



# Art and Diplomacy in Cold War Romania: Transnational Exchanges and the Evolution of Socialist Realism



Code Apogée  
PI2503



Composante(s)  
École Doctorale  
Montaigne-  
Humanités

## En bref

- > **Mobilité d'études:** Non
- > **Date de début des cours:** 12 févr. 2025
- > **Langue(s) d'enseignement:** Anglais
- > **Plage horaire:** Journée
- > **Effectif:** 20

## Présentation

### Description

This paper examines the role of cultural diplomacy in Socialist Romania during the 1950s through the lens of three significant art exhibitions held in Bucharest: Renato Guttuso (1954), Mireille Mialhe and Boris Taslitzky (1954), and a collective of Mexican artists (1955). Featuring works by international well-known artists, these exhibitions were integral to Romania's broader diplomatic strategy of fostering connections with both the West and the Third World. The study explores how cultural exchanges, led by institutions like the Romanian Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations, facilitated transnational networks and influenced the evolution of Socialist Realism. Additionally, it investigates the complex interplay between Romanian cultural diplomacy and international actors, highlighting the dual impact of these exhibitions on diplomatic relations and domestic debates about Socialist Realism's future.

### Objectifs

This project explores the reception of contemporary Mexican art in France during the 1950s-1960s, focusing on exhibitions and publications. It examines the circulation of works by the Taller de Gráfica Popular and muralists like Diego Rivera and David Siqueiros, revealing how Mexican art transcended Cold War divisions. While Eastern Bloc exhibitions emphasized cultural



diplomacy and contemporary art, Western events, such as Paris's 1952 National Museum of Modern Art exhibition, highlighted Mexican art as a national synthesis of pre-Columbian, folk, and modern traditions. France is a key case for studying transnational artistic exchanges among East, West, and Global South. By analyzing exhibitions, networks, and discourse in catalogs and press, this research compares Mexico's cultural diplomacy strategies and examines how political contexts shaped the art's reception in divergent geopolitical settings.

---

## Informations complémentaires



Irina Caba is assistant professor at the Department of Art History and Theory, National University of Arts in Bucharest. Her interests are the historical avant-garde, Socialist Realism, transnational relations in the Eastern Bloc, and the survival of Modernism in the postwar era. She is the author of the book *Realismul socialist cu fața spre trecut. Instituții și artiști în România 1944-1953* (Socialist Realism facing the past. Institutions and artists in Romania 1944-1953, Cluj-Napoca, Idea Design&Print, 2017) and also co-editor of several collective volumes.