulting — and violent — language is often reserved for immigrants," 2 October 2019, *The Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/10/02/trumps-most-insulting-violent-language-is-often-reserved-immigrants/ (accessed 1 May 2020).

[73] Cummings, "'A WALL is a WALL!'"

[74] David Lotto, "American Exceptionalism on Steroids," and Otto Kernberg, "Interview with Otto Kernberg," both in *Psychoanalytic and Historical Perspectives on the Leadership of Donald Trump: Narcissism and Marking in an Age of Anxiety and Distrust*, Michael Macoby and Ken Fuchsman, eds. (New York: Routledge, 2020).

[75] Victoria Phillips Collection, 1914-2011, "Oral Histories and Interviews," box 18, folder, Lyman, Peggy, Music Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; for Lyman's performance and Graham's commentary see https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1141810046259525 (accessed 15 May 2021), The Paley Center for Media, *American Masters: Martha Graham, The Dancer Revealed*, Susan Lacy and Takis Kandilis, Executive Producers, PBS WNET, 13 May 1994, 9 p.m. EST (catalogue ID T:32903).

[76] (Original Caption) 8/18/1962-Berlin, Germany- East Berliner Peter Fechter, 18, lies dying on the Eastern side of the Communist's 'Wall of Shame,' Getty Images in Lee Ferran, "An Hour Dying in No Man's Land: Teen's Berlin Wall Tragedy," *InsideHook*, 17 August 2018, https://www.insidehook.com/article/news-opinion/hour-dying-no-mans-land-teens-berlin-wall-tragedy (accessed 1 May 2021);

[77] Michael D. Shear and Julie Hirschfeld Davis, "Shoot Migrants' Legs, Build Alligator Moat: Behind Trump's Ideas for Border," *New York Times*, 1 October 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/01/us/politics/trump-border-wars.html (accessed 1 May 2021).

[78] President Donald J. Trump, C-SPAN, 16 May 2018, https://cs.pn/2INPSJ4 (accessed 1 May 2021).

[79] "The Wall," Hearst News, 1962, https://www.c-span.org/video/?300753-1/the-wall (accessed 1 May 2021): "Military troops begin to descend on southern border," NBC News, 3 Nov. 2018, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/sent-trump-soldiers-arrive-border-migrant-caravan-pushes-north-n930751 (accessed 1 May 2021).

images open questions of "how many dead" there were at the Berlin Wall through 1989; this question ricochets into the American twenty-first century as reporters note tides of "deaths in the sands" of the "American frontier."[80]

The Graham I have come to know would bore her glare into the eyes of Trump, and send her dancers out on stage challenging them to find new frontiers. Graham planned a company-saving tour under Nixon-Kissinger, dodging Nixon's offer of the Medal of Freedom because she worried about his administration's ethics. Then with her luck of the gods, she toured Asia weeks after Nixon resigned under President Gerald R. Ford and received the medal from him, with Kissinger still looking on. If the company had been in dire straits in 2019, surely Graham would have sought out Fiona Hill, Trump's Senior Director for Europe and Russia of the National Security Council, who is eloquent and unflinching.[81] Graham would understand full-well that the tour would have required a Nixonesque move by Congress to get the company abroad, even to Russia where representatives of the ambassadress and the promoter-politician had once crossed paths. But she would have been prepared. Always recalling her own performance of *Lamentation* (1930), the abstraction of personal agony, she told her dancers, "There is always one person in the audience to whom you speak. One. All I ask is that you feel for or against."[82] I remain firmly convinced that Graham never wavered in her belief in freedom, democracy, and discipline, which is what kept her ideologically valuable as an ambassadress for the United States over time. The Graham I know would be relentless in the promotion of what she was for, and against, even if her message reached only one.

My underlying argument in *Martha Graham's Cold War* is that the State Department and Congress must look and listen for the artistic echoes of cultural Cold War exchange that are still reverberating, however silenced. During the Cold War, dance and music were understood as the most effective arts for bringing people with opposed ideas together, whatever the ethics of the imagined outcome of "installed" political systems through "translation effects." As we consider how to soothe the diplomatic mayhem caused by four years of TV-style Americana drama, the cultural diplomatic history of Martha Graham provides some unmeasurable, yet irrefutable lessons that argue for international re-engagement through U.S. artists and their arts. Perhaps 2021 will offer opportunities for further discussion and action on the cultural front.

[80] Prof. Dr. Martin Sabrow, **"**Victims at the wall,**"** *Chronik der Mauer*, Chronicle of the Wall, *Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam e.V.*, Centre for Contemporary History Potsdam, *Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung*, Federal Agency for Civic Education, and *Deutschlandradio*, https://www.chronik-der-mauer.de/en/181331/imprint (accessed 1 May 2020); Reece Jones, **"**Death in the Sands: The Horror of the US-Mexico Border,**"** *The Guardian*, 4 October 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2016/oct/04/us-mexico-border-patrol-trump-beautiful-wall (accessed 1 May 2021); see also, **"**2019: A deadly year for migrants crossing the Americas,**"** *United Nations News*, 28 Jan. 2020, https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1056202 (accessed 1 May 2021).

[81] Adam Entous, "What Fiona Hill Learned in the White House," *The New Yorker*, 22 June 2020, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/06/29/what-fiona-hill-learned-in-the-white-house (accessed 1 May 2020).

[82] Graham, *Blood Memory*, 118.