

# The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy



Edited by  
Costas M. Constantinou,  
Pauline Kerr and Paul Sharp



The SAGE Handbook of  
**Diplomacy**



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# List of Abstracts

## **1. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES IN DIPLOMACY – COSTAS M. CONSTANTINOU AND PAUL SHARP**

This chapter maps the evolution of diplomatic theory, within and across the discipline of International Relations (IR). It looks at early (classical and modern) perspectives in diplomacy as developed by orators, scholars and reflective practitioners. It also examines the perceived neglect of diplomacy within mainstream IR theory, its contested purpose and means, whether it is an instrument or a medium, its epistemic links to the study of foreign policy and statecraft, and its role in the production, maintenance and transformation of international systems. It outlines the contributions of critical theorizing with regard to exposing the knowledge contests and power implications of dominant understandings and practices of diplomacy, and its retrieving of alternative, non-elitist and non-state-centric cultures and practices. Finally, it looks at theoretical perspectives in diplomacy as developed within other disciplines, such as anthropology, psychology, religious and cultural studies.

## **2. A CONCEPTUAL HISTORY OF DIPLOMACY – HALVARD LEIRA**

This chapter deals with the development of the concept of diplomacy. The focus is on how a specific understanding of diplomacy emerged and has developed over the last 250 years. Detailing first the etymological roots, the chapter deals primarily with how diplomacy emerged as a derogatory term during the revolutionary period, and how its meaning was immediately challenged by revolutionaries seeking to replace the old diplomacy with a new one. Calls for new diplomacy have been many in the ensuing centuries, but the way in which diplomacy itself has changed content is evident in that the calls are now for reform, rather than for revolution and/or abolishment.

## **3. DIPLOMACY AND THE COLONIAL ENCOUNTER – SAM OKOTH OPONDO**

This chapter raises questions about modern diplomacy's entanglements with colonial encounters and practices. Through a contrapuntal reading of the ethic of 'the necessity for continuous negotiations' among other conceptions and practices of diplomacy, the chapter raises questions about discourses on the 'genres of man', Eurocentrism, elitism and the statist geophilosophy that underlines the monological conception of diplomacy as statecraft or a set of skills, norms and rituals peculiar to professional diplomats. It also reveals the colonality of modern diplomacy and the transgressive and life-affirming diplomatic practices and imaginaries that emerge in the colonies and elsewhere.

#### **4. STATECRAFT, STRATEGY AND DIPLOMACY – MARKUS KORNPÖBST**

How do statecraft, strategy and diplomacy hang together? This chapter identifies five perspectives that address this question: classical realism, rational choice, cognitive approaches, culturalist approaches and critical approaches. After identifying the strengths and weaknesses of these perspectives, I make a case for more eclecticism. Statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are more important than ever in our globalizing age, in which more and more political issues move from the domestic to the international stage. But given global changes, we need to re-think the conceptual triad, similarly to scholars before us when they tried to make sense of a changing world.

#### **5. DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN POLICY – BRIAN HOCKING**

As the nature of foreign policy has changed in response to shifts in both international and domestic policy milieus, so the boundaries traditionally regarded as demarcating both features of the international order have weakened. This has produced challenges for both practitioners and observers of diplomatic processes and structures. In one sense, this is a manifestation of a long-established dual problem reflecting fundamental questions concerning the legitimacy of diplomacy and its efficiency in meeting the challenges of a changing foreign policy environment.

#### **6. DIPLOMACY, COMMUNICATION AND SIGNALING – CHRISTER JÖNSSON**

Communication is essential to diplomacy. Diplomatic communication is both verbal and non-verbal, including not only words as well as actions, but also silence and inactivity. Diplomats send signals intended to convey messages, which are subject to decoding and interpretation. Throughout history verbal communication has relied on a lingua franca of diplomacy. More importantly, a common language has been developed in terms of shared symbols and references and interpretation of words and actions. Nonverbal signaling covers a range from personal gestures, via meeting and travel logistics, to the manipulation of military forces. The tension between the need for clarity and the incentives for constructive ambiguity impels diplomats to spend much time and effort on the formulation and interpretation of signals. The speed of diplomatic communication has varied over time. The revolution in information and communication technology tends to challenge the privileged role of diplomats in transborder communication and endanger flexibility and confidentiality. While there is no paradigmatic approach in the study of diplomatic communication, there is a store of applicable analytical tools and ample room for more theory-driven, systematic studies of diplomatic communication.

#### **7. DIPLOMATIC AGENCY – REBECCA ADLER-NISSEN**

Diplomatic agency is intriguing. On the one hand, diplomats are crucial to the management of day-to-day international relations and the negotiation of war and peace. On the other hand, most diplomatic action is highly constrained or invisible. This chapter provides an overview of the ways in which diplomatic agency has been conceptualized in International Relations theory (English School, game theory, Foreign Policy Analysis, constructivism, practice

theory, post-positivism) before presenting and exemplifying major and overlapping types of diplomatic agency, including communication, negotiation and advocacy. It analyzes how professionalization, legalization, personalization and popularization of diplomacy have shaped diplomatic agency including how international law, bureaucracy, public diplomacy and new information technologies have impacted the scope and content of diplomatic agency. Finally, it discusses how diplomatic agency is linked to conceptions of diplomatic representation and legitimacy in its actual, functional and symbolic forms.

## **8. DIPLOMATIC CULTURE – FIONA MCCONNELL AND JASON DITTMER**

This chapter discusses ‘diplomatic culture’ in its various iterations. It begins by tracing the genealogy of diplomatic culture as a universal cosmopolitan culture, a perspective most commonly associated with Hedley Bull and the English School of International Relations. We then turn from this abstraction to the concrete ways in which diplomats seek to reproduce particular aspects of their culture through professionalization. In the final section, we examine the proliferation of diplomatic cultures, concluding that the multiplicity of diplomacies (and hence, diplomatic cultures) is a source of strength for diplomacy, and attempts to produce a monolithic diplomatic culture are bound to fail.

## **9. DIPLOMACY AND THE ARTS – IVER B. NEUMANN**

Diplomatic sites are saturated with art. Art always creates ambiance, and is sometimes also used by diplomats to project representations of polities. Art and diplomacy need one another to create the high status that they share. If diplomats are interested in art, art is also interested in diplomats. Diplomacy and diplomats are objects of artistic representation. They are also amongst the phenomena represented in popular culture, particularly within the genres of science fiction and fantasy. These representations have legitimacy effects. The chapter breaks down these questions and discusses the sparse extant literature.

## **10. DIPLOMATIC ETHICS – CORNELIU BJOLA**

The delegated source of authority of diplomatic agency protects diplomats against ethical scrutiny, but their indirect exercise of power manifestly turns them into morally accountable subjects. This chapter examines this puzzle in two steps. First, it argues that the normative basis of ethical judgement of diplomats’ actions has historically revolved around the principle of loyalty, first to the Prince, later to the State and more recently to People. Each loyalty dimension sets limitations for moral inquiry, which are rather difficult to address from a theoretically abstract perspective. Second, the paper offers a contextually tailored framework of ethical analysis centred on the concept of reflection-in-action by which diplomats seek to align the practical requirements of the situation at hand with the normative imperatives prompted by their divided loyalties. The context in which diplomats handle ethical challenges through reflection and action is therefore a determining factor for understanding the extent to which the actions taken by a diplomat are morally justifiable.

## **11. DIPLOMATIC KNOWLEDGE – NOÉ CORNAGO**

This chapter examines the crucial importance of knowledge for the instrumental and communicative functions that diplomacy has performed historically and is still expected to perform. In so doing, the relationship between ‘diplomacy’ and ‘knowledge’ is examined through four different but related prisms. First, in the light of current discussions in the fields of epistemology and sociology of knowledge, specific attention will be paid to the conditions under which the mutually constitutive relationship – between the practice of diplomacy and the acquisition and diffusion of knowledge in the most diverse domains – emerged and evolved historically. Second, the importance of diplomacy as heterology, that is, as a venue for trans-cultural communication, humanistic discovery and understanding and its unending negotiation of identity and difference between political communities, is examined. Third, the theoretical foundations and the practical dimensions of diplomatic knowledge as statecraft and its corresponding techniques – from personal observation, reporting or espionage to remote sensing and satellite driven geographical information systems – are discussed. Finally, it will discuss what can be called the diplomatization of knowledge in the wider social realm, as well as its implications for our understanding of diplomacy as it is practised today, in the post-Wikileaks era, by a growing variety of public and private agents.

## **12. EMBASSIES, PERMANENT MISSIONS AND SPECIAL MISSIONS – KISHAN S. RANA**

The resident embassy symbolizes the international system. Embassies are older than foreign ministries and have evolved since inception in ancient times when emissaries were sent to foreign courts. The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations sets the framework for the functioning of embassies. The utility of maintaining embassy networks is a perennial question; counter-intuitively we now find that resident embassies provide enhanced value in our globalized world of instant communication, volatility of international affairs and information overload, if only foreign ministries use them as key agents of bilateral diplomacy. Permanent missions, accredited to international or regional organizations remain equally pertinent. We witness the emergence of new representation forms, aimed at cost reduction, and these trends are likely to gain traction. Countries will always need agents on the ground, to build trust and pursue relationships with widening circles of state and non-state actors, working in varied circumstances, far removed from the formal settings of the past.

## **13. CONSULATES AND CONSULAR DIPLOMACY – ANA MAR FERNÁNDEZ PASARÍN**

This chapter analyses the consular dimension of diplomacy. It traces the historical development of the consular institution as a subfield of diplomatic representation, and examines its international codification, traditional functions and evolving practice in the face of contemporary challenges such as border security policy or the management of large-scale natural or man-made disasters. These developments have contributed to highlighting the strategic role played by consular officers in a globalized society. Key aspects of consular affairs today

include dealing with increasing citizens' expectations for responsive, efficient, multi-channel and customer service-oriented administrations: demands that have led foreign affairs ministries (MFA) to implement new forms of consular governance, among which consular cooperation, the delegation of representation, the automation of services, or the outsourcing of less sensitive consular functions stand out.

#### **14. THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS – PAUL SHARP AND GEOFFREY WISEMAN**

The diplomatic corps is a term which conventionally refers to the diplomats of other sovereign states resident in a capital city. It can also refer to the diplomats accredited to regional or international organizations. Both its practical operations and its theoretical significance have been neglected until recently. This chapter examines the possible reasons for this neglect in the context of two trends: First, the term's apparently increasing use to refer to the diplomatic service of a particular state. Second, the rising significance of a broader term – the diplomatic community – of which the diplomatic corps is only one part and which encompasses the proliferating number and types of other international actors active in a capital city or international headquarters city. Although less significant than formerly, the diplomatic corps persists and remains an important, if elusive, set of practices that help constitute the international society of states.

#### **15. DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW – DAVID CLINTON**

Diplomacy and international law share ancient origins as ways in which the participants in a highly pluralistic society, engaging in intensive interactions but lacking an authoritative sovereign over them, found means of regulating their conflictual and cooperative dealings. Despite the similarity in their background, diplomacy and international law have always been characterized by a complex relationship—sometimes competitive, sometimes complementary, and sometimes mutually reinforcing. They are also alike in that the rise of non-state actors seeking at least partial recognition as players in diplomacy and subjects of international law has diversified the roster and complicated the rules. This development, if no others, will ensure that these two primary ways of carrying on international society will continue to evolve, as they have throughout their history.

#### **16. DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY – LINDA S. FREY AND MARSHA L. FREY**

From ancient times to the present, many civilizations have respected the inviolability of envoys. Necessity forced most cultures to accord envoys basic protections because only then was intercourse between peoples possible. Rooted in necessity, immunity was buttressed by religion, sanctioned by custom, and fortified by reciprocity. As the essential foundations of immunity shifted from religious to legal, what had once been an expedient became over time a precedent. Courtesies hardened and over time became 'rights.' When expedients evolved into 'precedents' and earlier courtesies into 'rights,' the issue of whether and under what circumstances envoys

were entitled to immunity became a legal one. Ultimately, national laws and international treaties codified these privileges.

## **17. DIPLOMACY AND NEGOTIATION – I WILLIAM ZARTMAN**

Negotiations are the basic means of diplomacy, to pursue, prevent, manage, resolve, and transform conflicts among states (and other parties), to overcome problems and to instill cooperation. Negotiation has increased significantly since the end of the Cold War, but faces new types of challenges in fanatical ideological conflicts and worn out cooperative regimes. Negotiation operates under an unspoken Ethos of Equality, with notions of equal status, equal treatment, reciprocity and justice as its defining characteristics. Although parties are never equal in power, a sense of equality is helpful to productive negotiation. A perception of a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS) and a way out (WO) define a ripe moment, necessary but insufficient for the initiation of negotiations. Negotiations pass through the overlapping phases of diagnosis, formulation, and detailing to create a coherent agreement, reached through concessions, compensation, and construction (reframing). Conflict management ends violence and contains the promise for conflict resolution, which settles the issues of the conflict, removes the pressure to attain it.

## **18. DIPLOMATIC MEDIATION – KARIN AGGESTAM**

The study of international mediation reflects a broad range of theoretical perspectives, methodological approaches and empirical practices. This chapter compares two dominant modes: principal and pure mediation. They illuminate contrasting assumptions about leverage, resources, power, strategy, entry and outcome. The chapter identifies three salient challenges that diplomatic mediation faces in theory and practice: (1) resistance to negotiation and mediation; (2) quest of timing; and (3) management of devious objectives. The chapter concludes by arguing that the study of international mediation needs to engage more with normative and critical perspectives including gender analysis as a way to move the research agenda forward.

## **19. DIPLOMATIC SUMMITRY – DAVID HASTINGS DUNN AND RICHARD LOCK-PULLAN**

Summit diplomacy is the meeting of political leaders at the highest possible level. Although this practice dates back to the earliest days of diplomacy it was rare for the rulers of powerful states to meet in person until the nineteenth century. Now, however, summits are frequent and have superseded many more traditional forms and methods of diplomacy, especially as democratic politics has become more important in the summit processes. Summits have also increasingly become institutionalized. This chapter explores the history of summitry, the nature of modern summitry since the advent of nuclear weapons, and examines how to define the current nature of summitry as the range of meetings between executive leaders has expanded and evolved, ranging from G8 summits to personal bi-lateral summitry.

## **20. DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE – DONNA MARIE OGLESBY**

The chapter Diplomatic Language examines the signals, codes and conventions constructed over time by diplomats to smooth and soothe the process of communication between states and the organizations created by states in the international political realm. It argues that diplomatic language is instrumental: it serves the purpose of allowing diplomats to form and maintain relationships with those who manage international relations. The chapter examines the theory and the practice of diplomatic speech acts through various theoretical perspectives. It explores the balance diplomats attempt to achieve between ambiguity and precision in the production of diplomatic texts. And, it considers how the expanded, and increasingly diverse, cast of actors on the diplomatic stage, with their contesting scripts and varied audiences, are changing the discourse patterns.

## **21. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES – ALAN JAMES**

States, being notional persons, can only communicate with each other through their representatives. Such communication is primarily conducted via the diplomatic system – the world-wide network of embassies and allied arrangements, staffed by a multitude of diplomats. But to get easy and straightforward communication started (or resumed) between any two states, they have to agree to be ‘in diplomatic relations’. Almost all pairs of states do this. Accordingly, the concept of diplomatic relations is the key which opens the way to normal communication between states. As such it is a fundamental element in the whole inter-state set-up.

## **22. GREAT POWER DIPLOMACY – CORNELIA NAVARI**

This chapter defines Great Powers and the capacities they are expected to have. It provides a brief history of their presence as diplomatic actors from the peace negotiations that concluded the Napoleonic wars through the nineteenth century, the major congresses that ensued and their results, and the institutionalization of their roles in international organization in the twentieth century. It considers the influence/power that each exercised, over what issues, during what periods, and through the use of what methods and mechanisms. It concludes with the four different approaches through which great power diplomacy can be understood, revisited and revised.

## **23. MIDDLE POWER DIPLOMACY – YOLANDA KEMP SPIES**

Middle power diplomacy may be a contested and equivocal concept, but it offers a useful analytical tool to scholars and practitioners of diplomacy. It facilitates the understanding and prediction of state behaviour in the global diplomatic arena, and provides insights as to the projection of state identity through diplomacy. It also assists with comprehension of the



changing norms and conventions that infuse the notion of international society. Importantly, middle power theory elucidates a fascinating phenomenon within global structural power: the dynamic diplomacy of states whose influence and leadership seem disproportionately large compared to their material, quantitative attributes.

## **24. SMALL STATE DIPLOMACY – BALDUR THORHALLSSON AND ALYSON J.K. BAILES<sup>†</sup>**

Small states must acknowledge their limited diplomatic capacity. They need to take appropriate measures to compensate for these limitations, and utilize special characteristics of their public administration and foreign service – such as informal ways of communication, flexibility in decision-making and autonomy of officials – in order to defend their interests and gain influence in dealings with the outside world. Small states vary enormously in their diplomatic capacity, but those possessing basic economic and administrative competence can build on these and other features associated with smallness to succeed in international negotiations.

## **25. EUROPEAN UNION DIPLOMACY – MICHAEL SMITH**

The emerging system of diplomacy in the European Union has gained additional impetus and been newly institutionalised since the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009. This hybrid system of diplomatic representation and action involves not only a range of ‘Brussels institutions’ but also the EU Member States. The chapter looks first at the evolution of the current system and then at the new institutional context following the Lisbon Treaty. Ensuing sections explore the nature of the ‘EU diplomat’ and of EU diplomatic practices, the orientation and impact of EU diplomacy, and the types of theoretical approaches that can be deployed in order to understand the EU’s system of diplomacy.

## **26. AMERICAN DIPLOMACY – ALAN K. HENRIKSON**

The diplomacy of the United States originated in the American ‘nation,’ rather than deriving from state authority, and it continues to reflect republican ideals and democratic values. Somewhat paradoxically, while inheriting an ‘anti-diplomatic’ bias owing to the American Revolution’s rejection of the hierarchy of European society, egalitarian Americans themselves have freely engaged in making international connections. Benjamin Franklin is the prototype. America’s first ‘public diplomat,’ he set an example of citizen involvement. US professional diplomacy, as distinct from consular activity in support of American commerce, came only with the Rogers Act of 1924. The Second World War and the Cold War as well as the ‘Global War on Terror’ have increased the role of the military and the intelligence community in America’s international relations. The Department of State has sought to augment its influence at home and abroad by drawing upon the nation’s ‘civilian power’ and engaging foreign publics directly through the use of information technology and social media. Never merely intergovernmental, American diplomacy is international as well.

## **27. RUSSIAN POST-SOVIET DIPLOMACY – TATIANA ZONOVA**

Russian diplomacy has evolved through several historical stages. Over time, Byzantine tradition was substituted by a secular diplomacy. After the collapse of the Soviet Union the foreign policy decision making process also changed. According to the Constitution it is the President who determines the guidelines of foreign policy. From the mid-1990s the idea of creating a multipolar world and maintaining relations based on effective multilateralism has become more and more important for Russia's foreign policy and diplomacy. Relations with the former Soviet republics became one of its priorities. Russian diplomacy has tried to improve existing diplomatic structures and processes, and to create new ones for multilateral interstate cooperation. Great attention is paid to economic and energy diplomacy, network diplomacy and public diplomacy. Nearly 1000 Russian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are also engaged in foreign relations. The Subjects of the Russian Federation develop their international activity in the framework of what is increasingly known as paradiplomacy. The role of women in diplomacy still tends to be underestimated and there is considerable room for improvement in this framework.

## **28. CHINA'S DIPLOMACY – ZHIMIN CHEN**

Historically, China, as a pivotal regional power in East Asia, developed its own ways of conducting foreign relations. In the nineteenth century, in a western-dominated world, China was forced to embrace modern diplomacy. Through its internal revolutions in the nineteenth century, China rebuilt itself into a strong sovereign state. Due to its economic success, unleashed by its integration with the world economy from the late 1970s, China is now reemerging as a major power in world affairs and starting to adopt a more proactive diplomacy. To make this argument this chapter is divided into four parts. The first part provides an historical account of the factors that influence Chinese diplomacy. The second part analyzes the institutional arrangements of contemporary Chinese diplomacy. And in the third part, behavioral patterns of China's diplomacy are identified. Finally, various understandings and predictions of China's future diplomacy are canvassed.

## **29. DIPLOMACY IN EAST ASIA – PAULINE KERR**

There is a surprising deficit of studies on diplomacy in East Asia. Surprising because the region is economically the world's most dynamic and, politically, one of the world's most tense, not least because there is diplomatic competition between the US and a rising China. The Asian Century in East Asia is under-investigated in diplomatic studies. Unless its past and present evolution is understood, signs of its possible demise may be missed. This chapter starts from the assumption that this situation needs to be rectified. It argues that, from its examination of multilateral economic and security diplomacy in the region, there are several generalisations that could inform hypotheses needed to start an urgently required research agenda on diplomacy in East Asia.

### **30. LATIN AMERICAN DIPLOMACY – SEAN W. BURGESS AND FABRÍCIO H CHAGAS BASTOS**

In this chapter we argue that although there is a temptation to view Latin American diplomacy as a single entity, such an approach is mistaken. Pressure to manage relations with the US and external assumption of homogenization underpins a double movement in regional diplomacy that sees a simultaneous process of coordination and fragmentation. With this in mind, we offer five principles for a general understanding of Latin American diplomacy. First, the region is not a homogenous entity. Second, although coordination is frequent, it is too much to speak of either unity or coalition in the Americas. Third, regional collectivization of positions is used as a strategy to protect national autonomy. Fourth, foreign policy is predominantly directed at structural, not relative power games. Finally, national development is the overriding priority and aim.

### **31. MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY – STEPHAN STETTER**

This chapter studies contemporary Middle East diplomacy by drawing from historical sociology, global history and social theory. It focuses in particular on how modern world society/culture, on the one hand, and a global political system characterized by considerable underlying hierarchies both in colonial and post-colonial environs, on the other, shape Middle East diplomacy. It then discusses three major sites of Middle East practice/struggles in this context of modern world society, namely (1) diplomatic anxiety, (2) popular, transnational as well as cultural diplomacy and (3) sublime diplomacy.

### **32. AFRICAN DIPLOMACY – ASTERIS HULIARAS AND KONSTANTINOS MAGLIVERAS**

In the 1960s, after a long period of colonialism, most African states acquired their independence and soon became embroiled in the Cold War's competition. Bipolar rivalry obstructed the internationalization of Africa's diplomacy. Only after the mid-1990s did Africa's foreign relations expand considerably, having been assisted by economic development and recurrent waves of democratic consolidation as well as by the advent of multilateralism. Today, the African Union aims at becoming the continent's principal representative on the international plane.

### **33. SOUTHERN AFRICAN DIPLOMACY – STEPHEN CHAN**

This chapter looks at Southern African Diplomacy as developed after the independence process began. It focuses on the Rhodesia issue and Zimbabwean diplomacy and how African and international diplomacy dealt with the Apartheid regime in South Africa. It then examines the challenges and prospects of South African diplomacy in the post-Apartheid era. It finally provides an overview of the great issues ahead within the context of African Union diplomacy and the future of the continent.

### **34. DEVELOPING STATES DIPLOMACY – STEPHEN CALLEYA**

This chapter examines the challenges small developing states are facing and identifies trends in their foreign policy decision-making track record. The fact that small developing countries have limited human and natural resources gives rise to numerous questions addressed in this analysis: what are the strategic mechanisms that small developing states employ?; what are the primary motivations that guide developing states diplomacy?; how do small developing states pursue their strategic objectives; how do small developing states prioritize their foreign policy objectives to remain relevant in the international society of states? This chapter also includes a review of the evolution of Malta's foreign policy, as an example of a developing state's diplomatic practice. The study concludes by exploring future options available to developing states to help them maintain a relevant stance in an ever changing international system, including focusing on multilateral diplomacy.

### **35. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY – ELLEN HUIJGH**

Public diplomacy is a widespread practice at the heart of diplomacy, shaped by the ebbs and flows of circumstances in society as a whole. Part of the ongoing democratization of diplomacy, it is also a driver of it, kicked into high gear by globalization and the communication revolution. The development of public diplomacy amounts to the broadening of actors, issues, and instruments and must therefore contend with increased complexity and blurring boundaries in this digital age. Public diplomacy has become a multidisciplinary field of study that now extends beyond the confines of diplomatic studies. Its present form is so diverse that it has become a generic term with a fluid meaning. Within diplomatic studies, what are referred to as 'traditional' and 'new' diplomacy are now seen as too categorical, with moves toward more integrative scholarship. Much more study, particularly of a comprehensive nature (such as theoretical and empirical case study research on integrative public diplomacy), is required before claims about the future of public diplomacy solidify.

### **36. QUIET AND SECRET DIPLOMACY – WILLIAM MALEY**

Quiet and secret diplomacy entail more than simply discretion: they involve a conscious desire to leave activities unadvertised, or to hide certain forms of engagement from scrutiny. Secrecy has a long history: it has been reinforced on occasion by laws and institutions, and has long been used to hide the frailties of political leaders. Secrecy can provide space for complex negotiations, especially with unappealing actors such as terrorist groups. However, it may be difficult to maintain, it may be a barrier to learning from experience and it is increasingly challenged by vigorous media, and by the expansion in the range of actors involved in diplomacy. Its consequences are often difficult to assess; as a result, it may be that it is best appraised by attention to situational issues rather than some grand ethical theory.

### **37. CRISIS DIPLOMACY – EDWARD AVENELL AND DAVID HASTINGS DUNN**

Crisis diplomacy plays a vital role in the modern international system. It has had to be continually adapted as the world has changed. The crises that dominated the twentieth century are very different from those that are occurring in the twenty-first century. These crises are no longer restrained to armed conflicts between states but can emerge from every arena, financial, medical and natural. As the world has become smaller the potential impact of these crises has become much greater, with some able to quickly effect every corner of the globe. New tools and practices have developed, such as the Responsibility to Protect, which marks a significant development in crisis diplomacy. Researchers studying crisis diplomacy need to work closer with those practising it to better understand the changing nature of crisis and ensure that the practice of crisis diplomacy is fit to meet these challenges.

### **38. COERCIVE DIPLOMACY – PETER VIGGO JAKOBSEN**

Coercive diplomacy (CD) involves the use of military threats and/or limited force in support of diplomatic negotiations relying on persuasion, rewards and assurances. This combination of coercion (sticks) and diplomacy (carrots) is as old as the practice of diplomacy, and it is typically employed when actors want to resolve war-threatening crises and conflicts without resorting to full-scale war. This chapter analyses the establishment of CD as a field of study during the Cold War and shows how the theory and practice of CD has evolved in response to the strategic challenges of the day. Four separate strategic eras with distinct challenges and theoretical developments are identified since the field's emergence in the 1960s: the Cold War, the humanitarian 1990s, the war on terror and the hybrid future. The record clearly shows that skilful use of coercive diplomacy can resolve crises and conflicts short of full-scale war when the conditions are right. However, it is equally clear that our understanding of these conditions remains wanting in several respects. More research and scholarly attention are needed if we want to realize more of the potential for peaceful conflict resolution that coercive diplomacy does hold.

### **39. REVOLUTIONARY DIPLOMACY – DAVID ARMSTRONG**

'Revolutionary diplomacy' refers to the international outlook and conduct of states which, having undergone an internal revolution, adopt very radical postures in their external relations. Such postures inevitably have consequences for the ways states approach their diplomatic relations with other states. Examples include the United States of America, France, Soviet Russia, China, Iran and Libya. In the more extreme cases revolutionary states view world politics from a completely different perspective from the underlying principles of conventional diplomacy. The chapter outlines the role of diplomacy as an institution aimed at resolving disputes within a society of sovereign states and the inevitable confrontation between the conventional and the revolutionary views of diplomacy. It concludes by considering the degree to which revolutionary states become 'socialised' into adopting the more conventional norms and practices prevailing in the international community and also the extent to which

international society itself changes in the process of the interaction between revolutionary and conventional diplomacy.

#### **40. CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY – PAUL MEERTS**

As modern technology makes war more costly, negotiations within and outside diplomatic conferences are becoming increasingly important, both as a peaceful decision-making and a conflict-management mechanism. This chapter analyzes the nature and evolution of conference diplomacy. It argues that negotiations are vulnerable, unless they are protected by procedural frameworks, comprising rules and conventions, such as those adopted in conference diplomacy conducted by organizations such as the United Nations. The study also raises questions about the future role of conference diplomacy in a globalizing world in which diplomats are losing their traditional hegemony in international relations. It concludes with several recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness, and thereby the significance, of conference diplomacy in the future.

#### **41. CITY DIPLOMACY – MICHELE ACUTO**

World affairs are today more and more intertwined with the growing implications of urbanisation. Cities are increasingly popular actors on a number of fronts from the environment, to security and health. Yet how does this shape diplomacy? The chapter takes the phenomenon of ‘city diplomacy’ as the practice of mediated international relations by local governments as a starting point to answer this question. It argues that city diplomacy helps us expand our narrow International Relations horizon, reacquainting ourselves with the long *durée* of world politics, and appreciating the networked patterns that cities are weaving in international affairs. To make this argument the chapter explores the long affair between cities and diplomacy, the challenges in studying city diplomacy, the advances and limitations of practices of city diplomacy and concludes with observations about its future in an increasingly ‘urban’ age.

#### **42. CITIZEN DIPLOMACY – MELISSA CONLEY TYLER AND CRAIG BEYERINCK**

Definitions of what citizen diplomacy is and who can be considered to be citizen diplomats are highly contested. The term citizen diplomacy can be used either as a metaphor for those who are involved in international interactions or, more narrowly, to refer to state-sanctioned use of citizens in more traditional forms of diplomacy. While the actions of private citizens have long played a role in interstate relations, either for or against their states’ interests, there has been a strong preference by states for official diplomacy. However, ease of travel and communication have led to a growing role for private citizens in relations between states. People-to-people contact between citizens can have benefits including forming deep and long-lasting relationships that are perceived as authentic and untouched by government. Changes in diplomatic practice mean a growing place for citizen diplomacy to fill the gaps found between publics and traditional diplomatic practice.

### **43. CELEBRITY DIPLOMACY – MARK WHEELER**

This chapter analyses whether celebrity diplomats have effected a ‘politics of attraction’ through which they may bring public attention to international causes, such as poverty and human rights. It situates the theoretical concepts of celebrity diplomacy associated with soft power within a broader public diplomacy literature. It provides case studies of humanitarian initiatives supported by international governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and ‘go it alone’ individuals or groups. Finally, it considers the critiques of celebrity diplomacy in relation to celebrity-driven ‘affective capacities’ (for example, famous peoples’ ability to establish representational relationships with their audiences).

### **44. DIGITAL DIPLOMACY – EYTAN GILBOA**

This chapter explores the meaning, evolution, contribution and effects of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) on diplomacy. It clarifies definitions and distinctions between digital diplomacy (DD) and other areas of diplomacy. It traces the historical development of DD, primarily via the American experience. It moves from diplomacy 1.0 to diplomacy 2.0, from passive email and websites to the hyper interactive social media of Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. The chapter investigates the effects of DD on foreign ministries, the Foreign Service, audiences, and public diplomacy (PD), and exposes limitations and challenges for both research and practice.

### **45. ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY – MAAIKE OKANO-HEIJMANS**

Economic diplomacy is a contested concept and a diverse practice. Nonetheless, the processes of globalization – including the revolution in communications technologies – are connecting the world’s economies, while shifts in global power are causing governments to review the balance between their different national interests. The economic dimension of states’ foreign policies and therefore the role of economic diplomacy is receiving much attention. This chapter argues that as a result of these changes, the concept and practice of economic diplomacy is evolving, becoming more comprehensive and covering at least three types of diplomatic activity: trade and investment promotion (commercial diplomacy), negotiations on economic agreements (trade diplomacy) and development cooperation. The evolving nature of economic diplomacy is driving change in domestic and multilateral institutions, including new ways of decision making. Despite these and other changes, such as diplomatic networks of state and non-state actors, the state continues to be the primary actor in economic diplomacy.

### **46. BUSINESS DIPLOMACY – HUUB RUËL AND TIM WOLTERS**

Decades of globalization have intensified the relationship between business and governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and interest groups. The role of multinational corporations (MNCs) in today’s complex business landscape has grown to such an extent that MNCs



have a leverage that is comparable to nation-states. In this perspective, MNCs have become diplomatic actors. However, they are experiencing increased pressure from a multitude of stakeholders. In order to manage these pressures and create legitimacy, MNCs need to engage in long-term relationships with foreign governments and NGOs. This chapter aims to deepen our understanding of this relatively unexplored and fragmented concept of ‘business diplomacy’.

#### **47. RELIGION AND DIPLOMACY – DAVID JOSEPH WELLMAN**

When examining the religious dimension in the analysis and practice of diplomacy, it is important to first distinguish between two broad categories of analysis. The first category, which comes under the rubric of religion and diplomacy, refers principally to the influence of religion on the practice of track-one diplomacy among nation-state actors. The second category, faith-based diplomacy, generally refers to the practice of diplomacy on the part of track-two actors in the form of religious institutions, religiously affiliated NGOs and/or individual practitioners of a religious tradition. This chapter’s goal is to examine the approaches these two categories engage, in an effort to understand the insights they can provide analysts and practitioners of diplomacy.

#### **48. MILITARY DIPLOMACY – SEE SENG TAN**

Military diplomacy has grown in prominence as a strategy in response to the changing strategic environment and the evolving remit of militaries in the post-Cold War era. It involves the peacetime cooperative use of military assets and resources as a means of a country’s foreign and security policy. Its goals are both conservative or pragmatic, such as building capacity and interoperability and enhancing mutual understanding among countries and their militaries, and transformative, such as resolving conflicts and developing democratically accountable armed forces. While its rise has been encouraging, its contributions to enhancing military transparency and strategic trust among states have at best been mixed.

#### **49. ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY – SALEEM H. ALI AND HELENA VOINOV VLADICH**

Ecosystems transcend geopolitical boundaries and hence diplomacy has been essential to manage environmental resources most efficiently and effectively. However, ‘environmental diplomacy’, as a term and concept has evolved to encompass not only interactions on natural resource governance between nation-states but conflict resolution and peace-building around the environment more broadly. This chapter situates environmental diplomacy within the broader context of conflict resolution, consensus-building and peace-building. We also investigate the tools being used to improve the efficiency of environmental diplomatic negotiation and processes, such as mediated modeling and GIS technology, and the role science can play as an arbitrator for environmental diplomacy while recognizing that scientific knowledge can also be socially and politically constructed by stakeholders. Our chapter suggests that environmental diplomacy transcends conventional notions of Westphalian inter-state dynamics and also



operates in a parallel community-driven field of human endeavor. While international relations remain the dominant arena for environmental diplomacy, grassroots environmentalism has also necessitated that community-based conflict resolution also be encompassed by such an ecological worldview.

## **50. SPORTS DIPLOMACY – STUART MURRAY**

Compared to some of the major problems in twenty-first-century international relations – terrorism, poverty and climate change, to name but a few – sports diplomacy is a positive phenomenon that should be encouraged. However, in the modern diplomatic environment it is often oversimplified either as a remedy for the world's problems or derided as a gimmick, an accoutrement that only rich states can afford in these austere times. Such opinion is parochial and unhelpful. This chapter argues that to realise the potential of sport as a diplomatic tool it is necessary to map the relationship between states, sport and international relations. From this survey it introduces and critiques two categories of sports diplomacy: the traditional (version 1.0) and a 'new' networked form (version 2.0). As a result, the landscape of sports diplomacy becomes clearer, as do certain pitfalls and limitations of using sport as a tool for overcoming and mediating separation between states. In this chapter, opportunities for cooperation between theorists and practitioners are generated, and research gaps in the sports diplomacy identified. By mapping and re-imagining the relationship between sport, international relations and diplomacy, it then becomes conceivable that sports diplomacy could become a major soft power tool.

## **51. SCIENCE DIPLOMACY – DARYL COPELAND**

Science diplomacy is a critically important but under-resourced, under-utilized instrument of international policy. Since the end of the Cold War, science diplomacy, and collaborative programs in the area of international science, technology and innovation more generally, have been marginalized and replaced by a preference on the part of governments for the use of armed force. Militarizing international policy and privileging defence over diplomacy and development have proven costly; there are no military solutions to the complex transnational issues which imperil the planet. Science diplomacy offers a better way forward, especially if it regains its former standing as a soft power tool of public diplomacy. This chapter provides a critical introduction to the relationship between science, technology, diplomacy and international policy and examines the prospects for improving science diplomacy.

## **52. INDIGENOUS DIPLOMACY – J. MARSHALL BEIER**

Despite broadened and still broadening understandings of diplomacy in recent decades, as well as of the range of actors and sum of practices it connotes, relatively little attention has been paid to historic and contemporary diplomacies of Indigenous peoples. At the same time, important developments in Indigenous-state relations, in hegemonic fora of global governance

concerned with Indigenous issues, and in the rise of global indigenism – characterized by, among other things, a complex network of networks through which Indigenous peoples interact and coordinate globally – have become increasingly prominent. Notwithstanding oft times considerable resistance from sovereign power, Indigenous peoples' global political subjecthood has grown in visibility and in applied efficacy with respect to a wide range of political projects. These developments have not escaped the notice of states, even if students and scholars of diplomacy have been slow to take note. This chapter takes Indigenous peoples' unique and varied traditions of diplomatic practice seriously as well-functioning diplomacies which, though qualitatively different in many cases from even the more novel preoccupations of diplomatic studies, have nevertheless underwritten the provision of political order and have worked to sustain relations and exchange between peoples in myriad contexts across time and space. It also offers the important cautions that these distinct traditions are not reducible to one another or to some aggregate form and that care must be taken, so far as it is possible to do so without relevant competencies, to engage them on their own terms rather than those of hegemonic imagining.

### **53. PARIAH DIPLOMACY – HUSSEIN BANAI**

Pariahs are actors whose rogue behavior constitutes a source of disorder in international society. Precisely because pariahhood is a subjective mode of conduct, it requires diplomatic tools and methods to articulate its grievances, aims, and interests, and to negotiate the terms of coexistence with others in international society. Such practice is routine by both the great powers and states at the periphery of world politics. Pariah diplomacy testifies to the methods by which extra-legal and disorderly conduct – whether by members of the international society or those standing outside of it – are justified or impressed upon other diplomatic actors in international politics.

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# Introduction: Understanding Diplomatic Practice

Costas M. Constantinou, Pauline Kerr  
and Paul Sharp

Welcome to *The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy*. Handbooks generally aspire to give readers a handy toolkit, a practical guide. Recalling one of the most famous handbooks of diplomacy, Sir Ernest Satow's *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice*, the aim was to offer 'practical utility, not only to members of the services, but also to the general public and to writers who occupy themselves with international affairs' (Satow 1, 1917: ix). Similarly, this Handbook aims to provide guidance to three audiences: (a) the professional in national diplomatic services as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations; (b) the student and researcher of diplomatic and international affairs; and (c) the interested layperson who recognizes or suspects that diplomacy is an important daily occurrence with immense consequences for how we live together in a globalized interdependent world. Mindful of the practical imperative then, this Handbook provides a collection of *sustained reflections on what it means to practice diplomacy today* given

what we progressively learn about how it was practiced in the past, what global trends and challenges we face in current times, and what hopes and aspirations we harbor for the future. Like Satow we aim to be useful about the ways and means of practicing diplomacy; unlike Satow, however, we do not offer a single authoritative, declaratory account but a scholarly handbook that poses *questions and problematizations*, and provides *possible answers* to them.

Preparing a handbook on diplomacy nowadays reflects a major challenge that was not present during Satow's times, and which lets us say a great deal more about diplomacy than Satow could. Specifically, a handbook today encounters and benefits from the development over the last 100 years of the academic discipline of International Relations and within it the rich and expanding field of Diplomatic Studies. It must therefore refer to and engage this literature – the accumulated body of knowledge on diplomacy. Indeed, a practical guide that disregards such theoretical



developments – that is, the more or less systematic thinking aimed at understanding and explaining diplomatic practice – will be broadly unreflective and have little practical utility as to *what works* as well as *how, where* and *when* it works, or doesn't work.

It is useful to remember that practice moves on in ways that practitioners sometimes are the first to understand and recognize, yet also sometimes dogmatically resist acknowledging for a variety of reasons. At the same time, theory is sometimes pioneering in analyzing trends or re-conceptualizing practice, yet sometimes only belatedly catches up on what practitioners realized and routinely practiced for some time. What is needed to redress this dissonance is quite simple and often repeated: better cross-fertilization between theory and practice (see, among others, Brown 2012). The renewed interest in 'practice theory' in diplomatic studies (Sending et al., 2015; Pouliot and Cornut, 2015; Wiseman, 2015) is a welcome development in this respect.

## THE PRACTICE–THEORY NEXUS

The Handbook's advance of the practice–theory nexus and the view that diplomatic practice and theory are two sides of the same coin is not new (see Constantinou and Sharp in this Handbook). It suggests that a diplomatic handbook for the twenty-first century ought to be conceptual and historical but also fully global – in terms of issues and scope. It needs ambitiously to engage and understand the concept of diplomacy in history, the contexts within which it emerges as a positive or negative term, as well as what is at stake in demanding or claiming moves from 'old' to 'new' diplomacy (see Leira in this Handbook). It also needs to appreciate the complex entanglements of modern diplomacy with the colonial encounter, and what forms of diplomacy it legitimated or eradicated in colonial and post-colonial times (see Opondo in this Handbook). It should be concerned with how historically

specific practices of diplomacy are implicated with colonial governance and displacements of indigenous diplomacy as well as pre- and sub-state diplomacy (see Beier in this Handbook).

The Handbook suggests that both the student and the practitioner of diplomacy ought to remain robustly engaged with *normative questions*. That is to say, one should, where scholarly research has already yielded new and critical knowledge, scrutinize the usage of dominant universals, their geographical and historical utility, and their proper or inappropriate use. In this respect, the Handbook examines the extent to which the nature of foreign policy has changed in response to shifts in both international and domestic policy milieus and changes in the demarcation, including the impossibility of demarcation, of the *domestic* and the *international* (see Hocking in this Handbook). It points to how the mobility of political issues from the domestic to the international stage necessitates the reconsideration of the conceptual triad of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy, and specifically the limits of state power and the different kinds of actors the state needs to engage nowadays in order to achieve results (see Kornprobst in this Handbook). It also suggests that attention should be paid to how diplomatic agents are entangled in their everyday practice with deeply established but also contested conceptions of representation and legitimacy (see Adler-Nissen in this Handbook). Furthermore, the delegated authority through which diplomatic agency operates raises issues of ethical scrutiny and accountability, and should encourage 'reflection-in-action [...] by which diplomats seek to align the practical requirements of the situation at hand with the normative imperatives prompted by their divided loyalties' (see Bjola in this Handbook). None of this is possible without coming to terms with the changing currency of diplomatic norms and values.

These normative aspects open up wider questions about the *functional and symbolic forms of diplomatic practice*. For example, the verbal and non-verbal forms of diplomatic communication need to be understood in

their instrumentalist mode, i.e. as tools of the trade necessary for the fulfillment of daily diplomatic functions and signaling, but also in their constitutive mode, producing meaning and enacting the diplomatic worlds within which actors operate (see Jönsson in this Handbook). Similarly, with the notion of diplomatic culture we encounter the technical, professional culture of the diplomatic corps but also the wider notion of the diplomatic community beyond state officials and thus the pluralization of diplomatic cultures that are linked to everyday mediations and conflict resolutions (see the chapters of McConnell and Dittmer, and Sharp and Wiseman in this Handbook). Moreover, art is often used instrumentally in diplomacy to project the representation of polity or policy, but such representations as well as counter-representations by artists have legitimacy effects that need to be understood and taken on board by practitioners (see Neumann in this Handbook).

To support a better understanding of this practice–theory nexus, this collection seeks to present the latest theoretical inquiry into the practice of diplomacy in a way which is accessible to students and practitioners of diplomacy alike as well as the interested general reader. That said, the readers of this Handbook will note that there are different views about the status of theory within Diplomatic Studies that are reflected in various chapters. Diplomacy’s resistance to being theorized (Wight, 1960; Der Derian, 1987) is no longer a tenable proposition (see Constantinou and Sharp in this Handbook). There are plenty of theories of diplomacy. What remains conspicuous by its absence, however, is any meta-theory of diplomacy – a theory of the theories of diplomacy – which might present all the different things that people want to identify and discuss in a single set of coherent relations with one another. The more people become interested in practicing and theorizing diplomacy and the more the hubris of ‘grand’ theorizing is revealed and taken to task, the more the prospect for any such overarching general account

of it appears to recede. A guide to the practice of diplomacy must acknowledge this meta-theoretical lack and, at least, explore the possibility that it is not necessarily a matter for regret, quite the reverse.

This *resistance to meta-theorizing* with its associated sense of fragmentation and pulling apart is reflected in both the general organization of the Handbook and in some of its individual chapters. Part I focuses on concepts and theories of diplomacy, followed by Parts II, III and IV on diplomatic institutions, diplomatic relations and, finally, types of diplomatic engagement. One might expect, therefore, a rather stately progress from the orthodoxies of the past when aristocrats and professionals managed the relations of sovereign states, through the excitements and disappointments of the ‘new’ diplomacy and conference diplomacy of 1919 onwards (see Meerts in this Handbook), up to a present in which economics, terrorism, social media, and a host of other ‘usual suspects’, as Captain Louis Renault might term them, conspire to subvert, obscure, and transform the perceived orthodoxies of diplomacy. This happens to some extent, but more in individual chapters than in the collection as whole.

Taken in the round, the collection often presents a series of surprising and suggestive juxtapositions. Thus, for example, a chapter on what it means for states to be in diplomatic relations – an utterly orthodox, yet surprisingly ignored aspect of diplomacy to date (James in this Handbook) – rubs shoulders with an essay on pariah diplomacy, i.e. ‘the methods by which extra-legal and disorderly conduct are justified or impressed upon other sovereign entities in international politics’ (Banai in this Handbook). There are chapters on key institutions, such as on the diplomatic and consular missions (Rana and Pasarin), international law (Clinton), diplomatic immunity (Frey and Frey), negotiation (Zartman), mediation (Aggestam), summitry (Dunn and Lock-Pullan), and diplomatic language (Oglesby). There are regional, sub-regional, and single country perspectives, where

diplomatic relations are analyzed with regard to what theories and concepts the specific authors assessed as pertinent to their case.

Specifically, the Handbook examines the European Union and its hybrid system of diplomatic representation and action (Smith in this Handbook); the revolutionary legacy and changes in American diplomacy (Henrikson in this Handbook); the changing policy and discursive shifts in Russian post-Soviet diplomacy (Zonova in this Handbook); the 'modernization' of Chinese diplomacy and its shift to more proactive foreign policy (Chen in this Handbook); the surprising deficit of studies on diplomacy in East Asia as well as the near absence of anything that might be called 'regional diplomacy' (Kerr in this Handbook) at least compared to the EU region of Europe (see Smith in this Handbook) and even compared to the regional adherence to the *concertación* approach to diplomatic management in Latin America (Burgess and Bastos in this Handbook); and how colonial and postcolonial environments shaped Middle East diplomacy (Stetter in this Handbook), African diplomacy (Huliaras and Magliveras in this Handbook), and Southern African diplomacy (Chan in this Handbook). In short, the Handbook has a global outlook but there is no single theoretical perspective from which to view and order the knowledge of diplomatic institutions or through which to explain historical and current diplomatic relations in their entirety. There are often common understandings about the value of diplomatic institutions or the forms of diplomatic relations, but there is also a *prioritization of different levels and units of analysis* by different authors.

Conventional scientific and social scientific approaches concerned with rigor in method, coherence in conceptualization, and cumulation in the production of knowledge, suggest that resistance to meta-theorizing should be regarded as a problem. People interested in diplomacy, however, seem less concerned. To be sure, a more relaxed approach courts certain dangers. If one insists that diplomacy should be properly regarded as a practice performed

exclusively by the accredited representatives of sovereign states, then much of what is called diplomacy today and is presented as such in this collection will appear to be mislabelled. If, on the other hand, one has an open conception of diplomacy as ways of conducting relations, or is content to accept as such whatever other people present as being diplomacy, then 'diplomacy' and 'diplomats' remain blurry and indistinct. This is particularly the case with studies focused on elaborating the contexts in which diplomacy is undertaken.

### THE MEANING OF DIPLOMACY: SINGLE OR PLURAL?

Such elaborations on contexts are necessary, especially in a time which people characterize as one of change and innovation. The danger, however, is that they stop short of discussing diplomacy as such, or what it means to be diplomatic. The question 'why and how do we come to call this diplomacy or diplomatic?' remains a powerful one, although not as an attempt to discipline departures back into line from an orthodox or classical standpoint. It is an open question which admits of multiple answers, but it does ask that people attempt to answer it.

Indeed, it is a useful exercise to canvass how this open question might be answered even when people call something *diplomacy* or name someone an *ambassador*, catachrestically or 'unprofessionally'. Considering how such terms feed into *everyday reality and thinking*, literal or metaphorical, is quite crucial for fully appreciating the conceptual richness of diplomacy as well as its practical applications in social life (Constantinou, 1996). This is for two reasons. First, concepts carry within them and often begin themselves as metaphors – words carrying meaning from one context to another. Concepts then get modified through consciously literal but also consciously and unconsciously metaphorical use (Derrida, 1982: 258–71). One can be sympathetic to

the critique of conceptual overstretching, the private and excessive broadening of a concept just in order to prove a scholar's latest theory or idea. But it is difficult to be sympathetic to approaches that essentialize and police concepts, striving to prove conceptual purity and extricate historical interbreeding and the inevitable hybridization of ideas. In both, the quest for a fake clarity can shade over into a quest for control which is all too real. It is reminiscent of an age where religion could only be defined by the church and the priest, meaning in effect that the differing religious and spiritual ideas of people and their forms of expression were denied any reality, and thus could only figure as either mythical or heretical.

Second, especially for those working within a critical or constructivist mode, *linguistic uses are not just instrumental to communication but enact and create the worlds within which we live and operate*. The Wittgensteinian motto that 'to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life' is worth recalling here (Wittgenstein, 1958: section 19). Words are not just passive tools but active mobilizers of imagination. To imagine that one is experiencing a life in diplomacy has power effects and affects. Some flights into diplomatic fantasy may be harmless and frivolous, as when one is playing the board game *Diplomacy* and decides for the sake of fun to practice intrigue and coercion on a friend as the game encourages one to do. But other flights into diplomatic fantasy may have more serious implications, such as if one thinks that the board game's strategic understanding is the natural way of relating to others and diplomacy can only be that. Moreover, it is often missed that non-official or 'unauthorized' use of diplomatic discourse and terminology may hide wider or unresolved issues, be it claims to recognition or territorial sovereignty; taking exception to someone else's governmental jurisdiction; aspirations to fully represent or rightly speak for someone or something; or power to negotiate or reopen negotiation or opt out of an agreement, and so on. In short, quotidian diplomatic terminology may be just

language gaming or trope, just as it may be expressive and symptomatic of a major political claim or power context or representation anxiety.

On the whole, the difficulties created by a relaxed approach to defining diplomacy and establishing the boundaries of what can properly be regarded as such are far outweighed by the advantages. This is certainly the shared position of the editors for this project. Certainly, each of us had our preferences in the sense of wishing that more attention be given to one aspect of diplomacy and less to another – more on state practices, more on transformational potentials, more on real life diplomatic practice in concrete situations, for example. Each of us working individually might have produced a different balance between themes than the one which emerged from our joint efforts.

However, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that diplomacy is an inherently plural business which encourages an inherently plural outlook on the way people see things and see things differently from one another, and to that extent how diplomatic knowledge is crucially implicated not only in the instrumentality of official communication but also in the development of rival perspectives over any issue (see Cornago, 2013 and in this Handbook). A social world composed of different actors with different interests, identities, and understandings of what the world is, how it works, and how it might work – to the point that we may usefully talk of many worlds (Walker, 1988; Agathangelou and Ling, 2009) whose relationship to each other is captured by no single claim – invites a number of responses. *Which differences* should some effort be made to resolve, and which should be left alone? And *by what means* should differences be resolved or maintained – by *force* when there is sufficient power, by *law* when there is sufficient agreement, and by *habit and tradition* when there is sufficient sense of belonging? 'Good diplomacy' – with its emphasis on peaceful relations, avoiding misunderstandings

and unwanted conflict, and on paying attention to the Other – offers ways of conducting relations in a plural world where power, law and community are in short supply. Even ‘bad diplomacy’ can sometimes offer a way of rubbing along together where these are absent.

### **THE PRACTICE OF DIPLOMACY: TRADITIONAL OR TRANSFORMATIONAL?**

In a sense, therefore, the breadth of this collection and the, at times, most tenuous connection between some of its constituent elements is itself an appropriately diplomatic response to the subject matter. Two general themes emerge, nevertheless. The first is that in a world where power and authority seem to be diffusing, people are looking to something which they traditionally understand as, and want to call, *diplomacy* as a way of conducting their relations with one another. The second is that many of the contextual changes which fuel this demand for more diplomacy, make diplomacy – at least as it has traditionally been understood – more difficult to undertake.

There is very little desire to return to a world in which a relative handful of carefully selected, refined, low key, discreet, diplomatic guardians of the universe plied their trade, secure in their shared values and respect for confidentiality. And even if there was such a desire, such a world is unrecoverable, not least because of the considerable extent to which it was a myth in the first place. Accordingly, the task that confronts those theorizing and practicing diplomacy today is a complex one. What is required is a fundamental change in some elements of diplomatic practice, but not all of them. The prospects for reinsulating diplomacy and diplomats from the consequences of low cost, high content, information instantly available to the general public, for example, are probably very low, at least for now.

Nevertheless, there are some signs that this change is beginning to happen. While diplomatic careers have no doubt been damaged as a result of the diplomatic indiscretions revealed by WikiLeaks, they no longer produce the drastic outcome in diplomatic relations that they have produced in the past (Satow, 1917: 375). Younger diplomats, reflecting the outlook of their peers in society at large, are much more likely than their elders to agree with the proposition that ‘people say all sorts of stuff’. Diplomatic practice, therefore, might evolve in the direction of not holding diplomats so tightly to their words or, perhaps, specifying when their public or revealed utterances should be taken as *ex cathedra* and when they should be regarded as harmless instances of ‘people saying all sorts of stuff’. A similar shift might take place in attitudes towards the crisis character with which contemporary international news is presented by authorities and reported by mass media, a character often amplified in the tweeted and blogged responses within social media. Rather than trying to lower the temperature, diplomatic practice might seek to take the higher temperature as the normal operating level and recognize that people are neither as upset nor as energized as they often sound.

However, the need for diplomatic practice to adjust, in some instances, to changing conditions, is matched by the concomitant need of the myriad of new diplomats to take on at least some aspects of diplomatic practice as these have evolved from what appear in the present to have been quieter, simpler times. The representatives of ‘new’ international actors – private corporations, humanitarian organizations, and transnational political actors, for example – have traditionally positioned themselves as outsiders acting upon a world of insiders, that of the system or society of sovereign states. As a consequence, they have been viewed and tended to act as lobbyists, pressure groups, agitators, and subversives on behalf of rather narrowly defined objectives. So too at times have the more traditional state-based diplomats, of course. In addition, however,



the best among the latter have had some sense of ownership of, responsibility for, and even affection towards the system or society which facilitates and makes possible their work. This can be seen to work at the level of what Adam Watson (1982) calls *la raison de système* and underpins a diplomatic theory of international relations that can valorize political collaboration and coexistence whilst accepting separation and difference (Sharp, 2009).

As Navari (2014 and in this Handbook) notes, within the basic structures of state-based diplomatic practice as these have been articulated in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Consular Relations, there are other rules and conventions – some more tacit and less formal than others – by which specific *démarches* may be judged to be instances of the diplomatic game more or less well played. A similar sense of responsibility, however, can be found at the individual level when people who are not only radically different from one another, but who might also have a highly problematic place for each other in their respective universes, experiment in conflict transformation and coexistence (Constantinou, 2006). How they are to make meaningful representations, or conduct relations without conquering the other or capitulating to the expectations of the other, constitute diachronic diplomatic problems which require both reflection and self-reflection.

## THE DIPLOMATIC FIELD: REVIVAL OR EXPANSION?

One of our starting observations in this Handbook is that it has become commonplace to claim that interest in diplomacy is reviving. The end of the Cold War is often credited with initiating this revival, while the ongoing revolution in information and communication technologies (ICT) seems to be supercharging it. The War on Terror threatened to put diplomacy back in the deep freeze, but the foreign policy disasters which resulted merely underlined the

need for more effective diplomacy. In his election campaign for US President, Barack Obama called for more diplomacy and was rewarded with victory at the polls and a Nobel Peace Prize, just one year after taking office. However, it is perhaps worth noting two points about this diplomacy revival claim, for they have a considerable bearing not only on promoting a less cynical outlook on diplomatic practice but also on how the study of diplomacy has developed in recent years, which is reflected in this collection.

The first point is that the claim refers to *interest* in diplomacy, not diplomacy itself. Of course, diplomacy did not disappear during the Cold War. Even ideologically driven and strategically minded superpowers needed diplomacy – albeit diplomacy of a certain kind – and their diplomacy was neither so dominant, nor as ubiquitous, as their own accounts of international relations at the time suggested. Even so, the Cold War left its mark, particularly on the academic study of international relations which was, and remains, heavily centered on the United States. Diplomacy was necessary, everyone could acknowledge. Missing, however, among practitioners and students alike, was a sense that diplomacy was important to *making things happen* in international relations or *understanding why they happened as they did*. It was widely assumed that if one wanted to act internationally or explain international actions, one should look at structures – be these constituted by the distribution of state power, concentrations of capital and production, or, more recently, the distribution of scientific and technical competencies. More agency-focused approaches could not escape this structural framing, whether of the foreign policy bureaucracy or the cognitive make up of decision makers. And even studies of bargaining focused on the structure of contexts in which sparsely elaborated agents were presented as operating. As may be seen in many of the Handbook's chapters, the *emphasis on structure* continues to leave its mark on both the practice and the study of diplomacy, as indeed it must. What

many of them also reveal, however, is the shift to an *emphasis on diplomatic agency*, its actions and relations and the capacities, both actual and potential, that agents have for shaping international relations and, indeed, producing or enacting the structures which seem to exert so much influence on our sense of what happens and can happen.

The form of this shift of focus draws attention to the second point which needs to be noted about the revival of interest in diplomacy – the description of the process as a *revival*. The implication is that there was once a greater interest in both the practice and the study of diplomacy which went into decline and is currently recovering to something like previous levels. Strictly speaking, this is not the case. Certainly, it was plausible for a relatively small group of people in the fairly recent past to equate what they regarded as important international relations – those conducted between an even smaller group of sovereign states of which they were citizens and some of them represented – with diplomacy. Even so, the diplomatic histories produced between the late eighteenth century and the mid twentieth century missed a great deal of what was going on at the time. Much of what is presented as diplomacy today, however, would have been unrecognizable as such to those who maintained that it consisted of the adjustment of relations between sovereign states principally through negotiations undertaken by their accredited representatives. Rather than a *revival* of interest in diplomacy, therefore, it is perhaps more accurate to refer to an *expansion* of interest, and a double expansion at that. The number of people interested in diplomacy has expanded within and across the discipline of International Relations, and with that so too have conceptions of what people want to mean when they try to talk about diplomacy.

As evidenced in Part IV of this Handbook, the typologies of diplomatic engagement have also expanded, giving us an important laboratory for observations about the cross-fertilization between practice and theory (see chapters by Huijgh, Maley, Avenell and Dunn, Viggo

Jakobsen, Armstrong, Meerts, Acuto, Conley Tyler and Beyerinck, Wheeler, Gilboa, Okano-Heijmans, Ruël and Wolters, Wellman, Seng Tan, Ali and Vladich, Murray and Copeland in this Handbook). Other chapters in other parts are equally important observation sites of this dynamic (for example see Spies, Navari, Thorhallsson and Bailes, and Calleya in Part III of this Handbook).

Looking across this expansion of types of diplomacy reveals that *the extent of cross-fertilization between practice and theory varies*. Among the reasons for this are that research and scholarship around a particular type of diplomacy also varies. There is frequent acknowledgment among the authors in Part IV, and throughout the Handbook, that more research and scholarly attention is needed to better understand the practice–theory nexus and there are calls for researchers to work closely with those practicing diplomacy (for example, see Avenell and Dunn in this Handbook) to meet the practical and theoretical challenges ahead.

Nonetheless the overall observation about cross-fertilizations between practice and theory in this Handbook is that the many generalizations, or theoretical claims based on systematic thinking, about particular types of diplomacy require qualifications and caveats and are therefore ‘bounded’ within *temporal and spatial contexts*. To illustrate the point, digital diplomacy (see Gilboa in this Handbook), which is clearly one of, if not the most, recent types of diplomacy being practiced, is an area of study that currently offers generalizations: for example, that the recent means of diplomatic communication, namely the ICTs and Internet, are clearly different from those of the past, many more actors are involved, digital networks are evolving; and that this is having an impact on diplomatic practice. Simultaneously, qualifications are offered: for example, that much of the research on digital diplomacy is based on US experience, that the impact of different actors may well vary depending on such factors as the issue-area and the political system of a country,

that traditional and new instruments of communication co-exist, and that the digital landscape is changing so rapidly that future impacts are difficult to predict, including whether or not such new technologies will change the nature of diplomatic relationships and knowledge. Rather than undermining the practice–theory nexus, such careful qualifications add to its robustness and support the point made earlier that there are many theories of diplomacy, albeit in various stages of maturity, and that the absence of meta-theories is far from holding back our understanding of diplomacy today.

In addition to being mindful of this double expansion illustrated above and elsewhere, we as editors of the Handbook noted gaps in the existing literatures on diplomacy and to engage with some of them we invited our authors as experts in their specialized fields to individually and collectively tackle specific tasks, including the following:

- Offer *perspectives* on the past, present, and possible future activities, roles, and relations between the diplomatic actors of the global society – specifically *who* has power/influence *when*, *why*, and *how*.
- Provide a major thematic overview of diplomacy and its study that is both *retrospective* and *prospective*.
- Provide an overview of the field that is *intro-spective*, self-reflective and critical of dominant understandings and practices of diplomacy.

No one can singly undertake such a massive task. We think the cumulative result is splendid and has certainly fulfilled our own expectations! We also think the result contributes to knowledge about contemporary diplomacy in other recent texts and handbooks (see, for example, texts by Pigman, 2010; Bjola and Kornprobst, 2013; Kerr and Wiseman, 2013; and the handbook by Cooper et al., 2013).

## PERSISTENCE IN QUESTIONING DIPLOMACY

The chapters in the Handbook demonstrate the plural character of how diplomacy may

be understood, but, taken together, we suggest that they provide the Handbook with its distinctive contribution – the advancement of thought about theory and practice and the relationship between them. Looking ahead, a number of challenging ontological, epistemological, and practical questions arise out of the Handbook’s focus on theorizing and practicing diplomacy. We strongly advise students and professionals to pose these questions in different contexts, to make their own judgments, and to act upon them accordingly. For example:

- What does diplomacy mean, what does it mean to be diplomatic and how do the answers to both questions change in different social contexts?
- What are the roles of diplomacy and diplomats in producing, reproducing, and transforming different social contexts?
- Can the diplomatic be examined independently of the political, the governmental, the legal, and the personal – and what is at stake in doing or not doing so?
- How far should the diplomatic identity be extended – and at what cost or benefit?
- To what extent should diplomatic identity be denied – and at what cost or benefit?
- Can ‘new actors’, for example, the Coca Cola corporation, or the Doctors Without Borders organization, or the Invisible Children campaign cultivate not just transnational but diplomatic relationships?
- Can certain aspects of diplomatic practice be privatized or subcontracted – and at what cost or benefit?
- To what extent are diplomatic immunity and diplomatic asylum important norms or unnecessary privileges in a globalized age?
- To what extent and under what conditions can diplomacy and violence coexist?
- What constitutes diplomatic knowledge, how should it be acquired, and how far should the general public have access to it?
- How do diplomatic relations historically evolve and how are they artfully maintained?
- What are the main issues that traditionally concern particular diplomatic actors, what issues that interest them are regionally and globally sidelined, and why?



- In diplomatic relationships, who has what influence/power, over what issues, during what periods, and through the use of what methods and mechanisms?
- How can the diplomatic practice of particular actors be understood, revisited, and revised when viewed through different theoretical perspectives?
- How are alternative diplomatic cultures, both actual and potential, to be studied and learned from?
- To what extent are we moving into a 'managerialization', 'de-professionalization', or 'trans-professionalization' of diplomacy?

A final word. In the early stages of the process of assembling this Handbook it seemed at times as if we had committed ourselves to creating a veritable Leviathan of diplomacy covering nearly every conceivable aspect of the practice from nearly every conceivable angle. As our work progressed, however, we became increasingly aware of three things: substantive gaps which we will leave to our reviewers to identify; a wide range of views on diplomacy which cannot always be coherently related to each other; and, above all, a sense that the collection was producing more questions than answers. Social formations come and go, while diplomacy is perennial. Nevertheless, as social formations change, so too do diplomatic practices, as do the opportunities for diplomacy, in its turn, to enable positive changes in the ways in which people think about and conduct their relations with one another.

At the end of the project, we have a strong sense that we are at the beginning, but just the beginning, of such changes. As you read the following collection, we very much hope that the essays in it encourage you to think about and make your own sense of what diplomacy *is*, what it is *becoming*, and what it *might be*.

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PART I

# DIPLOMATIC CONCEPTS AND THEORIES





# Theoretical Perspectives in Diplomacy

Costas M. Constantinou and Paul Sharp

Diplomacy has been theorized long before the development of the subfield of diplomatic theory that we currently associate with the academic discipline of International Relations (IR). Within modern academia, theorizing is commonly perceived as a systematization of thinking, an extensive elaboration of ideas and principles governing or seeking to explain a particular phenomenon. Early theorizing, however, is often fragmentary and unsystematic, as are certain strands of contemporary theorizing, specifically strands that follow what Paul Feyerabend (1975) called an ‘anarchistic theory of knowledge’. All approaches can provide valuable perspectives, insights and modes of inquiry. That is why, in this chapter, we look at various disciplinary attempts that seek to offer more or less complete explanatory narratives of diplomacy, but also others that go beyond the so-called ‘grand theory’ approaches (Skinner 1990) and underscore the contributions of fragmentary and unsystematic thought. To that extent, we do not limit our account to established ‘traditions

of speculation’ about diplomacy whose historical absence might lead one to conclude that there is ‘a kind of recalcitrance’ of diplomacy to be theorized about, or indeed that there is no international and, hence in Wight’s framing, no diplomatic theory at all (Wight 1966). By contrast, we suggest that there is a lot of diplomatic theory around, including when writers do not name what they do as ‘diplomatic theory’. Our *theoretical perspectives in diplomacy* are thus grounded in the key conceptual explorations, epistemological exchanges and normative and critical propositions concerning different aspects of diplomatic practice.

## EARLY DIPLOMATIC THOUGHT

Bearing the above in mind, the diplomatic researcher might be initially struck by the archaic link between the practice of theory and the practice of diplomacy. Ancient Greek

*theoria*, as retrieved from the writings of Herodotus and Plato, was the sacred embassy sent to consult the oracle as well as the ecumenical embassy sent to see the world and reflect on the doings, ideas and values of foreigners. That the name of these special missions of problematization and sustained reflection began to be employed by Socrates and his followers to designate the arduous activity of philosophical contemplation, of knowing thyself and seeking to discover the true essence of beings, offers an interesting point of departure for *diplomatic* theory. It suggests a complex entanglement between early theorizing and diplomatizing, the linking of the incompleteness of human knowledge with the ceaseless search and negotiation of the foreign, the unknown and the unexplained. From quite early on, diplomacy has been as much about the negotiation of meaning, value and knowledge as of the negotiation of interests and positions (Constantinou 1996; see also Chapter 11 in this Handbook).

Among classical, medieval and modern thinkers of diplomacy, a key and recurring issue has been the outlining of the necessary conditions for fulfilling the diplomatic mission. It includes the demarcation of the role of the diplomatic agent, delineating the skills and ethics of the ideal ambassador within different diplomatic cultures. One of the earliest exchanges on this subject is found in the orations of Aeschines and Demosthenes on *The False Embassy* (*Peri Parapresbeias*), which concerned legal charges pressed by the latter on the former for his ambassadorial conduct in fourth-century BCE Athens, following a series of embassies to the Macedonians (Demosthenes 2000, Aeschines 2005). The orations offer valuable insights on what constituted a properly discharged embassy at the time, outlining arguments and counter-arguments on the responsibility for ambassadorial reporting and policy advice; on faithfully implementing the instructions of the polis; the appropriate conduct of the ambassador while abroad and on taking responsibility for missing opportunities as assessed post facto.

When following a Judeo-Christian trajectory, however, a different version of how faithfully to fulfil the diplomatic mission is in operation. Based on the ‘mytho-diplomacy’ of the Fall from the grace of God, diplomatic missions reflect attempts at the horizontal ‘mediation of estrangement’ between earthly communities but also vertical ‘mediation of estrangement’ between the human and the divine (Der Derian 1987). Medieval diplomatic thought – based on Augustine’s magisterial *City of God*, written in the fifth century CE – granted the Church mediating powers between the earthly cities and the heavenly city. Within a sacralized cosmology, this in effect gave the Church not only spiritual but temporal diplomatic powers and established in Western Europe a hierarchical diplomatic system with the Pope at its head.

In medieval and early Renaissance treatises on the diplomatic office, topics like the sociability, court behaviour, polymathy, oratorical and persuasive skills of diplomatic agents are extensively discussed (see Mattingly 1955, Queller 1967, Hampton 2009). A trait to which diplomatic theorists have also paid attention is temperament and emotional intelligence or, as Bernard du Rosier aptly put it, the development of *equanimitas*, that is, taming one’s emotions and cultivating a balanced psychology. The enhancement of these qualities has been strongly linked to the evolution of diplomatic civility and tact (Mastenbroek 1999).

Another key focus of the diplomatic craft has been negotiation. Not only the *conditions* for a successful negotiation but the *ends* of negotiation have been a major concern for philosophers and practitioners. Early on in ancient Rome, stoic philosophers, like Cicero and Seneca, re-conceptualized negotiation as something other than mere public business and/or bargaining of interests (Cicero 1913, Seneca 1932a, 1932b). For these philosophers, *negotium* was valorized as an occupation that strived to benefit the extended community beyond the polis, and only if that was not possible, then benefiting one’s

limited community, if not possible, benefiting those who are nearest, and if not possible, then striving for the protection of private interests. In short, negotiation as primarily or exclusively a self-serving exercise was rejected by these philosophers (Constantinou 2006).

In seventeenth-century Europe, Cardinal Richelieu has been the key thinker of *continuous negotiation*, elevated and valorized as an end in itself, including during war and even with no possible agreement in sight (Richelieu, 1965). The idea of continuous negotiation underscored the importance of always retaining open channels of communication, so that compromise and settlement could follow when conditions allowed for them some time in the future. This notion further highlighted the value of indirection or multi-directionality in diplomacy, the importance of negotiating for 'side effects'. These sideway pursuits could occur not merely strategically or as a devious objective of negotiation, but as a pragmatic response when stalemates have been reached, informing and reformulating unsustainable policy objectives and as a means of exploring *modi vivendi* in the midst of protracted disagreement (Constantinou 2012; see also Chapter 17 in this Handbook).

Philosophers–practitioners have reflected on *strategy*, often depicted as a crucial ingredient of diplomacy that underscores the means–ends method of getting one's way with others. In this regard, the importance of deceit and dissimulation, or less darkly of ambiguity, has been highlighted by thinkers from Sun Tzu to Machiavelli. Crucially retrieved from these strategic thinkers, although often singularly and absolutely interpreted, has been the bypassing of restraining ethics or the development of a different ethics (i.e. public morality vs private morality) in determining a course of action. The prevalent motto in such diplomatic thinking is that 'the end always justifies the means', which has worked as a moral license in diplomacy for 'lying abroad for one's country', for intrigue, coercion and the use of force (see also Chapter 3 in this Handbook).

On the other side of the spectrum, however, and especially when one realizes that diplomacy is almost always not a one-off game but an iterative business, one finds thinkers such as De Callières (1983) underscoring the importance of honesty in negotiation, crucial in developing long-term and sustainable relationships with others and not simply concerned with short-term gains or empire building. The complete reversal of 'Machiavellian' strategy comes with thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi (1997), where the means employed should always match the ends, projecting a more holistic–spiritual approach in dealing with rivals – irrespective of the means they choose to use. While this re-integrates personal morality with public morality it also offers a different strategy in sync with the moral, philosophical and anti-colonial aspirations that those involved were professing at that time (see also Chapter 10 in this Handbook).

*Raison d'état* has been suggested to be the founding principle of modern diplomacy (Kissinger 1994). Conceived in early Renaissance Italy by thinkers such as Guicciardini and Machiavelli, it legitimated diplomatic action through policies and activities that promoted the status of the ruler, but which progressively acquired an impersonal legal quality and autonomous ethics. Yet, it is in the more sustained meditations of Cardinal Richelieu in seventeenth-century Europe that *raison d'état* finds its fully-fledged application; that is, in building alliances with Protestant states by reason of acting in the national interest of France rather than on the basis of ideological and religious reasons that should have supported contrary alliances with Catholic states.

Beyond theorizations linked to statecraft concerns, there have been humanist meditations among a number of diplomatic thinkers with regard to the ends of diplomacy in early Renaissance Europe. These reflections have been subsequently sidelined or co-opted in accounts of diplomatic thought tied to statecraft. Whether to serve the peace or the prince and international order or

dynastical/patriotic interest were major concerns for writers like Ermolao Barbaro, Etienne Dolet, Torquato Tasso, Gasparo Bragaccia and Alberico Gentili, often presented as predicaments, not as settled positions (Hampton 2009, Constantinou 2013; see also Chapter 2 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Early diplomatic encounters combined advocacy, negotiation and problem-solving with missions of reflection and problematization.
- The diverse means and ends of diplomacy have been historically debated with regard to the normative aspirations of diplomatic actors.
- In the modern era, *raison d'état* has predominantly linked diplomacy to statecraft, sidelining its humanist legacy and promise.

## DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

It is an article of faith among most scholars of diplomacy that their chosen field and its subject are unjustly and unwisely neglected by their mainstream IR colleagues (Cohen 1998, Sharp 1999, Murray et al. 2011). This is true up to a point, but it is true in a way which is complicated and interesting. The extent to which this issue is deemed important depends on how seriously one takes diplomacy to be an autonomous concept that can in itself offer valuable perspectives in understanding and explaining international relations.

The claim of diplomacy's neglect is only true up to a point because, as even a cursory glance at some of the major works in IR reveals, quite a lot of attention is devoted to something called *diplomacy* (Morgenthau 1967, Kissinger 1994, Avenhaus and Zartman 2007). The claim is complicated because when this is pointed out to students of diplomacy, they tend to respond that what people like Morgenthau and Kissinger

call diplomacy is not, properly speaking, diplomacy but something else, for example, foreign policy or statecraft. The claim is interesting because, despite the efforts of its advocates over a period of nearly two decades, the study of diplomacy remains on the margins of mainstream IR. It is also interesting because some of the most innovative and challenging work on diplomacy has been undertaken not in any spirit of advocacy for diplomacy as it is conventionally understood, but more from a fascination with the problems which diplomacy seeks to address or, more properly, give cause for its existence.

Nevertheless, the claim that diplomacy has been neglected may not be particularly important. The question 'neglected by whom?' admits a range of possible answers – American IR, leading academics, academics in general, ordinary people – which provide grounds for valorizing or bypassing diplomacy's perceived neglect. It might be useful to note in this context that most of the subfields of mainstream IR are minor powers whose advocates voice concerns about being undervalued by the rest of the profession both as a natural disposition and as a way to capture more resources, exert more influence and achieve more status.

IR developed as a state-centric field of inquiry, and very much remains one today. States, their roles and their significance remain the axis around which inquiry revolves. Even the descants and challenges to their privileged position which are proliferating still seem to reinforce, rather than undermine, this centrality. As a consequence, diplomacy has been seen in mainstream IR as a state practice. It is assumed to exist, and exist in the way that it does, because states and the modern system of sovereign territorial states exist. It is assumed to function in accordance with the interests, priorities and concerns of these entities. In short, for most scholars the sovereign territorial state provides diplomacy's *raison d'être* (see also Chapter 21 in this Handbook).

So far so good; but what is diplomacy thought to be in mainstream IR? This is



where things become complicated. Often, especially in the United States (US), the term is used as a synonym for foreign policy or international relations in general (James 1993). Its use for *international relations* in general may be regarded as a holdover from a time in the history of the modern state system when it was reasonable to claim that nearly all important international relations were undertaken by professional diplomats representing sovereign states. It may also be regarded as evidence of people, and Americans in particular, using language loosely, although the argument has been made that in the latter case, treating diplomacy and international relations as synonyms is rooted in a rejection of the idea that international relations ought to be treated differently from other human relations (Clinton 2012). In this view, the term diplomacy should not be used to designate a privileged subset of either international or human relations demanding to run to its own codes and to be judged by its own moral standards.

Similar arguments can be made for treating diplomacy and *foreign policy* as synonyms (see also Chapter 5 in this Handbook). In addition, however, diplomacy is presented in mainstream IR as an instrument of foreign policy along with propaganda, economic rewards and punishments, and the threat or use of force to crush or punish (Holsti 1967). Morgenthau, in particular, presents diplomacy as an undervalued instrument of foreign policy and one which, if used properly, confers the advantages of a force multiplier, and a morally significant one at that. *Good diplomacy* enhances the more material instruments of power allowing a state to ‘punch above its weight’ or achieve what it wants more cheaply. *Bad diplomacy* can result in a state using its other foreign policy instruments unwisely and underperforming as a consequence. In addition, however, good diplomacy is good because it is associated with pursuing foreign policy objectives peacefully and taking a bigger picture view of what needs to be done. Morgenthau

(1967), for example, saw good or wise diplomacy as the most realistically achievable way of escaping the fate to which the national interests of states were otherwise propelling humankind – death in the nuclear age.

If we can accept that states, or their representatives, very often approach matters of common concern simply by talking things through, then diplomacy may be seen as an *instrument* of foreign policy. One way of getting what you want is by talking to other people. However, the claims in mainstream IR that diplomacy can render foreign policy more efficient, serve as a force multiplier or constitute a morally better way of conducting international relations all pose problems for the idea that diplomacy is simply one among several instruments of foreign policy. As soon as states move from simply talking to communicating threats and promises about punishments and rewards, then diplomacy moves from simply being an instrument of foreign policy to being a *medium* by which the possible use of the other instruments is communicated. It may be important, indeed necessary, but it is no more interesting than the processes by which the message gets delivered, especially when compared to the things being communicated (see further Chapter 6 in this Handbook).

Even as diplomacy is viewed as a medium by which the possible use of other foreign policy instruments is communicated, however, it acquires another and more complex form of instrumentality. This becomes apparent as soon as it is acknowledged that diplomatic messages can be more or less effectively delivered, diplomatic conversations can be more or less effectively conducted and diplomatic *démarches* can be more or less effectively undertaken. There is more to getting what states want than simply communicating it and what they are prepared to do or give to get it. And when the idea of diplomacy is imbued with the notion that it is a particularly good way for states to get what they want because it is generally cheaper than the alternatives and peaceful, then this



raises the question of *for whom* and *for what purposes* diplomacy may be regarded as an instrument. If monopolized by statecraft, it thus raises questions of representation and inclusiveness as well as of substate and transnational interests.

Mainstream IR has not been interested in considering, let alone resolving, these puzzles about whether diplomacy should be viewed as an instrument (and if so whose instrument and for what purposes), a medium (and if so why and when a virtuous one), or a combination of both. Instead, it has simply treated them as aspects of other issues, leaving its understanding of diplomacy compartmentalized to the point of being fragmented and incoherent. Thus diplomacy, viewed simply as the way a state ‘talks’ to other states, has been presented as not only unimportant but – in its traditional form as a way of communicating through resident embassies and foreign ministries – as in decline (Fulton 1998). Diplomacy as a way of enhancing (or inhibiting) the effectiveness of other foreign policy instruments has been treated as statecraft – the preserve of the great statesman or stateswoman especially during crises (George 1991) – as a not particularly distinctive type of bargaining and negotiation (Crocker et al. 1999), and as a similarly undistinctive type of organizational and network activity (Hocking et al. 2012). Finally, diplomacy viewed as a good way of handling international relations has been treated as a subfield of the ethics of international and human conduct in general, as a component of international institution-building and as a practice being superseded and displaced by the emergence of global governance and public diplomacy conducted by the representatives of an emerging civil society (Seib 2009).

The response of those interested in diplomacy to mainstream IR’s fragmented understanding has been uncertain. On the whole, it has mirrored that fragmentation rather than made a coherent and appealing case for their shared view that diplomacy is interesting, important and needs to be

better understood. A number of reasons for why diplomacy has been depreciated and devalorized have been put forward. The rise of IR, it is sometimes argued, coincided with a period of international history in which strategic issues were to the fore, an anti-diplomacy superpower performed the role of hegemon and structural factors appeared to rule over agency in making things happen (Der Derian 1987, Lee and Hudson 2004, Wiseman 2012). By the turn of the twenty-first century it was suggested changes in structure – whether of a transformational or balance of power kind – were re-opening the door to agency and therefore to a revival of diplomacy (see also Chapter 7 in this Handbook). These changes may be occurring, but they have not been matched by a rise of interest in diplomacy in mainstream IR.

Those who are the most closely interested in traditional state-based diplomacy take two different tacks in explaining this lack of interest. First, they hold on to the old argument that diplomacy is necessarily an esoteric business beyond the understanding of most people and incapable of arousing their sympathetic interest (Berridge 1995). This is sometimes accompanied by the corollary of little respect for other IR academics. Compare, for example, what is covered and attracts attention and what is ignored on the programme of a mainstream IR academic conference like the annual ISA Convention with what a Foreign Ministry, a bar of foreign correspondents or ordinary people on a bus would list as pressing international issues. Under pressure, however, diplomacy’s more traditional advocates sometimes retreat into maintaining that diplomacy is simply the IR equivalent of Public Administration – a worthy, but not particularly exciting, subfield about which it is important to know something and which happens to interest them (Berridge 1995, Rana 2000).

This modest position on diplomacy is plausible but not convincing. Most students of diplomacy maintain that it is interesting because it is important and

that this importance makes its neglect by mainstream IR a source of concern. Why do they think it is important? In part they tap into the sense that members of professions and trade unions have of their being at the centre of things. Whether it is the operating table, the classroom, the law court or the coal face, they are all liable to claim that their particular site is where the real action takes place and the real work gets done. The diplomatic system of embassies, consulates, ministries and international organizations is thus the engine room of international relations (Cohen 1998; see also Chapter 12 and 13 in this Handbook). This may be a professional conceit, but it is backed by a body of literature on diplomacy which stresses its role, not as one of the instruments of foreign policy, but as a practice which constitutes, reproduces, maintains and transforms international systems and world orders (Sending et al. 2011, 2015).

This body of literature has a long pedigree, reaching back in Europe, at least, to the late Medieval debates referenced above about how ministers (ambassadors) should strike the right balance between their obligations to their respective Princes and to Peace. Thus, preserving the peace of Christendom was argued to take priority over the interests of Princes when these two conflicted, and it was this which provided the functions of ministers with their sacred quality. This broader conception of the duties of diplomats and the functions of diplomacy was further elaborated in the eighteenth century by references to a diplomatic body or *corps diplomatique* constituted by all the diplomats in a capital and their shared interest in knowing what was going on (Pecquet 2004 [1737] (see also Chapter 14 in this Handbook). In the twentieth century this emerging collective professional consciousness was captured by the distinction between the demands made on diplomats by *la raison d'état* and *la raison de système* (Watson 1983). Good diplomats would recognize that the wider interests of their states were best served by pursuing

them with restraint so that they would not damage the international system or society as a whole which made their existence and actions possible (Butterfield 1966, Sharp 2003).

There are at least two problems with this conception of diplomats acting as *guardians* of the international system and *handlers* of their respective sovereigns to that end. The first is that it is possible to obtain only glimpses of them as system guardians and state handlers while we see a great deal of them as state instruments. The diplomats themselves can occasionally be spotted praising one of their number for restraining or subverting the wishes of his or her own political masters for a bigger interest or value. And once in a while we get the sense that a group of diplomats have taken it upon themselves to act in this way to prevent matters getting out of hand. When pressed to acknowledge this sort of activity directly, however, a diplomat will become uneasy and for the record quickly fall back on versions of Barbaro's famous formulation, namely that a diplomat's duty is 'to do, say, advise and think whatever may best serve the preservation and aggrandizement of his own state' (Mattingly 1955).

The second problem with the broad conception of what diplomats do, or think they are doing, is the general claim that, for a host of technical, social and political reasons, whatever they are doing is becoming less important for understanding what people want to know about international relations. Diplomats may work quietly as the guardians of the international society of states and others as they understand this to be. However, this may amount to no more than saying that, like the secret order in a Dan Brown novel, they are working on behalf of a conception of things in which hardly anybody else has any interest. The more traditional approaches to the study of diplomacy in mainstream IR have no effective response to this criticism. To find that, one has to look at other approaches to the study of international relations.

## Key Points

- Within the IR discipline, diplomacy has often been understood and studied synonymously with foreign policy, state communication and international relations.
- Diplomacy has been approached as an instrument or medium of statecraft raising practical and normative questions about representation, inclusiveness and purpose.
- Beyond statecraft pursuits, diplomacy has been theorized as a practice that produces, secures and transforms international systems and world orders.

## DIPLOMATIC THEORY AND CRITICAL IR

In particular, it is useful to look at those IR approaches which style themselves, or are presented, as post-modernist, post-structuralist, post-colonialist and post-positivist (hereafter all identified as critical approaches to diplomacy to distinguish them from mainstream ones). The divide between mainstream and critical is intentionally overdrawn to clarify patterns of inquiry. Most mainstream IR, viewed from a critical standpoint, assumes the existence of an objective, observable world which is produced by law-governed processes of cause and effect. Problems of context and perception may make it hard to access this world in a way that is agreeable to all, and some phenomena of interest within it may have less independent existence than others. Nevertheless, a mainstream consensus exists that the effort to access this 'real world' and explain its patterns is possible and worth making. Thus, it is assumed we can identify and observe something which everyone, or at least reasonable people, will agree is diplomacy, then take it as a given, examine how it works, and make an assessment of its place and significance in the overall scheme of things.

Drawing on a variety of sources in philosophy, psychology, sociology, linguistics,

literature and the arts, critical IR theorists draw attention to the problems with making such an assumption. It is impossible to make true or false claims about what diplomacy really is, only from what people say it is and how they use the term. If this is so, then attempts to define diplomacy objectively are, in effect, attempts to define it authoritatively which, intentionally or not, exclude, marginalize or suppress other uses of the term as well as alternative practices and cultures of diplomacy. Critical theorists argue that how people talk about and practise diplomacy – often differently in different times, places and circumstances – should be explored. Histories of the way the term has come into being and is used – among technocrats but also in popular culture and imagination – should be traced. Changes in the way its practice is used to help constitute the world of international relations – whether it would be colonial or postcolonial, statecentric or pluralist, and so on – should be identified. And theorists themselves should self-consciously use, stretch and transgress the term to explore possibilities for making helpful, empowering, and transformational interventions of their own in political life (Der Derian 1987, Constantinou 1996, Constantinou and Der Derian 2010, Cornago 2013).

While diplomacy has enjoyed the status of a backwater in mainstream IR, it is notable how critical theorists have been drawn into the backwater by the current. They have so for a variety of different reasons. Critical theorists often, although not always, are interested in the way understandings of international relations may be ordered in the interests of constellations of wealth and power. Diplomacy and diplomats, both conventionally understood, are easily presented as obvious manifestations, guardians and perpetrators of the separations and alienations (ethnic, racial, colonial, gender and so on) upon which those orders of wealth and power are seen to depend (Der Derian 1987, Opondo 2010, Neumann 2012a). To be sure, diplomacy employs wealth and power to

achieve ends, but it is also – less pronounced yet rather revealingly – a site for the deployment of truth claims and identity games, that is, a site for exercising knowledge as power and power as knowledge.

In addition, the practice of diplomacy is identified as providing us with one of the more obvious glimpses of what critical theorists want to tell us the rest of life in society is like. Diplomats are explicitly engaged in creating and maintaining the ambiguous and shifting identities of the states and other entities which they are employed to represent (Sharp 1999). They are also engaged in constituting international systems through the performance of their roles. Often, top-down diplomatic practice is not as autonomous as it seems; it is revised and complemented by local practices and discourses (Neumann 2002, 2012b). This performative aspect of the diplomatic vocation is quite revealing. Sometimes diplomats actually tell us this is what they are doing (though often after the fact in memoirs), and they reflect on the sort of disposition which is required to do it effectively. Yet by observing the diplomats we obtain the insight that the rest of social life is not so very different from diplomacy and that the lives of all human beings, particularly in their social and public aspect, are not so very different from the professional lives of diplomats. In other words, we can appreciate that diplomacy is not merely an inherited courtly profession but actually is all around us, not a mere practice of trained initiates but an everyday vocation and mode of living (Constantinou 2013 and 2016). We also learn that the fragmented, incoherent, but mainly unfocused accounts of diplomacy provided by mainstream IR are not weaknesses. They are clues that something very interesting might be going on that needs to be investigated and accounted for (Constantinou 1996, Sharp 2009, Cornago 2013, Holmes 2013).

With this insight, the diplomatic backwater becomes a wider space promising escape from mainstream IR and its artificially fixed channels with their contending, but

entrenched and unchanging, same old characterizations of the ‘same old melodramas’ of international relations. While critical international theorists interested in diplomacy share this insight, however, they put it to different uses. Some approaches, for example, offer detailed accounts of how phenomena as varied as the naming of street signs, the ensuing political arguments and the commentaries of experts and diplomats on the whole process help constitute international narratives, while revealing their gaps, concealments and contradictions at the same time (Der Derian 2012). Some approaches study conventional anomalies – non-state actors with well-established diplomatic standing, for example – to demonstrate how the diplomatic system is more open, and hence amenable to change, than it is conventionally presented (Bátora and Hynek 2014). Some approaches demonstrate how apparent breakdowns are managed in such a way as to deepen and consolidate the arrangements to which they are a response (Adler-Nissen 2015). Others retrieve the non-Eurocentric origins of diplomacy, engaging, for example, ancient classics like the *Mahabharata* to illustrate how putatively mythical principles of negotiating a unified cosmos offered valuable diplomatic principles before, during and after the colonization of India (Datta-Ray 2015). Still others point to the need to reject the consensus and embrace the ‘diplomatic dissensus’, that is, the need to broaden and change popular perception of what is sensible, to appreciate the dark sides of diplomatic agreement and conviviality, and their effects on the less powerful, the unrepresented and the dispossessed (Opondo 2012; see also Chapter 3 in this Handbook). Finally, others draw on an ethics of inclusiveness and prudence with regard to diplomatic conduct as a way of recalibrating diplomacy (Cooper et al. 2008, Bjola and Kornprobst 2013).

Sociological approaches identify the gaps which exist between the actual practice of diplomats in the day-to-day and the accounts which mainstream IR observers and the

diplomats themselves provide of what is supposed to be going on (Sending et al. 2011, 2015). Practice approaches are not necessarily all critical, however. Some are more rooted in legal traditions, seeking to identify the authoritatively specified goals and explicit principles of conduct for diplomacy by which undertakings of it may be evaluated (see also Chapter 15 in this Handbook). However, they do so not to define diplomacy and its functions authoritatively, but to discover these principles, explicate them and explore their implications (Navari 2010). Some approaches seek to uncover specifically diplomatic elements in the conduct of international relations and human relations generally. They seek to capture the views, priorities and assumptions of those who find themselves situated between, and charged with managing the relations of, human groups which wish to remain separate from one another (Sharp 2009, Bjola and Kornprobst 2013). Still others recover the lost, forgotten and ignored origins of terms like diplomacy, embassy and theory to create openings for more imaginative and creative explorations of what it might mean to be a diplomat and 'do' diplomacy (Constantinou 1996).

There has been an expansion of interest in critical approaches to theorizing diplomacy. They are more than well-represented in the recent publications in what Neumann has called 'the rapid professionalization of diplomacy studies' (Bátora and Hynek 2014). Two established book series in diplomatic studies have recently been joined by two new ones, plus another series devoted to public diplomacy. The only journal devoted exclusively to the study of diplomacy has just completed its first decade and journals focused on public diplomacy and business diplomacy have appeared. Nevertheless, the impact of all these diplomatic studies on the citadels of mainstream IR, especially in the US, remains unclear. Equally unclear, however, is the extent to which capturing these citadels, or even only breaching their walls, matters in an increasingly plural and horizontal world

of international practice and theory. What is clear is that, in borrowing from outside the discipline of mainstream IR, students of diplomacy have benefitted from and, in turn, contributed to long traditions of speculation about diplomacy which exist in other fields.

### **Key Points**

- Critical perspectives in diplomacy have challenged dominant accounts of what diplomacy is or ought to be.
- Most of these approaches seek to expose the ethical and power implications of different practices of diplomacy, and specifically the marginalizations, hierarchies, exclusions and alienations that these practices consciously or unconsciously produce.
- Some of these approaches are sympathetic to diplomacy as a practice for managing a world composed of agents equipped with positivist and universal, yet competing, understandings of this world.
- Critical approaches have helped to bring the field of diplomatic studies into conversation with other fields of IR and underscored the significance of opening up diplomacy to scholarly developments beyond the discipline.

### **DIPLOMACY BEYOND THE IR DISCIPLINE**

Diplomacy has also been theorized outside the IR discipline. Even though such works have not intensely or deeply engaged the concept of diplomacy per se, they have broadly conceived and applied it. At the same time they have imported standard or alternative definitions of diplomacy into their research. Their theoretical contributions, though tangential, as far as mainstream IR is concerned, are nonetheless important; specifically in the way they extend the scope and understanding of diplomatic practice with regard to a multiplicity of actors beyond states but also with regard to conflict resolution or transformation, reconciliation and



peace-building, dialogue of civilizations, place-branding or communication strategy, and so on.

For example, there have been attempts to bring together diplomatic and religious studies, thus engendering a theological and spiritual dimension into the theory of diplomacy. Already within IR there have been commendable attempts to revive diplomacy, through the 'Christian' notions of care, charity and self-sacrifice (Butterfield 1954) or through the 'Islamic' notions of truth, justice and extensions of community, as contrasted to cunning and guile, coercion and national interest (Igbal 1975). In some other writings, religion has been suggested as 'the missing dimension of statecraft' or 'faith-based diplomacy' promoted as a means of 'trumping realpolitik' (Johnston and Sampson 1994, Johnston 2003). Also within the context of new age spirituality, the pursuit of 'world diplomacy' has been suggested as a means of approaching holistically 'the common good of all humanity', promoting global rather than national interests and by doing so seeking to get in touch with the 'divine unity' of the world (Sidy 1992). An especially interesting eco-religious dimension has been proposed by David Wellman in pursuit of a 'sustainable diplomacy' (2004). He specifically identifies common Christian and Islamic precepts that help people to relate more constructively to each other and their environment, but also to bring about conflict-transformation and awareness of structural violence; in the end producing a 'sustainable diplomacy' that supports empathetic encounters and self-critique.

Works in anthropology and sociology have brought diplomacy down from the level of high politics and reconnected it to practices of everyday life. One key early work has been Ragnar Numelin's *The Beginnings of Diplomacy* (1950), which has provided a plethora of illustrations of pre- and non-state diplomatic activities among tribes and groups in non-western societies. Gift-exchange, participating in common religious

rituals, marriage settlements, breast-feeding across rival communities, and so on, have been seen to constitute overt or subtle ways of extending kinship and commonality, and of mediating otherness. More recently, Richard Sennett (2012) has employed the term 'everyday diplomacy' in the context of discussing togetherness and to refer to the daily activities and tactics that people use in order to cooperate in the midst of conflict and rivalry. Specifically, Sennett highlights the tact and indirection, the coded gestures, but also the empathetic talk, dialogic conversations and performances that create conditions of collaborative togetherness in everyday encounters.

Interesting contributions from within geography have highlighted 'the legitimizing strategies of unofficial diplomacies' (McConnell et al. 2012). Focusing on actors that imitate state diplomacy, such as governments-in-exile and micropatrias (self-declared parodic nations), the authors examine how diplomacy is used mimetically in order for these actors to make interventions and gain degrees of recognition and legitimacy in the international system. Others have looked at the bureaucratic production of knowledge, authority and expertise in supranational diplomatic services (Kuus 2013). From within pedagogy, it has been suggested (Richardson 2012) that multicultural education should be reconsidered as a diplomatic activity; specifically in the way it is supposed to enhance a 'diplomatic sensibility'; not only in the sense of teachers as representatives of their institutions but also as 'negotiators of the differences of minoritized communities'. This has been argued as a way of fostering 'culturally responsive pedagogy as cultural diplomacy', to counter-balance state-centred cultural diplomacy that simply brands a token multiculturalism. The 'theory of the living systems' has also been employed to highlight the interrelatedness, non-linearity and uncertainty of the world system, something that renders problematic the exact calculation of interests, the obsession with winning and losing as well as the strict determination of

causal links and final effects in diplomatic practice (Gunaratne 2005).

Volkan's work (1999a, 1999b, 1999c) has sought to explore the entanglements of diplomacy and psychoanalysis: specifically the shift from individual to large group identities, and from small ego to large ego formations; the unconscious links between the nation, natality and the mother figure which creates specific emotional attachments; the association of the leader and his policies with the authority of the father, whose decisions may be challenged but ultimately sublimated at critical moments and followed due to family loyalty; the constant use of others as 'reservoirs' for the projection of the negative aspects of one's identity. Overall, Volkan's work has outlined how diverse and recurring diplomatic activity can be better informed through introspective examinations into the individual and collective unconscious.

Finally, works on ethnology and art history have sensitized diplomatic studies as to the value and role of diplomatic objects. Kreamer and Fee (2002) have suggested that we see diplomatic objects as envoys themselves, with the high symbolic value that specific objects, such as textiles or body artefacts, might engender in particular cultures. This is something that is commonly missed in non-visual, language-centric approaches to diplomacy. Moreover, the work of Kreamer and Fee illustrates how the value of such diplomatic objects 'is transformed through ritual and exchange' (2002: 22). In McLaughlin et al.'s *Arts of Diplomacy* (2003), we get a fascinating glimpse of how diplomatic objects were instrumentalized in the encounters between US government emissaries and Native Americans, but also how such objects currently figure in the remembrance and commemoration of these lost communities. This gives them a different functional value today, serving as transhistorical envoys, supporting the mediation of contemporary estrangement between settler and native communities in the United States (see also Chapter 9 in this Handbook).

In this regard, the Actor Network Theory of Bruno Latour (2005), suggesting that we need to move beyond subjects and review objects as non-human agents, can be useful with regard to diplomacy, especially his proposition concerning the ability of objects to act as 'mediators' and 'intermediaries' in different contexts: *intermediaries* being mere carriers of power and knowledge, whereas *mediators* having transformative ability, multiplying difference and supporting the reconstitution of subjectivity (Latour 2005). In his latest major work, Latour suggests that the current ecological crisis and the recognition of different modes of existence demand an entrusting 'to the tribulations of diplomacy'. That is to say, resolving conflicts over value and ways of being in the world requires the emulation of diplomatic agency; i.e. diplomats who are not just advocates of the principles and interests of their masters but 'directly interested in formulating other versions of their [masters'] ideals' (Latour 2013: 483–4).

Negotiating what presents as real, reformulating what appears as ideal and, perhaps above all, acknowledging that we are doing neither more nor less than this may be an apt principle of diplomatic method. If and when applied, it may indeed help to constructively engage the plethora of complex problems in contemporary global society as long as it does not become a licence and caricature for cynically prioritizing interests and discounting aspirations. It may also serve as a final point of reflection upon which to finish our theoretical tour of diplomacy.

### Key Points

- New theoretical perspectives in diplomacy have been provided from within disciplines beyond IR, such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, theology, philosophy and cultural studies as well as from within cross-disciplinary perspectives.
- Such studies support the need for a more plural understanding and broadly conceived notion of diplomacy.

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# A Conceptual History of Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

Scholars of diplomacy have identified diplomatic practices across the human experience, spanning the globe and going back before recorded history. Even so, the actual term ‘diplomacy’ did not enter into usage until the last decade of the eighteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Does this discrepancy matter, and if so, what can it tell us? These are the underlying questions of this chapter. The position taken here is that the emergence of the specific concept is crucial to our understanding of ‘diplomacy’. Transhistorical reference to ‘diplomatic’ practice obscures the very distinct historical specificity of what we today refer to as ‘diplomacy’. The advent of the concept marked not only the drawing together of a number of what had been perceived as ‘political’ activities of princes and their representatives and named them collectively as the business of interaction between polities, it also happened as the culmination of a long process of critique against the very same practices. Furthermore, the

emergence of ‘diplomacy’ was part of a much larger shift in political languages, replacing the understandings of absolutism with the new understandings of the Enlightenment. What we today refer to as ‘diplomacy’ was, according to this understanding, born out of (Western) revolution and enlightenment. Drawing on a relatively modest secondary literature, as well as a number of primary sources, I will thus emphasise the relative modernity of the concept of ‘diplomacy’, and how it emerged very rapidly as part of a much wider transformation of political vocabularies around 1800. Furthermore, I will stress how it emerged as a contested concept (almost a term of abuse), and how it has repeatedly been contested over the last two centuries. Where ‘diplomacy’ was for a long time viewed with strong suspicion, and even for its multiplicity of meanings, predominantly associated with the state, over recent decades more positive connotations have been associated with the concept, and it has been stretched to cover ever more phenomena.

I make my argument in four steps. First I present the usefulness of conceptual history, and the notion of conceptual change, which underlies this chapter. Then follows a longer discussion about the emergence of diplomacy, subdivided into sections dealing with conceptual change in related concepts, the etymology of diplomacy and how diplomacy emerged as the negatively loaded term set to cover all that which radicals towards the end of the eighteenth century disliked about the executive prerogative over external affairs. The ensuing section covers the repeated challenges from 'new' diplomacy, and how diplomacy has become a more positively loaded term in recent decades. A brief conclusion wraps up the chapter.

## CONCEPTUAL HISTORY AND CONCEPTUAL CHANGE

When writing a regular history of diplomacy (like Black 2010), discussing the diplomacy of some historical epoch or polity or presenting definitions or even the 'essence of diplomacy' (Jönsson and Hall 2005), writers work with some more or less abstracted or ideal-typical notion of diplomatic practices and/or diplomatic institutions, and explore these in their given context. Focus is on the signified, on the perceived content of diplomacy, and although long periods of time might be covered, the underlying theme is one of stability – diplomacy is recognisable across time and space. In contrast, a conceptual history of diplomacy asks when and for what purpose the concept 'diplomacy' emerged, and what it has implied across time. Focus is on the signifier, on the meaning of the term 'diplomacy', and the underlying theme is one of change – 'diplomacy' is expected to change across time and space. The reasons for a conceptual focus are many. At a basic level, one seeks to avoid explicit anachronistic usage; the reading of the past in terms of the present. More importantly one desires not to add

conceptual baggage to times when it is not warranted, insisting that concepts attain meaning from their usage in specific historical contexts; thus one must study not only the meaning of concepts, but also how they are put to work. Conceptual histories start from a conviction that concepts are not simply tags for fixed phenomena, but in and of themselves tools or weapons in political struggle.

In the discipline of International Relations, conceptual history under that name has been largely associated with the works of Quentin Skinner and the Cambridge School, while studies inspired by Michel Foucault have touched some of the same ground. For the purpose of this chapter, some basic insights from the German school of conceptual history, associated in particular with Reinhart Koselleck (1985, 1988), will be utilised; namely the notion of concepts as inherently ambiguous, and the overarching claim that the period from 1750 to 1850 witnessed a radical transformation of political language during the transition from the early modern time to modernity. Let us briefly discuss them in reverse order.

First, the notion of a transformation of political language, of conceptual change, is tied to the enlightenment and the age of revolutions, with emphasis on changes in established concepts as well as the emergence of completely new concepts. Key to Koselleck is how this period witnessed what we can call the historicising of history; for the first time history was conceptualised not as a field of recurrence, but as inherently open-ended. What had come before needed not determine what was to come. This was a radical departure, enabling many of the other conceptual innovations of the period simply by breaking the bonds of recurrence. For our purpose, with 'diplomacy' emerging around 1790, this conceptualisation of general conceptual change seems pertinent. 'Diplomacy' emerged mainly as a negative description by non-diplomats, and almost from the outset, the evils of 'old diplomacy' were contrasted with the 'new diplomacy', ideally without diplomats. Second, the difference between words and concepts, according

to Koselleck, lies in the surplus-meaning of concepts. Following from Nietzsche, he argues that concepts can never be fully pinned down, that there is always some ambiguity involved. This fits the current usage of 'diplomacy', which can refer to the practice of diplomats, in particular negotiations, but also to skill in the conduct of international relations. It is also used as a synonym for foreign policy writ large, and as shorthand for both tact and finesse and a life of champagne, canapés and receptions (Berridge and James 2001). The multiplicity of meaning is evident also in the etymological development of 'diplomacy', and in the history of related concepts (see also Chapter 1 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- A conceptual history of diplomacy treats diplomacy as a contingent phenomenon.
- Understanding 'diplomacy' as a concept implies acceptance of ambiguity and a surplus of meaning.

### 'DIPLOMACY' AND RELATED TERMS

General, as well as etymological, dictionaries pin the emergence of 'diplomacy' to the last quarter of the eighteenth century, with 'diplomatic', albeit largely with connotations which differ from the ones of the twenty-first century, emerging some decades before. Constantinou (1996: 78) argues that during the medieval period,

there was no single term that conveyed the themes of diplomacy in terms of statecraft, deputation, negotiation, foreign policy, tact, and so on, nor was there a word that could be simply used as a substitute for the term diplomacy without any supplementary political associations and meaning.

Although words with *diploma* as the root started being used in the late medieval age, Constantinou's assessment could easily be stretched well into the eighteenth century. Moreover, there never emerged any concept

as a 'forerunner' of diplomacy. When diplomacy entered the political vocabulary, it built on existing terms and practices, but it gave a new name to something which had not been collectively named until then. Terms such as 'negotiations' (a staple of the widely read texts of e.g. Wicquefort and Callières) and 'politics' (as when the first school for future ministers in France, established in 1712, was called *L'Académie Politique*) cover some of the same ground, and a number of specialised titles (such as ambassador, minister, envoy etc.) existed for the practitioners, but the totality of practice had not before been named. Even so, some attention must be paid to politics and foreign policy, as the domain of the unnamed group of princely representatives.

### 'Politics' and 'foreign policy'

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, ambassadors and envoys were clearly seen as engaged in 'politics'. Koselleck (1988) suggests that absolutism rested on a conceptual dichotomy where the state monopolised 'politics', leaving 'morality' to the subjects. Viroli (1992) and Palonen (2006) provide more detailed readings of the conceptual history of 'politics' and related concepts, suggesting that with the coming of *reason of state*, politics was 'no longer the most powerful means of fighting oppression and corruption but the art of perpetuating them' (Viroli 1992: 477). Politics was also considered a whole, covering all forms of governance, from the household to relations between princes. Thus, the first sentence of the entry for 'politique' in the great encyclopaedia of Diderot and D'Alembert, published in 1765, reads: '*La philosophie politique est celle qui enseigne aux hommes à se conduire avec prudence, soit à la tête d'un état, soit à la tête d'une famille*' (Diderot and d'Alembert 2013).<sup>3</sup> Around the middle of the eighteenth century, a beginning differentiation can nevertheless be discerned in English usage, as when Dr Johnson (1768) defined 'policy' as: '1. The art of government,

chiefly with respect to foreign powers. 2. Art; prudence; management of affairs; stratagem'. The association of politics and policy with matters relating to other powers was nevertheless not complete; it would be more precise to argue that politics was in the process of being reconstituted as a sphere, a move which allowed for a specialised (and in principle spatialised) term like 'foreign policy' to emerge, which it did for the first time around 1730 in England, and some decades later in France (Leira 2011). Thus, when the radical enlightenment thinkers opposed the politics of the absolutist states, they could direct their fire both against politics in the wider sense and against 'foreign policy' more specifically (Gilbert 1951). But while ambassadors were attacked as practitioners of politics, they were not yet named as a wider collective.

### ***The etymology of 'diplomacy'***

The etymology of diplomacy is well known and referenced in etymological dictionaries, the OED and in a little more elaborated form in Satow (1922: 2–3). A much richer, scholarly account is provided by Constantinou (1996: 76–89). Very briefly, the term comes from ancient Greek, where it was used as a verb (*diploō*) to designate double folding (*diploin*), and as a noun (*diploma*) to denote official documents which were folded, and which gave the bearer a specific set of rights. Originally, *diplomas* functioned as something resembling modern passports, but gradually, through the medieval era, the term was used about any sort of document granting privileges. By the Renaissance, *diploma* was used as the term for papal letters of appointment, with the associated term *diplomatarius* used to designate the clerk writing these *diplomas* (Constantinou 1996: 78). Towards the end of the seventeenth century, and particularly in the beginning of the eighteenth century, yet another usage emerged. Older letters of privilege (*diploma*) were being scrutinised for authenticity, and collected and

commented upon under the collective term *diplomatica* (such as in Mabillon's *De Re Diplomatica* from 1681), which was also used as a term for the science of establishing the legitimacy of such documents.<sup>4</sup> Since diplomas were regularly dealing with privileges relating to other polities, it was but a small step to consider collections of treaties between princes in the same way, and in 1693 Leibniz published *Codex Juris Gentium Diplomaticus* and in 1726 Dumont *Corps Universel Diplomatique du Droit de Gens*. These were collections both of treaties and other official documents, but around this time *corps diplomatique* seems to have signified the corpus of texts defining international law in practice (*corps du droit des gens*).

How the concept expanded to cover not only the total body of treaties, but also the total body of those engaged in negotiating such treaties, is unclear. What is clear is that, from around the middle of the eighteenth century, *corps diplomatique* was also used to cover the totality of ministers accredited to one specific court. Pecquet (1737: 134) presents an understanding of the phenomenon, but without naming it, referring to it as 'Le Corps des Ministres dans un Païs'. Ranke (1833–36: 724, note 1) dates the term to Vienna in the mid-1750s, but without anything but anecdotal evidence, and again referring to the notion of a community, rather than the actual concept. A decade later, 'corps diplomatique' was repeatedly used in Chevalier d'Éon's (1764) published letters, in the sense of the collective of ministers. The concept was also reiterated in original and translated form (as 'the diplomatic body') in English commentaries (and commentaries on commentaries) the same year (Smollett 1764: 177).

Even so, usage was not consistent, and the reference to documents more common than the reference to practitioners. In French dictionaries, 'diplomatique' can first be found in the fourth edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* (1762), but here only in the sense of the art of recognising true from false diplomas. This was also the case



in the great encyclopaedia, where the article on ‘diplome & diplomatique’ (from 1754) deals solely with official documents and the art and science of knowing true documents from false and interpreting their content (Diderot and d’Alembert 2013). In the fifth edition of the *Dictionnaire*, from 1798, there has been added a second meaning, where ‘le corps diplomatique’ is defined as a collective term for the foreign ministers residing in any one power. Turning to the 30-volume *Dictionnaire universel des sciences morale, économique, politique et diplomatique; ou Bibliothèque de l’homme-d’état et du citoyen*, published from 1776 and onwards, where diplomatic science is promised in the very title, the results are similar.<sup>5</sup> ‘Corps diplomatique’ was used intermittently, in the sense of a collection of treaties and reports, and the science of diplomacy is related to the knowledge of such treaties. None of ‘diplomate’, ‘diplomatie’ nor ‘diplomatique’ were index words.

### ***The emergence of ‘diplomacy’***

Etymological dictionaries provide a little more insight, suggesting that ‘diplomate’ and ‘diplomatie’ were derived from ‘diplomatique’, on the pattern of ‘aristocratique – aristocrate – aristocratie’ (v. Wartburg 1934: 83).<sup>6</sup> From at least the 1770s, *diplomatique* was used to describe the practice of envoys, as when Linguet (1777: 383) discussed ‘intrigues diplomatiques’. The associated words ‘diplomate’ and ‘diplomatie’, dealing with interstate practice rather than documents, have their origin in the revolutionary period (Imbs 1979).

In the 1780s, ‘diplomatique’/‘diplomatic’ was thus in a process of gradual change, but still with multiple layers of meaning. As Constantinou (1996: 83–8) argues, the connection with written diplomas suggests a connection between a form of specialised handicraft and statecraft, and the roots in the accrediting authority of diplomas and their (in)authenticity suggest a capacity for duplicity, a capacity which was underscored in an

early usage of the term by Burke (1796: 121, note), who, in one of the first usages of the concept in English, praised Louis XVI for doing what he could ‘to destroy the double diplomacy of France’, that is, referring to the parallel accreditations to the same ruler, with opposing instructions, and their duplicitous practices thereon.

To this we should add the following: being derived from the study of treaties, ‘diplomatic’ was strongly connected to issues of alliance, war and peace (as these were the issues typically covered by treaties), and to the secrecy with which these treaties were most often associated. Furthermore, by its connection with diploma, the term also had a strong affinity with privilege. This affinity was made even stronger by the usage of ‘diplomatic corps’ to designate the collective of ministers, a collective which was increasingly claiming (and being accorded) a number of privileges (Anderson 1993: 54), and which was largely constituted by the nobility, the foremost carriers of privilege. In sum, the term conveyed specialisation, duplicity, secrecy, privilege and a fixation on war and alliance (see also Gilbert 1951, Frey and Frey 1993). From the perspective of a broader conceptual history, it covered a number of the terms on the wrong side of the dualistic enlightenment scorecard (Koselleck 1988), terms associated with politics rather than morals (see also Chapter 10 in this Handbook).

The association with the ways of the past was underscored in what would prove to be a decisive conceptual break, the establishment of the *comité diplomatique* of the French constitutional assembly in 1790 (on this, see Martin 2012a). Tellingly, the first suggestion of such a committee mentioned ‘un comité politique’, a committee dedicated to what we discussed above as the external component of ‘politics’, and not diplomacy. However, naming was soon to change. There are a few examples of ‘diplomatique’ having been used to designate something other than documentary study before that date, but the establishment of this committee brought together the

practical question of checking the existing treaties of the old regime, and the ongoing desires for abandonment of the royal prerogative over external affairs. The committee was established with the sole purpose of studying and evaluating treaties, but increasingly also dealt with the conduct of foreign affairs. In what seems to have been a fairly rapid conceptual development, ‘diplomatique’ came to cover not only the inspection of documents, but all activities falling within the purview of the *comité diplomatique*. Although the committee never had executive powers, as argued in the literature, it spawned debate about diplomacy in both the national assembly and the press, thus rapidly popularising the concept.

English usage seems to have been largely derivative of French usage. Thomas Paine (1792: 42), writing *Rights of Man* as a reply to Burke’s early criticism of the French revolution, referred to Benjamin Franklin’s work as minister to France arguing that it was of ‘the diplomatic character’, which ‘forbids intercourse by a reciprocity of suspicion; and a diplomatic is a sort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled’. The genius of Franklin lay in his transcendence of this role, ‘He was not the diplomatic of a court, but of MAN’. Burke’s later use of ‘diplomacy’ and related terms, as referenced above, was likewise in texts dealing directly with the situation in France. In the diary of Gouverneur Morris (1888: 299), who was at the time representing the US in France, the term likewise appears in 1797.

Considering its newness, it should come as no surprise that the concept had yet to attain a precise meaning. In Mason’s (1801) supplement to Dr Johnson’s dictionary, ‘diplomatic’ is, for example, defined as ‘Privileged’, based on a traditional (if probably unintended) reading of Burke. As the previous discussion of etymology has demonstrated, the connection was not far-fetched, and in 1805 another dictionary based on Dr Johnson’s defined ‘diplomatic’ as ‘relating to diploma’; which is again defined as ‘a letter or writing conferring some privilege’ (Perry 1805). A decade

later, changes in usage had worked their way into dictionaries, with Webster (1817) defining ‘diplomacy’ as ‘the customs or rules of public ministers, forms of negotiation; body of ambassadors or envoys’. Even so, ‘diplomatic’ still had the double meaning ‘pertaining to diplomas, relating to public ministers’.

In French, ‘diplomatie’ can be found for the first time in the fifth edition of the *Dictionnaire* from 1798, where it is defined as ‘Science des rapports, des intérêts de Puissance à Puissance’.<sup>7</sup> Only in the sixth edition from 1835 are the actual people who made the treaties and wrote the reports covered by the term and, by this stage, ‘diplomatique’ was also considered as ordinarily concerning matters related to diplomacy.

Even though some conceptual uncertainty remained, the spread and uptake of the concept was rapid across enlightened Europe. In German, it can be found at least as early as 1795, again in relation to France, when an article in *Europäische Annalen* discussed ‘Frankreichs diplomatie oder geschichte der öffentlichen Meinung in Frankreich’ (Posselt 1795).<sup>8</sup> The scepticism towards the concept and its association with absolutism and aristocracy seems to have been a common feature as well; at the Norwegian constitutional assembly of 1814, representatives spoke with scorn and admitted lack of knowledge about ‘the dimly-lit corridors of diplomacy’ and ‘the cold and slippery ice of diplomacy and politics’ (Leira 2011: 174, 177; see also Chapters 3 and 11 in this Handbook).

## Key Points

- Before the eighteenth century there was no collective term for the activities of ambassadors and envoys.
- Until the eighteenth century, relations between princes were seen as ‘political’; ‘foreign policy’ was not established as a separate sphere before the mid-century.
- ‘Diplomacy’ grew out of an etymological background of treaties, duplicity, secrecy, and privilege.



- 'Diplomacy' first emerged during the French revolution, largely as a term of abuse, and spread rapidly across Europe.

## NEW DIPLOMACY, NEWER DIPLOMACY, NEWEST DIPLOMACY

Considering how the revolutionaries treated 'diplomacy' as emblematic of most which had been wrong in the past, it should come as no surprise that an alternative was soon formulated, indeed with Koselleck it could be argued that contestation over the content of a new concept should be expected. Gaspard Joseph Amand Ducher (1793: 75), who had worked as an *ancien régime* consul in the USA, and was writing about external affairs for the revolutionary government, in 1793 called for a 'Nouvelle diplomatie' basically concerned with commercial matters and desires for direct trade. He argued that French foreign affairs should solely deal with external trade, and that politics should simply be the extension of commerce. Thus there would be no need for the former secrecy or noble privileges, the new ministers of France were to be 'ni marquis, ni intrigans',<sup>9</sup> and where the treaties of old diplomacy had simply been giving titles to the royal family, the French family (i.e. the French nation) would guarantee itself (Ducher 1793: 74). The 'new diplomacy' would be simpler, fairer and cheaper than the old one, where the diplomats had been like priests, with their doctrines relating to the true relations of the peoples in the same way as theology related to morals (Ducher 1794: 23). What this opposed was not only the previous practice of French diplomats, but also the current practice of the enemy: in the hands of Pitt, diplomacy had become 'la science des trahisons & de la guerre civile' (Ducher 1794: 23).<sup>10</sup>

Ducher's call for a new diplomacy echoed the general dissatisfaction with diplomacy, and for many the solution was simply to abolish the whole thing, as when Saint-André

claimed that French diplomacy was simply 'la vérité, la liberté',<sup>11</sup> and demanded the suppression of the diplomatic committee (quoted in Frey and Frey 1993: 716). From 1794, there was an increased emphasis on trade and science (Martin 2012b: 5–10), but the complete abandonment of diplomacy proved impossible for France at war. In the USA, however, more could be done. Upon taking office, Thomas Jefferson abandoned half of the US missions, and would have wanted to cut the rest as well, claiming in 1804 that:

I have ever considered diplomacy as the pest of the world, as the workshop in which nearly all the wars of Europe are manufactured. [...] as we wish not to mix in the politics of Europe, but in her commerce only, Consuls would do all the business we ought to have there quite as well as ministers. (quoted in Gilbert 1951: 31, note 92)

Calls for a 'new diplomacy' would persist, but a departure from the past need not be associated with trade; it was also noted some decades later (Cuvier 1829: 7) how France had 'sent out her scientific ambassadors to all quarters, and war itself has not interrupted this new diplomacy'. The association between regular diplomacy and war nevertheless persisted, and the distinction between an old, political diplomacy and a new diplomacy, focused on trade, was maintained as a liberal critique throughout the nineteenth century, as when Thorold Rogers argued (1866: 496) that:

The ancient habits and instincts of political diplomacy are silently or noisily wearing out or passing away, and a new diplomacy of commerce, assuming for a time the guise of formal treaties, is occupying no small part of the ground once assigned to labours which were called into activity by distrust, and effected their purpose by intrigue.

The newness of 'new diplomacy' was, however, not restricted to trade and science; it was also used by liberal promoters of imperialist ventures. Towards the end of the century, this combination took another form, when Joseph Chamberlain argued for a 'new diplomacy', characterised by

openness towards the public, in dealings with the Boers.

The combination of liberal critique, openness and expansion was evident in American debate at the same time as well, as when an unnamed American diplomat addressed the public and noted that the new diplomacy:

is as old as the United States [...] A European diplomat works by intrigue and dissimulation [...] The American diplomacy has always been the reverse of this. We ask for what we want, and insist upon it. [...] The 'new diplomacy', in the popular meaning of the word, is not diplomacy at all. It is simply knowing what we want, fearlessly saying it and insisting upon it with a disregard for consequences. (*Los Angeles Herald*, 1898)

Again, the rejection of what had previously been known as diplomacy, and which relied on intrigue and dissimulation, is obvious. The feeling that there was something inherently American was echoed by government officials as well: 'The discovery of America opened up a new world; the independence of the United States a new diplomacy' (Scott 1909: 3). Secretary of State Elihu Root (Root 1907: 113) stressed the historical development more than the uniqueness of America:

There was a time when the official intercourse between nations which we call diplomacy consisted chiefly of bargaining and largely of cheating in the bargain. Diplomacy now consists chiefly in making national conduct conform, or appear to conform, to the rules which codify, embody and apply certain moral standards evolved and accepted in the slow development of civilization.

And from politics, the term found its way into academe. Paul Reinsch, one of the fore-runners of what would become the discipline of International Relations, writing in 1909 contrasted the old kinds of treaties, with the purpose being 'conciliation and compromise of conflicting interests', in essence exercises in balancing and marginal gains, with the new economic treaties seeking to find 'a basis for cooperation, an essential equality of interests between all the nations upon which permanent international arrangements may

be founded' (Reinsch 1909: 14). This, he argued, was leading diplomacy to gradually lose its association with 'shrewdness, scheming, and chicane', and to the rise of a:

new diplomacy [which] makes its main purpose the establishment of a basis for frank cooperation among the nations in order that, through common action, advantages may be obtained which no isolated state could command if relying merely on its own resources.

All of the above ideas fed into the intellectual debates about the Great War, leading to the repeated rejection of the 'old diplomacy' and the hopes and promises of a new diplomacy in 1918–20. The extent to which this was achieved need not concern us here, the central point being that once again an international practice celebrated by its opposition to the diplomacy of old was being put forward – 'diplomacy' was in essence defined by its flaws and failures, by its secrecy and its failure to avoid war. The new diplomacy, however, promised peace and co-operation.

The failure of the League of Nations and the Second World War was to change the valuation of diplomacy, over time completely transforming the conceptual grid around it. Where diplomacy had for 150 years been seen as related to war and as the opposite of true co-operation, it gradually became defined as the opposite of war, and as the prime mechanism of co-operation. While there have been repeated discussions of 'new diplomacy' in the decades following the war (e.g. Géraud 1945, Butterfield 1966, Sofer 1988, Riordan 2003), the newness has been associated with *evolution* rather than *revolution*; with gradual changes in the means, methods and content of diplomacy, rather than the wholesale rejection of traditional practice.

The revaluation of diplomacy has not only implied that the calls for its abandonment have disappeared. On the contrary, defined as the opposite of hostile conflict and as associated with expert skill in negotiation and the mediation of difference, diplomacy has become not only a growth-business, but also

a growth-concept. More and more practices are latching on to diplomacy as something to emulate, and in effect we are seeing the emergence of ‘composite diplomacy’ (or perhaps ‘hyphen-diplomacy’), where new actors, arenas, topics and forms of interaction are claiming ‘diplomacy’ for themselves or being claimed by ‘diplomacy’. Diplomacy is now associated with units above, below and parallel to the state; with supra-national organisations, regions and cities, multi-national corporations and rebel groups, to name but a few. Likewise, diplomacy is described as taking place not only in the traditional arenas of state-to-state interaction, but in individual lives, families, public spheres and business, again to name a few. The list of topics connected with diplomacy is limited primarily by the imagination, but special attention has been paid to sports and health. As for modalities, an emphasis on citizens hails back to earlier hopes for a new diplomacy, and this can also be said for the emphasis on new media and public diplomacy witnessed over the last decade (see further Chapters 35, 36, 39, 41, 42, 43 and 44 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Calls for a ‘new diplomacy’, centred on trade, instead of the ‘old diplomacy’ of intrigue and politics, arose almost as soon as the concept had been coined.
- More radical critics have wanted to abolish diplomacy altogether.
- Around 1900, ‘new diplomacy’ became more associated with openness and co-operation.
- After the world wars, diplomacy was largely re-evaluated as a vehicle for peace and co-operation, with calls for ‘new diplomacy’ now focusing on evolution and reform, rather than revolution and abandonment.

### CONCLUSION

Although the etymological root and many of the associated practices are old, the concept of

diplomacy is relatively modern. Considering how ‘diplomacy’ is currently regularly defined through a set of practices (e.g. communication, representation, negotiation), it is noteworthy how the actual concept has its roots not in practice as such, but in the material results of practice; in privilege rather than in parity.

Situated in a conceptual web undergoing rapid development in the decades around 1800, the newness of ‘diplomacy’ illustrates well how the very conceptualisation of relations between political entities was changing, and how this new naming was part and parcel of the domestic struggles over political power. Never before named as a collective practice with specific content, ‘diplomacy’ became one of the key pejorative terms associated with the *ancien régime*, defined by its opponents and by virtue of all that had been wrong with how external affairs were handled. It clearly matters that there was no established term for diplomacy until it arose as a derogatory label. Whereas the earlier titles in use (like ambassador or envoy) were descriptive terms, the concept of diplomacy was evaluative, and strongly negative, leading to the almost immediate call for something else to supersede it, namely ‘new diplomacy’.

The negative associations of ‘diplomacy’ would persist for a century and a half, only abating with its gradual disassociation from war and coupling with co-operation. In current parlance, ‘diplomacy’ is no longer to be exchanged for a ‘new diplomacy’, rather the old version is to be upgraded to ‘diplomacy 2.0’.

### NOTES

- 1 Thanks for comments on an earlier draft are due to the editors, Benjamin de Carvalho, Iver B. Neumann, Ole Jacob Sending, Minda Holm, Morten Skumsrud Andersen, Mateja Peter, Kari Osland, Cedric de Coning, Bjørnar Sverdrup-Thygeson and Pernille Rieker. The usual disclaimer applies.

- 2 For etymological reasons, the discussion below deals not only with 'diplomacy', but also, when appropriate, with 'diplomatic'. The discussion is also limited to English and French language, a limitation which is justified both by the centrality of France, Britain and the US to political and conceptual innovation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and by the importance of these countries to the admittedly Eurocentric theory and practice of diplomacy (Neumann 2012).
- 3 'Political philosophy is one that teaches men how to behave with prudence, either at the head of a state or at the head of a family'.
- 4 The term *diplomats*, referring to the study of documents, retains this meaning.
- 5 All volumes can be searched on <http://gallica.bnf.fr/>
- 6 Considering how 'aristocracy' was itself changing from a neutral descriptor to a derogatory political term over the second half of the eighteenth century, it was hardly coincidental that the terms related to 'diplomacy' followed this particular pattern.
- 7 'The science of reports on the interests between powers'.
- 8 'French diplomacy, or the history of public opinion in France'.
- 9 'Neither marquis [that is noble] nor making intrigues'.
- 10 'The science of betrayal and war'.
- 11 'The truth, liberty'.

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# Diplomacy and the Colonial Encounter

Sam Okoth Opondo

Europe is literally the creation of the Third World ... So when we hear the head of a European state declare with his hand on his heart that he must come to the aid of the poor underdeveloped peoples, we do not tremble with gratitude. Quite the contrary; we say to ourselves: 'It's a just reparation which will be paid to us'. (Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p.102)

## MODERN DIPLOMACY AND/AS COLONIAL APPARATUS

'The term diplomacy,' Elmer Plischke tells us, 'has many meanings and tends to be defined by the individual user to suit his particular purposes'. In this quest for diplomatic meaning and the meanings of diplomacy, Plischke suggests that 'we' seek diplomacy's 'etymological, lexicographical, theoretical, functional, and academic interpretations' and goes ahead to propose a method of refinement that 'may be both positive, denoting what diplomacy is, and negative, determining

what it is not' (Plischke, 1979: 28). Implied in Plischke's exploration is an acknowledgement of the subjective and even inter-subjective dimensions of diplomacy and the entangled discourses and worlds that enframe those who practise diplomacy or are considered capable of being diplomatic in the first place. The stakes of this search for the meanings of diplomacy are raised when he calls for us to distinguish diplomacy from 'other concepts including foreign relations, foreign policy, various specific aspects of diplomatic practice, individual diplomatic functions such as negotiation and the like'.

Plischke is not alone in this quest for a clearer and less messy conception of diplomacy. José Calvet De Magalhães, a retired Portuguese ambassador and author of *The Pure Concept of Diplomacy*, calls for a more precise definition of diplomacy and having defined diplomacy, it becomes possible for him to identify 'a pure diplomat' while providing a sense of 'diplomatic pathology' (backchannel diplomacy, combat diplomacy,

diplomatic intelligence and counter intelligence) (Magalhães, 1988: 60, 71, 79). It is important to note that concept of pure diplomacy articulated by De Magalhães is for the most part derived from partial histories and genealogies of diplomacy as well as a limited conception of the 'diplomatic world'.

If we take the work of De Magalhães and some of his interlocutors seriously, it becomes clear that a concept or history of diplomacy that does not acknowledge the pluricentric, contested and continuously negotiated character of diplomacy produces an idea of diplomacy that is essentially Eurocentric and, when viewed from the perspective of colonized others, *anti-diplomatic*. For instance, Harold Nicolson attempts to sanitize the history of the 'old diplomacy' by acknowledging that the 'mistakes, follies and the crimes' of diplomacy that took place during the era of the old diplomacy can 'be traced to evil foreign policy rather than to faulty methods of negotiation' (Nicolson, 1979: 43). According to Nicolson, the 'theory and practice of international negotiation originated by Richelieu, analyzed by Callieres and adopted by European countries during the three centuries that preceded the change of 1919' was the method best adapted for the 'conduct of relations between civilized states'. Not only did it regard Europe as 'the most important of all the continents', other continents, namely 'Asia and Africa were viewed as areas of imperial, commercial or missionary expansion'. Accordingly, the old diplomacy was concerned with 'great powers' and the fact that they had a shared diplomatic culture and 'desired the same sort of world' characterized by continuous and confidential negotiation (Nicolson, 1979: 45). Combined with the fact that European states had 'wider responsibilities, and above all, more money and more guns', they also had the right to intervene in the affairs of smaller powers for the 'the preservation of peace' (Nicolson, 1979).

In contrast to the above articulations or quest for a moral and pure concept of modern diplomacy, the following explorations

highlight the entangled and darker side of diplomacy. Taking the entanglement and coeval emergence of modern diplomatic and colonial worlds as its starting point, this chapter explores the violence of recognition/non-recognition that makes modern diplomacy possible and its relationship to the coloniality of power. Through a series of contrapuntal readings of diplomatic and colonial encounters, the chapter carries out a simultaneous narration of metropolitan diplomatic history and those other histories, subjects and practices against which (and together with which) this dominating discourse works (Said, 1993: 51). Such a comparative study of diplomacy departs from a concern with non-European cultures of diplomacy that locates them in another time as part of the 'beginnings of diplomacy' (Numelin, 1950) or those that consider modern diplomacy to be 'the relatively narrow and applied body of knowledge pertaining to the right conduct of professional diplomats in their relations with one another and other servants of the states to which they are accredited' (Satow, 1957; Sharp, 2009: 7). Doubtless, attempts at 'placing statecraft in a historical perspective' or the theorizing of 'diplomatic essences' and 'common sense' has enabled diplomatic theorists and historians to look at practices of statecraft in non-Western texts like the Arthaśāstra and the Armana letters. However, fidelity to Eurocentric and disciplinary categories means that Kautilya is referred to as the 'Indian Machiavelli' (Gowen, 1929) while the 3,000 year old Egyptian correspondence is incorporated into a preexisting idea of diplomacy that considers it to be the 'beginning of International Relations' (Cohen and Westbrook, 2000). These extensions of an already formed idea of diplomatic history and theory beyond the West present us with alternative (diplomatic) histories rather than alternatives to hegemonic (diplomatic) history (Nandy, 1995: 53).

Heeding insights from James Der Derian's (1987) genealogical study of the mediation of Western estrangement and Costas M. Constantinou's (1996) re-reading and



rewriting of the theme of diplomacy by relating it to the crafts of the double hand (the process of doubling), the following exploration is also a meta-diplomatic quest that interrogates modern diplomacy's 'claims of originality, truth and, finality' by taking seriously the place of the colonial/colonized other (Constantinou, 1996: 84; Der Derian, 1987). Not only does this enable us to raise questions about the conditions under which colonized subjects and peoples are considered diplomatic or non-diplomatic and the differential treatment accorded to peoples or places that were considered external to the European diplomatic milieu, it highlights the relationship between discourses on diplomatic negotiation and their related colonial and race-mediated forms of negation that present the human and political experience of non-European peoples as something that can only be understood in terms of an absence or a negative interpretation thus giving way to colonial violence and governance, missionary conversion and present-day postcolonial intervention (Mbembe, 2001: 1; Mignolo, 2001).

The reading of the co-constitutive elements of modernity and coloniality, diplomacy and colonialism, and the estrangement and mediation that accompanies these projects, departs from texts that disavow these entanglements. While Nicolson and De Magalhães might not acknowledge the entanglements between Eurocentrism, diplomacy and colonialism, critical diplomatic theorists like Iver B. Neumann note that the historical preconditions for diplomacy and the way it operates as a social practice through conventions of immunity, permanent representation and the *corps diplomatique* reveals contemporary diplomacy's Christian myths and its Eurocentrism. However, Neumann maintains that these sociabilities 'have spread to third parties and third parties use them for their own interaction' in transformed and hybridized forms such that 'diplomacy remains a public good', meaning that 'we should not care too much about Eurocentrism at the level of diplomacy itself' (Neumann, 2010: 128).

Acknowledging that diplomacy is a 'culturally biased game, and the bias is Western', Neumann concludes that diplomacy has 'proven itself as a global institution,' one that has 'proven to be able to adapt to challenges such as revolutions and decolonizations' (Neumann, 2010: 144).

However, acknowledging and then locating modern diplomacy's colonial and Eurocentric logics in a past that we have since surmounted is not an innocent practice. At a minimum, it endorses a moral project that makes distinctions between modern diplomacy and colonialism while failing to acknowledge the coloniality of modern diplomacy. This means that 'the long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, inter-subjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations' remain unquestioned (Maldonado-Torres, 2007: 243–4). In addition to illustrating that the 'structure of diplomacy is both the structure of Western metaphysical thought and the structure of representation', this chapter traces and questions the coloniality of diplomacy (Constantinou, 1996: 103). It illustrates that the diplomatic/colonial structure is found in places beyond the West given that the West, as Edouard Glissant asserts, 'is not in the West. It is a project, not a place' that was reshaped by the entanglements of diplomacy and modernity/coloniality (Glissant, 1992: 2). That is, one recognizes that beyond the cultures and institutions it propagates, modern diplomacy, as a way of being, seeks to 'maintain this metaphysical space, to direct this global stage and to continuously sustain its fictions'. Not only does it develop what Constantinou refers to as an elaborate '*techne* of diplomacy', which involves the fiction of the sovereign subject, the fiction of the representative agent, the fiction of the instrumental object, the fiction of the specialized process, modern diplomacy is also a *techne* of coloniality (Constantinou, 1996: 103). A *techne* that encounters, recognizes, represents and inserts or abjects foreign practices and

peoples into a diplomatic milieu that is constantly being invented and reinvented according to the grids of colonial difference (see also chapters 1, 2 and 11 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- The decolonial project engages practices of 'transculturation' that make it possible for us to read as diplomatic and ultimately political a whole range of colonial/colonized peoples, sites and mediation practices or forms of estrangement that are trivialized, erased or silenced by modern/colonial regimes of recognition and intelligibility.
- It recognizes an array of colonial modes and modalities that exist 'parallel to diplomacy complementing or competing with the regular foreign policy of the government' (Cornago, 2010: 94). These para-diplomatic mediations make it difficult for one to proclaim a 'new' diplomacy at the moment of formal decolonization or to have a moralized idea of diplomacy predicated on inattentiveness to the coeval emergence of modern diplomacy and colonial worlds and the colonial spectres that continue to haunt the diplomatic present (Mamdani, 1984: 1048).
- It explores the diplomacy-colonialism nexus by engaging the disavowal of colonial diplomacies, diplomatic colonialism and the coloniality of diplomacy within official narratives of colonialism and dominant treatments of diplomacy.

### COEVAL PRODUCTION OF COLONIAL AND DIPLOMATIC 'MAN'

To mark the entanglements of colonial and diplomatic worlds and the coloniality of diplomacy, we can turn to Armand-Jean du Plessis (1585–1642), commonly referred to as Cardinal Richelieu, the chief minister of France's Louis XIII. As a key figure in modern diplomacy, Richelieu's diplomatic ventures are an especially apt vehicle for thinking about the *techné* of diplomacy and the colonial worlds it produced (and those that produced it). Not only is Richelieu recognized as a key proponent of the principle

of *raison d'état* exemplified by his dealings with the Huguenots and the call for religious tolerance during the Thirty Years War, he is also lauded in texts like Henry Kissinger's *Diplomacy* (1994), where he is presented as the promulgator of modern statecraft who replaced the 'medieval principle of universal moral values' with the more rational principle predicated on the pursuit of the state rather than religious interests (Kissinger 1994: 58). Given that Richelieu made the case for France to have a broad network of diplomatic agents who 'negotiate ceaselessly, either openly or secretly, and in all places, even in those from which no present fruits are reaped', his *Testament Politique* is continuously invoked within diplomatic circles in order to emphasize the strategic importance and ethics of 'continuous negotiation' (Richelieu/Hill, 1989: 94; Berridge et al., 2001: 94). Beyond formal diplomatic circles, Richelieu also found a place within the popular and literary imagination through Alexandre Dumas' swashbuckler novel, *The Three Musketeers* (1844), where Richelieu's crafty handling of personal matters and matters of state is at the centre of intra-European diplomatic, religious and romantic intrigues.

While the image of Richelieu as a committed advocate of the reason of state is often considered proto-diplomatic such that modern diplomacy comes to be read as a 'dialogue between states', a different story and idea of diplomacy and modernity emerges when we engage the world of Richelieu and modernity from spaces other than the self-contained and self-referential Europe of the Thirty Years War or the religious accommodation that he is well known for. Treated in this way, Richelieu's settlement of the religious question in France, and the said move from medieval universalism and religious orthodoxy, is read alongside the religion-mediated colonial unsettlement of other religions in Africa, Asia and the Americas, where the universalist and colonial side of Richelieu's career and the civilizational aspects of the modern state and the darker side of diplomacy are constantly

revealed and contested. On the literary front, the fictional Richelieu of Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* is read alongside the larger world of *Georges*, an earlier Dumas novel set in Mauritius (Ile de France), where the literary and geographical space is populated with Yolloffs, Mozambicans, Malgaches and Anjoun slaves from the Comoros Islands as well as Chinese traders, French settlers and British colonial governors/diplomats (Sollors, 2007: xvi–xvii). With the protagonist Georges Munier moving between worlds and rebelling slaves making reference to the Haitian Revolution, Dumas offers a wider and wilder picture of diplomacy and colonialism where race, slavery and estrangement are negotiated and negated in a manner that resonates with Frantz Fanon's analysis of the psychopathology of oppression and the possibilities of a critical humanism (Fanon, 1967). In this historical novel, Dumas offers glimpses into his own family history (Dumas is the grandson of a slave from Saint Domingue) while revealing the world that created and was created by French colonial ventures of which he is a product (Martone, 2011). Not only does such a contrapuntal reading of Richelieu call for a consideration of the other worlds that his diplomatic theory and practice is implicated in, it is also a call for thinking about modern diplomacy from the perspective of the colonial logics that it is entangled with and the dynamics of race, capitalism and violence that constitute modern diplomatic distinction.

For instance, the names and ventures of numerous colonization and trading companies associated with Richelieu point to the colonial ambitions of this revered diplomatic figure such that his diplomatic dictum of having agents 'in all places, even in those from which no present fruits are reaped' becomes part of colonial venture, where representatives of the state or state-sanctioned agencies negotiate, enter into agreements and even govern foreign peoples on behalf of the French state and the Catholic Church. C.V. Wedgwood has excellently documented how Richelieu's economic and diplomatic policies, despite their

initial failures, contributed to the colonial imaginary that enabled France to establish links with, and eventually govern, parts of Africa, North America, the Antilles and Asia:

The *Compagnie du Morbihan*, founded for the trade with Canada, the West Indies, Russia and the North ... *Compagnie de la Naceelle de St. Pierre Fleuredelysee*, which succeeded it and took almost the world for its province ... The *Compagnie des Cents Associes*, for Canada alone, collapsed for lack of funds. The *Compagnie des Iles d'Amerique*, although it secured for France the Islands of St. Kitts and San Domingo, dragged on a bankrupt existence until it was liquidated in 1651. Numerous African companies were equally unfortunate. The East India Company staggered through its early years, but with all its achievements far in the future. The fundamental mistake in the constitution of all these companies was the excess of government interference ... Yet, the initial energy was not lacking. An embassy pushed as far as Moscow. French ships reached the East and West Indies, explored the St. Lawrence, took possession of Madagascar. (Wedgwood, 1954: 139–40)

In addition to the above economic interests, diplomatic representation merged with colonial governance such that the principle of continuous negotiation was transformed into practices of negation and conversion. Unlike the equally violent colonial expansion of England where New England represented the withdrawal from the authority of the established church of England, Richelieu's diplomatic vision and theory of state transformed colonial spaces like 'New France' into an expensive mission or 'another outpost of the French Church' where Huguenots were not allowed and Jesuit missionaries were considered agents of God, the church and the state (Wedgwood, 1954: 141).

The Jesuit missionaries' work among the Hurons and Algonquins are well documented in the annual ethnographic/diplomatic/mis-siological report *Jesuit Relations* (Dablen and Marquette, 1891). In the second chapter of Volume XXIII of the *Jesuit Relations* of 1643 (appropriately titled 'Of The House Or Permanent Residence of Sainte Marie'), the missionaries note that the new language of 'conversion of the savages' requires of them

to be both 'master and pupil at the same time'. The representational force of these dispatches meant that practices like the Iroquois mourning wars were subjected to European and Christian grids of interpretation that focused on the brutality of the war while overlooking other mediation capacities of this practice among the Five Nations (Richter, 1983; Shannon, 2008). Like Richelieu, the Jesuits considered the French colony a foundational site of conversion and an 'efficacious way of procuring' the salvation of indigenous people (Dablen and Marquette, 1891: 271). Given that Richelieu had allowed the Jesuits to act as negotiators in the fur trade and granted them the monopoly on missionary work in New France, the Jesuits received news of his death with great sorrow while acknowledging the relationships between 'old diplomacies' and new world ventures, for 'besides the care that he [Richelieu] had for old France', he 'was not forgetful of the new' (Dablen and Marquette, 1891).

While often read as a theory of state, the 'double anthropology' that Richelieu and the Jesuits represent in their dealing with 'old' and 'new' worlds deploys a theory of diplomacy and colonialism that simultaneously pursues the interests of the state and 'universal ideals' while producing cultural and colonial difference. Thus, the colonial/diplomatic encounter, as a form of man-craft articulates 'descriptive statements of the human' that were central to the evangelizing 'mission of the Church', the expansion of the zones and content of diplomatic representation and the governance-oriented 'imperializing mission of the state based on its territorial expansion and conquest' (Wynter, 2003: 286). According to Sylvia Wynter, the visions of 'Man' and the 'idea of order' that emanated from it was the basis of the 'coloniality of being' that manifested itself in 'the relation between Man – over-represented as the generic, ostensibly supra-cultural human – and its subjugated Human Others (i.e. Indians and Negroes)' and was a foundational basis of modernity complete

with the related questions of race, the state, diplomacy, colonialism and the governance of natives. In short, the modern diplomatic question, much like the colonial question, becomes a question of 'the genres of the human' and the mediation of human and civilization estrangement (Wynter, 2003: 287–8).

It was precisely this question of the 'genres of man' that was at the centre of the sixteenth-century dispute between the missionary priest, Bartolomé de Las Casas and Ginés de Sepúlveda, the humanist royal historian and apologist for the Spanish settlers of then Santo Domingo (Wynter, 2003: 287–8). This modern question borne out of the colonial encounter freed European diplomatic relations from their exclusive Christian and European milieus by presenting a new set of objects and subjects in need of diplomatic/colonial mediation (Der Derian, 1987: 101). With the 'discovery' of the Americas and the enslavement of black Africans, a different 'classificatory and hierarchical system' was devised so as to provide the grammar and technics appropriate to dealing with a world where otherness exceeded the familiar categories of a Christian Europe cohabiting with or working against 'Muslims, Moors, Jews and Turks' (Mignolo, 2006: 17).

In addition to providing a context for the emergence of Eurocentrism as a 'conceptual and political reality', the conquest of the Americas transformed 'the periphery' into the 'repository of material and symbolic commodities', thus radically transforming the economies and cultures of Europe including the notions of rights and some of the conventions of the 'old diplomacy' (Dussel, 1981: 15; Moraña et al., 2008: 4). Emerging from these ethnologies and inventions of diplomatic and colonial 'man' is the will-to-convert, save or govern rather than converse with the non-European other as well as the desire for diplomatic and colonial objects that continues to haunt the present. While Las Casas was overly concerned with the human status of the 'Indian', other Spanish colonialists

like Cortes failed to recognize the diplomatic and human agency of the Indigenous Americans and were more concerned with the objects that they produced. Writing about the *Conquest of America*, Tzvetan Todorov notes that ‘Cortes goes into ecstasies about the Aztec productions but does not acknowledge their makers as human individualities to be set on the same level as himself’ (Todorov, 1999: 129). This leads him and other Spanish authors to ‘speak well of the Indians, but with very few exceptions they do not speak to the Indians’ (Todorov, 1999: 132). The non-recognition of humans and recognition and desire for objects transformed the idea of diplomatic agency, conceptions of fellowship and the rights and obligations of European and non-European peoples by creating a ‘law of inviolability’ within which the Spanish were considered the ‘ambassadors of Christian peoples in the new world’ while the ‘Indians’ were ‘bound to give them free passage and a friendly hearing’ (Der Derian, 1987: 101).

With culture as a privileged site for the mediation of metropolitan and colonial difference, the conversion and use of indigenous peoples, slaves, things and colonial spaces in the pursuit of profit, the interests of the state and narratives of the human was legitimized. For instance, the large number of slaves taken by the Portuguese to work in Brazil after their encounter with the Kongo kingdom (Mbanza Kongo) in Africa led the ManiKongo (ruler) Nzinga Mbemba Affonso I, a convert to Christianity and a ‘selective modernizer’, to write numerous letters to his ‘brother’ King Joao III of Portugal. In his letters of 1526, Affonso I protests the depopulation of his country arising from the kidnapping of his free subjects, ‘sons of nobles and vassals’ and even people of his own family. He goes on to state that the kingdom only needs ‘priests and schoolteachers and no merchandise unless it is wine and flour for mass’ (Hochschild, 1999: 13). Besides pleading to his fellow sovereign, Affonso I also attempted to send emissaries to the

Pope in the Vatican but they were denied free passage and detained as they stepped off the boat in Lisbon (Hochschild, 1999: 14). The enslavement and colonization of the Kongo is not an isolated event. It is part of a structure and meta-discourse through which ‘Africans came face to face with the opaque and murky domain of power’ where they, like other colonized peoples, had to negotiate or contest the ‘problem of freedom from servitude and the possibility of an autonomous African subject’ (Mbembe, 2001: 14).

As illustrated above, the ‘new world’ engagements by icons of the ‘old diplomacy’ like Richelieu and Bartolomé de Las Casas reveal the coloniality of diplomacy. Given the diplomatic innovations that accompanied colonial ventures and vice versa, colonial subjects and spaces of colonial mediation like Haiti or the Kongo become potent sites for reflection on the transformation in modern diplomacy’s ethical, geopolitical and ontological referents (see also Chapters 8, 52 and 53 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- The colonies were the site of diplomatic imagination and designs where frontiers were constructed not only in geographical terms but also in terms of the boundaries of humanity (Mignolo, 1995: viii–xi).
- The invention and articulation of the ‘genres of man’ as evinced by the idea of diplomatic man, colonial man and the human in general meant that ‘diplomatic’ encounters with non-European others were quickly transformed into some form of colonial governance through the non-recognition of indigenous diplomatic agents, denigration of gods and reneging on treaties as well as the conversion of a people and a space into something familiar and governable.
- The modern diplomatic mediation of difference is entangled with the mediation of colonial difference. These entanglements play out in spectral spaces where ‘global designs have to be adapted, adopted, rejected, integrated, or ignored’ (Mignolo, 1995: viii–xi).



## COLONIES, POLITIES, EMBASSIES

Nowhere is the entanglement of 'genres of man', colonial difference, the diplomatic order and a radical quest for autonomous human subjectivity clearer than in Saint-Domingue (Haiti). Not only was Hispaniola (present day Haiti and the Dominican Republic) the earliest site of the European conquest of the Americas, the island also provided the context for Las Casas' reflection on the possibilities for more humane encounters between the Spanish and 'Indians' after witnessing the suffering of the indigenous Taino population. Ironically, Las Casas advocated for the 'importation of African slaves to save the brutalized indigenous population' and years of Spanish and French colonialism and slavery on the island transformed Saint-Domingue into the most profitable slave colony in the world, receiving thousands of slaves from the West African coast and the Kingdom of Kongo (Dubois, 2005: 15; Thornton, 1993).

Hailing from different parts of Africa, and speaking in mutually unintelligible languages or believing in diverse religions, the 'Africans' of Saint-Domingue mediated the estrangement caused by their collective experience of slavery through Haitian creole/kreyòl, 'a language of survival', and hybrid religions like Haitian voodoo, which, for all its African sources and resonances, was a product of the cross-cultural encounters that were part of the plantation economy (Farmer, 2006: 156). As Carolyn Fick illustrates in her study of popular movements and popular mentalities in revolutionary eighteenth-century Santa Domingue, voodoo incorporated rituals from various parts of Africa, such as the Congolese chants, which were then inserted into a broader religious structure complete with its own 'rules, procedures, hierarchy, and general principles'. With Dahomean Voodoo serving as an 'existing substructure' for diverse 'religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions of the diverse African nations' in Santa

Domingue, this pluralistic popular religion became an 'important organizational tool for resistance' and mediated the slave insurgencies led by voodoo priests and Maroon leaders like Francois Makandal (Fick, 1990: 58–9). Through the symbolic and strategic facilitation of 'secret meetings, as well as the initiation and adherence of slaves of diverse origins', voodoo provided a matrix of communing and communication among the slaves in different plantations and helped create a network of slaves 'who gathered clandestinely to participate in the ceremonies, and secured the pledge of solidarity and secrecy of those involved in plots against the masters' (Fick, 1990: 58–9). In later years, voodoo was part of the imaginary in the popular slave insurgencies and intersected with the 1791–1804 Haitian revolution led by Toussaint Louverture and his black officers, Henri Christophe, Moïse and Jean-Jacques Dessaline, which challenged and eventually overthrew French imperial authority and the system of racial inequality and set out to abolish the existence of slavery itself.

In order to avoid exoticizing or occidentalizing the Haitian revolution, we must read it as both an anti-colonial, anti-diplomatic and diplomatic event. As an anti-colonial transcultural and planetary formation, the revolution created a space where France, the Americans, Spaniards and British could no longer send commissioners to speak to Toussaint but had to send 'charges d'affaires and ambassadors' as their representatives (James, 1989: 266). As an anti-diplomatic innovation, the Haitian revolution highlighted what C.L.R. James calls the 'sad irony of human history' as it revealed that the French revolution 'was a bourgeois revolution, and the basis of bourgeois wealth was the slave trade and the slave plantations in the colonies' (James, 1939: 339). The Haitian revolution also revealed that the correlative idea of emancipation and diplomacy that emerged from the French conception of the French Revolution was Eurocentric,

racial and colonial, especially when it was extended to spaces like Saint Domingue where its concept of rights excluded colonial subjects and slaves. In Saint Domingue, one found the 'most concrete expression of the idea that the rights proclaimed in France's 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen were indeed universal' given that the slaves did not hesitate to lay a claim to the rights of man, rights to citizenship and the right to diplomatic recognition (Dubois, 2005: 3).

While some French enlightenment thinkers and abolitionist movements like the *Amis des Noirs* (Friends of the Blacks) were critical of the excesses of slavery, few, if any, made the case for liberty, fraternity and equality on racial grounds as articulated by the slaves during the Haitian revolution. (Buck-Morss, 2000: 828; 833–4). As a result of such a racialized and colonial conceptualization of the world, diplomacy and philosophy, the Haitian revolution remained 'unthinkable' insofar as enlightenment philosophy and theories of man were concerned and 'unrecognizable' insofar as diplomatic history, theory and practice were concerned. Michel-Rolph Trouillot captures this phenomenon well in his reflections on the 'unthinkability' of the Haitian revolution in the West based on the revolution's challenge to slavery and racism and also due its methods (Trouillot, 2013: 40). Not only did the revolution present intellectual and ideological challenges to enlightenment philosophy, the practices that marked the events of the mass insurrection of 1791 to the proclamation of independence for a modern black state in 1804 crossed numerous 'political thresholds' that enabled Haiti to challenge the 'ontological order of the West and the global order of colonialism' (Trouillot, 2013: 41). To put it otherwise, the anti-colonial revolution was considered anti-diplomatic by the French due to its use of violence. However, it was a move towards establishing a different kind of diplomatic order and agency

for the subjects/objects of Saint Domingue who, up until then, had been subjected to the anti-diplomacies of slavery and colonial governance.

Recognizing the significance of the Haitian revolution as a site of physical and metaphysical emancipation, C.L.R James' *Black Jacobins* (1989[1938]) presents this world-historical event as the precursor to the struggles for African decolonization and the emergence of new diplomacies. That is, the revolution goes beyond its particular historical and geographical location in order to reveal the pretensions of universalist theories of the Rights of Man by making them truly universal through decolonization and the emancipation of slaves. However, Haiti was also the site of a different kind of diplomatic encounter. One characterized by both non-recognition and 'unthinkability' by the 'great powers' of Europe and the USA that Nicolson privileges in his conceptualization of diplomacy. As a result of non-recognition, diplomatic sanctions, isolation and later on military and humanitarian interventions, the site of the first successful slave revolt and first 'modern black state' was transformed into the first third world nation in the world (Dubois, 2005: 15). It is for these reasons that the Haitian state 'combines an unusual historical depth and a fragility typical of much new entities' (Trouillot, 1990: 31). Laurent Dubois' analysis of the entanglement of colonial and diplomatic practices and the denial of recognition and coevalness is worth quoting at length:

They would begin with the simple denial that Haiti existed ... in 1806 one of them [planters], exiled in Louisiana, noted as part of his property his 'Negroes remaining in Saint-Domingue'. Many governments reacted similarly. The refusal of diplomatic relations with Haiti pioneered by Jefferson would last until 1862 ... The denial of political existence was accompanied by other attacks on sovereignty. In 1825 the Haitian government agreed to pay an indemnity to France in return for diplomatic and economic relations ... it was meant to repay them for what they had



lost in Saint-Domingue, including the money invested in their slaves, and amounted to a fine for revolution. Unable to pay, the Haitian government took loans from French banks, entering a cycle of debt that would last into the twentieth century ... the United States ... occupied Haiti in 1915, crushing a resistance movement whose soldiers believed they were fighting a second Haitian Revolution, and departed in 1934, but not before Haiti's constitution was altered to allow whites again to own land there. (Dubois, 2005: 303–4)

In Haiti, we witness the colonized subject's quest for 'universal' freedom or humanity through the mediation of the 'universal alienation of mankind' rather than the pursuit of 'the mediation of the particular alienation of states'. This contributes to an ambiguous project where one contests or negotiates rather than seeks to resolve with absolute certainty the 'conflict between particularism and universalism' (Der Derian, 1987: 136). Critical diplomatic theorists like James Der Derian have fruitfully illustrated how anti-colonial utopias can be anti-diplomatic and even contribute to terror, as illustrated by his reading of Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*.

### Key Points

- The coloniality of modern diplomacy and the multiple ways in which anti-colonial practices create and tap into a 'bond between liberators,' thus creating new spaces of diplomatic encounter as well as a new idea of (diplomatic) man (Der Derian, 1987: 156).
- To read the history of Haiti as part of colonial history without considering its diplomatic predicates and vice versa contributes to a moralized diplomatic history that overlooks the histories of violent mediation of estrangement that Haiti reveals, contests and reproduces.
- Like the history of many Caribbean and African societies, overlooking the colonial diplomacies and coloniality of diplomacy leads to the assumption that postcolonial diplomacy begins with decolonization and entry into the world of sovereign statehood.

## GEOPOLITICAL IMAGINARIES AND MORAL RE-ARRANGEMENTS

The violence inherent in the disavowal of the entanglements between colonialism and modern diplomacy, or denial of their coeval emergence, is revealed in the shifting geographical locus of the moral discourse on the slave trade. In the post-abolition era, Europe's ethico-political and ontological commitments to anti-slavery shifted from 'a moralizing condemnation of European *demand* for slaves to work its plantations in the new world to Africa's willingness to *supply*' (Thorne, 1997: 241; Opondo, 2010). Accordingly, the fight against the slave trade moved to the East African coast where Arab allies like the Sultan of Zanzibar were considered crucial to both the colonization and civilization of Africa and the abolition of the slave trade. These concerns over the introduction of European civilization and a commitment to the opposition of slavery in Africa were the subject of a meeting on International Geography held in Brussels in 1876 with devastating effects for Africa. For instance, the formation of the Belgian Committee of the Association Internationale Africaine (AIA) and expeditions into the interior of Africa organized by King Leopold created the conditions of possibility for the colonization of the Congo. Not only did Pope Pius IX (1846–78) support Leopold's civilization project, the AIA was recognized by the multi-lateral Berlin conference (1884–85), thus making Leopold the sovereign of the *Etat indépendant du Congo* while partitioning most of Africa along the lines that are the basis of postcolonial state diplomacy and violence in the postcolony (Mudimbe, 1994: 106).

As Ali Mazrui puts it in the preface to Adekeye Adebajo's *The Curse of Berlin*, the irony of Bismarck is that he helped to unify Germany while initiating the division of Africa. As a result of these 'old' diplomatic/colonial machinations, we saw the emergence of one of the most powerful nations in the world on one hand and the 'invention'

of the most vulnerable region on the other (Mazrui, 2010: ix). The resultant regimes of recognition meant that groups that were hitherto the subject of 'foreign relations' in a 'diplomatic' sense (complete with its protocols, privileges and immunities), became the subject of a 'colonial rationality and credo of power that makes the native the prototype of the animal or a "thing" to be altered at will' while simultaneously producing 'diplomatic man' (Mbembe, 2001: 46). However, it is worthwhile to note that colonial rhetoric on what it meant to be European, diplomatic, African or human was riddled with contradictions and constantly sought meanings on which to anchor the desire to know, reorganize and dominate colonized peoples. In order to achieve their own ends, some colonized peoples like Mzilikazi, the Ndebele leader, appropriated the colonial apparatus or created zones of negotiation from which they could resist or transgress against the colonizing cultures. As a result, in his friendship with the missionary Robert Moffat in the 1820s, Mzilikazi did not welcome the missionary as an evangelizing force but as a 'good messenger who would inform him about approaching enemies to the Ndebele state', agent of Western culture, 'trading agent with white South Africa' and technician with the skills required to mend and repair firearms (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2011: 100–102).

These colonial contradictions made the colonial encounter more than a one-sided affair. By altering conceptions and orientations towards the foreign and the domestic, friend and enemy, the culturally proper and the improper, they transformed established diplomatic protocols and ceremonies while creating a space where the everyday colonialist could act as some form of diplomatic agent complete with the immunities, privileges and the sliding 'credentials' required for the colonial enterprise. The same can be said for the principle of the right to legation. In the colonial context, we witness Europeans exercising both the active right of legation (*jus activum*), by establishing diplomatic missions in foreign

countries, and the passive right of legation (*jus passivum*), by receiving foreign diplomatic missions; while the colonized peoples are relegated to the reception of a range of foreign diplomatic agents and colonial governors, explorers and missionaries without the correlative right of sending them. In spite of the complex set of diplomatic norms that the Bey of Tunisia shared with European states for many years, it could receive but not send its own diplomatic agents given that relations with Tunisia as a French protectorate were mediated through the Resident General appointed by the French government (Silva, 1972: 35, 38). In the post-French revolution era, the Bey also had to deal with a unilateral transformation of protocol among other forms of non-reciprocity when the French consuls and nationals refused to kiss his hand as was the custom among the Bey's subjects and consuls (Windler, 2001: 93, 98).

With the shift to the 'new diplomacy', a supposedly more moral form of diplomatic engagement, we witness a continuation of the old partialities with regard to colonized peoples. Whereas the Berlin Conference partitioned and divided Africans in order to colonize them, the League of Nations, and more so its mandate system, can be seen as a continuation rather than a move towards the abolition of colonial logics as it merely re-distributes colonies based on the assumption that colonized peoples were not ready to govern themselves. Not only did the mandates system set up under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations uphold the idea that the colonies were 'being held in trust for civilization', it also categorized the colonies along developmental and civilizational lines (Upthegrove, 1954: 5). In the trusteeship plan (*The League of Nations – A Practical Solution*) published by General Jan Smuts on 16 December 1918, the mandates were divided into three categories based on their location, economic states and cultural development. The Class A mandates (Palestine, Trans-Jordan and Iraq) were all received by Great Britain and were considered

to have a higher stage of development; while Class B mandates (British Togoland, British Cameroons and Tanganyika) were formerly owned by Germany and were considered 'less advanced' and thus requiring more supervision (Upthegrove, 1954: 17). The last category of mandates (Class C: South West Africa and the Pacific Islands) were assigned to neighbouring powers due to the 'sparseness of population, their small size and their remoteness from the centers of civilization' (Upthegrove, 1954: 12).

In the 1960s, actively anti-colonial Asian, African and Latin American governments sought to prevent the abuse of Chapter XI of the UN Charter by noting that the colonial powers had used the general act of the Berlin Africa Congress of 1884 and Article 23b of the Covenant of the League of Nations to achieve their colonial objectives. As such, the United Nations became one of the sites for the collision of 'the giant forces of colonialism and anti-colonialism', while the discourses related to safeguarding the well-being of colonized peoples became the subject of critique (Ahmad Hassan, 1974: 3; see also Chapters 10 and 29–34 in this Handbook).

The contrapuntal reading of the ethic of 'the necessity for continuous negotiations' that this chapter explores points to both the negations and negotiations that accompany diplomatic and colonial encounters.

### Key Points

- The civilizational mission, abolitionism, capitalism and will-to-convert contributed to the shift in moral and diplomatic discourses resulting in the replacement of slavery with colonialism and settlement or passing on of the colonies from one colonial master to another.
- The resultant moral cartography was at once colonial and diplomatic. Its colonial imperatives continuously limited the diplomatic possibilities. For instance, multi-lateral diplomatic entities like the League of Nations found it easier to imagine the end of war for Europeans or world peace than the more modest project of decolonization.

- The spectres of the colonial system continue to haunt the postcolonial present. A case in point is the mandate system that structured apartheid era South West Africa (Namibia)–South Africa relations; another is the mandate for Palestine, which, unlike other mandates, acted as a 'trustee for the conscience of the civilized world' by privileging and holding in trust the land for 'Jewish people as a whole who are not yet there on the ground' (Upthegrove, 1954: 145).
- However, the historical abuses of morally-inflected diplomatic discourses have not gone uncontested by those who resist or negotiate the colonial negations.

### CONCLUSION

The above attempts to reveal the diplomacy–colonialism nexus make it possible for us to engage the postcolonial present in a manner that does not 'distribute colonial guilt' on the one hand, or create a sanitized idea of diplomacy on the other (Mamdani, 1984: 1048). Rather than think of the colony and the post-colony as spaces of lack and incompleteness, a place where diplomacy's promises can only be realized through the logics of command, administration and conversion, the chapter illustrates how the postcolony – a site that is at once necropolitical and life affirming – presents some of the most complex negotiations of the meanings of modern diplomacy by revisiting its connections to nature and the question of being, the denigration and 'mismeasure of man', colonial rule, the celebration of the nation-state as an anti-colonial apparatus, to more recent revelations of the pitfalls of national consciousness.

As such, the postcolony (and the colony before it) encourage us to continuously pluralize or renegotiate our idea of modern diplomacy given its entanglements with colonial violence as well as transgressive life-affirming imaginaries. This means that critical reflections on the diplomatic, colonial and anti-colonial or postcolonial self should be more patient and vigilant as they could very

easily become self-congratulatory formations that 'forget that the world is a crowded place' (Said, 1993: xxi). The same can be said for recognition-based practices that seek to expand the domain of diplomacy or citizenship through the incorporation of colonized others into existing political and diplomatic imaginaries as a corrective to centuries of colonial exploitation. These range from present day multi-track diplomatic efforts that tap into indigenous conflict resolution methods not as diplomacy *proper*, but as ethno-diplomacies to be used to solve some of the local problems arising from colonial and postcolonial political arrangements while distracting 'us' from a critique of the arrangements themselves or the material conditions of existences of subaltern groups. In the context of settler colonial societies like Canada, 'recognition-based models of liberal pluralism' also act as a form of capture as they 'seek to reconcile indigenous claims to nationhood with Crown sovereignty via accommodation of indigenous identities' while reproducing the colonial configurations of domination and the asymmetrical relationships that indigenous peoples seek to transcend (Coulthard, 2007: 438).

While there are numerous diplomatic-colonial entanglements that make it difficult to theorize the coloniality of diplomacy and the diplomatic character of some colonial ventures, we can derive some insights from the useful distinction that Edward Said makes between relations and 'knowledge of other peoples and other times that is the result of compassion, careful study and analysis for their own sakes and those forms of knowledge that work for the domination of the Other' (Said, 1993: xix). To think and enact a diplomacy that reveals and seeks to delink itself from the logics of colonial difference and its related genres of man is not a utopia. It is a relational negotiation of that which was negated by modern diplomacy and colonialism and resists the coloniality of being in the present, while orienting us towards the possibility of coexistence with human and non-human beings despite the struggle to

exist across difference (Glissant, 2000). While the promise of modern diplomacy might be presented as that which would enable us to have an effective cosmopolitan, humanitarian, multicultural and even a more peaceful dialogue among states, the critical diplomatic project enables us to recognize the limits of these projects while experimenting with or apprehending multi-natural and cosmopolitical possibilities in an age where violence on human and non-human beings in the name of humanity or culture is becoming moralized, common and acceptable. An age which, like the colonial era that precedes it, is marked by a human and humanitarian calculus that makes it possible to purse violence as a lesser evil, to convert rather than converse with difference or where the responsibility to protect vulnerable human life has become the right to punish.

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# Statecraft, Strategy and Diplomacy

Markus Kornprobst

## INTRODUCTION

It is simply stating the obvious that statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are closely related. Strategy is an important guide for statecraft. Diplomacy features prominently both in this guide and in actual practices of statecraft. Yet this chapter seeks to go beyond the obvious. What is statecraft? How are strategy and diplomacy to be conceptualized? How do these concepts hang together?

I deal with these questions one after the other. The reason for this is simple. While there are rich literatures on strategy and diplomacy, statecraft is something akin to a conceptual enigma in International Studies. Statecraft is widely considered to be an important concept. But there is a lack of conceptualization of the term. For instance, the term features in the title of the well-known journal *Diplomacy & Statecraft*. But the actual content of the journal is lop-sided. There is a lot about diplomacy but not that much about statecraft. Thus far, the journal has published

174 articles with a title including the word ‘diplomacy’ but only ten with a title including the word ‘statecraft’. Of these ten articles, only seven are research articles and only one of these – a discussion of Machiavelli – ends up discussing the concept in depth. When the journal web-page outlines the objectives of the journal, there is mentioning of diplomacy and diplomats but not of statecraft.<sup>1</sup>

A similar pattern prevails in books written on statecraft. There are many books that feature the term ‘statecraft’ in the title but the content of the books does not define the concept. The concept does not even appear in the index (Ledeen, 1988; Zelikow and Rice, 1995; Barrett, 2003; McKercher, 2012). There seems to be something about the term ‘statecraft’ that is of some importance. This is why authors choose to use the term. At the same time, however, the meaning of the term often remains up in the air.

I contend that most authors addressing the conceptual triad of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy draw from five broader



**Table 4.1 Five perspectives on statecraft, strategy and diplomacy**

	<i>Statecraft</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Diplomacy</i>
<b>Classical realism</b>	Prudent choice of means to secure survival	Plan for choosing means to achieve an end	Crafting balance of power
<b>Rational choice</b>	Compute costs and benefits	Sequential plan of moves to attain preference	Bargaining international institutions into being
<b>Cognitive approaches</b>	Putting heuristics to use to serve interest	Adaptive plan for choosing means to achieve an end	Wielding power without waging war (producing of heuristics)
<b>Culturalist approaches</b>	Context as resource for reasoning	Compass for coping with international relations	Communicating global order into being
<b>Critical approaches</b>	Habitual reasoning	Strategy without strategist	Unreflectively communicating unjust global order into being

perspectives to make sense of the concept: classical realism, rational choice, cognitive approaches, culturalist approaches and critical approaches. These perspectives underline that statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are closely interrelated. But they differ in terms of how they define these concepts and how they relate them to one another. Discussing the strengths and weaknesses of these perspectives, I argue for more eclecticism. Classical realism, rational choice, and cognitive approaches are more concise and parsimonious when they address the conceptual triad. But cultural and critical approaches provide important insights that need to be taken seriously when we want to make sense of our changing global polity.

This chapter is organized as follows. First, I provide an overview of how the five perspectives link strategy and diplomacy to statecraft. Second, I discuss these linkages. Third, I propose an eclectic agenda for further research. Fourth, I conclude on an empirical note, highlighting the need to move beyond entrenched understandings of the conceptual triad.

## **FIVE PERSPECTIVES ON STATECRAFT, STRATEGY AND DIPLOMACY**

This section discusses the main perspectives on statecraft, strategy and diplomacy.<sup>2</sup> It

uncovers five perspectives: classical realism, rational choice, cognitive approaches, culturalist approaches and critical approaches. Table 4.1 provides an overview of these lenses.

Classical realism is close to the foundational works on statecraft written by Kautilya (1915), Plato (2013) and Machiavelli (1979) when it comes to conceptualizing statecraft. Statecraft is, above all, about prudent reasoning. The end of this reasoning is state survival (Carr, 1964: 153–4; Wolfers, 1962; Morgenthau, 1985: 115–84; Kissinger, 2001: 31).<sup>3</sup> Given that classical realists consider statecraft an art, they do not try to squeeze prudent reasoning into an elegant theory (Morgenthau, 1985: 565; Kissinger, 2001: 285). But they are very vocal about what it is not. It is to be sharply distinguished from emotions and ideological zeal (Morgenthau, 1985: 584–7; Kissinger, 2001: 264–73).

It comes quite naturally to classical realists to link statecraft closely to strategy and diplomacy. Statecraft revolves around relating means to an end. Strategy stands in the middle between means and ends. Strategy is the guide for choosing means to achieve an end. Classical realist scholarship tends to conceptualize strategy in terms of grand strategy. It advocates particular grand strategies and related courses of action. The balance of power always looms large in these strategies. Such a balance is the only kind of (tenuous) stability that is possible in an anarchic

system (Morgenthau, 1965; Kissinger, 2012). This is where diplomacy comes in. Prudent state leaders gear their strategies towards crafting a balance of power. It is no coincidence, therefore, that Morgenthau concludes his influential *Politics among Nations* with a chapter on diplomacy (Morgenthau, 1985: 561–94). It is also no coincidence that Kissinger (1994) titles one of his most-cited books simply *Diplomacy*. Diplomatic means are considered to be highly important. A balance of power does not just happen. It has to be made by diplomats with an adequate strategy for how to do so.

Some authors conceptualize statecraft as rational choice. In this view, state leaders compute what means are best suited to attain a state's given goal. Statecraft thus understood is not an art. Practising statecraft is something akin to a science, and it is to be analysed by the scientific means of elegant and parsimonious theories (Solingen, 2009: 148–51; Moravcsik, 2013). This perspective encompasses two main strands of thought on statecraft, i.e. research on economic sanctions (Cain, 2007; Solingen, 2012a)<sup>4</sup> and liberal intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik, 1998, 1999).

For the rational choice perspective, strategy is a key term. Strategy is important because a leader engaging in statecraft never acts alone on the world stage. There are other actors as well. In game theoretical language, players are locked into a game that they play with one another. Striving for getting what one wants in this game requires something akin to a game plan. A particular move by one player is to be countered by a particular move by another player and so on. The analogy here is a chess game. The players calculate several moves ahead (Barrett, 2003). Research on economic sanctions puts much less emphasis on diplomacy than on strategy. Economic sanctions do the explanation of the behaviour of the target state. Diplomacy, understood as bargaining, makes its appearances in these studies. But the bargaining outcome is explained by the properties of

the sanctions regime (Solingen, 2012b) and not, say, by negotiation skill. Liberal intergovernmentalism also reduces diplomacy to bargaining. What economic sanctions are to authors such as Solingen, credible threats with implications for domestic economies are to Moravcsik (1998: 3). They are the key causal force that determines the outcomes of bargaining, i.e. whether more integration happens or not. Nevertheless, there is a notable difference between the two rational choice strands. In Moravcsik, the bargaining of diplomats has the potential to create an institutional order within which future diplomatic bargaining takes place. The kind of bargaining addressed in the economic sanctions literature, by contrast, is not productive in this fashion. It affects behaviour directly but does not create an order for future diplomatic encounters.

Authors putting cognitive approaches to use to write about statecraft also weave the concept together with strategy and diplomacy. Statecraft is again conceptualized in terms of relating means to ends. Leaders weigh the expected costs and benefits of their actions in terms of how they serve the national interest. But cognitive approaches conceptualize processes of reasoning differently from the perspectives above. They are not content with the normative prescription to be prudent (classical realism) and they are highly sceptical about the far-reaching computational powers of leaders assumed by rational choice. Instead, they vow to look into the analytical 'black boxes of decision-making' (George, 1997: 44). Leaders acquire a heuristic 'baggage' and put these cognitive shortcuts to use to make sense of reality and make decisions. This putting to use, in turn, may reshape their heuristics.<sup>5</sup> Authors often use the term 'judgement' to describe these processes of sense-making and decision-making (Lamborn and Mumme, 1988: 6; Rosenthal, 1995; Ross, 2007: x). This line of inquiry heavily borrows from Herbert Simon's path-breaking work on bounded rationality (Bulpitt, 1986; Baldwin, 1999/2000; Buller, 2000: 13).

Cognitive approaches take strategy and diplomacy seriously, too. Similarly to classical realism, cognitive approaches understand strategy as something that is located in the middle between means and ends. Nevertheless, the cognitive conceptualization of strategy is distinctive. Strategy is a plan for action that evolves over time. Decision-makers have the ability to adapt their strategies (Lauren et al., 2014: 290). Strategy, in other words, is not something that merely features among the parameters of rationality. It is also a potential outcome of interaction. Diplomacy plays a key role when it comes to this interaction. Authors tend to relate diplomacy to policy outcomes. Research on coercive diplomacy, for instance, is concerned with how leaders put robust diplomatic means to use in order to avoid the escalation of a crisis into war. Cognitive approaches, therefore, deliver a hands-on perspective on diplomacy. They are about how diplomacy leads to a certain policy outcome. They are – in contrast to classical realism and liberal intergovernmentalism – not concerned with the making of political order.

The culturalist perspective is very heterogeneous.<sup>6</sup> Albert Hirschman, Herbert Butterfield and Adda Bozeman address the conceptual triad of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy in quite some depth. These authors share in common that they conceive of actors as socially embedded in context. Hirschman (1977) approaches capitalism as a social context, and Butterfield (1952) is very much indebted to the English School when he writes about international society. Bozeman (1992: 1) comes close to defining statecraft in terms of social context: ‘The term “statecraft” [...] stands for the sum total of human dispositions, doctrines, policies, institutions, processes, and operations that are designed to assure the governance, security, and survival of a politically unified human group’. Yet for all the insights provided by culturalists on the social context within which reasoning takes place, there are not many clues as to how reasoning proceeds. Some authors, similarly to cognitive approaches, use the term

‘judgement’. But they are not clear about what judgement actually is. This is somewhat reminiscent of classical realism. Again, statecraft is considered an art, and culturalists are reluctant to over-theorize this art (Butterfield, 1960: 99–120; Bozeman, 1992: 253–55; Hirschman, 2013).

Culturalist approaches offer alternative understandings of strategy and diplomacy. Hirschman conceptualizes strategy more comprehensively than rationalist perspectives. He includes a wider range of means. Strategy is about making use of resources that are usually hidden (Hirschman, 1958: 5). He also problematizes how interests come to be defined by actors (Hirschman, 1986: 35–55). Bozeman breaks with rationalist conceptualizations with more determination. Strategy is akin to a compass that helps actors to ‘come to terms with life’ (Bozeman, 1992: 1). Butterfield’s work on statecraft is clearly influenced by the English School’s tendency to define diplomacy in terms of communication (Watson, 1982: 11; Bull, 1995: 162–3). Bozeman (1979), having undergone diplomatic training herself, conceptualizes diplomacy as multi-cultural communication. Understandings of diplomacy as communication, although more implicit, are found in Hirschman’s work as well (Hirschman, 1978). Very much in line with the emphasis on social context, the inter-relatedness of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy can have a very broad impact, the social context within which this interrelatedness happens very much included. Hirschman, for instance, is primarily interested in issues of economic and developmental order. Bozeman and Butterfield allude to how statecraft shapes a diplomatic context that is widely shared beyond nation-state boundaries.

Critical approaches, similarly to culturalist ones, draw heavily from sociological insights. But the epistemological stance of the former differs from the latter. Critical approaches do not merely seek to understand statecraft, strategy and diplomacy. They aim at critiquing it. Borrowing from poststructuralist thought, critical scholars allude to

oppressive background ideas.<sup>7</sup> These give rise to unreflective practices of exploitation and injustice. Reflecting on the US–Mexico border, Roxanne Lynne Doty (2001: 525) argues that statecraft is:

rooted not in the rationality of atomistic actors made up by IR scholars, but in the forces, the impulses, and energies that traverse this seemingly endless tract of land divided, on maps, by a line that separates the world's richest country from one of the poorest.

This quote also illustrates the potential effects of statecraft. According to critical scholars, statecraft reproduces taken-for-granted ideas that are implicated in sustaining oppressive orders. These are substantive and procedural in nature. Cynthia Weber (2010), for instance, critiques liberalism for justifying oppressive domestic and international practices.<sup>8</sup> Richard Ashley (1989) deals more with the procedural aspect of who is entitled to engage in statecraft when he chastises statecraft as ‘manecraft’.

With very few exceptions (Doty, 1996: 83; 104–5) critical scholars provide only a few hints about how statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are related. But these are worth discussing. Some authors address strategy but give it a rather different spin. The concept of ‘strategy without strategist’ (Rabinow, 2003: 54; Thomas, 2014: 170), for instance, re-conceptualizes strategy and squarely locates it in the social context as opposed to autonomous individual decision-making. Strategies, too, are habitual. They are outside of the realm of the reflective. In the last two decades, critical scholarship has generated a number of important studies on diplomacy. Similarly to culturalist research, communicative encounters feature prominently in these studies. The focus is not on explicit encounters but more on the orthodoxies and heterodoxies that underpin these communicative encounters and constitute them in the first place. To put this differently, context – and the production and reproduction of hidden context – is considered even more important

than in culturalist approaches (Der Derian, 1987; Constantinou, 1996) (See also Chapters 5, 7 and 8 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- There are five main perspectives on statecraft, strategy and diplomacy: classical realism, rational choice, cognitive approaches, culturalist approaches and critical approaches.
- They agree that statecraft is, ultimately, about rationality. But they conceptualize reasoning differently, alluding to prudence, computation, heuristics, social contexts more generally and exploitative contexts more specifically.
- They agree that statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are interwoven. But they conceptualize strategy and diplomacy differently as well. Schisms cut deep, with scholars coming down on different sides of the structure–agency debate (ontology) and even on how to conduct research (epistemology).

### DISCUSSING THE FIVE PERSPECTIVES

This section discusses the strengths and weaknesses of these five perspectives. I contend that rationalist perspectives are, compared to sociological perspectives, more concise about what statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are, and how these three concepts hang together. Yet this comes at the price of overly narrow conceptualizations of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy. Sociological perspectives provide important insights for how to move beyond these narrow confines.

Among the three rationalist perspectives, rational choice defines its terms in the most concise and parsimonious manner. Rationality is assumed to be the maximization of expected utility, strategy is the plan for how to do so while interacting with others, and diplomacy is about the actual interaction, defined as bargaining. Cognitive approaches, too, are concise. Reasoning revolves around heuristic devices and strategy is an adaptive

plan linked to these heuristics. Diplomacy is often not addressed in its full breadth. Authors focus on a particular aspect of it: coercive diplomacy (see also Chapter 38 in this Handbook). But cognitive approaches are less parsimonious. Opening up the black box of decision-making has the major benefit that researchers do not merely rely on assumptions about how decisions are made but actually inquire into the process of decision-making. Classical realism is parsimonious but not always as concise as the other two rationalist approaches. At the risk of oversimplifying the classical realist account, statecraft, strategy and diplomacy are, ultimately, about one particular demand placed on leadership by international anarchy: *Realpolitik*. But processes of reasoning are not addressed in any rigorous fashion. The same applies to strategy and diplomacy.

Rationalist accounts, however, also have their drawbacks. With the conceptualizations of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy being rather narrow, authors miss important aspects of the conceptual triad. The conceptualizations of statecraft and strategy are all about autonomous, individual decision-making. There is nothing about advisors shaping the views of leaders or leaders bowing under public pressure. There is nothing about shared decision-making clues. Conceptualizations of diplomacy are, arguably, even more narrow. In classical realism, the diplomats that matter are the key decision-making figures of great powers, and the only kind of diplomacy that is elaborated on in depth is the crafting of the balance of power. Rational choice reduces diplomacy to bargaining among states. Cognitive approaches, too, are all about state interaction, especially coercive diplomacy involving great powers (see also Chapter 22 in this Handbook).

Sociological perspectives are more tentative when they define statecraft, strategy and diplomacy. They often find it particularly difficult to deal with reasoning and strategy because their focus is on social context as opposed to individual autonomy

and decision-making. At times, sociological perspectives, too, are overly narrow. This applies especially to critical approaches. They put heavy emphasis on the unreflected as opposed to the reflected. This is quite a radical move. It is far from clear whether reasoning and applying strategies are always habitual.

Nonetheless, sociological perspectives make important contributions. They help us re-think entrenched categories. They push us to work towards a more sophisticated understanding of rationality and strategy. Cognitive approaches make a very strong case that clues held by individuals matter for how they figure out what to do. Culturalist and critical approaches highlight that clues held by communities matter, too. They also highlight that not all reasoning is all out in the open. There are reflective and unreflective dimensions. Perhaps most importantly, sociological approaches prompt us to embrace a broader view of diplomacy. Statecraft and strategy leave their mark on global and regional orders and they do so via diplomacy. Vice versa, diplomacy shapes statecraft and strategy. In some encounters, diplomacy may amount to little more than bargaining. But in others, it may go much beyond that. Messages may win over other actors. In the language of rational choice, diplomatic communication can change preferences. Equally importantly, diplomatic communication may leave its mark on the authority of the interlocutors, strengthening or weakening their status as senders of messages. This communication is by no means confined to state-to-state interaction (or even the interaction of great powers). It potentially encompasses all 'governors' of regional and global governance – no matter whether they are state or non-state actors.

### Key Points

- Rationalist perspectives (classical realism, rational choice, cognitive approaches) are more concise and parsimonious in their discussion of



statecraft, strategy and diplomacy than sociological ones (culturalist approaches, critical approaches).

- But sociological perspectives provide important inputs for moving beyond the limitations of rationalist perspectives.

## AN AGENDA FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the discussions above, this section develops an agenda for further research. Drawing upon current debates in international relations theory and the study of diplomacy, it identifies questions for improving our understanding of the conceptual triad as well as our normative discussions about it.

How do agents come to figure out what to do? Research on statecraft would benefit if it engaged in more detail with the concept of rationality. In international relations theory, there are numerous debates about rationality. There are debates about how utilitarian actors weigh costs and benefits between rational choice and psychological approaches (Bueno de Mesquita and McDermott, 2004). Furthermore, there are debates about logics of action other than this consequentialist one. Scholars putting forward the logic of appropriateness hold that the actors we study do not always weigh costs and benefits; sometimes they are rule-followers (March and Olsen, 1989). Writers arguing for the logic of argumentation hold that there are circumstances under which actors come to be persuaded to change their views, even their preferences, while interacting with others (Risse, 2000). Authors making a case for the logic of practice submit that actors do not always reflect in order to figure out what to do; at times they simply do, following the background knowledge they hold (Pouliot, 2008). In research on statecraft, these different scholarly understandings of rationality are present. But there is very little discussion about them across perspectival divides.

Precisely such discussion is required, however, in order to get a better understanding of rationality. Rationality, after all, is probably *the* key concept underpinning statecraft.

How does statecraft come to produce *what* aspects of international order? Conceptualizing order, many international relations theorists have moved far beyond simple dichotomies of anarchy and hierarchy along with unidimensional views of international order that are all about military capabilities. Global governance may very well be a fuzzy concept. But research on global governance shows plenty of potential to improve our understandings of the complex nature of international order (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992; Barnett and Finnemore, 2004; Hurrell, 2007). It makes a compelling case, for instance, that the world becomes more and more interdependent. It also demonstrates that more and more issue areas that used to be dealt with on the domestic level are pushed onto the international one, such as environment, health and migration. These changes are of major importance for research on statecraft. They demand new answers to old questions. Questions about statecraft and national security, at the forefront of research and practices of statecraft, have to take the evolution towards more and more interdependence into account. The changes also pose entirely new questions, such as how some issue areas make it onto the global agenda while others do not. This may very well have something to do with statecraft.

How does strategy link up with rationality and order? Old and new debates among international relations theorists help to elaborate on the entrenched scholarly definition of strategy as a plan for choosing means to pursue a given end. They add to the pool of means (Nye, 2004; Barnett and Duvall, 2005) and put the concept of interest under scrutiny (Wheeler, 1992; Weldes, 1999). They contend that grand strategy is a taken-for-granted guide for action that is not just about means and ends but also about epistemic understandings of the security

environment and representations of identity (Kornprobst, 2015). These elaborations make for thought-provoking questions for research on statecraft: What are the subtle means of statecraft in our age? Is there such a thing as an enlightened self-interest in statecraft? Where do understandings of security environments, identity, interests and means come from and how do they, woven together, come to assume a taken-for-granted quality? For the most part, these questions pertain to processes of how strategy guides practical reason to build order. Yet there are also questions – most notably the last one – that would make researchers look into how order is implicated in shaping the ingredients of strategy, which in turn deeply influences practical reasoning.

How does diplomacy link up with rationality, strategy and order? Recent research on diplomacy revisits these concepts. It underlines the importance of the questions outlined above. Research on global health, for instance, often mentions the concept of enlightened self-interest (Yach, 1998; Fauci, 2007). The telecommunications revolution has prompted scholars of diplomacy to elaborate on the means used by diplomats. Public diplomacy and, very much related to it, e-diplomacy are among these means (Gilboa, 2008). There is also a more and more nuanced understanding of different forms of power that necessitates revisiting the means used by diplomats. Several studies on diplomatic routines provide evidence for the logic of practice (Guzzini, 2000; Neumann, 2002). All of these elaborations on practical reason and the role of strategy in it point towards the salience of the context in which diplomats are embedded. Authors address this context in substantive and procedural terms. When diplomats communicate about a particular issue concerning arms control, for instance, they do so based on (a selective reading of) existing arms control agreements. Additionally, the way they communicate with one another is a peculiarly diplomatic one. Diplomats are socialized into

a particular mode of communication with one another (Kornprobst, 2012; see also Chapters 6 and 35 in this Handbook).

How ought statecraft be conducted and what ought to be the relationship between academia and statecraft? Most writings about statecraft are normative in nature. They are, ultimately, not just about how statecraft works but about how it ought to work. There is, in principle, nothing wrong with that. But normative theory needs to be discussed as normative theory. This means two things: first, there has to be a meta-theoretical debate about how scholarly knowledge affects statecraft. What are the processes through which scholarly ideas make it out of the supposed Ivory Tower of academia and come to inform statecraft? What kinds of processes are warranted and what kinds are not? With the exception of critical approaches, writings on statecraft are not sufficiently self-reflective, and critical approaches run the risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater, i.e. they tend to equate statecraft with oppression. Second, there has to be a theoretical debate about morality and statecraft. In the 1980s, normative research in international relations still felt constantly obliged to defend the purpose of normative writings against the classical realist stance that morality in international affairs is simply about pursuing the national interest and securing the nation's survival (Beitz, 1988). Yet normative theory in international relations has come of age. It is much more self-confident now and no longer feels the constant need to defend its very existence against classical realism. In the age of globalization and global governance, research on statecraft, too, has to address normative issues in a more sophisticated fashion. Orthodox interpretations of classical realism should not curb normative research. Critical engagement (Lebow, 2003; Williams, 2005), by contrast, facilitates it. So do several avenues of research advocated above, including the scrutiny of enlightened interest and the interaction of state and non-state actors.



## Key Points

- Future research on the nexus of statecraft, strategy and diplomacy should develop our understandings of practical reason (statecraft and strategy) and communication among different actors (including diplomacy) further.
- The key *explanandum* of such investigations should be the making and unmaking of order.
- In addition to research focused on explaining the making and unmaking of order, there should also be a normative research agenda.

## CONCLUDING EMPIRICALLY: SOME THOUGHTS ON OUR GLOBAL POLITY

July 1914. Austria-Hungary issues a sharp ultimatum to Serbia. Germany declares its unconditional support of Austria. On 28 July, Vienna declares war on Serbia. The world slides into the First World War. July 2014. A hundred years later, there is no world war. Indeed, there is not a single inter-state war. Yet leaders are struggling to cope with a host of issues that have been recurring over and over again for some time.

To name but a few, it is ‘boat season’ (Sherwood et al., 2014) in the Mediterranean Sea. Trying to escape intra-state war, violence, poverty and crime, tens of thousands embark on largely unseaworthy and hopelessly overcrowded boats to cross the Mediterranean from Africa to Europe. In the European Union, the flows of migration are often understood as a security issue and dealt with accordingly (Zaiotti, 2011). At the US–Mexico border, well over 50,000 children try to cross the border, their parents desperately hoping for better lives for their children in the United States. Congress refuses to allocate funds for humanitarian aid. Instead, Texas mobilizes 1,000 troops of the National Guard and sends them to the border, determined to ‘secure the Southern border of the United States’ (Governor Rick Perry, quoted in Bever, 2014).

Israel, targeted by Hamas missiles yet again, responds with yet another round of

bombardments and a ground troop invasion into Gaza. Once again, civilians suffer the horrible and deadly consequences of refusals by political leaders to look for political solutions. Islamic State (IS) jihadists, having proclaimed a new caliphate, expand the territories they hold in Syria and Iraq. They terrorize the population, targeting Christians, moderate Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims and especially Yazidis. Boko Haram, a militant Muslim sect, burns villages, abducts people, rapes and kills in Nigeria. The situation for civilians in the embattled Eastern Ukraine worsens. Russian separatists shoot down a civilian aircraft headed for Malaysia. The Netherlands mourns; most of the passengers were Dutch.

Far away from the headlines, people continue to die because of poverty and poverty-related diseases. Child mortality continues to be a major problem in the Global South, in particular Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia. About 1,500 children under the age of five die every month due to preventable diseases that are closely linked to poverty.<sup>9</sup> The situation is particularly dire in countries ravaged by war. In South Sudan, war causes starvation. West African states join in their efforts to battle Ebola. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) publishes its annual *Human Development Report*, highlighting yet again that environmental degradation, poverty and conflict hang closely together.<sup>10</sup>

This comparison between the 1914 July crisis and the world a hundred years on is, of course, very sketchy. But it is suggestive. On the one hand, today’s global politics is markedly different from the past. More and more issue areas that were considered domestic in the past move onto the international agenda, and more and more new and old items on this agenda become closely interwoven. Take migration flows to Europe, for instance. Intra-state wars make the number of refugees increase to the highest number since the Second World War. IS, therefore, makes itself felt not only in Iraq and Syria but also

in neighbouring countries and Europe. This is not only due to the many refugees trying to escape the slaughter. Among its fighters are a large number of foreigners. European governments debate nervously about what to do when European citizens, having fought for IS, return to Europe. IS, to continue this short list of interrelatedness in today's global polity, formed in response to the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

On the other hand, leaders – especially state leaders – are struggling to find answers to today's problems. All too often, they hold on to a deeply entrenched security reflex. When major problems arise for a state, they equate these problems with threats to national security and choose military means that originate as responses to inter-state wars. The US reaction to Latin American children trying to cross the border shows this security reflex all too clearly. The security reflex, however, is often highly misleading. There is, after all, a difference between nuclear weapons, tanks and heavy armoury on the one hand and children struggling to escape poverty on the other. Furthermore, state leaders find it difficult to embark on multilateral solutions to global problems. The Security Council becomes more and more ineffective because its permanent members, reminiscent of the Cold War, threaten or actually use their veto powers. More and more divided internally, the European Union is as far away from taking on a more determined role in world politics as ever (see also Chapter 25 in this Handbook).

The gist of this is simple. Statecraft, strategy and diplomacy in our age have a lot to do with regional and global governance. States – and the leaders that represent them – are important governors of world politics. Statecraft is about building regional and global orders that have the potential to address the problems of our times appropriately. Scholars should not underestimate the role they play in all of this. If we hold on to too many understandings of statecraft that were arrived at by scholars engaging with the nineteenth century and early twentieth

century more than fifty years ago, the postulates and critiques we deliver are unlikely to be very helpful for the twenty-first century. If we engage in a broad debate with scholars from different perspectives and practitioners representing different kinds of state and non-state actors, we may have opportunities to do better than that (see also Chapters 29–33 in this Handbook).

## NOTES

- 1 Diplomacy & Statecraft, [www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=fdps20#.U7ZaP53mSUK](http://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=fdps20#.U7ZaP53mSUK) [accessed 4 July 2014].
- 2 Note that I only include perspectives in this overview that address all three concepts. Neoclassical Realism, thus far, has tended to shy away from engaging with statecraft explicitly. Those neoclassical realists who do write on statecraft borrow considerably from cognitive approaches. See, for instance, Field (2007).
- 3 Contemporary scholarship remains influenced by classical realism (Murray 2010; Freeman 2010: 137).
- 4 Yet note that there is also research on economic sanctions that is informed by cognitive approaches (Baldwin, 1985). Solingen (2012b), who draws heavily from rational choice assumptions, is open to eclecticism, too. Research on economic sanctions traces itself back to Albert Hirschman, whose eclectic work allows for various interpretations. Since Hirschman puts a very strong emphasis on cultural forces, I include his work in my discussion of culturalist approaches below.
- 5 There are overlaps between cognitive approaches and the work of historians in this regard. See especially Kennedy (1983).
- 6 I borrow the label of 'culturalism' from Lichbach and Zuckerman (1997), intending to indicate that this cluster of scholarship is broader than entrenched schools of thought dealing with cultural and ideational forces (such as constructivism and the English School).
- 7 There are some hints that instrumental rationality is among these background ideas. This critique, of course, is much further developed in critical scholarship that does not deal with the conceptual triad under scrutiny. See, for example, Horkheimer (1991).

- 8 This is a response to Deudney and Ikenberry (1999).
- 9 UNICEF, *Levels & Trends in Child Mortality Report*, 2013.
- 10 UNDP, *Human Development Report 2014: Sustaining Human Progress: Reducing Vulnerabilities and Building Resilience*.

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# Diplomacy and Foreign Policy

Brian Hocking

The relationship between diplomacy and foreign policy is an intimate yet sometimes confused one. As Harold Nicolson noted when identifying five common usages of ‘diplomacy’, the two terms have been used interchangeably (Nicolson 1939). He went on to argue that this had led to uncertainties amongst the public regarding the essential differences between the two and, therefore, confused expectations regarding their functions. If this was a problem for diplomats in the era in which Nicolson was writing, it remains so today. But it also characterises academic analysis. Here, foreign policy and diplomacy are commonly treated as interlinked components in a process through which the objectives of policies directed towards the management of relations with an actor’s international environment are translated into outcomes through the employment of a range of institutionalised techniques and strategies mediated through a set of established structures, rules and norms. At the same time, diplomacy focuses on *interactions between actors* rather than the *actors*

*themselves*, which is the focus of foreign policy. The distinction underpins Watson’s definition of diplomacy as ‘the process of dialogue and negotiations by which states in a system conduct their relations and pursue their purposes by means short of war’ (Watson 1982: 11).

The confusions that concerned Nicolson have been thrown into greater relief and given a new gloss in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. A rapidly changing ‘foreign policy’ environment in which the meaning and content of the term is contested poses major issues for all aspects of diplomatic process, the actors participating in them and the institutions through which diplomacy is conducted at all levels (Hill 2003; Webber and Smith 2002). Consequently, the very constitution of ‘foreignness’ is questioned in an environment in which processes of ‘deforeignisation’ affect policy content and arenas as well as the norms, rules and structures associated with the diplomacy of the modern state era. Adapting the latter to new needs thrown up by complex processes



of globalisation, regionalisation and localisation is part of the current agenda, as is creating spaces in which new diplomatic forms attuned to new needs can develop. Hence the appropriateness of foreign policy and diplomacy as subjects for investigation in an era preoccupied with global governance are questioned, being regarded as remnants of decreasingly relevant state-centred approaches to understanding the contemporary global environment (Smith et al. 2008; Alden and Aran 2012). In this sense, foreign policy and diplomacy share a legitimacy and efficiency problem which turns on their effectiveness and appropriateness as foci of academic enquiry as well as modalities of managing complex international processes.

Against this background, the following discussion explores the relationship between these two long-established features of the international system, the parameters of change affecting them, the consequences that these are having for the processes of diplomacy and the traditional norms and institutional structures on which they rest.

## LANDSCAPES OF FOREIGN POLICY AND DIPLOMACY

Mapping the nature of twenty-first century foreign policy and diplomacy requires us to grapple with their functions and structures in an era of profound change in both domestic and international policy environments. But the narratives surrounding diplomacy often fail to help us make sense of this complexity. Too often they obscure its fundamental character, equate it with the attributes of one period, namely that of the states system, stress discontinuities at the expense of continuities and confuse arguments about the status of transitory diplomatic machineries with those concerning the enduring character of its functions. This has produced a number of propositions regarding the nature of contemporary diplomacy. Each of them is bound

up with changes in the character of social, political and economic structures at both domestic and international levels, the erosion of the boundaries demarcating them and consequent issues of agency. Commonly, these issues are subsumed under the broad categorisation of 'globalisation' and the set of referents employed in discussions relating to it – although their contours and implications are contested (Clark 2014).

The significance of these changes and the linkage between the character of foreign policy and the consequent shape and forms assumed by diplomacy over time is captured in two contrasting images taken from very different historical contexts. The first comes from Rebecca West's acclaimed account of her travels in Eastern Europe in the 1930s, in which she describes a diplomatic system – that of the Republic of Ragusa (latterly Dubrovnik) – which transcended the worlds of politics and diplomacy, regarding them as closely interwoven in the quest for survival:

The Republic (Ragusa/Dubrovnik) was surrounded by greedy empires whom she had to keep at arm's length by negotiation lest she perish: first Hungary, then Venice, then Turkey. Foreign Affairs were her domestic affairs; and it was necessary that they should be conducted in complete secrecy with enormous discretion. It must never be learned by one empire what had been promised by or to another empire, and none of the greedy pack could be allowed to know the precise amount of the Republic's resources. There was therefore every reason to found a class of governors who were so highly privileged that they would protect the status quo of the community at all costs, who could hand on training in the art of diplomacy from father to son, and who were so few in number that it would be easy to detect a case of blabbing. (West 1994)

Contrast this with Robert Cooper's description of a 'post-modern' diplomatic environment encapsulated in the European Union:

The postmodern system does not rely on balance; nor does it emphasize sovereignty or the separation of domestic and foreign affairs. The European Union is a highly developed system for mutual interference in each other's domestic affairs, right down to beer and sausages...Mutual interference

in some areas of domestic affairs and mutual surveillance...is normal for postmodern states. (Cooper 2004)

Whilst there are echoes in West's description which resonate with our own times in terms of the close relationship between domestic and foreign policy environments and the transcending of the political and the diplomatic arenas, Cooper presents a milieu marked by the transition from the emphasis on sovereignty, secrecy and hierarchy in the image of Ragusan diplomacy to the centrality of 'mutual interference' and 'mutual surveillance' as key features of the twenty-first century diplomatic environment. But, as Cooper suggests, this is only part of a broader, more complex picture in which pre-modern, modern and post-modern forms of foreign policy and diplomacy coexist. In other words, no single image fits the intricacies of contemporary world politics which comprise densely textured features of 'neo-medievalism', layers of modernism as represented by determinedly 'modern' states such as China and Russia alongside manifestations of post-modernism.

Part of this growing complexity is represented by the redefinition of boundaries demarcating the 'foreignness' of foreign policy and the role and character of diplomacy as a component of the processes through which it is managed. This touches on agendas in an increasingly broad policy milieu which, if not demolishing, obfuscates the nature of the 'foreign-domestic' policy distinction, the goals that international policies are intended to serve and the characteristics of diplomatic processes and structures (see also Chapters 11, 25 and 41 in this Handbook).

## **BOUNDARY EROSION AND THE POLICY PROCESSES**

Seen in its most conventional expression foreign policy possesses a clear agenda, heavily focused on military security and attended by policy processes distinct from

those associated with the domestic policy sphere. Here, the concern with territorial defence implies an identifiable collective 'national' interest, marking off one community from another and symbolically expressed in geographical borders. The growing significance of what, in the terminology of complex interdependence of the late 1970s, was designated 'low' policy manifested in economic/ecopolitical agendas was reinforced by the perceived shift from geopolitics to geoeconomics in the post-Cold War era.

Even before the events of the late 1980s and 1990s onwards, the high-low dichotomy was looking increasingly frayed, not simply in the sense that what had hitherto been designated as 'low policy' was becoming more salient, but because the very distinction appeared to be losing its utility as a means of describing the substance of the policy environment. Changing perceptions of the constitution of security among publics as well as policy-makers were a major factor here. The demands for collective action in key areas such as climate change, global pandemics, global terrorism, international crime and the challenges posed by fragile states became identified in terms of a 'new international security agenda' (NISA) wherein international security is seen not simply in terms of the integrity and stability of the state, but as the physical, psychological and economic security and welfare of the citizen within it. The close interrelationship between these agendas became even more marked in the post-9/11 environment with a growing recognition of the need to link the critical facets of foreign policy in the form of defence, development and diplomacy (Clinton 2010).

At the same time, however, the character of these issues and the linkages between, for example, the problems of fragile states, organised crime and terrorism constitute uniquely challenging issues. What have been termed 'wicked' issues are not susceptible to rational policy processes of problem definition, analysis and solution – often because there is no agreed definition of the problem.

Consequently, they defy generalised management prescriptions and demand tailored management strategies for each situation (Edwards 2008).

Associated with these developments are three significant changes in the broad goals of foreign policy which impact on the conduct of diplomacy. First, the primary imperatives of control associated with the dominance of states and territory-related issues have been overlain by the more subtle demands of access to and presence within the key nodes in an increasingly complex international environment. Second, the diverse challenges confronting actors on the world stage – not least the experience of the global financial crisis – are reflected in the growing emphasis on the capacity to absorb sudden and unexpected shocks – that is to say ‘resilience’ (Evans and Steven 2010; Cascio 2009; Hudson 2009). This highlights the importance of key features of foreign policy processes including analytical capacity, collaborative strategies and a commitment to systems open to external inputs which, as we shall see later, have important consequences for the character of diplomacy.

A further change in the foreign policy environment is to be found in the mutability of power and the growing importance of social power in world politics. This highlights the significance of discursive power in the form of shaping perceptions of the world through processes of issue framing, agenda setting and norm advocacy (van Ham 2010). This is not to say that other, more traditional, conceptions of power are irrelevant but that, as van Ham puts it, a ‘postmodern eclecticism’ is appropriate to understanding the complexities of power underpinning the range of issues that constitute contemporary foreign policy and diplomatic processes (van Ham 2010: 21).

Closely related to the developments outlined above is the redefinition of the assumed boundaries separating domestic and international policy arenas. First, the domestic and international policy environments are

more closely linked in terms of the sources of policy inputs as a result of globalization and regionalization. Additionally, changing agendas and the importance of social power enhance the role of civil society organisations operating across national boundaries, frequently forming transnational coalitions and placing added demands on national governments (Higgott et al. 2000; Reinalda 2011). Simultaneously, the internationalization of the domestic policy environment provides authorities with resources for action at the collective as opposed to national level.

A third dimension of the domestic–international relationship focuses on arenas of activity. The point here, following from what has already been said, is that the political arenas in which policy objectives are pursued are increasingly porous in the sense that both governmental and non-governmental actors find themselves operating in subnational, national and international environments simultaneously. Furthermore, groups and even individuals are now able to operate at all three levels, partly as a consequence of the revolution in communications technology (de Jong et al. 2005).

The impact of the shifting boundaries between domestic and international policy arenas is to create a continuum of policy types which blend together differing elements of domestic and international influences, variously located in subnational, national and international arenas. Some areas of policy, especially those relating to military security, will tend towards situations in which policy-making is the preserve of a restricted cast of players and the inputs from the domestic environment are more controlled. On the other hand, the NISA will be marked by a plurality of influences and a high degree of domestication, often projected across national boundaries through linkages between groups in different national settings.

The evolving foreign policy environment also challenges boundaries imposed on the activities of and relationships between states and non-state actors. The debate between

competing perspectives on international relations is clearly reflected in discussions of foreign policy and diplomacy. State-oriented perspectives have focused on the processes attaching to communication and information-sharing between sovereign states, whilst globalist approaches emphasise the diminished significance of the state and the enhanced role of non-governmental actors. Latterly, however, there has been a move towards more subtle, less zero-sum inclined interpretations of relationships between state and non-state actors (Coward 2006; Bisley 2007). Rather than emphasising the separateness of the two, the emphasis has moved towards analysing the patterns of interaction between them and the complex relationship roles that they perform in different policy environments (Hocking et al. 2012).

The redefinition of these various forms of boundary has had a major impact on the ways in which foreign policy is conceived, going far beyond the heightened relative importance of economic as contrasted to military security issues. Their significance is reflected in debates regarding the appropriate perspectives to employ in analysing the conduct of foreign policy. The application of insights from international political economy and foreign economic policy has reinforced this debate, focusing, for example, on the nature of the state and the motivations – economically rather than security related – which explain the ways in which actors behave both domestically and internationally (Lee and Hudson 2004).

The resultant images of foreign policy that these trends are producing are ones that weaken clearly defined and unitary depictions of foreign policy. Rather, as Williams has argued in the context of UK foreign policy, we are confronted with a diversity of foreign policies situated in interlinked and overlapping arenas and involving an extensive range of participants from the public and private spheres (Williams 2004). Additionally, these multiple foreign policies are located within issue complexes reflecting cross-cutting

agendas and participation by diverse actors. This fluid and multilayered policy milieu weakens traditional assumptions regarding what foreign policy is, who is involved in it and where it is located (Christensen and Petersen 2004) (see also Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 8 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Traditional images of foreign policy have undergone profound change in terms of agendas and the arenas in which it is conducted. Given the linkages between them, these changes in the constitution of foreign policy have significant implications for diplomacy.
- Alongside agenda change, there have been key shifts in the modalities of power – the rise of social power – which impact on the character and role of diplomacy.
- Additionally, redefinition of domestic–international policy boundaries and closer linkages between governmental and non-governmental actors has expanded the locations in which diplomacy has to operate.
- Consequently, unitary images of foreign policy are weakened as the emergence of ‘issue complexes’ lead states (and non-states) to have a diversity of foreign policies.

### **THE DIFFUSION AND REDEFINITION OF DIPLOMATIC PROCESS**

Each of the developments concerning the constitution of foreign policy is reflected in diplomacy – conventionally regarded as the means through which foreign policies are effected. Indeed, the policy formulation–implementation distinction, always problematic in any policy process, has become increasingly so given the developments set out above (Brighi and Hill 2008). As the content and the locations of foreign policy have become more extensive and the participants more diverse, so the feedback processes have become more densely configured. If the essence of diplomacy lies in its character as

'institutionalised communication' (Jönsson and Hall 2005; Sharp 2009; Pigman 2010; Bjola and Kornprobst 2013) then the patterns that define it have become hugely more complex. This is reflected in the ways in which our definitions of what diplomacy is and how it is deployed are responding. Here, traditional distinctions regarding diplomatic processes appear increasingly outdated and misleading. The familiar arguments about the replacement of bilateral with multilateral processes fail to recognise the significance of the interactions between them, changes in their purpose and the extended range of actors involved in them.

Similarly, 'summit' diplomacy is still differentiated from other forms despite the fact that it has become an increasingly common feature of diplomacy in which diverse actors, state and non-state, claim a place in the shaping of diplomatic spaces such as those offered by the G20 (Feinberg 2013; Martin 2013). At the national level, the shifting parameters of foreign policy are reflected in the reconstitution of established forms of diplomacy in the face of new environments. The growing importance attached to consular work is one example (Okano-Heijmans 2011). On the one hand, this has a long history predating the extensive diplomatic structures associated with state building. But, on the other hand, what might be termed the 'new consularisation' of diplomacy reflects the pressures confronting governments from a potent mix of greater mobility of publics and expectations from these publics regarding the services governments should provide, the multiplicity of human and natural disasters, and the problem of defining the nature of commercial diplomacy in an era of complex economic interdependence.

Another set of challenges for diplomacy derives from the fact that significant elements of the contemporary foreign policy agenda concerns issues whose very nature – even existence – is contested even before negotiation can be brought to bear on them. Not infrequently, rather than diplomacy involving

interactions between actors with clear and defined interests, gradually moving towards a point of convergence between those interests, it is more akin to a management process (Winham 1977). Here, actors are locked together in the management of problems marked by their technical nature, complexity, and uncertainty in terms of content and outcome, together with the bureaucratization of the processes through which negotiations proceed.

A consequence is that the diplomatic environment becomes one in which a key test of success for actors, both governmental and non-governmental, in achieving their objectives is their capacity to develop strategic and tactical relationships to meet specific needs. Thus, for example, a test of diplomatic resilience is the ability to deploy 'co-optive power' through links with a diverse range of non-state entities (Nye 1990). Establishing and managing 'coalitions of the willing' – and sometimes unwilling – is regarded as a manifestation of a broader trend in diplomacy – the challenging of hierarchical structures by network forms and processes (Castells 1996; Metzl 2001; Slaughter 2004). Thus, instead of thinking of international policy as an area dominated by governments – and a relatively small group of players within government – we are presented with policy networks comprising a diversity of actors, often dependent on the nature of a specific issue, and constructed to serve particular objectives. Moreover, these networks embrace a diversity of actors located in various political arenas not determined by national boundaries.

One way in which these developments are interpreted is the replacement of hierarchical diplomatic forms and processes associated with the state by network forms and processes better attuned to the nature of modern societies and current global policy agendas (Hocking 2004; Heine 2008; Kelley 2010). Networks are seen as inclusive, flexible and capable of tapping essential knowledge resources that are no longer the monopoly of the state and its agencies.



All levels of diplomacy reflect the growing importance of global public policy networks. At the multilateral level, initiatives such as the Global Compact redefining the relationship between the UN, business and civil society are matched at the national level by the emphasis placed by foreign ministries on the importance of 'stakeholder' relationships in the management of foreign policy. Whilst a common claim is that networks are replacing older hierarchical organisational forms in the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy, reinforced by the growth of the Internet and social media, in fact the two continue to operate in symbiosis with one another. Diplomatic networks themselves display hierarchical characteristics and are multidimensional phenomena assuming a variety of forms determined by the nature of a specific diplomatic domain. Thus some are more heavily intergovernmental, possessing higher levels of traditional hierarchical or 'club-like' characteristics, whilst private actors dominate others (Coleman and Perl 1999). In short, networks are not an alternative to hierarchy but different aspects of organisational design. Contemporary diplomacy requires blends of hierarchical and network forms to meet the challenges of a daunting international agenda.

The centrality afforded to public diplomacy within the diplomatic landscape, as demonstrated in other chapters in this Handbook (see Chapters 35, 42, 43, 44 and 50), is another consequence of the changing agenda and power configurations underpinning foreign policy. The logic of social power directs key diplomatic strategies towards influencing varying publics, both internationally and domestically. At both levels, public diplomacy strategies reflect the hierarchy–network debate. Thus, influencing international publics in the pursuit of foreign policy goals demands supplementing traditional strategies, in which communication is a predominantly top-down process between senders and receptors of messages, with interactive ones, where the goal is to influence

policy agendas by developing dialogues with relevant stakeholders. Domestically, older notions of policy ratification through formalised processes are reconfigured as international negotiation is paralleled by multilevel consultative processes involving key constituencies and on which successful negotiation outcomes are increasingly dependent (Evans et al. 1993; Webber and Smith 2002). The mainstreaming of public diplomacy as an integrated component of the diplomatic environment and no longer a peripheral activity restricted to specialist units is one of the significant consequences of the changing environment in which foreign policy is framed and conducted (Gregory 2008).

### **Key Points**

- Foreign policy change has had a differential impact on diplomatic process, challenging the conventional distinctions maintained in terminologies employed. Increasingly, complex problems lead to diplomatic negotiation assuming the characteristics of a management process.
- A key feature of this development has been an increasing emphasis on the construction and maintenance of coalitions through networks embracing both governmental and non-governmental actors.
- Public diplomacy has become increasingly significant and has both international and domestic dimensions.

### **STRUCTURES OF DIPLOMACY**

The structures of diplomacy in any period reflect the character of international policy and the international and domestic environments in which they are located. As we have seen, the evolution of foreign policy in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries has emphasised the need for modes of collaboration frequently manifested in networks embracing an expanding cast of players, both governmental and non-governmental.



Unsurprisingly, this presents challenges to diplomatic structures as they grapple with the task of marrying established principles, institutional forms and modes of behaviour with changing demands (Hocking 2006). The resultant pressures can be seen in all forms of diplomacy, from the national to the various forms of multilateralism. In the case of the latter, the need to accommodate growing claims for involvement from civil society combined with the realities of rapid changes in communications technology has resulted in what has been variously termed 'complex' (O'Brien et al. 2000; Badie 2012), 'Web 2.0' (Van Langenhove 2010) or, more colloquially, 'messy' multilateralism (Haass 2010). Each of these relates changing demands on international organisations with functional adaptation and enhanced participation underscored by the development of what is loosely termed 'digital diplomacy' (Seib 2012; Copeland 2013).

Similar pressures are to be found at the national level. Here, the picture is configured by the impact of systemic change on the role and functions of the state and its agencies. Clark (2014) has identified the implications of globalisation on what he terms the 'globalised state', whilst Jayasuriya analyses the impact of the rise of the 'new regulatory state' (Jayasuriya 2004). Both draw attention to the internal consequences of globalisation as it changes the architecture of the state and, in the case of Jayasuriya, the resultant fragmentation of diplomatic functions. It has always been the case that national diplomacy is a projection of complex relationships between a range of bureaucratic and political actors, including diplomats serving at overseas posts. These internal dimensions of globalisation, including the diffusion of foreign policy management through the 'diplomatisation' of line ministries alongside the concentration of power and functionality at the centre of government, has resulted in growing uncertainty as to the role of the MFA (ministry of foreign affairs). Rather than claiming pre-eminence for one government department in managing complex foreign

policy agendas, it is more useful to view the structures of national diplomacy as constituting a 'national diplomatic system' (NDS) comprising a diverse and fluid range of actors and agencies amongst which the MFA plays a significant but not necessarily the dominant role (Hocking 2012).

Consequently, the delineation of the NDS and the relationship between its component elements needs to be continually re-examined. For example, the increasingly critical link between diplomacy and development poses questions of organizational form and the degree to which development and foreign policy need to be linked. Whilst most governments integrate their aid programs and their foreign ministries, in the US and the United Kingdom (since the late 1990s), the trend has been to separate them. Thus the US Agency for International Development (USAID) is not fully integrated into the State Department, and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) is separate from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Reinforcing the link between diplomacy and development through the strengthening of what Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has termed 'civilian power' was a central theme of the State Department's first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (Clinton 2010).

Bureaucratic/political conflicts in foreign policy management are part of the profile of the contemporary NDS. Here two broad trends are evident: fragmentation and concentration. Fragmentation indicates the diversification of the NDS as sectoral ministries found their responsibilities acquiring enhanced international dimensions. Alongside this situation, in many settings subnational authorities practice what has come to be termed 'paradiplomacy', whilst a broader 'societisation' of diplomacy occurs as civil society gains an ever-greater presence in diplomatic processes. Concentration denotes the enhancement of the foreign policy capacity of central agencies, particularly prime ministerial and presidential offices.

Whilst this is partly a reflection of the growing significance of heads of state and government in diplomacy, it is also recognition of the potential costs of lack of coordination in the management of foreign policy and the desire to minimize its costs by centralizing policy-making functions.

Each of these developments is posing challenges for the constitution and role definition of MFAs and their diplomatic services (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2011). As we have seen, many of the features of twenty-first-century diplomacy challenge traditional features of state-based diplomacy. The emphasis on partnership, inclusiveness and transparency challenges the closed, guild-like characteristics of traditional diplomacy and associated definitions of the role of the professional diplomat (Copeland 2009). Rather than that of a gatekeeper, policing the boundaries between domestic and international policy environments, an alternative role image more suited to the contemporary environment is that of the 'boundary-spanner'. This recognizes that boundaries between organizations and policy arenas remain significant but are fluid and continually reconstituting themselves, thereby becoming sites of intense activity which demand a special role for those capable of acting as linkage points. In such an environment, professional diplomats can assume significant roles as mediators or brokers, facilitators and entrepreneurs (Hocking and Spence 2005). Doing so suggests the growing importance of the capacity to develop strategic visions of global agendas, understanding growing conflicts over norms and rules, and the ability to establish and manage complex networks.

In terms of diplomatic representation, determining the requirements of an effective diplomatic network involves the juxtaposition of three factors: First, what purposes is the network intended to serve? Second, which policy nodes do countries need access to in performing these functions? Third, what modes of presence best serve the needs of function, access and participation? Effective

diplomacy requires the alignment of the three factors and for each NDS to establish a 'representational matrix' based on this framework. Increasingly, the form that diplomatic presence assumes is being re-evaluated, as small, flexible and quickly deployable posts are often better attuned to contemporary needs than the traditional embassy (see also Chapters 7, 12, 13 and 21 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Change in diplomatic processes is reflected in all layers of diplomatic institutions, global, regional and national.
- Whilst the traditional focus of attention at the national level has been the ministry of foreign affairs (MFA), each government has configured an evolving 'national diplomatic system' for the management of foreign policy, in which the MFA is a subsystem.
- The changing foreign policy environment challenges many key assumptions about how diplomacy should be conducted, the roles performed by professional diplomats and the nature of diplomatic representation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The environments which foreign policy and diplomacy cohabit in the early twenty-first century are marked at one level by processes of deforeignisation of the international and foreignisation of the domestic policy milieus. A redefinition of boundaries separating the two combines with a bewildering network of linkages between policy arenas through which actors relate to one another in a variety of ways. Policy-makers are required to operate in an environment spanning subnational, national and international arenas, where the achievement of goals at one level of political activity demands an ability to operate in the others. Moreover, the challenges associated with the configuration of contemporary foreign policy and diplomacy redefines the

relationships between governmental and non-governmental actors and the complex roles that they perform in changing policy environments. Strategies for accomplishing foreign policy often require, therefore, that negotiators conduct diplomacy in several environments simultaneously, weaving together threads from each into a single tapestry. In this sense, what was regarded as a phenomenon of international politics – diplomacy – has assumed a notably domestic dimension. At the most extreme, it could be argued that the growth of redistributive issues in international politics has rendered both the content and the processes of ‘foreign’ policy indistinguishable from those of ‘domestic’ policy. It is important to note, however, that these developments do not apply to all interactions or affect all actors in equal measure. There are issues, particularly those on the military–security agenda, which accord far more to the traditional intergovernmental patterns of international relations than to multilayered policy configurations. To return to the point of departure, just as the foreign policy milieu comprises cross-cutting elements of pre-modern, modern and post-modern forms, so do the evolving forms of diplomacy associated with it.

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# Diplomacy, Communication and Signaling

Christer Jönsson

Communication is one of the logically necessary conditions for the existence of international relations. Without communication, there is no diplomacy. In fact, diplomacy is often defined in terms of communication. For instance, diplomacy has been understood as ‘a regulated process of communication’ (Constantinou, 1996: 25), ‘the communication system of the international society’ (James, 1980: 942), or ‘communication among internationally recognized representatives of internationally recognized entities’ (Bjola and Kornprobst, 2013: 201).

Communication is to diplomacy as blood is to the human body. Whenever communication ceases, the body of international politics, the process of diplomacy, is dead, and the result is violent conflict or atrophy. (Tran, 1987: 8)

Frequently, diplomacy is associated with a specific subclass of social communication: negotiation. Thus, diplomacy has been characterized as ‘negotiations between political entities which acknowledge each other’s

independence’ (Watson, 1982: 33) or ‘the conduct of international relations by negotiation’ (Berridge, 1995: 1). Students of negotiation have similarly pointed out that ‘without communication there is no negotiation’ (Fisher and Ury, 1983: xi, 33) and that ‘in essence, international negotiation is communication’ (Stein, 1988: 222).

To communicate, whether in a negotiation setting or not, diplomats send signals intended to convey messages to their counterparts. As signals have no inherent meaning or credibility, the message actually conveyed is a matter of decoding and interpretation by the receivers. Diplomatic signaling is verbal as well as nonverbal. All social communication involves the transmission of messages to which certain meanings are attached, and ‘the pristine form of diplomacy is the transmitting of messages between one independent political community and another’ (Bull, 1977: 164). As in all social communication, these messages can be conveyed either by words or gestures. Just as the verbal components in a



normal person-to-person conversation carry only part of the social message, so nonverbal messages and 'body language' constitute important aspects of diplomatic communication. Diplomatic signaling, in short, includes both what diplomatic agents say and what they do.

This is evident from the very first records of diplomatic communication. The Amarna Letters, a remarkable cache of diplomatic exchanges from the fourteenth century BC between the Egyptian court and other kings of the Ancient Near East, include many examples of both verbal and nonverbal messages to which certain meanings were attached. For instance, the address of the clay tablets in cuneiform script followed a pattern where the sender would name himself first only if he was superior to or the equal of the addressee. Deviations were noted and given sinister interpretations. The exchange of gifts stands out as a prominent form of 'body language' in early diplomacy. Messengers in the Ancient Near East not only carried oral and written communications between royal courts but also distributed presents among the rulers, the varying values of which were perceived as symbols of status and relations (see Jönsson, 2000).

The meanings of verbal and nonverbal signaling may not be immediately obvious to the uninitiated observer, but require interpretation or decoding. Meaning does not reside in the message itself but is produced in interactive processes between senders and receivers. Diplomatic expertise includes encoding messages at the sending end and decoding signaling at the receiving end. Diplomats are, as it were, 'intuitive semioticians', conscious producers and interpreters of signs (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 72; see also Chapter 1 in this Handbook).

Diplomatic communication includes not only words as well as actions, but also silence and inactivity. In fact, diplomatic actors know well that whatever they say or don't say and whatever they do or don't do will be scrutinized and interpreted by others in the diplomatic community. Thus, words and silence as well as action and inactivity assume message

value. By way of analogy, diplomats are in the same predicament as students at one psychoanalytically oriented school, who were considered hostile if they came to class late, anxious if they came early, and compulsive if they came at the appointed time (Simons, 1976: 42). There is simply no escape from producing message value.

At the receiving end, the tendency to look for message value in most verbal and non-verbal behavior and non-behavior seems to rest on an implicit assumption of intentionality (cf. Cohen, 1987: 20). Yet signaling does not necessarily imply intentionality. Even unconscious, unintended behavior and non-behavior may convey messages in a diplomatic setting. Hence we may refer to signaling whenever one actor displays behavior that is perceived and interpreted by another, whether or not it is spoken or intended or even within the actor's conscious awareness.

This chapter will, first, take a closer look at verbal and nonverbal communication, respectively. It will then address the question of whether clear or ambiguous messages – or both – are characteristic of diplomatic signaling. Another section will discuss the extent to which, and in what ways, developments in communication technology affect diplomatic communication. Finally, different approaches to the study of diplomatic communication will be identified and summarized.

## **VERBAL COMMUNICATION: A COMMON DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE?**

We commonly associate diplomacy with linguistic skills. One may speak of a 'semantic obsession' of diplomats resting on the realization that 'speech is an incisive form of action' (Eban, 1983: 393). Ancient Greece can be seen as the forerunner of the verbal skills and eloquence associated with modern diplomacy. Diplomatic communication among the Greek city-states depended on direct and oral exchange and face-to-face

contacts between representatives. Moreover, communication was open and public, relying on oratorical skills. Celebrated orators, such as Pericles and Demosthenes, were frequently entrusted with diplomatic missions.

Diplomacy involves communication between political units that are often separated by different languages. To find a common diplomatic language has thus been a major consideration throughout the ages. The word ‘communication’, we may recall, derives from the Latin verb *communicare*, which means ‘to make shared or common’. The problem of achieving shared meanings is central to diplomatic communication. The quest for shared meanings has involved finding a common language both in the purely linguistic sense and, more importantly, in a broader sociological sense.

As the use of different languages has been a source of misunderstanding and discord since the dawn of history, there have always been efforts to develop a *lingua franca* of diplomacy. Sumerian, the first known linguistic medium of culture and civilization in the Tigris–Euphrates valley, was the ‘earliest language of diplomatic intercourse and expression’ (Ostrower, 1965: 164). From the third millennium BC until the time of Alexander the Great, Akkadian became the recognized diplomatic language. Akkadian was a rather peripheral Semitic language but had certain advantages over Egyptian hieroglyphs by using a more versatile cuneiform script that was suitable for the clay tablets on which diplomatic messages were written (Ostrower, 1965: 132–3). When Akkadian ceased to exist as a living language, it was superseded by Aramaic, which had adopted alphabetical script, as the leading diplomatic language (Ostrower, 1965: 189–94).

Greek, and later Latin, became common diplomatic languages in the wake of expanding empires. When command of Latin began to be rare among European diplomats by the early seventeenth century, conversations through interpreters became normal practice (Mattingly, 1955: 236). No other

common language of diplomacy arose until the eighteenth century, when French became the language of the European nobility and, by implication, the diplomatic language *par préférence*. The multilateral conferences of the twentieth century ‘offered the English language the first real opportunity to oppose French linguistic supremacy’ (Ostrower, 1965: 356). While English has increasingly become the *lingua franca* of diplomatic communication, the vocabulary remains replete with French expressions (*demarche*, *note verbale*, *chargé d’affaires*, *doyen*, *rapprochement*, etc.).

Multilateral diplomacy represents a linguistic challenge but has also generated creative solutions. For instance, a constructive distinction between working languages and official languages was introduced at the 1945 San Francisco Conference. Occasionally, linguistic variety can be an asset rather than a liability. For instance, at the G20 meeting in St Petersburg in September 2013, which was held at a time of growing US–Russian tensions over the Snowden affair and Syria, the Russian hosts avoided seating Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin next to each other by not using the host country language, as is customary, but switching to English when placing the state delegates in alphabetical order. That way five leaders of other countries were seated between the Russian Federation and the United States. Similarly, at the NATO summit in Prague in November, 2002, the controversial Ukrainian leader Leonid Kuchma, who was suspected of providing Iraq with radar equipment, appeared uninvited and would sit next to George W. Bush and Tony Blair if placed in alphabetical order following the English spelling of participating countries. The embarrassing situation was solved by changing to French, whereby USA became *Etats Unis* and United Kingdom *Royaume Uni*.

Languages may be one source of communication problems in diplomacy, and may occasionally contribute to their solutions. Yet far more important is the development of a common language in terms of shared symbols and references and intersubjective structures

of meaning and interpretation of words and actions. The institutionalization and professionalization of diplomacy in the past few centuries has entailed the development of a distinct diplomatic subculture with mutually understood phrases and expressions. The ritualized diplomatic language is characterized by courtesy, non-redundancy and constructive ambiguity. The emphasis on courtesy has given rise to ironic definitions of diplomacy as ‘the art of saying pleasant things to people you hate’. Non-redundancy implies that ‘a diplomatic communication should say neither too much nor too little because every word, nuance of omission will be meticulously studied for any shade of meaning’ (Cohen, 1981: 32). Constructive ambiguity avoids premature closure of options. Circumlocution, such as understatements and loaded omissions, permits controversial things to be said in a way understood in the diplomatic community but without needless provocation (cf. Cohen, 1981: 32–4).

Diplomats, in short, have adopted a series of conventional expressions and idioms that, however amiable they may seem, convey a message that their counterparts clearly understand. For example, a verbal or written communication to the effect that the diplomat’s government ‘cannot remain indifferent to’ an international issue, is understood to signal intervention; and the government that expresses ‘grave concern’ over a matter is expected to adopt a strong position (Nicolson, 1977: 123). If a diplomat says ‘my government feels obliged to express reservations with regard to ...’, it means that ‘my government will not allow ...’ (cf. Ishmael, 2013). In a multilateral conference setting, a phrase like ‘While I have deep respect for the distinguished delegate of ..., who has stated his view with intelligence and conviction, I must point out that ...’ can be interpreted as ‘I do not agree with the delegate of ...’; and ‘I may have misunderstood the distinguished representative of ...’ translates into ‘The representative of ... has been talking nonsense’ (Kaufmann, 1996: 162).

Silence may send messages as well. For instance, Finland’s policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union during the Cold War was often characterized as ‘eloquent silence’ – careful avoidance of signaling that might provoke its powerful neighbor. One instance of consequential and carefully designed silence was the US decision during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 to ignore and refrain from replying to the second, less conciliatory of two consecutive letters from Khrushchev to Kennedy. Whereas the first letter was perceived to be written by Khrushchev personally, the second letter was more formal and assumedly drafted by the Foreign Office. By responding only to the first one, the United States strengthened Khrushchev’s hand in the apparent internal struggle in the Kremlin and contributed to a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

In sum, a carefully deliberated diplomatic language has evolved, which allows communication across a multitude of national cultures with a minimum of misunderstanding. The other side of the coin is that the meanings of diplomatic exchanges are not immediately obvious to outsiders (see also Chapters 17, 20, 36 and 40 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- There has always been a tendency to develop a *lingua franca* of diplomacy.
- Linguistic plurality can be exploited for signaling purposes.
- The professional diplomatic language is characterized by courtesy, non-redundancy and constructive ambiguity.
- Both words and silences send messages in diplomatic communication.

### NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION: DIPLOMATIC BODY LANGUAGE

Nonverbal signals have the advantage of capturing the attention of a wider audience and of allowing greater flexibility and deniability

than verbal messages (Cohen, 1987: 35–40). Diplomatic body language encompasses a wide variety of behavior, ranging from personal gestures to the manipulation of military forces.

Among personal gestures, a handshake sends signals of friendly interstate relations. A classical example is John Foster Dulles's refusal to shake hands with Zhou Enlai at the 1954 Geneva Conference, which was read by the Chinese as a signal of American rejection and harmed US–Chinese relations for years to come. Interestingly, when Henry Kissinger met Zhou Enlai seventeen years later in the process of opening US–Chinese diplomatic relations, Zhou inquired whether Kissinger was one of those Americans who refused to shake hands with Chinese leaders (Kissinger, 1994: 719). At the Oslo accord ceremony on the White House lawn in 1993, Yitzhak Rabin knew he had no choice to avoid commitment when Yasir Arafat stretched out his hand before the TV cameras broadcasting live to a world audience. Had he chosen not to accept the outstretched hand, it would have sent strong signals of lingering hostility. By accepting it, he made an equally strong commitment to friendly relations. President Obama's handshake with Cuban leader Raúl Castro at Nelson Mandela's funeral in December 2013 was commonly interpreted as a signal heralding improved US–Cuban relations.

At the intermediate range, the venue and format of – as well as attendance at – international meetings may send signals. The implied prestige conferred upon the host has made the selection of venues problematic throughout history. For instance, the fifteenth-century meeting between Edward IV of England and Louis XI of France was held on a bridge (Goldstein, 1998: 50). In the 1930s Neville Chamberlain conceded to Mussolini's insistence that negotiations between Britain and Italy be held in Rome, with Anthony Eden and the Foreign Office disagreeing on the grounds that this 'would be regarded as another surrender to the dictators' (Cohen, 1981: 39–40).

The choice of delegates to meetings also sends signals. Generally, a lower level of representation communicates coolness or disapproval, a higher level respect or esteem (Cohen, 1987: 156). At the Moscow talks leading to the Partial Nuclear Test Ban in 1963, the selection of Averell Harriman to lead the US negotiating team sent positive signals, as Harriman was well known to the Soviets and had established a relation with Khrushchev. In the words of one Soviet diplomat at the Washington embassy, 'as soon as I heard that Harriman was going, I knew that you were serious' (Seaborg, 1981: 252). Many saw President Obama's attendance at the climate talks in Copenhagen in 2009 as a sign of policy change. Conversely, envoys of low rank may signal lack of respect. In one of the Amarna Letters, the Egyptian Pharaoh complains to the Babylonian king who, instead of sending 'dignitaries', had dispatched a delegation of 'nobodies', one of whom was an 'assherder' (Jönsson, 2000: 203). His reaction foreshadowed similar concerns at later international gatherings.

The travel schedule of statesmen can also be part of nonverbal signaling. When China's new president Xi Jinping made his first visit to the Korean peninsula in July 2014, he went to Seoul rather than Pyongyang. In the diplomatic community, this was interpreted as discontent with China's North Korean ally. That same month Finland's new prime minister Alexander Stubb chose Estonia, a neighbor with NATO membership, as the destination of his first trip abroad rather than Sweden, as is customary. As Stubb had been known to favor Finnish NATO membership, this was perceived to have symbolic significance. Both these examples illustrate that it was both what was done and what was not done that created message value.

Protocol, the body of customs governing the procedure and choreography of diplomatic intercourse, is a convenient medium for non-verbal signaling. All deviations from ritualized forms and expressions send subtle signals. For example, the rank of the welcoming or farewell

delegation for a visiting dignitary and the quality of state visit arrangements can be used to signal esteem or lack of it (see Cohen, 1981: 38). When Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made his surprise visit to Israel in November 1977, the first Arab leader ever to visit the Jewish state, he was greeted at Ben Gurion airport by Israel's Prime Minister Menachim Begin and Israeli President Ephraim Katzir and a gun salute was fired in his honor. In addition to a long meeting with Begin, Sadat was allowed to address the Israeli parliament, the Knesset. When US President George Bush announced that he would attend the funeral of Japan's emperor Hirohito in 1989, this caused a seating problem. According to protocol, the heads of state were to be accorded preference by the date they assumed their positions, and Bush had only just taken office. This problem was solved by treating the funeral as a celebration of Hirohito's life rather than a state event. Thus, it was announced that heads of state would be treated in the order of countries Hirohito had visited, which gave the US president a seat at the center of the front row of attending heads of state (Goldstein, 1998: 53).

Conversely, when the Clinton administration tried to link renewal of China's most-favored-nation status to concessions on human rights in 1994, Secretary of State Warren Christopher received an eloquently cool treatment on his visit to China: reception at the airport by a deputy foreign minister, no pomp, no public words of welcome, no banquet, and cancellation of the planned news conference (Cohen, 1997: 157). Similarly, when Putin came to the annual EU–Russian meeting in Brussels in January 2014, the usual summit format starting with a welcoming dinner and ending with a press conference was abandoned in favor of a closed two-hour meeting with a small circle of participants. This signaled EU concern about Russia's role in the burgeoning crisis in the Ukraine.

At the 'louder' end of the scale, nonverbal signaling involves the exploitation of military hardware. In the words of Thomas Schelling

(1966: 2): 'The power to hurt is bargaining power. To exploit it is diplomacy – vicious diplomacy, but diplomacy'. The term *coercive diplomacy* is sometimes used to refer to threats or the limited use of force as a signaling or bargaining instrument (George et al., 1971; George, 1991). The central task of such signaling is 'to create in the opponent the expectation of costs of sufficient magnitude to erode his motivation to continue what he is doing' (George, 1991: 11). President Kennedy's choice of a naval blockade to signal determination without risking war in the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis is a prominent example of coercive diplomacy (see, e.g., George et al., 1971: 98–100). In the Yom Kippur War of 1973 the US at one point ordered a worldwide military alert including its nuclear forces, and a Soviet freighter, transiting the Bosphorus en route to Alexandria, gave off neutron emissions, indicating the possible presence of nuclear weapons on board. On both sides these moves were interpreted as signals, warning against unilateral intervention, and did not cause undue alarm (cf. Jönsson, 1984: 186, 188, 190).

Naval forces have proven particularly useful signaling instruments. Capable of conspicuous presence and withdrawal, they offer readily perceived and understood signaling opportunities (Cable, 1981: 67). The Six-Day War of 1967 was the first time Soviet and US warships operated in close proximity to each other during a major international crisis. By circumscribing their preparedness moves in various ways – staying well clear of the battle zone, avoiding reinforcement of amphibious and other offensive forces, and not interrupting or shortening scheduled port calls – Washington and Moscow signaled their intentions to avoid military involvement (cf. Jönsson, 1984: 166–7).

Often, nonverbal signals are used when explicit verbal signals are politically inconceivable. One example is taken from the buildup to the 1973 Yom Kippur War in the Middle East. Three days before the war started, Soviet dependents and civilian personnel were hurriedly evacuated from Syria



and Egypt. As the evacuation was made in a deliberately conspicuous manner, it could be interpreted as a tacit warning to Washington of the impending attack and a signal that the Soviet Union was not involved in the final decision to go to war. At the same time, it could serve as a reminder to Egypt and Syria not to expect direct Soviet intervention. The point is that Moscow could not have given the United States an explicit warning without openly acknowledging its complicity in the Arab military preparations and betraying its clients (see Jönsson, 1984: 178–9).

In the same way that silence may send signals, so non-action can have message value. For instance, the absence of signaling from Moscow – no military mobilization and no actions in support of the incumbent regimes – was of vital importance for the developments in Eastern Europe during 1989 (see also Chapters 38 and 53 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Diplomatic body language ranges from personal gestures, via meeting and travel logistics, to the manipulation of military forces.
- Protocol provides a convenient medium for non-verbal signaling.
- Coercive diplomacy involves the threat or limited use of force as a signaling instrument.
- Both actions and non-actions send messages in diplomatic communication.

### CLARITY VS AMBIGUITY

It has been said that signaling is as essential to diplomacy as to a busy airport, with the crucial difference that there is much more scope for ambiguity in diplomatic signaling. Whereas ambiguous communication between pilots and traffic controllers may be a prelude to disaster, ambiguity is considered constructive and creative in diplomatic signaling (Bell, 1971: 74). This needs to be qualified. There may be several incentives to send ambiguous

signals, such as retaining flexibility and deniability or needing to take multiple audiences into account. At the same time, clarity and precision are often called for. Diplomats have been characterized as ‘specialists in precise and accurate communication’ (Bull, 1977: 179). In short, the tension between the need for clarity and the incentives for ambiguity impels diplomats to spend much time and effort on the formulation and interpretation of signals.

‘Constructive ambiguity’ is a term that is often associated with Henry Kissinger. Most often it is used to denote the deliberate use of vague language in an agreement to allow opposing parties to interpret it in different ways. But it may also refer to signaling that leaves future options open. For example, such expressions as ‘use our best endeavors’ or ‘take all possible measures’ leave considerable leeway for discretion (Cohen, 1981: 33). A subtle example of signaling characterized by constructive ambiguity dates back to US–Chinese parleys preparing President Nixon’s momentous visit to China. On one of his trips to Beijing, Henry Kissinger was taken for an ostentatious public appearance at the Summer Palace in plain view of hundreds of spectators. Among them was a North Vietnamese journalist taking photographs, as his host, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, later told Kissinger apologetically. Zhou could thus signal to North Vietnam – and ensure that Washington grasped – that China would not permit North Vietnam’s problems to stand in the way of a *rapprochement* with the United States (Cohen, 1997: 152). In this example, the Chinese were able to exploit nonverbal signaling to send messages to multiple audiences while retaining deniability.

Another example of carefully crafted ambiguity concerns the US reaction to the Soviet military buildup along the Chinese border in September 1969. President Nixon authorized a statement to the effect that the US did ‘not seek to exploit for our own advantage’ the Sino-Soviet conflict but was ‘deeply concerned’ with an escalation into war. Denying



any intention to exploit the conflict signaled that the US had the capacity to do so and that the conflicting parties should do nothing to jeopardize US neutrality. The expression of 'deep concern' conveyed that the US might assist in some unspecified way the victim of aggression. The statement was delivered by Undersecretary of State Elliot Richardson, who was high enough in the hierarchy to leave no doubt that he was speaking on behalf of the president while at the same time not so conspicuous as to challenge the Soviet Union head on (Kissinger, 1994: 723–4).

Ambiguity may, however, in some cases be destructive rather than constructive. The prelude to the Suez War of 1956 offers a classic example of counterproductive ambiguous signaling. Divergent expectations colored the main actors' interpretation of each other's signaling. The firm belief of British Prime Minister Anthony Eden in US support, or at least tacit acceptance, of military action against Nasser's Egypt caused him to misread mixed and ambiguous US signals about 'the use of force if all other methods failed' and to look for green light in messages that were not intended as such. At the same time, Eden's reliance on the Munich analogy alerted him to behavior on Nasser's part that reminded him of the dictators of the 1930s while blinding him to other aspects of Nasser's conduct, whereas US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's preoccupation with the Soviet Union predisposed him to perceive Nasser's Egypt as a pawn in a larger game (see Jönsson, 1991).

US signaling to Baghdad in the period before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 is another example of ill-fated ambiguity. A proposal for economic sanctions in response to revelations of Iraq's illicit acquisition of nuclear weapons parts was voted down by the US Congress six days before the invasion. Around the same time, US Ambassador April Glaspie told Saddam Hussein that the US had no opinion on inter-Arab conflicts, which could have given him the impression that the United States would not intervene if he attacked Kuwait. In addition, Assistant

Secretary of State John Kelly stated in a congressional hearing that the US had no formal obligation to defend Kuwait in the event of an invasion.

Nonverbal signals tend to be more ambiguous than verbal ones. Words, like gestures, require interpretation; yet there is more latitude for misunderstanding in nonverbal signaling. One reason is that different cultures ascribe different meanings to nonverbal signals.

A gesture of approval in the United States may be taken for a very rude sign in Egypt. A smile in Japan may mark embarrassment rather than indicate enjoyment. Even when the act or expression itself – the frown, the gift – is common, rules of legitimate display may differ. What is an appropriate moment for tears in Egypt is one for self-restraint in the United States. An act of hospitality in Mexico City may be seen as a bribe in Washington. (Cohen, 1997: 154)

At the interpersonal level, 'proxemics' – the signaling problems arising from the differences between cultures concerning physical proximity and normal speaking distance – may affect diplomacy. One episode in the chain of events leading up to the Suez War is illustrative. In February 1955, British Prime Minister Anthony Eden visited Cairo. One photograph shows Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser trying to hold the hand of the clearly embarrassed Eden. In another picture Eden can be seen uneasily poised at the very corner of a sofa with Nasser edging up to him and coming too close for his comfort. What constituted normal speaking distances and friendship gestures to the Egyptian, sent the wrong signals to the British nobleman. As Eden knew Arabic and was no stranger to the Middle East, Nasser took away the unfortunate impression that his reserve was an intentionally political signal of unfriendly relations (Cohen, 1987: 104).

In sum, there is considerable scope for intentional or unintentional ambiguity in diplomatic signaling, which means that shared meaning – the essence of communication – is not always achieved. Diplomats have to be

content with saying both less and more than they intend: less, because their verbal and non-verbal signaling will never immediately convey their meaning; more, because their signaling might convey messages and involve them in consequences other than those intended (see also Chapter 11 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Carefully crafted ambiguity can be constructive, but frequently ambiguity is destructive.
- Nonverbal signals tend to be more ambiguous than verbal ones.
- Diplomats tend to say both less and more than they intend.

## **THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY**

The development of available means of communication and transportation has affected diplomatic signaling in various ways. Most importantly, the speed of diplomatic communication has varied over time. In the Ancient Near East, diplomatic missions could take years to complete, and communication over great distances traveled slowly well into the nineteenth century. It was only with the technological evolutions in the past few centuries that the premises of diplomatic communication changed dramatically. The invention of the telegraph permitted fast and direct communication between governments as well as between foreign ministries and embassies. When the first telegram arrived on the desk of British Foreign Minister Lord Palmerston in the 1840s, he reputedly exclaimed: 'My God, this is the end of diplomacy!' (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 91). The rapid speed of communication was seen to endanger the careful reflection that is the hallmark of good diplomacy. New, electronic media have further compressed the time and distance separating the world's states (Roberts, 1991: 113).

The remarkable revolution in information and communication technology has deprived

diplomats of their privileged role in communicating across state borders and has facilitated direct communication among political leaders. The speed of communication often forces decision-makers to react instantaneously to international events, bypassing traditional diplomatic channels. Whereas President Kennedy in 1961 could wait eight days before commenting publicly on the erection of the Berlin Wall, President Bush was compelled to make a statement within hours of its dismantling in 1989 (McNulty, 1993: 67).

Television and other electronic media may affect diplomacy in uncontrollable ways, but may also be exploited for diplomatic signaling purposes (cf. Jönsson, 1996; Gilboa, 2001). 'Media diplomacy' has become a familiar term. The new media offer opportunities for diplomats to communicate to a global audience, while at the same time depriving them of their signaling monopoly across state borders. Signaling via the new media takes the indirect route via public opinion. Diplomatic signaling then tends to become a public relations exercise whereby various actors try to influence the public attitudes and opinions that bear on another government's foreign policy decisions (Grunig, 1993: 142).

Signaling via electronic media often implies a loss of flexibility. Broadcast signals tend to incur commitments. In November 1977 President Sadat underscored his willingness to visit Jerusalem and speak to the Knesset in an interview with American journalist Walter Cronkite. 'I'm just waiting for the proper invitation', he told the world in the satellite broadcast. Interviewing the Israeli prime minister later the same day, Cronkite asked Begin for his reaction to Sadat's statements. Begin assured that he would meet Sadat cordially and let him talk to the parliament. By making the statements on international television and not via secret cables passed through foreign diplomats, the two leaders essentially made a public commitment to the world to hold the unprecedented meeting in Jerusalem.

By highlighting the visual elements of messages, television and other media have enhanced the symbolic and metaphorical element of diplomatic signaling. The enhanced significance of nonverbal communication, beyond the conventions of traditional diplomatic language, has enhanced the difficulties of signaling to different audiences. For example, Saddam Hussein's signaling via television during the Gulf War may have been successful vis-à-vis certain Arab audiences, but it estranged Western viewers. The videotape provided by Iraq to CNN, in which Saddam, dressed in civilian clothes, visited British 'guests' (hostages) and patted the head of a reluctant five-year-old boy, acquired notoriety. To many in the West, it recalled pictures of other smiling dictators patting the heads of children and reinforced the prevalent Saddam-as-Hitler metaphor.

While facilitating information gathering, the Internet and social media present new challenges to diplomatic communication. Terms such as 'cyber diplomacy', 'digital diplomacy' and 'e-diplomacy' are gaining currency. Often they refer to efforts at reaching out to other audiences than governments and are seen as new forms of public diplomacy. Increasingly, diplomats are active in the blogosphere, becoming 'tweeting Talleyrands' (Fletcher, 2013: 43). This new form of signaling to a wider audience may be more lively and engaging than traditional diplomatic communication, but the lack of nuances and need for oversimplification entail risks. For example, the active tweeting by former Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt engendered criticism both abroad and at home for using formulations that were unnecessarily drastic.

Secrecy and confidentiality seem to be endangered by the digital revolution. The unauthorized release of some 250,000 US State Department documents by WikiLeaks in 2010 revealed the vulnerability of electronic storage of confidential diplomatic records. At the same time, it has made the exchange of confidential information more risky. In sum, the advent of new media has expanded

the repertoire of signaling instruments while adding time pressure and making the differentiation among audiences and the preservation of confidentiality more problematic. Yet the basic premises of diplomatic communication – searching for the optimal combination of verbal and nonverbal instruments, of noise and silence, and of clarity and ambiguity – remain (see also Chapters 9, 35, 43 and 44 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Historically, technological changes affecting diplomacy have primarily concerned the speed of communication.
- Recent technological developments tend to challenge the privileged role of diplomats in transborder communication and endanger flexibility and confidentiality.

### APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION

Different analytical tools have been used in the scholarly study of diplomatic communication. Raymond Cohen (1987) has suggested that it can be understood in terms of a *theater metaphor*. Just as in the theater, diplomatic communication takes place within a setting contrived for that purpose. In the performance, actors manipulate gestures, movements and speech to conjure up a desirable impression for a watching audience. Policy-makers and their aides assume the role of producers or stage managers, molding the total performance.

*Discursive* approaches focus on diplomatic signaling as speech acts or 'discursive practices', inspired by Michel Foucault and Michel de Certeau (Neumann, 2002); or 'communicative action', drawing on Jürgen Habermas (Lose, 2001). The central challenge to Iver Neumann is 'to re-combine the study of meaning with the study of practice' (Neumann, 2002: 630). Lars Lose argues that

diplomatic communication, understood as communicative action, produces and reproduces what Habermas labels a 'lifeworld', which 'comprises the linguistically acquired and organized stock of patterns of understanding and, hence, constitutes an intersubjective structure of collective understandings that enables meaningful communication' (Lose, 2001: 185).

*Game theoretically* inspired analyses make a distinction between 'cheap' and 'costly' signals. It is based on the observation that the signaling actor must suffer some costs for sending the signal if it is to be credible. Actors can send credible signals either by 'tying hands', that is, creating ex post audience costs for bluffing; or by 'sunk costs', creating financially costly moves. Costly signals are those that come with high levels of 'tying hands' and/or 'sunk costs', whereas cheap signals have low levels of 'tying hands' and 'sunk costs' because they do not require the signaling actor to make any significant investment to reinforce its position (see Fearon, 1997: 69–70).

*Semiotics*, the study of signs and the way they acquire meaning, seems relevant to the study of diplomatic communication. Semioticians emphasize the arbitrary nature of signs and symbols, the meaning of which rests on social convention. Signs are organized into systems of signification, or codes, which rely on shared cultural background (cf. Eco, 1985: 161). Successful signaling presupposes a common code, which is part of the (often unconscious) preknowledge necessary for understanding a message. While the relevance of semiotics to diplomatic signaling has been suggested (Jönsson, 1990: 16–21) and the use of symbols in signaling has been studied (Faizullaev, 2013), semiotics has not been applied systematically.

*Cognitive theory* may be useful in addressing the question of how diplomatic signaling is received. Cognitive scientists emphasize the theory-driven nature of human perception: we process information through preexisting 'knowledge structures' (belief systems,

schemata). Attribution theory, which deals primarily with the perception of causation, is of relevance to the study of how receiving agents answer the question 'why did they send that signal?' To be persuasive, signals need to be not only communicated but also deemed credible. Receiving agents ask themselves 'do they say what they mean, and do they mean what they say?' To verify or falsify other actors' signals, receiving actors rely on various indices, believed to be 'beyond the ability of the actor to control for the purpose of projecting a misleading image' (Jervis, 1970: 26). Capability, domestic events and information received through clandestine channels are examples of indices used to assess credibility in diplomatic communication. The study of interpretations of signals, in short, can draw on theories of human perception (see, e.g., Jervis, 1970, 1976; Jönsson, 1990).

In sum, there is no paradigmatic approach to diplomatic communication. However, as this sketchy overview suggests, there is a store of applicable analytical tools and ample room for more theory-driven, systematic studies of diplomatic communication.

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# Diplomatic Agency

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## INTRODUCTION

Politicians often complain about the passivity of diplomats. John F. Kennedy grumbled that US diplomats never came up with any new ideas: ‘the State Department is a bowl of jelly’ (Sofer 2001: 107). In contrast to military and political leaders, diplomats are often portrayed as ‘pathetic heroes’ (Sofer 2001). Meanwhile, diplomats tend to find politicians irresponsible and ignorant of world politics, hindering diplomatic work. Can diplomats be considered agents? If so, what does diplomatic agency imply?

Clearly, diplomatic agency is constrained. The diplomat acts ‘within a restricted repertoire, but remains an object of public wrath and may be a target of aggression as a symbolic representative of his or her nation’ (Sofer 2001: 110). Yet, as this chapter will show, there is room for different kinds of agency in diplomatic affairs. To analyze diplomatic agency, the chapter will, firstly, provide an overview of the ways in which

diplomatic agency has been conceptualized; secondly, present and exemplify major and overlapping types of diplomatic agency, including communication, negotiation and advocacy; thirdly, examine how diplomacy has developed as a profession from envoys of kings to trained career diplomats; fourthly, analyze how the personalization and popularization of diplomacy has shaped diplomatic agency with the rise of public diplomacy and new media technologies; and, finally, discuss how diplomatic agency is linked to conceptions of diplomatic representation in its actual, functional and symbolic forms.

## CONCEPTUALIZING DIPLOMATIC AGENCY

Traditionally, diplomacy is ‘the organized conduct of relations between states’ (Henrikson 2013: 118), making states the principal agents in diplomatic affairs.

However, states cannot act on their own in the international arena; instead they operate through organizational agencies (foreign services) and individual agents (diplomats) (Faizullaev 2014: 279). Moreover, non-state actors crowd the diplomatic scene. Among the rapidly expanding types of actors, we find sub-national and regional authorities such as Catalonia, multinational corporations such as Nestlé, celebrities such as George Clooney, who is a UN Messenger for Peace, as well as non-governmental organizations including Independent Diplomat and Transparency International and regional and intergovernmental organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and ASEAN. All of these ‘agents’ are involved in diplomacy, but what do we mean when we talk of diplomatic agency?

### ***Structural limits to diplomatic agency***

An agent can be understood as an individual or collective unit that commits an act of consequence upon its environment (Kelley 2014: 4). Agency is thus the capacity of an agent (a person or other entity, human or any living being in general) to act in a world. In the social sciences, agency is generally conceptualized as the opposite of structure, which is seen as a force that organizes the actors so that their actions fall in a certain social order. Structure is, to borrow John G. Ruggie’s notion, ‘what makes the world hang together’ (Ruggie, quoted in Kelley 2014: 4).

Diplomatic agency, whether performed by individuals or groups, is thus necessarily constrained by structure. This structure may take both material and ideational forms. For instance, foreign office staff work in multi-organizational settings that usually comprise a presidential administration, other governmental agencies, a parliament, a ministry of foreign affairs and an embassy, affecting foreign policy decision-making and

implementation. Foreign policy activities increasingly concentrate around prime ministers and presidents, directly instructing or sidelining the foreign ministries. Moreover, written and unwritten rules regulate relations between these groups of individuals and institutions. Because such rules are often locally negotiated, the scope for diplomatic agency cannot easily be put into an abstract formula.

In poorer countries, the lack of trained personnel, resources and national stability limits the room for diplomatic maneuver considerably, both in terms of the number of diplomatic staff and missions and in the actual conduct of diplomacy (Anda 2000: 124). Also, in richer countries, diplomatic agents often find domestic interactions and negotiations, including the fight for resources and money, to be even more complex and cumbersome than international ones. Last, but not least, increased involvement of broader society and the 24/7 live media coverage of foreign policy events put structural limits on diplomatic agency. Previously, decision-makers and leaders had more time to understand a crisis situation, examine the evidence, explore various options, and reflect before choosing among them. As Graham T. Allison writes, looking back at the Cuban Missile Crisis: ‘In 1962, one of the first questions Kennedy asked on being told of the missile discovery was, How long until this leaks? McGeorge Bundy, his national security adviser, thought it would be a week at most’ (Allison 2012: 16). Today, confidentiality is measured not in days, but in hours. This puts enormous pressure on political leaders and diplomats to act fast – sometimes too fast (see also Chapter 36 in this Handbook).

### ***Diplomatic agency in international law***

One particularity of diplomats is that they act on behalf of the state: ‘This does not mean that the state and the individual becomes one, but rather by, for example, representing France to a foreign state or an international

organization, a French diplomat performs as France' (Adler-Nissen 2014a: 62–3). One of the challenges in conceptualizing diplomatic agency is therefore to distinguish diplomatic agency of a foreign minister or ambassador from the agency of the foreign ministry, embassy, or country he or she represents. In diplomacy, individuals are often institutionalized (a head of state, minister, or ambassador is not just an individual but an institution, too), and institutions are individualized (they may function differently when headed or presented by different individuals). Any new foreign minister or ambassador inevitably brings personality to the job (think of the difference between Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell) while also functioning within a certain organizational framework, having to use particular diplomatic tact and manners, and carrying the state's identity, values, and interests (for a discussion of diplomatic agency, see Faizullaev 2014).

Diplomatic agency is thus distinctive because the diplomat (still) represents the sovereign ('*L'Etat c'est moi*'). This sovereignty logic has been formalized in international law, including in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), which specifies the privileges that enable diplomats, ministries of foreign affairs, embassies, governments and envoys to perform their functions (Gardiner 2003: 339). The Vienna Convention also clarifies the institution of diplomatic immunity, which is crucial for diplomatic agency because it ensures that diplomats are given safe passage and are not susceptible to lawsuit or prosecution under the host country's laws. Diplomatic immunity thereby allows the maintenance of diplomatic agency during periods of strained relationship or even armed conflict.

Diplomatic immunity also makes it possible for individual diplomats to take exceptional forms of action. For instance, during the 1970s, the Swedish ambassador Harald Edelstam, who was posted in Chile, helped thousands of Cuban diplomats, Uruguayan refugees and Chilean political activists escape

prosecution by Augusto Pinochet. Following the 1973 coup, the ambassador took a Swedish flag in hand and marched up to the Cuban embassy that was under fire by tanks and fetched refugees out of the embassy, took them to the Swedish embassy and got them out of the country safely. Similar examples of exceptional diplomatic agency (indeed heroism) can be found across the globe. Chiune Sugihara was a Japanese diplomat who served as Vice-Consul for the Empire of Japan in Lithuania. During World War II, Sugihara wrote travel visas that facilitated the escape of more than 6,000 Jewish refugees from Lithuania to Japanese territory, risking his career and his family's lives (Levine 1996). This is a form of diplomatic agency made possible by diplomatic privileges codified in international law, but it may require disregarding instructions (or exploiting lack of instructions). Both Edelstam and Sugihara did what they found morally right, not what their states had instructed them to do (see also Chapters 15 and 16 in this Handbook).

### ***Theorizing diplomatic agency***

Most IR scholars, including neo-realists and neo-liberalists, do not accord diplomats much attention. For them, material resources tend to define much of what goes on in world politics. However, IR theory features at least five exceptions to this dismissal of diplomatic agency: the English School, rationalist game theory, foreign policy analysis, the practice turn and post-structuralism.

In contrast to most of mainstream IR, the *English School* has always granted diplomacy a key role. Hedley Bull (1977) highlighted diplomacy as one of the five institutions integral to international society. Without diplomacy there would be no communication between states and without communication, no international society. Other English School theorists elevated diplomatic agency to a (potentially) virtuous art. Most prominently, Paul Sharp suggests that there

are particular diplomatic values of charity and self-restraint, which can help political leaders who ‘work under terrible pressures and have to respond to multiple constituencies and considerations, and whose motives are not always of the finest’ (Sharp 2003: 875). Political decision-makers therefore need to be ‘surrounded by virtuous advisers and agents embodying and advocating the values of diplomacy’ (Sharp 2003: 875; see also Chapters 8 and 14 in this Handbook).

In contrast, *game theory* assumes that each state is a rational actor concerned with promoting its national interests, and diplomatic agency is understood as tactical moves in a game, which are calculated by the players or negotiators. In Putnam’s (1988) perspective, the two-level game gives the diplomat–negotiator leverage and the possibility of pursuing the chief negotiator’s interest, but that room for maneuver is constrained by structure (i.e. the role of domestic preferences and coalitions, domestic political institutions and practices, the strategies and tactics of negotiators, uncertainty, the domestic reverberation of international pressures). Other diplomatic scholars have borrowed ideas from principal-agent theory (first developed by economists in the 1970s, see Miller 2005: 205) to understand diplomatic agency. Diplomats, as Christer Jönsson and Martin Hall note, ‘whether in bilateral or multilateral forums, always negotiate on behalf of others, in the sense that they are agents of a principal with ultimate authority, be it an individual king or a collective government’ (Jönsson and Hall 2005: 84). A principal and an agent are considered individuals who enter into a specific relationship: the first gives instructions and the second executes them in order to achieve the goals set by a superior. Accordingly, diplomatic agency is studied as actions, which determines the payoff to the principal. To analyze the agency of diplomats in this way, one can for instance focus on information asymmetry, which prevents the principal (e.g. government, president, or Congress) from successfully monitoring the

agent (e.g. ambassadors or diplomats) (See also Chapter 38 in this Handbook.)

*Foreign Policy Analysis* (FPA) explicitly puts emphasis on diplomatic agency. Valery Hudson has argued that FPA constitutes the very micro-foundation for international relations because ‘foreign policy analysis is characterized by an actor-specific focus, based upon the argument that all that occurs between nations and across nations is grounded in human decision makers acting singly or in group’ (Hudson 2005: 1). What FPA brings to the study of diplomatic agency is particularly the idea that the cognition and information processing of decision-makers are crucial. Graham T. Allison’s (1971) work on the Cuban Missile Crisis and Robert Jervis’ (1976) research on perceptions and misperceptions in foreign policy are pioneering in this respect. Today, FPA scholars build on political psychology, examining leader types, cognitive constraints etc., while also taking geopolitics, bureaucratic politics and organizational culture into account (e.g. Mouritzen and Wivel 2012).

IR *constructivists* argue that diplomatic agency, as any other social activity, is not a product of immutable scientific laws, but is rather the result of learning and socialization that create relationships, identities and perceptions that condition the actions taken by actors in world politics (Jackson 2004). This leads to an understanding of diplomatic agency, which sees diplomatic negotiation not just as bargaining, but also as changing perceptions and continuous interaction, learning and adaption (Checkel 2005). In other words, diplomacy is where beliefs about state interests and capacities are enacted, reproduced and changed.

More recently, scholars engaged in the *practice turn* of IR have accorded diplomatic agency a much larger role than IR scholars normally do. They have argued that diplomatic practice is constitutive of world politics (Sending et al. 2015). Practice scholars focus on everyday habits and professional codes that are central to diplomacy. They have

analyzed how diplomats identify competent and incompetent behavior, building on participant observation and interviews (Adler and Pouliot 2011; Neumann 2012; Adler-Nissen and Pouliot 2014). In practice theory, the logic of diplomatic agency is neither one of consequence, nor of appropriateness, but of practicality (Pouliot 2008). For instance, officials engaged in the multilateral diplomacy of the UN will tacitly come to know their place in the international ‘pecking order’ despite the formal sovereign equality of all member states (Pouliot 2011). Similarly, national diplomats working in Brussels will experience, in an embodied sense, that new proposals need to be framed as European interests to carry weight at the Council of Ministers (Adler-Nissen 2014a).

*Post-positivists* such as James Der Derian (1987) and Costas Constantinou (1996) build on post-structuralist insights on subjectivity and identity and have problematized the ability of diplomatic representatives to speak fully for the sovereign. A diplomatic representative can never be regarded as an authentic surrogate for the sovereign. Departing from a conceptualization of diplomacy as the mediation of estrangement, they have explored how representatives, as ‘go-betweens’, are influenced or ‘captured’ by their host nation. Recently, they have promoted what they call ‘sustainable diplomacy’ that emphasize ‘practices of self-knowledge and [is] open to identity transformation’ (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010: 2). Constantinou has argued that:

Diplomacy changes face, posits a different ontology, whenever its practitioners conceive themselves as being on the side or in the middle [...] when the diplomat sees him or herself as being in the middle, they promote mediation or activity that brings different sides together [...] in a constructive ‘relationship’. (Constantinou 2013: 145)

Accordingly, two-sided diplomats or ‘double-agents’ gain their legitimacy from the ‘interstitial’ – from the international or intercommunal – making the most of not taking sides or by functionally distancing

oneself from the sides. Practical experiences with conflict-mediation show how difficult it is to preserve the legitimacy from the interstitial and not be drawn into the conflict (see also Chapters 1, 3 and 11 in this Handbook).

Notwithstanding these important advances in the theorization of diplomatic agency, much work remains to be done to excavate the agency involved in the conduct of diplomacy.

### Key Points

- IR theories have generally bracketed diplomacy, concentrating instead on the material distribution of resources or the development of norms and ideas, thereby assuming that diplomatic agency is limited and unproblematic.
- Some IR-oriented approaches accord more importance to diplomacy: The English School claims that diplomacy is one of the constitutive institutions of international society; rationalist game theory argues that bargaining and negotiation are crucial for world politics; foreign policy analysis insists on individuals’ role in foreign policy decisions; poststructuralists investigate the very possibility of articulating diplomatic agency and practice theory points to the crucial role of diplomats in the everyday performance of world politics.
- The study of diplomatic agency will benefit from more explicit and systematic theorizing as it has largely been examined through case studies, anecdotal accounts and historical analyses with limited attention to theory.

### TYPES OF DIPLOMATIC AGENCY: COMMUNICATION, NEGOTIATION, ADVOCACY

#### *Diplomatic agency as communication*

Communication is probably the most fundamental form of diplomatic agency. Following the invention of the institution of residential diplomacy in the fifteenth century’s Italian city-states, a nation’s diplomat is required to function as his or her country’s eyes, ears and

voice abroad (Cooper et al. 2013: 2). Gathering information on the local scene and reporting it home is still seen as one of the most important functions of the resident embassy (Jönsson and Hall 2003: 197). However, the job as a communicator is not just about reporting home or gathering intelligence, but also delivering the message and being aware of national interests and influencing foreign governments and publics through meetings, workshops, interviews to the local media, dinners, receptions, cultural events and parties. In other words, the main activity involved in the role as communicator is message-delivery, which requires intelligence, networking, tact, discretion, teamwork, creative imagination, etc.

In ancient times, when direct consultations and back-and-forth communications were not feasible, the monarch or republic was far more dependent on the ambassador's skills and judgments when it came to communication. When the first telegram landed on the British foreign minister Lord Palmerston's desk in the 1840s, he reportedly declared: 'My God, this is the end of diplomacy' (Dizard 2001: 5). The telegraph changed diplomatic practice, but it did not make the diplomat-as-communicator obsolete. Today, cheap flights and communication technology, including e-mail, telephones, Skype and video calls, have limited the autonomy of the resident diplomat. Information overload and new actors have made the monitoring of diplomats by the capitals more difficult, as the chapter will explore further below (see also Chapter 6 in this Handbook).

### ***Diplomatic agency as negotiation***

Negotiation is the second major type of diplomatic agency. When diplomacy takes the form of negotiation – be it bilateral or multilateral – diplomats become more explicit agents. They are involved in a back-and-forth process, requiring an additional set of skills to that of the communicator. Numerous studies

have demonstrated the importance of personal leadership for negotiation processes. For example, it is apparent from the correspondence between Kennedy and Khrushchev during the Cuban missile crisis that they (and their advisors) were trying to figure out how they could both retain personal and national honor in relation to each other and globally (Ting-Tooney 1990). But behind-the-scenes negotiations are rarely subjected to direct observation and remain under-theorized.

The advent of more open and multilateral diplomatic negotiation does not detract from the importance of skillful negotiation techniques. Effective diplomatic negotiation is still often undertaken in private, without the intrusion of competing preoccupations and loyalties. In a study of the negotiations in the UN Security Council and NATO that led to the international intervention in Libya in 2011, Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Vincent Pouliot (2014) found that, in crisis negotiation, countries may rely on their permanent representatives whose positions emerge from mutual trust and local moves in New York and Brussels just as much as from national instructions.

A particular type of negotiation is linked to conflict resolution. Here, those in conflict seek the assistance of or accept an offer of help from an outsider to mediate (Ahtisaari and Rintakoski 2013: 338). The UN has been a principal actor in the peace-making scene, using the Secretary-General and his representatives. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld was known to play up his agency. For instance, Hammarskjöld engaged in extensive coalition-building, creating alliances between member states through intensive traveling to capitals, building trust and access and operated at several levels of diplomacy (see also Chapter 17 in this Handbook).

### ***Diplomatic agency as advocacy***

It is not new that diplomats focus on the broader public and try to achieve change



through persuasion, i.e. though advocacy. In the eighteenth century, an increasing sense developed among statesmen of a 'public' below the state whose opinion mattered for diplomacy (Mitzen 2005). The diplomatic scene is increasingly on public display as interrelated revolutionary changes in politics, international relations and mass communication have greatly expanded the role of publics in foreign policy. More recently, the increased visibility of foreign policy made possible by new communication technologies has led to a focus on soft power (Nye 2004), public diplomacy (Melissen et al. 2005), nation-branding (Van Ham 2001) and social media in diplomacy (Seib 2012).

Oriented towards a wider public, diplomatic advocacy can take many forms. Former US ambassador to the UN, John R. Bolton, finds that diplomats have lost sight of the promotion of national interests and advocacy (Bolton 2007). Advocacy, however, can also mean more sophisticated promotion of national interests through strategic partnerships or public diplomacy. Many countries now team up with NGOs, companies and individuals engaged in various forms of lobbying and advocacy, from the Red Cross to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, in ways that also favor particular national interests.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomatic agency takes three generic forms: communication, negotiation and advocacy. On the one hand, cheap transportation and communication technology have limited the communicative autonomy of the resident diplomat; on the other hand, information overload and new actors have made the monitoring of diplomacy by capitals more difficult.
- When negotiating or mediating – be it bilaterally or multilaterally – diplomats become more explicit agents. Numerous studies have demonstrated the importance of personal leadership for negotiation processes, not just in bilateral but also in multilateral negotiations in the UN, WTO, EU, NATO, etc.

- Advocacy involves the promotion of national interests through strategic partnerships with NGOs and companies and through public diplomacy. Many countries now team up with NGOs, companies and individuals engaged in various forms of lobbying.

### **PROFESSIONALIZATION, PERSONALIZATION AND CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF REPRESENTATION**

The fundamental question regarding the professionalization of diplomacy is who gets to be considered as a diplomat. Traditionalists cling to the view that only official state representatives are diplomats, but a lot of diplomatic action is taking place outside traditional diplomatic institutions such as embassies and foreign services. Non-state actors, from private companies to non-governmental organizations, and other parts of the state apparatus increasingly engage in their own separate diplomatic activities. Today, most ministries have their own skilled international secretariats that uphold relations with their peers in other states and they send their own personnel on diplomatic missions. These tendencies imply that international relations are no longer the exclusive preserve of foreign ministries.

As all other professions, diplomacy has a history of gradual and non-linear developments. In fact, the distinctions that make diplomacy as a profession possible are relatively recent. The differentiation between 'domestic' and 'foreign' was only gradually institutionalized (Neumann 2012: 53). The first diplomats were personally appointed envoys, acting for the king or republic, often belonging to the aristocratic elite. Gradually, diplomacy gained its status as a meritocratic profession, starting in France in the sixteenth century – with an academy, secretariat, archives and manuals (Weisbrode 2013: 14) (See also Chapters 2, 5 and 12 in this Handbook.)

One of the particularities of diplomacy is that it has never accepted the distinction

between official and private life. Being stationed abroad and having to attend and organize social gatherings, diplomats have relied on their (female) spouses in their work. Yet, as Cynthia Enloe (2014) notes, the role of diplomatic wives (and women's role in international politics more generally) is still misrepresented by practitioners and scholars. Indeed, the agency of diplomatic partners (female or male) is unofficial and under-appreciated. Yet, diplomatic partners can have remarkable influence also on state-to-state relations, exploiting their transversal agency. They not only oil the machinery and shape the conditions for good conversations during dinner parties, they also take strategic and agenda-setting roles during foreign postings (Dommet 2005).

Today, state agents – and more specifically national foreign services – have acquired a dominant position in diplomatic affairs. This is largely due to what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu called 'symbolic power', which is the imposition of particular perceptions upon social agents who then take the social order to be just (see Adler-Nissen 2014b). Symbolic power requires the constant performance of social distinctions. For instance, when France inaugurated a new diplomatic academy in 2001, French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine explained: 'we are creating a diplomatic institute to further demarcate the amateurism from the professionalism, which is ours' (Vedrine, quoted in Colson 2009: 74). Many countries have adopted formal training programmes and diplomatic schools. Some countries, such as Germany, Chile and Peru require all new employees to go through one year at a diplomatic academy before they start working (Rana 2007). Notwithstanding the formalization of diplomatic training, most diplomats still acquire their skills and status mainly by experience and patronage. Indeed, national diplomats have generally been in a position to rebuff challengers and they have largely been able to affirm their mastery over the art of diplomacy (for a discussion, see Adler-Nissen 2014b).

One of the major developments in diplomatic agency is personalization. The formal codes of conduct, including courtesy calls and presentation of credentials, have not disappeared (Bjola and Kornprobst 2013: 70), but such ritualized performances are supplemented with informal interactions diplomat-to-diplomat and diplomat-to-foreign-publics. States (and their leaders) seek to present themselves as favorably as possible, both proactively through public diplomacy and nation branding, and more reactively by trying to manage media coverage. Media handling often takes place simultaneously – and interferes directly – with closed-door negotiations. Foreign ministers and diplomats interact and monitor each other electronically, as during the 'propaganda war' between the West and Russia over Ukraine in 2014. Texting, emailing, Facebooking and Tweeting may seem like more private ways of interacting, requiring users to present themselves as 'someone like' their audiences. The EU's Foreign Policy Representative Federica Mogherini might choose to reveal personal details on Facebook, but personalization may also produce embarrassment. For instance, one US diplomat used her professional Twitter profile to mention purchasing a bathing suit in the midst of a meltdown in the Middle East (Cull 2011: 5).

There are both critics and defenders of the transformations and increased visibility of diplomatic agency. One key critic includes Paul Sharp, who insists on an ethos of representing (not creating) national interests. As Sharp puts it:

Diplomacy has an important role to play relative to the policy process, but it is limited and should be specifically defined. To expect it to contribute more is not only to offend the democratic ethic, but also obscures the true location of the policy-making responsibility, which is with the political leaders. (Sharp 2003: 565)

Accordingly, diplomatic agency is to be limited to the interpretation and translation of different cultures to political leaders. Yet such self-restraint may be difficult when the

diplomatic profession is under pressure. For instance, export-oriented companies increasingly require a wide variety of professional diplomatic services as markets and productive operations expand globally and non-governmental organizations expect diplomats to advise and assist them when they operate across cultures.

Former diplomat and scholar Daryl Copeland (2009) has a completely opposite take on diplomatic agency to Sharp. If nation-based diplomacy is to remain relevant in a globalized and interlinked world, Copeland argues, it must transform itself into 'Guerilla Diplomacy'. The guerrilla diplomat interacts with people outside the embassy walls. He or she is comfortable with risk and has an affinity for outreach. Standard operating procedures, awaiting instructions and doing things 'by the book' will rarely be sufficient in resolving the complex problems which characterize the sorts of fast-paced, high-risk environments of modern world politics (Copeland 2009: 146). When for instance, the Danish ambassador to Pakistan organizes a rock concert with other ambassadors from the diplomatic corps in Islamabad, including the Bosnian ambassador on guitar, Japanese ambassador on drums and Australian ambassador on flute and vocals, he signals more than musicality. By engaging in such informal and 'non-diplomatic' activities outside the embassy walls (and later sharing it on Facebook), the Danish ambassador displays mutual understanding within the diplomatic corps and informality as modern diplomatic values. However, many diplomats and international policy managers lack the skills and experience to combine formality and informality (Bjola and Holmes 2015). Diplomatic scholars also lack theoretical and methodological tools to grasp how social media affects diplomatic agency (see also Chapters 35 and 43 in this Handbook).

Four decades ago, Raymond Aron wrote: 'the ambassador and the soldier live and symbolize international relations which, insofar as they are inter-state relations, concern diplomacy and war' (Aron quoted in Cooper et al. 2013: 6–7).

Today, however, the rise of non-state actors ranging from transnational companies to global media, over non-governmental organizations to multilateral organizations, challenges the image of national diplomats as 'custodians of the idea of international society' (Bull 1977: 176). Symbolically, new articulations of collective representation, differing from the traditional promotion of national interests, such as the Occupy movement and various attempts to create a transnational public sphere, challenge territorial-based diplomacy (see also Chapters 41 and 42 in this Handbook).

Changes in diplomatic representation also happen through formal or functional delegation as states choose to delegate or open up diplomacy. For instance, the member states of the European Union have delegated their trade policy to the supranational level. As a consequence, the European Commissioner is the sole representative of European trade interest in negotiations of trade agreements with the US, Japan, or Canada. Moreover, international organizations such as the UN and OSCE invite new actors such as NGOs inside, partly to solve problems that the traditional intergovernmental diplomacy cannot solve, partly to increase legitimacy as international organizations engage in far-reaching cooperation with real life implications for citizens across the globe (Tallberg et al. 2013). Interestingly, this process of opening up multilateral diplomacy has to a large extent been controlled by states (Tallberg et al. 2013: 256). Diplomacy largely still takes place within a field of rules and roles established over hundreds of years where states officially communicate with each other. We should thus avoid looking at diplomatic agency in isolation, and instead ask how it adapts, transforms, or undermines international interactions.

### **Key Points**

- Personalization is a strategy used by diplomats to promote a range of values and national interests off- and online. Yet, such activities involve

more risk-taking as well-tried diplomatic rituals are discounted and the traditional boundary between the private and public is transgressed.

- Diplomatic scholars lack theoretical and methodological tools to grasp how public diplomacy and social media affects diplomatic agency.
- Critics of the transformations of diplomatic agency insist that diplomacy should stick to an ethos of representation of the sovereign to remain legitimate, while proponents argue that diplomats should embrace informality, social media and networking beyond the embassy walls.

## CONCLUSION

Diplomatic agency is constrained and criticized. Diplomats have gained a dominant position in international relations, inscribed in past international negotiations (e.g. treaties), material resources (e.g. embassies), institutions (e.g. diplomatic immunity) and symbolic rituals (e.g. presentation of credentials), recorded and canonized by professionals in conversation along with scholars and journalists. Behind-the-scenes diplomatic negotiations are rarely subject to direct observation due to their confidentiality. This limits our empirical knowledge and theorization of diplomatic agency. Scholars disagree on whether it is individual and cognitive, social and normative, or legal, institutional and material structures that shape the room for diplomats to maneuver, but they agree that individual and groups of diplomats play a crucial role in communicating, negotiating and advocating national and organizational interests. The personalization and popularization of diplomacy related to the emergence of new information technologies and the request for more transparency in world politics have made diplomatic agency more visible, requiring additional and creative skills as diplomats interact more proactively and informally with a broader transnational public. Whether this strengthens or weakens the legitimacy of diplomats depends on how attached one is to the idea of the diplomat as representative of the sovereign and as custodian of a system of sovereign states.

## NOTE

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# Diplomatic Culture

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Something we may call a diplomatic culture arises out of the experience of conducting relations between peoples who regard themselves as distinctive and separate from one another. (Sharp 2004: 361)

## INTRODUCTION

If diplomacy is understood as the practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of distinct communities, then questions of culture and cultural exchange are at its core. This includes the promotion of particular ideas and values (whether these be grounded in so-called ‘national cultures’ or framed as universal), the mediation of different values and political priorities and, in recent decades, the formal engagement of foreign publics with national ideals and institutions in the form of cultural diplomacy (Finn 2003). But what of the culture of diplomacy itself? As Paul Sharp (2004: 361) asks: ‘To what extent does an independent diplomatic culture exist which

permits diplomats to exert their own influence on the conduct of international relations? Insofar as such a culture exists, what does it look like, is it a good thing and, if it is, how is it to be sustained?’ In starting to address these questions this chapter looks first at the evolution of the concept of diplomatic culture, from its roots in pre-Westphalian negotiations between empires through to its framing as universal and codification within diplomatic protocols and international law. The second part of this chapter turns attention to the articulation of diplomatic culture by diplomats themselves, looking at the emphasis placed on tact and civility, the professionalization of diplomatic services, the unifying role that a shared diplomatic culture plays, and tensions between diplomatic culture and national cultures. The final section considers the multiplicity of diplomatic cultures that emerge and shape one another, from ‘national’ diplomatic traditions to unofficial or paradiplomacies that feed off diplomatic culture and, in the process remake it.

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF DIPLOMATIC CULTURE

Within diplomatic studies, the notion of diplomatic culture is a relatively recent conceptual addition, dating to the broader cultural turn in the social sciences in the 1990s. Prior neglect of questions of culture has been attributed to a perceived 'thinness' of cultural context between polities, and a scepticism towards the idea of culture within the positivist approaches of North American International Relations (IR). This prevailing view saw 'diplomatic culture [as] too vague, ambiguous or unverifiable to warrant serious intellectual attention' (Der Derian 1996: 87; Sharp 2004). Where the idea of diplomatic culture has been discussed within the various schools of thought in IR it has had a contested uptake. In Geoffrey Wiseman's review of the term (Wiseman 2005) the responses are grouped into four perspectives: 'Diplomatic culture exists and its importance is underestimated' (English school of IR); 'Diplomatic culture exists but is not important' (negotiation theorists); 'The existence of diplomatic culture is either ignored or taken for granted' (a constructivist critique of neo-Realism); and 'Diplomatic culture exists but harms the national interest' (neo-conservative policy think tanks).

In light of this, it is the English School perspective on diplomatic culture – and Hedley Bull's ideas in particular – which has had the most significant influence on debates to date. For Bull (1975, 2002<sup>1</sup>) diplomatic culture is a concept that underpins and, in many ways, constitutes the international society of states. In a reading of Bull's understanding of diplomatic culture through the lens of critical theory, James Der Derian argues that it plays a 'meta-theoretical' role in his work on international society (Der Derian 1996: 85). Der Derian usefully outlines the multiple uses of culture in Bull's writings in terms of three concentric circles. The outer, all-embracing circle is constituted of 'world' or 'cosmopolitan' culture which 'all historical international

societies have had as one of their foundations a common culture' (Bull 2002: 304). Or, as Sharp puts it, 'an underlying, cosmopolitan set of values which human beings have been claimed to share whether or not they are aware of the existence of each other' (Sharp 2004: 364). Whilst the broadness of this definition means that it includes cultures of pre-Westphalian city-states and empires, inside this circle lies the 'international political culture' which is specific to the context of the modern interstate system. At the centre of these circles, and thus at the core of international society, lies the diplomatic culture: 'the common stock of ideas and values possessed by the official representatives of states' (Bull 2002: 304).

Diplomatic culture, here specifically written in the singular, is thus the label given to an overarching structure that constrains the behaviour of states and their diplomats. A number of key elements to diplomatic culture are apparent when we consider Bull's notion of diplomatic culture alongside Wiseman's more detailed definition, also from an English School perspective: 'the accumulated communicative and representational norms, rules, and institutions devised to improve relations and avoid war between interacting and mutually recognizing political entities' (Wiseman 2005: 409–10). These elements include common values (including a shared religion and a preference for peace-making), a common intellectual culture, institutionalized norms, a presumption of equivalent diplomatic actors, and a heritage accumulated over long periods of time and handed down to the present. We will briefly discuss these elements in turn.

Der Derian (1987) traces the genealogy of European diplomacy from well before the modern state – instead finding its roots in Judeo-Christian theology. As humanity was meant to be united in Christ, so were its political units (then cities). However, mankind's fallen nature leads to estrangement between these Christian polities, and it is in this space between would-be fellows that diplomacy emerges. As Christendom became Europe

with the fracturing of the sacred unity of the Church and the Ottoman threat from the southeast, diplomacy became tied to the rise of the modern state. Der Derian argues that Machiavelli's treatise marked the emergence of a new political rationality that prioritized the interests of the state over the needs of any larger community. Iver Neumann argues, however, that this new rationality did not dis-establish the Christian nature of diplomatic culture:

As late as 1815, although Tsar Alexander of Russia did not succeed in making his 'holy alliance' the framework for a new European diplomatic order, he still managed to recruit his 'brothers in Christ', the Habsburg emperor and the king of Prussia, with a treaty text that bore the explicit religious and kinship markers of the diplomacy of Christendom. (Neumann 2012: 304)

Neumann identifies three facets of contemporary diplomacy that have their roots in the Christian origins of diplomacy: immunity of envoys (but see Numelin 1950), permanent representation, and the ordering of the diplomatic corps. Implied, of course, is that there are many more.

Diplomatic culture is thus given as a European inheritance, emerging in modern form with the state system itself and diffusing through the world through processes of colonization and de-colonization (Watson 1984). As Shaun Riordan notes, it is '[s]triking the extent to which the structures and decision-making procedures of the British, French and US service have been replicated, with greater or lesser efficiency, by developing and even communist countries' (Riordan 2003: 30). From an English School perspective the universalizing of this diplomatic culture is instrumental to the place of diplomacy within international society (Bull 2002). Yet this is hardly a new idea: it also a sentiment articulated by François de Callières (1717) who noted the need for negotiation to be continuous and universal. The subsequent codifying of diplomatic culture was achieved both through its co-evolution with cultures of

international law, and the establishment of its rules and conventions through protocol and institutionalisation.

If the understanding of diplomacy as a formerly culturally-specific but now-universal facet of the international society is true, then the practice of diplomacy itself takes on the role of translation. In a world of estranged polities – by definition alienated from one another – diplomacy serves as the middle ground in which representatives can meet. Diplomatic culture is thus the mechanism through which estrangement is mediated: it facilitates the movement of people and ideas 'across alien boundaries' (Der Derian 1996: 85). Indeed the notion of alienation – understood as something made separate and foreign – lies at the core of English School engagements with diplomatic culture (Wight 1979; Watson 1984; Bull 2002). From this perspective diplomacy 'not only manages the consequences of separateness, but, in so doing, it reproduces the conditions out of which those consequences arise' (Sharp 2004: 370). As Der Derian asserts, 'the existence of a diplomatic culture only becomes self-evident, and subject to inquiry, when the values and ideas of one society are estranged from another' (Der Derian 1996: 92). This estrangement exists in a range of intersecting relations: between high and low cultures (read Western and non-Western), between different political actors, and between 'society and self' (*ibid.*).

As such, the idea of a common intellectual culture underpinning diplomatic culture is key to facilitating communication between estranged members of the international society of states. According to Bull, this is constituted of a common language (in broad brushstrokes Latin until the mid-nineteenth century, French until the end of World War I, and English since then), 'a common scientific understanding of the world, [and] certain common notions and techniques that derive from the universal espousal by governments ... of economic development and their universal involvement in modern technology' (Bull 2002: 305).

Whilst, as we note below, the existence ‘on the ground’ of such a universal diplomatic culture based on such a broad set of common cultural values is patchy at best, it is nevertheless promoted as an ideal to which to aspire. The extent to which this always produces the ‘best’ international relations’ is, however, open to debate. Joyce Leader’s (2007) account of the Kigali diplomatic corps’ role in the Arusha peace talks in 1992–93 is a case in point. Leader notes that, on the one hand, the diplomatic corps’ adherence to a shared diplomatic culture based on common norms and values relating to the conduct of negotiations played a key role in unifying what was a disparate group of Western donors, neighbouring and other African states, a European Commission delegation, and UN aid agencies. Yet on the other hand:

Diplomacy failed in Rwanda at least in part because the Kigali diplomatic corps was a victim of its own diplomatic culture. The Kigali diplomatic community ... were so committed to the success of the Arusha process, as a way of both ending the war and bringing democracy to Rwanda that they failed to see or to comprehend the warning signs that the process was not leading to peace. (Leader 2007: 192)

(See also Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 11 in this Handbook)

### **Key Points**

- Some question the existence of diplomatic culture, and others contest its implications.
- Diplomatic culture, such as it is, is largely derived from European and Christian traditions.
- If diplomatic culture provides a space of translation between estranged polities, it carries within it the potential for improving relations and occasionally degrading them.

## **DIPLOMATIC CULTURE AND PROFESSIONALIZATION**

Thus far we have considered diplomatic culture somewhat in the abstract. We now turn to how diplomatic culture is ‘learned’,

articulated and re-worked by diplomats themselves. As Sasson Sofer (2007; 2013) argues, it is the diplomatic corps (and, preceding that, the looser notion of the diplomatic community) that is the primary repository of diplomatic culture. It is perhaps notable that the first book on the diplomatic corps was only relatively recently compiled (Sharp and Wiseman 2007). Through the institutionalisation of the diplomatic corps we can trace the development of an increasingly codified diplomatic culture. Given that it is practiced by a few carefully selected representatives of international polities and has aristocratic origins, diplomatic culture is conventionally understood as an elitist manifestation of international culture. Aristocratic fraternity based on shared cosmopolitan values was central to the unity of the diplomatic corps until the turn of the twentieth century. Yet even then the tradition of diplomats being so wedded to dynastic European culture did not go uncontested. In the eighteenth century, de Callières and others argued that the ‘ideal ambassador’ needed more than blue blood: negotiation should be a profession in and of itself as ‘It demands all the penetration, all the dexterity, all the suppleness which a man can well possess. It requires widespread understanding and knowledge, and above all a correct and piercing discernment’ (de Callières 1963: 9).

While the transition from an aristocratic to a professional diplomatic culture is still ongoing in many parts of the world, the process can be seen to originate in the regularisation and codification of what had hitherto been a body of knowledge that aristocrats learned through being immersed in their milieu. This process, which included such new rules as the introduction of precedence within a diplomatic corps on the basis of the date of accreditation, can be traced to the Congress of Vienna (Sofer 2007). Through the self-aware creation of a body of professional knowledge, diplomatic culture came to be the object of its own government; the mannerisms of aristocracy had become the by-laws of interstate negotiation.

This separation of diplomacy as a profession distinct from, for instance, soldiers, lawyers or priests, fostered the idea of a community of individuals who were unique within broader society and who 'often seem to have more in common with each other than with those they allegedly represent' (Mayall 2007: 1). Indeed, they were often related to one another. To this day, in the popular imagination diplomats are often seen as belonging to a cohort set apart from 'ordinary citizens'. How has such an idea of separation endured? Sharp argues that, to an extent greater than other professionals, diplomats 'not only serve their professional universe, they constitute it' (Sharp 2004: 376). And certainly the privileges and immunities that diplomats enjoy not only constitute the conditions which make diplomatic work possible, but also serve to bolster the perceived 'separateness' of this profession. Beyond this, the norms, roles and traditions of diplomacy created powerful poles of identity to which practitioners could feel bound. Diplomatic services consisted of 'officials representing their governments in foreign capitals (who) possessed similar standards of education, similar experience, and similar aim. They desired the same sort of world. As de Callières had already noticed in 1716, they tended to develop a corporate identity independent of their national identity' (Nicolson 1954: 75). Further, as Neumann (2012) notes, the need to easily know who your 'opposite number' is in another embassy or foreign ministry meant that there were powerful incentives for foreign ministries and diplomatic services to create parallel hierarchical structures.

Of course, perhaps the strongest norms in diplomatic culture are civility and tact. In fact, in Satow's celebrated definition 'diplomacy is the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of relations between the governments of independent states' (Satow 1957: 1). Indeed, these norms have carried over into the quasi-diplomacy of non-state actors: 'As the experience of the Taliban diplomats in the Islamabad diplomatic corps suggests, even

those apparently at war with the world are quick to learn its prevailing forms of civility' (Sharp 2009: 206). While this is the ideal that diplomats should aspire to, it is not always necessarily the reality of diplomatic practice on the ground. Often norms are most apparent in their violation, such as:

Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez's *ad hominem* remarks about US president George W. Bush during the 2006 Annual General Debate [at the UN]. The reaction of UN diplomats to Chavez's speech illustrates how deeply the norm of civility runs in diplomatic culture in general and in the UN corps in particular. Many linked Venezuela's subsequent failure to win a coveted two-year term on the Security Council to that speech. (Wiseman 2007: 256)

Indeed, although the 'majority of diplomatic relations, even the most difficult and politically charged ones, are still conducted with great civility ... it is widely believed that the standard of civility achieved in modern diplomacy has now greatly declined' (Sharp 2009: 205).

Sharp attributes this to international relations today being 'more culturally divided, ideologically driven and popularly based' (*ibid.*). Indeed English School proponents of diplomatic culture (Wight 1979; Bull 2002) expressed concern about its declining standards, which they saw as a result of a dilution of a shared international culture. It is worth noting that, in general, a decline of formality and manners is noted throughout the modern era in many spheres of social life, and so this lament may simply speak to a larger phenomenon. Still, the decline of diplomatic culture might be remedied by enhanced engagement in practices of professionalization.

Given these shared norms, obligations and traditions it would stand to reason that the training of individual diplomats would be not only key to their admission to the profession, but would be as standardized across national diplomatic services as other aspects of diplomatic culture are. Nevertheless, this is far from true (e.g., Cohen 1997) – there is a remarkable lack of consistency across states in terms of the provision and nature of



diplomatic training (e.g., extensive training in Spain, minimal in the UK and US where most training has, to date, been done ‘on the job’). In this way, the continued class-based elements of diplomatic culture can be seen, as particular elite schools in both the US and UK might be understood as providing training in diplomatic culture without being vocational training. However, as countries like the UK increasingly aim to recruit a representative work force to the Foreign Office, such informal systems of training are increasingly seen as inadequate, and change is coming.

Whilst diplomats are perceived as specialists in the technical aspects of their art – particularly in ‘precise and accurate communication’ (Bull 2002: 173) – they have traditionally been generalists when it comes to knowledge and experience. But diplomatic practice is changing: diplomats are now expected to engage with far more than ‘just’ foreign policy. Their remit may now include issues of trade and investment, humanitarian aid, environmental regulation and public health. As such, contemporary international relations increasingly require specialists (Riordan 2003): ‘an elite society of cultured, educated diplomats ... have been replaced by technically competent experts whose knowledge and experience are limited to very few issue areas, and who do not have the cultural background evident in the old diplomacy’ (Lipschutz 1996: 107) (See also Chapters 6, 7, 12, 14 and 21 in this Handbook)

### Key Points

- Shift from aristocratic to professional diplomacy is an ongoing process, with many cultural holdovers.
- Professionalization entailed the production of a body of knowledge that could be perpetuated and modified by diplomats themselves
- Diplomatic culture has much continuity with the past, such as tact and civility. However, new professional demands require new skills.
- There is a trend towards greater formalisation of diplomatic training and a shift from diplomats being generalists to increasingly requiring specialist knowledge.

## ALTERNATIVE AND NEW DIPLOMATIC CULTURES

The idea of a monolithic diplomatic culture is a denial of the difference that diplomacy seeks to overcome. As Sofer notes, ‘The duality of closeness and estrangement is inherent in diplomacy, as it is always surrounded by suspicion and divided loyalties’ (Sofer 2007: 35). This is true both in a general sense and in particular encounters. Regarding the former, Costas Constantinou (2006) argues for homo-diplomacy, an understanding of diplomacy that draws on two aspects of diplomatic practice that remain understudied: (1) non-professional, non-state diplomacy and (2) the transformative potential of diplomacy.

Within this context, homo-diplomacy would be about the mediation of same-ness, internal mediation, as a condition for as well as a neglected aspect of the mediation of the estranged. In homo-diplomacy not only the Other but the Self becomes strange, a site to be known or known anew. Self becomes strange so as to creatively deal with alterity, overcoming the diplomatic fixation of clear and unambiguous identity, which renders mediation a one-dimensional external process. (Constantinou 2006: 352)

In this sense, we can see diplomatic cultures, in the plural, as proliferating and relational. Human encounters (whether between polities or not) are necessarily diplomatic as they both seek to bridge the Self/Other divide and enable communication, cooperation, or something more – like the creation of a new ‘us’. Further, each encounter not only changes those communicated with, but also changes the Self. Diplomatic cultures therefore can be understood as alive, dynamic and hardly the stable structural ground on which international society is built.

Intriguingly, Constantinou (2006) argues that a missing dimension in contemporary diplomacy is the role of spirituality – with its emphasis on knowing the Other so that one might know thyself – as an antidote to the *raison d’Etat* that Machiavelli introduced to European diplomacy. Parallel



to Constantinou's argument, although not framed as homo-diplomacy, is Megoran's (2010) study of the Reconciliation Walk, in which evangelical Christians walked the path of the first Crusade to apologize for it. The unexpected outcome of the evangelicals' own transformation through the process – reversing their previous understandings of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict – is an indicator of the transformative potential within diplomatic practices, even when conducted by non-traditional diplomatic actors.

Of course, any analysis of encounters between differing diplomatic cultures (in the traditional, macro-sense) illustrates how such an encounter is an event that changes both. When the Iroquois engaged in diplomacy with European states, it was not done on strictly European terms but instead was a hybrid set of practices that were improvised over time and conventionalized:

Although the roots of forest diplomacy can be traced to the Iroquois Condolence Council, a ritual for mourning dead chiefs and installing their successors, by the mid-eighteenth century it incorporated many elements borrowed from European practice. Gun salutes, toasts, the distribution of European trade goods as presents at the conclusion of councils, and especially the keeping of written records of the proceedings and treaties were European innovations. [...] In order to be successful in their dealings with the Iroquois, English government officials found it necessary to operate within the established system of Iroquois council protocol, just as the Indians had to accept and adopt certain colonial practices. (Hagedorn 1988: 60–1)

It could be argued that this is a historical example drawing from a time in which the state system was not yet universal. But this is to miss Constantinou's primary point, which is that all human encounters are efforts to overcome estrangement.

Even within the established, formalized diplomatic protocol (the heart of official diplomatic culture) there are geographic variations and emphases. In Iver Neumann's words, 'clashes on the level of practices are fairly everyday in diplomacy, and they are to a certain degree inevitable' (Neumann 2012: 316).

Indeed, in an interview with one of the authors, a Canadian protocol officer noted that:

We have other countries too who, there's no difference in what their expectations are *per se*, but just the way they go about it is more informal. There's still a definite expectation that their head of state is received in a certain way, but the preparation and the lead-up to it has a different kind of tone and is more informal. Our Latin colleagues, for example, are like that, just more relaxed. (unpublished interview, 2010)

Therefore diplomatic encounters require cultural 'translators' – those individuals who not only speak the 'universal' diplomatic language but also understand the local dialect. Indeed, it is notable that state visits are negotiated between the protocol officers of the receiving country and the staff at the local embassy of the sending country; the stage for diplomacy must be set by a pre-diplomacy conducted between these interlocutors, who presumably have a minimal cultural divide:

When the country we're receiving comes to prepare their state visit or their official visit they all have demands [...] and then we have to negotiate [...] It's just an example but if our standard is a six foot wide red carpet but they want ten feet, these are the little variants they might have in terms of demands. (unpublished interview, 2010)

As a result of this recognition of difference, recent studies have eschewed studies of abstract diplomatic cultures – whether universal or national – and have turned to diplomats as embodied practitioners. The rise of studies using ethnography (Neumann 2005; 2007) or drawing on the work of Bourdieu (Adler-Nissen 2012; Kuus 2014) to examine the lived performance of diplomacy marks this practice turn within diplomatic studies.

The practice turn thus enables the recognition of each diplomatic encounter as both a repetition of well-established protocols or scripts, and also a unique performance different from all previous encounters (Deleuze 1994). Draining 'diplomacy' of its categorical status and shifting attention from a monolithic diplomatic culture to a multiplicity of

diplomacies has enabled a greater recognition of the various diplomacies that might formerly have fallen outside our attention. The above example of the travelling American evangelicals apologizing for the Crusades is a good start, and indeed religion provides a range of examples of non-state politics engaging in diplomacy (e.g., McConnell et al., 2012).

Another area in which diplomacy thrives beyond the sovereign state system is in the realm of indigenous peoples, who have a topological relationship with the states in whose territories they exist: both within and yet beyond the state (Jennings 1985). As Marshall Beier notes, indigenous diplomatic relations and cultures long pre-dated the arrival of Europeans in the Americas and elsewhere, and in recent years there has been a 'growing prominence of Indigenous peoples in international fora, not merely as an issue, but as important and effectual global political actors in their own right' (Beier 2007: 9). Yet, scholarship within international relations has been 'almost completely silent on indigenous peoples, their diplomacies and the distinctly non-Western cosmologies that underwrite and enable them' (Beier 2010: 11). Attending to the diversity of indigenous diplomatic cultures can offer a revealing lens on the 'boundaries of hegemonic understandings of diplomacy as well as what constitutes bona fide diplomatic practice' (Beier 2007: 10; de Costa 2007). Beyond religion and indigeneity, 'diplomacy' can be seen to proliferate in many directions, including the paradiplomacy of cities (Acuto 2013) and regions (Aldecoa and Keating 1999; Cornago 2013). Each varietal both mimics 'official' diplomacy in some ways even as it inflects it with regional or cultural specificity. Diplomatic culture serves as a hegemonic norm that paradiplomatic and indigenous actors can nevertheless draw legitimacy from even as they subvert it for their own purposes.

If each of these groups' diplomatic encounters draws on some general sense of what 'diplomatic culture' is or ought to be, and yet is also inflected by particular context

in which that encounter is occurring, then we can imagine diplomatic culture as the aggregate of these encounters, clustered around one another in a possibility space with a few outliers. Further, if diplomatic encounters are transformative, with both the sender and received changed by the experience, and if each group is having encounters with multiple groups, then 'diplomatic culture' must be imagined as not only multiplicitous but also dynamic. A constant flux and flow ripples through the networks of diplomacy, with norms and expectations changing over time in a radically de-centred fashion:

So, the president of Japan is coming – Prime Minister, sorry – coming with foreign media. We used to provide ground transportation for all of them, so we would rent buses and vans and we would look after them. We consult and we talk amongst each other and we realized that geesh, the past ten visits our Prime Minister has done abroad and not one country has provided a van to *our* media, so why are we doing it? So we adjust our standards and that's pretty much international practice. (unpublished interview, 2010)

Given the number of diplomacies in play – with new diplomacies emerging all the time – there is no chance for the dynamism of this multiplicity to settle out. Rather, we are left with a de-centred, amorphous, dynamic set of diplomatic cultures: each sharing some commonalities with the others yet remaining distinct, both from the others and from past selves (see also Chapters 42, 43, 50 and 52 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Any diplomatic encounter necessarily involves different national 'dialects' of diplomatic culture.
- Homo-diplomacy highlights both the transformational possibilities of these encounters and the need to account for diplomacies beyond the state.
- Research following from the practice turn in diplomatic studies enables us to consider each encounter as it is performed rather than through abstract categories like diplomatic culture.
- There is increasing recognition of multiple diplomatic cultures articulated by state and non-state actors.

## CONCLUSION

Diplomatic culture refers to an ensemble of practices, comportments and historical precedents which may or may not be found in any specific new encounter. Attempts to nail down what is, or what is not, diplomatic culture are therefore bound to fail. Fruitful ways to study diplomatic culture in the future would seem to be rooted in the recognition of its inherent fractured, multiplicitous nature. Two conceptualizations stand out: Bourdieu's notion of habitus and Bhabha's idea of mimicry. The former emphasizes the embodied nature of diplomacy, considering the tastes, dispositions and habits of its practitioners in particular contexts (Kuus 2014). The latter concept, from literary theory, refers to the subversive adoption of a culture, an adoption that is always incomplete (McConnell et al. 2012). Therefore mimicry leads to continued fragmentation of diplomatic culture, even as it relies on the coherence of the category for its power. It is a paradoxical relation that speaks to the tensions in the entire concept of diplomatic culture we have highlighted above.

## NOTE

- 1 This was originally published in 1977.

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# Diplomacy and the Arts

Iver B. Neumann<sup>1</sup>

While the last two decades have seen a coming of age of the study of aesthetics in international relations (Bleiker 2009, Danchev and Lisle 2009), the diplomatic arena remains understudied. What little there is we find scattered across disciplines such as history, art history, musicology, geography and, indeed, international relations and political science. This chapter looks at the prominent aspect of aesthetics that has to do with art, broadly understood as the high-status genres of culturally significant expression (literature, painting and so on), as well as cultural artefacts that also attempt to concentrate life experience but have a broader appeal (popular culture). It only tangentially relates to the wider aesthetics agenda of scrutinizing the visual and sensual appreciation of the (diplomatic) world in general. I concentrate on two general interfaces between art and diplomacy and catalogue extant work that is particularly ripe for follow-up. En route, I also take note of this field's many lacunae.

Diplomacy is about communicating with the other. It is also instrumental, in that

communication is supposed to change people's minds. For the individual diplomat, it is, as sociologists have put it for half a century, about impression management. Impression management is about face work – direct communication – and face work always happens in contexts. Those contexts have a visual quality. The sites and the artefacts that go into creating the sites have a user value. A negotiation table may be rectangular to facilitate leadership from one of its short ends, or it may be round, so that all participants seated around it are placed on a par in a physical sense. However, the sites and artefacts used also have an aesthetic quality. A negotiation table may be plain, ornamented, beautiful and so on. One way in which diplomacy and the arts interact concerns the constitution of diplomatic sites. This is the topic of the first part of the chapter.

Art is also about communication. It represents phenomena. One such phenomenon is diplomacy. We find paintings, including portrait paintings, of diplomats, we find

diplomats on the pages of novels and we find diplomats being represented on stage. Here we find another interface between diplomacy and the arts. Note that ‘the arts’ as a term privileges a certain set of cultural artefacts with high social status. Works of art are an obvious match when diplomats meet, for diplomats also have a high social standing. It is no coincidence that persons and artefacts of high social standing crop up in the same place, for they partly owe their high social standing to their association with one another. Art is not the only place where we find representations of diplomats, however. If art is ‘high culture’, there must necessarily also exist a ‘low culture’ or, to use the general expression, popular culture. If art is associated with high status and so is politically constitutive of privileged position, popular culture is associated with low status and so is associated with authority and legitimacy. How diplomacy is represented in genres that are historically considered to be low, such as novels with a mass readership, films, TV series, cartoons (Hansen 2011) and comics (Dodds 2007), is important for the legitimacy of both diplomacy and diplomats, for popular culture normalizes phenomena. I discuss this in the second part of the chapter.

Note should also be taken of an underlying factor of the relationship between diplomacy and art, which is particularly present when artists and diplomats meet. Artists depend on Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs) and other customers for their livelihood. At the same time, artists take an interest in how their works are consumed. I once addressed the annual meeting held by the Norwegian MFA on the matter of art and diplomacy. Norway is a consensus-seeking country, so all the major arts have their professional national organizations and they all have institutionalized cooperation with the MFA. Their representatives were present at the occasion. While most of what I said went down well, the representative of the organization for national painters objected vehemently when I pointed out that, as seen from

the point of view of an ambassador, the major point with a painting that adorns a residence or an embassy is to make for a conversation piece. Her objection was not to the factual – she did not contest my observation as such – but to the fact that the world was not more of an ‘art for art’s sake’ kind of place. I would argue that she underestimated the political potential of her guild, for by definition, the surplus of meaning that makes a piece of art great has the ‘ability to escape being instrumentalised for political purposes’ (Butler and Bleiker 2014: 1). Some cultural artefacts make for a certain illness-at-ease which has an invariance-breaking potential. It is certainly the case that diplomats make use of artistic work, but it is also the case that the best of such work also makes use of diplomacy, in the sense that they challenge what is taken for granted. Diplomats try in various degrees to aestheticise politics, but the politics of the aesthetic will always be about more than such instrumentalisation of cultural artefacts.

In conclusion, I speculate about yet another intersection between art and diplomacy, namely how the two may meet in scholarly analysis of diplomacy.

## USES OF ART IN DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION

The perhaps most conspicuous use of art in diplomacy concerns so-called signature buildings. MFAs are frequently shorthanded by their addresses – ‘Itimaraty’ for the Japanese MFA, ‘Ballhausplatz’ for the Austro-Hungarian MFA, ‘Quai d’Orsay’ for the French one – and the addresses are shorthand for the building itself. The buildings tend to be monumental. By the same token, permanent embassies are often works of art, drawn by architects with a view to capturing the face of the country being represented (the Nordic embassy complex in Berlin comes to mind), or hybridization between the country



represented and the host nation (the American embassy in New Dehli would be an example of this) or avantguardism in world architecture (French embassies tend to be particularly elegant). Since the nation represented often adds to the bragging by publishing richly illustrated brochures or even entire books about their embassy buildings, there is a rich empirical literature. There is, however, little of any scholarly value. The key work is a broad overview of American diplomatic architecture (Loeffler 1998). The American 'fortress model', which is a radical break with aesthetics and a turn towards a hedgehog model of security, aims to churn out embassies in three ready-made module sizes to be collated on site. During the Cold War, a self-assured United States aimed to be a dominating presence in the middle of the world's capitals. Now they hide in heavily guarded compounds in suburbs. Loeffler (2012) has also written about how diplomats have tried to stand up to this development, so far with little success. Meanwhile, the rest of the world continues to build embassies according to various aesthetic standards.

The aim to dazzle one's own subjects as well as visiting diplomats with monumental architecture, works of fine art and other heavily wrought artefacts has a long pedigree that stretches back at least to Pharaonic Egypt and probably to Mesopotamia. The key example in the literature is, however, Byzantium. Byzantine emperors dazzled their visitors with sensual stimuli. For the eyes, there were great halls, beautiful colours and roaring mechanical lions behind the throne. For the ears, the lions as well as beautiful music. The touch got feather-light silks and the palate got the most exquisite dishes. The root metaphor of Byzantine diplomacy was that, in line with the state religion, which held that the Emperor was God's representative on earth, guests who came to Byzantium actually arrived in the earthly representation of heaven. The use of art was consistently and emphatically geared towards bringing out the heavenly quality of the host country (Neumann 2006).

There is probably no form of plastic art, from the traditional European oil painting to installations, that has not been pressed into this kind of diplomatic service. Ministries of Foreign Affairs will usually have one or more people, often art historians, who are in charge of buying art to adorn the MFA itself as well as its embassies. Once again, the empirical literature covering specific ministries and specific embassies is brimming with illustrations and presentations of these works, but little or nothing has been done on how specific countries choose to represent themselves by way of specific kinds of artefacts with specific kinds of motives over time. There are entire literatures available to tap for such a task, with the one on how nations have represented themselves at world exhibitions and international art exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale lying perhaps closest to hand (Martini and Martini 2011; for an introduction, see Løfgren 1993). Danish researchers Lene Hansen and Rebecca Adler-Nissen are at work on how countries choose to represent themselves during the art exhibitions that are regular official fringe events during European Union summits.<sup>2</sup>

If self-presentation in terms of embassy design and interior decoration has not been much studied, there is another kind of diplomatic self-presentation that is well covered historically. This is the diplomatic gift, artefacts that are exchanged on the occasion of meetings and visits (see French 2010). These artefacts tend to be luxury goods, which Appadurai (1986: 38) defines as 'goods whose principal use is rhetorical and social, goods are simply incarnation signs, the necessity to which they respond is fundamentally political'. Works of art are such goods and, historically, they are richly represented in diplomatic gift exchanges. One exemplary study that focuses on the materiality of the gifts exchanged is a special issue of the niche journal *Studies in the Decorative Arts* dedicated to Early Modern European Diplomatic Gifts (Cassidy-Geiger 2007–2008). Note should also be made of the fact that music, which had

religious significance, was a frequently used gift in mediaeval East Asian diplomacy (Pratt 1971). Within the understudied field of diplomacy and art, the study of music is particularly understudied; but for groundbreaking research on the fairly obvious topic of what kind of music is played during diplomatic proceedings and beyond, see Agnew (2008) as well as Ahrendt et al. (2014).

Art and its presentation abroad was, once again, a staple in East Asian diplomacy, where artists were often part of embassies. It has remained an important part of so-called cultural diplomacy. Orchestras, in the European case often but not exclusively symphony orchestras, seem to be a popular choice, particularly when relations between two states have glazed over and are in need of thawing. In such cases, art is not used contextually and contemporaneously, but as an overture to hoped-for and subsequent diplomacy (see Gienow-Hecht 2009).

One of the few works on art and diplomacy with a theoretical intent discusses Australia's use of aboriginal art in its diplomatic campaigns to establish itself as a United Nations member in the 1940s and again in its campaign to secure a seat at the Security Council in the 2000s. In the first case, Australia used art to underline its difference from the imperial homeland and its similarity to the US. In the second case, it played to the indigenous lobby at the UN. Butler and Bleiker (2014: 6) note laconically that '[t]he kind of cultural diplomacy at play here was rather different to how it is sometimes seen: as an exchange of art and other cultural artifacts and ideas in the spirit of genuinely increasing cross-cultural understanding'.

Art may also be found as an object of diplomatic communication. There is first the fraught issue of return of objects of art after a stint of colonialism, or after war. The paradigmatic example of the former is possibly the so-called Parthenon or Elgin Marbles. While serving as British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire around 1800, the Earl of Elgin negotiated a deal whereby Britain took – most Greeks would say stole – ancient

Greek sculptures from the Parthenon. The ill-begotten marbles remain in the British Museum to this day and remain also a thorny issue in British–Greek diplomatic relations (Rudenstine 1999). These marbles are the most visible case of such repatriation debates, which are ubiquitous in post-colonial settings.

The most well-known post-war parallel to post-colonial tugs of war over stolen art is probably the case of Nazi Germany's looting of paintings during its occupation of a number of other countries during the Second World War (De Jaeger 1981). Seventy years later, the issue keeps cropping up on the diplomatic agenda every time a new case of theft comes to light.

Finally, art may also be a standard object of running diplomatic relations between two states, as when an art exhibition goes on tour and logistics have to be worked out. If relations between the two states in question are distant, this tends to be treated as a state-to-state affair, with diplomats on both sides being active. If the context is close diplomatic relations, however, the sending and the receiving museums or foundations will be the main actors, with diplomats at the respective MFAs and embassies providing support from the wings (see also Chapters 5–7, 35 and 43 in this Handbook).

## Key Points

- Art is important as a context for diplomacy, in the form of architecture, decoration, music etc., to create the right ambience.
- Art, particularly paintings, but also music, is a frequent diplomatic gift, often aiming to give expression to a certain trait of the giver or of the relationship between giver and receiver.
- Art and its presentation, particularly in the forms of touring ensembles, is a staple amongst ways of thawing frozen relations.
- Art and its return after colonial exploits or war has been the object of heated diplomatic debates.
- Art is also an object of standard running diplomatic communication, when countries cooperate about art exhibitions etc.

## REPRESENTING DIPLOMACY IN THE ARTS AND POPULAR CULTURE

Diplomacy does not produce art directly. The closest thing would probably be the calligraphy that has gone into certain treaty documents produced by diplomatic negotiation. Then there are the commissioned buildings, paintings, furniture and other artefacts commissioned for use in and around permanent or fleeting sites. Ministries and individual diplomats commission portraits and biographies. Representations of diplomats in the arts may or may not be spawned by such a history.

The genre of high culture where diplomats seem to be most present is literature, with the European novel standing out as the most crowded genre (Shapiro 1989). Again, there is little scholarly literature, but a recent doctoral thesis looks at the British post-Second World War novel as an attempt at setting out to former imperial and colonial subjects both what happened, often with a view to reconciliation, and thinks of this as a kind of diplomacy (Krzakowski 2011 and 2015). Impressionistically, English, German, French, Russian and Scandinavian literatures seem to treat the diplomat as a vain, swinging dipsomaniac (for paradigmatic examples of this, see Albert Cohen's *Belle du Seigneur* [1968] and William Boyd's *A Good Man in Africa* [1981]). Further study is certain to disclose other representations and regional variation. Particularly stimulating works that point us in this direction are Constantinou (2000) and Badel et al. (2012).

Painting is yet another genre where representations of diplomats, and to some degree diplomacy, is rife. Luke (2002) and Sylvester (2009) have done groundbreaking work on international relations on display in museums, but the only literature that specifically concerns diplomacy focusses on Early Modern Europe. Perhaps due to a combination of rich literary pickings, limited numbers of personnel to study and the advent of permanent diplomatic representation, this particular chronotope has

been the focal point of the only concerted thrust of literary scholarship of diplomats. This work was begun within the discipline of International Relations (Constantinou 1994, but see also Strong 1984) and subsequently taken up by literary historians (Watkins 2008, Charry and Shahani 2009, Netzloff 2011). Spurred, among other things, by the publication of Timothy Hampton's *Fictions of Embassy* (2009), a work that concentrates on the intertext between diplomacy and literature during the Renaissance, Oxford University harbours a 'textual ambassadors network'.

Yet another reason why the Renaissance has been the almost sole focus of scholarly concern regarding the painting of diplomats may reside in the somewhat anachronistic fact that the paradigmatic painting of the European diplomat remains Hans Holbein the Younger's *The Ambassadors* (1553), on display in the National Gallery, London. A certain collusion of art forms over the centuries is suggested by the fact that the oil painting is dominated by a foregrounded anamorphic skull, the art term for which is a *vanitas*. The picture features on the cover of the book that introduced theory to diplomatic studies (Der Derian 1987) and was indeed the main focus of the article that inaugurated the literature on diplomacy and the arts (Constantinou 1994).

Two art genres stand out when it comes to representing diplomacy. These are science fiction and fantasy. They are both ostensibly non-mimetic, and they are both, probably to some degree for that very reason, traditionally categorized as popular. Science fiction fastens on the question of what it is to be human. One of the major ways of exploring the issue is by juxtaposing the human species with other animals on the one hand, and with cybernetic beings on the other. Another is to have humans interact with other self-aware (or, in the lingo, sentient) but extraterrestrial species. Fantasy fastens on the question of fantastic beings, often in interaction with humans. Where there are different polities that attempt communication, there is diplomacy. Diplomacy is, therefore,

a frequently discussed practice in science fiction and fantasy. A number of artefacts, such as the science fiction TV show *Babylon Five* (1993–1997) or the Hollywood movies *The Constant Gardener* (2015) and *The Whistleblower* (2010), have the conduct of diplomacy as their main theme.

While the study of the relationship between international relations and popular culture in general has yielded a by now crowded shelf, however, the study of how diplomacy is represented in popular culture is in its infancy. I only know of two scholarly works. One is a study of diplomacy in the American television franchise *Star Trek* (1966–present), which fastens on how in-show *Star Trek* representations of the dilemmas inhering in talking to the enemy while violence may be ongoing or imminent are more sophisticated than what we find in much American foreign policy debate (Neumann 2001). The other is a reading of how a character in the *Harry Potter* universe (novels 1997–2007, films 2001–2011), who hails from two different species one of which is depicted as much older than the other, stands in for the indigenous peoples of this world. The half-giant Hagrid's in-book failure as a diplomat whose mission it is to mediate between humans and giants corresponds to in-world problems of establishing diplomatic relations between sovereign states and indigenous polities (see Chapter 52 in this Handbook; also Epp 2001).

One genre that holds out particularly low-hanging fruit for International Relations scholarship is video games. Despite the fact that its turnover has been larger than that of the film industry for years, it has yet to receive any attention whatsoever. Ian Bogost's (2007, 2011) work is key to the opening up of video games for scholarly attention, and suggests a number of foci for diplomatic studies: which kinds of (artificial) cultural environments that offer variation that invite diplomatic selection rather than, say, war; under which circumstances diplomacy is represented as yielding Pareto optimal outcomes, and so on. If millions of people, with adolescents and

young adults prominent amongst them, spend long hours exerting agency within these simulated worlds, one would hypothesize that there would be some kind of spill-over between how they represent the world and how they decide on it in-game and in-world. These and related problems are ripe for the scholarly picking.

With the opening up of diplomacy to wider public scrutiny, representations of diplomats in the arts and in popular culture may become ever more important. Diplomats mediate between polities. For an increasing number of both state and non-state diplomats, that means that they mediate on behalf of professional politicians. Increasingly, politicians are dependent on day-to-day support from a large number of polity members in order to remain in office and get things done. The key tool for politicians to maintain legitimacy is now the media. A consequence of this is that the media are the key provider of legitimacy. There is no reason whatsoever to read 'the media' as news media only; the media include mass media, but also traditional media such as exhibitions. With an increasing political role for the media in producing legitimacy for politicians, the media's political poignancy is on the up, and their representations of phenomena such as diplomacy are on the increase, for they contribute to diplomacy's legitimacy in the eyes of the polity at large, and politicians increasingly have to take the question of legitimacy seriously. This argument carries different weight in different political settings throughout the globe, but regardless of degree of censorship, there is hardly a place left where it can be totally ignored (see also Chapters 1, 3, 8 and 11 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Representations of diplomats in the arts seem to be rather one-dimensional, but the issue awaits scholarship.
- Popular culture, particularly the genres of science fiction and fantasy, frequently discuss diplomacy, often in sophisticated ways.

- When politicians' need for legitimacy increases, so does their dependency on favourable representations of what they do, including their diplomacy.

## CONCLUSION

Diplomacy uses art as a prop in staging contexts and easing communication. Art and popular culture represent the phenomenon of diplomacy. Both issues remain understudied. In conclusion, I should like to touch on the issue of a third way in which art and diplomacy intersect. This is art as a potential prop for the analysis of diplomacy. Every picture tells a story. Photography and other visual or linguistic representations of diplomacy are, among other things, data about diplomacy in need of analysis of what they tell us about diplomacy (Kennedy 2003). They may be particularly useful for what they tell us about a deeply understudied aspect of diplomacy, namely the emotional work that diplomats do when they keep themselves under control, and also when they try to change the emotions of their interlocutors. Emma Hutchison (2014: 14) has recently argued that representations, by which she specifically means photography and other mechanic or non-mechanic means of depicting phenomena, are 'a key to conceptualizing the linkages between the individual and collective politics of emotion. Representation is the process through which individual emotions [...] can acquire a collective dimension and, in turn, shape social and political processes'.

Diplomacy is constitutive of international relations (Sending et al. 2015). Diplomatic practices are the very sinews of transnational relations. When we say that 'France and Togo met', we usually mean that there has been a diplomatic meeting. Such meetings are documented in various ways, with visual images taking a prominent place amongst them. And yet, most analysts of international relations choose not to avail themselves of this material. That is indefensible, for any scholarly

discipline or sub-discipline is under an imperative to draw on as wide a sample of data as possible. As I have tried to demonstrate here, many promising inroads have been made. The field of diplomacy and art offers a number of themes that are ripe for the picking, and may be in the process of becoming a separate sub-field of the study of diplomacy.

## NOTES

1. The chapter is part of a project on Images and International Security based at Copenhagen University and funded by the Danish Research Council for Independent Research, grant no. DFF -132-00056B.
2. Hansen, Lene and Rebecca Adler-Nissen 'Self presentations at fringe art exhibitions at EU Summits', unpublished ms.

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# Diplomatic Ethics

Corneliu Bjola

## INTRODUCTION

What does it mean to act ethically as a diplomat? What is the latter supposed to do when caught in the horns of a moral dilemma? What kind of normative prescriptions is she required to follow in morally ambiguous situations? Under what conditions can she break ranks and pursue a moral agenda? Should a diplomat, for instance, serve as a loyal deputy to the prince regardless of the orders that he is being asked to execute, or as De Vera once pointed out, he should be ready to risk 'his job, the favor of the prince and perhaps his life' (Berridge 2004: 93) when he judges the assigned mission to be unjust? Similarly, should a diplomat represent only the interests of her government or, as Adam Watson argued, should she also consider the impact the representation of these interests may have on international or regional stability (Watson 1984)? Equally important, should a diplomat refuse to let considerations of pragmatic expediency influence his moral

stance on issues, or as Edmund Burke once observed, 'a statesman, never losing sight of principles, is to be guided by circumstances; and, judging contrary to the exigencies of the moment, he may ruin his country forever' (Burke and Stanlis 1997). In other words, what normative challenges do diplomats face in their day-to-day work, how do they handle them, and to what extent are they capable to shape or transcend the ethical limitations of their profession?

Unlike the more systematic study of the constitutive role of moral principles in international affairs (Rosenthal and Barry 2009), the question of diplomatic ethics has been rather sparsely discussed in the scholarly literature. The few notable studies that have approached the subject have sought to examine the space of compatibility between ethics and diplomacy (Toscano 2001), unpack the international legal constraints on diplomacy (Bolewski 2007) or discuss the normative underpinnings of diplomatic conduct in contemporary international relations (Bjola

and Kornprobst 2013: 147–98). Building on these studies, this chapter seeks to develop an applied conceptual framework for understanding the ethical imperatives and challenges of diplomatic practice. In so doing, it aspires to advance the debate on diplomatic ethics from more general assumptions regarding the ethical discourse in diplomacy as mentioned above, to more tangible conclusions about how moral principles concretely inform, regulate or constrain the practice of diplomacy.

Diplomacy and ethics have always shared a controversial relationship, primarily because of the competing moral constraints and responsibilities that diplomats have to juggle in their work. On the one hand, diplomats' capacity to exercise moral agency is limited by the very nature of diplomatic agency. Diplomats do not represent themselves, but they always act on behalf of a collective authority (primarily states, but also regional organizations or international institutions). Diplomatic agency is thus the result of a conditional transfer of prerogatives from the legitimate authority to the diplomat (Neumann 2005). It is this delegation of authority that makes it possible for diplomats to perform their traditional functions of representation, information-gathering and negotiation (United Nations 1961: Art 3). On the other hand, diplomacy puts people in touch with power, albeit in a paradoxical manner: diplomats largely live and work in the proximity of power, but they rarely exercise the power directly (Sharp 2009: 58). However, as Diderot reminds us, power always comes with boundaries: it 'presupposes conditions which makes its exercise legitimate, useful to society, advantageous to the republic, fixing and restraining it within limits' (Diderot et al. 1992: 7). In sum, whereas the restricted scope of diplomatic agency partially protects diplomats against ethical scrutiny, their exercise of power, even in an indirect manner, subjects them by necessity to considerations of moral accountability.

The inbuilt tension between agency and power largely frames the terms of debate on

diplomatic ethics: to what extent are diplomats morally accountable for their actions given the limited scope of agency they enjoy and on what principled basis should a moral inquiry of diplomatic conduct be pursued given the subdued manner in which diplomats exercise power? This chapter argues that the answer to the first question rests with the principle of loyalty, while the second question could be most fruitfully addressed from a contextually based perspective. More specifically, the way in which loyalty is understood in specific circumstances of diplomatic engagement informs the scope of diplomatic agency and the ethical boundaries of diplomatic use of power. I develop this argument in two steps. The first section provides an overview of the evolution of the concept of diplomatic ethics from three distinct angles: Loyalty to the Prince; Loyalty to the State and Loyalty to People. The second part introduces the phronetic method of ethical analysis and explains its added-value for understanding how diplomats address ethical challenges as professionals and how to normatively assess their actions (see also Chapters 1, 2 and 7 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Diplomatic ethics concerns itself with the dual question of whether and under what conditions diplomats can be held morally accountable for their actions.
- Diplomats are legitimate subjects of moral inquiry since, despite having limited agency, they exercise power via functions of representation, information-gathering and negotiation.

### **THE EVOLUTION OF DIPLOMATIC ETHICS**

Loyalty refers to 'the obligation implied in the personal sense of historical connection to a defining set of familial, institutional and national relationships' (Fletcher 1995: 3).

As a principle of social conduct, loyalty goes beyond friendship, gratitude or respect and includes 'the willing, practical, and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause' (J. Royce cited in Foust 2012: 41). It also comes with a critical reluctance about hastily shifting one's associations when they fail to deliver on their initial expectations and with a willingness to bear the costs of persistence (Hirschman 1970: 78). At the same time, loyalty must be distinguished from blind obedience and unworthy attachment to a misguided cause (e.g., an extremist ideology), although this distinction is not always easy to draw in practice. As Ewin points out, the line between loyalty and vice is often thin since both rely on different degrees of exclusion. Loyalty to one's country may occasionally mutate, for instance, into extreme forms of nationalism, in which exclusion takes the forms of intolerance and injustice (Ewin 1992: 417). By shedding light on how diplomatic agency and the exercise of power have historically shaped each other, the loyalty principle offers a unique conceptual tool for understanding the evolution of diplomatic ethics.

I pursue this line of inquiry from three different perspectives: diplomatic duty as Loyalty to the Prince; as Loyalty to the State; and as Loyalty to People. For many classical theorists, the scope of diplomatic agency in the early modern period was informed by the degree of loyalty of the diplomatic representative to the ruler of the country. In his famous treaty on diplomatic practice, Wicquefort remarked, for instance, that an ambassador is nothing less than 'a public minister dispatched by a sovereign prince to some foreign potentate or state, there to represent *his person*, by virtue of a power, letter of credence, or some commission that notifies his character' (Wicquefort 2004: 124, my emphasis). In the same vein, Vattel insisted that a public minister 'represents the person in whom resides the rights which he is to look after, maintain and enforce', but he cautioned against the minister being 'regarded as representing the dignity of his sovereign'

(Vattel 2004: 179–80). This understanding of the diplomat as the loyal minister to the prince took a variety of forms in the medieval period. For example, the *nuncius* often served as a 'living letter' by communicating the prince's messages 'in a way that was as near a personal exchange as possible' (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995: 24). By contrast, the *vicarii* had the capacity to stand in the Pope's place and perform official acts on his behalf (Constantinou 1996: 105).

Having the prince as the primary object of diplomatic loyalty had an important ethical implication for how medieval diplomats performed their functions. It extended an aura of moral protection to diplomats by removing considerations of personal honour from the way in which they accomplished their mission in the service of the prince. Diplomats were not supposed to feel ashamed if the ruler called upon them to lie or if they got involved in dishonourable actions on his orders (Black 2010: 44). Remarkably, the line between loyalty and vice was defended by the aristocratic code of honour that prevailed among diplomats at the time and by professional considerations. Wicquefort, who was actually twice imprisoned for espionage while working as a diplomat, agreed that 'the ambassador ought to seek his master's glory and advantage on all occasions' and to that extent he could 'conceal and dissemble his losses'. At the same time, he insisted that a diplomat 'cannot forge nor contrive false pieces without dishonouring his character' (Wicquefort 2004: 132). Machiavelli concurred with Wicquefort about the occasional necessity to 'conceal facts with words', but he also insisted that diplomats should take great care to avoid earning a reputation of 'being mean and dissembling' as that could have negative consequences on their ability to perform their functions (Machiavelli 2004: 41).

The transformation of the international system from a dynastic- to a territorial-sovereign principle of domestic legitimacy after the Peace of Westphalia (Hall 1999) shifted the object of diplomatic loyalty from the prince to the state. Ideologically, this

move was made possible by the doctrine of *raison d'état*, which was intellectually prepared by Machiavelli's reflections on statesmanship, but was given a coherent structure as a guiding principle of foreign policy by Cardinal Richelieu (Butterfield 1975: 11). The importance of the new doctrine on diplomatic relations cannot be overstated. The idea that the 'public interest ought to be the sole objective of the prince [...] and preferred to all private gain' (Hill 1961: 76) shortly became 'the fundamental principle of national conduct, the State's first Law of Motion' (Meinecke 1984: 1). An important part of the explanation for its success lay with the fact that it offered states a way to establish and maintain international order in disregard of ethical considerations. What mattered was no longer the religious orientation of the rulers, but the survival of the state through the accumulation and rational use of power. At the same time, as Kissinger notes, the concept of *raison d'état* had no in-built limitations as if everything would be permitted in order to satisfy the interests of the state (Kissinger 1994: 66).

*Raison d'état* transformed diplomatic loyalty from a personal type of relationship between the diplomat and the prince as in the early modern period, into an impersonal mode of affiliation to a collective entity, the state. The implications of this move were subtle but far-reaching. First, the scope of diplomatic agency expanded. The diplomat was still serving the sovereign, but from the broader perspective of protecting and enhancing the stature of the state and not of the prince. While this theoretical distinction would usually face no challenge in practice, it would occasionally force diplomats to take sides. Talleyrand defended, for instance, his controversial shifts of political loyalties during his diplomatic career on the grounds that he sought to protect France against Napoleon's misjudgements (Talleyrand-Périgord 1891: 101). Second, the *raison d'état* made the line between loyalty and vice more difficult to hold. If ethical

considerations are deemed irrelevant for the conduct of foreign policy and if everything is permitted in the name of state survival, then what would stop diplomats from using their power to breach international law and to even foment war – as illustrated by the case of the Third Reich's Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop (Salter and Charlesworth 2006)?

The excesses attributed to *raison d'état* diplomacy were seen as determinant in the outbreak of World War I. This prompted a rethinking of the diplomatic method in general, and of the relationship between diplomacy and ethics in particular, to the point that the very basis of diplomatic loyalty was called into question. Should diplomats represent only the interests of their governments or should they also consider the impact the representation of these interests may have on the international order? As Watson pointed out, states had not only an interest but also a moral obligation to preserve international order and to make it work, a principle he coined as *raison de système* (Watson 1984: 195). The new concept comes, though, with a thorny corollary which places diplomats in front of a serious predicament: on the one hand, if they let the principle of *raison de système* unrestrictedly guide their actions then they risk circumscribing the autonomy of their sovereigns and, by implication, their own position. On the other hand, if they unrestrainedly pursue diplomatic actions in line with the *raison d'état* doctrine, then they risk undermining the 'fabric' of the system itself by demotivating other diplomats from respecting the shared norms and rules that sustain international order (Bjola and Kornprobst 2013: 150).

*Raison de système* takes the question of diplomatic loyalty to a new level of generalization. Unlike the principle of 'Loyalty to the Prince' that keeps the object of diplomatic loyalty at the personal level, or 'Loyalty to the State' that favours the group, the concept of 'Loyalty to People' extends concerns of diplomatic ethics to humankind. In principle, this means that diplomatic agency cannot be restricted to diplomats serving the prince

or the state, but as the English School long argued, diplomats are, in fact, custodians of the international society (Bull 1997: 176; Sofer 2007). In practical terms, this conception of diplomatic agency translates into a commitment to an evolving set of international norms (sovereignty, non-use of force, mutual recognition, continuous dialogue, reasonableness, equality of states) that are constitutive of international order. From an ethical perspective, this move leads, however, to a rather puzzling situation. On the one hand, this cosmopolitan model of agency strengthens the moral profile of diplomats as the set of universal standards of international conduct they help create and reproduce is what makes international cooperation possible (Bjola and Kornprobst 2013: 131–45). On the other hand, it puts them on a collision course with the other sources of diplomatic loyalty. Guarding state interests while defending international norms is a challenging task that invites suspicion and even disregard. As Sofer (1997) insightfully remarks, it renders diplomats into ‘professional strangers’ (Sharp 2009: 100) who cannot comfortably walk the line between loyalty and vice in confidence their professionalism will never be called into question (see also Chapters 4, 5, 8 and 14 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- As loyal ministers of their sovereigns, diplomats benefited from an aura of moral protection in the early modern period; the aristocratic code of honour and professional considerations served as counter-balances to ethical transgressions.
- *Raison d'état* shifted the object of diplomatic loyalty from the prince to the state; this move offered diplomats a moral anchor for challenging the authority of the ruler, but it also made their position more prone to moral abuse.
- The principle of ‘Loyalty to People’ extends concerns of diplomatic ethics to humankind. As custodians of the international society, diplomats face suspicions of divided loyalties, but they also help create and reproduce the norms that make international cooperation possible.

## DIPLOMATIC ETHICS IN PRACTICE

Far from having only a historical character, the three traditions of diplomatic ethics discussed above retain substantial relevance for contemporary diplomatic practice. Whilst diplomats now share the stage with a broad range of actors and institutions, diplomacy remains a dominantly state-centric profession (Hocking et al. 2012: 5). Heads of diplomatic missions are still officially appointed by heads of state and their core mission continues to revolve around serving their countries while upholding international peace. The ethical principles subsumed by the three forms of loyalty (to the prince, to the state and to people) are therefore constitutive of diplomatic agency and they carry analytical weight for examining the normative value of contemporary diplomatic interactions. It should also be noted that, as a method of sustainably managing relationships of estrangement between political communities (Sharp 2009: 10), diplomacy relies on the recognition of a certain degree of institutional and normative heterogeneity, a condition which sits rather uneasily in the company of strong ethical prescriptions. Therefore, attempts to advance a universalistic conceptual framework capable of providing firm ethical prescriptions to every single aspect of the diplomatic lifeworld are rather misplaced and contra-productive for diplomatic theory and practice. Hillary Putnam’s advice that the ‘primary aim of the ethicist [is not to] produce a “system”, but to contribute to the solution of practical problems’ (Putnam 2004: 4) ought therefore to be heeded and acted upon.

That being said, what is a diplomat supposed to do when she faces a loyalty conflict? Should she side with the head of state or government even when the latter is morally wrong, should she pursue state interests as she interprets them even at the expense of her personal loyalty to elected officials, or should she make sure her actions would not endanger international peace even if that would



contradict the official policy of her government? Echoing Putnam, I argue that conflicts of diplomatic loyalty are difficult to reconcile from a theoretically abstract perspective. The contextually rich environment of norms, rules and power relations, in which diplomacy is embedded, is less amenable to scrutiny from Archimedean points of ethical validity. What matters, I argue, is the diplomat's capacity to professionally judge what moral action is appropriate to pursue in a particular context by carefully balancing loyalty demands against each other. Aristotle called this particular skill *phronēsis* – usually translated as 'prudence' or 'practical wisdom' – a form of knowledge concerned with what is context-dependent and particular, rather than what is abstract and universal. The *phronimos*, the one exercising practical wisdom, is an experienced practitioner with strong perceptual and intellectual capacity who can deliberate rightly about 'getting other people's accounts right, and perceiving the details of situations correctly' (Hursthouse 2006: 300).

While the principle of loyalty defines the nature of ethical challenges that diplomats may face in their work, *phronesis* offers them a method for addressing these challenges as professionals. For Ellett, *phronesis* coincides with the range and scope of 'professional judgments'. Being a good professional means 'having not only the (cognitive) capacity to deliberate (judge) well but also the appropriate (affective) attitudes and dispositions' (Ellett Jr. 2012: 17). Put differently, being a competent practitioner, in the technical sense of being able to perform one's functions effectively, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for becoming a professional diplomat (i.e., a *phronimos*). To accomplish this, a diplomat must demonstrate technical skill while taking on board the ethical constraints of his working environment. Drawing on Dewey's concept of 'reflective thinking' (Dewey 1933), Schön develops the concept of *reflection-in-action* for understanding how professional *phronesis* works. For Schön, practitioners frequently face situations of

'uncertainty, complexity, instability, uniqueness and value conflict' (Schön 1983: 17), which are difficult to address from an abstract theoretical perspective. He instead argues that 'doing and thinking are complementary. Doing extends thinking in the tests, moves, and probes of experimental action, and reflection feeds on doing and its results. Each feeds the other, and each sets boundaries for the other' (Schön 1983: 280).

Applied to the case of diplomatic ethics, the concept of reflection-in-action captures the repetitive process of action and reflection by which diplomats seek to align the practical requirements of the situation at hand with the normative imperatives prompted by their divided loyalties. As Schön points out, 'it is the surprising result of action that triggers reflection, and it is the production of a satisfactory move that brings reflection temporarily to a close' (Schön 1983: 280). For example, during the Libyan uprising in 2011, diplomats at Libyan embassies around the world decided to resign from their posts or to disavow links to Gaddafi's government on the grounds that their actions on behalf of the Libyan leader could no longer be reconciled with the ethical requirements of their positions: 'We are not loyal to him, we are loyal to the Libyan people' (Al Jazeera 2011). Their decision is illustrative of the conflicting identities that diplomats carry with them between their professional selves and that of the state they represent (Faizullaev 2006). When facing such ethical challenges, diplomats may choose to respond pragmatically through self-effacement (Neumann 2005), or they may decide to express their dissent officially, as in the example above, or unofficially, if such channels are available to them (Kiesling 2006). In each case, they activate reflection-in-action as a *phronetic* instrument of ethical resolution.

Resolving ethical dilemmas using the process of reflection-in-action involves three steps. First, as a result of a particular situation in which she finds herself, the diplomat experiences a contradiction between her

different layers of loyalty. She may choose to ignore this tension, but that may lead to a loss of integrity, stress and possible breakdown depending on the intensity of the contradiction (Johns 2013: 28). When the latter crosses a personally defined threshold, the diplomat may decide to do something about resolving the moral tension or at least about not allowing it to grow. She will thus initiate, in the second stage, a reflective conversation about the ethical trade-offs implied by her prioritizing of one level of loyalty over the others. This reflective conversation does not necessarily involve an instrumental calculus of the pros and cons of the different moral trade-offs she draws for herself, but it often relies on an intuitive feeling about what is reasonable to do under the circumstances (Ellett Jr. 2012: 16). The decision to follow from this reflective conversation shifts the diplomat's attention back to action. In the third stage, the diplomat suspends reflection and pursues a form of action in line with the chosen moral trade-off. If the action taken fails to resolve the moral contradiction, then the process of reflection-in-action resumes but from within a slightly modified context.

*Phronesis* thus offers a different perspective for holding diplomats morally accountable for their actions than theoretically driven models of ethical analysis. Instead of relying on exogenously defined criteria of moral validity, phronetic ethics focuses on contextually tailored standards of normative inquiry. The context in which diplomats handle ethical challenges through reflection and action is therefore a determining factor for understanding the extent to which the actions taken by a diplomat are morally justifiable. Typical questions to ask from a phronetic perspective would be: Does the situational context place the diplomat in front of a legitimate ethical predicament or can the latter be reasonably ignored? Is the process of reflection-in-action pursued in response to the ethical challenge guided by reasons other than loyalty contradictions? Does the diplomat face unusual obstacles that prevent him from properly

reacting to ethical challenges (institutional resistance, low levels of experience, extenuating personal circumstances)? Finally, does the chosen solution help mitigate the loyalty conflict? It should also be noted that a phronetic approach offers no definitive solution to a moral predicament, as reflection-in-action is a dynamic process. Each action and reflection slightly changes the context of normative inquiry. As a result, different configurations of ethical trade-offs may gradually become available as the process of reflection-in-action repeats itself.

As a way of illustrating these insights, let us consider the case described by a former British diplomat, Brian Barder, who served in Poland during the Cold War in the late 1980s. As a result of the Polish communist government engaging in acts of persecution of the Solidarity leaders (the independent trade union federation), Barder found himself, alongside other Western diplomats, facing a moral conundrum. He questioned, for instance, whether the duty of diplomats is to promote strictly their country's interests and policies or to also stand for more general values of freedom, civil rights and democracy. A reflective conversation followed between him and other Western diplomats about the pros and cons of the different moral trade-offs entailed by each option. From a pragmatic perspective, the Polish government, however undemocratic, had a far greater capacity for damaging or supporting Western interests than Solidarity. On the other hand, by protesting against the actions of the Polish government, Western diplomats could have helped secure some degree of protection against arbitrary harassment and persecution for ordinary Poles. Despite attracting a firm condemnation from the Polish Government, the decision to deliver a *démarche* to the Polish foreign minister on behalf of all members of the European Economic Community (EEC) was viewed as an acceptable compromise between the two courses of action (Barder 2010: 290–2).

The core ethical contradiction experienced by Barder and the other Western diplomats

was essentially one between the principles of Loyalty to the State vs Loyalty to People. In order to find out whether Western diplomats' reaction to this challenge was morally valid from a phronetic perspective, we need to examine the context of the case. Was the ethical contradiction legitimate in light of the circumstances? Without offering many details, Barder points to a 'particularly flagrant act of persecution' of the Polish government against a prominent Solidarity leader (Barder 2010: 290), a fact that indicates the presence of a serious moral issue that deserved diplomatic attention. Barder's account also suggests that reflection-in-action was primarily guided by concerns over how to reconcile the conflict between the two sources of loyalties as opposed, for instance, to attempting to score Cold War propagandistic points. Furthermore, there is no indication in the text about diplomats not being able to tackle the ethical predicament due to professional or personal reasons. The moderately engaging discussion among Western diplomats about the pros and cons of the two moral choices is actually indicative of an institutional culture within Western diplomatic services reasonably open to normative deliberation. Finally, the chosen solution (*démarche*) helped reduce the original tension between the two sources of loyalty, albeit the extent of the relief remained of course a matter of debate.

Overall, the reaction of Western diplomats to the Polish government's repression of Solidarity enjoyed substantial moral validity from a phronetic perspective. The loyalty conflict was sufficiently intense to justify a response, reflection-in-action was primarily guided by legitimate concerns, diplomats faced no major institutional constraints, and the final solution helped to satisfactorily mitigate the original ethical predicament. By contrast, had they decided, for instance, to pursue no action or to let their reflection-in-action be guided by Cold War propagandistic motivations then their actions would have lacked moral legitimacy. While bringing a temporary close to the tension between the

two sources of loyalty, the decision to deliver a *démarche* changed the context and prompted the Polish government to react by describing the action of Western diplomats as an unacceptable interference in the country's internal affairs (Barder 2010: 290). Fortunately, the statement of the Polish government was followed by no immediate resumption of the persecution of Solidarity leaders. Had that occurred, then the ethical contradiction between the two sources of diplomatic loyalty would have been rekindled, arguably in a more severe form, thus requiring diplomats to engage in reflection-in-action on a different basis and likely with a different outcome.

The phronetic model of ethical analysis presented above calls attention to two important research directions on diplomatic ethics. First, how do the ethical challenges experienced by diplomats as a result of conditions of conflicting loyalties influence their performance? As every diplomat is likely to face such challenges in her career, it is important to understand the conditions under which moral conundrums may undermine the effectiveness of diplomats in fulfilling their functions. Second, what kind of training do diplomats require in order to improve their capacity for ethical reflection-in-action? Generalized prescriptions of moral behaviour have arguably limited value as professional guidelines for contextual action. Ethical training must therefore take into account the uncertainty, complexity, instability, uniqueness and value conflict that diplomats face in their day-to-day activity (see also Chapters 11, 15 and 36 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- While the three principles of loyalty (to the prince, to the state and to people) define the nature of ethical challenges that diplomats may face in their work, *phronesis* offers them a method for addressing these challenges as professionals.
- The phronetic concept of reflection-in-action captures the repetitive process of action and reflection by which diplomats seek to align the

practical requirements of the situation at hand with the normative imperatives prompted by their divided loyalties.

- The intensity of the loyalty conflict, the nature of the concerns informing reflection-in-action, the type of institutional or personal constraints diplomats face when engaging in reflection-in-action, and the extent to which the diplomatic response action helps mitigate the original ethical predicament are the key criteria of phronetic ethical analysis.
- Future research directions on diplomatic ethics could explore the relationship between ethical challenges and diplomatic performance and examine the type of training diplomats require in order to improve their capacity for ethical reflection-in-action.

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# Diplomatic Knowledge

Noé Cornago

This chapter examines the relationship between ‘diplomacy’ and ‘knowledge’. It explores the practical dimensions of this particular relationship, such as those exemplified by the interest of diplomatic services all over the world on new technologies of knowledge production and management or their growing concern regarding the implications of social media. In addition, it aims to emphasize the deeper socio-historical significance of diplomatic knowledge, as well as its crucial importance for the instrumental and communicative functions that diplomacy is expected to perform.

The argument has been organized in four parts. First, it adopts a reflective and critical approach to ‘diplomatic knowledge’ and in doing so the relationship between ‘diplomacy’ and ‘knowledge’ will be problematized in the light of current discussions in the fields of epistemology and sociology of knowledge. Specific attention will be paid to the historical conditions under which the mutually constitutive relationship between

‘diplomacy’ and ‘knowledge’ emerged and evolved.

Second, this chapter discusses diplomatic knowledge as *heterology*, that is, as a way of dealing with the alien, the foreigner; in other words, as a way of mutual engagement with *otherness*. In so doing, it underscores that diplomacy has been for centuries a venue for trans-cultural communication, reflexive understanding and unending negotiation of identity and difference, not only for those belonging to distant and mutually exotic cultures but also amongst those living separately albeit in close proximity.

Third, it examines both the theoretical foundations and the practical dimensions of diplomatic knowledge as *statecraft*. More specifically, it will focus on the variety of new techniques – such as observation and reporting, fact finding missions, strategic negotiation, or espionage – developed most notably in the modern era as well as the main features of statecraft’s historical evolution. The legal and administrative regimes designed for



its management – such as those regulating secrecy and public disclosure of diplomatic knowledge – and its current transformation under new technological conditions and transnational societal pressures will be also briefly analysed.

Finally, and in line with recent contributions to the anthropology of knowledge and the widely extended recognition of its negotiated character, we will discuss the pros and cons of what can be called the *diplomatization of knowledge* in the wider social realm, as well as its implications for our understanding of diplomacy as it is practised, in the post-Wikileaks era, not only by official diplomats, but also by a great variety of public and private agents, such as scientists, political activists, social workers or corporate representatives.

## THE CO-PRODUCTION OF DIPLOMATIC KNOWLEDGE

Although somewhat underestimated by the most influential and authoritative accounts of the social history of knowledge (e.g. Van Doren 1992; Burke 2000), a careful examination of the history of diplomacy reveals the extraordinary importance that knowledge has had since the most remote antiquity, not only for diplomatic practice in diverse spatial and temporal settings, but also for the wider configuration of diverse domains of sciences and humanities. Not in vain, knowledge of the world has been always linked to the evolving ways in which political communities have been organized, represented and related historically through a variety of means, including most notably diplomatic means (e.g. Nechaeva 2007).

The importance of that relationship is even inscribed in the very etymology of the word ‘theory’. Constantinou (1996: 53–8) explains that the word *theoria* was frequently used in ancient Greek to designate an old type of solemn or sacred embassy sent to attend

religious ceremonies or discharge religious duties. Derived from *theos* (god) and *orao* (to see), he contends that in addition to other meanings it had the meaning ‘to see god’, invoking therefore a ‘specific truth-making process’. Those ancient ambassadors were ‘peripatetic theorists charged with the discovery of what was right or true’. That connection was further developed in the Platonic conception of knowledge. As Constantinou summarizes it:

*Theoria* constitutes, therefore, the philosophical journey out of the cave of ignorance ... The information and knowledge acquired by such *theoria* was then to be communicated to the citizens of the model *polis* to confirm the rightness of its laws or to amend the deficient ones. (Constantinou 1996: 57, 59)

Despite its theological foundations, that ancient understanding of ‘theory as embassy’ and ‘embassy as theory’ may help us to counteract the ahistoricism of prevailing approaches to epistemology. It emphasizes instead the historical conditions under which knowledge flourishes and evolves, in the vein of the historical epistemology represented by Wartofsky (1979) or Rheinberger (2010). In addition, its ‘peripatetic’ character demands greater attention to the changing ‘geographies’ of diplomatic knowledge (cf. Dumas 1999; Agnew 2007). Jonathan Wright aptly summarizes how crucial the cultivation of knowledge was in the history of diplomacy:

Over the course of millennia, from the cuneiform civilizations of the ancient near east to the empires of the modern era, it has been the ambassadors who have allowed the world to meet itself. They would embark on missions of faith and trade, of politics and love, but wherever they journeyed they would as likely as not report back on everything – the moralities and the myths, the plants and the animals, the fashions and the foods – they encountered ... There would be moments of misunderstanding and embarrassment, but there would be just as many of clarity and insight. Through the efforts of ambassadors, civilizations would compare and contrast one another, prejudices and affinities would emerge, and admiration and loathing would result. (Wright 2006: 6–7)

In view of these historical precedents, we shall move away from those approaches that tend to consider knowledge either a 'simple reflection of the truth about nature' or, conversely, a mere creation of 'social and political interests'. We shall rather follow what Jasanoff terms the *co-production* approach, which she introduces as follows:

In broad areas of both present and past human activity, we gain explanatory power by thinking of natural and social orders as being produced together. The texture of any historical period, and perhaps modernity most of all, as well as of particular cultural and political formations, can be properly appreciated only if we take this co-production into account... society cannot function without knowledge any more than knowledge can exist without appropriate social supports. (Jasanoff 2004: 2)

Knowledge, in sum, she contends, embeds and is embedded in 'social practices and identities, norms and conventions, instruments and institutions, representations and discourses'. More specifically, she asserts, 'knowing the world is inseparably linked to the ways in which people seek to organize and control it' (Jasanoff 2004: 3). According to this view, 'diplomatic knowledge' not only was historically crucial – and remains so nowadays – for 'diplomacy' and its performance but also for the most diverse domains of knowledge. In other words, science and technology permeate the history of diplomacy and correspondingly, the historical development of geography, medicine, biology, anthropology, architecture, engineering, administration or information sciences was closely related to the practices and institutions of diplomacy as well. The co-production and management of knowledge through diplomatic means – including its storage, retention and dissemination – has nonetheless historically served for very different purposes (Kurbalija 2002), including the careful administration of knowledge about the past (Scham 2009). As this chapter will later show, adventures of knowledge driven by genuine humanistic interest and fascination

for discovery were invariably combined with more utilitarian and power-based approaches. Cautious but sincere dialogue with others always coexisted with strategic negotiation, mutual mistrust, surveillance and espionage. Diplomatic historians, for instance, have aptly described the variegated or multitasked knowledge-related skills that early-modern diplomats were expected to perform:

These agents and diplomats made no distinction between the many arenas in which they worked to exert their influence on behalf of those who employed them. Even those largely employed in surveillance took the opportunity of their extended periods abroad to gather knowledge that they believed might be useful to those at home. (Adams and Cox 2013: 5)

Later, in the classic era of *realpolitik*, international diplomatic conferences on the most disparate issues, such as those represented, for instance, by the control of cholera, astronomy and observatory sciences, or the administering of prisons (cf. Huber 2006; Saint-Martin 2009; Shafir 2014), served as a 'technology that mediated intellectual exchange and scientific communication' and thus were crucial in the global shaping of contemporary understanding of social and natural sciences (Shafir 2014: 72). As experienced scientists increasingly recognize, it would be difficult to understand the progresses of a range of scientific disciplines without considering the many ways in which diplomatic practices and institutions – ranging from ancient exploratory missions and espionage to contemporary multilateral conferences of scientific or technical issues – contributed to them (e.g. Zewail 2010; Kaplan 2011). Although the rise of modern scientific knowledge, with its corresponding process of autonomization and disciplinary specialization, displaced temporarily diplomacy from the frontline of scientific discoveries, nowadays there is a new and widely shared demand for a new transnational partnership between scientists and diplomats in front of the political and technical challenges of a global

political agenda which requires their respective expertise. Interestingly enough, that old interplay between science and diplomacy is thus receiving a renewed attention amongst those concerned with the advancement of knowledge in a new global era in which both the national scientific system and diplomatic services are being radically reorganized (Chalecki 2008; Flink and Schreiterer 2010; Sutcu 2012; Benson and Kjelgren 2014; see also Chapter 1 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- From ancient exploratory missions and diplomatic reporting to contemporary multilateral conferences on scientific or technical issues, diplomatic knowledge not only was historically crucial – and remains so nowadays – for ‘diplomacy’ and its performance but also for the formative processes of the most diverse domains of knowledge, such as, for instance, geography, medicine, biology, anthropology, architecture, engineering, administration or information sciences.
- Although the rise of modern scientific knowledge, with its corresponding process of autonomization and disciplinary specialization, temporarily displaced diplomats from the frontline of scientific discoveries, nowadays there is a new and widely shared demand for a new transnational partnership between scientists and diplomats to face the political and technical challenges of a global political agenda which requires their respective expertise.

### DIPLOMATIC KNOWLEDGE AS HETEROLOGY

As Constantinou has convincingly argued (1996: 112–20), any reflective understanding of diplomatic knowledge should consider the experiences of diplomats in their engagement with the diplomatic ‘other’, either considered as ‘object’, placed in a position of observable exteriority outside the closed boundaries of the ‘self’, or conversely as ‘subject’, whose presence involves the very questioning of the ‘self’ in a process of mutual re-configuration

of subjectivities. Following Michel De Certeau’s inspiring work on the resurgence of indigenous movements in Latin America, that inter-subjective dimension of diplomatic knowledge may be considered as a form of ‘heterology’, for its actual performance endlessly demands of the ‘self’ – in front of a ‘returning other’ which can neither be avoided nor overcome – the establishment and cultivation – without assimilating each other to the category of sameness – of a mutual and durable relationship (De Certeau 1987).

That understanding of diplomatic knowledge as a venue for empathy and mutual self-transformation has been widely confirmed by historical research. In antiquity metaphors of kinship and friendship were always accompanied with the expression of mutual recognition and respect for mutual difference (Cohen 2001). The humanistic character of those ancient forms of diplomatic knowledge understood as mutual discovery was slowly displaced under the imperatives of the modern doctrine of *reason of state*, in a long historical period ranging from the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 to the Congress of Vienna in 1815 – that is, when a new understanding of diplomatic knowledge as a mainly strategic resource for power politics finally acquired the overwhelming predominance that we are still witnessing nowadays. But, against the influential narratives that portray Renaissance diplomacy as a moment of humanistic pluralism (e.g. Mattingly 1973) definitively displaced by the rise of the nation-state (e.g. Anderson 1993), the new stream in diplomatic history emphasizes continuity more than rupture in the passing from pre-modern to early-modern diplomacy (Antiel-Quiroga 1989; Watkins 2008; Carrió-Invernizzi 2014). This therefore provides a much wider space for the survival of the humanistic tradition in diplomacy (Black 2010).

The study of diplomatic relationships beyond the European contours offers a fertile field for research, such as, for instance, those existing between both France and Spain with Muslim countries in the late eighteenth

century. Although incidents abound that reveal how difficult the task of diplomacy was due to cultural difference, estrangement in the face of otherness was more frequently transformed in a reflective and critical understanding of cultural difference under notions of tolerance to different religious beliefs (Windler 2001). Of course, these processes of mutual discovery with their corresponding part of mutual misunderstanding were not circumscribed to the closer Mediterranean proximities. Before their displacement in the colonial era by the violent deployment of modern sovereignty, early diplomatic encounters between Europeans and Africans also offered multiple opportunities for heterology (Lowe 2007).

Bearing in mind these and other similar precedents, Constantinou has recently vindicated the historical importance of the humanistic tradition of diplomacy as a model for the contemporary cultivation of reflexive knowledge (Constantinou 2013), calling for new forms of diplomatic engagement, such as those represented by the resurgence of indigenous diplomacies (Bleier 2009) and for the better mediation of the many forms of estrangement in global life:

The mission is not only, not just, the knowledge and control of the *other* but fundamentally the knowledge of the *self* and this knowledge of the *self* as a more reflective means of dealing with and transforming relations with others. (Constantinou 2006)

In contrast with the abstract treatment that this question used to receive in the field of contemporary philosophy by influential authors such as Buber, Levinas or Ricoeur, that understanding of diplomacy as ‘heterology’ comes easily from the attentive examination of the phenomenology of diplomacy, its observable practices, accumulated experiences and related sociabilities. Ernst Satow, for instance, aptly formulated in his influential *Guide to Diplomatic Practice*, albeit in a rather self-celebratory tone, how diplomats actually realize in their professional practice

the importance of what we have called diplomacy as heterology:

A good diplomatist will always endeavour to put himself in the position of the person with whom he is treating, and try to imagine what he would wish, do and say, under those circumstances. (Satow 1917: 133–4)

The idea of diplomatic knowledge as heterology, however, should not be idealized. Moreover, it does not necessarily entail a strong normative foundation. Some authors have convincingly shown how the simple cultivation of prose, politeness and conversation were crucial for shaping the grammars of diplomacy in early modern Europe (Fumaroli 1994; Sofer 2013). Interestingly enough, the distinctive value of diplomacy as a way of dealing with otherness has also been recently confirmed by neurosciences. The importance of some salient specific features – such as the importance of face-to-face communication or its adaptability to ever-changing context-specific situations – explains the timeless significance of diplomatic encounters as a venue for empathy, mutual understanding of each other’s intentions, the acquisition of knowledge and enhancement of human reflexivity (Holmes 2013). The virtualization of diplomacy and the proliferation of internet social networks that the world is experiencing nowadays makes particularly important the cultivation of that form of communication.

A long time before the arrival of digital diplomacy, however, another understanding of ‘diplomatic knowledge’, namely one that considers the *other* more as an ‘object’ to be observed than as ‘subject’ to be engaged with, has proven to be significantly more influential. That second understanding of diplomacy has been crucial – as our next section will try to show – in shaping both in theory and practice the notion of diplomatic knowledge as *statecraft*. From the perspective that this section aimed to underline, the most important effect of this process, as Constantinou has convincingly argued, has been the concealment of the ‘symbiotic relationship between

diplomatic knowledge and practice', a symbiosis that can neither be reduced to the narrow conceptual grammars of utilitarianism nor to the practical or bureaucratic management of the one-sided definition of interests. That symbiosis of mutual and reflexive learning singularizes the unavoidable double location of diplomats as both representatives and mediators, placing them in some unstable but distinctive middle ground, between these two poles (Constantinou 2013; see also Chapters 2 and 3 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Diplomatic knowledge may be considered as a form of 'heterology', for its actual performance endlessly demands of the 'self' – in front of a 'returning other' which can neither be avoided nor overcome – the establishment and cultivation – without assimilating each other to the category of sameness – of a mutual and durable relationship.
- The understanding of diplomacy as 'heterology' comes easily from the attentive examination of the phenomenology of diplomacy, its observable practices, accumulated experiences and related sociabilities. That understanding of diplomatic knowledge as a venue for empathy and mutual self-transformation has been widely confirmed by historical research.

## DIPLOMATIC KNOWLEDGE AS STATECRAFT

Whilst the previous section examined the importance of diplomacy as a venue for humanistic discovery of otherness, diplomatic knowledge also has been fostered, since ancient times, by utilitarian considerations and hidden intentions, even acquiring in modern diplomacy undisputable centrality. The importance given to a state's stability and self-preservation under the doctrine of *reason of state* served historically to justify a reconsideration of the very rationale of diplomatic knowledge, largely displacing –

although not completely – the humanistic dimension of diplomacy in favour of a new understanding of diplomatic knowledge as *statecraft*, that is, as an instrument of state power and governmentality (Neocleous 2003; McMillan 2010). The origins of that doctrine can be traced back to classical authors such as Tacitus, but it was most notably developed in early-modern Italy by Machiavelli in *The Prince* (1532), and Botero in his *Della ragioni di stato* (1589), an influential work to which the doctrine owes its name (cf. Viroli 1993). Its huge impact was propelled by the course of historical events in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. Yet early-modern diplomatic practices were embedded in a wider geopolitical context that simultaneously configured the foundations of modern sovereignty in Europe as well as beyond. In that context, new technologies of state power were of paramount importance. Antony Carty aptly portrays the implications of that transformation:

Knowledge presupposes a subject, and this subject, for international relations, is the Hobbesian sovereign who is not named, but names, not observed, but observes, a mystery for whom everything must be transparent. The problem of knowledge is that of security, which is attained through rational control and analysis ... Other sovereigns are not unknown 'others' in the modern anthropological sense, but simply 'enemies', opponents, with conflicting interests, whose behaviour can and should be calculated. (Carty 2007: 6)

At the risk of oversimplifying, the corresponding historical events that framed that transformation can be summarized as follows: first, wars of religion; then competition amongst European monarchies; later the radical challenge of the French Revolution and the subsequent spread of the Napoleonic wars; and finally and simultaneously European colonial expansion and the rise of Western imperialism. All these critical historical aspects, in their combination of accumulated effects, largely displaced the humanist tradition in diplomacy to a secondary role, forging instead the theory and practice of diplomacy



as statecraft that remains highly influential nowadays (cf. Graig and George 2013). That historical process, which was crucial for the global emergence of the modern states system, was coincidental with the professionalization of diplomacy and the emergence of new diplomatic bureaucracies. These bodies were dedicated not only to knowledge production and information gathering but also, as historians have recently pointed out, to the production of ignorance, always submitted to the better performance of the operational needs of modern statecraft (cf. Wieland 2012). As previously discussed, that transition was not always straightforward, however. Initially, critical distinctions were often effaced amongst writers, philosophers, medics, artists, naturalists, diplomats and spies at this particular moment in history in which a new world vision was taking shape (Ordine 1999). But the fact remains that it was at that historical moment when diplomatic knowledge, and the mastering of its corresponding techniques, was considered for the very first time as worthy of professionalization and all-encompassing rationalization.

In that particular context, a number of influential diplomatic treatises were published from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries establishing the canon on the proper combination of knowledge and skills that any diplomat was expected to demonstrate and to duly perform (cf. Behrens 1936; Bazzoli 2002). From the analytical prism that this chapter adopts, however, more than in the doctrinal dimension itself, we shall concentrate our attention on the variety and durability of techniques that this new understanding of diplomatic knowledge as statecraft entailed. Generally written by experienced diplomats, such as by Vera, Wicquefort or Callières, those pioneering treatises offered a variety of practical recommendations about some critical aspects related to diplomatic practice. Aspects such as the importance of paying due attention and respect to ceremony and protocol, the prudent management of the delicate negotiations including those conducted in secrecy, or

the writing of short but relevant and inquisitive reports based in the model offered by the Venetian *relazioni*. But those treatises also included advice about the careful execution of some covert methods of intelligence such as espionage, surveillance, eavesdropping or the use of ciphered messages and cryptography. As Colson has pointed out, diplomats:

... needed to find ways to protect their own secrets from third parties and uncover the secrets of others. These concerns from earlier times helped to establish secrecy as the paradigm for modern negotiation. (Colson 2008: 179)

Despite the frequent eruption of incidents, the compatibility of those techniques of espionage and secrecy with the shared standards of diplomacy was commonly accepted during that long historical period in which the bases of modern diplomacy crystallized (Pearton 1982). More importantly, despite the successive challenges posed by the American, French and Soviet revolutions, the new canon survived for centuries without significant changes, from Wicquefort to Kissinger, from wars of religion to the Cold War (cf. Berridge et al. 2001). Only in the early decades of the twentieth century, when advocates of the so-called 'new diplomacy' acquired significant albeit fleeting prominence, some limitations to secret diplomacy were agreed without substantially changing the terms of the debate (Weisbrode 2014). The corresponding legal and administrative regimes designed for the management of diplomatic knowledge – such as those regulating the place of secrecy and public disclosure of information or the recourse to some special methods – were developed in parallel, rapidly acquiring the profiles that are still recognizable today within diplomatic services all over the world (cf. Rangarajan 1998; Stempel 2007).

Despite the formal incompatibility of espionage with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations adopted in 1961, such old forms of intermingling diplomacy and espionage survived, conveniently updated and refined, in contemporary practice. This



is clearly shown in the widespread use of equivalent contemporary techniques such as data mining, network and traceability analyses, social networks surveillance, and satellite-based Geographical Information Systems (GIS). The persistence of these practices within democratic political systems, and their ambiguous ethical foundations, are subject to a new scrutiny nevertheless, frequently raising severe criticisms in both academia and international media. For some observers, intelligence and diplomacy – despite occasional overlaps – are realities clearly differentiated: whilst the former ‘provides knowledge by special methods’ the latter ‘uses it’ (cf. Herman 1998: 1). For others, in contrast, the distinction is both theoretically and practically fuzzy, thus deserving a systematic and critical examination of its ethical justification and pragmatic necessity (cf. Bjola 2013). Recently, however, the growing awareness of the ultimate uncontrollability of new information technologies, as exemplified in the Wikileaks case, has provoked a serious reconsideration not only of its ethical justification but also of its technical feasibility. Whilst some observers consider that the age of secret diplomacy may have come to an end (cf. Colson 2009), others understand the impact of new technologies in terms of a new illusion of transparency, which will hardly displace it (cf. Bolt 2010; Page and Spence 2011; Roberts 2011).

Beyond its more controversial dimensions, however, diplomatic knowledge can also be approached in terms of its standardized practices and routines. Kurbalija aptly identifies three main dimensions of diplomacy as knowledge management: (a) intelligent access to information; (b) automation of procedures through workflow and routine; and (c) cultivation of knowledge as an institutional resource (Kurbalija 2002). His approach serves to introduce a new understanding of diplomatic knowledge influenced by knowledge-management theories imported from the corporate world. These approaches put an emphasis on giving more serious attention to knowledge management

in diplomatic training, as well as in the importance of a closer cooperation between diplomatic services and the private sector through the cultivation of innovative clusters within global transnational networks (cf. Del Giudice et al. 2012).

Successive technological and other material innovations, from telegraphy to digital social networks, constantly modify, however, the organizational infrastructures of diplomatic services all over the world, transforming not only their material environment but also their working routines and even the emotional climate in which they operate (see Dittmer 2016). As Black and Bryant convincingly assert:

The historic knowledge-management role of the diplomat highlights the part technology has played in the world of diplomacy, including the relationship between the ambassador abroad and the political centre. It also offers a further perspective on the ways in which technologies open up new possibilities, intended and unintended, often fraught with ambiguity and potential for enhancement and disruption. (Black and Bryant 2011: 1)

Unsurprisingly, the impact of new social media on diplomacy has been a subject of considerable interest. Arguably, their rapid and widespread diffusion all over the world both constrains and enables new modes of diplomatic knowledge management, and diplomatic services all over the world try to maximize their possible functionalities (cf. Holme and Ghoshal 2009). But they do so in a way far less linear than we frequently tend to think. As Archetti has convincingly summarized, the variety of actors and audiences that interact nowadays, either face-to-face or virtually, use technologies to pursue ‘their own agendas within the structure of opportunities and constrains of the specific environment in which they operate’, in a way that remains elusive to comfortable generalizations (Archetti 2012: 206).

Diplomatic knowledge can also be approached through the examination of the organizations’ structures, such as the national foreign services that contain it. Based on his ethnographic work on the contemporary

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Neumann argues that when diplomats are posted abroad their work can be basically understood as a ‘form of knowledge production’ framed in ‘highly specific and ephemeral social constellations’, highly dependent on the perceptions and sociability of diplomats themselves (Neumann 2012: 7). Conversely, when they are placed at home their work tends to be significantly more bureaucratic, frequently adopting a distinctive institutional tone which is less indicative of the need to express a personal opinion or an insightful personal analysis than of the perceived need to fit within a wider consensual ministerial voice. Neumann’s insights may be applied to diplomatic innovations such as that represented by the European External Action Service (EEAS), to the extent in which their corresponding organizational transformations can be examined as the expression of a new transnational form of diplomatic knowledge production in the making (Cross 2007; Kuus 2013; Bicchi 2013) see also Chapters 4 and 5 in this Handbook).

In sum, as aptly formulated by Cornut, diplomats ‘remain primarily knowledge producers, using their craft to understand and represent a situation as well as possible’ (Cornut 2015: 385). For so doing they must combine ‘analytic competence’ with ‘social skills’, deploying a number of distinctive practices, not only within the walls of their own embassies or in dialogue with their peers within the diplomatic corps in a particular country, but also, and very specially, cultivating social interaction with the most diverse local agents: government and administrative officers, the common people they meet in the markets and streets, or political, religious, cultural or business elites (cf. Cornut 2015).

### Key Points

- The understanding of diplomatic knowledge as statecraft, under the doctrine of *raison of state*, was historically coincidental with the

professionalization of diplomacy and the emergence of modern diplomatic bureaucracies. Through the development and mastering of its corresponding techniques, these administrative bodies performed an all-encompassing process of the rationalization of diplomacy and ever changing adaptation that remains observable nowadays.

- Despite its incompatibility with diplomatic law, some old forms of intermingling diplomacy and espionage survived, as clearly shown in the widespread use of equivalent contemporary techniques such as data mining, network and traceability analyses, social networks surveillance, remote sensing and GIS. The persistence of these practices within democratic political systems, and their disputable ethical foundations, are subject to a new scrutiny nevertheless.
- Diplomatic knowledge can also be approached through the examination of the organizations’ structures, such as those of national foreign services and international organizations, and more recently, in the context of some innovative institutions such as the European External Actions Service (EEAS). Ethnographic research reveals that when diplomats are posted abroad, their work tends to be highly context-specific and credited not only to the analytical competence but also to the social skills of diplomats themselves. In contrast, those working at the headquarters frequently adopt a more bureaucratic and consensual institutional tone.

## DIPLOMATIC MODE OF KNOWLEDGE

This final section brings our discussion beyond the diplomatic realm. Not in vain, the significance of ‘diplomacy’ as a mode of knowledge has been vindicated recently by some outstanding contemporary intellectual figures that, paradoxically, remain largely ignored in the field of diplomatic studies. A new understanding of diplomacy as a form of practical knowledge is taking ground, becoming increasingly influential in the most disparate fields. This new understanding does not, however, fit the restrictive assumptions that characterize the on-going discussions on ‘communities of practice’, conventionally

circumscribed to knowledge production and collective learning within specific professional communities (e.g. Wenger 2000). Quite the opposite, those advocating for a generalization of diplomacy, a sort of socialization of diplomatic knowledge beyond professional diplomacy, as the most promising way of facing the challenges of contemporary global life, rarely are diplomats themselves. Business consultants, social workers, educators, scientists and lawyers (e.g. Saner 2000; Mormont 2007; Lee, Witte and Cusick 2015; Thoreau and Despret 2014; Bartram et al. 2015; Braithwaite and Hong 2015) are the most active in this trend. Isabelle Stengers' contribution to this debate has been particularly pioneering and influential. She strongly suggests the need to generalize the experiences and practical knowledge of diplomats to many other fields:

I have named as diplomats those participants whose obligations designate the possibility of generating rhizomatic connections where conflict seems to prevail ... To speak about diplomacy is to speak about borders and the possibility of wars. Borders do not mean that connections are cut but that they are matters of arrangement. Reciprocity itself, if it exists, is part of an arrangement, with different risks and challenges for each involved party ... As such, the art of diplomacy does not refer to goodwill, togetherness, the sharing of a common language, or an intersubjective understanding. Neither is a matter of negotiation between flexible humans who should be ready to adapt as the situation changes ... Such events have nothing to do with heartfelt reconciliation: neither are they meant to produce mutual understanding. Indeed, they are such that each party may entertain its own version of the agreement ... It is an art that does not exhibit a deeper truth than their very achievement. (Stengers 2010: 29)

Consequently, Stengers finds in the 'diplomats' an inspiring model that may serve to forge a new cosmopolitanism, not under the sign of any universalized singular, but upon the need to manage the unavoidable recurrence of global multiplicity in a constructive way (Stengers 2011). That understanding of diplomacy is largely shared by Bruno Latour, who has repeatedly advocated the idea of a new 'symmetrical' anthropology no longer

based on the unfair comparison of cultures by those installed in a self-assigned ethnographic authority (see Clifford 1983) but in the experiential knowledge acquired by diplomats in their practical intercourse (Latour 2000; 2004; 2007). In Latour's view, the predicament for this new 'diplomatic' inspired anthropology is less a matter of knowledge about other cultures than about the challenge of peaceful and sustainable coexistence. This implies the enhancement of symmetrical capability to revise each side's own assumptions, and ...

to appear once again in front of other peoples with a new peace offering. Diplomats are used to these kinds of redefinitions, they always know how to rephrase their requirements, this is why they are cleverer than scientist-philosophers. But they run the risk, or course, of being called unscrupulous traitors. (Latour 2007: 20)

Moral philosopher Pablo Iannone (1999: 74–5) has also promoted the idea of diplomacy as a particularly promising model for wider social and political practice with similar arguments. He contends that, as an open-ended activity, diplomacy avoids the shortcomings of both consequentialist and deontological approaches to moral philosophy, favouring instead a realistic and pragmatic approach to the many challenges of social and political life. More specifically, he summarizes the virtues of diplomacy as follows: first, he argues that diplomacy is sensitive to the concurrent varieties of policy and decisional problems, and procedural alternatives; second, in contrast with approaches that 'hopelessly seek consensus or invariably opt for confrontation', diplomacy aims to ascertain the procedures that are likely to address the problems in a feasible and effective way; third, diplomacy is realistic insofar that it does not merely 'dwell on abstract ideas', but on the 'social fact that there is a recurrent issue that something should be done about it'; fourth, diplomacy does not presuppose that problems are either exclusively or primarily settled through the appeal to principles, no matter how important these may be; fifth,

diplomacy recognizes that policy-making and theoretical assessments of the moment are ‘often unfeasible to spell out all significant implications’ of a particular problem; and sixth, and perhaps the most important:

diplomacy takes seriously the fact that certain unsettled data are worked out in the process and are not available at the time initial policy discussions take place. Indeed they often result in part from such discussions. The process of critical scrutiny and social interaction leads to the settlement of reasons for assessing policies and decisions. These are new, previously non-existent, and hardly predictable data. (Iannone 1999: 75)

Consequently, against the presentation of diplomats and scientific experts as necessary contenders (Auer 1998), or the dismissal of diplomacy and diplomats as irrelevant for the global production or ‘dissemination of knowledge’ (e.g. Stehr and Ufer 2009), some voices are defending consistently the understanding of diplomatic knowledge in a way that may serve as a model in the most disparate fields. The revalorization of diplomatic knowledge in contemporary epistemology and anthropology can be read in short as a sort of vindication of the value of diplomatic skills vis-a-vis the limitations of scientific expertise and policy advice in contexts of social complexity and epistemic uncertainty (cf. Ravetz 2006; Funtowicz and Ravetz 2008; Turpenney et al. 2011).

However, and as a way of concluding this chapter, it is important to avoid the idealization of diplomacy in view of its proven limitations (cf. Davis and Patman 2015). As Neumann cogently reminds us, the professional diplomatic career is, at the end, ‘a nomadic trek between post at home and abroad’, and to be a diplomat is ‘to take part in a lifelong balancing act between one’s own shifting position and mode of knowledge production’. At this point, he emphasizes the similarity between diplomats’ experiences of ‘negotiations between different positions held by different polities’ and the practices of ethnography (Neumann 2012: 169). To reflect on the hopes and despairs that these two

contrasting modes of knowledge production produce in their most dedicated practitioners may offer valuable insights about the future of diplomacy in a fast-changing world (see also Chapters 6 and 8–10 in this Handbook).

## Key Points

- A new understanding of diplomacy as a form of practical knowledge is taking ground becoming increasingly influential in the most disparate fields beyond the diplomatic services all over the world. This new understanding does not, however, fit the restrictive assumptions that characterize conventional approaches to diplomacy. An increasingly important number of voices, coming from the most disparate fields, advocate for a generalization of diplomacy, a sort of socialization of diplomatic knowledge beyond professional diplomacy, as the most promising way of facing the challenges of contemporary global life.
- The revalorization of diplomatic knowledge in contemporary epistemology and anthropology, and the growing recognition of its validity amongst educators, consultants, social workers and lawyers, can be read in short as a sort of vindication of the value of diplomatic skills vis-a-vis the limitations of scientific expertise, policy advice and legal adjudication, in contexts of social complexity and epistemic uncertainty.

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PART II

# DIPLOMATIC INSTITUTIONS





# Embassies, Permanent Missions and Special Missions

Kishan S. Rana

Even more than the foreign ministry, the resident embassy symbolizes the international system. Embassies are older than the institutions that came up in home capitals to manage them; it was the need to furnish manpower for embassies, absorb their reportage, and manage them that led to the establishment of foreign ministries, starting with France. As foreign country outposts embedded in the receiving state, embassies manifest for each country their connection with the outside world. For the host country, embassies are accessible representations of the 'other', in culture, ways of life, and often language as well.

The public sees diplomatic missions as expressions of their international personality. For countries that were colonies and struggled long for their independence, the exchange of embassies is proof of sovereignty, i.e. their presence in the international system, and also their equality with other nations. In every capital, the media track news and activity of foreign embassies with a particular fervor,

since in common perception they are cloaked in exotica, glamor and mystery.

In times ancient, kingdoms of varied hue sent out emissaries, often on special missions, sometimes to reside at foreign courts. The Amarna Archives (1350–1330 BC), clay tablets of ancient Egypt, contain correspondence between the administration of the Pharaohs and representatives of kingdoms in Babylonia, Assyria, Syria, Cyprus and elsewhere. In other world regions, too, that same method was used, sending empowered representatives to foreign kingdoms. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, compiled in the third century BC as a comprehensive treatise on statecraft, offers advice to the envoy residing in the foreign court.<sup>1</sup> Rudimentary notions of immunity of envoys emerged in those days, founded on the understanding that they were messengers of other powers, and that their ill treatment would invite reciprocal action. Reciprocity remains the central ingredient of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR), the universal doctrine governing the functioning of diplomatic missions.

## RECENT HISTORY

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, embassies were exchanged mainly between monarchies and republics. Some were at the level of legations, a lesser form of diplomatic representation than the embassy; for instance, even in 1945, the majority of foreign missions in London and Washington DC were legations, headed by ‘ministers plenipotentiary’. But as decolonization moved forward after the end of World War II, newly independent states opted for embassies as their standard form of representation and the legation has gone the way of the Dodo.

The 1961 VCDR was negotiated for more than two years, on the basis of a draft produced by the International Law Commission; it codified existing international regulations and conventional practices, but also brought in some innovation.<sup>2</sup> VCDR is a child of the Cold War, and incorporates some provisions that are rooted in that ethos.<sup>3</sup> Some of its regulations have been overtaken by technology; for instance, elaborate provisions governing the installation of radio links by embassies have become redundant in an internet age of quotidian global connectivity. But its key provision of untrammelled immunity for diplomatic officials is as vital today as when it was framed; it is the pillar on which ambassadors and embassy personnel function. VCDR essentially covers the activities of governments acting through embassies, to reach out to the official agencies of the receiving country, specifying that the foreign ministry is the prime channel of contact for foreign embassies, a provision that embassies routinely breach today.<sup>4</sup> VCDR did not anticipate the development of ‘public diplomacy’ as an activity undertaken by official agencies and by non-state actors, reaching out to publics and non-state actors in foreign states, to project their own viewpoints, to influence them. A few scholars and practitioners hold VCDR to be outdated, and would like to see its provisions concerning immunity to be modified; some wish to bring activities directed at

non-state actors, including public diplomacy, under some regulation. But there is little appetite among states for starting a revision process, and even less prospect for crafting new consensus over a revised framework.

In sum, the resident embassy is unchanged in basic structure over several hundreds of years, while its ways of work have evolved. In contrast, the permanent mission is of recent origin, as a key player in multilateral and regional diplomacy.

## CONTEMPORARY EMBASSY: IN REGRESSION OR RENAISSANCE?

Conventional wisdom suggests that advances in communications have tightened control by foreign ministries and governments over embassies, reducing their latitude for ‘plenipotentiary’ or discretionary action. That has indeed been the case, but other trends have also been at work in parallel, producing a complex net outcome that reflects interplay of counter-currents. Thus, while embassies are tied more closely to the home capital than anyone might have imagined even two decades back, one result is a counter-intuitive enhancement in the embassy’s role.

Let us briefly list the elements that influence the work of embassies, before we consider the consequences. These are: the entry of many new state and non-official actors in international affairs; an expanded direct role of the head of government in foreign issues, including participation in bilateral, regional and global summits; new technical, interlocking and amorphous issues in international dialogue that bring in issues of human and environmental security; intermingling of foreign and domestic issues as a consequence of globalization and interdependence; an expanded role played by publics, domestic and foreign, in shaping outcomes; and the emergence of an international order that is more democratic and region-focused than before, in effect mediating the exercise of conventional power, with new

concepts such as 'soft power' and 'country brands'. How do these impact on the embassy?

First, as a consequence of the explosion in information, the bilateral embassy is now the best resource for the country on developments in the assignment country. With feet on the ground, it can offer a holistic perspective on developments there, and how these impact on the interests of the home country. With plural actors, state and non-state, involved in the bilateral relationship, it is only the embassy on the ground that has information on the activities they undertake in that assignment country, on which the foreign ministry is often out of the picture. For instance, very few business enterprises keep their governments informed of their foreign activities, but it is often one's embassy in the target country that is likely to have some information; that applies even more to foreign collaboration by academic institutions and think tanks. Not all foreign ministries fully take this into account, because superficially it goes against the tenet that it is the headquarters that gives authoritative assessments on bilateral relations.

Application of information and communications technology (ICT), especially the use of 'intranets' for MFA-embassy communication, means that embassies can be virtually embedded into the MFA, permitting them access to foreign ministry dossiers, and engaging them in continual conversation. For instance, in contrast to the past when an embassy might only be consulted once or twice during the formulation of a proposal in the ministry, it is now possible to treat the embassy as a constituent in the decision process; even before a proposal takes shape, a desk officer can consult an embassy counterpart for a first reaction, through point-to-point confidential communication that may not be subject to the protocol that applies to cypher messages.<sup>5</sup> This happens in some Western countries, notably Austria, Canada, Germany and the UK, which have consequently thinned out staff in their foreign ministry territorial units, and redeployed them to work on cross-cutting, thematic issues.

Second, a further consequence of the above situation is that the embassy needs alertness, and a wide local network of contacts, for a holistic understanding of developments, to offer to the home stakeholders, not just the MFA, the full range of information they require on the assignment country.<sup>6</sup> The embassy is no longer the lead negotiator on most issues, since it is the functional ministries that handle such bilateral dialogue. But they depend on the advice of the embassy on the cultural cues and negotiation techniques they are likely to encounter from the other side. The old requirement for language expertise and area specialization is thus reinforced; countries that had reduced emphasis on these skills, such as the UK, are now reinforcing them (House of Commons, 2011).

Third, the embassy gains in value as a contributor to the MFA's domestic outreach, because of the breadth of its contacts with home partners that are involved in economic, cultural, educational, media, S&T and other activities in the assignment country. In practice, the embassy depends on these varied stakeholders for its own contacts and actions in the assignment country, as an agent for 'whole of government' and 'whole of country', holistic diplomacy. This too rebalances the MFA-embassy equation.

Fourth, aid delivery and management is witness to disintermediation. Most Western donors have transferred to their embassies responsibility for aid disbursement within the allotment for the recipient country. The fact that more of this aid now goes to local NGOs and for small schemes, with direct impact on local beneficiaries, also adds to the embassy's role. Developing countries that increasingly implement their own aid programs also use embassies as delivery agents for their project aid, and even more for the deployment of their technical assistance that has special focus on training programs, necessarily based on the needs of the recipients.<sup>7</sup>

The above developments impact on the embassy's role in the bilateral relationship. If the embassy is the locus of information, and



has the best concentration of specialists on the country concerned, why not also use it as a partner in decision-making? Countries such as the UK and Germany now do this, partly as a consequence of staff reductions in territorial units at the foreign ministry. But the notion is anathema to other countries such as China and the US, where such reductions have not taken place, and where the MFA–embassy personnel balance remains tilted heavily in favor of the MFA.<sup>8</sup>

While the above narrative takes into account most of the new trends noted at the start of this section, how does more direct involvement of the head of government into foreign affairs impact on the embassy? When heads – and even foreign ministers – communicate with one another via smart phone messages and other forms of personal communications, the foreign ministry establishment is often left out of the loop, at least in real time. The situation for the embassy is no better, but it has slightly better prospects for catch-up by virtue of its local contacts, not just at the foreign ministry but also vis-à-vis the office of the foreign head of government. In this respect, too, it becomes a resource for the home foreign ministry.

Rather little of the above applies to embassies of developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, except insofar that: first, all countries are party to the information explosion that has made foreign ministries depend on their embassies for comprehensive information on the assignment country; second, with plural actors engaged in external activity, the MFA depends on the embassy to provide a more complete picture of the home country's engagement overseas. Both these factors enhance the utility of embassies.

Who are the main entities that guide embassies? Are embassies only answerable to the home country, or do some elements in the receiving country also affect their work? Let us first look at the home agencies. Under the classic format, the foreign ministry has been the master of the diplomatic system, with direct day-to-day control over embassies. But the embassy represents the entire country,

and is now seen to be at the disposal of the government as a whole. In particular, the head of government is now a direct participant in international affairs, which makes the ambassador sometimes directly answerable to the head, and more frequently to the office of the head. The new element today is that indirectly the embassy is under the influence of a wide range of non-official agencies that have a strong stake in the assignment country, including but not limited to: opposition political parties, in strongly democratic states, which expect to receive briefings from embassies on their foreign visits;<sup>9</sup> associations of business and even individual enterprises; academic and S&T institutions and think tanks; the media; civil society actors and development agencies; and the public at large, if an issue gains popular attention, as with consular cases or evacuation of one's citizens in the midst of foreign conflict. Among these, business exerts a strong influence much of the time.

While the embassy is not directly answerable to entities in the receiving state, official and non-state actors may exert some influence on it, as a relatively weak force. The diaspora is an element of rising importance, given heavy international movement of people, both in pursuit of work and as migrants; in our globalized world, the home public also show sharp concern for their welfare. That makes embassies concerned with their diaspora, even if they have taken up citizenships in their new homeland. Increasingly, the diaspora is now a link between the states concerned.

### **Key Points**

- The bilateral embassy has a bigger role than before in the formulation of policy and in its execution, which adds to its work demands.
- It functions more closely with varied state and non-state partners, both in the home country and in the country of assignment, including diaspora groups. This adds to its ability to monitor issues, giving it a holistic perspective.
- The embassy also finds itself answerable to a wider range of home actors than hitherto.

## NEW EMBASSY FORMS

In most countries, foreign ministries are confronting budgets cuts and manpower reductions. In consequence, networks of overseas missions are often, but not always, shrinking. At the same time, international commitments have expanded for most, so that they look for different kinds of representation options, going beyond the established method of 'concurrent accreditation' under which one embassy simultaneously handles representation in other countries, usually in its neighborhood. A few countries, such as Brazil, China, Mexico and Turkey, have significantly expanded their embassy networks; India is slowly adding new missions.

One method is a 'non-resident ambassador', when someone typically based in the home country – it may be a senior foreign ministry official, a businessman or public figure – takes on a part-time ambassadorial position, traveling to the assignment country a few times in the year, sometimes accompanied by a young MFA official.<sup>10</sup> Malta and Singapore appoint some twenty to thirty such envoys. It is not a substitute for resident representation, but is an effective alternative to no representation at all.

A variation on the above, used especially by Scandinavian countries, is the 'laptop ambassador' who visits the country of assignment for a few weeks at a time, say in advance of a major event like an outbound visit by a high personality from the home country, operating out of a hotel. For the rest of the time, the official attends to his duties from the home capital. On occasion they embed an ambassador in a fellow-Scandinavian embassy, sharing some services, usually without any direct staff support. The UK and a few others have also resorted to sending from home an ambassador unsupported by any home-based staff, relying on the services of locally recruited personnel for support.

An entirely different approach is to bring into the overseas representation network a substantial number of honorary consuls, who

are often nationals of foreign countries, or members of one's diaspora, or other long-term residents in the target country (see Chapter 13 in this Handbook). This does not provide diplomatic representation; honorary consuls work on consular, commercial, cultural and related tasks, but not political tasks. They do 'fly the flag', and provide limited support to the home country at almost zero cost. Honorary consuls, who may be located in a foreign capital or in other cities, can be of considerable practical assistance in building local contacts, and help businessmen and visiting delegations, in addition to undertaking some consular tasks. Many developing states could benefit from more extensive use of honorary consuls, but are perhaps inhibited by perceived difficulties in choosing the right individuals. Managing an extensive network of this kind also requires the foreign ministry to invest in manpower and effort to assist and supervise them.

Other approaches have emerged. One is to concentrate staff in select regional embassies, which become service providers to smaller missions in that neighborhood. For instance, an agriculture or IT expert based at one embassy can serve neighboring missions. Such a hub-and-spoke arrangement pools services; sometimes it engenders the thought that a regional embassy under a senior ambassador might also supervise neighboring missions, but no one has tried this, perhaps as it would add a needless intermediate layer.<sup>11</sup>

## Key Points

- It is likely that new forms of representation will be tried out more in the years ahead, including embassies that are trimmer and share facilities with others, as well as replacing some resident missions with 'non-resident ambassadors', and wider use of honorary consuls, to cope with budget cutbacks.
- In contrast, some countries are still at a phase of expanding their diplomatic representation networks.

## PERMANENT MISSIONS

Diplomatic representation attached to an international organization is called a 'permanent mission', distinguishing it from delegations sent to take part in conferences and other activities at these organizations. In practice these permanent missions are attached by member-states to the UN and its agencies, and also to regional organizations, to work with these entities on a continuous basis. They serve as a mechanism for uninterrupted negotiation. The 1961 VCDR, which does not mention permanent missions, applies to them loosely; they are governed by the rules established by the UN or the concerned entity, and by agreement between the organization and the country where it is located, a so-called 'headquarters agreement'.<sup>12</sup>

This has several consequences. Ranks and designations of officials do not follow VCDR norms.<sup>13</sup> Permanent missions often have two or more 'ambassadors'; this rank becomes an honorific, since the head of mission is usually called a 'permanent representative'. The work handled by permanent missions is narrower in focus compared with embassies. Their principal interlocutors are the permanent missions sent by other countries, i.e. representatives of fellow member-states, plus officials at the organization's secretariat. Mutual cultivation among missions is intensive. No less important, especially today, are the non-state actors that are active in multilateral and regional diplomacy. This includes the media, from the home country and foreign, key information multipliers, and non-government organizations (NGOs) active on the subjects handled by that international organization, often with 'consultative' status. These NGOs act as information providers and as connectors with civil society, at home and internationally. Thus, public diplomacy has become a major new task for permanent missions.

The skills needed for multilateral diplomats are not intrinsically different from those entailed in bilateral diplomacy, but with special emphasis on the negotiation craft. As always,

personal credibility and interpersonal skills are at a premium. Chairing a meeting, or acting as a 'rapporteur', calls for domain skill that comes mainly from practice, as does work in a drafting group that hammers out a resolution or statement; this is part of the essential training in multilateral work. Permanent missions do not engage in economic, cultural, consular, or other kinds of outreach, though on the margins of conferences and other meetings, bilateral contacts are pursued by leaders, be it at New York, Geneva, or elsewhere. Small countries with limited global networks use these places for bilateral contact with countries where they do not have resident representation; here the permanent mission plays a post office function, transmitting messages as needed. New York in particular is a global listening post. The diplomats stationed at permanent missions mainly act as political officers; some are specialists. Functional experts on climate change, disarmament, or other issues in dialogue may be brought in as needed as 'advisers', or may be stationed at these missions, but in general, these diplomats are less diversified in the work handled than those at embassies.

The Organization of American States, headquartered at Washington DC, was one of the first regional organizations to which member-states sent permanent missions, by tradition separate from their embassies in the US capital. At the EU headquarters at Brussels, the permanent missions of member-countries are vast in size, some with over a hundred diplomat-level officials.<sup>14</sup> An increasing number of regional organizations now have permanent representatives attached to their secretariats, be it the African Union at Addis Ababa or ASEAN at Jakarta; some non-members also feel obliged, depending on their stakes, to send their permanent representatives to important entities.

How has the work of permanent missions changed over the years? What further evolution should we anticipate? Three main changes are so far evident. First, the subjects in dialogue have grown, so that diplomats attached to such missions now deal with many

new subjects. They need to be quick learners, not so much to become instant experts, but to absorb new ideas, work with domain specialists, and integrate their knowledge with national objectives, to advance the home country's interests. Second, they have to deal with a wider gamut of non-state actors and master the public diplomacy aspect of multilateral activities. Third, bilateral issues crop up increasingly at multilateral fora, adding to the work burden. This demonstrates the connectedness of global, regional and bilateral themes.

Multilateral problem solving is less effective than many have hoped. Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria have taught us that the eradication of terrorism and elimination of abhorrent regimes involve complex human security issues. Seemingly decisive initial results from military intervention engender deeper, persisting challenges. New concepts such as 'peace-enforcement' and 'responsibility to protect' are increasingly difficult to practice on the ground. Some scholars have hoped that diplomats might practice 'enlightened multilateralism', and follow a professional ethic that rises above national interests.<sup>15</sup> Decades earlier, Harold Nicolson had also spoken in such an idealistic vein, but that is neither feasible nor likely in an international system that remains animated by sovereign states.

We may expect growth in permanent missions, especially those attached to regional organizations, working along traditional lines, but more agile and serving the interests of diverse home constituencies, beyond the foreign ministry. Diplomats working at these would continue to widen skillsets and competencies.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomatic missions that are embedded in international and regional organizations are in essence permanent mechanisms for negotiation, focused on much narrower agendas, compared with bilateral embassies.
- They deal with wide range of subjects, in an environment that is dynamic and volatile, calling for high professional skills. Their numbers are likely to grow.

### **IMPROVING EMBASSY PERFORMANCE**

The diplomatic system of each country requires its overseas missions to contribute to national objectives. This would typically include national security and a peaceful environment in its neighborhood, development and prosperity through trade, investments and technology, and advancing the welfare of people through education, international travel and other exchanges. In our globalized age, countries are more dependent on one another than ever before, as reflected in the ratio of the country's international trade and foreign investment to national GDP, and also in the interconnections between national development and the regional and global environment.

Do all embassies rise to their potential? Much hinges on the degree of professionalism, as well as the motivation and leadership, in the embassy, and the training provided to its personnel. To the extent that politicians and other non-career ambassadors are sent abroad in many developing countries, notably in Africa and Latin America, embassies start with an initial handicap. Such recourse to non-professionals is distinctly less in Asia, and rare in Western diplomatic systems.<sup>16</sup> If we accept that diplomacy is a profession that requires its domain knowledge and expertise, it stands to reason that in the main embassies should be headed by experienced professionals.

Embassies are governed by rules framed by the MFA, and are typically supervised jointly by MFA territorial units and by the administration mechanism, the former concentrating on functional output and the latter on managing personnel and rule compliance. How they perform depends on: selection of personnel, especially the ambassador; the training given to both them and locally engaged staff; aligning their work to the objectives of the MFA; the quality of their tasking and supervision; monitoring performance, typically through annual assessments; and mentoring, morale and motivation.

The traditional methods for performance enhancement include periodic inspection of

embassies through visits by senior officials from the MFA, who examine staff strength and suitability to the assigned tasks, and the working of different sections of the embassy, ranging from political to economic and consular, plus the quality of supervision over all these activities by the ambassador. In the better systems, the focus is not so much on the assessment and grading of individuals, important as this is, but also help for the embassy to overcome problems and to deliver better results.

In well-managed MFAs, performance evaluation methods have been refined, accommodating ideas borrowed from corporate management that are applied across public services (Rana, 2013: 89–93). They may include:

- Aligning embassies' tasks to the MFA's major priorities. The MFA typically sets these at three cascading levels: principal national objectives; several goals articulated under each objective; and finally a compendium of desired outputs or 'deliverables' for each goal. Embassy tasks thus become an extension of these MFA objectives. Some foreign ministries stipulate elaborate embassy tasks without setting out their own objectives, which produces responses from embassies that are unrealistic and difficult to assess or implement.<sup>17</sup>
- Some countries, ranging from Botswana to Malaysia to the UK, require their embassies to project their activities against 'Key Performance Indicator' matrices. Other countries, including Canada, Kenya and Switzerland, take this a step further to sign 'performance contracts' with ambassadors. This has shown mixed results.
- The French have pioneered the method of 'ambassador's instructions', under which every envoy setting out at the start of a mission receives in Paris elaborate, custom-tailored guidelines on the tasks that this individual is expected to accomplish, on behalf of all the ministries that have a stake in that bilateral relationship. Within six months the ambassador presents to Quai d'Orsay a 'plan of action' to implement these instructions, along with a request for resources, human and material, that are deemed essential (Rana, 2013: 91). A few other European countries have adopted a similar method, with mixed results.
- Other countries have come up with their own methods. India requires its embassies to produce an 'annual plan of action', but does not enforce this with any rigor.<sup>18</sup> In the mid-2000s, the Thai Foreign Ministry prepared a five-year projection of what it sought to achieve in its relations with some 25 major partner countries, with inputs from other ministries and official agencies. This is a particularly wholesome method of forward planning, for managing bilateral relations.

Performance enhancement actions are of real utility if they help embassies to better work on their tasks. That depends on whether the stipulated norms are relevant and applied in realistic fashion, taking into account the intrinsically unquantifiable nature of diplomatic work. It is also essential to distinguish between process and outcomes; for instance, an embassy or a foreign ministry can stipulate that *x* number of ministerial visits or delegations are to be exchanged, but say nothing about the results from those visits. Outcomes in diplomacy are notoriously difficult to quantify. Further, one can set a target for bilateral trade or flow of foreign direct investment, but since the result hinges on actions by business enterprises, official agents, be they embassies or ministries, can only speak of their facilitator roles, the more so as outcomes depend on many exogenous factors.

With all such caveats, monitoring embassy performance is an inexact science. No particular method can be identified as best. Yet it is useful to benchmark, and refine, one's monitoring and assessment mechanism. It is also worthwhile to heed the advice of a 2011 British parliamentary committee, which cautioned the Foreign and Commonwealth Office against an excess of 'managerialism', saying:

We received evidence that this was a factor behind the claimed decline in the quality of FCO foreign policy work, as it led to managerial skills being emphasized rather than geographic knowledge, and time and attention to be diverted from core diplomatic functions. (House of Commons, 2011: 3)



## Key Points

- Embassies and foreign ministries confront demands that are common to public services across the world: to deliver value and to be measured in their performance. The essentially unquantifiable nature of the bulk of diplomatic tasks makes this problematic.
- To the extent that priority is given to setting goals and direction, such methods can deliver value. But rigid application of evaluation criteria borrowed from the corporate world leads to pointless form filling and applying standards that miss the real work of diplomacy management.

**Table 12.1 Embassy functions: past, present and anticipated**

<i>Function</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Contemporary</i>	<i>Future</i>
Representation	Core activity, embassy as exclusive agent.	Somewhat taken for granted. Embassies rub shoulders with other official representatives, face problems over establishing primacy coordinating local actions (US issues Presidential Letters; Thailand has law naming ambassador as 'CEO' of Team Thailand) (Rana, 2013: 74).	Expect greater plurality, including within embassies; diplomats will jostle with representatives of other official agencies, sub-state entities, and non-state actors. Embassy will remain prime channel for official contact, and best source on local information.
Main influencers	Foreign Ministry of home country, plus other branches of government. Especially answerable to the head of government.	A wide range of official agencies, across the entire government are its 'customers'; also parliament entities; plus non-state actors that have a stake in the assignment country. Indirectly, the embassy is also under the influence of official and non-official agencies of the receiving country.	All the agencies mentioned earlier, plus the publics in general, in the home country, and to an extent also the publics of the receiving state. The diaspora in the receiving country is a special responsibility for the embassy.
Negotiation	Embassies as prime channel.	Functional ministries handle their own negotiations; they involve embassies to a limited extent.	Embassies act more as facilitators, with reduced direct role in negotiations; will remain key resource for advice on cultural and other local characteristics.
Relation building	Central task, under close supervision from home, with main focus on official actors, and limited outreach to non-state agents.	In practical terms, this is highest priority, involving full range of official actors, including sub-state entities; business actors; media; academia and think tanks; diaspora; plus publics across entire range, including NGOs and civil society, and anyone that influences bilateral, regional and international activities of target country. Embassy is increasingly a 'co-manager', together with the MFA.	Will become multi-dimensional activity, in which public diplomacy dimension will be especially important. Much of the process – but of course not all – will be open, and accessible to outside scrutiny. Further growth in interactive social media will add to openness.
Promotion	Starting in 1950s, trade promotion grew in importance; attracting FDI became new task from end 1960s.	Economic promotion and public outreach have become core tasks.	Likely to remain major priority. Public-private partnerships will grow in importance.

(continued)



**Table 12.1 Embassy functions: past, present and anticipated (continued)**

<i>Function</i>	<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Contemporary</i>	<i>Future</i>
Image projection	Not treated as a priority initially, though emergence of electronic media made diplomatic systems aware of importance of country image.	First priority has been to build favorable image to attract tourists, which has morphed into wider image projection. Concepts of 'country brand' and 're-branding' embraced by many states.	Will be mainstreamed as key activity. But image marketing specialists may encounter more savvy diplomatic clients, who better understand long-term nature of image building.
Reportage	MFAs depended on embassy assessments as key input into policy making	Embassy no longer first source for hard information; does not compete with instant news sources. Focus has shifted to predictive analysis, and home country perspective on external developments. Embassy only one of many other sources for MFA.	Embassy remains key source for: comprehensive analysis, joint reports by several missions, giving full picture; prediction of likely developments; identification of future key actors, in political, economic & public fields. Reportage telescopes into relationship building.
Aid management	Embassies had little role, foreign aid emerged after World War II.	Has grown in importance; for donors, embassy is now prime delivery channel, with some disbursement decisions delegated; for recipients, outreach to govt. agencies and to NGOs is major task.	Embassies will have to mediate between multiple actors; greater role of non-state agents among both donors and recipients. Also close monitoring by publics and media.
Services	Consular, not a priority activity	Consular work has strategic value in age of extensive foreign travel, migration. Public outreach and information services also important. Student exchanges also larger.	Migration, travel and diaspora communities will demand more attention. Education diplomacy will also gain further traction.

## **WILL EMBASSIES BE NEEDED IN THE FUTURE?**

Are embassies indispensable? Contemporary information and communication technology permits countries to maintain contact with one another 'virtually', overcoming distance and geography. Officials and delegations can visit foreign capitals as needed, without maintaining expensive permanent establishments. We saw that some countries have employed the method of 'non-resident ambassadors' and 'laptop envoys' in such fashion. We can count on further innovation.

Will there be a shift towards greater professionalism? The US, which is unique among major states in drawing up to 30% of its ambassadors from outside the diplomatic career

track, has witnessed even a slightly greater swing in favor of such 'non-professionals'. To the extent the latter come from public life, often with a wide range of experiences, they add real value, but not when the appointees are drawn from the ranks of presidential campaign contributors.<sup>19</sup> The situation is much less favorable in a number of developing states, especially in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, where such appointments are seen as the head of government's prerogative, with little care for job competence. That degrades the performance of embassies, and leads to demoralization in the professional cadre.

One scholar has described the contemporary work of embassy officials as 'gumboot diplomacy'.<sup>20</sup> Another has spoken of the professional as 'a high-functioning, street-smart,

renaissance humanist with well-developed instincts, a Blackberry, and where necessary, a Kevlar vest' (Copeland, 2009: 259). Attired in tuxedos or cargo pants, as circumstances mandate, countries will always need representatives on the ground, to reach out to diverse foreign actors, to engage with them and negotiate, and to furnish authentic ground information. Will they need to operate out of lavish residences and project an aura of glamor? Perhaps not. But image is also part of public diplomacy. It is likely that these swans on the seemingly gilded lake will need to pedal harder than ever beneath the surface. Embassies will endure; if they did not exist, they would need to be invented.

## NOTES

- 1 See LN Rangarajan, *The Arthashastra* (Penguin, New Delhi, 1992). Kautilya advised the envoy to uphold his king's honor, and to deliver the message entrusted to him 'exactly as it was given to him, even if he apprehended danger to his own life'; the envoy was advised not to let honors go to his head, avoid liquor, and 'sleep alone'.
- 2 For example, Article 3, setting out the functions of embassies, brought into the draft a vital concept that was not in the original draft prepared by the International Law Commission: 'promoting friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving State, and developing their economic, cultural, and scientific relations' (Article 3, 1 (e)); this was proposed by Yugoslavia and the Philippines.
- 3 Example: VCDR Article 3 1(d) reads: 'ascertaining by all lawful means conditions and developments in the receiving State, and reporting thereon to the Government of the sending State'. The convoluted language is intended to ensure that receiving governments do not restrain embassies from gathering information for their reports to home governments; it also reflects the concern of Soviet bloc countries of the time over activities of Western embassies in their countries.
- 4 Article 39 of VCDR says that embassies should 'conduct official business through the foreign ministry'.
- 5 This is based on research interviews with diplomats. See Rana, *The 21st Century Ambassador*, 2004, pp. 16–7.
- 6 This increasingly includes non-state entities, such as chambers of business, think tanks, and other credible entities. Many foreign ministries do not have specific regulations covering embassies sharing reports with domestic non-state actors, but my experience at different embassy posts was that, handled with discretion, this seldom posed a problem.
- 7 This has been the Indian experience; the Ministry of External Affairs established its Development Partnership Administration (DPA) in 2012 for holistic oversight over an expanding aid program, in which Indian embassies are the key implementing agents.
- 8 The concept of the MFA–embassy manpower balance is based on empirical study. See Rana, *Bilateral Diplomacy* (DiploFoundation, Malta and Geneva, 2002b), p. 121.
- 9 In a growing number of countries, including India, it is customary for ambassadors who come home on consultations to meet with opposition leaders.
- 10 Non-resident envoys also look after high or influential visitors from the assignment country, which helps them build contacts. Combining this method with a 'virtual embassy' would render it even more effective, though this does not seem to be the practice in Malta or Singapore.
- 11 This was one of the notions advanced by the Sen Committee in India in 1983; that report has not been published, though its main findings were disclosed in JN Dixit's book (2005).
- 12 The 1975 Vienna Convention on the Representation of States in their Relations with International Organizations of a Universal Character sets out privileges and immunities, but it has not been widely accepted, much less incorporated into the municipal law of most member-states.
- 13 In 2000, India's BJP government sought to appoint an Indian 'Green Card' holder living in the US as a special envoy for overseas Indians; the US State Department turned down his designation at the Indian Embassy as 'special adviser' in the rank of ambassador, on the ground that this was not in accord with VCDR. He was eventually given that designation and rank at the Indian Permanent Mission to the UN at New York. The appointment was terminated in 2004 when a Congress government came to power in New Delhi.
- 14 Daily 'prayer meetings' at large EU missions are held in auditoria; the permanent representative often delegates this coordination task to their deputies.
- 15 Former German ambassador Karl Theodore Paschke set out some of these ideas in a statement at a Wilton Park conference in January 2003.
- 16 Spain is one exception now, and sends a number of political appointees as ambassadors. In most Western countries, at any point of time one

would not find more than one or two non-career ambassadors. In Asia, such appointments are relatively few, compared with Africa or Latin America. Brazil has a law that mandates that ambassadors must belong to the diplomatic service. In Trinidad and Tobago, or Uganda, the majority are political appointments, which demoralizes their professional diplomats.

- 17 This observation is based on research and interviews with diplomats from several countries.
- 18 I had pioneered this method at Algeria in 1977, and applied it at other missions I headed; in 1980 it caught the MEA's attention and was thereafter applied to all Indian embassies (Rana, 2002b: 81–2); it now receives cursory attention, and many Indian embassies ignore this.
- 19 Bloomberg Business, 25 July 2013: 'Obama Ambassadors gave \$13.6 million in campaign money', [www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-07-25/obama-ambassadors-gave-at-least-13-6-million-in-campaign-money](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-07-25/obama-ambassadors-gave-at-least-13-6-million-in-campaign-money). See also: 'BBC, 28 June 2013: 'Should campaign contributors become ambassadors?' [www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-22894459](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-22894459)
- 20 This evocative metaphor comes from Professor Dietrich Kappler, former President, DiploFoundation.

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# Consulates and Consular Diplomacy

Ana Mar Fernández Pasarín

Consulates and consular diplomacy refer to different aspects of consular affairs. While the former puts the accent on the definition and formal description of the consular institution, the latter focuses on the political output of consular administrations.

This terminological differentiation reflects a conceptual nuance that has been taking shape in consular literature over the years. Traditionally, the analysis of consulates has been the domain of legal and historical studies. Whereas international public law has paid particular attention to the codification of the status, functions and privileges of consuls, historians have traced the origins and the path of sedimentation of the consular institution across countries and throughout history. Contemporary consular studies have incorporated the perspectives of political science and international relations studies, which are nowadays less oriented towards pure institutionalism and more towards public policy analysis. The recent emergence of the concept of consular diplomacy, which involves

approaching consular services as an instrument of foreign policy, reflects this evolution.

## THE ORIGINS

Consulates are an old institution in international society. Their origins lie in Europe, well before the emergence of the modern state and the creation of resident diplomatic services. The fertile ground for their emergence was not a specific form of political organization but rather the flourishing of economic activities between territories and the demand for their securitization from the Middle Ages onward (Leira and Neumann, 2011).

Signs of the early consular system can be found in the figures of the *prostatai* and the *proxenoi* of the ancient Greek city-states. The former were appointed by Greeks living abroad to act as intermediaries between the colony and local authorities in legal and political matters,

while the latter, who were chosen from among the nationals of the receiving state, are considered to be the ancestors of modern honorary consuls (Lee, 1991; Leira and Neumann, 2011; Núñez and Martí, 2009). They were appointed to look after the interests of the nationals of the Greek sending polity, ensuring, in particular, their protection and the promotion of their merchandise. The Roman republic created a similar figure, the *praetor peregrinus*, to serve as arbitrator in trade disputes between foreigners and Roman citizens. At the time, the term ‘consul’, which is of Latin origin, was coined to designate the two elected – civil and military – heads of the Republic. The title of ‘consul’ survived during the Roman Empire, although consuls were no longer elected but appointed by the emperor and their importance greatly decreased (Leira and Neumann, 2011).

During the Middle Ages, the term ‘consul’ came to mean diverse functions that developed in the western Mediterranean. The ‘consuls of the sea’ and ‘consuls of traders’ were respectively on-board magistrates who accompanied ships and port merchants, who were elected from among their peers and had their own business in foreign havens. Both were invested with certain judicial competences aimed at solving disputes during voyages on vessels and among merchants in foreign lands.

As mentioned by Leira and Neumann, the different meanings gradually merged. The distinction between consuls of traders and consuls of the sea became increasingly blurred. In addition, the office of consul of the sea lost most of its practical relevance with the emergence of the ‘consuls at sea’ as leaders and judicial chiefs of their merchant compatriots in foreign lands (Leira and Neumann, 2011: 234).

The rise of resident overseas consuls came in the wake of the crusades. Trade expansion on the part of the Western seafaring powers in the Mediterranean entailed the signing of treaties with Eastern countries, which expanded consular networks, functions and privileges. Consuls were given exclusive competences

for adjudicating disputes among merchants and seamen of their nationality residing in foreign lands. As pointed out by Lee, these legal agreements conceding judicial privilege mainly to merchants and seamen of the sending authority predate the modern diplomatic doctrine and privilege of extraterritoriality, defined as the exemption from the local jurisdiction or the extension of jurisdiction beyond the borders of the state (Lee, 1991). In addition, consuls were also gradually invested with the general mission of safeguarding commercial affairs and facilitating trade, travel and residence in foreign lands. Illustratively, from the eleventh century on, cities like Genoa, Pisa and Venice started to sign treaties with the Byzantine Empire that gave them the right to appoint the first European resident consuls in the Eastern Mediterranean (Berridge, 2007). In the late Middle Ages, the practice of appointing consuls in foreign lands also became frequent in Western countries. As noted by Lee (1991), in the fifteenth century there were Italian consuls residing in England and the Netherlands, while English consuls could be found in the Netherlands and in the Nordic countries.

The modern consular institution developed with the gradual centralization of political power and the emergence of the European modern state in the sixteenth century. The consolidation of absolute monarchies with mercantilist ambitions in the context of international trade expansion involved increasing public control over the appointment of consuls and the definition of their role. The regulation and professionalization of the consular office – with the exception of honorary consuls – under the aegis of state authority involved the attribution of new representative and political functions. Consuls were confirmed in their responsibility over their compatriots in foreign countries but they were also tasked with the mission of fostering the general interest of the polity and of transmitting, in particular, economic and political information concerning the receiving polity. This phenomenon of ‘diplomatisation’

of consuls (Núñez and Martí, 2009), their transformation into public officers in charge of furthering the state's general interests, contributed to creating confusion over the limits between their competences and those in the hands of diplomats. This was also due to the fact that both the diplomatic service and the consular service, although technically differentiated (mostly in Western countries), were placed under the authority of the same external administration of the state (see Chapter 12 in this Handbook). By way of example, the US Department of State, created in 1789, included both sections. There was, however, a geographical difference between embassies and consulates. Whereas the former were located in capitals in order to maintain relationships with the central government of the receiving country, the latter were placed in major ports and commercial cities with the objective of promoting trade interests. Territorial decentralization was thus one of the characteristics of the deployment of consular posts.

The significant development of permanent diplomatic missions relegated the consular institution to a position of secondary importance in the eighteenth century. However, the expansion of commerce and industry in the second half of the century allowed consuls to preserve their former standing in the economic domain. Consulates reached the apex of their development and recognition in the nineteenth century in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and the promotion of Western trade in the Asiatic and American continents. The European example was soon followed by Russia and the United States, which also started to expand their consular networks throughout the world during the century. Tellingly, by the end of the eighteenth century, there were 70 US and 34 Russian consular posts overseas (Hamilton, 2011; Zonova, 2011). In the case of Russia, it is worth mentioning that the consular network expanded particularly in the Balkans, a region with sizeable Orthodox communities, with 23 Russian consulates by the mid nineteenth century.

China started to accredit consuls one century later with the opening of the first Chinese consulate in Singapore in 1877 (Liping, 2011).

The prominent role played by consuls as international trade promoters and protectors started nevertheless to decline with the appointment of Economic attachés in the diplomatic missions, who assumed the responsibility for the promotion of foreign trade and the consolidation of commercial actors operating on a global scale. For states and major companies, commercial expansion soon became too strategic to depend only on the diligence of consuls, and the image of consular services as marginal players and the poor cousin of diplomacy became more familiar. The need for new economic structures specifically in charge of promoting commercial interests relegated the consular institution to a secondary role. Illustratively, shortly after the adoption of the Rogers Act of 1924, which involved the merger of the US Consular and Diplomatic Services into the US Foreign Service, the commercial duties of the consuls were reassigned to the Foreign Commercial Service, which was created in 1927 (Hamilton, 2011).

The emergence of new consular tasks under the pressure of globalization restored the role of consuls at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Such phenomena as increasing flows of citizens living or traveling abroad, international terrorist threats and natural disasters have led to the prominent role played by consuls nowadays in visa diplomacy as well as in the domain of protection and assistance. Illustratively, the 50 Mexican consulates operating in the United States issue about 825,000 passports and 900,000 identification cards per year (Hernández Joseph, 2012). Contemporary consuls have lost their past prominence as commercial and jurisdictional agents but they have gained importance as interfaces for communication with diaspora and, more generally, as agents of securitization. This recent shift has been particularly noticeable in the field of border control and the prevention and management of overseas crisis situations.



## Key Points

- Consulates are an old institution whose origins must be located in pre-modern Europe.
- Their emergence is related to the Western seafaring powers' economic expansion in the Mediterranean from the Middle Ages onwards.
- The modern consular institution developed with the centralization of political power in the sixteenth century.
- Contemporary consuls have gained importance as agents of securitization in the fields of visa diplomacy and citizens' protection and assistance

## INTERNATIONAL LAW CODIFICATION AND EVOLVING PRACTICE

Consuls have enjoyed different statuses and privileges throughout history. They have also performed a wide range of functions that have evolved according to the development of the modern state. In legal terms, the consular office has been regulated by domestic rules and bilateral treaties for centuries. In this regard, the Code of Euric, drawn up in Spain during the Visigothic period, the 'Book of the Consulate of the Sea', a compilation of norms and traditions regulating maritime trade that was also issued by the Crown of Aragon in Barcelona in the fifteenth century, or the treaties of Capitulations that were signed between the Christian and the Muslim countries since the same period, constitute some of the attempts to codify the early functions of the consular institution. Later on, the Industrial Revolution fostered the adoption of the first bilateral treaties regulating aspects of the specific status of consuls. France and Spain inaugurated this practice with the signing of the Convention of El Pardo in 1769. States' domestic regulations also developed: The French Ordinance of 1781, The Netherlands Consular Regulations of 1786, the United States Consular Service Acts of 1792 and 1856, the first Russian Consular Charter of 1820 and the British Consular Advances Act of 1825 represent some of the first examples

of national consular regulations specifying the status, rights and responsibilities of consuls in the contemporary age (Sen, 1965).

As for international codification of the consular institution, this stems from the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963. This legal text, which was drafted under the umbrella of the United Nations and had been signed by 177 states by 2014, defines and harmonizes in five chapters and 79 articles the principles ruling the establishment and conduct of consular affairs and, in particular, the question of the connection between diplomatic and consular relations.

In Article 5, the Vienna Convention provides its own list of consular functions. First are those tasks relatively similar to those carried out by resident diplomatic missions, among which consular protection, the promotion of commercial, economic and cultural relations and information functions stand out. Second is the function of consular assistance, which consists of assisting nationals of the sending state during their stay or transit in the territory of the receiving state in cases of temporary difficulty, detention, or incarceration, and of facilitating administrative procedures pertaining to repatriation in case of death or serious illness. The other main aspects of the consular function involve such duties as the exercise of notary and public register functions; the supervision of maritime and aerial navigation (inspection of vessels or aircraft having the nationality of the sending state; assistance and investigation in the event of incidents); functions of international judicial cooperation such as representing or arranging appropriate representation for fellow-nationals before the tribunals of the receiving state and guaranteeing the preservation of their rights; control of migration and travel flows through the issuance of passports to fellow-nationals and the issuance of visas to foreign citizens wishing to travel to the sending state. Overall, in this contemporary light, the consular function can be defined as the capacity of action attributed to the administration of the state in the areas mentioned in order

to protect the interests of the individuals and corporate bodies that form part of that state when in a foreign country.

Consular affairs were marginalized during the twentieth century. Considered to be of low intensity in comparison with the ‘high politics’ of inter-state diplomacy, ‘diplomacy for people’ was for long somewhat disdained within foreign affairs ministries. Since the beginning of the new millennium, however, several phenomena have contributed to reversing this tendency. Consular affairs have gained a new political saliency thanks to a series of overlapping processes. The globalization of the economy and the transnationalization of national communities, with the corresponding migration pressure, as well as changes in the logics of security due to man-made or natural phenomena such as the international terrorist threat or large-scale natural disasters, have highlighted the strategic role of consular posts overseas. These new variables characterizing today’s society are the main reasons for the shift of consular services from the periphery in which they were confined within the external administration of the state towards the center of most foreign affairs ministries’ concerns. Interestingly, the Consular Department of the Russian MFA is today the largest department of the ministry (Zonova, 2011: 187). Increasing pressure on governments to anticipate and prevent risks and to provide immediate assistance to their nationals when threats occur abroad have renewed consideration for consular affairs within a context of 24/7 exposure and monitoring of political elites’ activity by the media.

Global phenomena have underlined the key role played by consular services in the event of major transnational crises. Notwithstanding, similarly to the contemporary tendencies observed in the general design and management of public policies, globalization has also highlighted the limits of individual action in dealing with transnational security problems. Increasingly aware of the added value of enhanced coordination and joint strategies to cope with common problems

such as massive evacuation of citizens in the event of major crises caused by political situations or natural disasters, governments have started to engage in mutual cooperation and public–private partnerships as a means of improving their effectiveness as providers of consular services.

In many regions of the world, especially in Europe and Latin America, consular affairs have become an exercise of power-sharing and pooling of resources. While the classic consular institution has not disappeared, what we do observe is an increasing tendency to resort to innovative formulae of collaboration, not only between states but also between states and non-state actors in order to deal with the new developments arising in international society.

New modes of consular governance include the development of new patterns of intergovernmental consular cooperation, enhanced inter-administrative coordination, the delegation of representation to state and non-state actors and the deployment of IT solutions to move consular administration closer to citizens, while extending, speeding up and facilitating their access to information and consular procedures.

### **Key Points**

- Consuls have performed a wide range of functions throughout history.
- Until the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963, these tasks had been regulated by domestic laws and bilateral treaties.
- Under globalization pressure, consulates have increasingly invested in the deployment of new modes of governance such as enhanced inter-governmental cooperation, public–private partnerships, or the use of IT solutions in consular administrations.

### **CONSULAR COOPERATION**

Nowadays, consular cooperation, especially when developed locally or overseas, has

become a primary strategic instrument. Different factors and events, especially the security challenges posed by the growingly transnational nature of organized crime, increasing migrations flows, natural disasters, or the fight against international terrorism, have stimulated the rise of consular cooperation as a policy tool of securitization.

The large-scale emergency situations that the consular services had to deal with on occasions such as the terrorist attacks in the USA of September 2001, the tsunami of South-East Asia in 2004, or the Mumbai terrorist attacks in 2008 underlined the strategic position of consular officers overseas at a time when citizens increasingly travel overseas and when such phenomena as international terrorism, natural disasters, or major political crises multiply the potential number of situations requiring consular assistance. Yet, these events also revealed the weaknesses of governments' individual approaches in major crisis prevention and management. Traditionally, consular services only regulate typical, individual cases and fail to consider exceptional cases, such as natural disasters, wars or humanitarian crises, affecting large groups of citizens whose states are not represented in the third state. This was the case in December 2004, when a large number of states did not have any representation in the countries affected by the disaster (Fernández Pasarín, 2009). Increasing governments' awareness about the shortcomings of individual administrative, financial and human resources capacities led to the development of enhanced overseas consular cooperation as a means of guaranteeing higher degrees of consular protection and assistance to citizens when they are abroad.

Furthermore, consular cooperation has also developed as part of border security policy and thus as an instrument to control migration flows to or through territories. Traditionally, the granting of visas has been considered an act of territorial sovereignty through which the state has exercised preventive control over foreign nationals entering

and staying in its territory. In general, this function has been regulated on the basis of bilateral treaties. For treaties of trade and navigation, friendship, and those establishing specific consular conventions, states have usually operated on the principle of reciprocity of freedom of entry and exit for the respective nationals in the other state's territory (Lee, 1991). In this respect, the visa regime has emerged as a low-intensity diplomatic instrument: when granting or denying a visa to a foreign national, a state is indirectly taking a foreign policy stance with respect to the state of origin of that citizen.

September 11th substantially elevated governments' awareness of the importance of visa policy and, in particular, of local consular cooperation as a means of administering internal security abroad. The willingness to develop stable channels of cooperation in third countries to prevent illegal immigration and terrorism has translated into the adoption of legal and practical measures, prominent among which are the exchange of information over criteria used for issuing visas, verifying applications and preventing the existence of simultaneous or successive applications.

By way of example, in the aftermath of 9/11, the European Union adopted the Common Consular Instruction in 2002, setting common criteria for the processing of applications and the exchange of information on potential networks of illegal immigration. It also published catalogues of best practices and recommendations aimed at deploying common procedures regarding the security of consulate buildings, the completion of forms, interviews with applicants, the detection of forged documents, the functioning of the archives system, or the training of personnel in information technology. In the United States, in addition to reinforcing inter-agency coordination between the Department of Homeland Security and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, this latter administration also negotiated fifteen bilateral agreements (2011 data) with countries for which the

United States has waived visa requirements on the sharing of terrorist screening information. In doing so, visa policy also ended up making an indirect contribution to the design of a foreign policy.

### **Key Point**

- Overseas consular cooperation has become a key policy instrument for dealing with trans-national security challenges such as organized crime, increasing migratory flows, natural disasters, or the fight against international terrorism.

## **DELEGATED REPRESENTATION**

Another practice that has consolidated in recent times is the delegation of consular representation: the possibility for a state to be represented in a third country by another state even when it is already represented in that third country. These bilateral agreements among sovereign states are based on an extended practice among Commonwealth states, especially the smaller ones, who often delegated their representative functions to the former imperial power. In general, the chosen state for delegation is the so-called ‘dominant consulate’ by virtue of the number of visa applications that it normally deals with, or its historical ties with the host country or with the state represented.

In general, states have been reluctant to see this practice extended, given that it would involve a loss of control over migratory flows and especially over illegal immigration. Indeed, the delegation of powers means that the state taking on the responsibilities must act with the same degree of diligence that it employs, for instance, when processing its own visas. However, it also means that the state in question must bear sole responsibility for the evaluation of the risks of illegal immigration. This can generate a basic problem of trust that is difficult to overcome.

In the field of consular assistance and assistance overseas, the delegation of representation has also extended in recent years, although here the practice does not usually go beyond handling civilian crisis management operations in exceptional, collective and temporary circumstances. By way of example, in 2011, during the Libyan crisis, Hungary made an aircraft available to evacuate 29 Romanians, 27 Hungarians, 20 Bulgarians, eight Germans, six Czechs and six other EU and non-EU nationals from Tripoli, with the Monitoring and Information Centre of the European Commission co-financing the operation. Following the European example, the Andean Community of Nations and the Mercosur countries plus Bolivia and Chile also adopted agreements on consular cooperation and the delegation of representation in third states since 2000.

In the case of both visa diplomacy and civil protection and assistance operations, the rationale behind the delegation of representation is the willingness to improve the efficiency of consular affairs management and at the same time reduce the material, financial and personnel costs associated with a particular task. Cost-saving solutions based on functional considerations have thus driven the change in the workings of consular posts.

Another innovation that has also developed in recent years is the creation of joint or common consular centers. As Lee points out, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United States were among the first in inaugurating this kind of multilateral arrangements in Oaxaca, Mexico in the 1980s (Lee, 1991: 70–1). The Nordic countries have also been particularly enthusiastic about developing this practice. In the European Union, the sharing of consular services is more recent. In Chisinau, Moldova, the consular section of the Embassy of Hungary represents, since 2007, 13 EU member states (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Latvia, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Sweden) and two non-EU members (Norway and

Switzerland) for the processing of visa applications. As these examples illustrate, this does not involve the ‘fusion’ of states’ consulates, but rather bringing together the consular sections in the same building, which would maintain their autonomy. In the European Union, France and Germany are the main forces behind these types of initiatives, considered beneficial from the standpoint of both efficiency and economic and security criteria. Centralizing infrastructures is considered not only to contribute to saving resources but also to improving the security of consular personnel.

### Key Points

- The delegation of consular representation and the creation of joint consular centers has increased in recent years.
- Cost-saving solutions based on functional considerations are the main rationale behind these institutional changes to the map of political representation abroad.
- These practices are considered beneficial from the standpoint of both efficiency and economic and security criteria.

## NEW TECHNOLOGIES

The twenty-first century has also witnessed the watershed of the telecommunications revolution. The exercise of the consular function has been deeply transformed over the last two decades by the extraordinary upsurge of IT solutions applied to consular services. This swift adaptation of consular administrations to new technologies can be explained by a need for enhanced security, especially after 9/11, and greater efficiency in the face of growing citizens’ expectations and media scrutiny.

The application of informatics solutions to consular administration is particularly noticeable in two domains. First of all, it is worth mentioning the increasing automation of exchange of information, both horizontal

and vertical, between consulates and between consulates and foreign affairs ministries, particularly as regards visa procedures (applications, rejections and issuances). This flow of information aimed at enhancing border security through the identification of foreign travelers and detection of forged documents became of crucial importance after 9/11. Illustratively, the US Enhanced Border Security Act of 2002 required the inclusion of biometrics on all entry documents. In addition, three information pillars of the US consular system were strengthened: the Consular Lookout and Support System (CLASS), gathering the data of persons who were considered ineligible for visas as well as those suspected of terrorism or criminal activities; the State Department’s intranet, which allows high-speed information exchange between consular posts on visas, updated travel information and citizens’ registration data; and the Consular Consolidated Database (CCD), fed by this intranet, which is the main dataset with consular information and includes data of US citizens living and traveling abroad and records of visa applicants.

The European Union followed the same path. In 2006, the Visa Information System (VIS), which included compulsory biometric elements, was adopted jointly with a Community Code on Visas that unified all provisions concerning procedures and conditions for the issue of short-stay visas and transit visas through the territories of member states and associated states applying the Schengen *acquis* in full. This regulation came into force in April 2010. It applies to nationals of third countries who must be in possession of a visa when crossing the external borders of the EU, as listed in Regulation (EC) No.539/2001 and periodically amended since then. It also includes a list of third countries whose nationals are required to hold an airport transit visa when passing through the international transit areas of member states’ airports. In the field of protection and assistance, a secure consular-on-line website



(CoOL) for information sharing by EU consular authorities was launched, and EU joint crisis procedures and pilot exercises in third countries in collaboration with EU delegations were drawn up.

Second, as well as the above, citizens' access to information via the internet has also been sharply enhanced by the creation of specific websites within MFA homepages, with information on consular services, country details and travel advice and real-time warnings, in addition to the local data delivered by sites run by consulates themselves, or by the consular section of embassies abroad. In more and more countries like the US or Russia, interactive websites have also been set up that allow citizens to directly process passport and visa applications online or register their passage or stay overseas.

Overall, both the quantity and the quality of information and services made available to citizens have spectacularly increased with the arrival of new technologies. So have public expectations. Nowadays, populations of most countries in the developed world expect their governments to facilitate rapid access to accurate, up-to-date information on consular issues. The communications revolution has not, therefore, altered the functions of the consuls but rather the way of performing them. Fast communication is a key aspect of today's consular services' functioning. It is also what people expect, especially in the event of a crisis affecting nationals abroad, as they become more familiar with the activity of Foreign Affairs Ministries through the internet.

### **Key Points**

- In the twenty-first century, the management of consular affairs has been deeply transformed by the development of IT solutions.
- The need for enhanced security, especially after 9/11, and greater efficiency in the face of growing citizens' expectations and media scrutiny explain the rapid adaptation of consular administrations to new technologies.

## **OUTSOURCING OF CONSULAR TASKS**

Last but not least, another tendency observed in recent years is the increasing outsourcing of less sensitive consular tasks. It could be argued that the early consular institution inaugurated to some extent the externalization of consular services with the creation of the figure of the honorary consuls. Indeed, the logic underlying the appointment of honorary consuls, non-career consuls and locally appointed consuls, whose status was regulated by the Vienna Convention of 1963, conforms to the idea of delegating the execution of certain consular functions to a third party. The added value of honorary consuls in terms of cost effectiveness and local business networks and conditions has expanded their presence in commercial cities since the second half of the twentieth century. Over recent years, in parallel with the growing tendency to resort to honorary consuls, another practice that has developed is that of outsourcing administrative consular tasks to non-state actors, such as administrative agencies like VSF Global, travel agencies and tour operators, which process visa applications in a given city where the consular services have to deal with a particularly high number of applications, or to call centers managed by private companies in areas that receive a large number of country-specific travel safety and security inquiries. By contracting out these functions, the idea has been to relieve consular services of less sensitive tasks that can be performed by non-consular officers.

In general, over the past years, consulates have undergone a deep transformation. This has been fostered by several phenomena, one of which is the growing vulnerability of citizens in the face of unpredictable factors that can have devastating consequences, such as international terrorism, natural catastrophes, or sudden and serious political crises.

These new coordinates characterizing contemporary international society have made governmental elites aware of the strategic role played by consular services within MFAs in



the event of a crisis, in a world in which the flow of human beings is on the increase. This growing awareness has led to the adoption of new forms of consular governance, among which consular cooperation, the delegation of representative tasks to state or non-state actors and the outsourcing of less sensitive administrative consular tasks stand out. The twentieth century disdained consular diplomacy as the Cinderella service within MFA. The twenty-first century has restored its role as an agent of securitization both in civil protection operations and border security policy.

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# The Diplomatic Corps

Paul Sharp and Geoffrey Wiseman

The diplomatic corps is a term mainly used to refer to the diplomats of different sovereign states resident in the capital city of another sovereign state. It also refers to the diplomats of member states present at the headquarters of major regional and international organizations. Heads of missions, secretaries, attachés, others with diplomatic functions, and sometimes personnel whose functions are of a more technical nature are conventionally regarded as members of the diplomatic corps (Satow, 1917: 339–64). People recognized as being members of the diplomatic corps enjoy certain immunities and privileges, although these are derived from their diplomatic status rather than their membership of the diplomatic corps. The term is sometimes, and perhaps increasingly, used to refer to the diplomatic service of a particular state. The practical consequences and possible theoretical significance of this dual use of the term will be examined below. The diplomatic corps has its counterpart in the consular corps, consisting of those engaged in consular activities

on behalf of their states, usually within cities other than the capital of the state to which they are accredited. Practitioners and academics alike have neglected the diplomatic corps. There exists only one collection of scholarly essays devoted exclusively to it (Sharp and Wiseman, 2007). Many practitioners would regard this as appropriate. In addition to confusion over the way the term is used, it also increasingly has to compete with the rising use of a broader term – the diplomatic community – of which the diplomatic corps appears as a subset. Nevertheless, the diplomatic corps remains an important, if elusive, set of practices by which the international society of states is constituted.

The diplomatic corps is generally thought to have had its formal origins in fifteenth-century Rome where the popes, and especially Pius II, developed the practice of summoning the resident representatives of other polities to be addressed jointly (Mattingly, 1937; Berridge, 2007). This practice persists in Rome as an annual routine (The Holy See, 2014). The papal

diplomatic corps may also be summoned on special occasions. Prior to the 1995 Beijing Conference on Women, for example, John Paul II summoned all 168 ambassadors accredited to the Holy See to meet with senior cardinals to hear the Vatican's strong anti-abortion views (Ryall, 2001: 51). It may be surmised that groups like the diplomatic corps existed at earlier times and other places wherever the representatives of separate political entities came together, for example, congresses, coronations, weddings, funerals, games, religious occasions, and other ceremonial meetings (Cohen, 2013: 17). It is likely, however, that two developments were critical to the emergence of the diplomatic corps as that idea is currently understood. The first was the development of a distinctive, and eventually, professional class of diplomats facing the same set of problems associated with their work and developing similar understandings of those problems. The second was the establishment of specifically resident missions which put such diplomats in daily proximity to one another over extended periods of time. Together, these allowed a sense of collective identity to emerge between the diplomats of different states at a shared location. The growing number of resident missions and the increased number and density of interactions between them also generated new problems which required some form of collective management.

We have some evidence of resident missions developing and glimpses of negotiators enjoying a measure of shared identity and self-awareness at different times and places in the world (Numelin, 1950: 128). The Forest Diplomacy of the Iroquois, for example, exhibits elements of both (Jennings et al., 1985: 99). However, in the most developed and familiar account of the emergence of the diplomatic corps, the story begins in Europe between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In 1716 (although the book was probably written earlier) Callières noted how the diplomats of different sovereigns were bound together by their common interest in finding out what is going on (Callières, [1716] 1983: 113). In some early translations, he is presented as speaking

of a 'freemasonry' of diplomacy based on this shared interest (Callières, [1716] 1919: 113). However, these translations may be unreliable. In 1737, Pecquet refers to '*le corps des ministres étrangers dans une pais.*' This body of diplomats, he argues, forms 'a kind of independent society, whose members live among themselves in an intimacy proportionate to how well their Sovereigns get along'. The members of this body are driven by 'different and often opposed interests'. However, they are bound together by the need for knowledge about the state in which they are residing and by the need to defend their 'community of privileges, such that the infraction that harms one becomes the cause of all' (Pecquet [1737] 2004: 73). By the Vienna *Règlement* of 1815, the diplomatic corps has become an established institution requiring a measure of reform and regulation regarding the procedures by which its dean (*doyen*) is determined (Satow, 1917: 339; Leguey-Feilleux, 2009: 42). There has been no significant institutional change in the formal arrangements of the diplomatic corps since 1815 although, as we shall see, the same cannot be said in regard to what it does, or the general significance which is attributed to it by practitioners and students of diplomacy alike.

### Key Points

- The diplomatic corps refers to the diplomats of different sovereign states resident in the capital city of another sovereign state.
- It may also refer to the diplomats of member states present at the headquarters of major regional and international organizations.
- The consular corps refers to the members of the consular services of different sovereign states present in a city. A consular corps is more easily identifiable in non-capital cities.

## THE FORMAL PRACTICES OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

In the formal sense, the principal members of the diplomatic corps at any capital or

international organization headquarters are the heads of mission. These rarely meet as a whole except on the occasion of formal state ceremonies necessitated by such occasions as the inaugurations and funerals of leaders or formal addresses by chief executives to their legislatures, and in unusual circumstances, for example when the immunities and privileges of diplomats have been infringed upon by the host government. The main formal differentiation in the diplomatic corps is between the dean and the other heads of mission. Historically, the question of who was to be dean was resolved in the context of broader arguments about precedence and seniority between the leading states of Europe, especially Spain and France. General or local power preponderance would settle the question. The practice of appointing the papal nuncio as the dean originally reflected the temporal power of the papacy. Where this practice is maintained today, however, in Catholic states and especially in Latin America, it reflects a traditional respect for the Holy See, together with a desire to avoid precedent and seniority arguments by having a simple rule (Rana, 2007: 129). The same may be said for the procedure adopted at Vienna in 1815 by which the longest serving senior diplomat is appointed to the position. There has been some variation between states regarding whether the date of arrival or, as is more often, the date of accreditation is used for determining seniority in this regard (Satow, 1917: 342). On occasions, a vice dean or committee of senior diplomats has been appointed to assist the dean.

The appointment is rarely controversial. In the past, problems might arise when bad relations or no relations existed between the state represented by the dean and another state whose ambassador was a member of the diplomatic corps. This situation arose, for example, when the representative of the German Democratic Republic or the People's Republic of China was entitled by seniority to be dean but before their respective states enjoyed almost universal diplomatic recognition. Problems

of this sort have been eased by the practice of separating the dean's role as dean from his or her role as head of mission. The vice deanship has also been used to finesse such difficulties (Berridge and James, 2003: 272). Departures from the seniority principle occur in cases of multiple representation when the senior member of the diplomatic corps in one capital is normally resident in another capital, and when the senior diplomat declines the role on personal grounds or because their mission is not sufficiently resourced to undertake the burdens of the post. Some sources suggest that in the past small states would have been unlikely to decline this opportunity for honor and publicity, and that their willingness to do so today may be indicative of the declining status of the diplomatic corps or the increasing burdens of work placed on the members of small missions (Rana, 2007). There were also some difficulties about appointing Commonwealth High Commissioners to the role, only settled when agreement was reached that High Commissioners are the functional and symbolic equivalent of ambassadors (Berridge and James, 2003: 125).

Deans act as the formal link between the diplomatic corps and the host government. The formal precedence attached to the position is almost entirely ceremonial and its holder is regarded as 'only the first among equals' (Sofer, 2013: 53). Deans act in the name of the whole diplomatic corps only with the consent of their colleagues. In the past, this consent was given only after other ambassadors had received special instructions from their governments that they should support a dean's initiative (Satow, 1917: 340). Deans generally lack resources other than those provided by their own mission or informal assistance from other missions. In some capitals, records of meetings of the diplomatic corps and the representations of the dean to the host government are kept. In others they are not, and some diplomats maintain that they have served in capitals where the corps, in a formal sense, barely exists and never functions (private source). The reasons why the

diplomatic corps exists and the functions it performs remain those identified by Berridge as operating at Constantinople in the early seventeenth century. First, the representatives of European powers came together for their own physical security. Second, they collaborated to protect the rights and privileges under the Capitulations granted them by the Sultan. Third, they collaborated to provide and maintain practical services which they required in common to function. Fourth, they tended to live in the same neighborhood of the city. Finally, like the Pope in Rome, the Sultan in Constantinople often liked to address and treat the representatives of the European powers as a group (Berridge, 2007: 25).

The issue of security persists. Indeed, it has become more important, although physical threats to missions increasingly have an 'unofficial' character (Wikipedia, 2014). Nonetheless, Rana notes how members of the diplomatic corps appeared at Beijing airport to say goodbye to members of the Indian and Soviet delegations as a gesture of solidarity after the latter had been declared *personae non gratae* during the Great Cultural Revolution (Rana, 2007). Red Guards habitually posed a considerable, although not mortal, threat to the diplomats of states with which China was not in good relations when they left the safety of their missions. The British embassy in Beijing, for example, was sacked and burned by them in 1967. In contrast, Ken Taylor, the Canadian ambassador to Iran during the embassy hostage crisis beginning in 1979, recalls that the Bulgarian dean of the Teheran diplomatic corps orchestrated no formal protest at the extensive violation of the immunities of diplomats and their missions. The maintenance of practical services, except perhaps in the midst of an exceptional political breakdown, would no longer appear to be a major concern of the diplomatic corps. Modern states and capitals can be generally relied upon to provide these. And for similar reasons, living in the same neighborhood – insofar as diplomats continue to do this – would seem to be of diminishing significance.

Nevertheless, accounts of diplomats from different missions sharing services and working together on the most practical of issues exist, provided especially by those who have served in such places as North Korea (Hoare, 2007: 116–21) and Vietnam (Wiseman, 2007: 253).

The key tasks confronting the formal diplomatic corps and its dean continue to involve questions of precedence at state ceremonies and protecting the immunities and privileges of the members of the diplomatic corps from encroachments – intended or otherwise – by the host government, local authorities, or private actors. Questions of protocol have lost much of their significance. Arguments over titles and precedence in the arrangements for ceremonial processing and sitting now rarely delay business for months and never lead to wars as they could do in the past. Nevertheless, details of state protocol continue to take up considerable time, and deans of diplomatic corps work with host protocol offices to head off misunderstandings and mistakes which may still contribute to difficulties in the personal relations of ambassadors and visiting ministers. Moreover, while most senior professionals and politicians will profess a relaxed outlook on questions of protocol today, they often have highly developed antennae sensitive to perceived slights. It is useful then to have a formal, if archaic-sounding, code of rankings and orderings to refer to since it provides a blanket defense for everybody against concerns of this nature.

Ask most contemporary diplomats about what significance, if any, the formal diplomatic corps holds for them, however, and they will likely refer to its role in safeguarding their immunities and privileges. As noted above, these can still be associated with life and death matters. Typically, however, questions regarding immunities and privileges – especially the latter – revolve around low key and, indeed, banal concerns with exemptions from tax regimes, duty free import allowances, and conduct by the officials of local authorities. The days when the diplomatic corps might meet to discuss diplomatic asylum and debate

whether it was making international law on the matter, as it did in Lima in 1867, are long past (Satow, 1917: 291). As one former diplomat expressed it, today the dean of the diplomatic corps may find himself absorbed by 'trade union issues' concerning the terms and conditions under which its members carry out their work (private source). Novelists might have notions of the diplomatic corps as romantic freemasonry (Rana, 2007: 125). Some diplomatic corps may have lived up to this notion in the past when a real *esprit de corps* existed among the aristocrats and high bourgeois who staffed the European services up to the early twentieth century. The siege of the legations at Peking in 1900 is emblematic in this regard. The contemporary reality, most diplomats want to assure us, is far more prosaic. Indeed, if Lawrence Durrell is to be believed, the operations of the diplomatic corps can border on the farcical at times (Durrell, 1957).

### Key Points

- The principal members of the diplomatic corps at any capital or international organization headquarters are the heads of mission.
- The dean of the diplomatic corps represents the corps to the host government, usually on practical matters, but occasionally on questions of policy.
- The processes by which the dean is determined may vary, but it is usually the ambassador who has been longest in post.

### THE INFORMAL PRACTICES OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

The informal aspects of the diplomatic corps present a somewhat different story in terms of both structure and processes. Deans may have little or no institutional power, but the power of personality, sociability, and hard work in individual cases may contribute to other diplomats' sense that they are members of something beyond their own respective missions in a capital city. The formal structure of the

diplomatic corps may impose difficulties on members of it who are not in formal relations with one another when one of them is qualified to be the dean, as noted above. More informally, however, the diplomatic corps permits contacts between members whose states are not in diplomatic relations. As in the case of US–North Korean contacts in Beijing *inter alia* over the latter's nuclear programs, these can on occasions lead to serious negotiations (Berridge and Gallo, 1999). The formal grouping of ambassadors around deans is mirrored by less formal groupings of diplomats of other ranks meeting in one case, for example, for monthly luncheons (Rana, 2007: 125). More obviously, it is possible to identify sub-groups of the diplomatic corps organized on a regional basis, or because they share membership of an organization, meeting together and making sure that they are seen to be doing so. Thus, an 'African diplomatic corps' and a Caribbean grouping operate in Washington DC (Henrikson, 2007: 59). The members of the Commonwealth coalesce on occasions, especially within the diplomatic corps in the capitals of states which are members of these associations. Members of the old Warsaw Pact military alliance used to caucus especially in the capitals of states which were members of NATO, and today the members of the European Union (EU) increasingly seek to coordinate their positions not only at the level of policy formulation in Brussels, but also at the level of policy implementation and delivery, especially in states where the EU has development programs. Less formal groupings can also come together around specific issues as did the Addis Ababa diplomatic corps in coordinating the famine relief efforts of their respective states in the 1980s (private source). However, these examples raise the question of whether sub-groupings within a capital city or at an international organization headquarters may usefully be regarded as sub-elements of their respective diplomatic corps as opposed to political alignments. The answer very much depends on what these constellations actually attempt to do.



The 'Beijing lunch club' of second and third secretaries to which Rana refers, engaged in trading information reasonably freely where key interests were not prejudiced by such exchanges. Wiseman (2007: 253) notes similar arrangements by which members of the Hanoi diplomatic corps at several levels could meet each other due to the flatter than usual diplomatic hierarchy, a feature common to smaller diplomatic corps. Like the attendees at receptions, buffets, and cocktail parties, these junior diplomats shared an interest in finding out what was going on. As Watson notes, all diplomats have had their views 'corrected and amplified by a member of another embassy which happened to be better informed ...' on a particular issue (Watson, 2004: 128, also Berridge, 1994). In addition, however, members of this informal corps share information about their experiences of what works, what does not, to whom to listen, and how to listen to them in much the same way that the members of any other profession share information. Members of sub-corps or regional corps engage in similar trading, facilitated and fueled by the shared elements of their general interests, identity, experience, and ways of seeing things. However, it is difficult to describe them as emanations of the diplomatic corps when they caucus around specific policy objectives, especially objectives which the host government and/or other members of the corps might not welcome. The same conclusion might be drawn where, as in the EU case, a major purpose of acting together is to give expression to a new actor – namely the EU itself.

### **Key Points**

- The informal powers and influence of the dean depend on his or her personal qualities.
- The diplomatic corps may provide opportunities for contacts between the diplomats of states which do not enjoy diplomatic relations.
- The diplomatic corps may serve to socialize junior diplomats and those new in post.

### **THE CONSULTING VS CAUCUSING BALANCE**

Even so, the distinction between informal constellations within the diplomatic corps which consult for primarily professional or information-gathering reasons, and caucusing or collective lobbying of the host government by groups of diplomats to advance a shared policy, is not always easy to make. Consider, for example, the role of EU and NATO members of the Skopje diplomatic corps in the 2001 Macedonian crisis. Senior ambassadors presented themselves as acting on behalf of an international society into which they were attempting to socialize the Macedonians. Macedonia's full membership of that society, they argued, was conditional on its government accepting their governments' proposals for how to deal with its armed opposition in a civilized way. Many Macedonians, in contrast, viewed the same process as the product of selfish and ignorant great powers interested only in imposing a diktat (Sharp, 2007: 207). It would seem, therefore, that the activities of the diplomatic corps need not involve every member and need not be formal in character, but that their objectives need to be of a general nature contributing to a consensus that those activities are for a higher good and transcend narrow national interests. It might be added that the more members of the corps are actively engaged in supporting a specific action, and the more clearly this action is directed at contributing to the smooth and effective operation of diplomacy in a particular location, the easier it will be to maintain that it is an action undertaken on behalf of the diplomatic corps, as opposed to a political grouping within it.

### **Key Points**

- The diplomatic corps may sometimes lobby the host government on matters of policy.
- Some members of the diplomatic corps may sometimes claim to act for the entire group.

## THE GROWTH AND PROLIFERATION OF STATES, DIPLOMATIC CORPS, AND DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITIES

The structures and processes of the diplomatic corps may have changed little since 1815. However, the proliferating number of sovereign states since World War I has entailed a similar proliferation in the number of diplomatic corps in existence and an increase in the size of many individual diplomatic corps. In addition, the proliferating number and types of other international actors has given greater currency to the idea of a diplomatic community also present in a capital city or international headquarters city. This diplomatic community may be viewed as part of the context in which the diplomatic corps operates and, on occasions, as an actor in its own right. These developments have brought problems associated with complexity as noted above, but in many of the newer and smaller states, the diplomatic corps retains much of the character of its past. What has changed, of course, is the context. The general thrust of this change has called into question the importance and significance of the diplomatic corps just as it has called into question the entire panoply of state-based diplomacy anchored in residential missions. If the latter may be criticized as a system premised on the elite values present and the communication technologies available in seventeenth century Europe, then it would seem that the diplomatic corps, with its apparently archaic emphasis on privileges, protocol, and precedence, might be one of the more prominent targets for the critics. It has not been, and for at least two possible reasons. First, the diplomatic corps seems to exhibit what Granovetter has called in another context 'the strength of weak ties' (cited in Sending et al., 2011: 542). Maintaining it, in this view, incurs few costs while ending it holds out the prospect of few rewards and, hence, the diplomatic corps endures. Second, the information and communication revolutions which have arguably

undermined the functional justifications for the diplomatic corps have, at the same time, given a new life to its ceremonial significance by making the politics of the spectacle more important. Ceremonies by which the existence and the power of the state are enacted have become easily available to global audiences for entertainment certainly, and legitimation possibly. The diplomatic corps, as noted above, has had a long-established, if poorly understood, role in many of these ceremonies, both as legitimator of the state concerned and of international society itself, as argued further below.

The strength of weak ties may help to explain the capacity of the diplomatic corps to endure by hanging on. However, it tells us little about the strength of the diplomatic corps in other terms, notably its capacity to produce or contribute to the production of significant effects. To obtain a clearer picture in these terms requires an examination of the inquiries of academics, and international relations theorists in particular, into the practices of diplomacy. It is conventionally maintained that those who study international relations have not been interested in diplomacy until recently (Murray, 2008; Murray et al., 2011). Diplomatic historians, it is said, have used diplomatic records to construct narratives of international history, while International Relations scholars have ignored diplomacy in their efforts to establish patterns of foreign policy-making and state behavior. This is not entirely accurate. Diplomacy viewed as an instrument of foreign policy making and implementation, or as a dimension of statecraft, has received considerable attention, as has negotiation, the defining activity (for some) of diplomacy. What have been neglected, however, are insider perspectives of diplomats on their own activity and their understandings of the broader contexts in which it is situated, together with close analyses from outside of what diplomats actually do and how they do it (Watson, 2004; Sharp, 2009; Neumann, 2012). As a consequence, the diplomatic corps has generally been ignored

as a sub-institution of diplomacy and viewed as a marginal and possibly obsolescent form of state practice.

The same sources that speak of diplomacy's neglect also refer to the revival of a measure of interest in it in recent years made possible by the development of two related clusters of approaches to theorizing about international relations. The first of these revolves around the English School and Diplomatic Studies, with their shared focus on the international society of states as their analytical point of departure (Bull, 1977; Hamilton and Langhorne, 2011; Buzan, 2014). The second revolves around sociological, anthropological, and linguistic investigations of the long-term sources and immediate causes of the states system (as opposed to the consequences of such a system existing), shaped by a broadly critical orientation to how social phenomena present themselves (Der Derian, 1987; Constantinou, 1996; Neumann, 2005, 2012). The two clusters are linked by a shared understanding that the relationships between language, ideas, and actions, and thus between agents and structures, are necessarily complex, possibly ambiguous, and always less clear than they appear. From within both clusters, diplomacy and even the diplomatic corps take on a salience which is not apparent from within other more established approaches to understanding and explaining international relations.

For the English School, diplomacy is a master institution of the international society of states (Wight, 1986: 113). It is important in both an explanatory and a constitutive sense. According to some (Mayall, 2007: 1), while diplomats undertake much practical work, it is their symbolic significance taken as a whole which is vital. This is so because 'it is the institution of diplomacy that translates international society from a theoretical proposition into some kind of practical reality' (Mayall, 2007: 5). It is the diplomatic corps, by its defense of the immunities and privileges of its members, which acts as 'the guarantor of this sovereign representational role' (Mayall, 2007: 5). Those involved in Diplomatic

Studies take the argument a step further. If there is an international society in the English School's sense, then where do we actually see it? Governments, embassies, diplomats, and border guards in themselves do not constitute it. Rather, they help constitute the states they govern, represent, or protect. We only see the international society where the representatives of states are collectively gathered at, for example, congresses, conferences, and international or regional organizations and, on a daily basis, in the diplomatic corps (Sharp and Wiseman, 2007). Not only does the diplomatic corps safeguard the institution of diplomacy, therefore, it also gives expression to the international society of states. Nor does it do this passively, simply by existing. The diplomatic corps has its own distinctive understanding of international relations and how they should be handled which is captured by the notion of '*la raison de système*' in contrast to '*la raison d'état*' (Watson, 2004). This telos guides the diplomatic corps' collective actions in the direction of subordinating the contents of international relations – the interests, policies, and issues which preoccupy those represented by the diplomats – to their conduct. Therefore, diplomats in capital cities and international organization headquarters, acting together as the diplomatic corps, work to avoid misunderstandings which might lead to unwanted conflict, to restrain the ambitions of political leaders (including their own political leaders), the aggressive pursuit of which might threaten peace, and they work to restore peace where conflict has broken out. Working on behalf of '*la raison de système*', the diplomatic corps is not a corps in the sense of an elite looking after itself. It is a body, to use a literal English translation of the French, which has substance and acts on its views of how international relations should be conducted. It may act as a weak force in this regard but, according to proponents of Diplomatic Studies, it is an important force and a good force which should be supported and encouraged in what it seeks to achieve and, perhaps more importantly, what it works to avoid.

That it needs support and encouragement, however, suggests an obvious and difficult problem with this view of the diplomatic corps. If it is so important, why is it so neglected, even by diplomats themselves and those who study them? To be sure, diplomats consulted for this chapter were at pains to stress the trade union dimension to the diplomatic corps. They also noted the very real, but not ubiquitous, sense of camaraderie with their colleagues from other diplomatic services which can emerge, for example, when one of their number is badly treated by a host government, or when they are working hard together to produce an agreement or create institutionalized measures of cooperation. They regarded the role of the diplomatic corps as presented by the English School as overblown, however, and struggled to grasp quite what Diplomatic Studies was saying about the way the international society of states is embodied and enacted by the diplomatic corps and its functions. In addition to holding this minimalist view of the diplomatic corps, diplomats and academics alike often follow the general public's tendency (notably in the US) to use the term diplomatic corps when they are talking about the diplomatic service or foreign service of a particular state, thus blurring an important distinction (Berridge and James, 2003). Even Satow, on at least one occasion, uses 'diplomatic corps' in this sense (although he always uses 'diplomatic body' correctly) (Satow, 1917: 183). According to Oppenheim, 'As the Diplomatic Corps is not a body legally constituted it performs no legal functions, but it is nevertheless of great importance, as it watches over the privileges and honours due to diplomatic envoys' (Oppenheim, 1955: 779). The Vienna conventions on diplomatic and consular relations, together with the unratified New York convention on Special Missions and the unratified Vienna convention on the Representation of States in their Relations with International Organizations of a Universal Character fail to mention the diplomatic corps (Rana, 2007). Foreign Ministries publish or distribute to

embassies Diplomatic Lists providing the names and rank of all accredited diplomats. However, the protocol documents of Foreign Ministries, while they sometimes mention the diplomatic corps, do not discuss it as a whole, only in terms of how regulations pertain to its individual missions and members (Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2014). And just as it is possible to find International Relations texts which fail even to mention diplomacy, it is also possible to find authoritative and recent accounts of diplomacy which either completely fail to mention the diplomatic corps or note it merely in passing (Anderson, 1993; Cooper and Shaw, 2009; Bjola and Kornprobst, 2013).

There is another Janus-faced aspect to this puzzle, however. On the one hand, it is hard to square the neglect of the diplomatic corps by practitioners and scholars alike with claims about its importance. Yet on the other, it refuses either to disappear or to transmute into a synonym for the national diplomatic service completely. It is the more sociological, anthropological, and linguistic approaches to international theory and the study of diplomacy that help make sense of both halves of this puzzle. Regarding the diplomatic corps/diplomatic service overlap, they remind us to think of language in terms of uses which change, rather than meanings which are fixed and true. The ambiguity here, therefore, may be seen as evidence of the currently 'heterodox' character of contemporary diplomacy mixing, as it does, elements of the old 'gentlemanly' or 'club' diplomacy with other newly diplomatic agents and practices crowding on to the international stage (Sending et al., 2011; Cooper et al., 2013). People 'misuse' the term diplomatic corps because they are unfamiliar with its 'proper' use, unfamiliar with the idea it represents, and do not find that idea to be important. This would conform to the view of traditionalists in Diplomatic Studies that diplomacy continues to be an esoteric business about which ordinary people are doomed to remain ignorant. Adding corps after the word diplomatic

really does signify something different from when corps is added to, for example, the word ‘army’, ‘officer’, or ‘peace’ because, they argue, diplomacy is different. Traditionalist complacency about this state of affairs seems less and less warranted as more and more people become involved with diplomacy. However, the eliding of the two terms, diplomatic corps and diplomatic service, might also suggest that people actually do, at some level, regard the diplomats of their own state as part of a general category of diplomats or ‘international society clique’ as Hitler called them. If so, this might be taken as evidence of a door which is slightly open to systemic or even cosmopolitan thinking about diplomacy in people’s consciousness – a door which might be pushed open wider through argument and reflection (Constantinou, 2013).

These alternative and emerging approaches are also useful in thinking about the problem of the diplomatic corps’ apparent lack of ability to produce effects. A standard power analysis, of course, reveals its weakness. The diplomatic corps lacks the hard power resources of guns and money. It also lacks the soft power resources of being attractive or, more importantly, presenting itself as attractive. Both hard and soft power resources, conventionally understood, are distributed among the individual states which members of the diplomatic corps represent. Yet as with Evans-Pritchard’s Leopard Skin Chief who brokered deals among the Nuer tribes of the Nile Valley, Neumann (2011: 571) notes that a lack of power may serve as a source of strength in certain situations for it helps convey neutrality and disinterest in particular policy outcomes. For a variety of reasons, people find the idea of the diplomatic corps both useful and, up to a point, necessary. Governments want witnesses from their fellows to their state ceremonies. Diplomats may seek the legitimacy its support confers when they make *démarches* to their host governments. States and peoples may present it as the source or point of focus of their problems when others are seen to be interfering in

their internal affairs. New actors seek, if not membership of the diplomatic corps as yet, then to align with it as members of the diplomatic community to advance their diplomatic standing. All these are aspects of the relational power and influence which the diplomatic corps possesses, even if others, or some of its members, seek to co-opt it for their own purposes. Even then, the professional values and priorities of its immediate membership – the diplomats – exert a restraining influence on the ways in which it may be exploited. A diplomatic corps might be mobilized to pressure its host government when sufficient international consensus exists about what is being attempted, as we have already seen in Skopje in 2001 for example. It could not be mobilized in the absence of this consensus, for example in Baghdad prior to the second American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, in Damascus to get the Assad regime to negotiate with its opponents, or in Moscow to get the Russians to suspend their assistance to pro-Russian Ukrainians in 2014.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomatic corps have proliferated with growth in the number of sovereign states since the end of the Cold War.
- International theorists note the significance of diplomatic corps as rare tangible expressions of international society.
- Diplomats value diplomatic corps for their formal role in safeguarding their working conditions and their informal role as agents of socialization.

### **FROM DIPLOMATIC CORPS TO DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITIES**

While these theoretical approaches may re-signify the relational and rhetorical power of the diplomatic corps, however, their focus on the heterogeneity and hybridity of the contemporary international system raises questions about the membership of the corps.



How does the range of new actors and new types of actors engaged in international and diplomatic activity affect the composition of the diplomatic corps, what it does, and its claim to help enact, embody, and constitute international society? The formal composition of the diplomatic corps has not yet changed, but it may be beginning to do so. The presence of traditional ‘fringe players’ like the Holy See and the Sovereign Military Order of Malta is being re-visited and re-interpreted in terms of the precedent it might set for other non-traditional members (Bátora and Hynek, 2014). The emergence of the European Union as an international actor with its own diplomatic service and claims to representation is actually challenging the established membership rules in many capital cities (Adler-Nissen, 2014). And, as noted above, it is becoming easier and more intuitive to analyze not the diplomatic corps in a capital city or international headquarters city, but the diplomatic community of which it increasingly appears to be a part (Henrikson, 2007; Sharp and Wiseman, 2007). The diplomatic community is a broader site for action and, on occasions, a broader actor than the diplomatic corps, involving many more participants besides the representatives of sovereign states as in Kigali in the early phases of the Rwanda genocide (Leader, 2007). It dilutes the significance of the corps, certainly, blurring the boundaries between state and non-state actors, and public and private actors, and weakening the obstacles to the latter actor in each pairing engaging in diplomacy. However, the flow is not entirely in one direction, for what we see is not the erosion of diplomacy and its institutions by the rise of traditionally non-diplomatic actors, but the gravitation of the latter towards diplomacy – as Wiseman (2015: 13) suggests is happening, for example, at the United Nations. Transnational businesses and banks, humanitarian organizations, religious groups, and sometimes even individuals seek diplomatic standing to varying degrees, indeed to become members of the diplomatic corps, if

often only initially in its consular form. Thus, while a Google search for ‘diplomatic corps’ reveals very little besides the occasional news item, academic treatments of the institution, and a host of references to a popular board game, a similar search for ‘consular corps’ reveals the websites of several US-based consular corps. The ‘Oregon Consular Corps’, for example, maintains a website which lists a dean, a vice dean, a treasurer, and past deans, all of whom are honorary consuls (Oregon Consular Corps, 2014). Similar websites exist for the large consular corps in Los Angeles, which lists as one of its objectives ‘fostering ... an esprit de corps among its members’ (LA Consular Corps, 2014) and, elsewhere, the Consular and Honorary Consular Corps of the Lebanon (Consular Corps, 2014). Of course, this development also reflects the rising status of consular issues in relation to more traditional security and political issues in the diplomatic systems of most states (see Chapter 13 in this Handbook). Furthermore, given this new focus on consular issues, which includes low-politics trade and economic matters, it may well be that the idea of community will take hold sooner in consular cities than in diplomatic capitals. Moreover, while diplomatic corps worldwide may be seen as having a relatively thick social fabric within a clearly identifiable and well-developed diplomatic culture, the emerging diplomatic communities that we are conceptualizing currently have a thin social fabric. With the possible exception of new artificial capitals where diplomacy is the only business in town – Abuja, Brasilia, Canberra, Naypyidaw – the evidence implies a historical trend away from the more exclusive diplomatic corps and more towards the more inclusive diplomatic communities.

The diplomatic corps retains many diverse features and functions which it is reasonable to suppose would be found in any situation where relations are undertaken between separate peoples by representatives engaged in what we would recognize as diplomacy (Sharp, 2009). It also retains many of the



features and functions of the particular system of modern diplomacy which emerged in Europe, and perhaps of the broadly Christian understanding of the world which, arguably, continues to underwrite key elements of that system. Consider, for example, the reasons for the variations, referred to above, in how the deanship is determined in different places. The diplomatic corps appears as a trade union or lobbying organization on behalf of its members, and as an ensemble through which the international society of states is enacted.

The symbolic significance of the latter, however, ensures that even trade union concerns with terms and conditions can generate international political conflict on occasions. Diplomats are not just unionized workers, and their host governments are not their bosses, and not even their contractual partners in any simple sense. But the diplomats can certainly be characterized as an epistemic community of professionals (Davis Cross, 2007). And while diplomats do not lobby to be assigned by their Foreign Ministry to the Washington DC diplomatic corps per se, but rather to Washington DC, they instinctively know that part of the attraction of the US political capital is the presence of a diplomatic corps filled with the best of every country's diplomatic service, a corps that operates within a wider community of think tanks, lobbyists, and major international organizations and that signifies the US's evolving world standing. In short, the historical rise of the US as a world power has been reflected in the status attributed by diplomats to a Washington posting. In fact, this idea has extended to the dean of the diplomatic corps (for an early telling illustration of this point, see *A Veteran Diplomat*, 1910).

The idea of the diplomatic corps occupies a position on at least two conceptual boundaries: between corps and service; and between corps and community. The diplomatic corps itself flickers in and out of existence. Routinely, it can almost be forgotten about except on ceremonial occasions, when a dispute about immunities and privileges arises, or when a journalist or diplomat describes its many

micro-practices (Gotlieb, 1991; Shaw, 2006). It can also lie dormant until someone seeks to summon it up as a vehicle for exerting pressure on a host government to conform its actions to the demands of 'world opinion' and, less often, when a government or its people seek a target so they can push back against the rest of the world. In terms of its future, the most important questions revolve around the relationship between the diplomatic corps and the diplomatic community. Is the former in danger of being swamped by the latter, or does the desire of new actors and new types of actors to 'become diplomatic' suggest that a process of co-option of the community by the corps is getting underway? If the latter, then it will be important for new actors to realize that becoming diplomatic is not merely a matter of status, but also a manner of conduct. This being so, the traditional role of the diplomatic corps as an agent of socialization and education for its own may be poised to undergo a dramatic expansion.

### Key Points

- Diplomatic corps persist although with less significance than formerly.
- The presence of diplomatic corps is overshadowed by the rising significance of the diplomatic community composed of both state and non-state actors.
- The rise of the diplomatic community may strengthen the diplomatic corps trade union function and weaken its claim to represent international society in a capital.

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# Diplomacy and International Law

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Diplomacy may be considered a means of carrying on the business of international society through negotiation, communication and representation.<sup>1</sup> International law may be considered a means of regularizing the conduct of this business through the definition, acceptance and, occasionally, enforcement of general principles governing the interactions of entities accorded an international personality. Both seem to have been present in some variant in so many international systems through history that it is easy to take for granted the assumption that they are automatically paired in organized international life. Yet scholarship indicates that one or both have been present only in an attenuated form or in a form very different from contemporary conceptions and institutions, in some international systems marked by durability and renown.<sup>2</sup> Both diplomacy and international law are central components of the contemporary global international system, however, and both have been identified by Hedley Bull as central elements in the preservation of order within that

system.<sup>3</sup> Both survive the vicissitudes of international life because states (and other aspiring members of international society) want and need the smoothing out of rough passages in their relations, and have learned through experience that diplomacy and international law, in their different ways, can perform just this role. Still, the relationship between the two is not an uncomplicated one, and current changes in international relations may have significant consequences for the role that they play, separately and together.

## **DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW: CO-CREATED**

It is certainly true that, despite the near-universality of some form of diplomatic contacts wherever there have been political or other entities that could not or did not wish to ignore one another's existence, that had business of one sort or another to transact with

one another, and that recognized no authoritative common superior over them all,<sup>4</sup> and despite the fact that the contemporary body of international law has long historical antecedents that can be traced back at least as far as the jurisprudence of Rome and the ethical codes of the ancient Hindu world, the idea that both diplomacy and international law are means of both governing and softening the relations among juridically equal political communities lacking a universal head is one that draws heavily on the conception of international life that has governed first Europe and later the world since the rise of the sovereign state. Both, in other words, take on some 'Westphalian' characteristics, which might not have been found in earlier examples of either legal codes or efforts at negotiation. Even in an international environment without a supreme political authority, the idea that the players would all have the complete political power summed up in 'sovereignty' lies at one end of a spectrum along which political control can be more or less dispersed.<sup>5</sup>

In this world of political entities, each of which theoretically has unchallenged control over its territory, but all of which are constantly thrown together by the coinciding and clashing interests that geographic proximity, trade, migration and unifying or unwelcome cultural influences create, the practices recognizable as contemporary diplomacy and international law grew up. It was never an uncontested assumption that it was perfectly clear who the subjects of international law and the legitimate practitioners of diplomacy were, and that a recognizable line separated them from those who were not players of the game, but a Westphalian world made the assumption close enough to the truth for the status of a subject rather than an object of international law to be a widely desired one. That status tended to coincide with recognition as a political authority with the right to participate in the diplomatic practices of the day, and increasingly it was authorities recognized as states that occupied this sought-after rank.

What these players did in one area of international life had effects on other areas, and so it was in the complementary relation between diplomacy and international law. The perceived advantages of what Wight described as the 'master-institution' of diplomacy, the resident envoy, were accompanied by a host of irritants and conflicts caused by the long-term residence of subjects of one prince in the capital of another. Since rulers quickly discovered that they could not claim respect for the persons and property of their diplomatic envoys abroad while mistreating in their own realm the representatives of other sovereigns, shared self-interest produced increasingly detailed common rules on the rights and duties of diplomatic personnel (see Chapter 16 in this Handbook). The very needs of successful diplomacy therefore created a new body of international law that in turn regulated the conduct of diplomats, and this long before the negotiation of international conventions turning these regulations from customary law into codified treaty law. The same process took place in the establishment of treaties and conventions on other subjects – it was diplomacy, in the negotiation of these legally binding agreements, that created and elaborated international law. Such diplomatic efforts also hammered out the charters of an increasing number of international organizations, both general and specialized, and these institutions in turn became the venues not only for a new 'parliamentary diplomacy' of resolutions, debates and votes in public arenas but also for a traditional diplomacy of private talks and bargaining in the corridors and anterooms of the buildings constructed to house international quasi-parliamentary bodies.

This gradual development of diplomacy and international law as institutions and practices that regulated and moderated the contacts among equal sovereign political communities did not, of course, proceed in a smooth and unbroken ascent from unlimited conflict to peaceful cooperation. Periodic war disrupted the functioning of both, even

if it has never been true that in war either the laws or diplomatic expectations were entirely silent. Moreover, when the participants in international life have divided, not only over rivalries concerning material objectives that could potentially be compromised, but more fundamentally over the basic precepts of political life – over the definition of the good life within each regime – then, even if there was not ongoing overt military conflict, these basic differences have often led to open violations of the most widely endorsed precepts of law and diplomacy. Their common historical trajectory has therefore been a jagged one, marked by breaks and discontinuities and by painful efforts to recover. Taking the long historical view, one might be as impressed by the fragility of diplomacy and international law as by their resilience.<sup>6</sup>

Yet despite the fact that war and the differences leading to war can be the enemy of both diplomacy and international law, it is also the case that both these limitations on the complete freedom of action of states can continue to perform their functions during war, especially during wars that are not wars over principles such as those of the French Revolution. That diplomacy and international law can survive the storms of international life and indeed have developed elaborate rules applicable to such disruptions of peace indicates that neither aspect of international life is only a restriction upon states, thwarting their capacity fully to pursue their self-interest. Rather, both international law and diplomacy exist because states have created them (or in the case of some rules of international law recognized their inherent validity) out of a recognition that they advance the interests of states – interests that cannot be fully served in a world lacking regularized channels of communication and dispute resolution on which states can rely. States benefit from both modes of interaction, and so they have consistently recurred in the relations of states, even after tensions in those relations have impaired them; states also chafe against the restraints of both modes, particularly

when the leaders of states perceive that they are facing existential crises, and so states have sometimes employed their sovereignty to contend that they have a higher duty to their people than to the practices of either diplomacy or international law.

## **DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW: COMPETITORS**

Despite their common origins, diplomacy and international law have often been seen as being in some tension, because of differences in their methods and in the assumptions about international society that have been attributed to them. Adherents of a view of international politics that emphasizes the role of bargaining over interests and the necessity of taking differentials in power into account have often claimed that traditional confidential diplomacy among experienced professionals performs this task most effectively, with the consequent benefit of making it most likely that peace can be preserved. By contrast, they say, when international contact becomes consumed with creating and then applying standing rules for international life, with the fixity and durability of laws, international society becomes rigid and unable to cope with change, making conflict more likely. E.H. Carr gave the classic statement of this point of view when he compared international legal institutions to judges handing down decisions divorced from the needs and capacities of the parties involved, and diplomats to law-makers alive to the dynamic contest for power that underlies all particular disputes. Quoting Bernard Shaw, Carr remarked, ‘the functions of judge and legislator are “mutually exclusive”: the former must ignore every interest, the latter take every interest into account’.<sup>7</sup> In a related but somewhat different line of concern, Morgenthau worried that the publicity associated with that other form of the legalization of international politics, the quasi-parliamentary international



organization, exacerbated disputes by encouraging each party to frame its demands in the most extreme form possible, which it declined to compromise for fear of being attacked at home for relinquishing what it had previously declared was vital.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, advocates of a more prominent place for law in international life have tended to object to the very concern of diplomacy with interests and power as compromising justice, while they have contended that the impartial standards of international law have more fully embodied justice. In the interwar period, Nicholas Murray Butler, a prominent supporter of increasing the authority of international legal institutions supported by internationalist public opinion, criticized the debates and negotiations that went on under the auspices of the League of Nations as *overly* political and suggested instead that the focus of international reform should be on the Permanent Court of International Justice and on adding to the body of international law that the court would apply. In a statement issued to the *New York Times* in 1925, for example, Butler emphasized what he saw as the non-political and humanitarian work of the League, pointing to the field of public health, to the work of the League in maintaining statistical and other records on a number of questions of public policy, and to the clerical role of the League in registering all treaties and conventions, thereby curtailing the influence of secret diplomacy.<sup>9</sup> Seven years earlier he had indicated where he believed the emphasis of international reform should lie: 'to lay stress upon the power and authority of a single international judicial authority, and to accustom the public opinion of the world to seek and to defer to the findings of such authority'.<sup>10</sup> In this view, then, international organizations gave excessive scope to the machinations of diplomacy, which would result only in further wars, while international law proper, along with its attendant institutions like courts, would be successful in promoting peace precisely to the extent that it resolved disputes in a way that was unlike

diplomacy. The impartiality of law would generate support from public opinion, which in turn would require governments to abide by the rulings of international judicial bodies; there would be no need for the grubbiness of diplomatic haggling or the problematic resort to force required by the theory of collective security.

More recently, Michael Akehurst has identified several reasons why states may prefer negotiation over resorting to judicial mechanisms, whether those might be referral to the United National Security Council, a request for arbitration or mediation, or the filing of a claim before an international court. The governments of states may well be reluctant to be placed in the position of the defendant in an international dock, as opposed to the position of legal and psychological equality in which the parties to a diplomatic negotiation can be conceived to be. Governments are often risk-averse, and they may fear the unpredictability of arbitral or judicial decisions, particularly as courts depart from black-letter treaty law and base their decisions on standards such as *jus cogens*. The perceived danger of judicial unpredictability increases as governments reflect on the fact that the decision may well not only be binding in the immediate instance but also serve as a precedent in the future. The consequence is that 'to start judicial proceedings against another state is sometimes [itself] regarded as an unfriendly act'.<sup>11</sup>

To sum up, international law may seem most incompatible with diplomacy when law is considered through the Austinian lens of the enforceable command of a sovereign. If this is the defining characteristic of 'law', then law is by definition impossible to find in a realm open to the practice of diplomacy, which rests on persuasion, representation, and coexistence among entities who lack such a central authority among themselves. If one takes the concept of law propounded by H.L.A. Hart, on the other hand – its authority resting on the legitimacy of the entity laying

it down – then international law and diplomacy appear much more similar, for both would rely on the legitimacy granted to their institutions and defining presuppositions by those who participate in them and accept them as rightful social practices.

## **DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW: COMPLEMENTARY**

For all these ways in which diplomacy and international law can be in tension, there have also been those who have argued that they can exist side by side. It is worth noting, after all, that Satow's classic work on diplomatic practice first appeared in a series entitled 'Contributions to International Law and Diplomacy', an indication that to the editor of the series (the renowned scholar of international law Lassa Oppenheim), at least, the two activities had enough in common to make intelligible a series devoted to both.<sup>12</sup>

Oppenheims's reference to 'diplomatists' reminds the reader that both international law and (at least professional) diplomacy produce a cadre of skilled practitioners who can form epistemic communities with their counterparts abroad. Both can, in other words, develop into 'guilds', which can have both beneficial and baneful consequences. A common professional language and common habits of mind, along with adherence to common 'forms', can improve communication and make the resolution of differences, even outside the formal institutions of law and diplomacy, speedier, more effective, and more amicable than might be the case if the letter of the law or the formal machinery of diplomacy were not oiled by personal trust and professional courtesy.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, self-identification as a professional can also encourage an attitude of exclusivity that resists directives from responsible (but not professional) political leaders and undervalues the contributions to international order that can be made by interested representatives

of the broader society. Perhaps because they are guilds, each may be tempted to undervalue the importance of the other – though this tendency seems to be more common among outside observers, academicians, and political leaders than among diplomats and international lawyers themselves. (An amusing but not always reliable exception to this rule may be Callieres' warning that a judge does not make a good diplomat, for his 'habit of giving judgment makes him assume an air of gravity and superiority, which renders him ordinarily of a less flexible temper, of a more difficult access, and of a less engaging carriage, than are commonly courtiers', who know how to please the officials to whose court they are dispatched.<sup>14</sup>)

Diplomacy and international law are alike as well in that international organizations may employ experts in both. It is a rare agency of the United Nations or other international institution that does not contain a legal staff that can advise it on the powers granted to it under its founding charter, on the precedents that exist in any particular case, and on the most effective legal arguments that can be made on behalf of whatever course of action is preferred by the officers and staff of the organization. Likewise, in the ranks of officials in intergovernmental organizations (IGO's) former diplomats of member states are well represented, including their top-most leaders; every person who has served as Secretary-General of the United Nations has had a background that included service as a professional diplomat or Foreign Minister.

Turning from the personnel to the activities involved, both diplomacy and international law are considered by Bull to be primary institutions of international order, with the former having the functions of 'facilitating communication', negotiating agreements, gathering intelligence, minimizing 'the effects of friction', and 'symbolizing the existence of the society of states' and the latter having the functions of identifying, 'as the supreme normative principle of the political organization

of mankind, the idea of a society of sovereign states', stating 'the basic rules of coexistence' among these states, and helping to 'mobilise compliance with the rules of international society'.<sup>15</sup> It will be seen that these two sets of contributions to international order have a large area of overlap, particularly in the central task of recognizing the fundamental nature of international politics as existing among juridical equals who lack a shared superior but nevertheless must regulate the dealings among themselves that they wish to undertake or cannot avoid. The particular ways in which each institution of order regulates these interactions differ, but, as Bull identifies them, they do not conflict; there is nothing in either list that would prevent states from entering into participation in both. Moreover, in their employment of both, states implicitly recognize a high degree of society among themselves – a recognition that is based on more than resigned acceptance of the impossibility of destroying other states or absorbing them into a single cooperative project, but asserts a real good to be served by plurality in international life. When those claiming to speak for ISIL put forward the goal of destroying existing states and replacing them with a supranational entity dedicated to the tenets of Islam, this is not the sort of 'cooperation' that appeals to others. Violence and terror may be used to coerce the recalcitrant. On the other hand, the mind-numbingly complex and protracted multilateral 'rounds' of negotiations that have proceeded under GATT and now the World Trade Organization demonstrate the painstaking work of diplomacy as the players haggle, bargain, bluff, and compromise in the search for a new set of rules governing international commerce that will be acceptable to each government with its own economic interests in mind. Plurality requires diplomacy and results in addition to international law.

Bull's mentor, Martin Wight, discusses international law and diplomacy as they would be understood and employed by adherents of all three of his traditions – realist,

rationalist, and revolutionist – but he appears to devote more attention to the rationalist appreciation for and theorization about plurality in international life (the special concern of the rationalists) than he does to either of the other two traditions.<sup>16</sup> In this conception, then, diplomacy and international law stand side by side in performing distinct but complementary tasks for international society, but their primary area of overlap may lie in the fact that they both symbolize the high degree of society that exists in international relations. Plural but cooperative – this seems to be the nature of the international realm when diplomacy and international law play a large role within it.

## **DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW: MUTUALLY REINFORCING**

In some interpretations, diplomacy and international law do more than remain shoulder to shoulder in representing and thereby strengthening international society; each can assist the smooth functioning of the other. International law in the form of the UN Charter makes use of diplomacy as an alternative to war. In his analysis of what he calls 'a constitution for the world community', Eugene Rostow suggests that 'all societies ordered by law ... are necessarily pluralist: only a wide dispersal of influence and authority ... can protect them from the risks ... of lawless power'. As the pluralist society *par excellence*, international society has provided itself with law, and this law in turn relies on that other pluralist institution, diplomacy, as it seeks to deter and to resolve conflict. For the first aim of preventing conflict, 'the Charter contemplates that the political, economic, and social goals of the instrument be sought by persuasion, diplomacy, and other means of peaceful international cooperation, and not through the use of force'. Here one sees the reappearance of those humanitarian and reformist tasks that Butler

thought were the primary contribution of the League, accompanied by a recognition that these goals, because they must be accepted and pursued by a number of independent political communities with varying interests and conceptions of the good, are necessarily political, requiring the employment of the politically pluralist institution of diplomacy. Far from being at odds with law, diplomacy is here at the service of international law. Rostow also recognizes that at times the effort to avoid war may fail, and on these occasions too he argues that the Charter envisages the resort to diplomacy as one of the bows in the quiver of those attempting to resist and defeat aggression or other violations of international law. 'When the Security Council is unable to function', he states – a not infrequent occurrence during the Cold War, when he was writing – 'the vindication of the Charter is left to ... the efficacy of individual or collective self-defense: that is, to trial by battle, supplemented by the persuasive and mediating influence of diplomacy and public opinion'.<sup>17</sup> Rostow here seems to make of diplomacy something more than a neutral instrument available to any member of international society to employ it in any way that that party finds desirable. Diplomacy in this view assumes a substantive content in that it takes its character from the lineaments of international society, which is naturally ordered to peaceful interchange among the members of a pluralist world, and hostile to those who attempt by force or fraud to subvert the pluralist nature of the society of states. Nevertheless, it remains distinct from 'battle' as more persuasive than coercive, more mediating than imperative. In those qualities, it is more similar to international law than to war.

Of course, there is an extensive literature on 'coercive diplomacy' that is reliant precisely on the sending of messages through the threat or use of armed force.<sup>18</sup> Even in this realm, however, international law and diplomacy appear to have made their peace. If one accepts coercive diplomacy as an

instance of 'true' diplomacy, then its status as legal seems settled as a matter of practice, even if not according to a strict reading of the UN Charter's prohibition on 'the threat or use of force'. If every movement of armed forces intended to send a message of deterrence or compellence were to be considered as contravening the Charter, then diplomacy and international law would indeed be at cross-purposes. In fact, attitudes toward the Charter appear relaxed enough to allow the practice of coercive diplomacy to go on. In the second decade of the twenty-first century, for example, both Russia – in its employment of armed force to absorb Crimea and its support for insurgent forces in eastern Ukraine – and NATO – in its training exercises on the territory of the Baltic states apprehensive that they could come under pressure – resorted to coercive diplomacy. Each criticized the actions of the other as inconsistent with international law, but neither seemed able to muster an overwhelming majority of the members of international society to take actions that would support the view that a breach of international law dangerous to the whole society of states had occurred. Coercive diplomacy revealed the limits of what was considered to be undeniable, enforceable international law; it helped to define international law. Adam Watson has called this activity 'indicating the limits of the possible' – identifying the views on legitimate conduct held by something like a consensus of the recognized entities practising diplomacy and subject to international law, and thereby demonstrating just how far international law extended.<sup>19</sup> If it is an advantage to international law that the members of international society have an accurate understanding of its bounds, then such episodes of testing and response do in fact constitute a service to the international legal regime.

If diplomacy can thus benefit international law, international law can return the favour by strengthening diplomacy. One obvious way in which international law aids diplomacy is the widely-held opinion that having the law on one's side is a diplomatic advantage.

Andrew Jacovides, who served in the diplomatic service of Cyprus in many capitals, has argued that the leaders of states wish to be seen as law-abiding. 'The vast majority of States ordinarily observe their obligations under international law, even if motivated only by enlightened self-interest', he contended. 'And even when they do not observe such obligations, they tend to attempt to justify their actions or omissions by invoking legal arguments, however contrived, rather than admit their [*sic*] such actions or omissions violate the relevant rules of international law'. Elsewhere he went further, declaring that international law was more than a convenient cover for policies perhaps determined for other reasons – that the legal staffs of foreign ministries did in fact play a substantial part when policy was being decided: 'in my own experience the rules of international law played a very substantial role, [in] that the principles and rules of international law frequently provided the framework in which diplomatic negotiations, arguments and positions were formulated'.<sup>20</sup>

Jacovides recalls that diplomats tend to assume that being perceived as the law-abiding party under existing international law strengthens one's hand in negotiations and before public opinion, and act accordingly. Ian Hurd takes this observation a step further in declaring that diplomatic interchanges can 'invoke international rules, provide interpretations of behaviour and of rules, and construct arguments using the resources of public international law' and in so doing produce 'the public, social, and legal resources with which future state behaviour is understood, justified, and argued over'. That is to say, in relying on international law and in seeking to justify their actions under international law, states make arguments to other participants in international society based on interpretations of law. If their diplomatic gambits are successful, this outcome not only gains them the objective for which they were striving in the immediate instance; in demonstrating the effectiveness of such

interpretations, it brings other states to adopt similar understandings of international law. International law is thereby changed by the practice of diplomacy, because 'law *follows from* behaviour rather than leading it'.<sup>21</sup> Diplomacy therefore serves as 'one dynamic for change in international law' – the very dynamism that Carr thought that politics, negotiations, and diplomacy possessed and law lacked.<sup>22</sup>

This deep interpenetration of law and diplomacy makes clear the high degree to which the supposedly free-wheeling practice of diplomacy has been made the subject of detailed international law, both customary and positive. Michael Hardy has given us a likely explanation for this reliance of diplomats on international law: a desire to avoid unnecessary trouble.

Diplomatic relations are regulated by law for the same reason as many other branches of human activity, namely from a general recognition that only by so doing can affairs be conducted smoothly. The foundation of diplomatic law lies accordingly in the desire of States that their diplomatic relations should function on a stable and orderly basis.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps the best-known example of this legal regulation may be found in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and its counterpart on consular relations, which in 1961 translated into treaty law what had long been governed by customary law. Diplomatic immunity and the rights, privileges and duties of diplomats and their families and staffs are, however, far from the only subject on which a body of international legal rules has developed. The opening of diplomatic relations and the granting or withholding of diplomatic recognition, the organization and procedures of international conferences, diplomatic protocol, the conduct of business by foreign ministries, and the institutions of the UN system have all been made part of international law.<sup>24</sup> What once might have been the occasion for angry dispute and even violence is now (usually) governed by reference to generally accepted standards of law,

supported by the shared self-interest of (most) parties; diplomacy has been calmed by international law.

## **CONCLUSION: SHARED CHALLENGES TO INTERNATIONAL LAW AND DIPLOMACY**

This serene picture of advancing order and efficiency in diplomacy and international law, with each helping to guide the other, is complicated by contemporary questioning of the foundational assumption that introduced this essay – the equation of international society and a society of states, and the dominance in international life of sovereign states that were the only legitimate participants in diplomacy and the only recognized subjects of international law. The rise of non-state actors challenges both law and diplomacy, because traditionally both have assumed that it is possible to know the accepted players through their possession of sovereignty, and to distinguish these players from other entities. This is not to say that either mode of international interaction, conflict resolution and interest advancement claims to freeze the roster of its participants – the literature on state succession, which deals precisely with the question of the way in which political communities become recognized participants in both international law and diplomacy illustrates that – but the requirement of both law and diplomacy that those who undertake them be capable of carrying out their agreements or their legal obligations does pose problems for the entrance into the game of those who are not equipped to assure others that they are capable of honouring their word. That is to say, both international law and diplomacy rely on truth-telling and promise-keeping. These fundamental social norms in turn require some degree of institutional capacity to ensure fidelity to either bargains or rules. The institutions possessing

this capacity must exist over time, so as to be able to look ahead to make promises about the future, and to be held responsible for commitments made by their representatives in the past. International law is such a set of rules, and ‘because they are in the main observed, they give a pattern of conformity and thus a sense of predictability to the way in which states – and other organizations such as private corporations – behave on the international scene’.<sup>25</sup> The greater the number and diversity of non-state actors grows, the less that this assumption of predictability may reflect international reality.<sup>26</sup>

The entrance, or attempted entrance, of different kinds of actors into the ranks previously almost monopolized by states affects both law and diplomacy. The effort by the Palestinian Authority to obtain recognition as a state, with all the rights that come with holding that status, has raised both legal and diplomatic questions. Its effort to join the International Criminal Court could be seen as part of this strategy of raising its juridical status, but, once a party to the ICC, it could seek to bring charges against the government of Israel as a way of putting pressure on Tel Aviv to accept a true Palestinian State freed of almost all restrictions on its territory or its freedom of action in such matters as its armaments.

Of course one might say that for the Palestinian Authority this existence as an entity that might be recognized as a state only by some of the members of international society, while it exercised rights and powers previously held to belong only to states, would be only a way-station on the road to full statehood. A more far-reaching example of the challenge to the Westphalian order could be the increasing participation of non-state actors in the negotiations that lead to international conventions. Perhaps this phenomenon could be seen most clearly in the active role played by NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in recent multilateral conferences on climate change and other environmental issues – not only as sources of information



and as lobbyists on the 'outside', but as negotiators at the table on the 'inside'. Once such a precedent has been set, then – such is the influence of law on thinking – it becomes difficult to reverse in future talks, on these or other subjects. Legal recognition can carry diplomatic consequences, and the desire of formerly non-state actors to become states forces existing states to rethink both.

Another assumption receiving renewed scrutiny concerns the motivations of the members of the swelling ranks of diplomacy and law. It has always been an oversimplification that the leaders of states follow only the material interests of their states – pride, belief in an idea and a desire for revenge have frequently driven state action. It would be surprising if some non-state actors were not also faithful to goals so important to them that they are willing to sacrifice the material advantages of both law-abidingness and diplomacy. Zealotry and utter cynicism both are in tension with the humane moderation that a respect for law and diplomacy promote. It is possible that participation in both activities will itself subtly alter states' and non-state actors' estimation of where their true good lies, but there would still be danger in the intervening period before the calming effect of the give-and-take of international society takes hold, and history holds examples in which military force was required to restrain revolutionary actors until they arrived at a *modus vivendi* with their international environment.<sup>27</sup> Both the most sophisticated diplomacy and an appreciation of the possibilities and limitations of international law will be required to manage these challenges.

Recognizing that their starting assumptions are not accepted by all returns the discussion of international law and diplomacy to its beginning. Diplomacy has always rested on the awareness that 'it takes two to tango', even if one partner sometimes leads. International law, too, rests on an acceptance that international life does not recognize one party who is to command (no matter how valid or

beneficial it may consider its ideas to be) and a host of others who are to obey. Conceptually and practically, both modes of international interaction are carried on by those who know that they occupy the same international ballroom. The question is whether they are always dancing to the same tune.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 The author wishes to express his appreciation for the acute and insightful comments on this chapter from the editor of the volume and from the anonymous external reviewers of the manuscript.
- 2 See the discussion of 'The Institutions of Diplomacy' in Frank Adcock and D. J. Mosley, *Diplomacy in Ancient Greece* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975), pp. 183–226. See also Martin Wight's dictum that 'the Hellenic system had no notion of international law' and that 'the Greeks did not know ... the master-institution of the modern Western states-system ... the diplomatic network of resident embassies, reciprocally exchanged'. Wight does acknowledge that the Greek international system possessed a different form of diplomatic representation and that a sense of religious piety and prudential calculation sometimes brought Greek states to observe standards applicable to international life, but he finds the latter so frequently ineffective that he hesitates to accord them the description of 'law'. (See Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, ed. Hedley Bull (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), pp. 150–3.)
- 3 Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 3rd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 122–77.
- 4 See Paul Sharp, *Diplomatic Theory of International Relations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 10.
- 5 See Adam Watson, *The Limits of Independence: Relations between States in the Modern World* (New York: Routledge, 1997).
- 6 In 'Positivism, Functionalism, and International Law', 34 (April, 1940), pp. 260–84, Hans Morgenthau argues that during the 1930s, political tensions in both Europe and Asia had almost completely destroyed international law. In *Renaissance Diplomacy* (New York: Dover Publications, 1988 [1955]), Garrett Mattingly argues that the break-up of Christendom and the wars of religion did much the same to the diplomatic institutions that had been evolving since the fifteenth century.

- 7 E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964 [1939]), p. 206, quoting Shaw, *John Bull's Other Island*, Preface.
- 8 See the summary of Morgenthau's argument in Edwin Egede and Peter Sutch, *The Politics of International Law and International Justice* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), pp. 218–19.
- 9 Nicholas Murray Butler, 'The Humane Work of the League of Nations', in *The Path to Peace: Essays and Addresses on Peace and its Making* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930), pp. 23–33.
- 10 Butler, 'A League of Nations' (1918), in *Is America Worth Saving? Addresses on National Problems and Party Policies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920), p. 128.
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- 13 The use of the term 'forms' here is taken from Tocqueville's argument that 'the usages and the turn of ideas' commonly understood among lawyers (though often not among the general public) gave to the members of the legal profession a common identity that in turn made them a collective influence for order in political and social life in the United States and a bulwark against despotism. (See Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 2 vols., Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop, eds. and trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), pp. 252, 256, 258, 669–70.)
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- 25 Watson, *op. cit.*, p. 41.
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more involved in negotiations across state boundaries, they also have access to national courts in these cases, but such non-state actors lack corresponding judicial institutions that would impose a settled and authoritative decision on who

conducts what diplomatic activities on behalf of those non-state entities.

- 27 See David Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order: The Revolutionary State in International Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

# Diplomatic Immunity

Linda S. Frey and Marsha L. Frey

From ancient times to the present many civilizations, whether in the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, or Africa, have respected the inviolability of envoys. Necessity forced most cultures to accord envoys basic protections because only then was intercourse between peoples possible. Without such protections, no international system could exist. Rooted in necessity, immunity was buttressed by religion, sanctioned by custom, and fortified by reciprocity. The rules and conventions governing diplomatic immunity have been historically shaped and conditioned and continue to evolve. As the essential foundations of immunity shifted from religious to legal, what had once been an expedient became over time a precedent. Subtly, acquiescence in small changes led unintentionally to the creation of precedent. Courtesies hardened and over time became 'rights.' When expedients evolved into 'precedents' and earlier courtesies into 'rights,' the issue of whether and under what circumstances envoys were entitled to immunity became a legal one. Ultimately, national laws

and international treaties codified these privileges (Frey and Frey, 1999) (see Chapters 14 and 15 in this Handbook).

Because the establishment of resident envoys is a Western development and because the expansion of European power across the globe brought in its wake European international law, there is a distinct Western tradition on the inviolability of envoys. Although every international system recognized the inviolability of envoys, different rules shaped their practice and governed relations with states outside the system. Thus the Chinese (one could substitute the Japanese, the Greeks, the Romans) treated barbarians differently, just as the Christians (one could substitute the Muslims) did the 'infidels,' because each system developed exclusive and culturally specific principles. For the Greeks, the common bonds were language and religion; for the Chinese and Japanese, culture; and for the Muslims, religion. What distinguished the European system from others was its stress on the equality and sovereignty of states within

it and sometimes, but not invariably, outside of it. In contrast, the Chinese emperor, as the son of heaven, acknowledged other states, even those within the system, only as vassals. Envoys also fared better in a multipolar system, such as Ancient Greece, than they did in a hegemonic system, such as Ancient China. All civilizations have recognized the importance of protecting envoys from harm. The degree of protection, however, varied with each culture. Over time, the position of the envoy deteriorated in some civilizations, especially those that became hegemonic and harbored universalistic pretensions and those that regarded the others as barbarian.

The concept of according envoys inviolability may stem in part from early man's attitude toward strangers and the traditional code of hospitality. The ancient Greeks and Romans considered it impious to injure a guest, as did the Celts, Gauls, and Teutons (Numelin, 1950: 117). Although strangers were sometimes welcomed, they were also feared. Early man insisted on disarming or ritually purifying anyone who might have magical, potentially harmful, powers. Envoys, like strangers, were feared but also protected. The sacred status of messengers and heralds seems partly ascribable to their allegedly supernatural powers. Insulting, injuring, or killing an envoy incurred the death penalty.

The custom of regarding envoys as holy and an attack on them impious may originate from the practice of employing priests as envoys as they did, for example, in Ancient Kerala and Ancient Rome. Envoys may also have been regarded as holy because of the vital role they played in bringing peace, or in Herod's words, 'reconciling enemies to one another' (Josephus, 1975, 2:275). Throughout the world, whether the Iroquois in North America, the Wiradjuri in Australia, the Maoris in Oceania, or the Tonga in the South Seas regarded messengers, heralds, and envoys as inviolable. In preliterate societies these individuals carried (e.g. a coconut) or wore a highly visible sign of their status (e.g. a sacred staff, a red hair net, a nose peg).

## Key Points

- Pre-literate societies regarded envoys as sacred.
- This sacrosanctity may stem in part from early man's attitude toward strangers and the traditional code of hospitality.

## ANCIENT WORLD

In spite of a common foundation in which divine sanctions reinforced inadequate human deterrents, the protections accorded envoys varied greatly. In Ancient Greece, heralds (*kerykes*), not envoys, possessed diplomatic inviolability, for the Greeks regarded heralds as the descendants of Hermes, the messenger of the gods. The ancient epics give some idea of the religious dimensions of the envoy's role. In the *Iliad*, Achilles, understandably enraged when Agamemnon demanded that he turn over his beautiful captive, Briseis, nevertheless did not harm the terrified envoys sent to take the girl. Instead he greeted them as 'messengers of Zeus and of mortals' and handed Briseis over to them (Homer, 1962: 339). Herald's enjoyed then a powerful, protected position. They carried a staff or caduceus that symbolized their sacrosanctity and served as an insignia of office. Public opinion and customary law also guaranteed the safety of heralds, who carried formal messages, announcements, or requests. Although envoys were orators and politicians, usually senior men of some eminence, they had to rely on safe-conducts secured by heralds who preceded them. Because it was not customary to extend immunity to envoys, truces and treaties often included stipulations for such protection. In spite of these precautions, envoys, on occasion, were mistreated, abducted, or even killed (Adcock and Mosley, 1975). Throughout the Near and Far East envoys were respected and their importance acknowledged. In Babylonia envoys were both inviolable and accountable. Envoys did not enjoy immunity for crimes committed during their missions. In Ancient India as well envoys could not be

killed but they could be punished: branded, maimed, or detained. In Ancient China, with its hegemonic view of the world, envoys had less protection and were regarded more as messengers than as personal representatives. Nonetheless, most diplomats, even of tributary states, remained inviolate because of imperial benevolence and a deep rooted pragmatic conviction that envoys be well treated. The status of envoys in Burma and Siam mirrored that of China. Throughout the ancient world, third parties typically did not respect the inviolability of envoys. Nor did diplomatic practice evolve; it remained rudimentary as diplomatic relations remained *ad hoc*.

In Ancient Rome, in the early republic, the practices of diplomacy, predicated on the idea of reciprocity, ensured the immunity of diplomats. Common fetial institutions coupled with the predominance of Indo-European dialects meant that a feeling of community could develop (Watson, 1993). War, however, transformed Rome. As fetial law became mere ritual, diplomatic immunity was increasingly violated, especially on the barbarian fringe. When Rome became a multicultural empire the ties that bound were secularized. The violation of a diplomat's immunity, once an offense against divine prescription, now became an assault on the state as civil law replaced religious injunction. Rome established a secular rationale for the idea of diplomatic immunity that, in contrast with Greek practice, was not dependent on common cultural traditions. Rome's achievement lay in forging an empire not only through military might but also through law. Rome passed on the ideal of diplomatic immunity, an ideal universally acknowledged in the *ius gentium*. Sanctioned by custom, reinforced by law, diplomatic immunity became part of the Roman legacy. The word immunity itself comes from Rome. *Munera* meant public services or charges that everyone was obliged to perform or discharge. *Immunitas* was granted as a personal privilege to certain individuals. The *immunes* included those exempt from those charges

and those exempt from military service. Legacies are often ambiguous and Rome's was no exception. During the early republic Rome had respected the rights of diplomats but later, during the imperial republic and empire, had transgressed that rule as the earlier rationale, personal restraints, and societal constraints disappeared. While in practice Romans violated the earlier standard, ironically, in practice Roman legalists and philosophers strengthened it.

### Key Points

- Across the ancient world the immunity accorded to diplomats varied widely.
- In ancient Greece only heralds enjoyed such status.
- In Ancient Rome their sacred status was based on fetial law. In other cultures a deep-rooted pragmatism dictated that envoys be well treated.

### MIDDLE AGES

During the Middle Ages, immunity continued to mean that an envoy should be able to come and go in safety. Not only he but also his goods and entourage were inviolable. Whether in Europe, the Middle East, or Asia, principals, that is, those who sent another, looked to custom, law, religion, and the threat of reciprocal action to safeguard their emissaries. Third parties were not, however, expected to respect a diplomat's status unless he had procured a safe-conduct from them. Any privileges, such as the right to bear arms, were just that. In the medieval, as in the ancient world, a diplomat was not answerable for crimes committed *before* his embassy but he was for crimes committed *during* as were the those of his suite. As members of the Christian commonwealth, diplomats were answerable to God as well as their fellow man. When diplomats committed a crime they were punished for it. As society became more literate, principals tended less to rely on customary and religious safeguards and more



on juristic ones to protect their envoys. Both church and state continued to stress the necessity of an inviolate social order and to recognize the existence of a common body of international law, the essential core of which was the sacred status and fundamental accountability of envoys (Queller, 1967).

### Key Point

- In the Middle Ages principals looked to custom, law, religion, and the threat of reciprocal action to safeguard their emissaries.

## EARLY MODERN

The development of resident embassies in the Renaissance ultimately entailed an expansion not only of the number of envoys but also of their entourages as well as an explosive growth in the attendant immunities. The Renaissance did not initiate a new era in diplomatic immunities but only marked the threshold of one. At first the establishment of resident embassies had no effect on the practice of diplomatic immunity, in part because *ad hoc* embassies not merely continued but increased in number. Though the resident envoy differed functionally from the *ad hoc* envoy, he initially enjoyed no more protection. Envoys continued to be regarded as inviolable – but only by the receiving state. As in the past, custom, law, and religion protected them. Other powers, however, continued to regard them as private individuals who had no protection unless their principals had procured a safe-conduct for them. Only after resident envoys became widespread and only after a time lag when the effects of and problems involving permanent residents, such as the inviolability of embassy grounds, became apparent did practice adapt and change (Mattingly, 1971).

During the Early Modern period, the Reformation fractured Christendom and challenged the practice of diplomatic immunity; envoys, especially those of a different

faith, increasingly were viewed as the enemy within. In civil disputes, especially that of debt, practice meshed with Roman theory that envoys were responsible for debts contracted during their embassy. In criminal cases, theorists often argued that an envoy had forfeited his privileges by his actions but expediency triumphed and ambassadors escaped punishment. Despite the protests of theorists, such as Gentili and Hotman, a disjunction between theory and practice persisted. In theory ambassadors were not immune, but in practice they were. Expediency became practice and practice became precedent. Governments gradually adopted the fiction of extraterritoriality. They did so to justify the burgeoning ambassadorial exemption from both civil and criminal law. Earlier, when an ambassador was subject to personal law, the law that a man took with him wherever he went, an ambassador's exemption was obvious. Personal law coupled with limitations on where the royal writ ran paved the way for the idea of extraterritoriality. Extraterritoriality was as much a 'legal survival' as it was a 'legal fiction' (Adair, 1929: 29). In the chrysalis of the emerging territorial state, extraterritoriality 'conformed rather than conflicted with many existing practices' (Ogdon, 1936: 164). It is not surprising then that the theory of extraterritoriality appealed to many scholars and practitioners of the diplomatic craft in an age of virulent religious conflict and sectarian agenda. Although the idea of extraterritoriality predated Grotius, he coined the term when he noted that ambassadors should be treated as *quasi extra territorium* (as if outside the territory). On accepting an ambassador, the receiving states implicitly recognized the attendant immunities. On the premise that the ambassador was still legally, although not physically, present in his own land, the ambassador was not subject to the criminal or civil laws of the host country. No matter what the crime, the receiving state could only send the ambassador back to the sending state with the demand that he be punished. The ambassador was inviolable because

he represented a sacrosanct sovereign and because his business was vital. In this period the chapel question probably created the most acrimony because it often involved a volatile combination of conspiracy, treason, and heresy. The question revolved around whether a forbidden rite, often associated with political dissidence, should be tolerated even when hidden behind an embassy compound. The performance of such rites often triggered the debate over ambassadorial privileges as whole. Confessional differences forced a reexamination and ultimately a reaffirmation of the necessity for diplomatic immunity.

Such controversies triggered an outpouring of literature as theorists such as Jean Jacques Burlamaqui, Thomas Hobbes, Baruch Spinoza, Samuel von Pufendorf, Christian von Wolff, and Emerich de Vattel grappled with the question of diplomatic immunity and relied on the law of nature to justify their positions. Vattel, the most popular theorist of his day, in part because of both the elegance and simplicity of his style, based international law on the law of nature. For him ambassadorial immunity was not an artificial or arbitrary construction agreed upon by various states. The importance of embassies made the ambassador both sacred and inviolable. The immunities of an ambassador were based on functional necessity; an ambassador must be exempt from civil and criminal jurisdiction because he must 'have nothing to hope, nothing to fear from the sovereign to whom he is sent' (Vattel, 1982: 452).

The natural law theorists were gradually being undermined in the seventeenth and later eighteenth centuries by positivists such as Richard Zouche, Samuel Rachel, Johann Wolfgang Textor, Cornelius van Bynkershoek, Johann Jakob Moser, and Georg Friedrich von Martens. These positivists based international law on the implicit or explicit consent of states. The balance shifted in their favor because they dispelled the earlier confusion between international morality and international law so prevalent in the natural law school. Whereas the natural law school appealed to

allegedly innate ideas of justice, the historical or positivist school sought to delineate the guidelines adopted by most states. For positivists, the resolution of disputes involving envoys and their entourages revealed the practice of nations. Positivists were guided by a presumption of continuity and by the implicit, though often unarticulated, assumptions that prescription legitimized a right. The mere existence of a convention was presumptive in that it gave reasonable grounds for its continuance. The positivists tended to appeal to what was, to rely on cases and precedents, not what should be; the accumulation of precedents only strengthened their hand.

### Key Points

- The Early Modern period witnessed the establishment of resident embassies and occasioned a new debate over the immunities of diplomats.
- In theory (according to some, such as Gentili and Hotman) ambassadors were not immune, but in practice they were.
- Although the idea of extraterritoriality predated Grotius, he coined the term when he noted that ambassadors should be treated as *quasi extra territorium* (as if outside the territory).
- Some theorists, such as Vattel, based their defense of immunity on the law of nature but they were increasingly being challenged and undermined by the positivist school, who based international law on the implicit or explicit consent of states.

### MODERN ERA

From the French Revolution to the present, the international order changed dramatically. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the 'European' law of nations collided with other mutually exclusive, imperial and at first fundamentally irreconcilable geopolitical systems. The European system was predicated on the equality of nations, whereas others, such as the Chinese, was based on hegemony. Admittedly, the European insistence on certain privileges such as diplomatic asylum in

'barbarous' or 'semi-barbarous' countries – privileges that Europeans would not tolerate within their own countries – revealed the limits of that norm of equality. In expanding across the globe, the West exported permanent embassies and with them international law and its attendant advantages, including the pretense of equality and a mechanism for maintaining order. With diplomatic relations came diplomatic inviolability.

Nonetheless, in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries, diplomatic privilege was assailed on many fronts. First and foremost, the attack on privilege and on the diplomat dates back to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The French Revolution, even more than the Reformation, constituted an unprecedented challenge to the system and the practice of diplomatic immunity.

For the French, rights based on sovereignty transcended those based on treaties. Diplomatic privilege survived in spite of the virulent attack on privilege in general because a Europe at war dispatched few envoys and because both sides acknowledged the necessity of diplomatic inviolability. The French, who during the early years of the Revolution also feared diplomatic isolation and wanted to retain the few allies they had, found themselves defending the old diplomacy and one of its principle tenets, diplomatic inviolability.

The revolutionary challenge, however, lived on in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly in the 'Italian' and 'Belgian' schools of jurisprudence. For them diplomatic immunity meant diplomatic impunity, a denial of justice. Many jurists in the nineteenth century saw diplomatic privileges as detritus from the past, a 'deadly legacy from the Roman law and the barbarian ages' (Sinner, 1906: 137). One of the foremost critiques of the existing system was François Laurent. His central argument that diplomatic immunities were no longer necessary rested on the premise that the *droit des gens* was not eternal and immutable. Rather, the *droit des gens* should reflect the

ineluctability of progress, the primacy of justice, and the rights of the individual (Laurent, 1880: 3: 10, 14, 50). His views were endorsed by Silvestre Pinheiro-Ferreira, who leveled much of his criticism at extraterritoriality as naught but a sterile fiction. Other prominent theorists such as Pasquale Fiore, Pietro Esperson, and Giuseppe Carnazza-Amari advocated the restriction, if not the abolition of basic diplomatic privileges, and the adoption of a more functionalist approach. Although they did not succeed in eliminating diplomatic immunities, they did restrict diplomatic rights, eliminating flagrant abuses, and forcing a reconsideration of the rationale for such privileges. Although jurists remain sharply divided over the extent of and necessity for diplomatic privileges, they did defend the age-old concept of diplomatic inviolability which encompassed freedom from physical and verbal attack and immunity from criminal and civil jurisdiction. Municipal law, however, differed markedly on questions as basic as the duration of an envoy's protection. In the nineteenth century, governments uniformly recognized an envoy's exemption from criminal jurisdiction. The state's only remedy was to expel him or request his recall. No universal norms prevailed on an envoy's exemption from civil jurisdiction. A consensus did emerge on the liability of the envoy's family as well as his official suite; most agreed that the criminal and civil exemption of the envoy extended to both. Practice, however, varied widely on the liability of the unofficial suite. Governments increasingly demanded that diplomats submit the names of both their official and unofficial suite. The remarkable divergence in and variation among states over the question of diplomatic privilege stands out as a striking feature of nineteenth century jurisprudence. European governments granted an envoy an exemption from criminal jurisdiction and recognized a diplomat's exemption from the countries through which he passed. Both had been common practice. But they agreed on little else. Some governments limited the

exemption of domestic servants. In the nineteenth century, the functionalists who wanted to limit diplomatic privilege prevailed. Those who defended the theory of extraterritoriality found themselves in an increasingly untenable and ultimately indefensible position.

The burgeoning nationalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries accelerated the trend underscoring the sovereignty of the state and repudiating any privileges that derogated from its authority. The growing acceptance of the concepts of equality and democracy also undermined the belief in privilege. In addition, the explosive growth of the diplomatic corps and their attendant staffs prompted a reconsideration of the privileges accorded diplomats and their retinues.

Before the adoption of the Vienna Convention a diplomat's privileges varied greatly, dependent on where he was stationed. Generally, the United States and Great Britain granted diplomats the most extensive, while Italy, Greece, the USSR, and Argentina the least. The confusing welter of widely diverse practices predictably caused problems; it often enmeshed diplomats in disputes that deflected them from their main goals and raised substantive issues of reciprocity and justice. These often fundamentally divergent principles and policies obstructed diplomatic negotiations and soured, if not embittered, relations. By the 1950s, a basic consensus had emerged on the privileges accorded to the head and the official staff, but even here differences emerged over a diplomat's exemption for private acts.

### Key Points

- In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as resident embassies, and with them international law, expanded across the globe, the number of envoys and their entourages increased exponentially and occasioned new debates over the immunities of envoys.
- Practice varied widely among states. Generally, however, the functionalist view of the Italian and Belgian schools, which strove to limit privileges, prevailed.

## VIENNA CONVENTION

Necessity more than anything else ultimately helped to ensure the passage and acceptance of a new code on diplomatic privileges and immunities. The Vienna Convention of 1961 succeeded because it focused on permanent envoys and did not deal with other internationally protected persons, such as *ad hoc* envoys and representatives to and officials of international organizations. The Convention also avoided controversial issues, such as diplomatic asylum, that might have provoked prolonged and contentious debate. For example, no consensus existed on the problematic issue of diplomatic asylum. Its restrictive and functional approach to diplomatic privileges guaranteed its acceptance by many nations committed to restricting diplomatic privileges and reducing the number of individuals who enjoyed them.

At the Convention, function determined privilege. Functionalism underlay stipulations (Articles 22, 24, 27, and 30) that the premises, archives, documents, and official correspondence of the mission and private residence of the diplomat were inviolable and that the receiving state had a special duty to protect the residence and mission. Article 26 provided that the receiving state should ensure freedom of movement and travel except in areas restricted for reasons of national security. The most fundamental provisions of the convention reduced the occasions when immunity could be claimed and drastically reduced the army of privileged individuals. A diplomat and his family, provided they were neither nationals nor permanent residents of the receiving state, enjoyed immunity from criminal as well as civil and administrative jurisdictions with notable exceptions: (1) a real action relating to immovable property in the territory of the receiving state (unless the individual held it on behalf of the mission); (2) an action relating to succession in which the diplomat acts as executor, administrator, heir, or legatee;

(3) an action related to a professional or commercial activity outside his functions; (4) a court action initiated by either a diplomat or a member of his family. Even more significant, the technical and administrative staff and their families, who were neither nationals nor permanent residents of the receiving state, enjoyed full immunity from criminal jurisdiction. Immunity from civil and administrative jurisdiction only covered acts performed in the course of their official duties. Members of the service staff, who were neither nationals nor permanent residents of the receiving state, were only immune for acts performed in the course of their duties. Private servants enjoyed no immunity. In a few instances a more liberal interpretation prevailed. The Convention granted a diplomat inviolability and jurisdictional immunity when in transit to and from his post as long as the third state granted him a visa. Even this provision could be defended on the basis of functional necessity and was not a total departure from diplomatic law. Both the United States and the United Kingdom had previously observed this proviso. Other provisions that passed, such as exemptions from custom duties, were clearly not based on functionalism but on reciprocity and courtesy. Because of the often significant disparity in exemptions, many governments based their fiscal policies on strict reciprocity.

The representatives from the 81 states were able to reach a consensus on so many issues because the Convention essentially defined customary practice that had developed since the Early Modern period. By 1985, 145 nations had ratified the convention, though admittedly some made reservations. The Vienna Convention of 1961 demonstrated that states increasingly relied not on customary protection for their diplomats but positive law. Attempts to restrict diplomatic immunity more have failed because of the difficulties of reaching a consensus. The Vienna Convention had not resolved especially problematic issues such as automobile accidents, smuggling, and compensation for victims injured by diplomats. The Convention also did not deal with

the issue of *ad hoc* envoys or the growing body of international officials. At present, governments who extend special privileges to *ad hoc* envoys do so because of international amity and courtesy, not legal obligation.

### Key Points

- The Vienna Convention of 1961 succeeded in part because it defined what had become customary practice and because a generally functionalist view prevailed among the receiving states.
- It prevailed as well because it avoided controversial issues such as asylum and only dealt with permanent envoys and their staffs.

## INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (IGOS)

Just as the number of states burgeoned, so too did the number of international organizations. From 1815 to 1819 there was just a single IGO, by 1985 there were 378. The privileges and immunities traditionally granted to diplomats were extended to the personnel and representatives of international organizations. Although no consensus existed on the privileges international officials should enjoy, a convention was convoked in Vienna in 1975. Although all states were invited, only 81 came and two sent observers. The sessions quickly became polarized between the host states, most of them affluent Western ones, and the majority. Unlike the previous convention, this one was bitter and divisive. Because most states were sending, not receiving states, they wanted to expand the privileges. The draft granted more privileges and immunities to international officials and their families as well as their administrative and technical staff. The draft also limited the power of the host state, for example in declaring an individual *persona non grata*. Unlike the earlier meeting at Vienna this convention failed. The IGO issue has remained problematic. IGOs obtain their



privileges in a variety of ways: first from their constitutions. When states join an organization they have an obligation to accept its constitution. Second, member states often adopt a general instrument to which they make explicit reservations. Third, privileges and immunities are often determined by an agreement between the organization and a government or governments. Fourth, headquarter agreements between the host and the organization provided for certain immunities and privileges. Fifth, bilateral agreements, such as the Mexican Water Treaty (1945), which created the International Boundary and Water Commission, stipulated the privileges and immunities accorded to personnel. Questions about 'international privilege' understandably have become part of the debate about the necessity of limiting diplomatic privilege. The growing number of individuals who enjoyed such status has made the issue controversial (Wilson, 1967: 576–7). Jurists question whether it is necessary to extend diplomatic privileges to the members of IGOs, such as the Inter-American Tuna Commission. The contentious, often acrimonious, debate over the codification of the privileges of international officials reflected not a world united but one divided.

### **Key Point**

- The Vienna Convention of 1975 failed because no consensus existed between the receiving states (generally wealthy and Western) and the sending states on the status of the personnel of IGOs.

### **EPILOGUE**

Some within the diplomatic corps also undermined the position of the envoy. Terrorists who masqueraded as envoys brought the profession into disrepute, as did diplomats who routinely abused their privileges, including their customs exemption, notably the diplomatic bag. All the privileges, even the

most basic, that of diplomatic inviolability, came under attack from terrorists. Before the twentieth century, attacks on diplomats were the exception. No longer. In the last half of the twentieth century, terrorists, often with the support of their governments, flaunted their disregard of the most fundamental precept of international law, the inviolability of envoys. The Iranian government's complicity in and sanction of the seizure of American diplomats and the international order's failure to enact meaningful sanctions were symptomatic of the disintegration of the world order. Finally, the transformation into a worldwide diplomatic framework did not enhance the position of the diplomat. In the twentieth century two world wars and several revolutions, coupled with the growth in the number of new states, undermined the traditional international society (Craig, 1990: 201–6). The position of the envoy deteriorated because of the vaunted growth of that world order, which destroyed the old, admittedly Eurocentric community of nations. States no longer shared common values or interests or felt bound by common values (Bull, 1977). The breakdown of internal homogeneity and the expansion of the international community coupled with the enormity of socioeconomic changes and the virulence of ideological conflict has triggered a revolution and made the diplomat's position more precarious than ever. Revolutionaries, in particular, ignored basic precepts of international law and destabilized the system. They dehumanized the enemy (Wight, 1978: 36). Revolutionaries, whether Jacobins, communists, or Iranian 'students,' could not extend the ties that bind. Revolutionary powers are morally and psychologically at war with their neighbors because of their mission to transform international society by conversion or coercion (Armstrong, 1993).

They seek to destroy or subvert. In part because of such ideologues, the indivisible community of interests, albeit in a limited framework, no longer exists. That world is gone.



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# Diplomacy and Negotiation

I. William Zartman

Diplomacy, writes Sir Harold Nicolson (1939/1963: 4–5; also de Martens 1866) in his authoritative work on the subject, ‘is the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist’. Negotiation is the process of combining divergent positions into a joint decision (Zartman and Berman 1982; Hopmann 1996; de Callières 2000 [1716]; Druckman 2001; Odell 2000; Mansbridge and Martin 2013). Whether in interpersonal dealings to buy a used car or to prevent or end a world conflict, negotiation has certain characteristics that distinguish it from the two other basic types of decision-making, voting (coalition) and adjudication (hierarchy) (Zartman 1978; Dahl 1955, 47; Carr 1939/1946: 218; Lewicki et al. 2010: 4–6); unanimity as the decision rule, formal equality of parties (right of veto), mixed motives (common and conflicting interests), process

of exchange of offers/demands within a threefold decision choice (yes, no, continue talking) (Ikle 1964).

Negotiation is giving something to get something, so it involves moves from opening positions by both/all sides, although not necessarily to an equal degree. A negotiated agreement is a positive-sum outcome, in that no party would agree to the outcome unless it feels itself to be better off than without an agreement (its security point). To be sure, this positive sum element can be ‘artificially’ created by a stronger party by threatening sanctions (worsening the security point) if the other party does not sign, where it is the release from the threat of sanctions that creates the positive sum, as in the Iranian nuclear proliferation negotiations. Thus, power in the process lies not in numbers (as in voting) or in authority (as in adjudication) but in alternatives (security point) and in persuasion (Shell 1999; PON 2014).

Negotiation may be used to *pursue* relations in order to bargain for advantage or to *prevent* conflict from escalating or from turning violent; it may be used to *manage* relations – i.e. de-escalate the means of their pursuit from violence to politics; or it may be the means to actually *resolve* the basic incompatibilities of positions or to *transform* them into cooperative relationships. Conflict here refers not just to violence but to any active incompatibility of positions on an issue or problem.

Since World War II, negotiation to produce a peace agreement has accounted for a quarter of the serious conflicts managed with a ceasefire or resolved, together accounting for about the same number as those terminated by victory of one side over the other. There has been a burst of activity since the end of the Cold War to reduce violence through negotiated ceasefire agreements and about two-thirds of them contain some move toward conflict resolution, although about half of the management efforts still await translation into full resolution.

These figures, however, concern only a small – if uncalculable – part of the activity of negotiation, which ranges from small

diplomatic incidents to global multilateral regime-building conferences. Parties turn to diplomatic negotiations when they have a problem or conflict to be resolved that they cannot handle unilaterally. Smaller issues are the daily bread of diplomats at home and abroad, often treated in informal and ongoing negotiations, whereas regimes are recursive negotiations continually adjusting broad international agreements (Spector and Zartman 2003). Negotiation has led to the establishment of a growing web of international regimes, beginning with the security regime in the UN itself (1945), and going on to the Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (1982), the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) (1947) and then the World Trade Organization (WTO) (1995), the Ozone Treaty (1987) and Framework Convention on Climate Change (1995), the Convention/Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe (C/OSCE) (1975/1992), and a myriad other regimes. These figures and instances show a significant increase of the use and degrees of success of negotiation since the end of the Cold War. However, figures since 2010 would show the rise of revolutionary religious fanatical conflicts and the

**Table 17.1 Conflict Outcomes over time, 1946–2010**

	<i>Victory</i>	<i>Peace accord</i>	<i>Ceasefire</i>	<i>Low activity</i>	<i>Total ended</i>	<i>Unresolved</i>
1946–50	17	3	0	9	29	41
1951–55	6	4	1	4	15	27
1956–60	8	5	1	9	23	36
1961–65	11	4	4	6	25	47
1966–70	11	3	3	10	27	47
1971–75	11	4	4	7	26	51
1976–80	11	1	1	4	17	52
1981–85	9	1	1	10	21	59
1986–90	12	4	4	22	42	79
1991–95	14	14	12	30	70	96
1996–2000	6	7	10	21	44	75
2001–05	4	7	6	16	33	66
2006–10	3	1	22	15	41	66
All episodes	123	58	69	163	413	742

Source: Kreutz (2010)

breakdown of major cooperative regimes, posing new challenges to negotiation (see also Kissinger 1964: 2–3).

The negotiation process operates under a loose bundle of norms that can be termed the Ethos of Equality (Faure 2003), the notion that equal status, equal treatment, and fair and equitable results are the defining characteristics of negotiation. Like any norms, this notion is present more strongly in spirit than in letter. Although it may be breached in detail, its influence is still felt in concept and action in negotiation. The formal structural equality of the parties is derived from the fact that decision unanimity means that each party has a veto over any agreement and therefore should grant each other recognition with equal standing in the negotiations. A *sense* of equality, or symmetry, is beneficial to the efficient and effective achievement of results, and negotiators are well advised to cultivate that sense so they can move from tending the atmospherics to resolving the problem, even though, in fact, full symmetry does not exist in the real world. The ethos then extends to the process, where requitement – the sense that concessions will be reciprocated – is expected, and when not practiced, parties can cry foul. International law holds that agreements made under duress are invalid, although in fact power inequality is always present and conditions negotiating behavior (Zartman and Rubin 2000).

All negotiations are asymmetrical, to a greater or lesser degree; there is no absolute equality in the real world. While symmetry has long been thought to be the most favorable situation for efficient and effective negotiations, both social psychology and political science have recently shown that its real-world equivalent, near-symmetry (small asymmetry), is the least productive structure because the parties will spend most of their time and effort in position politics, seeking to maintain or upset (and therefore counter-maintain) the near-symmetry (Hornstein 1965; Hammerstein and Parker 1982; Pruitt and Carnevale 1993; Zartman and Rubin

2000). Asymmetrical parties know their roles and goals and seek absolute gains, whereas rivals at any level of the totem pole contest each other's position and seek relative gains at the other's expense (Powell 1991). Weaker parties have a potential array of means at their disposal to reduce the degree of asymmetry, by borrowing power from third parties, opponents, context, and process (Deutsch 1973; Zartman and Rubin 2000). Smaller parties tend to concentrate on a single issue whereas larger parties are burdened by many issues and are easily distracted; the latter focus on setting the formula for a solution at the beginning of the negotiations, leaving the smaller partner to win back initial losses in the detail phase (Crump and Zartman 2003). In intrastate conflicts, the government has the structural advantage but the conditions and tactics are the same, as the rebellion emphasizes commitment and concentrates on recognition – formal symmetry – as its goal and the key to its equality (Zartman 1995). The role of imperfect information in conflict decisions between asymmetrical parties is currently the subject of a surge of rational choice literature, but it ignores negotiations, assuming bargaining failure instead of analyzing how to prevent it (Fearon 1995; Kydd 2005).

While the overarching principles of any agreement, or its formula, are the primary subject of any negotiation, they always refer to some mutually agreed notion of justice, the basis of which is equality or equalizing, whatever the specific referent (Zartman et al. 1996; Kolm 2002; Albin 2001). If negotiations were a one-shot affair, parties could drive the hardest bargain possible, sign, and run. But diplomacy is the business of managing relations, that is, ongoing ties and contacts among states. Even if a party feels it needs to prevail in a particular diplomatic negotiation, it is under pressure to do so in such a manner that the outcome does not impel the other party above all to seek revenge (Shell 1999). 'Diplomacy', said Cardinal Richelieu (1637), 'should aim, not at incidental or opportunistic arrangements, but at creating solid and durable relations'.

## Key Points

- Negotiations are the basic means to pursue, prevent, manage, resolve, and transform conflicts among states (and other parties), including conflicts on how to overcome problems and install cooperation.
- Negotiation operates under an unspoken Ethos of Equality, the notion that equal status, equal treatment, and fair and equitable results are its defining characteristics.
- Negotiation has increased significantly in the last quarter century (since the end of the Cold War), but faces new types of challenges beyond its efficacy in fanatical ideological conflicts and worn out cooperative regimes.

## STRUCTURE

Merely an unresolved problem or conflict is not enough to drive parties to negotiate; our lives abound in problems and conflicts we cannot settle by ourselves. In addition, the stalemate must be painful to the parties; if they can bear irresolution, there is no need to engage in the compromises that bi- or multi-lateral resolution necessarily requires. And these feelings of discomfort and impasse must be felt to some degree by all parties involved for them to turn to bi- or multilateral methods for dealing with the situation. This situation is termed a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS); when combined with the perception that the other side is willing to look for a negotiated outcome, termed a way out (WO), the situation has achieved 'ripeness', the necessary but not sufficient condition for the beginning of negotiations (Zartman 1989, 2000, 2007; Mitchell 1995; Pruitt and Olczak 1995; Ohlson 1998). Ripeness is a situation where both/all parties feel their security point (or BATNA – best possible alternative to a negotiated agreement) to be significantly low. For the negotiations to arrive at a successful conclusion, the parties must seize the MHS and turn the WO into a mutually enticing outcome (MEO) through

their negotiations, a pull factor that complements the push factor that impelled them into diplomatic discussions. The notion of a MHS is readily understandable in matters of conflict, where rising costs of continued conflict and falling chances of a favorable unilateral outcome impel the parties to seek a negotiated solution. But it also applies to problems requiring two or more states to pool their efforts in cooperation when unilateral efforts to handle the problem fail and the costs of that failure rise. As a result, parties negotiate trade agreements, set rules to handle nuclear proliferation, and seek to regulate climate change. Ripeness is a matter of perception, a subjective appreciation strengthened by but independent of objective evidence. So states may well need help in perceiving the need and opportunities for negotiation, and diplomacy involves not only resolving one's own conflicts and problems but also helping others to do so. The fact that a MHS and WO are subjectively perceptual opens the door to the efforts of a mediator to ripen the conflict/problem; otherwise, diplomats would just have to sit and wait until the parties felt hurt and stalemated on their own (Zartman and Touval 2007; Zartman and de Soto 2010).

Ripeness was seized in the mediated negotiations that resolved the South West African conflict (1988) (Crocker 1992), the Salvadoran conflict (1989) (de Soto 1992), and the Mindanao conflict in 2015, and in the direct negotiations in South Africa in 1990–94 (Sisk 1995) and in Colombia in 2015. It was carried through to a minimal outcome (agreeing formula) in Nagorno Karabagh (Mooradian and Druckman 2003) and to more or less resolving formulas in Dayton (1993) (Holbrooke 1996), in the Israeli disengagements (1973–75) (Rubin 1982), and the Israeli–Egyptian Washington Treaty (1979). Ripeness was absent in the failed Carter mediation between Eritrea and Ethiopia (1990) (Ottaway 1995) and the Clinton and Kerry mediations between Palestine and Israel (2000, 2014) (Enderlin 2002), and was at least objectively present but not seized in

Liberia in 1990 or Lebanon in 1976 (Zartman 2005). Its absence in the Syrian uprising in 2011–15 explains the inability to get negotiations going (Hinnebusch and Zartman 2016).

The cost/benefit value of what a party can obtain without negotiating has many names, including security point, best/worst alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA/WATNA), reservation price, threat point, and others, and is the most important reference point in understanding and conducting a negotiation (Pillar 1983; PON 2014). A comparison of what each party can gain without an agreement is the source of relative power and determines whether a party can play it tough or soft in negotiating (tough, if the security point is close to the expected outcome; soft, if the gap is great and there is much benefit to gain or much loss to be protected) (Kahneman and Tversky 1979, Zartman 2006).

Power structures also operate within institutional structures, which can have important effects on power relations. States institutionalize their relations into international regimes, informal and formal, in order to reduce transaction costs, and such regimes both expand and limit their negotiating possibilities (Hasenclever et al. 1997; Jönsson and Talberg 1998; Spector and Zartman 2003). Regimes provide information, monitor progress, expand linkages, establish agendas, and generally reduce uncertainties and regulate expectations; but they also limit options and strategies (Odell 2000). In this they tend to equalize member parties and reduce asymmetries. Multilateral bargaining (and analysis) also depends largely on the formation of temporary, informal institutions such as party and issue coalitions, involving some very distinct strategies, typologies, and negotiations (Hampson 1994; Zartman 1994, 2006; Sebenius 1996; Bottom et al. 2000; Narlikar 2003; Crump and Zartman 2003; Odell 2000).

Another form of structural analysis concerns the negotiatory relation between the negotiator and their domestic constituencies in two-level games (Druckman 1978; Evans et al. 1993; Putnam 1998) The idea that

negotiating parties need also negotiate with their home constituencies and reach an agreement at the domestic level that corresponds to the parameters of an agreement on the inter-party level is as applicable to conflict negotiations as to cooperation. The negotiations in the Arab Spring, particularly in Tunisia and Egypt, involved a new dimension that may be termed vertical negotiations, where civil society, in tacit negotiations or in dialog fora, supplemented the struggling horizontal negotiations on the new constitution (Zartman 2015).

### Key Points

- A perception of a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS) and a way out (WO) define a ripe moment, necessary but insufficient for the initiation of negotiations.
- Although parties are never equal in power, a sense of equality is helpful to productive negotiation.
- Negotiations are conducted between parties but also within parties (horizontal), and in addition between civil society and elites (vertical).

### PROCESS

Pioneering work by economists introduced process analysis in the early twentieth century, but, while theoretically elegant, it was hampered by two assumptions: fixed initial positions and constant concession rates (Edgeworth 1881, Zeuthen 1930). Now it is understood that negotiation typically goes through its own process involving a number of stages and turning points (Zartman and Berman 1982; Bendahmane and McDonald 1986; Druckman 1986, 2001; Hopmann 1996). These may overlap and parties may backtrack; their passage may be explicit or implicit; but their functions need to be observed or else the negotiations will fail or produce an incoherent result.

The first stage is *diagnosis*. Parties need to answer such questions as: What are my real interests in this problem/conflict, as opposed



to stated positions (Fisher and Ury 1985)? What is my security point? What is this problem/conflict like? How were other similar conflicts handled? Is there a zone of possible agreement (ZOPA) where the parties' positions overlap, and where? And then similar questions need to be ascertained from the other side's point of view. Parties must also – separately or jointly – establish preparatory understanding covering parties to be included and issues to be covered in negotiation; risks and costs incurred in negotiating; support for resolving rather than pursuing the conflict; and preliminary contacts (Stein 1995).

Parties and issues are some of the most difficult pre-negotiation problems (Talberg 2003; Zartman 2009). While negotiations among both sides' moderates only are likely to leave the mass of the opponents outside the agreement, scholarship and practice are still out on whether to include diehard spoilers in the hopes of carrying them along in the momentum of the negotiations or to leave them out in marginalized isolation, the critical variable being the weight that they command within the rebellion or the problem (Stedman 2000; Zahar 2006). Whether the hardliners (the *akazu*) and the Committee for the Defense of the Republic (CDR) should have been included in the Arusha negotiations on Rwanda in 1993 is a question that will be long debated and never settled (Jones 2001; Leader 2001). But the absence of the IRA on one side and the DUP and the UKUP on the other made the Good Friday Agreement possible in 2003 (Curran and Sebenius 2003). In between, excluded parties at the Arusha negotiations on Burundi after 2000 were gradually brought in as the agreement evolved. Similarly, the question of what issues to include without breaking the back of an agreeable agenda is also crucial; it is unlikely that the Jerusalem question could have been included at Oslo or the Kosovo question at Dayton, but the decision to put off a resolution of Brcko at Dayton (1994) and of the Panguna mine at Arawa (2001) were the keys to the last lock on the Bosnian and Bougainville agreements.

Although diplomats may assume that such preparation is natural to negotiation, it is frequently neglected. A comparison of President Carter's (1979) and President Clinton's (2000) preparation for their Camp David Mideast negotiations goes far to explain the relative success of the first and the failure of the second. Rebel groups often need training in negotiation, beginning with the diagnosis phase, as the painful experiences of Renamo in Mozambique leading up to the 1990 negotiations, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka leading up to the 2005 ceasefire, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda leading up to the 2006 negotiations, and the Darfur rebels at Abuja (2006) and Doha (2010) negotiations all show, among others.

The second phase is one of *formulation*. Negotiators do not immediately start establishing a meeting point from fixed positions; implicitly or explicitly, they first establish a formula for their agreement, consisting of a common definition of the problem and its solution (emerging directly from the diagnosis components), a common sense of justice, and/or an agreed set of terms of trade. This set of principles serves as the basis for the subsequent allocation of details. Establishing a satisfying formula is the key to a subsequent agreement, and if it is not done, the resolution of the conflict will be slower, less coherent, and less satisfactory (Narlikar and Odell 2006). While since Aristotle people have looked for a single overarching notion of justice governing negotiated outcomes (Rawls 1971; Barry 1986) and others have held that justice has no place at all in negotiation, it has been found that justice is an important element in the search for a formula but that the particular version of justice to be applied is negotiated between the parties before they can move on to the disposition of specific items in dispute (Gauthier 1986; Elster 1992; Zartman et al. 1996; Albin 2001, 2003). Formulas abound. The Arab–Israeli disputes were handled on the basis of the UNSC 242 formula of 'Territory for security' in the Israeli–Egyptian Washington Treaty (1979),

the Israeli–Jordan Treaty (1995), and the Oslo Accords (1993), and were not managed or resolved with Syria or Palestine because the formula was not applied. Philippine negotiations pursued the formula ‘peace for autonomy’ and the Colombian negotiations pursued ‘peace for participation’.

There are two different types of formulas: a minimal agreeing formula that ends or suspends the violence without touching the basic conflict issues (conflict management), and a resolving formula that takes on the more difficult challenge of managing both the original issues, the complications that have arisen during the conflict, and a mechanism for dealing with old conflict that may re-emerge and new conflicts that may arise (conflict resolution). The distinction raises a major dilemma in negotiated conflict resolution: should peace be achieved, even if through a minimal agreeing formula that may leave issues unresolved and grievances unaddressed, or should negotiation focus on the achievement of a final resolving formula, even if the search prolongs the violence and killing that come with the struggle for justice (Zartman and Kremeneyuk 2005)? The optimal strategy involves sequencing, focusing first on conflict management and the reduction of violence and then turning to the search for the ingredients of a just, resolving formula, recognizing that conflict management both undermines and promises conflict resolution since it reduces pressure for a solution (a less hurting stalemate) but also implies subsequent attention to underlying causes lest they return to bring back the conflict. It is then only after the first two stages that negotiators turn to *details*. Optimally, they can find the specifics that translate and implement the formula; if not, they have to go back and reformulate.

Parties can achieve positive sum agreements either through concession, compensation, or construction (or reframing) (Pruitt and Olczak 1995). *Concession* involves mutual movement from initial positions on a single item to a meeting point somewhere in the middle, a

distributive allocation of the disputed good so that each party gets some of it (Dupont 2006). The movement would be zero-sum (what one party gets, the other loses) if it were not accompanied by the shared value of ending the conflict. It is initiated by the establishment of a range where the potential positions of the parties overlap, termed the bargaining range or zone of possible agreement (ZOPA), absent of which agreement is not possible (Pillar 1983). The Zairean conflict in 1996 or the Caricom proposal for resolution of the Haitian conflict in 2004 involved concessions from opposite positions favoring removal of the president vs those favoring his maintenance in power, with the middle point – maintenance in position but with power diverted to the prime minister – the basis of the compromise, adopted in the Zairean case and finally rejected in Haiti. In the prolonged negotiation over Aceh, mediator Martti Ahtisaari successfully proposed self-government as the midpoint resulting from concessions from Indonesia’s discredited autonomy and the Acehnese’ independence (Kingsbury 2006). The Communist states and the West divided the Korean peninsula along the 38th parallel in 1945 and Vietnam along the 17th parallel in 1954, the government favored by each side getting half of the country; 70 years later, and less equally, Russia and the Ukrainian government divided Ukraine so that a pro-Russian autonomous region was created in the east, the anticipated added value being the end of the armed conflict.

*Compensation* refers to an exchange of concessions on different matters, one party’s ‘paying for’ a favorable outcome in one matter by granting the other party a favorable outcome on another matter. It can be achieved by establishing differential values, referring to the fact that parties tend to value stakes differently and can use them for trade-offs. Homans’ (1961: 62) maxim, the key to much successful negotiation (and also the basis of the Nash [1950] Point in game theory), states that ‘the more the items at stake can be divided into goods valued more by one party than they cost to the other and goods valued more by

the other party than they cost to the first, the greater the chances of a successful outcome'. Under these conditions, parties can compensate each other in order to 'purchase' what matters most to them. Agreement to end the conflict in Namibia and Angola was reached by pairing a withdrawal of South African troops from Namibia (and its consequent achievement of independence) with the withdrawal (of a coincidentally equal number) of Cuban troops from Angola in 1988, thus achieving a full realization of both parties' goals. Negotiations looking for concessions to a midpoint between zero and 50,000 for either troops would have been meaningless, but using each proposal as compensation for agreement on the other, as the US mediator got the parties to do, produced a highly positive-sum agreement with relatively balanced terms and Namibian independence as well. Similarly, the National Party retained its goal of social and economic privilege in South African negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC) but saw that it could only be achieved with the cooperation of the ANC, in exchange for political control. Developed countries sought to compensate developing countries for development losses in adhering to the Kyoto Protocol on slowing climate change but the sums were deemed insufficient. Of course, not all collections of stakes are Homans-divisible, still leaving a distribution problem in many cases.

*Construction*, sometimes termed integration or problem-solving, refers to a redefinition of the issues in conflict, so that parties can focus on common concerns rather than on issues defined distributively (Follett 1952: 147). It is unlikely that construction can totally recast the stakes to the elimination of all distributive concerns, but it can provide superordinate goals and a cooperative atmosphere, in addition to reframed stakes, so that distribution becomes less contentious. The Peru–Ecuador border dispute reached a settlement in 1999 when the Guarantor Countries (mediators) focused the conflicting parties' attention on the development of the

poor and isolated region in contest rather than on the legalisms of their contending claims (Simmons 1999; Herz and Nogueira 2002). Territorial distribution and borderlines still had to be assigned, but the positive spirit created by the common goal made the task much easier and susceptible to creative solutions. Construction can also make agreement possible through a re-evaluation of the end goal. In Ulster, the redefinition of the conflict by the mediator into three strands – intra-Ulster, Ulster–Eire, Eire–UK – took it out of a distributive, zero-sum confrontation. Parties can also hold on to their goal but change their means to attain it. The FARC in Colombia kept its goal of reforming society but gave up military means for electoral politics to attain it when the government assured them that political means were indeed available. The most radical would be to consider the worst outcome as deadlock (mutual defection or security point) rather than giving in to the opponent ('Better Red than dead'). Here there is no determinate outcome but two Nash equilibria favoring each party in game theoretic terms, respectively, creating a coordinating rather than a collaborating problem (Snyder and Diesing 1977; Stein 1983; Wagner 1999). This represents the tactic used by the US under President Kennedy to end the Cuban Missile standoff (1962) and by President Reagan to end the Cold War (1989) (Brams 1990).

## Key Points

- Negotiations pass through the overlapping phases of diagnosis, formulation, and detailing to create a coherent agreement.
- Agreements are reached through the use of concessions, compensation, and construction (reframing).
- Negotiations over conflicts can aim at conflict management, which ends violence, or for the fuller goals of conflict resolution, which settles the issues of the conflict; negotiations over a problem have only the second goal to aim for. Conflict management contains the promise for resolution but removes the pressure to attain it.

Current scholarship and practice have developed a better understanding of the process and requirements of negotiation, yet the challenges of different types of conflicts and problems continue to rise to test that knowledge as it comes from a range of experiences. The new challenges range from negotiations on climate change, nuclear nonproliferation, and broadened trade to negotiations with rebel and terrorist groups, with interstate aggressors, and with true believers on abortion and capital punishment. Two and a half centuries ago, one of the first encyclopedia articles on 'Negotiation' began:

In common usage, 'negotiation' means the art of handling the affairs of state ... However, negotiation is not limited to international affairs. It takes place everywhere there are differences to conciliate, interests to placate, people to persuade, and purposes to accomplish. Thus, all life could be regarded as a continual negotiation. (de Felice 1778).

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# Diplomatic Mediation

Karin Aggestam

## INTRODUCTION

The history and practice of diplomatic mediation is as long as the existence of conflicts and wars. It is also visible and present in most regions and cultures. Over time, mediation has become an integral part of the diplomatic institution, reflecting a set of norms, rules and practices. Diplomatic mediation was institutionalised by the Congress of Vienna and later within the UN Charter under Article 33. Recently, a number of regional organisations have underlined the importance of mediation as a preventive tool of conflict management. In short, diplomatic mediation plays a vital role in the historical and cultural reproduction of international society (Jones 1999: 29; Jönsson and Hall 2005; Sharp 2009).

Diplomatic mediation is today one of the most common practices of managing contemporary conflicts. It occurs in sixty per cent of all international and intrastate conflicts.

Furthermore, the chances of a successful outcome in the form of an agreement are six times higher when mediators facilitate peace negotiations (Bercovitch and Gartner 2006; Bercovitch and Jackson 2012; Wallensteen and Svensson 2014). The overarching rationale of diplomatic mediation is to strengthen the diplomatic window of opportunity and peace negotiations so that they can lead to a settlement. As such, diplomatic mediation can be viewed as a normative practice intended to manage and resolve conflict by achieving durable peace agreements (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010).

This chapter seeks to illuminate the diversity of perspectives and practices of diplomatic mediation. The overarching aim is three-fold: (1) to provide an overview of some of the theoretical and methodological approaches in the field; (2) to identify contentious issues in research and key challenges to the practice of mediation; and (3) to explore some new avenues for research.

## DELIMITING THE FIELD OF RESEARCH

Diplomatic mediation is part and parcel of peace negotiations and touches upon the core of diplomatic practices, such as representation, communication and negotiation (Berridge 2010; Jönsson and Hall 2005; Sharp 2009). At the same time, it is distinguished by the presence of a third party, which alters the dynamics of direct negotiations. This broad range of practices includes acting as a go-between; improving communication channels; designing negotiation processes; facilitating negotiation milieus; deciding on the inclusion/exclusion of negotiating parties; framing and reframing agendas; suggesting workable formulae for agreements; and influencing the parties' preferences towards compromise by persuasion or the use of threats and rewards (Bercovitch 2002; Greig and Diehl 2012). While power is used as leverage to reinforce the parties' incentives to negotiate and preferences to reach an agreement, this type of 'manipulative' mediation is still distinct from other more forceful international practices, such as arbitration and the use of force, because the mediation process is guided by and dependent on the voluntary participation of the parties (Bercovitch and Jackson 2009).

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to do justice to all the diverse practices of mediation, but in order to demarcate the contents some clarifications on mediation are required. First, 'diplomatic mediation' and 'international mediation' are concepts that will be used interchangeably below. Second, both formal and informal processes of diplomatic mediation are addressed, but the focus is primarily on the interactions between these different tracks of diplomacy that are here referred to as Track 1 (official), Track 2 and Track 3 (unofficial). Third, research on mediation is studied more broadly in a number of disciplines, such as political science, history, sociology, psychology and economics, as well as within diverse empirical contexts. Yet, the focus is here limited to peace mediation as this chapter is primarily concerned with international conflicts.

## THE STUDY OF DIPLOMATIC MEDIATION

While the practice of mediation has a rich history, the field of study is much more recent (Stenelo 1972). In the last decades, research has expanded dramatically and brought new theoretical and empirical knowledge, which underlines the contingent nature of international mediation (Bercovitch and Jackson 2009; Zartman 2015).

Some studies have the explicit ambition to prescribe what is considered the most effective strategy of mediation. Based on an appropriate diagnosis of the conflicting situation, mediation strategies can be matched to a specific phase of conflict. Such studies focus more on process than outcome and are reflected in the number of handbooks on conflict analysis and conflict resolution (see, for example, Fisher *et al* 1997; Fisher 2009). They also tend to argue for problem-solving and integrative mediation strategies as a way to resolve conflicts. Other studies underline the need for mediators to act in a specific normative direction where the aim is the promotion of some specific outcomes, such as the satisfaction of human needs or restorative justice (Rigby 2001; Kelman 2004). Finally, empirically oriented studies, which in recent years have come to dominate the field, have shifted the set of research problems away from 'how' (prescription) and 'should' (normative) towards 'why'. The overarching ambition seeks to explain 'why actors behave the way they do without trying to change or moralize about such behavior' (Bercovitch and Gartner 2006: 319). These three strands of research not only reflect the existence of different theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches in the field, but also shed light on the distinct epistemological and ontological assumptions held by scholars about conflict, peace and mediation (Kleiboer 1998).

Since most scholars recognise that international mediation is a contingent practice, where context matters greatly, theoretical generalisations have been limited. The research

field is therefore devoid of grand theorising and focuses instead on generating policy-relevant and middle-range theory, for instance, on strategic interaction, motives, roles, functions, strategies, resources, favouring conditions and outcomes (Bercovitch and Fretter 2007). Key problems that have been addressed by scholars are why mediators are mediating; why adversaries are seeking third party assistance; what are the distinct conditions of mediation; what constitutes successful mediation; to what extent mediation practices are generalisable; what is the appropriate moment to enter as mediator; how distinct mediation strategies can be matched to specific phases of conflict; and how the effectiveness of mediation can be improved.

These research questions have been addressed by the use of a broad range of theoretical applications and methodological approaches. A large number of empirical single case studies and structured focused comparisons have been pursued, but in recent years a noticeable quantitative turn<sup>1</sup> has come to dominate the field where large N-studies and global longitudinal datasets are used to identify generalisable global patterns (see, for example, Bercovitch 2002; Regan and Allan 2006; Greig and Diehl 2012).

### **Key Points**

- Mediation is part of a diplomatic institution that reflects a set of norms and practices.
- The practice and outcome of diplomatic mediation are highly contingent on context.
- The research field is relatively young and focuses on policy-driven and middle-range theories.

## **DIPLOMATIC MODES OF MEDIATION**

There are a large number of typologies for describing mediation strategy and behaviour. One of the most frequently used is the one advanced by Zartman and Touval (1985), who conceptualise mediation strategies

ranging from low to high intervention (see also Bercovitch and Houston 1996: 29–30). With communication-facilitation strategies, a mediator acts as a channel of communication or go-between for the parties, but does not intervene directly in the negotiation process or provide any substance to the negotiating text. Procedural strategies are located where a mediator has more formal control over the negotiation process (agenda, number of meetings, the mediation environment, distribution of information, resources to the parties). The most direct and assertive form of mediation is the use of manipulating strategies where the mediator is heavily involved with the content and substance of the negotiations. A mediator attempts to influence the process by providing incentives, offering rewards and punishments, issuing ultimatums and introducing new proposals.

### ***Principal and pure mediation***

Two approaches, pure and principal mediation, are often mentioned for comparison in the literature (Princen 1992; Beardsley 2011; Heemsbergen and Siniver 2010; Greig and Diehl 2012: 8–9). Principal mediation illuminates the formal and official dimensions of Track 1 mediation, whereas the second also includes the informal and unofficial settings and dynamics (Tracks 1–3). The two modes of mediation highlight distinct understandings about goals, skills, capabilities and strategies.

The analysis of principal mediation draws upon a power-political framework of realism, which underscores the importance attached to leverage and manipulating mediation strategies, which mediators use to influence the parties' preferences towards a negotiating settlement. Leverage and the resources of a mediator are therefore considered more important to bring to the table than striving towards neutrality and impartiality. Moreover, mediators are assumed to have their own interests, agendas and relations

with the parties, which can include allies (Greig and Diehl 2012: 91–2). The rationale leading the parties to accept this type of mediation is often driven by an expectation that principal mediators may be able to transform the bargaining process and affect the distribution of power in their favour. Hence, third-party intervention concerns the direct negotiations between the mediators and the parties and how mediators can utilise a wide range of political, economic and military sources of leverage. Using coercive and rewarding strategies, mediators are assumed to influence the parties' way of framing their gains and losses, which enhances the prospects of a favourable negotiated outcome (Princen 1992: 19–25).

Principal mediation is often applied in the case of deadlock or crisis situations, where hostility and mistrust between the conflicting parties are running high. It is a method mostly considered in conflicts where the parties express low willingness and motivation to negotiate. In such situations, the adversaries tend to stand firm on their original negotiation positions. To persuade the parties of the necessity to compromise, the mediators may therefore use threats and rewards as a mediating tactic. For instance, side-payments may be attached as an inducement to the acceptance of a specific proposal advanced by the mediators. The Camp David negotiations between Israel and Egypt in 1979 are often used to illustrate how a mediator, here the American president Jimmy Carter, was able to persuade the parties to accept a negotiated outcome by attaching material incentives (military and economic aid to Egypt) and security guarantees (to Israel).

In contrast, pure mediation focuses mostly on the ability to persuade and communicate effectively with the negotiating parties. It is a non-coercive form of mediation, which is often applied when conflicting parties express a political willingness to negotiate, but require third-party assistance to reach an agreement. In this capacity, the mediator may suggest various formulae to resolve the

conflict, facilitate a confidential framework and milieu of negotiation that can improve diplomatic channels of communication and (re)frame as well as enable recognition of common interests. Hence, the strength of the mediators reflects their content and process skills of understanding the conflict and the parties' perceptions and concerns (Rubin 2002). For instance, the facilitation of the secret talks between Israel and the PLO in 1992–93 by the Norwegian non-governmental organisation FAFO was primarily centred on providing the parties with a secret negotiation milieu away from the media spotlight and reliable communication channels between the negotiation sessions.

Isak Svensson (2009) has compared these two modes of mediation and found that principal mediators generally outperform pure mediators in achieving peace agreements. Yet, he also underlines that pure mediators tend to be more effective in reaching territorial and political power-sharing provisions. At the same time, such comparison may be less suitable since the two modes of mediation differ greatly in capabilities, goals and interests as well as in the focus of intervention (Princen 1992: 30). First, principal mediation is mostly performed by great and super powers with global objectives and extensive influence in several regions where conflicts take place. In comparison, small states and international organisations, such as the United Nations and Red Cross, primarily tend to hold what is called information and expertise resources and utilise pure mediation strategies because they lack any direct interests in a conflict (Rubin 1992: 265). Second, principal mediation focuses on coercive and rewarding strategies as a way to affect the pay-off structure of a likely outcome of a negotiated agreement. Pure mediation, in contrast, emphasises the need to improve the interaction between the parties through facilitation, communication and problem-solving strategies that can enhance the prospect of win-win outcomes (Fisher 2009). In sum, the two approaches differ in their emphasis on distributive and



integrative dynamics of mediation. As a consequence, impartiality is of much less concern for principal and biased mediators than for pure mediators who strive to interact with the conflicting parties in a more equal manner.

The differences between the two approaches reflect the continuous debates, among practitioners and academics alike, about what kind of resources mediators should utilise during intervention and what relationships they should have with the negotiating parties. Bias challenges in many ways the long-held assumption about impartial mediators as a prerequisite for diplomatic mediation. However, Saadia Touval (1982), in his seminal work, began to question the assumption about impartial mediators. He argues that leverage and the ability to influence the parties' positions are more dependent on the use of the mediator's resources and special relationships with the disputing parties than on holding neutral or impartial ground in practice. Since then Touval's work has triggered a large number of studies and in recent years data sets have been constructed to analyse when biased mediators can be effective (see, for example, Kydd 2003; Svensson 2007).

### **Key Points**

- Diplomatic mediation ranges from low to high forms of intervention.
- Mediation strategies include communication, facilitation, formulation and manipulation of the negotiating parties' preferences.
- There are two dominant and contrasting modes of mediation: principal vs pure mediation.

### **CHALLENGES TO DIPLOMATIC MEDIATION**

Since context and process variables<sup>2</sup> matter greatly, in both theory and practice, I will elaborate on three salient challenges that international mediation faces in contemporary global diplomacy.

### ***Resistance to negotiation and mediation***

The optimism about efficient diplomacy and peace-making following the end of the Cold War has today been replaced by increased pessimism because of the current turmoil in global politics. The repeated but failed attempts at peace mediation in the protracted Syrian civil war provide only one of several illustrations (Aggestam and Dunne, 2016). In many ways, contemporary conflicts seem to defy negotiated settlements. Some argue that we are witnessing new forms and patterns of violence. While interstate wars have been in constant decline over the last century, intrastate wars have waxed and waned unevenly in regions more recently (Kaldor 2012; Themnér and Wallensteen 2013). Others argue that these conflicts defy Western notions of international norms and diplomatic rules (Bercovitch and Jackson 2012: 32). One reason for this may be that a large number of state and non-state actors are involved in them. Deeply contested issues about representation and leadership that are related to international legitimacy need to be resolved before peace negotiations can get started.

Another distinguishing characteristic of contemporary conflicts is that they are highly asymmetrical in power relations as well as in judicial terms since both state and non-state actors are involved. Research points to asymmetry as constituting one major barrier to effective negotiations, since stronger parties are inclined to persist with unilateral military actions while weaker parties tend to strive on an existential commitment to continue with violent resistance (Habeeb 1988; Zartman 1995; Aggestam 2002). As such, powerful parties attempt to impose conditions on weaker actors rather than to negotiate them. Also the discrepancy in expectations of mediation between strong and weak parties tends to lead strong parties to reject or lay down irreconcilable conditions for diplomatic

mediation, whereas weaker parties often make appeals for forceful third-party intervention (Zartman and Rubin 2000; Fixdal 2012a).

At the same time, there are groups, so-called peace spoilers, who are excluded or choose to opt out of the process and thus attempt to derail the peace negotiations (Newman and Richmond 2006; Stedman 1997). This has led a number of scholars to question the traditional modes of diplomacy and mediation. For instance, Mary Kaldor (2012) underlines that peace negotiation and mediation have proved limited at best and counterproductive at worst. She argues that these attempts at elite-based negotiations have generated several unfortunate outcomes where, for instance, mediators have allowed war criminals to participate. Their inclusion has given public legitimacy to individuals who are responsible for serious human rights abuses. Furthermore, the formulae promoted by several international mediators have been based on particularistic grounds, which according to Kaldor inhibit the construction of stability and long-term sustainable settlements.

Finally, a number of the peace agreements that are reached encounter great obstacles in the implementation phase, which impact negatively on the public legitimacy of the peace that is being delivered (Paris 2004). For instance, there are few peace agreements that contain a mandate to enforce the rule of law, so when violence and human rights abuses spill over in the post-agreement phase, the overarching peace process may be at risk (Stedman 2002; see also Kydd and Walter 2002). Consequently, the old dictum of *pacta sunt servanda* (parties are committed to signed agreements) seems to be less adhered to. Because of the lack of prerequisites for diplomatic mediation, some scholars therefore argue that we need to pay much more attention to the notion of timing and the conditions when or when not to intervene in a conflict (Haass 1990).

### ***Timing intervention and defining success***

The quest for timing and the right moment to intervene as a mediator seems to be a perpetual question that both scholars and practitioners have pondered at length because it is closely associated with effective mediation. The seminal work of William Zartman (1986, 1989, 2007) on ripeness of conflict has triggered a large number of studies in the field (see, for example, Aggestam 2005; Greig 2001; Pruitt 2005). He identifies a ripe moment for mediation and negotiation as that of a mutually hurting stalemate (MHS). It relates to a painful and costly deadlock in which the parties have recognised the limits of unilateral strategies and therefore perceive a negotiated settlement as the only way to de-escalate the conflict.

Several scholars have attempted to advance the concept of ripeness both theoretically and empirically (see, for example, Greig and Regan 2008; Walch 2016). The identification of an 'enticing opportunity' (Mitchell 1995) and 'motivational ripeness' (Pruitt 2005) has been suggested, which underlines the importance of perceptions and political willingness among the parties to manage and settle conflict. Still, there is no consensus on what constitutes a ripe moment in conflict and to what extent such a situation can be identified before mediation takes place. Hence, there is a risk of tautology because the concept is closely associated with successful outcomes (Kleiboer 1996). Also a mutually hurting stalemate is less likely to evolve, as Zartman (1995: 9–10) rightly points out, in intrastate and asymmetrical conflicts since stronger parties are inclined to use their power superiority to continue unilateral actions, whereas weaker parties mobilise strength through strongly held commitments to resist domination and exclusion by means of violent struggles.

Closely related to the notion of ripeness and the timing of mediation is the operationalisation of success and failure (Gartner and Melin 2009). A common distinction is made

between subjective and objective definitions (Bercovitch 2002: 17). A subjective approach originates from the perceptions held by mediators and the parties' assessment of third-party intervention. An objective definition focuses on some specific empirical indicators and observable outcomes, such as ceasefire, or partial or comprehensive agreements that are associated with success. Another way of assessing the success and failure of international mediation is to analyse the efficiency of one particular strategy applied to a specific phase of conflict (Bercovitch and Houston 1996). Yet, the risk of such an approach is that it depicts conflict as one-dimensional and linear, and tends to ignore the transformative dynamics and complexities (Lederach 2005). Finally, an alternative understanding of success and failure is to analyse the quality and durability of peace agreements. The implementation phase has gained more attention in recent years (Stedman *et al* 2002), but few studies combine the quality of a mediated peace agreement with durability (Aggestam and Björkdahl 2013; Druckman and Albin 2011; Fixdal 2012b; Wallensteen and Svensson 2014). For instance, to what extent does a mediated peace agreement contribute to negative, positive or durable peace?

### ***Devious objectives and international recognition***

If one challenge for mediators is to get the parties to the table, another concern is the presence of parties who hold devious objectives. Hence, their acceptance of mediation may be less related to willingness to negotiate and compromise than to the fact that internationally sponsored peace negotiations provide opportunities to gain wider legitimacy and recognition as international actors (Richmond 1998; Pillar 1983). Consequently, a major challenge for mediators is how to nurture and sustain good faith negotiations, based on commitment, good intention and willingness to reach a negotiated settlement (Aggestam 2012).

Peace negotiations are often stalled because recognition needs to be resolved before any meaningful progress can be made in the negotiation process. As Oliver Richmond (2006: 68) underlines, non-state actors fight for their lack of recognised status while governments reject claims for proto-political status. The quest for inclusion of a representative leadership or valid spokesperson in the negotiation process is a major hurdle to overcome because one side may withhold recognition as a way to undermine the other side's position or simply because it does not benefit its own long-term interests. Many of the claims to recognition originate from Westphalian norms of diplomatic recognition (visibility), equal sovereignty (respect) and non-interference, which concern the quest for respect and normative expectations of being recognised as member of a community. In this way, recognition is strongly linked to international norms and justice, which if denied may incite violence that is seen as a justified option due to the perceived denial of recognition (Lindemann 2012: 213–14). There are today a growing number of studies in International Relations that focus on the struggle for recognition and its causal linkages to the causes of war and conflict (Lindemann 2010; Lindemann and Ringmar 2012). A number of other studies also problematise such issues as inclusion/exclusion in peace processes (see, for example, Darby 2001; Paffenholz 2014). However, few studies specifically explore the interplay between recognition and diplomatic mediation (Aggestam, 2015).

### ***Key Points***

- Several contemporary conflicts, which are distinguished by highly asymmetrical power relations, seem to defy negotiated and mediated settlements.
- The quest for timing diplomatic mediation is a conundrum that scholars and practitioners have pondered at length.
- A major challenge for a mediator is how to nurture and sustain 'good faith' negotiations.

## NEW STRANDS OF RESEARCH

As discussed above, the study and practice of international mediation is complex and diverse. At the same time, two distinct paradigms have come to dominate the field, namely the power-political and problem-solving. In more recent years, we can also observe a quantitative turn, which has generated a number of useful databases for statistical correlations and regional comparison. Despite the growth of normative and critical perspectives in the discipline of International Relations, with focus on international ethics and human rights in global politics, no similar development has occurred in the study of international mediation (Jones 1999). However, if we are to take the analysis of mediation and the quality of peace agreements seriously, as several scholars argue (Druckman and Albin 2011; Wallensteen and Svensson 2014), the study of international mediation needs to engage more with normative and critical approaches. Its inclusion might move the research agenda forward and spur new creative diplomatic practices of peaceful co-existence as a response to the current global turmoil (Heemsbergen and Siniver 2010; Brigg and Bleiker 2011).

Another lacuna is the absence of any gender analysis in the study of international mediation. Gender studies have expanded greatly in the fields of both International Relations (Steans 2013; Tickner and Sjöberg 2013) and peacebuilding (Porter 2007; Snyder and Stobbe 2011), and they highlight the crucial roles that women can play as peacemakers in civil society. Yet, there are hardly any theoretical and empirical studies on gender and women as international mediators, notwithstanding UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000, which calls for more women as peacemakers in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. The absence is somewhat paradoxical. In peace negotiations, gender roles, norms and practices are particularly salient in times of violent conflict. This may be one plausible reason why women are virtually absent

from peace negotiations and grossly under-represented as mediators since their inclusion would break with rigid gender norms. Despite UN resolution 1325, there are still few women appointed to senior positions even within the UN and regional organisations. With more systematic and theoretically driven studies, research on diplomatic mediation has great potential to make significant contributions, which can move beyond the present state-of-the-art in the field.

## NOTES

- 1 This is reflected in the large number of articles published in the main leading international journals, such as *Journal of Peace Research* and *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- 2 Context variables refer to the characteristics of the parties and the nature of the dispute as well as the mediator. Process variables concern the initiation of mediation, the environment and strategies.

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# Diplomatic Summitry

David Hastings Dunn and Richard Lock-Pullan

Summit diplomacy is the meeting of political leaders at the highest possible level. Although this practice dates back to the earliest days of diplomacy it was rare for the rulers of powerful states to meet in person until the nineteenth century. Now, however, summits are frequent and have superseded many more traditional forms and methods of diplomacy (Eban 1983: 359, Dunn 1996). The diaries of world leaders are now blocked out years in advance for pre-scheduled meetings of various international organisations such as the G20, NATO, Commonwealth and Organization of American States summits.

Until the modern era, summits were difficult to hold because there were huge issues with the logistics of travelling to meet in distant kingdoms. It took Tsar Alexander 11 days to get from Moscow to Vienna for the Congress of 1814 (Zamoyski 2007: 276). Not until 1919 did a US President meet a foreign head of state abroad, when Wilson travelled to the Paris peace conference at the end of the First World War. If logistics were

not prohibitive then the sensitivities of venue were often difficult to manage. Napoleon met Tsar Alexander I after the battle of Friedland in 1807 on a raft placed precisely in the middle of the Niemen River with the doors facing either bank (Chandler 1967: 585–6). There was also the question of the security of the participants. Stalin was not willing to leave territory that he controlled, resulting, famously, in Churchill and Roosevelt travelling thousands of miles for their summit meetings with him during the Second World War. The 2005 G8 Summit took place in the isolated Gleneagles resort in Scotland, showing that the concern with security has resurfaced and been combined with the increasing use of convivial surroundings to aid negotiations.

## THE EVOLUTION OF SUMMITRY

Given the range of problems involved with having a summit of leaders, it is little wonder

that negotiations until the fifteenth century were conducted by correspondence, as Goldstein shows in his history of summitry (1996). If verbal negotiation was required then an emissary could be dispatched, though with such enormous and costly ceremony they were a rare occurrence. Thomas Becket went to Paris in 1158 with a huge retinue (Barlow 1986: 56). On arrival in Paris he had to procure rations for the 1,000 men in his entourage. Little wonder the astonished inhabitants exclaimed 'what a wonderful king he must be to have such a great chancellor!' – precisely the effect Becket and Henry II aimed for. Ambassadors were seen as the representative, indeed the personification, of their sovereign. This meant that their meetings can be seen as 'summit diplomacy by proxy' (Goldstein 1996: 25). These rather intermittent relations stabilised with the development of the residential embassy, firstly amongst the Italian city states and by the end of the sixteenth century across Europe, which led to the gradual establishment of specialised ministries of foreign affairs (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995). By the end of the eighteenth century all the major states possessed such ministries and the centralised state's formalised bureaucracy was the regular channel of communication between states. The art of negotiation became a permanent activity. For extraordinary circumstances, such as the ending of wars, irregular means were still needed.

The seventeenth century congress was the novel mechanism from which the modern summit evolves. The church was the model for this format of handling international disputes as it had had great Ecumenical Councils (325–787 CE) to resolve theological disputes plaguing the Empire (Davis 1983). The conclusions reached were deliberately shaped to bring political stability to Emperor Constantine's areas of responsibility. The aspirations and success of the seven councils gave a model for the diplomats to follow as the format resolved conflicts, generated agreements and norms and provided legal frameworks for future practice.

Before the French Revolution there were ten congresses. All were convened to end wars of a particularly complex nature, allowing the resolution of further issues to be addressed. The 1648 Treaty of Westphalia coming from the linked meetings at Osnabruck and Munster is both the first and the most emblematic, though it was carried out by correspondence. It was the Congress of Ryswyck in 1697 that introduced the round table, though much of the work was done away from it in private talks outside. However, though useful to end wars, the Congresses were too cumbersome for more general settlements, which were dealt with bilaterally through the rapidly developing institutional diplomacy.

The end of the Napoleonic wars saw new diplomatic tools developed as Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, instituted the Congress System. This was to maintain ongoing discussions through regular summits, of which there were eventually four. After Great Britain pulled out, from 1822 the Congress worked through *ad hoc* conferences dealing with matters of international concern, led by residential ambassadors of the Great Powers. The Foreign Minister of the host Country presided. Congresses themselves were used three times – Paris 1856, and Berlin 1878 and 1885. All dealt with complex issues on the periphery of Europe, namely Crimea, the Balkans and Africa. In this period of increased instability, bilateral summitry became far more frequent till the great powers lined up in two blocks at the outbreak of the First World War.

The end of the First World War led to a revival in diplomacy by conference. Rather than relying on diplomats, the democratically elected leaders – rather like the unelected Emperors in the 'Three Emperors League' in 1872, for example – were to meet and settle the issues themselves. The Paris Conference was the 'single greatest mass of summitry in history, with 1141 delegates' (Goldstein 1996: 30). Little wonder Margaret Macmillan sees it as 'the world's government, its court of

appeal and parliament' (Macmillan 2001: 1). President Wilson believed in the force of personal meetings and, incredibly, stayed for all but one of the six months of meetings. French President Poincaré opened the conference as Head of State, but Prime Minister Clemenceau chaired the working sessions. The three Great Power leaders met daily, often morning and evening (Macmillan 2001: 44). Wilson as Head of State did not push for precedence and so the conference marked a greater informality to such meetings – in contrast to the 1699 Congress of Carlowitz, for example, where none were prepared to concede precedence, so four doors were constructed, allowing all the sovereigns to enter the room simultaneously. The presence of Wilson also meant that the language of diplomacy was no longer exclusively French, as now two Great Powers spoke English, so it had dual status, as it still does at the UN today.

Not all summits met with success. The rapidly planned meetings between Hitler and Chamberlain in 1938 have left a legacy to this day (Goldstein and Lukes 1999). The summits were necessary as the mechanism of the League of Nations could not be used. Germany and Italy had left it and the US never joined. Chamberlain relied on personal diplomacy, meeting Hitler at Berchtesgaden, with Hitler's interpreter being the only other person present. It was only at the following meeting at Godesberg that Chamberlain was even accompanied by a British note taker (Gilbert and Gott 1963: 144, 152). It is little wonder that professional diplomats in the modern era have consistently resented the use of summitry as they fear similar diplomatic naivety by political leaders relying on the force of personality over established process.

The increased ease of travel facilitated the growth of summits. Disraeli had travelled by train to Berlin for the Congress of 1878. He went on to use it as a bargaining tool by ordering a special train to be made ready so he could leave prematurely. It worked. An alarmed Bismarck immediately invited him

to dinner to discuss matters (Seton-Watson 1935: 448). The summit meetings with Hitler were notable for being the first time that a Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, flew, marking a new stage in the evolution of summitry. His successor Churchill flew frequently, though the first summit between allies saw him and Roosevelt meeting off the coast of Newfoundland (1941) on warships, a setting reminiscent of earlier leaders' meetings. There was also the novelty of the Atlantic Charter being part of the press release, starting the trend to release conclusions in the final communiqué. Later trilateral meetings took place in Tehran, a territory Stalin controlled, beginning a process of East–West summitry that predated the Cold War and was to be a feature of it from the late 1950s onward, with Reagan and Gorbachev's series of summits in the 1980s culminating with Gorbachev and H.W. Bush's summit in Malta in December 1989, ending the Cold War (Reynolds 2007).

Summitry continues to be used, even though the United Nations provides a forum for negotiations. Great powers turned to it 'only when international problems appeared too intractable or insoluble by other means' (Lauren 1994). In 1950, Churchill spoke of meetings at the highest level and called for a 'parley at the summit', a point reiterated in 1953 after the death of Stalin when he called for a 'summit of nations' to work for peace between the Great Powers (Gilbert 1988: 510, 831). It was the year in which Everest, the highest summit, had been conquered. (Those who prepare the ground for summits are still known as 'sherpas'.) Implicit in this call is an understanding of summitry that, at the highest level, brings together rivals to discuss issues of high politics that have global consequences. Summits of this nature began in 1955 but met infrequently till the 1970s. As the number and purpose of high-level meetings have increased in the post-war period, Churchill's understanding of summitry has become too narrow, as the term now covers a variety of high-level meetings.

### **Key Points**

- Historically, summits were infrequent due to the difficulty of travel and the concerns with security.
- Congresses developed as a means for the Great Powers to manage crises.
- The Paris Conference in 1919 was a turning point, as democratic politics became a model for summit processes.

### **MODERN SUMMITRY**

With the dawn of the nuclear age, a new motive arrived for summit diplomacy, especially as the issue was considered too important to be left to the diplomats. The frequency of summits was initially due, as Churchill envisaged, to the nature of political crises that required a speedy conclusion to grave international questions. Politicians thus became far more involved in the detailed process of international dialogue. As the number of nuclear states proliferated, so did the need for summits to either ease tensions with long term negotiations – SALT I took three years to be agreed – or to address immediate crises, such as between India and Pakistan when tensions reached an apogee as both held nuclear tests in May 1998. The Lahore Summit in 1999, with its resultant declaration, was seen as a watershed agreement, but the following Agra Summit in 2001 failed to reach agreement. However, the atmospherics of the negotiation and engagement were themselves progress in a bitter, nuclear relationship (Baral 2002). Other summits between nuclear powers had more tangible and immediate results, particularly Kosygin and Zhou Enlai's summit in Beijing in 1969, which halted the fighting on their border that had already killed 3,000 troops. They then resumed border negotiations, begun earlier in 1964, and continued them at deputy foreign minister level without much progress till the summit of Gorbachev and Deng Xiaoping in 1989 (Wang 2003: 399–401). New global concerns, such as the environment

and terrorism, are often addressed either by international summits – such as Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and Copenhagen in 2009 – or by hosted summits such as President Obama's 2015 'Summit on Countering Violent Extremism' in the White House.

The increased need for summits has been matched by the declining logistical difficulties of bringing leaders together rapidly. Technology allows summits to be arranged far more swiftly and with the minimum of disruption to other business. Where embassies with ambassadors holding plenipotentiary powers had been established out of necessity rather than choice, the development of air travel collapsed the time required to travel and meet. The development of 'crisis management' as a discrete activity, separate from regular diplomatic dialogue, is also accentuated by this trend. At the emissary level, the 'shuttle diplomacy' of Dulles, Kissinger and Haig are further examples of this trend, as are the contemporary travels of Hilary Clinton and John Kerry.

The developments in communication technology have altered the nature of diplomacy. Over the last two centuries, innovations such as the wireless have allowed faster communication between the embassy and the capital (Nickles 2003) – Kennan's 'Long Telegram' probably the most famous, and the Zimmerman Telegram one of the most dangerous – but it also meant greater centralisation of diplomacy evolving into leaders communicating directly, increasing the contact between leaders and their involvement in foreign policy matters. Being more familiar with the issues and their opposite numbers has also encouraged this growth. Political leaders now regularly bypass formal diplomatic channels. President Carter, for example, happily reached for the telephone to the Prime Minister of the UK or the Chancellor of West Germany, often not even bothering to tell the resident ambassador (Jenkins and Sloman 1985: 129). President George H.W. Bush largely built the international coalition that fought the 1991 Gulf War by extensive

personal diplomacy, conducted largely over the telephone, with numerous heads of government (Freedman and Karsh 1994: 107). The same type of technology allows constant communication between a leader and his delegation and the wider field of advisors back home, something particularly useful for protracted talks.

Summitry has also developed as a consequence of the expansion of the international community with decolonisation, and the regional and international requirements they have generated. The increase of economic and defence issues has been a feature of the post-1945 era. These groupings range from the comprehensive and well established, such as the EU and NATO, to the younger issue-specific Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC). Most groupings are geographical, whilst others, such as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), are single issue, or based round specific identities, such as the Arab League. For such organisations the participation of the heads of government is necessary, thus generating further summits. The EU, with its aspirations towards supra-national sovereignty, points to a further development as the heads of government attend summits in a substantive role, but this leads to a further blurring of the line between foreign and domestic policy. European affairs are now such a central part of domestic policy and politics for European countries that leaving European business in the Foreign Office is, in the words of Tony Blair's Chief of Staff, 'an anachronism' (Powell 2010: 245). Furthermore the annual China–EU summits, attended by the President of China and the Presidents of the Council and the European Commission, show a further stage in the evolution in summitry as a state formally meets and negotiates with a regional multi-national body. China is well ahead of the US in this practice, with, for example, the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation meeting since 2000.

Post-war developments have led to governments being more directly involved in

economic issues, which are increasingly global in nature. President George W. Bush called a summit in November 2008 of the G20 nations, rather than the G8, as the scale of the financial crisis became apparent. Economic management has become part of a more explicit 'global governance' concern of political leaders. Direct commercial diplomacy has also become a growing feature of international politics. Prime Minister David Cameron's visit to China in December 2013 was a trade mission where he met President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang. For this trip he was accompanied by three Secretaries of State, whilst the Foreign Office was only represented at the lower ranked Minister of State level (Gov.uk 2014). The increasing role of governments in business promotion will lead to an ever greater number of bilateral summits, with the continual downgrading of the foreign ministry over the trade department.

As the needs and opportunities for summits increase so does the motive for them. They are very much the product of the democratic age where leaders of avowedly open and accountable governments meet. For domestic purposes, such a meeting has tangible benefits as it gives status as state leaders meet as equals, boosts popularity and generates legitimacy for the leader. Publically, the method of domestic politics with its open debate and negotiated settlements is replicated at the international level. The Paris Conference was the start of the new era as the old formula of the authority of Great Powers in conference became rather awkwardly combined with the American emphasis on consent and the principle of the equality of all parties, in this case states (Otte 2001: 170). The UN is a continuation of this unhappy amalgam. Increasing understanding is also seen as good in its own right and the importance of the 'atmospherics' of the summit cannot be underestimated in its importance for domestic status, especially once television and wider media became dominant in domestic politics. Summits are also opportunities to signal displeasure



for a domestic audience – Japanese Prime Minister Abe and Chinese President Xi were photographed having a very icy handshake in November 2014 when they formally met on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Beijing (BBC 2014). Summits can also exacerbate domestic political problems. When Gorbachev arrived for his summit with Deng Xiaoping in May 1989, tens of thousands of students were in Tiananmen Square protesting against the government. Many were holding banners in support of Gorbachev's reforms (Westad 2012: 426–8).

The problem with relying on a domestic model of open, reasoned debate between leaders is shown most clearly by Chamberlain's Munich meetings, but the tradition continued as with Reagan in 1986 in Reykjavik where the two leaders were unaccompanied and drew up a series of tentative proposals that caused great alarm to the President's foreign policy advisors and NATO ally leaders alike (Williams 1987). This approach and the publicity generated stoked expectations of the superpower leaders that they could individually address the overwhelming concern with war and peace in the world.

There is often a distrust of diplomats by politicians, which encourages them to bypass them and hold summits. For one, professional diplomats had not been quite as successful as they often believed, as they became a byword for caution and inactivity as they awaited instructions from their political masters along laborious communications channels (Eban 1983: 358). Furthermore, diplomats who serve modern political leaders often come from different personal, professional and educational backgrounds. Professional diplomats have linguistic expertise, training and extensive knowledge of the country in which they serve. Politicians, in the main, do not. Ernest Bevin once remarked that the only job he could hold in the Foreign Office was that of Foreign Secretary as he had not passed the requisite exams in history and French (Eban 1983: 366). Margaret Thatcher famously felt that she could not rely on the

'laid back generalists from the Foreign Office – let alone the ministerial muddlers in charge of them' (Thatcher 1993: 464). When dealing with an authoritarian regime, personally meeting the leader makes tremendous sense, but more generally the rising influence of 'political advisors', namely individuals outside of the formal government bureaucracy, leads to leaders themselves taking the initiative and managing the process. These changes sit atop the fault-line that has always existed between politicians and diplomats as to who represents the country best. Political leaders stress the importance of their electoral mandate and that they are more in touch with the wishes and interest of the electorate. There is a deep suspicion among politicians of diplomats going 'native' and being out of touch domestically, having spent so many years abroad. In principle there does not need to be a tension, but in practice there often is. Different political cultures generate different tensions; for example, in 1991 Raymond Seitz was the first professional US diplomat to be appointed Ambassador to the UK; prior to that it had always been an appointment of a political supporter of the President (Seitz 1998). British Prime Ministers have done the reverse, with Jim Callaghan appointing his son-in-law to the Washington embassy and Margaret Thatcher later pulling Nicholas Henderson out of retirement to appoint him to be her man in Washington. The tensions between the political leadership and the diplomatic service have, of course, been further exacerbated by the growth of supra-national diplomatic missions such as the EU's diplomatic service (The European External Action Service, EEAS), a symbolic if not a material challenge to traditional layers of guidance, developing a hybrid form of diplomacy and bringing a further level of tension for national diplomats (Adler-Nissen 2014).

The centralisation of modern politics not only undercuts the role of the diplomat but also weakens the position of the foreign minister. In previous times, delegation of the responsibility for foreign affairs

was willingly given, whereas now the Prime Minister guards it jealously. The tension between Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, and his Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, is a case in point. He complained she continually played 'second fiddle' as well as 'first' (Howe 1994: 394). The tension can lead to the appointing of weaker politicians as Foreign Minister so that the Prime Minister stays in charge, which then becomes a reinforcing cycle. Tony Blair's appointment of Margaret Becket as Foreign Secretary is often suggested as a modern case in point.

### Key Points

- Nuclear weapons and economic issues have created a growing need for summits.
- Improved communications have increased the opportunity for summits.
- The domestication of foreign policy has increased the role of politicians in diplomacy.

## DEFINING SUMMITTRY

The frequency and purposes of summitry, as has been shown, have expanded rapidly from the time of Churchill's call for a summit of great powers. Furthermore, the use of the term in journalism has also broadened to such an extent that there is a need to define the concept rather more closely. Applied in this way, the concept justifies George Ball's criticism that:

Today the word 'summitry' is used without distinction to describe any occasion in which chiefs of state or heads of government get together bilaterally or in large meetings. It has, as a result, become so vague in meaning as to be not only useless but downright misleading. (Ball 1976: 34)

The strength of this point is brought home further when the above definition is applied to exclude telephone conversations between leaders, however substantive, from the category of summits. The rationale for this distinction

was that while telephone conversations might be long and substantive, in content they do not involve the same commitment of political capital and thus political risk, time and energy as of an actual face-to-face meeting. A useful approach is to look in more detail at the actors or agents involved in summits, and the activity that takes place.

Plischke emphasises summitry as an executive practice:

Simply stated it is diplomacy engaged in by political principals above cabinet or ministerial rank, including participations of state, heads of government, a few others who qualify by virtue of their official positions (such as presidents-elect, crown princes, and the ranking officers of international organisations), and certain agents of heads of government who genuinely represent them at their level. (Plischke 1979: 170)

For Plischke the key feature of summitry is the notion of executive agency. As long as they take place explicitly on behalf of the political principal of the state they are summits. There is the difficulty of how far down the chain representation goes. Are ambassadors genuinely engaged in summitry? A way round this is to limit the definition to meetings where there is political presence. But it is not easy to make the division between political and diplomatic in cases where the diplomatic appointment is explicitly political, as with the case of the US ambassadors to the UK and elsewhere already cited. Secondly, there is the additional problem concerning executive agency, in the sense that even heads of government may lack full power as they require domestic political bodies to ratify agreements made at summits, as the separate cases of Brezhnev and Carter negotiating the SALT II Treaty in 1979 shows. Although Carter signed the treaty the US Senate failed to ratify it, so it never had the force of law.

However, a summit is different to other diplomatic or political activity if it involves the primary executive of a state, be they the head of state, the head of government or the leader of the ruling party in appropriate cases, as with

Stalin and Mao who were general secretaries of their respective communist parties. The key element thus becomes the executive participation. They may differ on their ability to deliver on the agreements reached, but by virtue of their position they are not able to be contradicted by any other individual. Summit meetings are thus distinguished by their form of personal contact and the level of the meeting that takes place rather than by the importance of the issues discussed or the results obtained.

Where the head of government is in a dispute that lies outside the constitutional framework, such as a civil war, then a meeting of the leaders of various factions is a summit. An example is the Lancaster House Conference on the future of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia where the negotiations were conducted at the highest level. However, the leadership is not just of states, as leaders of organisations such as NATO, the UN and the EU can also participate in summits with heads of government and state.

Whether bilateral or multilateral meetings of executive leaders, the purpose of the meetings needs addressing, especially as the purpose and nature of summit meetings varies greatly. Prime Minister Edward Heath said that leaders' meetings should be held 'for a specific purpose, agreed beforehand', and that planning them months in advance for 'a general chat, is, in fact, meaningless'. For the scholar, however, the question raised is different: rather, if such a meeting is not purposeful, is it still a summit (Young 2006; Dunn 2007)?

Of course, if the practice of meeting now excludes routine 'courtesy' meetings because they are too burdensome for their relative benefit, it could be argued that this negates the need to define them out of the definition of summitry. In response to such a line, however, it needs to be pointed out that institutional meetings, such as multilateral summits, invariably also involve lots of bilateral meetings that can best be described as 'courtesy' meetings. For their participants, these are seen as valuable for symbolic purposes even if they are devoid of substantive content.

In analysing this, it is not necessary to demonstrate that such 'courtesy' meetings are devoid of worth. They can still be useful without necessarily being defined as summits. Indeed, they clearly still have diplomatic significance, especially for the minor party who often initiates such meetings. Indeed, they are a level and form of bilateral engagement that would be absent was the opportunity not available for such one-to-one contact. They often allow sustained conversations between leaders.

However, if the mere value of meeting another head of government for its own sake is no longer sufficient in and of itself to justify being dignified as a 'summit' meeting, then the term itself may need to be refined. An interesting variation on the definition of summitry is offered by Geoff Berridge and Alan James in *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*. They suggest that summitry is 'The use of meetings of heads of state or government for diplomatic or propaganda purposes' (Berridge and James 2001: 229). Thus the simple act of meeting would not constitute a summit in itself as far as they are concerned; it would need to have an instrumental element.

Defining a summit by the specific activity involved, apart from a face-to-face meeting, is certainly no easy task. How 'purposeful diplomacy' can be defined is obviously not objectively measurable, and what might be purposeful for one party might be trivial for another. Other criteria that might be considered – such as the requirement for advanced preparation, documentation of the meeting, mutual purposefulness, being part of a wider diplomatic process to which they add momentum, occupying a considerable period of time, ranging across a number of interlinked subjects, the summit being the primary motivation for travel, or it simply being a significant international event – all also pose difficulties for a workable definition.

Early summits, as expressed by Churchill, were exceptional as they were substantive, multi-issue meetings that allowed business to

be concluded in a timely and secure manner. This distinction has more recently become rather less clear. With the advent of mass communication, summit 'communication' begins to be indistinguishable from other routine communications between one chief executive's office and another's. For Churchill, the highest level did not just refer to the rank of the individual or the states taking part, but at least in some sense to the highest purpose of statecraft. While this originally also implied gatherings of the Great Powers to discuss matters of war and peace, there is a general acceptance that this was too exclusive a meaning for the term. But should the notion that summits are for purposeful diplomacy also be abandoned?

A useful answer to this question might be to look again at various definitions of summitry and the categories used to think about this notion. In this respect, Berridge's categorisation of summits into regular 'serial summits' which are part of a regular series of meetings; one-off and often specific-issue-focused '*ad hoc* summits' which might be the first of a regular series of meetings; and the shorter, less formal, residual category of 'exchange of views' remains useful (Berridge 1995: 83). That said, these categories are also limited in our exploration of what constitutes summitry, since their primary purpose is the identification of patterns of activity within the practice of such meetings. As such, they are primarily focused on the structural context of the meetings within the diplomacy in which they take place, rather than the significance or otherwise of the encounters.

Young suggests that Berridge's categories can be usefully subdivided, further arguing that 'there needs to be further division between bilateral and multilateral meetings, with multilateral further divided into global and regional' (Young 2006: 285). To this list one might add the further subdivisions of institutionally linked summits – which most, but not all, serial summits are – and further subdivisions for functional, identity or geographic-based meetings. While these are all plausible ways of subdividing the different possible types of

meetings, however, how useful any of these divisions are to our understanding of summitry is another matter. They are certainly of limited value to the actual definition.

It may even be appropriate to develop an entirely new concept, that of 'executive diplomacy' or 'leadership diplomacy', which would incorporate summitry but also include the panoply of diplomatic activities in which political chief executives engage. This would simultaneously remove the excessive and distorting focus on meetings in and of themselves, while at the same time allowing greater consideration of the role of leaders outside the formal confines of summits and in isolation. The use of private audio-visual conferencing technology that now exists between, for example, the UK Prime Minister and the US President needs to be considered in this context, as with the role of personal communication between Prime Minister Blair and President Bush over the run up to the Iraq war. As a result, despite the trend towards greater personal communication through other means, the private face-to-face meeting at the summit may be the only way to ensure the conduct of truly and enduring confidential communication at the highest level on substantive issues.

### Key Points

- Summits have moved from Great Powers addressing substantive issues to leaders of all nations meeting for a wide range of purposes.
- Summits have increasingly become institutionalised.
- 'Executive diplomacy' is increasing as the growing number of international issues are managed by a rapidly centralising domestic political leadership.

### CONCLUSION

The role of heads of government in diplomacy has gone full circle, from the earliest participation of Kings and Princes, through the period of delegated representation to

Ambassadors and diplomats, back to the globally connected ministries and palaces of modern leaders. The result is that modern summitry has re-emerged in the post-war period for a number of interrelated but powerful reasons. Communication technologies and the means of transportation have increased the ability to hold summits, whilst the processes of democratisation and centralisation of foreign policy have shaped their nature, and the increase in the number of states, international organisations and the growing need to address global issues, especially economic ones, have had a particularly large influence on the modern need for summits. The nature and frequency of summits has expanded due to the contraction of diplomatic means concurrent with an increasing volume of international issues. For our purposes the key element of summitry is executive participation in diplomacy at the highest possible level. The growing range of the purposes of these meetings means that a wider understanding of summit activity is needed as high-level diplomacy becomes more dominated by the Executive. In summary, summits are more than confidence building exercises or informative meetings, they are a place of substantial and personal negotiation between state leaders.

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# Diplomatic Language

Donna Marie Oglesby

*Strand One. Strand Two. Strand Three. None of the strands yet set in stone. The incredible weave of language. All the little tassels still hanging down. The tiniest atoms. The poorly tied knots. There is the possibility of an annex. The rumor of a rewrite. The suggestion of a delay.* (Colum McCann, 2013)

## SETTING THE STAGE

Irish novelist Colum McCann (2013, Book One) imagines United States envoy for Northern Ireland George Mitchell suspended between ‘the British and their words’ and ‘the Irish and their endless meanings’ two years into negotiating the 1998 Good Friday Agreement in Belfast. ‘All he wants,’ McCann writes, ‘is to get metal nibs striking against the page.’

The pens that diplomats wield can only be mightier than swords when words are found to bridge the differences between international parties to a dispute. Words span across the divide of contesting interests, intentions

and values creating possibilities for agreement and allegiance. To create authority, words are played like strings to hold the tensions between parties until each resonates to the text at its own native frequency, creating harmony. Because language is a social instrument and diplomacy is, in essence, intercultural political communication, Raymond Cohen (1997) contends that achieving this cultural resonance in the management of international relations requires linguistic agility and other diplomatic skills.

One instrument developed over centuries to overcome the natural dissonance arising from different semantic assumptions and frames of reference expressed in the vernacular languages of varying states is a constructed diplomatic style. Marked by restraint, subdued tone, moderated vocabulary, and ‘refined control over nuances in the meaning of words,’ a Diplomatic Language is one established norm within the transnational diplomatic corps (Stanko, 2001: 44). So strong is the norm of civility among diplomats that an inadvertent

verbal transgression can create an international incident, and an intentional violation sends a pointed message. For example, as Henry Kissinger writes in his book *Diplomacy* (1994), Bismarck succeeded in provoking Napoleon III to declare war simply by editing Prussian King Wilhelm's Ems Dispatch to indicate that the customary courtesies had not been extended to the French envoy and then leaking it to public uproar in France.

Framing and reframing arguments to find the convergent wavelengths, diplomats traditionally engage in a particular diplomatic discourse that G.R. Berridge (2003) characterizes as 'typically mild, euphemistic, and circumlocutory.' Diplomats, above all else, are focused on the process of forming and maintaining relationships with those who manage international relations. The aim, as political philosopher Danielle Allen (2004: 87) writes in *Talking To Strangers*, 'is to develop practices that support vigorous argument about political disagreements by sustaining the relationships that make it worthwhile to argue with others in the first place.'

Without those relationships, diplomats would find it more difficult to achieve their political objectives or manage crises that may arise over time. To keep the channels of communication open even in times of hostility, diplomats require a non-abrasive manner of communicating that lubricates, rounds-off the sharp edges, and creates the space for saving face and creating possibility. In their quest for such a language and their ability over time to construct an arbitrary set of signals, codes and conventions that serve their purpose, theorist Christer Jonsson (2012: 21) considers diplomats to be 'intuitive semioticians.'

Constructed slowly, conscientiously, deliberately, and with great subtlety, the concrete might appear to melt into the abstract, as George Orwell (1946) complains of political speech. Yet, E.T. Hall (1973) would recognize the allusive mode of expression characteristic

of diplomats as typical of high-context communal cultures where dignity and honor must be maintained during constant interaction. More recent scholars would point to the logic of appropriateness as a way to understand the speech codes by which diplomats practice their profession in mutual recognition (Bjola and Kornprobst 2013: 104). More classical scholars like Callieres (as quoted in Sofer, 2007: 35) would recognize the diplomatic habits of self-interested political friendship to be those advocated by Aristotle.

Diplomats, as political actors, are deeply embedded in a social context that privileges careful, controlled and cautious behavior. Their language is an expression of their practice. The fact that a Diplomatic Language, in a sociological sense of shared codes and conventions, has been constructed to moderate official international political speech is one indication that diplomats, wherever they serve, may constitute a global epistemic community with their own expertise and domain of knowledge (Davis Cross, 2007: 225). Their general knowledge of diplomacy is, however, always situated knowledge that derives from and is applied by practice.

Mesopotamian clay tablets may give way to digital texts thumbed by diplomats searching for the right words to end an impasse, but the function of Diplomatic Language is the same throughout time: to lubricate the great and smaller gears enmeshing separated political communities into a single international system. By default, diplomats want to reduce friction and maintain civility in external relationships through continuous dialogue while they represent, negotiate and communicate internationally. Diplomatic Language is therefore an instrument of diplomatic society designed to minimize misunderstandings and miscalculations that give rise to conflict. It is not an end in itself. It does not contain magical incantations with the power to convert war into peace. Nor is it used for internal communication within a government where speech acts are grounded by the weight of shared thought, history and culture.

## Key Points

- Diplomatic Language is instrumental: it was constructed over time to overcome the natural dissonance arising from different semantic assumptions and frames of reference expressed in the vernacular languages of varying states.
- Diplomatic Language is an arbitrary set of signals, codes and conventions that lubricates, rounds off sharp edges, and creates the space for possibility.
- Diplomatic Language is an instrument of international society designed to minimize misunderstandings and miscalculations that give rise to conflict.

## THE BACKSTORY

The first known diplomatic letter was written 4,300 years ago in cuneiform on a baked clay tablet excavated in present day Syria (Podany, 2010). Written in Akkadian, the lingua franca of the Ancient Near East, the diplomatic letter between the King of Ebla and the King of Hamazi in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) demonstrates the essence of diplomatic mis-sives throughout time and place.

At its core, the first known diplomatic letter is a simple bilateral transaction. Kingdom A wants something from kingdom B. That message of want and willingness to give in exchange is written in a lingua franca, a neutral language identified with neither kingdom. Diplomacy makes systematic use of such designated bridge languages to facilitate communication between political communities not sharing a native tongue. In this instance, the lingua franca of the region was Akkadian, which after 2,000 years gave way to Aramaic. In the European system it was Latin and then French. Today, reflecting the dominant power, the world Diplomatic Language is global English.

The kernel of the transactional message in this first known diplomatic letter is encased in stock phrases of comity and good will. Podnany (2010) notes that in accord with kinship terms employed diplomatically at that

time, the word ‘brother’ is used seven times in the brief second millennium BCE text. An emissary who would carry the written message to a most likely illiterate king would have expanded on the message orally in a formal audience according to protocol. The receiving king’s advisor would have interpreted the message into the kingdom’s native language and facilitated an oral exchange of views to be followed by a written reply carried by king B’s emissary back to kingdom A.

What was said might have deviated in nuance from the written messages as the important continuous bilateral dialogue ensued. Potentially provocative or embarrassing communications often remained oral to keep any edges in relationships from being etched in clay. Even written disagreeable messages conveying threat or displeasure would have been delicately woven into the verbal fabric of the lingua franca in ways that could be reworked when passions cooled and needs changed. This pattern, while widespread, was not universal among the ancients given differing cultural and historic contexts. The Greeks had a preference for oration before public assemblies using heralds as diplomatic envoys and conducting negotiations orally. The Chinese, on the other hand, conducted diplomacy primarily by written text in accord with their particular mode of sensibility.

In general, however, shared meanings were constructed by diplomatic use, trial and error as words were translated into and out of the lingua franca. Given the cross-cultural local contexts of international communication, diplomats required sophisticated linguistic skill to ensure that the message sent was the message received in a particular locale. The initiated both constructed and knew the diplomatic code designed to soothe and smooth international relationships grinding through cycles of cooperation and conflict in an ever-expanding international system. The cognoscenti, then as now, know how to read between the lines of constructed Diplomatic Language that purposefully removes affect

and carries softened signals over rougher patches, deeper troughs and higher peaks in the political landscape. They know too the supplementing silent language of gesture and signal integral to the performance of diplomacy on the world stage (Cohen, 1987).

As the brotherhood of kings evolved into a community of states, the diplomatic method solidified, settling on terms, expressions and semantic conventions designed to minimize misunderstanding and maintain orderly discourse. Classical Western diplomatic methods, including the restrained manner of speech of the professionalized diplomatic corps that evolved during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe, were, according to Paul Sharp (2009: 44), ‘all elements of a system that imposed restraints on the conduct of the sovereigns themselves.’

Influenced by Enlightenment thinkers, diplomats saw their role as one of tamping down emotions and contributing reasonableness and rational thought to the process of communication between states. In Sharp’s understanding of the rational tradition, diplomats were civilizing influences both on their sovereigns and the emerging international society. Their restrained linguistic style reflected an understanding of their shared responsibility to make collective decisions to advance and protect the system as a whole, while advancing the interests of their sovereign state. Diplomatic Language reflects the mode by which diplomats both recognize each other and reason together.

Scholars disagree on the effects acquiring an audience has had on Diplomatic Language and whether conference diplomacy has led to the creation of an international public sphere in which deliberation is possible. Informed by her case study of the Concert of Europe in 1814, Jennifer Mitzen (2005: 415, 407) argues: ‘Forum discussion among states mitigates the problem of violence by generating a structure of public reason.’ Assuming a thick notion of international society and publicity, she contends: ‘[Diplomatic] talk in a public forum produces order while keeping

the foundations of that order open to rational debate.’

Other scholars (like linguists Scott, 2001 and Oliver, 2003) argue that the greater the publicity the more the ambiguity in diplomatic speech. The conference diplomacy context, in particular, causes diplomats to code shift from more precise private diplomatic talk, to more ambiguous speech. The linguists’ findings in some way echo the observation by journalist Walter Lippmann (1922: 126), who characterized the ensuing rhetoric as so many hot air balloons:

As you go up in the balloon, you throw more and more concrete objects over board, and when you have reached the top with some phrase like *rights of humanity or the world made safe for democracy*, you may see far and wide but you see very little.

As states democratized, their internal workings became ever more transparent to foreign emissaries. The impulse to speak in the vernacular ‘to the people on the wall’ of Judea from Biblical times, well documented by Cohen (2013: 18), became a practice now known as public diplomacy. Speaking to the galleries over the heads of the players on the diplomatic stage requires a different kind of affect-tinged political speech in the vernacular. Diplomats have to develop a stage voice to complement the clubhouse voice that soothes relationships within the diplomatic community. They also need to share the stage, and the clubhouse, with political actors visiting from the domestic realms who have brought culturally contingent styles usually too hot for the cooling saucer of diplomacy.

## Key Points

- Diplomacy makes systematic use of designated bridge languages, known as *lingua franca*, that facilitate communication between communities not sharing a native tongue.
- Although the essence of Diplomatic Language was constant, the ancients used varying oral and written forms given their different cultural and historic contexts.

- Diplomatic Language reflects the mode by which diplomats both recognize each other and reason together.
- Given the need to speak to the galleries, diplomats have also needed to develop a stage voice to complement the clubhouse voice that soothes relationships within the diplomatic community.

## INGATHERING ON THE STAGE

The rapid expansion in the number of independent states in the latter part of the twentieth century brought a heterogeneous array of countries into the international system of states and diversity into the diplomatic community. Diplomatic Language lubricated the culturally contingent gears of the old and new states comprising the increasingly complex international order. The skin of Diplomatic Language might fit some representatives with difficulty given their own historical, cultural, political and social contexts. Still, new diplomats could acquire the established diplomatic style to smooth their socialization into unfamiliar roles by constant adjustment, learned through interaction with other diplomats.

Even the diplomatic emotional repertoire could be learned by exposure to the corps' embodied emotional displays: its silent language. For example, Cohen (1987: 105–6) maintains that diplomats do not usually display fear, disgust, surprise and sadness because they are too personally revealing. But, he argues, culturally appropriate somatic expressions are used to show agreement, displeasure, equanimity and anger because they can be effective and do not sever political bonds.

Political actors, including diplomats, are socialized into the norms and identities of a community by participation in a 'circulation of affect' (Ross, 2013). Civility is the diplomatic norm, but occasionally, as T.H. Hall (2011: 551–2) reminds us in a US–China case study on the Taiwan Straits, a state may choose to violate the norm and make a point

by expressing a vehement and overt state-level display of anger in response to a perceived insult. On the receiving end of China's orchestrated expressions of indignation, American Ambassador Stapleton Roy diplomatically said, 'What the Chinese response in 1995 did is it restored understanding in the Clinton administration about the sensitivity of this issue.'

The socialization of diverse international players into the United Nations was made possible by using French and English as working languages and recognizing six official languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Given the shifting political demographic, some suggest Spanish, English and Chinese would be more appropriate working languages in this century. As helpful as lingua franca are, the best diplomats know that mastering the native tongues of those with whom they deal is the only sure way of understanding them. As George Steiner (2013: Preface to second edition) reminds us, 'each tongue construes a set of possible worlds and geographies of remembrance.' Less poetically, languages also often lack comparable concepts and words, making translation a diplomatic challenge.

Revolutionary powers that did not share in the collective intentionality of the diplomatic corps could choose to resist co-optation by the matrix and disrupt the process of incorporation. One of the most famous examples of disruption occurred in the 1960 UN General Assembly meeting when Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev banged his shoe on the table in reply to a Philippine assertion that the Soviet Union had 'swallowed up Eastern Europe.' Later Khrushchev was reported to say:

It was such fun! The U.N. is a sort of parliament, you know, where the minority has to make itself known one way or another. We're in the minority for the time being, but not for long. (Romero, 2008)

Sharp (2009) explains this undiplomatic behavior in his discussion of the radical tradition of diplomacy with its intent to liberate and subvert international society from within.



In order to achieve their broader goals, however, diplomatic representatives of revolutionary societies have learned to make full use of diplomatic forms and conventions to protect their sovereignty and advance their interests within the system they intend to transform. Ironically perhaps, while many in the West now find and seek the erosion of state sovereignty as the basis for global society, non-Western states seek refuge in the sovereign equality of states that is the organizing concept of the Westphalian order once imposed on the rest by the West. Diplomatic Language is an instrument suited to that purpose because rhetorical displays of sovereign equity have been constructed.

Reflective of new Western thinking, critical scholar James Der Derian (1987) draws on Foucault and uses the term ‘anti-diplomacy’ to characterize those practices that challenge diplomatic authority by scrutinizing its language and practice. From this alternative genealogical perspective, anti-diplomacy is the ideological and political doppelganger twinned with classic diplomacy at birth. Der Derian (1987: 135) writes, ‘diplomacy is negotiation between states, while anti-diplomacy is propaganda among peoples ... its aim is to transcend all estranged relations.’ A utopian impulse, anti-diplomacy aligns with universalistic forces in counterpoint to the particularistic force field of geographically bound states.

Activists and scholars who believe that the state is the obstacle to be overcome use the grammar of diplomacy to undermine it, precisely because diplomats embody states and organizations created by states. Anti-diplomacy wants to disturb this unjust order, and digital information technology is thought to empower it to do just that (Der Derian, 2009). Language games, designed to jolt the staid status quo, are key to anti-diplomatic practice.

Paradoxically perhaps, practitioner scholar Geoffrey Wiseman (2011) contends that the United States, the current preeminent power in the international system, is itself anti-diplomatic because it wilfully violates diplomatic culture. Wiseman was reflecting on US

‘anti-diplomacy’ prior to the 2003 Iraq War; but a decade earlier in 1991, prior to the first Gulf War, Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz refused a letter from President H.W. Bush demanding that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait to avoid war. President Bush wrote, ‘to eliminate any uncertainty or ambiguity that might exist in your mind about where we stand and what we are prepared to do.’ According to Thomas Friedman (1991) writing in the *New York Times*:

‘I told him I am sorry,’ said Mr. Aziz, ‘I cannot receive such a letter. The language in this letter is not compatible with the language that should be used in correspondences between heads of state. When a head of state writes to another head of state a letter and he really intends to make peace, he should use polite language.’

Much as they’d incline toward the latter, diplomats are tasked with managing relationships of enmity as well as friendship (Bjola and Kornprobst, 2013). Diplomatic Language cannot always be ‘language that sits on the fence’ as Oxford linguist Biljana Scott (2012) defines it. When it does, as Ambassador Glaspie learned from her now infamous conversation with Saddam Hussein prior to the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, there can be unintended consequences. Ambassador April Glaspie had made a perfectly diplomatic statement according to her instructions: ‘[W]e have no opinion on the Arab–Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait.’ Three days later, Iraq invaded Kuwait much to American surprise. Finding verbal formulations to signal deterrence that are both precise and avoid giving offense requires consummate diplomatic skill.

## Key Points

- In the twentieth century, Diplomatic Language lubricated the culturally contingent gears of the old and new states comprising the increasingly complex international order.
- Activists and scholars who believe that the state is the obstacle to be overcome use the grammar of



diplomacy to undermine it by employing language games designed to jolt the staid status quo.

- Diplomats must manage relationships of enmity as well as friendship, and finding verbal formulations to signal deterrence that are both precise and avoid giving offense requires consummate diplomatic skill.

## BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

Indirect though it may be, the best diplomatic verbal construction, like a suspension bridge, is precisely anchored in bedrock on each side. For all its fragile appearance, its strength lies in cabled strands of language supporting the weight of political traffic traveling between and below the textual towers. Whatever the medium, the twisted grass of sixteenth century Incan mountain passes or modern steel, suspension bridge engineers employ the same principles to make them strong yet flexible. So it is with diplomats and their language. Diplomats may speak in the *lingua franca* of the time, through interpreters or in the languages of those whom they wish to engage. Whatever the tongue used, the manner of speech is designed to bridge disagreement and maintain connection through continual interaction in a pluralistic external world that exists independently of diplomatic representations of it. The ‘moorings and constraints’ of external realism and the context of power underlie diplomatic speech even when they seek to transform the way things are through words (Searle 2008: 19).

Words are chosen to be precise enough to communicate clearly to diplomatic interlocutors yet elastic enough to plausibly suggest the alternative meanings the diplomat’s political masters need to manage their domestic politics. If the diplomats engaged in negotiations do not truly represent the parties to the dispute and cannot manage their domestic and alliance politics, the negotiated text will not find the necessary purchase in political reality to succeed in transforming it.

In behavioral terms, Robert D. Putnam (1988: 434) calls this a ‘two level game’ in

which some rhetorical differences and slight openings on one board lead to realignment on the other, enabling achievement of ‘otherwise unattainable objectives.’ In a specific example of the 1980s Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) language game, Gavan Duffy et al. (1998: 271) demonstrate that the superpower parties to the negotiations on INF in Europe eventually transformed a security regime through explicit and implicit discourse that led to a ‘Soviet reconceptualization of the Cold War insecurity dilemma.’

By their habit of using ambiguity to create the space for international agreement and room to maneuver politically at home and abroad, diplomats open themselves to the charge of ‘duplicity and theatrical play’ by critical scholars investigating their threshold practice. Constantinou (1996: 152) compares the liminal, or boundary spanning, practice of the diplomat to the games of the mythological ‘Trickster.’ He expands the metaphor in an insightful discussion of how the patron god Hermes, who is at one ‘a medium, a message, and an interpreter,’ represents diplomatic representations.

Other post-positivist scholars, taking the same linguistic turn, use Diplomatic Language against itself (deconstruct) often making it appear strange and silly. Because diplomacy ‘is a practice where the textual plays a key role’ it attracts Derridean analysis (Neumann 2012: 24). Such critical scholars parody diplomatic discourse because diplomats embody the state in an international system that they contend is thoroughly opaque and unrepresentative of marginalized sectors of global society.

Whether Diplomatic Language civilizes or deceives, as contesting scholars posit, speech act theory advanced by philosopher John R. Searle (2010) would help explain how the international state system beginning in 1648 was linguistically created and linguistically constituted and maintained by diplomats. The international states system exists as a social reality because we believe it exists and we act accordingly. By their accreditation as representatives of sovereign states, diplomats

have had the collectively recognized status to create the reality they represent. As Searle (2010: 84) writes, ‘once you have the capacity to represent, you already have the capacity to create a reality by those representations, a reality that consists in part of representations.’

Searle (2010) is clear that this deontological power only exists when the declarations by those in authority have the double direction of fit: their representations correspond to the world as it is and also are believed to transform it. For example, the creation of the United Nations at the 1945 San Francisco Conference both reflected prevailing power relations and transformed them by creating a venue for institutionalized multilateral diplomacy. Increasingly, most diplomatic speech acts do not fall into that rare category because, given the diffusion of global and regional power and the consequent evaporation of authority, collective acceptance of diplomatic declarations often cannot be achieved.

As the number of sovereign states has grown, many smaller and middle range states can no longer afford resident missions in all recognized states. They use the United Nations as a site of contact with other states, changing the nature of their diplomacy. Indian scholar-diplomat Kishan Rana (2001: 112) points to opportunity cost in effective diplomatic action when, infatuated by words, the Global South waste time and effort in producing a multitude of UN General Assembly resolutions that have little intrinsic value and no legs in the world as it actually is. The UN General Assembly is just one among thirty thousand international organizations of varying significance available to generate the texts that international political actors choose to accept. As international relations theorist Randall Schweller (2014) points out, from this ‘world to word’ forum shopping perspective, representatives of a shifting international system write a multitude of ambiguous agreements that can only reproduce its pluralism.

Still, some idealistic scholars, believing that language creates its own reality, analyze diplomatic speech from an alternative ‘word

to world’ perspective. For example, following a lengthy linguistic and legal comparative analysis between UN resolutions and US congressional documents, Giuseppina Scotto di Carlo (2012) contends that intentional and strategically vague language in UN resolutions contributed to the 2003 Iraq War. Game theorists would not be surprised that ‘deliberately vague UN wording allowed the US to build its own legislation with a personal interpretation implying that the UN did not impede military action’ (2012: 507). Scotto di Carlo, however, believes that had the international community chosen the right binding words ‘there would have been diplomatic solutions to the Iraq crises’ (2012: 508). Such a contention belies the political realities of the United Nations Security Council. Neither the US nor the UK, both permanent members of the UNSC, would have agreed to words preventing the use of force, given the post-9/11 context, because of what they intended to do.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomats choose words to be precise enough to communicate clearly to diplomatic interlocutors yet elastic enough to plausibly suggest the alternative meanings the diplomat’s political masters need to manage their domestic politics.
- Critical scholars, investigating the diplomatic habit of using ambiguity to create the space for international agreement and room to maneuver politically at home and abroad, see in Diplomatic Language proof of ‘duplicity and theatrical play.’
- Speech act theory explains how the international states system was linguistically created and linguistically constituted and maintained by diplomats.

### **EXPANDED CAST, CONTESTED SCRIPTS**

Although questions of war and peace are dramatic, everyday diplomatic practice rarely concerns the need to signal deterrence while reassuring amity on the eve of war. Diplomats

conduct considerable routine business bilaterally and multilaterally. They keep the international watch works moving with small communicative oscillations: oral statements, remarks, speeches and conversations layered with written communiqués, demarches, notes, non-papers, readouts, and press releases. Theirs is a practice of nearly imperceptible verbal adjustments learned by acquired ‘feel’ from the doing. Their verbal craftsmanship requires policy orientation wrapped in political sensitivity, fine-tuned to the local context, nested in the larger regional, and then international, whole. Diplomacy’s elaborate, time-consuming speech-works mechanisms appear as anachronistic as a seventeenth century mechanical watch to those accustomed to electronic movement.

Employing practice theory, I.B. Neumann (2007) conducts a vivisection of the production of a diplomatic speech and pronounces the process within a foreign ministry to be ceremonial, mundane and incapable of creating any daring innovation without political intervention. Neumann’s ethnography raises critical questions about whether Diplomatic Language is a living membrane capable of new feeling and renewal. Or whether, as George Steiner (2013: Chapter 1) writes of dying language systems, ‘it is imprisoned in a linguistic contour which no longer matches, or matches [only] at certain ritual, arbitrary points, the changing landscape of fact.’ It may be that Diplomatic Language conserves, rather than innovates, but it also codifies and summarizes mastery of diplomatic practice. Without the ballast of diplomatic speech, official international political rhetoric could fly out of control and contribute to further disorder.

In the liberal West, political intervention has come by choice, as the democratic states prefer open government with active engagement of private players. It has also come as once domestic policy issues and the political actors who swarm around them push themselves across domestic/foreign boundaries and onto the global stage in search of

solutions to problems that seem borderless. The expansion of international trade, the growth in citizen travel abroad and the intensification of transnational flows, virtually and physically, amplify the work of diplomats by altering the context within which they ply their craft.

In the new global media ecology, diplomatic dialogue has been disrupted and taken on a less scripted, less decorous tone as chirp exchanges between the Russian and American ambassadors to the UN clearly demonstrate (Oglesby, 2014). Diplomats need to adapt to the acceleration of communication enabled by digital technology without losing their sense of purpose: to maintain perpetual systematic relationships with representatives of states and the international organizations created by them, in order to maintain a space for politics in the international political realm. One of the key problems diplomats face in the social media age is the difficulty of calming things down, and moving forward slowly toward consensus, in competition with the roar of 140 character instant reaction.

Significantly, Western diplomats, in particular, conduct their diplomacy in a chaotic environment with a range of actors, from domestic government bureaucracies and private sector entities, who do not share the codes and conventions of Diplomatic Language. The increased use of summit diplomacy also marginalizes the professional diplomatic corps and gives control over speech acts to a different set of political actors (see Chapters 14 and 19 in this Handbook). For all diplomats, the parallel rise in conference diplomacy, according to the late Norman Scott (2001: 153), requires new blends of precision and ambiguity in negotiated texts on a whole range of complex issues. Any diplomatically worded agreement is buttressed by kilos of contesting addenda spelling out what parties to the agreement really mean.

The interface between diplomacy and governance is populated by a range of actors performing in different languages from different

scripts, for different audiences and with varying intent. They both collaborate with diplomats and challenge them as ‘rival centers of authority and legitimacy to the state on a range of economic, environmental and other technical issues’ (Hocking et al., 2012: 34). Many of these voices argue for replacing the instability of interstate politics conducted by diplomats, with a new order grounded in presumed universal principles. They want prescriptive rules drawn from positive law at the international level, technical expertise, or moral imperative.

With the expansion in the scope of international law, particularly human rights law, challenging the plural legal traditions of the various states, lawyers bring in their legal verbal conventions to compete in writing the rules and standards to order international relations (see Chapter 15 in this Handbook). Their purpose is to avoid the equivocal outcomes accepted by diplomats operating politically, and to compel compliance under an international rule of law. Legal rules of appropriateness require a very different prescriptive language that is ‘precise, consistent, obligatory and legally binding’ (March and Olsen, 2009: 21). The European Union is a legally integrated political community and its representatives on the broader global stage, in particular, are accustomed to this shift in both concept and rhetoric. Rising non-Western powers that do not share this experience, and find it threatening to their sovereignty, take refuge in customary and indeterminate Diplomatic Language that respects the right of sovereign difference.

Scientists seeking to inform and influence policies on issues ranging from climate change to nuclear proliferation bring their own language conventions onto the diplomatic field. While suitably formal to diplomatic ears, scientific language insists on terminology with fixed meanings and greater specificity than that customarily used by diplomats. It challenges diplomatic representations of political reality by insisting on scientifically determined objective

knowledge of the real world that presumes to lock in only certain courses of action for international policy consideration. What scientists lack, as James C. Scott (1998) argues, are precisely the practical and political skills required to craft and implement any complex international policy involving cross-cultural social interaction.

Additionally, representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), used to raising public awareness and support through a kind of morally imperative ‘brochure talk,’ chafe at the neutrality of customary Diplomatic Language. ‘Brochure Talk’ is a useful term coined by scholar Sinead Walsh (2014: 14) ‘to describe the way in which practitioners in the aid sector give public relations-type descriptions of their work, as might be read in a brochure’ even though the reality of implementation in the field falls short. Dr Walsh’s exploration of the disjuncture between the ideal and the field reality in NGO speech acts stimulates thinking about the struggles over the representations of reality diplomats will increasingly face as they share the black box theater with a mixed company of actors, and a newly interacting audience, working from contested scripts.

While most actors on the diplomatic stage want to influence global outcomes in the form of international treaties, resolutions and political action, increasingly some use the stage as a springboard to rally their constituents and impact their home domestic politics (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Unlike the diplomatic corps, these political actors have a different purpose and audience, and therefore their language is focused on building and maintaining relationships within an issue network of their specific concern. Their networks may well be global, but they work in issue specific silos within particular languages, as disciplined academics might well understand. They are not focused on maintaining clear channels of communication between states and the organizations created by them as those

of diplomats are. They are therefore less capable than diplomats of finding cross-binding solutions to wicked global problems when they arise.

Rana (2001) contends that Western states dominate the new more public diplomatic discourse with phrases like 'fair trade' and 'social standards' because they are reinvigorated by the supplementing voices of private actors competing to frame issues. 'They are sharper at shaping these [code] words, and in capturing the deeper concepts behind them and therefore seize the high ground in debates' (2001: 112). Writing from a Chinese perspective on interpretations of rule of law concepts, Yang Mingxing agrees, arguing 'international public opinion is a discourse system overwhelmingly dominated by the Western countries' and only by paying careful attention to the interpretation of Chinese concepts in language that resonates with the international community can misunderstanding and suspicion be avoided (Mingxing, 2012: 9). At a Meta level, some scholars (like Steiner, 2013) speculate that computer languages themselves reflect and reinforce this Western, particularly Anglo-American, hegemony.

Journalists covering it all with increasingly fast, bright lights of new information technology dislike bland, decorous, diplomatic discourse that they feel disguises what is really going on behind the scenes. They want words with edges to mark the conflict that provides a hook for stories that make news. In the age of WikiLeaks, the conflict that makes news is consequently sometimes found when candid internal diplomatic reporting is leaked to the public and juxtaposed with official representations composed in Diplomatic Language. The diplomats' intent to create the space for possibility by saying no more and no less than is necessary, while maintaining external relationships in continuous dialogue, is then read by those, unaccustomed to diplomatic practice, as a cunning effort to obfuscate and deceive. Sometimes it is, even if much, much more is going on.

## Key Points

- Diplomats conduct considerable routine business bilaterally and multilaterally with small communicative oscillations: oral statements, remarks, speeches and conversations layered with written communiqués, demarches, notes, non-papers, readouts, and press releases.
- In the new global media ecology, diplomatic dialogue has been disrupted and taken on a less scripted, less decorous tone.
- The interface between diplomacy and governance is populated by a range of actors performing in different languages from different scripts, for different audiences and with varying intent.

## AFTERWORD

For some critics it would seem Diplomatic Language is, like oysters, an acquired taste. They mistake a certain order inducing predictability and regularity in Diplomatic Language with unchanging rigidity. In fact, the speech of diplomats is fluid and variable across time and place because the practice of diplomacy itself adapts to changing local conditions and to the international environment that it has helped create.

Young diplomats, who distend their thumbs in an effort to understand, inform and influence global public opinion through short, fast bursts of digital speech, should cast one wary eye back to the cautionary tale of *The Walrus and the Carpenter*. Remember: the purpose of diplomacy is to engage in vigorous argument about political disagreements by sustaining the relationships needed to order the international system. Remember: the interstate public sphere is a babel of bodies politic not one Public Opinion.

Let's give Lewis Carroll (1871) the final metaphoric word on Diplomatic Language:

'O Oysters,' said the Carpenter,  
'You've had a pleasant run!  
Shall we be trotting home again?'  
But answer came there none –  
And this was scarcely odd, because  
They'd eaten every one.



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PART III

# DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS





# Diplomatic Relations between States

Alan James

## **DISTINCTIONS AND SIGNIFICANCE**

Diplomatic relations must be distinguished from several related phenomena. First, being in diplomatic relations has nothing directly to do with the doctrine of recognition, a distinction which has been particularly muddled by the occasional use of the term 'diplomatic recognition'. When one state 'recognizes' another – which is a unilateral act – what that first state does is formally acknowledge that the other entity possesses the characteristics of sovereign statehood. Theoretically, recognition is a pre-requisite for the establishment of diplomatic relations. But as a practical matter states sometimes associate the two, swiftly following up recognition with the establishment of diplomatic relations, combining the two in a single announcement, or even just letting the establishment of diplomatic relations with a new state carry with it the implicit recognition of that state. But the two are distinct phenomena, as is evident from the fact that a breach of diplomatic

relations does not imply the withdrawal of recognition.

Second, diplomacy – in the sense of the structures and understandings which permit states to conduct relations with each other through the medium of accredited representatives – is not identical with diplomatic relations. Rather, it is (as it were) a step above it. For diplomatic relations is the pre-condition for unhindered diplomacy, the handle which opens the door to the establishment of embassies, both resident and non-resident, to the easy despatch of special missions, and hence to all the activity in which diplomats commonly engage.

Nor, third, is diplomatic relations identical with foreign policy, which is two steps away from diplomatic relations (with diplomacy coming between the two). Foreign policy is the flesh which is put on the procedural bones of diplomacy, the content which is placed in the in-trays of a state's diplomatic missions, which it is the task of that state's diplomats to advance and defend. Nor, fourth, is diplomatic relations identical with the whole

range of inter-state relations. Rather, the latter are chiefly the product of states' cooperative and competing foreign policies – and so are three steps away from diplomatic relations.

States, although commonly spoken of as persons, are not human beings. They cannot communicate with each other in the manner of humans. They are notional persons only. Other notional persons, such as a university, a business corporation or a tiddly-winks club, communicate externally through their official representatives – the vice-chancellor, chief executive officer, chairman (and those subordinate to them). States, too, need to communicate externally, for this is the overwhelming way in which, directly or indirectly, they advance and defend their foreign policies: advising, explaining, urging, bargaining, warning, threatening and so on. To engage in such communication states must, like all notional persons, use official representatives. And as most of a state's external interests and concerns – which generally are multitudinous – impinge in one way or another on those of other states, a system which enables state representatives to communicate regularly with each other is required. That need is met by the diplomatic system, by the world-wide network of embassies and allied arrangements, staffed by a host of diplomats. But to get smooth communication going between any two states a starting motor has to be operated. The engine to power this particular diplomatic relationship has to be brought to life. Diplomatic relations is the requisite key. Only if it is used can a pair of states be on easy and straightforward speaking terms. Hence it is an essential element in the whole inter-state set-up.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomatic relations is distinct from recognition.
- Diplomatic relations is distinct from the day-to-day conduct of diplomacy, from foreign policy, and from inter-state relations.
- Diplomatic relations is the key which opens the door to easy and straightforward inter-state contact.

### **THE VIENNA CONVENTION OF 1961**

During the last 50 years the conduct of relations between sovereign states through the medium of accredited representatives has taken place within an almost universally accepted legal framework, set out in the 1961 Vienna Convention 'on Diplomatic Relations'. It might therefore be supposed that that term has an important and specialized meaning which is defined and elaborated in the Convention. Another supposition would reasonably follow: that writers on diplomatic law and diplomatic practice had paid and would continue to pay close attention to the term. Such assumptions receive support from the fact that states not uncommonly refer to being (or not being) in diplomatic relations. The concept referred to by the term would therefore appear to hold a central place on the diplomatic canvas.

Be that as it may, these suppositions are virtually groundless. The term 'diplomatic relations' is not mentioned in the Vienna Convention's Preamble; nor is it among the nine terms which, because of their appearance in the Convention, are defined in its first article; and only in two of its 53 articles is the term used. Article 2 says that the 'establishment of diplomatic relations ... takes place by consent'; and Article 45 speaks of certain consequences if 'diplomatic relations are broken off'. But neither in these articles nor anywhere else in the Convention is there even a hint as to what the term means. The explanation for this strange state of affairs seems to lie in the decade-long discussions which preceded the Convention. The focus of attention was then generally described as being on 'diplomatic privileges and immunities', and less often on 'diplomatic practice' – both of which are dealt with in some detail in the Convention – with the content of the term 'diplomatic relations' being totally neglected. It was also neglected at the Vienna Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities which negotiated and adopted the Convention. There, following Britain's late discovery that the title of the Conference would not do for that of the Convention, on account of

the indelicacy (in the English text) of the term 'intercourse', the term 'relations' was substituted for it. Possibly the consequential disjunction between the title and the content of the Convention reflected a rush to get it finished; possibly, too, it was taken for granted that 'everyone' knew what 'diplomatic relations' meant.

It may indeed have been the case that diplomats were in this respect fully cognizant. But it has to be said that, judging from a range of earlier twentieth century writing about diplomatic procedures, the term 'diplomatic relations' and its content had made little impact on the wider world, as it receives no prominence at all. Nor does this situation appear to have been altered by the arrival and widespread acceptance of the Convention. For in subsequently published books on diplomatic law which this writer has noted, substantive references to the term are rare, and unaccompanied by any sustained indication of its nature or significance. And when international relations experts wrote on diplomacy they too evidently felt no need to put the term under their microscopes. Certainly, in both authorial categories – and especially the former – the Convention was noted and its provisions received due attention. But it is as if its title was of little independent weight – composed, maybe, only with a view to catching (and not offending) the eye. Can there really be nothing more to it than that? (see also Chapters 15 and 16 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) did not define diplomatic relations.
- Writers on diplomacy appear not to have defined or discussed diplomatic relations.
- Nonetheless the term is frequently used in diplomatic interchanges.

### CONCEPT

Imagine an isolated, self-sufficient village of about 200 dwellings. Each is occupied by a

single family, and at many of them a business of one kind or another is based. The satisfaction of each family's needs and desires, together with the establishment of guidelines about a gamut of village arrangements, necessarily leads to much interaction between the families and their individual members. That is to say, the villagers are on 'speaking terms' with each other. But in the nature of human things, some of their contacts do not go smoothly. There is an undercurrent of competition, and from time to time overt antagonism between certain families, not least neighbouring ones. Occasionally things get to such a pass that one person or family decides not to be on speaking terms with another. In consequence, professional and social contact with the targeted individual or group will henceforth be avoided.

The phrase 'speaking terms' indicates the essence of diplomatic relations. What an instance of such a relationship connotes is that the two states involved have indicated their mutual willingness to engage in direct communication, the routine channel for that communication being their diplomatic services. Hence, when a pair of states has established diplomatic relations there is no formal obstacle to either of them getting in touch with the other, no need for a specific check as to the acceptability of an official contact and the means whereby it is to be executed. The two states may freely relate to each other, they may agree to exchange diplomatic missions, each may express to the other by written or oral means its view about this or that, their representatives may mingle at multilateral assemblies and on social occasions, and the two may establish bilateral legal ties. All such things tend often to happen. Thus, being in diplomatic relations enables states to behave towards one another in what is regarded as the normal international way.

This pattern differs from that in a village in one important respect. In the latter the prevailing, implied assumption is that each member is on speaking terms with all the others. In the international society of states, too, that was



probably the basis on which relations used to be conducted. For until about a century or so ago states tended to have a lot in common, there were not very many of them, and their number was fairly stable. At the same time, multilateral conferences were highly infrequent, the despatch of diplomatic missions by no means automatic, and the transmission of messages between states was time-consuming and arduous. In that context the idea that communication with another state could only occur in the presence of an agreement to do so would have seemed an unnecessary encumbrance. Instead, the concept of being in diplomatic relations essentially connoted nothing more than the despatch to or acceptance from a second state of a resident diplomatic mission; and the absence of such an arrangement was not usually indicative of poor relations between the two. Only if they were at war would that certainly be so, as its outbreak was always accompanied by the hasty (but ordered) departure of any diplomatic missions which the now-hostile states had sent to each other.

However, since the end of the First World War the number of sovereign states has substantially increased, as have the opportunities for them to become busily engaged in diplomatic contact on a variety of fronts. At the same time the ideological and cultural differences between them have become a lot deeper. In this much-changed milieu, the practice emerged of requiring pairs of states who were not in some form of regular diplomatic contact, and who wished to be on speaking terms with each other, to establish 'diplomatic relations' through an agreement to that effect. By no means did this necessarily imply that they were on good terms with each other, and from time to time pairs of states in diplomatic relations get along very badly. Indeed, there is evidence from recent decades to suggest that even the existence of some form of armed conflict between two states is not always seen as requiring a breach of diplomatic relations. Throughout the 1980s, for example, Nicaragua maintained diplomatic

relations with the United States, and a diplomatic mission in Washington, notwithstanding the fact that that state was overtly giving considerable aid to the group which was seeking to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. Even more remarkably, it appears that Iraq maintained a diplomatic mission in Iran for much of the Gulf War between them (1980–1988). Such instances underline the point that the establishment and maintenance of diplomatic relations may connote nothing more than that each party wants to enjoy the convenience of easy communication.

An agreement to establish diplomatic relations may be reached through the good offices of a third party. More usually, however, the two states concerned make a joint decision (although some of the earlier soundings towards that goal might well have involved an intermediary). It may take the form of an exchange of notes between foreign ministers, or between ambassadors stationed in a third state or at an international organization; or there may be a simultaneous announcement in the capitals of the two states; or a communiqué may be issued following a meeting of foreign ministers. Especially in the case of a new state, an existing state can simply announce its willingness to establish diplomatic relations, leaving it to the newcomer to respond positively if it so wishes.

Accordingly, over the past hundred years it has often become possible to give a precise date to the establishment, or re-establishment, of diplomatic relations between a pair of states. But not always. For there is some evidence to suggest that since about the middle of the twentieth century new and smallish states do not always formally establish diplomatic relations with states with which it is improbable that they will have a great deal to do – states, perhaps, which are distant in both a geographical and a political sense. Yet when a state which has chosen to behave in this way comes into contact with one with which it has not formally opened relations – at the United Nations for example – it tends nonetheless to act as if it had in fact done so, and seemingly

is rarely rebuffed. In other words, such a state takes normal diplomatic intercourse for granted unless it has explicitly decided not to have diplomatic relations with a particular country. The writer has been told that the thinly-populated southern African state of Namibia took this approach on its establishment in 1990. This would appear to give rise to a category of diplomatic relations based on an implied rather than a specific agreement. But of course it remains open to a new state to decide that it does not want to be in such a relationship with a particular state. Equally, a state treated in the above-mentioned taken-for-granted manner may reject such an approach, and insist that any establishment of diplomatic relations be done in the orthodox way.

### Key Points

- If two states are in diplomatic relations they are thereby on straightforward speaking terms with each other.
- During the last hundred years it has become common for diplomatic relations to be established through a formal bilateral agreement.
- However, there seem to be cases where agreements to that effect are implied rather than specific.

### MODES

It is often suggested that the establishment of diplomatic relations between two states requires or even consists of the exchange of resident diplomatic missions. Such exchanges do indeed often occur. But it must be emphasized that there is no necessity for the existence of diplomatic relations to be so marked. It may be that only one of the two states concerned will set up a resident mission in the capital of the other, there being no obligation of reciprocity in the matter. And it is not uncommon for neither to do so. Thus in January 2015 there were many states with which the tiny Indian Ocean state of Maldives was in diplomatic relations, but it had resident

diplomatic missions in just ten of them; and in its capital, Male, it received missions from only five. (Maldives also had permanent missions to the United Nations, in both New York and Geneva, and to the European Union.) If, however, a state wishes to establish a mission in the state with which it is in diplomatic relations, it is customary for the proposed receiving state to agree. But the would-be sending state has no legal right to demand the acceptance of a mission, and correspondingly the intended receiving state has no legal obligation to assent to the request.

Where a resident mission is not established, an alternative way of keeping in direct diplomatic touch is through the accreditation by the sending state to the receiving state of a head of mission who is already accredited to and/or ordinarily resident in another state. In this way a non-resident mission is established. These days, its head will almost always hold the rank of ambassador (or, in the case of a mission from one Commonwealth state to another, high commissioner), who may or may not have supporting diplomatic staff. In 2015 Britain had getting on for 50 non-resident diplomatic missions, reflecting the closure in recent years – not least for financial reasons – of a number of resident posts, of which about 150 remain. The United States had in the region of 165 resident embassies, and non-resident diplomatic representation in about two dozen capitals.

A non-resident mission can arise in several ways. In the first place, the individual designated as head of mission may be the sending state's ambassador to a second state – very probably a geographically-convenient one – provided there is no objection to this by either of the two receiving states. And, as happens not infrequently in this kind of situation, an individual ambassador can be accredited non-residentially to more than one state. Secondly, an ambassador to an international organization may also be accredited to a nearby capital, possibly the capital of the state in which the organization is located. A third possibility (although seemingly a rare one) is that an

official of appropriate seniority in the sending state's foreign ministry may be accredited non-residentially to the receiving state.

In any event, what is established in these various circumstances is a non-resident diplomatic mission. And when that non-resident representative is on official business in and in relation to the receiving state, he or she is as much an ambassador as the ones who reside permanently in its capital, and hence receives all the privileges, immunities, and courtesies to which an ambassador is legally and customarily entitled. Furthermore, and again provided the receiving states do not object, some or all of the lesser members of the sending state's mission in another capital or capitals, or to an international organization, may also be designated as members of the sending state's non-resident mission to the receiving state. And they too, when on official business in and in regard to the receiving state, enjoy privileges and immunities which are identical to those held by resident diplomats.

As is hinted by the number of non-resident American and British missions, such missions are more likely to be appointed by larger and wealthier states than smaller and poorer ones. For where a state of the latter sort does not have many interests to advance and protect in a state with which it is in diplomatic relations, it may well decide not to go to the bother and expense of accrediting a non-resident mission to that state. Such a decision is all the more likely where, as may well be the case, the lesser state has no geographically-convenient diplomatic mission, and especially so if the larger state has accredited a mission to the lesser state, as the latter can then use that mission as one way of communicating with the former. However, it is not the ideal diplomatic procedure, as the absence of a representative accredited to the capital of the state to which a message is sent means that it may not be presented in the most advantageous way.

There are four other ways in which a state lacking any kind of diplomatic mission in another state with which it is in diplomatic

relations may communicate with or otherwise protect its interests in that state. First, they may both be represented in the capital of a third state, or both be members of a particular international organization. If that is so, the absent state can use the regular diplomatic contacts which arise in such a location or venue to send both written and verbal messages to the other state. Given that virtually all the world's states are members of the United Nations (in January 2015 there were 193 of them), and also accredit permanent representatives to the Organization, it is probable that most instances of communication between states who are not represented in each other's capitals occur via their missions to that body. Second, it is possible that the absent state has a consulate in the other (consulates are not diplomatic missions), and with the consent of that state the consular mission may be empowered to perform diplomatic acts. This is not a very likely scenario. But if a large number of a state's nationals live and work in another state with which there is little need for regular diplomatic contact, the consular option could come into play.

Third, a state may resort to special missions. At the beginning of the modern international system, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, such missions were the usual means through which diplomatic business was done. But gradually they were edged out by the growth in the number of resident missions, and came to be used almost only on occasions of special ceremonial or substantive significance, such as some weddings and funerals, and the negotiation and signing of certain treaties. However, over the last hundred years, and especially since the end of the Second World War, their number has considerably increased – facilitated, of course, by the speediness of international travel. The advantage taken of this device reflects two further developments. One is the considerable growth in the number of states which do not appoint a large number of resident or even non-resident missions, as such states find special missions particularly

useful when some matter arises which is deemed sufficiently pressing to require direct bilateral attention. The other is the greater complexity of the international agenda, as this often results in expert delegations being despatched from home – by both larger and lesser states – to engage in negotiation.

Finally, there is the use of a ‘protecting power’ – a state which, through its mission in a particular state and with the consent of that state, undertakes to protect the interests (or maybe certain specified interests) in the receiving state of an absent state. In one guise this too can be identified as having existed in the early years of the modern international system. But it is in the latter part of the twentieth century, and in a different context, that a particular form of the device has come into its own – as will be explained later.

### **Key Points**

- Two states in diplomatic relations are not obliged to establish resident diplomatic missions in each other’s capital.
- In the absence of such a mission there are other means of keeping in direct touch.

### **BREACH**

There is no obligation on a state to establish diplomatic relations with another. And, once established, either party to such a relationship can bring it to an end by making an announcement to that specific effect, adding such attendant publicity as it deems fit. Thus a relationship which has to be set up bilaterally can be broken unilaterally. A breach does, however, have consequences for both sides. Most immediately, if the state initiating the breach has a resident diplomatic mission in the state it is targeting, it must be withdrawn, as must any diplomatic mission of the target state in the initiating state. Likewise, any non-resident representation which has been established by either state in

respect of the other must be cancelled. In principle the two states concerned are no longer on speaking terms. It is as if they are boycotting each other.

It follows that in third states the normal type of diplomatic contact will not occur between the missions of two states not in diplomatic relations. In general, the members of the two missions will not communicate or do direct business with each other, or engage in social interchange. Equally, hosts will not knowingly invite the representatives of two states not in diplomatic relations to relatively intimate social events – unless, perhaps, trying to provide an opportunity for the two states’ representatives to talk to each other – nor to larger ones at which a representative of one such state is guest of honour. Should, nonetheless, the representatives of states not in diplomatic relations find themselves together at a small event, or seated near or next to each other at a larger one, it appears that they do not necessarily feel under an obligation to object or leave. Instead, as a matter of courtesy, they may just treat each other as distant colleagues. On other occasions when the representatives of two such states happen to come across each other, a bow of the head might be deemed an appropriate response. However, when relations between the two states are very difficult – and especially if they are fighting each other – it is not unknown for their representatives pointedly to ignore each other.

A somewhat different situation arises in a third state where the doyen of its diplomatic corps represents a state with which one or more of the other states represented there are not in diplomatic relations. In this circumstance a distinction is drawn between the role of the ambassador in question as doyen and as head of a diplomatic mission. When acting as doyen he or she may speak to the representatives of states which are not in diplomatic relations with his or her state. Correspondingly, the representatives of those states may speak to the doyen when he or she is acting in that capacity, and attend meetings of the local corps called and chaired by the doyen.

At international organizations the understandings which prevail in third states regarding contacts between the representatives of two states not in diplomatic relations undergo some relaxation. Thus there is no objection to their representatives being present at the same plenary meeting, sitting on the same committee or sub-committee, addressing each other on such occasions, and working with each other in their common capacity as members of the same body. The actual degree of contact and cooperation which develops, however, will depend on the precise state of political relations between the two states, and to a lesser extent on the personalities of the relevant representatives. But the latter do well to take care. In the 1980s a Foreign Minister's removal from office followed, in point of time, some informal contacts he had had at the United Nations with the Ambassador to the Organization of a state with which the first state was not in diplomatic relations. The reasons for his downfall were extensive and complicated. But his incautious behaviour seems to have been a pretext for his sacking, and was believed by some to have been a substantive factor in the case.

When diplomatic relations have been broken, the initiative for their restoration is expected to come from the state which instituted the breach. In political terms this may be less easy than it sounds, as a state would look, or could be made to look, rather silly if after breaking relations it soon sought to get them back. Heated statements on the occasion of the breach may also prove an obstacle to their resumption. Moreover, once relations have been broken, further problems in the relationship may complicate any move to restore them, even if in themselves such problems might have been unlikely to provoke a breach. A resumption of relations carries a certain symbolism which the actual state of relations may be deemed too fragile to bear, especially if the question of contact with the other state is a source of lively domestic controversy. Thus it is possible that a pair of states may find themselves not

in diplomatic relations for a long while. A notable instance is that of Cuba and the United States, the latter having broken off diplomatic relations in 1961, creating a situation which lasted until 2015. A breach of diplomatic relations does not necessarily mean that the states concerned are unable to get in touch (as will be seen below). But any moves or arrangements towards that end may well encounter difficulties – thus signifying the absence of a normal diplomatic relationship.

### **Key Points**

- Either of a pair of states in diplomatic relations may terminate that relationship.
- Such an act has repercussions where both such states are represented in third states and – although to a lesser degree – in international organizations.
- The initiative for the resumption of diplomatic relations is expected to come from the state which terminated them.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

It has been mentioned that the absence of diplomatic relations does not mean that there cannot be any kind of contact between the two states concerned. In these circumstances there are a number of ways in which such a state may communicate with the other – provided always that both agree to ignore the restrictions which customarily apply to states in their situation. The first four are counterparts to the devices which a state in diplomatic relations with another may use when it has not accredited either a resident or a non-resident mission to the second state. First, communication could occur, probably through an intermediary (at least in the first instance), in the capital of a third state where both states have diplomatic missions. A well-known example of this tactic is the on and off talks which went on in Warsaw in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s between the ambassadors of China and the United States

to Poland. In terms of hard outcomes they achieved very little, but they were a valuable point of contact between two states whose relations were often at a critical juncture. (Such contacts could also, of course, be arranged anywhere, and the Warsaw meetings were in fact a continuation of talks in Geneva between conveniently-located ambassadors.) Likewise, meetings can be arranged at the headquarters of an international organization to which both belong, either through their permanent missions to the organization or their delegations to its plenary meetings – although here it is possible that if an intermediary is involved he or she may be a senior member of the organization's secretariat. Furthermore, at a locale in which two such states are represented it is always possible for them to make informal contact, maybe with intent but maybe, too, in an entirely accidental way. (At a serious stage of the Cold War, there was what was said to be a fortuitous and fruitful meeting in a gentlemen's lavatory at the United Nations between the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States – admittedly states in diplomatic relations, but ones then having very little to do with each other.) Second, as two states not in diplomatic relations may at the same time be or remain in consular relations, a state with a consulate in another could use it to transmit a message to that state. Third, a special mission could be sent, perhaps a relatively high-powered one, possibly despatched to discuss the establishment or re-establishment of diplomatic relations.

Fourth, the device of the protecting power could be brought into play, nowadays probably through its offshoot, the 'interests section'. Especially where a breach of diplomatic relations occurs between states which had had a lot to do with each other, the traditional protecting power relationship can be less than satisfactory. The protecting power may well find it onerous, and the protected power probably itches to have a more direct role in safeguarding its interests. This led, in the mid-1960s, to the emergence of the

interests section: the presence as part of a protecting power's embassy (but not necessarily in the same building) of diplomatic personnel from the protected state's foreign ministry. And where it suited all concerned – the receiving state, the protecting state and the protected state – some interests sections came to act almost as if they were independent embassies. A good instance of this is the United States interests section in Cuba, which within two years of its establishment in 1977 had become the largest non-Communist diplomatic mission in Havana, dwarfing its 'parent' entity, the Swiss embassy. Occasionally it even happened that its head walked out of meetings at which the United States was insulted, notwithstanding the fact that his technical superior, the Swiss Ambassador, remained seated.

Additionally, there are three, formally non-diplomatic, ways in which states not in diplomatic relations may make contact with each other. First, one party may, with the receiving state's consent, establish in the latter's capital a mission which is not of the sort referred to in the Vienna Convention. In 1990, for example, China and Israel exchanged supposedly non-diplomatic offices, China's being termed a travel agency and Israel's a liaison office of her Academy of Sciences and Humanities. A popular name for such an arrangement is 'representative office'. It is also a device which may be used by a sending entity whose claim to sovereign statehood has not been recognized by the receiving state. In either circumstance, if the receiving state does not object such a mission may, in the manner of some interests sections, come to behave rather as if it were a fully-fledged embassy.

Second, states not in diplomatic relations – particularly contiguous ones – may set up formally non-diplomatic local arrangements to deal with continuing bilateral issues. East and West Germany did so in the 1950s and 1960s. Cyprus and the (unrecognized) state of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus have for a long time cooperated in the solution of problems regarding the supply



of electricity and water from one part of the island to another. And it is even the case that there has been some ongoing cooperation between the intelligence services of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. Such devices can, of course, be used as a means of communicating on broader matters than their outwardly technical remit.

Finally, there is what has become known as ‘signalling’ (which may also be used by states already in diplomatic relations, especially when their political relationship is poor). Typically, this may consist of subtle hints dropped in leaders’ speeches, which is one reason why such statements are closely scrutinized for any unusual nuances or emphases. A signal may also be given by a change in voting behaviour on a matter which regularly comes before the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is then up to the state to which the signal is directed to decide whether to make a positive response, possibly with a signal of its own.

### **Key Point**

- If two states not in diplomatic relations both wish it, contact can be made and maintained in various ways, through both regular diplomatic personnel and by way of formally non-diplomatic devices.

## **CONCLUSION**

The variety and ingenuity of the arrangements discussed in the last section must not lead to the assumption that it matters little whether or not two states are in diplomatic relations. The value of this device, like any established practice (such as one enjoined by protocol), is that it enables those to whom it applies to know exactly where they stand on the matter in question, in that each participant knows what behaviour will be entirely acceptable (or unacceptable) to the others and, by the same token, what behaviour can

be expected (or not expected) from them. Reliable assumptions can be made about how all concerned will proceed. This is particularly important for states, in that it more or less ensures uniformity of conduct by and towards their numerous and geographically-scattered official representatives.

The last remark points to the crucial difference, in this regard, between the contemporary society of states and a village of about two hundred families. Communication in the latter is simply a matter of one individual (or the members of one family) speaking to another face-to-face. If any one individual or family is not on speaking terms with another, that will quickly become obvious. But in a world where foreign services employ from less than a hundred to many thousand of individuals, where states’ foreign postings number between a handful and approaching a couple of hundred, where there is an abundance of inter-state organizations, and a multitude of ad hoc inter-state meetings and conferences, resulting in almost an infinity of face-to-face contacts in a highly protocol-conscious environment, it is very important that precise knowledge about who is on speaking terms with whom, and who is not, should be generally available. In other words, some such device as that offered by the concept of diplomatic relations is definitely needed.

In its absence, states would find that even the mere making of diplomatic contact would not necessarily be smooth and straightforward. And ongoing contact would take place within an uncertain and therefore messy procedural context. Obstacles to easy communication would appear. But the universal adoption of the concept of being in diplomatic relations enables day-to-day interactions to occur without let or hindrance between those who enjoy this relationship – which is its whole point. If the concept did not exist, it – or something exceedingly like it – would almost certainly have to be invented. It is indeed the rock on which the whole inter-state diplomatic system is built (see also Chapters 4–6, 12–14 and 53 in this Handbook).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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# Great Power Diplomacy

Cornelia Navari

## DEFINITIONS

A Great Power is a sovereign state that exerts influence on a global scale. Great Powers possess military and economic strength, as well as diplomatic and ‘soft’ power sufficient to cause minor powers to consider the positions of Great Powers before taking actions of their own. They have dominated the peace conferences following major wars, and assumed ‘special rights and obligations in any formal machinery created to preserve international peace and security’ (Berridge and Lloyd, 2012: 172). Great Powers may consider themselves, and are expected by others, to ‘demonstrate resolve’ or ‘reassure allies’ or ‘protect credibility’ or ‘show leadership’ and to have special responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and stability. A viable peace system has been identified by Gordon Craig and Alexander George as requiring agreement among a majority of states on its major aims and objectives, a framework of norms, rules, procedures and institutions and

the availability of a great power structure to channel agreements, and to back up agreements (Craig and George, 1995: 285–287). The *Brahimi Report of the Panel on UN Peace Operations* in 2000 stressed the importance of ‘great power resources’ to peace-keeping.

The term ‘great power’ entered the formal language of diplomacy during the peace negotiations to end the Napoleonic Wars. Lord Castlereagh, the British Foreign Secretary, first used it in a diplomatic context in a letter of February 13, 1814: ‘It affords me great satisfaction to acquaint you that there is every prospect of the Congress terminating with a general accord and Guarantee between the Great powers of Europe, with a determination to support the arrangement agreed upon ...’ (Webster, 1931: 307). Their formal position was anticipated in the 1815 Treaty of Chaumont, intended to turn the quadruple alliance of Britain, Prussia, Russia and Austria-Hungary into a long-standing alliance in the event that France rejected their peace terms. (Each agreed to put 150,000

soldiers in the field against France and to guarantee the European peace against French aggression for twenty years.) It was extended by the 1818 Treaty of Aix la Chapelle guaranteeing the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna, which contained a secret protocol confirming the Quadruple Alliance and a public declaration of the intention of the powers to maintain their union 'strengthened by the ties of Christian brotherhood' whose object was the 'preservation of peace on the basis of respect for treaties', to which France was invited to adhere (Philips, 1920: 176–9). This was the formal basis of the Concert of Europe, which met periodically through the rest of the century whenever the provisions of the Vienna Treaty were threatened or needed adjustment.

Of the five original Great Powers recognized at the Congress of Vienna, only France and the United Kingdom have maintained that status continuously. Prussia (as part of the newly formed German state) experienced continued economic growth and political power but fell out of the rank with Germany's defeat and division in 1944. Russia and Austria-Hungary stagnated. At the same time, largely through the process of industrialization, Japan emerged as a great power after the Meiji Restoration and the United States after its civil war, both of which had been minor powers in 1815. By the dawn of the twentieth century the balance of world power had changed substantially, represented by the Eight Nation Alliance, a belligerent alliance against the Boxer Rebellion in China. Formed in 1900, it consisted of the five Congress powers plus Italy, Japan, and the United States, indicating the Great Powers at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The power wielded by Great Powers is variously identified in terms of both 'inputs' and 'outputs'. On the output side, note the historian A.J.P. Taylor (1954: xxiv): 'The test of a great power is the test of strength for war.' A recent discussion of US–China relations associates US 'great power' in peacetime with its alliances, its trade relationships and the deployments of US forces

abroad. The *European Geostrategy* website calls for 'a wide international footprint and [the] means to reach most geopolitical theatres, particularly the Middle East, South-East Asia, East Asia, Africa and South America' (Rogers et al., 2014). On the input side, the classic 'list' established by Organski in 1958 is military, economic and political capacity (Organski, 1958). Kenneth Waltz, the founder of the neorealist theory of international relations, elaborated these in terms of five sources of power: population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, political stability and competence, and military strength (Waltz 1979: 131). The states that have the 'most' of these relative to others will be candidates for great power status.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

In practice, great power diplomacy first took the form of an on-going alignment between Russia, Prussia and Austria-Hungary to control post-Napoleonic revolutionary efforts, taking advantage of the 'congress system'. At Aix, Russia's Alexander I, urging 'collective security', had suggested the idea of an 'international' (in reality joint) military force that would be available to suppress revolutions wherever they appeared. The British foreign minister Viscount Castlereagh vehemently opposed the idea but could not prevent the others going ahead. At the Congress of Troppau in 1820, called by Metternich to forestall the collapse of the government of Naples, Austria, Prussia and Russia insisted on restoring the king of Naples. The Congress of Verona, 1822, called again by Metternich in reaction to the weakening position of the Bourbon government in Spain and the growing activism of Greek nationalists against the Ottoman Empire, allowed France to send an army into Spain to suppress the revolt, following which Britain (represented by Canning) withdrew. Only Austria, Prussia and Russia met at St Petersburg in 1825, the date

usually used to mark the end of any prospect of a wider collaboration on Metternich's terms.

But the Great Powers continued to meet, and to agree on the management of some of Europe's most critical affairs. In 1827, three (Britain, France and Russia) joined in the Battle of Navarino to defeat an Ottoman fleet threatening to put down Greek rebels. At meetings in London in 1830, 1832 and 1838–39, Britain and France secured agreement on independence for Greece and Belgium (in 1830 and 1831). In 1840, the powers (except France) intervened in defence of the Ottoman Empire (despite their previous support for Greek independence) to end Egypt's eight-year occupation of Syria. They fell out over Russia's claims of a protectorate over Christians in the Ottoman Empire, leading to the Crimean War (1854–56), in which Britain and France confronted Russia; they also fell out over the claims of nationalism leading to the Italian War of Independence (1859, also called the Franco-Austrian War), the Austro-Prussian War (1866) and the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71). But concerting did not die out.

The 1878 Congress of Berlin, called by the German chancellor Bismarck to settle questions raised by the Russian victory in the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78) was the high point since Vienna. It established a committee to oversee the finances of the Ottoman Empire, in debt to the European Powers, and ceded Cyprus to Great Britain, Bosnia to Austria, and recognized Montenegro, Serbia and Romania as independent states. The 1888 Congress of Berlin, again called by Bismarck, this time to sort out rival claims over the Congo basin, laid down the rules that would govern the European conquest of Africa. After signing the Berlin Act, a colonial power could no longer raise a flag on the African coast and claim everything that lay behind it. Instead, it had to physically back its claim with troops, missionaries, merchants and even railroads. Britain got most of what it wanted – European recognition of its claim in Egypt. Freedom of navigation was

established on the Niger and Congo Rivers, but it endorsed France's pre-eminent position along the Congo River, 'compensating' Britain by recognizing Britain's dominant position on the Lower and Middle Niger. Germany also emerged as a major winner – with little previous presence in Africa, the Congress ratified Bismarck's declaration of a protectorate over the East African territory that would become Tanganyika, confirming Germany as a major player in international affairs.

Concerting suffered a halt as the rival alliances that would fight the First World War took shape. Bismarck worked the German–Austro-Hungarian Alliance in 1879; France allied with Russia in 1894. Britain held out, hoping to act as the balancer to keep the peace, but its hesitancy may have actually encouraged Germany to mobilize, and it was finally forced to declare war on France's side to prevent a German hegemony in Europe. In the event, the destructiveness of that war and its catastrophic political consequences – the dissolution of the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires, and the Russian revolution – produced the idea of 'the war to end all wars' and a movement for a 'league of peace'. The idea was taken up by the United States: on January 8, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson enumerated the last of his Fourteen Points to Congress, calling for a 'general association of nations ... formed on the basis of covenants designed to create mutual guarantees of the political independence and territorial integrity of States, large and small equally'. Both Britain and France seized on the idea to continue allied collaboration into the interwar period, raising schemes for a council of great powers that would revive, legalize and make permanent a concert of powers.

The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, commissioned the first official report in early 1918, drafted by the Phillimore committee. Drawing on the experience of the Concert, it initially aimed to limit a league to the victorious powers. It proposed a conference

of allied states that, in the words of historian Mark Jarrett, 'might have been taken straight out of the Quadruple alliance' – holding its meetings as occasion required (Jarrett 2013: 370). The French drafted a much more far-reaching proposal in June of that year, advocating annual meetings of a council to settle all disputes, as well as a true international army to enforce its decisions. Neither idea was welcomed by the United States, following which, in November, Lord Robert Cecil, a member of the Phillimore commission, put forward a compromise that would form the blueprint of the eventual League of Nations. Drafted by Jan Smuts (prime minister of South Africa and a prominent Commonwealth statesman), the relevant articles proposed a permanent council of great powers to serve with a non-permanent selection of minor states. The League would be made up of a General Assembly (representing all member states), an Executive Council (with permanent membership limited to major powers) and a permanent secretariat. The Council's first four permanent members were Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan. (The first four non-permanent members, elected by the Assembly for a three-year term, were Belgium, Brazil, Greece and Spain.) The League held its first meeting at Executive Council level in Paris on January 16, 1920, six days after the Versailles Treaty and the Covenant of the League of Nations had come into force.

But unlike the Concert, the League Council had few clearly defined responsibilities. The Concert powers had pledged to maintain the Vienna Treaty, and by implication common agreement on any changes, with the promise of military action if any broke the agreement. But the powers at Versailles refused to guarantee the provisions of the Versailles Treaty, much less promise military action, while the treaty became subject to multiple claims for adjustment, not least on the part of the Great Powers themselves. The Locarno Pact of 1926 secured Germany's western borders but did not touch the question of its eastern borders, where Germany had ambitions

in relation to Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well as the aim of overturning the peace terms. Britain and France fell out over the demilitarization of Germany and the exploitation of the Ruhr basin. America and France fell out over the terms of the Dawes plan for financing German reparations. None agreed on the general aims of concerting or on the basic norms of international conduct.

Some common rules promised to emerge. In 1921, US Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes invited nine nations to Washington to discuss naval reductions and the situation in the Far East. Three major treaties emerged out of the Washington Conference. The first set a ratio for how far the four League powers and the United States could set their naval strength; by the terms of the second, the United States, France, Britain and Japan agreed to consult with each other in the event of a future crisis in East Asia before taking action. A nine-power treaty promised that each of the signatories – the United States, Britain, Japan, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal and China – would respect the territorial integrity of China while recognizing Japanese dominance in Manchuria. But none of the treaties provided for any reinsurance and called only for consultations. It was also clear that Japan did not look upon the treaties as curbing its aspirations in the Pacific. Both Italy and Japan embarked on imperial adventures, in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and Germany began a rearmament program in 1935, their respective ambitions forming the basis of the Axis bloc and a joint determination on war to protect their gains.

In 1944, in a work written just as the Second World War was closing, William T.R. Fox coined the term 'superpower' to characterize the three powers that were securing victory over Germany, famously Britain, Soviet Russia and the United States (Fox, 1944). Defeated, under occupation, with their economies in ruins, Germany and Japan fell out of the ranking. As for France and China, they had been defeated victims of war, qualifying



their positions as Great Powers, but each had considerable potential weight and would be invited to join the 'superpowers' in essential aspects of peace-making. At the Yalta conference in February 1945, the three set the terms for post-war collaboration, including permanent association in a United Nations organization and an invitation to China to join them (US president Roosevelt's idea). They also offered France an occupation zone in Germany, the forerunner of its eventual placement on the Security Council, urged by the British Prime Minister Churchill. (France under General de Gaulle would turn all its efforts in the post-war period toward confirming its seat at 'the top table', including acquiring a nuclear capability.) They also agreed central aspects of how they would work together, including the limits of the veto power that had been insisted upon by Soviet leader Stalin.

The 'United Nations' was originally the official term for the Allies; to join, countries had to sign the 1941 Declaration of the United Nations, drafted by President Roosevelt, and to declare war on the Axis. The 1945 San Francisco conference convened to draft the UN Charter was open only to states that had declared war (46 did, some retroactively). Stalin had accepted the idea of a United Nations organization at the 1943 Moscow Conference (in return for promises on opening a 'second front' in the war). The basic structure was determined by the superpowers and China, whose representative met at the Dumbarton Oaks Conference from August to October 1944 in Washington, DC, the final powers of the Security Council to be agreed at Yalta. The new format was to be a League of Nations with teeth. There was to be a General Assembly, but denuded of all power to inhibit Great Power action; there was to be a Security Council of eleven members, five of which were to be permanent – besides the three superpowers it would include China and France. Together, they had the power to determine aggression and threats to the peace and to act in the event of either, and there was

provision to raise an army. Each had a veto over final resolutions, but none could prevent discussion. A position of Secretary General was created, empowered to call the attention of the Security Council to potential threats to the peace. Responsibility for preventing future war was conferred upon the Great Powers by all signatories to the Charter, giving them a legal as well as political responsibility for the management of international order, which they were to have in perpetuity. Gerry Simpson has characterized the new system as 'legalised hegemony', which he defines as:

The existence within an international society of a powerful elite of states whose superior status is recognized by minor powers as a political fact giving rise to the existence of certain constitutional privileges, rights and duties and whose relations with each other are defined by adherence to a rough principle of sovereign equality. (Simpson, 2004: 68)

Peace treaties have been a permanent instrument of great power diplomacy since the modern period, setting the architecture of each 'post-war' settlement, whose terms become potential diplomatic assets. So, for example, the 'interim peace' with Germany that ended the Second World War in Europe placed Germany under the constraint of four-power control, relieving France of the burden of containing Germany alone or dependent on uncertain allies. Directing a peace process is a major objective of great power diplomacy, and France was noted for its success in achieving the status of one of the four occupying powers of Germany after the Second World War.

Participation generally demands strategic contribution to the enemy's defeat. The latter involves more than feet on the ground or control of the skies, and may include variously, and with reference to specific context, market power, financial resources, geographical access and governing capacity. France gained a position on the Control Council, despite its defeat, because its large material and political capacity would be required to contain

Germany in the future. There is also fungibility, the ability to turn one sort of resource into other resources. America has retained its role as pre-eminent Great Power since the Second World War, and continues to dominate the terms of peace processes, not only because it is a large power with plenty of resources, but because it is able to quickly turn one relevant power asset into others.

### ***United States***

In the immediate post-war period, the critical aspect of America's power was its financial capability. Despite the highest national debt in its history, a rapid post-war recovery provided it with financial resources at a time when its debt-ridden European allies' economies were in ruins and when they had no resources for reconstruction or to reward their citizens for their war-time efforts (or face a feared social upheaval) – Britain in particular was desperate for the post-war loan that would allow it to begin reconstruction. The distribution of Marshall Aid credits to fourteen European countries plus Turkey was one of the main instruments ensuring their cooperation in the process of confronting an increasingly intractable Soviet Union.

'Dollar diplomacy' was initiated by President Taft in the form of private bank lending, primarily to Latin America to encourage capitalist development during the 1920s and 1930s. It was overtaken by the official issuing of credits through the State and Commerce Departments who administered Marshall Aid, which in turn was eventually overtaken by the Treasury Department, who administer economic sanctions. The first Cold War sanctions imposed by the United States were against North Korea in 1950, as a prelude to the Korean War; the second and long standing were against Cuba in 1960 to isolate Central America from the contagious effects of the Cuban Revolution, and against Iran in 1979 in response to the Iranian Revolution.

'Atomic diplomacy' refers to attempts to use the threat of nuclear warfare to achieve diplomatic goals. After the first successful test of the atomic bomb in 1945, US officials considered the potential non-military benefits that could be derived from the American nuclear monopoly. In the event, the US possession did not soften Soviet resistance to American proposals for free elections in Eastern Europe or reduce Soviet control over the Balkans. But the fact of the nuclear bomb was useful in ensuring that Western Europe would rely on the United States to guarantee its security rather than seeking an accommodation with the Soviet Union, because it could protect the region by placing it under the American 'nuclear umbrella'. The US insistence on hegemony in the occupation and rehabilitation of Japan also stemmed in part from the confidence of being the sole nuclear power and in part from what that nuclear power had gained: Japan's total surrender to US forces. But the US nuclear monopoly was not of long duration; the Soviet Union successfully exploded its first atomic bomb in 1949, the United Kingdom in 1952, France in 1960 and the People's Republic of China in 1964.

By contrast, its conventional military capability has proved of enduring relevance. The largest military spender though the entire of the period since the Second World War, at the height of the Cold War the United States had military alliances with over 100 countries aimed to 'contain' the Soviet Union and limit its or its Chinese ally's potential for political and/or military movement. The alliances channelled military aid to defence ministries, encouraging military-backed anti-communist governments and ensured adherence to America's Cold War goals. The policy of containment evolved to entail military and covert interventions across wide areas of the globe, wherever 'credibility' was challenged. Expected to decline in significance with the collapse of the Soviet Union, its military has been repeatedly called upon in the post-Soviet period, first in securing Bosnia from

being divided between Serbia and Croatia in the wars that followed the dissolution of Yugoslavia; in the Iraq Wars of 1991 and 2003 to push Iraq out of Kuwait and to unseat Iraq's tyrannical president Saddam Hussein; in Afghanistan to defeat the Taliban; in Libya to secure the resistance to Colonel Qaddafi; and in coercive diplomacy against Syria from 2013. The Obama administration's decision to fly B-52s through the air defence identification zone announced by China in 2014 is the most recent example.

The United States supplemented its military alliances with 'market power', derived from the size of its consumer market and the administration's right to open or close it. The reconstruction of Japan into a stable democracy with a developed industrial sector was powerfully aided by opening the American market to Japanese goods – initially the occupation goods sold in America to earn dollars which helped finance the occupation, but then increasingly innovative industrial goods turned Japan into one of the world's foremost industrial economies. The policy tied Japan into a permanent alliance with the United States – the cornerstone of America's Pacific security policy. South Korea was also turned into a reliable ally through a development policy that depended on external earnings from a developed industrial market.

### ***The Soviet Union and Russia***

In the final stages of the war, the Soviet Union determined on nuclear possession, primarily to ensure that it would be immune from the sort of surprise attack it had suffered from Germany in June 1941. It made one major excursion into nuclear diplomacy in 1962 when it placed nuclear armed missiles in Cuba, creating a nuclear facility 90 miles off the American coast. (Most analysts agree the aim was to increase diplomatic pressure on the allies to leave Berlin and to recognize East Germany.) If the aim was to support the

protective zone of the Warsaw Pact, however, its conventional forces were much more relevant. Its large land army, with 3000 tanks, ended the war in occupation of a large swathe of central Europe, including Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, eastern Austria, and Bulgaria. Moscow considered Eastern Europe to be a buffer zone for the forward defence of its western borders, and ensured control of the region by transforming those countries into subservient allies. Soviet troops crushed a popular uprising and rebellion in Hungary in 1956 and ended insubordination by the Czechoslovak government in 1968. Soviet control in Eastern Europe came to an end in 1990 when Prime Minister Gorbachev refused to permit Soviet troops to put down the popular uprisings in East Germany and Czechoslovakia.

Soviet military strength was buttressed by 'popular front' movements. Originating in the Communist International (Comintern) set up by Lenin to export revolution to the rest of Europe and Asia, the Soviets encouraged Communist uprisings in Germany and saw Béla Kun briefly establish the Hungarian Soviet Republic in the immediate aftermath of the First World War. Stalin followed with the United Front tactic in which foreign Communists were urged to enter into alliances with reformist left-wing parties and national liberation movements of all kinds. The high point of the United Front was the partnership between the Chinese Communist Party and the nationalist Kuomintang, a policy that effectively crashed in 1927 when Kuomintang leader Chiang Kai-shek massacred the native Communists and expelled all of his Soviet advisors. But Stalin revived the policy in the Soviet occupied territories of Eastern and Central Europe after the war, where progressive parties were encouraged to join with local communists in fighting the first post-war elections, serving with them in governments, and effectively seizing power from within. When French prime minister Ramadier 'fired the Reds'

in 1947, he demonstrated that France was immune to the tactic, but, backed by Soviet troops, it was successful in the Soviet areas of occupation.

The Soviet Union also practiced 'peaceful coexistence' – government to government relations exploiting the ordinary rules of diplomacy. The new policy was initiated under Maxim Litvinov, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs between 1930 and 1939, who concluded alliances with France and Czechoslovakia. The Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in 1934 and was active in demanding action against imperialist aggression, a particular danger to it after the 1931 Japanese invasion of Manchuria (which eventually resulted in the Soviet–Japanese Battle of Khalkhin-gol, 1938–39). During the post-war period, the Soviets made particularly effective use of their seat on the Security Council, using the veto 109 times up to 1973, by which time the Western domination of the UN had weakened. The high spots were the 1950 veto against action in Korea, the 1956 veto in respect of condemning Israel's Suez adventure, the 1974 veto against a resolution condemning the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the 1980 veto in reference to the protection of Afghanistan's sovereignty. During the post-Soviet period, Russia, together with China, refused to allow resolutions authorizing Western intervention into the domestic affairs of Syria.

When Putin came to power in the newly formed Russian Federation, he determined to reconstruct a Russian sphere of influence among some of the former Soviet territories. The major diplomatic instruments were Russia's oil and natural gas reserves. It was not a novel policy – the Soviet Union had controlled Eastern European states through its ability to supply or withhold vital natural resources. Putin also exploited Russia's membership of the Security Council to protect its gains in respect of both Georgia and the Ukraine.

## ***Britain***

In the long aftermath of the Second World War, Britain's power was sourced primarily in its global reach – its imperial and post-imperial resources in Africa, the Middle East and the Far East, and its high governing capacity. America's key Second World War ally on the basis of its determination, its geography (the US still enjoys access to five military bases in Britain) and its governing capacity, it won control of Germany's Ruhr industrial zone, offering the latter to the US to form the bi-zone, and eventually the Federal Republic of Germany, in exchange for America's agreement to act as guarantor of German good behaviour for the foreseeable future. As one of the Big Three, it naturally had a seat on the Security Council.

Britain has the fourth highest defence budget in the world, \$61 billion, behind the US (\$683 billion), Russia (\$91 billion) and China (\$166 billion). Among the larger European economies, France and the United Kingdom are the only significant spenders on defence. It has retained substantial overseas base facilities at Gibraltar, Diego Garcia and Cyprus (Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia) and smaller facilities at Brunei, Kenya and Sierra Leone. British forces have key enabling capabilities (command and control, intelligence, strategic transport), and Britain has the ability to operate at long range. In a 'straight fight, the UK would outmatch even China in an equidistant location' (such as the Gulf), according to the Royal United Services Institute (Lubin, 2014).

Britain has made that capacity available to the United States repeatedly, beginning in 1948, when Britain offered to lead a European military resurgence to secure German rearmament. In January 1991, the United States and Britain provided the two largest forces respectively for the coalition army which liberated Kuwait from Saddam Hussein's regime. British forces participated

in NATO's war in Afghanistan, and British Prime Minister Blair took the lead (against the opposition of France, Canada, Germany, China and Russia) in advocating the invasion of Iraq in 2003. (Britain was second only to the US in sending forces to Iraq.) It has also offered its military assets to its European partners. The 1998 UK–France summit at St. Malo, Normandy adopted a declaration which laid the basis for a European Union defence policy (Atlantic Community Initiative, 1998).

As de-colonization proceeded, Britain took care to develop other institutional assets, not only in the United Nations where it was one of the architects of peacekeeping, and in NATO with reference to its command structure, but also in the European Union, which Britain determined to join from 1962. Britain has led the development in both the range and versatility of EU instruments for foreign action: the British Presidency of the EU in 2005 saw the launch of six security and defence missions to help manage crises around the world. Its roles in the EU's foreign policy structures are designed to ensure that NATO remains the primary European and transatlantic defence organization and that EU efforts are in line with British priorities and joined up with the efforts of the 'wider international community', especially those of the US.

## **France**

Institutional resources have been central to post-war French diplomacy, particularly its hard won position as one of Germany's occupying powers and a member of the four power control group. After initially trying to dismember Germany through non-cooperation with Britain and the United States, France changed its strategy, Prime Minister Schuman proposing the Schuman plan for the integration of Germany's coal and steel sector into a common management structure. Thereafter, France used its key

role in Europe's integration processes to keep the emerging German sovereign state firmly tied to European structures in which the French had a determinate say. The most recent and critical parlay of this sort was its refusal to accept German reunification in 1990 unless Germany agreed to widening European integration. The Maastricht Treaty establishing a tightened European Union was the price Germany had to pay for French acquiescence. The resultant partnership developed into a key foreign policy asset, particularly after the new united Germany became the major European Union paymaster and the major influence on EU policy.

France made probably the most successful use of atomic diplomacy. Under de Gaulle and subsequent to him, it retained independent use of its nuclear capability and deployed it to ensure that the other Great Powers had to coordinate policies with France, and to stop its NATO partners going ahead with a defence strategy or negotiations with which it did not agree.

France has never been in any doubt that military capability is the key to great power diplomacy. Possessing an independent nuclear deterrent capability since the early 1960s, only France, Britain and Greece, in Europe, annually spend more than 2 per cent of gross domestic product on the military. It also maintains garrisons and naval bases around the world, with a concentration in sub-Saharan Africa. In the aftermath of the Cold War, France undertook a major restructuring of its armed forces to develop a smaller professional military, more rapidly deployable and tailored for operations distant from France. Key elements included phasing out conscripts by 2002 in favour of an all-volunteer, technologically more intensive military force. France deployed military forces to Côte d'Ivoire in 2002, to the Central African Republic in 2003, and, with EU partners, to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2003. In 2004 it deployed military forces to monitor the Chad–Sudan border.



## China

China enjoys a military force of 2.2 million frontline soldiers and 9000 tanks, without much advanced technology, and a small navy with only one aircraft carrier, not able to project much power relative to even Britain, reflecting its defensive strategy toward its western neighbours. Its major peacetime diplomatic instrument is its \$3.3 trillion in reserves and small external debt (compared to the US reserves of \$150 billion and its external debt of \$15 trillion). It has used those reserves to shore up the US debt, ensuring a hands-off policy on the critical question of China's human rights record; to invest heavily in Africa (primarily for commodity exploitation); and to shore up its image as a peaceful and responsible power, particularly in East Asia where it is creating a free trade area.

China's 'new neighbour policy' relies heavily on leader and summit meetings (President Hu Jintao went to Africa six times between 1999 and 2009), demands no political strings in trade and aid (except the One-China policy), and avoids confrontation with other Great Powers. (It tends to slipstream behind Russia on opposing foreign interventions and other confrontations with the West.) It participates in selective multilateral organizations, the first being the Shanghai Cooperation Organization founded in 2004 with Russia and the central Asian Republics, following the Iraq war, to prevent conflicts that might invite American intervention on its peripheries. In 2008, it sent a naval contingent to help with Somali pirates, the first time a modern Chinese navy had left its near waters. A special relationship is developing with Russia, China committing some of its reserves to the purchase of Russian natural gas following the West's sanctioning of some Russian assets and the fall of world oil prices in 2014.

## EMERGING TRENDS IN THE PRACTICE OF GREAT POWER DIPLOMACY

During the Cold War, immediate communication became a practice among the nuclear powers following the establishment of a 'hot line', a direct telephone link between the offices of the US president and the Soviet head of state to avoid mistaken signals that might unleash a nuclear weapon. Direct telephone communication between heads of state has become a common feature of crisis diplomacy.

From 1975, the leading industrial democracies began to meet annually at 'summit'; that is, head of state level, and in a separate cycle of meetings during the year at finance-minister level. Leaders caucus before the September meetings of the IMF and World Bank. Proposed by France's president Giscard d'Estaing, the original Group of Six were Britain, France, Germany, Japan, the United States and Italy. (They became the Group of Seven with the addition of Canada, and the Group of Eight after the Russian Federation was invited to join in 1998.<sup>1</sup>) The intent was to discuss current world issues (dominated at the time by the oil crisis) in a frank and informal manner. The Plaza Accord agreed by the G7 Ministers of Finance in Paris in 1987 depreciated the US dollar in relation to the Japanese yen and German deutsche mark, held at artificially high levels since the war to aid reconstruction. It has emerged as a global economic concert to defend the essential minimum of international order, as well as its great power guarantors, against major economic shocks.

Summits have been supplemented by institutionalized meetings of the European foreign ministers within the framework of the European Union: a practice has emerged for heads of state to meet before foreign ministers, as required, and usually on a bilateral basis, to set the terms of the foreign ministerial meetings. The practice began in earnest with the conclusion of the Elysée treaty in 1963 between French President de Gaulle and German Chancellor Adenauer. A diplomatic pattern soon became evident in alternative



meetings between Germany and Britain, Britain and France, and Germany and France.

Collective economic sanctioning became a major instrument of great power diplomacy against states that were deemed to 'threaten the peace', arising from Article 41 of the UN Charter, which in effect requires economic and other sanctions before Security Council military action can be legally entertained (called 'mandatory sanctions'). The major mandatory sanctions authorized by the SC were against South Africa (1961–91), Iraq (1990–2003) and Cuba (1962–present). The perceived ineffectiveness of general sanctions to change state behaviour, as well as the growing threat to the Great Powers since 2001 from non-state groups, led to the increasing use of *targeted sanctioning* aimed at individuals, specific companies and groups. Targeted sanctions were first directed in 1993 against Yugoslav President Milosevic, in respect of acts of aggression in Kosovo; American President Clinton from 1995 used them against individuals and companies associated with the narcotics trade in Latin America; and from 2001 they have been used regularly against individuals and entities suspected of financing terrorist groups. The US Treasury Department has been in the forefront of tracking financial flows to terrorist groups, presenting evidence to the Security Council which can authorize collective sanctioning (Zarate, 2013). The UN maintains an official list of all individuals and entities subject to sanctioning, along with advice on how to be removed from it.<sup>2</sup>

### THROUGH DIFFERENT THEORETICAL APPROACHES UNDERSTANDING GREAT POWER DIPLOMACY

There is not one single mode of understanding Great Power diplomacy. Four approaches were distinguished by Raymond Aron in his 1966 classic, *Peace and War*. He identified them as, respectively, the moves on the chessboard; 'the rules of the game'; the 'referees'

who judge how the game is being played; and finally the 'judges' who consider the game itself and its relation to the social whole (Aron, 1966: 8–9). The first is the domain of the historian, who recounts who did what in the field of play; the second is the domain of the political scientist who detects the pattern behind the moves and the implicit rules (or absence thereof); the third is the domain of normative analysis, which judges the players and the teams that persistently break the rules; and the fourth is the domain of critical theory and the interpretive sociologist, who reflect on the institution of diplomacy and its wider social purpose. Individual commentators may move between these fields but it is helpful to distinguish them, as each has something important to say concerning diplomacy in general and great power diplomacy in particular.

The classic historical account is A.J.P. Taylor's *Struggle for Mastery in Europe* (Taylor, 1954). Gordon Craig, the eminent American historian, called it the best study of European diplomacy 'since W.C. Langer's' for Taylor's account of the policies and ambitions of individual powers; Taylor's biographer points to his eye for the 'dance of the balance of power' (Burk, 2000: 275). Rene Albrecht Carre's *A Diplomatic History of Europe Since the Congress of Vienna* places the focus on Germany and its critical role, through to the structuring of the Cold War. The standard contemporary accounts are Norman Rich's *Great Power Diplomacy 1815–1914* and *Great Power Diplomacy Since 1914*. Rich keeps the focus on the interests of each individual power.

The first political scientist of diplomacy undoubtedly was Machiavelli, who advised princes that, if forced to choose, 'it is better to be feared than loved' and, while he had a thorough comprehension of the uses of soft power, doubted that it could ever displace hard power. Traditionally, political realists have dominated the scientific study of diplomacy, the latest being John Mearsheimer's *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. He distinguishes between *unbalanced multipolarity*, a system that generates most fear and is the

least stable because rival powers assume the worst, and *balanced multipolarity* – a system with some power asymmetries, but which generates less fear than an unbalanced system (Mearsheimer, 2001: 44–5). Charles Doran has provided a process model of Great Powers' roles in the international system, called power cycle theory, which emphasizes their 'role ascription'; that is, the roles that they assign to themselves within the general structure of the international system at any one time (Doran, 1991: 36–40). He argues that when the 'future role projection' of a Great Power changes abruptly, the system goes adrift, increasing uncertainty.

Realist analysis has been enhanced and in some respects supplanted by more recent developments in liberal institutional approaches. The classic text is Robert Keohane's *After Hegemony*. Keohane argued that modern diplomacy was not simply a fact of each state's power, military or otherwise. He argued that modern diplomacy takes place within a web of institutions and regimes, which reflect prevailing expectations and practices as well as distributions of power. Regimes perform important functions in relation to diplomacy such as citing the normative code, framing the diplomatic agenda and providing reinsurance. According to Keohane, Great Powers act within such regimes, altering their policy preferences.

The best known referees of diplomacy are E.H. Carr for his defence of appeasement (Carr, 1939), and presently Henry Kissinger, who most recently offered a critique of the West's reactions to Crimea's accession to Russia. (In the *Washington Post* of March 5, 2014, he noted that Ukraine and Russia were one country for a long time, that Russia was important to the West in the critical questions of Iran's nuclear capacity and building a stable Middle East system – each more important to international order than the status of the Crimea, and that sanctioning Russia was a mistake.) They share the approach of the English School of international studies, which regards Great

Power management as a central institution of international order and judges Great Power diplomacy in terms of its contribution to order. The approach was first laid out by Hedley Bull in his 1977 *Anarchical Society*, where he argued that Great Powers were critical to guaranteeing international order, which they maintained primarily 'by managing their relations with one another' (Bull, 1977: 217).

The first interpretive study of great power diplomacy was Fritz Fischer's 1969 book *Krieg der Illusionen*; a detailed study of German politics from 1911 to 1914, it put forward a *Primat der Innenpolitik* (primacy of domestic politics) analysis of German foreign policy.<sup>3</sup> He argued that Imperial Germany saw itself under siege by rising demands for democracy at home and looked to a policy of aggression to distract democratic strivings. For Fischer, German foreign policy before 1914 was largely motivated by the efforts of reactionary German elites to distract the public from casting their votes for the Social Democrats by making Germany the world's greatest power at the expense of France, Britain and Russia. On a wider canvas, Edward Keene has explained the expansion of international society into a global system in terms of a double movement: the Great Powers were recognising an equality among themselves at the same time that they were subordinating much of the rest of the world through colonialism (Keene, 2002). Among an abundance of works defending the continuing relevance of the Great Powers to world order, Benjamin Miller's *When Opponents Cooperate* (1995 and 2002) is notable; Nick Bisley's *Great Powers in the Changing International Order* (2012) argues the contrary case.

## NOTES

- 1 But it participated effectively from the Naples summit of 1994; see Kokotsis (1999: 232–35).
- 2 [www.un.org/sc/committees/list\\_compends.shtml](http://www.un.org/sc/committees/list_compends.shtml)
- 3 It was published in English as *War of Illusions* in 1975, translated by Marian Jackson and Alan Bullock.

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# Middle Power Diplomacy

Yolanda Kemp Spies

## INTRODUCTION

The interplay between diplomacy and state power has fascinated scholars and practitioners since ancient times. Thucydides' compelling account of this diplomacy–power nexus during the Peloponnesian War in the fifth century BCE left us the maxim: 'the strong do what they can [what they have the power to do] and the weak accept what they must [have to accept]' (Thucydides 1954: 118). From this perspective diplomacy is a utilitarian rather than normative practice, indeed it appears to be inversely proportionate to a state's power.

At first glance, the idea of 'middle power diplomacy' suggests that there are states in the international system that are neither great nor weak powers, rather they occupy a space in the middle as intermediate powers (see Chapters 22, 24 and 34 in this Handbook). This ranking element presupposes quantitative comparisons and relativities within a theoretical hierarchy of power, but as will be argued in this chapter, the concept of middle power diplomacy

transcends a mechanical ordering device. Qualitative interpretations have, however, rendered the concept of middle power diplomacy more equivocal, and some scholars even question its usefulness as an analytical tool.

The chapter will begin with an historical account of the scholarship on middle power diplomacy, explaining the concept's origins in political theory and discussing some of the diplomatic methodologies and the issues that traditional middle powers tend to engage with. From this examination it will be suggested that, notwithstanding considerable debate about the defining characteristics of middle powers, these states tend to prioritise normative principles (and diplomacy *per se*) in their international conduct. The chapter will then turn to a recent development in the middle power diplomacy debate, namely a focus on the diplomacy of emerging powers that inhabit the 'new middle' in the international system. These states conduct diplomacy that is reminiscent of traditional middle power diplomacy, yet differs in fundamental aspects.

Key among these, and informed by their straddling the developed–developing divide, is their rejection of Western hegemony in international society. Their dynamic presence in the diplomatic arena will be considered in order to determine whether or not analysis of their diplomacy can add value to the global discourse on middle power diplomacy.

Finally, the chapter will reflect on the role of national interest in the ostensibly norm-driven diplomacy of middle powers, both traditional and new. The dynamics of the diplomacy–power nexus, which underpins the middle power concept, will therefore be a guiding theme throughout.

## MIDDLE POWER THEORY

The nebulous parameters of the middle power hypothesis make it difficult to determine its intellectual genesis. Some commentators have detected this type of theoretical construct in the classical writing on international politics by Aquinas and Machiavelli. Its apparent use has even been traced as far back as classical antiquity, in the work of Kautilya (Evans 2011; Gilboa 2009: 22). There is more clarity on its analytical application since the sixteenth century. In 1589, Italian scholar-practitioner Giovanni Botero philosophised about international order at a time when (unbeknownst to him and his contemporaries) the Westphalian state system was a mere 50 years away from being established. Heavily influenced by his experiences in the diplomatic courts of Europe, he described the international system of the time as comprising of three types of states – *grandissime* (empires), *mezano* (middle powers) and *piccioli* (small powers).

Middle powers (those states that had the strength and authority to be self-sufficient) were, according to Botero (1956 [1589]: 8), the most resilient of states, as they suffered neither the constant assaults weaker states were subjected to, nor the envy that great powers provoked in others. His thesis was

expanded by the acclaimed military theorist Carl von Clausewitz in his nineteenth-century writing on war and morality. Drawing on European examples, Von Clausewitz applied the term to states that were geographically lodged between great powers, and navigated their precarious geopolitical situation with diplomatic skill. In order to qualify as a middle power, a state would have to be reasonably strong itself – at least able to defend itself or offer substantive assistance to others – and would require a reputation as ‘friendly’ and ‘reliable’ (Holbraad 1984: 23).

Further evolution of middle power theory and the interplay between diplomacy and power is evident in the early and middle periods of the twentieth century, particularly during times when the distribution of global power was in flux. Following the First World War, the architecture for the unfolding world order was addressed by South African statesman and political philosopher, Jan Smuts. During 1918, in his pioneering draft proposals for a League of Nations, Smuts differentiated among great powers, middle powers and small powers, and noted the potential significance of the intermediate category at brokering a peaceful post-war world order (Evans 2011). The same sense of a new beginning in global order followed the end of the Second World War. In the course of the war, during 1942, Canada was the first country ever to identify itself as a middle power (Chapnick 2000: 189). During subsequent negotiations on the structure of the envisaged UN Security Council, Canada put forward the condition of what might be called ‘middlepowerness’ as a key criterion for states’ election to non-permanent seats on the Council. This notion of ‘middlepowerhood’, as Adam Chapnick (2000) refers to it, has been embraced in Canadian foreign policy ever since, with Australia following suit. The Scandinavian countries, Japan and the intermediate powers within Western Europe were similarly attracted to seeking ways to ensure that foreign policy would be guided by normative considerations (for example insistence on



good governance and human rights, as done at a domestic level) in their state-to-state relations. These policy positions demanded diplomatic dexterity during the Cold War period, when the arbitrary dictates of superpower competition left little space (and tolerance) for independent, principled positions by lesser powers.

In the course of the Cold War, and notwithstanding enduring Realist dominance in IR, more nuanced theoretical constructs of the diplomacy–power nexus were developed. For example, Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz (1962) argued that state power can also extend to a ‘restrictive’ capability, translating into the diplomatic ability to set the agenda for international relations. In the latter half of the Cold War the English School premise of there being an international society of states, bound by common rules, shared values and interests expressed through common institutions, gained some momentum (albeit in the UK and Europe rather than in the US) (Bull 1977: 13, 172; Sofer 1988: 207). Theorists in this tradition highlight the crucial role of diplomacy in the maintenance of global order and the stable distribution of power, and contemplate the prominence and credibility of states that seem to be ‘specialists’ at conducting diplomacy. The more recent incarnations of liberal thought (always sanguine about prospects for international cooperation) sought explanations for state power that is qualitative rather than quantitative, in other words power that is rooted in ideational clout rather than military and economic assets. Joseph Nye (1990) labels it ‘soft’ power: the ability to attract others to your way of doing things. The term soft power is increasingly a leitmotiv in the discourse on middle power diplomacy, precisely because it steers clear of the unilateralism that hard power implies (see Chapter 1 in this Handbook).

The notion of state power is further problematised by constructivist social theory. Constructivists recognise an inter-subjective discourse where power is ‘the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate’ (Barnett and

Duvall 2005: 39). Fixed identities and interests are not assumed, and the nature of international society is seen to be subjective and conjectured. This society therefore hinges less on the structure of the international system and more on the practice and recognition of shared social norms and traditions (Acharya 2011; Bellamy 2004; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 2001). Like any other manifestation of society, it has to have its values and norms continuously reaffirmed, to address what Rebecca Adler-Nissen (2014: 149) calls its ‘ontological insecurity’. The manner in which states and their official representatives – diplomats – are socialised by and into this international society is therefore of special interest because ideas of socialisation allow for diplomats to have agency.

Constructivists were also helpful in re-evaluating state diplomacy’s systemic role, when at the end of the Cold War seismic changes in world politics once again necessitated evaluation of how power in the international system is and should be best managed. With the vertical, hard-power defined polarity of the international system challenged by global interdependence and the concomitant growth of global governance, the evolving polarity of the system inspired various labels including ‘nonpolar’ (Haass 2008) and ‘polypolar’ (Spies 2010).<sup>1</sup> Richard Haass (2008) explains that the principal characteristic of the evolving diplomatic arena is a situation of diffusion, where power and influence are no longer automatically linked. The idea that power can be situational speaks to the new emphasis within the discourse of middle power diplomacy, on state behaviour rather than state attributes – in other words the performative aspects of power (Cooper et al. 1993: 19; Guzzini 2005).

### **Key Points**

- The middle power debate is ancient but it only started to gain momentum with the advent of the modern state system and examinations of the power of states.



- The distribution of power in the international system, including the diplomatic role of middle powers, is an important dynamic, especially when global order (polarity) is in flux.
- Constructivist theory challenges some of the structural arguments about state power and contributes to a greater understanding of the role of norms, identity and agency, including that of diplomats, in inter-state behaviour.

## TRADITIONAL MIDDLE POWER DIPLOMACY

The traditional understanding of a middle power is that such states are established democracies, industrialised and affluent in comparison to most other countries. Their societies embrace egalitarian domestic dispensations and are managed by efficient public bureaucracies with a low incidence of corruption. Politically, it could be said that these states are reassuringly boring, insofar as they adopt functional rather than dominant behaviours towards their geographical neighbourhoods.

Middle powers appear to share similar approaches to diplomacy. Ungerer (2007: 539) claims that one approach, and Australia is an example, is to make ‘declaratory statements’ about their middle power status, ‘employing a type of shorthand for a pre-defined and generally agreed set of foreign policy behaviours’. These behaviours are derived from sharing an international identity that is based on normative expectations which, according to Risse et al. (1999: 6), ‘creates impetus for behaviour consistent with the belief’. In this sense a middle power’s diplomacy is often considered transparent and predictable because it adheres to a pre-existing, normative script.

Among the normative expectations of middle powers is liberal internationalism, resulting in diplomatic behaviour that supports a proactive and reformist approach to the maintenance of international society. Traditional middle powers reify the core principles of

international society – order, peace and rule of law – and are driven by a sense of morality, regardless of who wields, wants or woos hard power. The objective of their diplomacy is well illustrated by the former Australian foreign minister, Gareth Evans, who, when speaking about Australia as a middle power, said that ‘what countries like ours, who are never going to have enough political, military or economic clout to force our will or preferences on others, can do [is] to make the world a better place’ (Evans 2011). For some this may appear to be a dubious objective because, as Andrew Cooper (2009: 30) notes, it could resemble ‘explicit claims of moral superiority’.

Another approach to diplomacy that middle powers share, which comes out of their normative focus, is an altruistic instinct to support official development assistance (ODA) to countries that are struggling economically. In this regard the world’s great powers have been ‘out-aided’ by states with far fewer resources. Since the 1970s the only states that have consistently met the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s ODA target of 0.7% of Gross National Income, are four middle powers – Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark (OECD 2010).

Another defining tenet of middle power diplomacy is multilateralism – the normative predilection for inclusive, transparent and cooperative diplomacy to address international problems. Middle powers are proactive coalition-builders, rallying other states into value-based coalitions, rather than ‘going it alone’ (Cooper et al. 1993: 19; Ungerer 2007: 538). When nuclear disarmament efforts lost momentum in the immediate post-Cold War era, it was a group of middle powers (currently comprising of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa) that established the New Agenda Coalition. Since its establishment in 1998 it remains the only state-based group that continues to pressure the nuclear weapon states to implement the commitments they made in the 1970 Non-proliferation Treaty (New Zealand 2014).

Traditional middle power diplomacy is also focussed on efforts to strengthen the interstate system. Enthusiastic participation within IGOs, where they are seen as active, loyal and collegial members – not likely to disrupt the organisational ethos by, for instance, withholding membership fees – is common. So too are efforts to legitimise global public policy through socialising other members of the same organisation. New Zealand, for example, has consistently worked to foster support for the UN system, *inter alia* by compiling and distributing an annual United Nations Handbook. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon hails the initiative, which began in 1949, as ‘yet another sign of New Zealand’s dynamic presence in the world organisation’ (New Zealand 2011/2012).

Middle power diplomacy is often equated with being a ‘good international citizen’ (Cooper et al. 1993: 19). The common national attributes of middle powers – domestic orderliness and adherence to human rights, democracy and good governance – also make them international role models for many other states in the diplomatic arena. This often takes on an activist dimension when states are described as ‘punching above their weight’ (Spies 2010: 88; Ungerer 2007: 548). The analogy is clear: even without the material power to impact decisions in international institutions, they manage to exert authority and display leadership. A case in point is the election of the UN’s Secretary-General, the world’s most influential bureaucrat. Candidates from states with mediating diplomatic credentials have historically been most likely to succeed, because nominees for the position must enjoy not only majority support from the General Assembly but also acceptance by the P-5 of the Security Council. Many of these individuals have shown statesmanship that mirrors the diplomatic profile of their country. Dag Hammarskjöld, renowned for his mediation efforts at the height of the Cold War, personified Swedish diplomacy by taking up the cause of smaller and weaker states, and to ‘speak truth to power’. In 1961,

under Soviet pressure to resign, he famously declared:

It is very easy to bow to the wish of a big power. It is another matter to resist it. If it is the wish of those nations who see the organization their best protection in the present world, I shall do so [stand up to the big powers and provoke their ire] again (UPI 1961).

Middle power diplomacy is known for placing a premium on international peace. Diplomatic flexibility and commitment to finding compromise positions in international disputes supports offers of ‘good offices’ to hostile parties, as Switzerland has done for the United States and Cuba since 1960. Norway’s long-standing role in the Middle East and Sri Lanka shows how such bridge-building instincts find expression in mediation as a diplomatic specialization (Cooper 2009: 32). Moreover, middle powers often reward others for pursuing peace: witness the Norwegian sponsorship of the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize.

In the pursuit of peace, middle powers commit many of their military resources to international peace-building efforts. This also inclines them to coalesce around matters related to arms control. Australia is well known for its leading role in fighting the export of chemical and biological weapons, through its founding of the multi-lateral Australia Group. By the same token, Canada provided leadership in the ‘Ottawa Process’ that culminated in the 1997 Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines (Gilboa 2009: 25; Ungerer 2007: 547).

Middle powers lack superpower capacity and therefore, in order to have global reach, condense their diplomatic resources through selective specialisation known as ‘niche diplomacy’. In this way they maximise diplomatic impact in areas where they enjoy comparative advantage. In the case of Canada, human security has often been at the forefront of foreign policy and public diplomacy (Chapnick 2000:

203; Cooper 2009: 31). Norm entrepreneurship in this regard was demonstrated when the Canadian Government sponsored the establishment of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). The Commission's 2001 report on the 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) transformed the international discourse on humanitarian intervention. Canada's subsequent campaign to socialise other states into R2P adherence has been matched by Australia, which heavily invests both diplomatically and otherwise in this quest (Bellamy 2010: 436).

Middle power diplomacy involves a pragmatic instinct towards inclusivity (Cooper 2009: 30; Jordaan 2003: 170–1). In the contemporary diplomatic arena, transnational networks of states and non-state actors that rate highly accountability and transparency are increasingly common. In line with their domestic emphasis on participatory democracy, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) have a long-standing tradition of including parliamentarians and civil society representatives in official diplomatic delegations to the UN General Assembly. Their pioneering involvement in symbiotic public–private partnerships has set a precedent in international diplomatic practice and is now widely emulated. In diplomatic theory it has contributed to the categorisation of a new diplomatic mode, what Geoffrey Wiseman (2010: 32) refers to as 'polylateral' diplomacy.

Canada is a prime example of a middle power that harnesses the legitimising effect of transnational networks on the delivery of public goods. When, during October 1996, it hosted an international conference on the banning of anti-personnel landmines, the participants included 'about 50 states, hundreds of NGOs and many UN agencies' (Gilboa 2009: 25). As Eytan Gilboa (*ibid.*) explains, the natural forum to deal with the issue of landmines would have been the UN Conference on Disarmament. The latter was hamstrung, however, by the unwillingness of key actors, including the P-5, to enforce a

ban. Canada rallied a coalition of like-minded states and facilitated unprecedented accommodation of NGOs in the actual negotiations. Julian Davis (2004: 1) refers to its delivery of a comprehensive treaty, in record time, as 'a diplomatic *tour de force*'.

Transnational networks understand the importance of having their causes championed by states, and middle powers have proven to be their most reliable recourse. The Middle Powers Initiative (MPI) does exactly this: it is a coalition of eight international NGOs that pool resources with middle powers to build momentum for nuclear disarmament (Evans 2009; MPI 2014). The MPI was particularly active in the preparation phase for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and thereafter assisted with the implementation of the commitments made by states.

### Key Points

- Constitutively speaking, traditional middle powers are stable, developed, democratic and egalitarian societies which, unlike the new middle powers, are not regionally distinct.
- Middle power diplomacy has a normative inclination and tends to be based on several aspirations: liberal internationalism and a reformist, nurturing approach to international society; multilateralism; good international citizenship; norm entrepreneurship particularly in conflict resolution; niche diplomacy; and inclusivity.

## THE NEW MIDDLE POWERS' DIPLOMACY

Over the past two decades, the middle power discourse has developed to include analysis of a diverse group of actors, specifically emerging powers. These states display distinct (if somewhat unconventional) middle power-type behaviour, notably norm-entrepreneurship and multilateralism. South Africa is a case in point. Since its transition to democracy in 1994, it has rallied other developing states

into supporting major normative agreements, such as the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1995, establishment of the International Criminal Court in 1998 and adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000 (Geldenhuis 2006). In Latin-America, Mexico is transcending its history of isolationist foreign policy to embrace a more dynamic role in global governance. Its activism in the WTO, membership of the OECD and championing of issues like migration, are just a few examples of its normative internationalism. In the Middle East, Qatar is turning itself into a nodal point for multilateralism (Cooper 2009: 30, 33). It is carving a diplomatic niche in mediation and the hosting of multilateral trade negotiations. Its willingness to help implement Security Council Resolutions (such as Res. 1973 on Libya) confirms that it is positioning itself as a global diplomatic actor.

Some of the differences between these emerging middle powers and their traditional counterparts are identified by Eduard Jordaan (2003: 165). He argues that their democratic status, in most cases, is only recently obtained, and in some instances, unconsolidated. At the domestic level, they battle deep structural inequalities and acute developmental challenges. This is also true of their international position. Their semi-peripheral, almost ambiguous, identity in the global economy allows them to act as intermediaries between industrialised states and the peripheral, developing states that are the numerical majority (Alden and Le Pere 2009: 147; Flemes 2007). Importantly, Jordaan (2003: 167) notes that emerging middle powers are regionally dominant in terms of hard power, an attribute that distinguishes them from their traditional counterparts. Traditional middle powers such as the Netherlands, Sweden and Canada wield great influence in their respective geographical regions, but are not (nor seek to be) regionally dominant through the accumulation of hard power. On the other hand, the sheer economic and military capabilities of an emerging middle power such as Brazil, in comparison

to the rest of the South American continent, impart on it a dominant, hard power status. As in the case of traditional middle powers, however, emerging middle powers use diplomacy to emphasise their soft power, and the latter reaches far beyond their immediate regions. India's 'Bollywood' and Nigeria's 'Nollywood' have an undisputed impact on the global entertainment industry, and demonstrate how non-Western culture is exported with unprecedented confidence. The new group of middle powers have become hubs for world summits (see Chapter 19 in this Handbook) on issues ranging from climate change to human rights and outbid Western countries to host prestige sporting events such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup (see Chapter 50 in this Handbook).

Emerging middle powers share some important international behavioural traits of their Western counterparts, including activism on behalf of smaller actors. But their diplomacy takes on an ideological tenor, and their high profile multilateralism allows them leadership roles as representatives of the global South. Their behaviour can be explained by using the IR lenses of structuralism and international political economy (IPE) that account for the hegemonic constraints of the capitalist world system on the behaviour of states outside the great power clubs (Cox 1989; Rodney 1972; Strange 1988). In this system, traditional middle powers constantly mitigate conflict to prevent the system from being destabilised. But the new, non-Western middle powers, most of whom have a history of being colonised, take issue with the status quo. They act more like trade union leaders, acutely aware of the 'parallel universes' (Rothgeb 1995) they have to contend with. They shun the concessionary attitude approach of their traditional peers, and instead push for substantive reform of global institutions that are unrepresentative of the 'demographics' of the inter-state system (Jordaan 2003: 167).

It is perhaps par for the course that their diplomacy is more confrontational than that

of middle powers from the developed world. Donald Puchala (1998) explains that the diplomacy of states that see themselves at an historical structural disadvantage tends to be more robust and vocal. Their foreign policy leaders play to the international audience as much as to their own domestic constituency, and their diplomatic rhetoric tends to be strident in tenor – ‘edgy’, as Cooper (2009: 33) says of Malaysia’s wilful diplomacy. Cooper observes that democratic Malaysia, rather than meekly bowing to the collective will of multilateral organisations like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), ‘has sought to assert its will where possible’.

Indeed, the multilateralism of emerging middle powers involves a strong rejection of hegemony in international affairs. Eduardo Brigidi de Mello (2014: 251), writing about Brazil’s return to ‘Independent Foreign Policy’ under the charismatic leadership of President Lula da Silva, notes that the country’s foreign policy manifests as ‘globalist protagonism’. The implied insistence on the value of global equality (global social justice) and rejection of the global North’s dominance is therefore a key variable of Brazil’s foreign policy.

The rejection of structural hegemony is often reflected in the amount of diplomatic activity by leaders of emerging middle powers, who strategically raise their countries’ visibility at an executive level. They do so – symbolically as well as practically – through well-publicised visits abroad, and the hosting of reciprocal visits by world leaders. During the eight years of the Lula Administration, for example, ‘Brazil received 904 visits from 137 countries or organisations; the President made 259 visits to 83 countries, while the Chancellor travelled 467 times to 101 countries’ (de Mello 2014: 252). In the case of South Africa, between 2000 and 2008 its globe-trotting President Thabo Mbeki attended more G8 summits (every single one of them, in fact) than the most senior G8 leader, US President George W. Bush (Shaw et al. 2009: 37).

Traditional and emerging middle powers overlap in important aspects of their internationalist agenda, and in some ways they challenge the existing distribution of global power. One of the most dramatic changes has been the establishment of the G20, which since 2009 has effectively replaced the G7/8, the traditional collection of powerful countries leading the global economy. The G20, with membership dominated by middle powers, assumed this role ‘even against the ostensible will of some of the [world’s] most powerful leaders’ as Jorge Heine (2010: 2) notes.

The multilateral engine of the global economy is thus, for the first time ever, comprised of Western as well as non-Western actors. This raises questions about the institutional norms that will prevail, change or develop, not only in this specific forum of global governance but also elsewhere, as diplomats engage in norm socialisation. The increasingly confident emerging powers who challenge Western dominance take issue with the conventional assumption that the ‘good’ norms of international society are based on liberal Eurocentric values and codes of conduct, and that the ‘importers’ of these diplomatic norms (non-Western societies) are passively socialised into international society. Ayşe Zarakol (2014: 312) warns that ethnocentric models of norm-diffusion tend to conflate internalisation with socialisation, and the latter with compliance – without taking into account the lingering impact of the ‘messy history of the international system’. The patronising idea that bad behaviour is exported only through non-Western agency is challenged by the fact that the 19th century European system expanded itself through mercantilism, conquest and colonisation (Adler-Nissen 2014: 150; Zarakol 2014: 312).

One effect of the growing influence of the new middle powers is that international society is now more diverse, its normative foundations are being questioned, and as a result achieving diplomatic consensus is becoming more elusive. The normative doctrine of R2P is an example. Despite unanimous endorsement



(expressed in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the World Summit Outcome Document) of R2P principles by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit, it subsequently became obvious that there was little agreement on its operationalisation. This prompted the formation of the Group of Friends on R2P, an informal group of some thirty mostly middle power states, to advance consensus on the norm within the UN community. In the wake of the controversial implementation of UN Resolution 1973 (2011) on Libya, Brazil offered a major conceptual contribution to the debate, namely the thesis of Responsibility While Protecting (RwP). It addressed one of the major weaknesses in the R2P doctrine: the matter of accountability of those actors in the international community mandated to implement an intervention (Brazil 2011: 1).

Developing middle powers, like traditional middle powers, project their domestic normative inclinations onto global diplomatic arenas. As de Mello (2014: 245–6) explains, Brazil's diplomacy reflects the 'democratic mirror', whereby the new pride in achievement of national democracy finds resonance in calls for global multilateralism and equitable global governance that level the playing field between rich and poor. South Africa is another example. Following its much-lauded transition to democracy, the country embarked on a campaign to counter hegemony within multilateral institutions. The state's domestic history of struggle was thereby extended to a global struggle for the liberation of marginalised states (Spies 2010: 76).

In the case of emerging middle powers, their networks of like-minded states include not only those with a normative international agenda but also states with a similar ideological outlook. Their diplomacy is typically explicitly aligned with 'South–South Cooperation'. But empathy with errant developing peers can be controversial when it clashes with the liberal principles enshrined in the constitutions of the emerging middle power. South Africa's first ever tenure as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (2007/2008)

saw the country shielding odious regimes in Myanmar, Zimbabwe and Sudan against punitive international action. Its seemingly irrational behaviour recalls the labels that have been attached to Brazil's diplomacy: 'comrade diplomacy' and 'Third-Worldism' (de Mello 2014: 251). Mexico has adopted a similar form of solidarity diplomacy. The danger with middle powers defaulting on their domestic and international obligations is that their power and global clout suffers (Cooper 2009: 33) and the meaning of the concept is muddled even further.

A major difference between traditional and emerging middle powers is that the latter are dominant actors in their respective regions. This is arguably a function of their regions, which are often rife with unresolved conflict and/or underdevelopment. For example, South Africa's military capacity dwarfs that of its neighbours and its GDP is almost triple the combined GDP size of its nine fellow southern-African states.<sup>2</sup> The hard power such emerging powers have *vis-à-vis* their neighbours has hegemonic implications because in a microcosm of global structural power, the regional giant assumes the role of a superpower. Where such states are involved in a regional integration scheme, as is the case with South Africa within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), they are usually in a pivotal position, i.e. they have a disproportionately large influence on the terms of integration.

### Key Points

- The new middle ground in the international system is inhabited by emerging powers which, although often growing economically, have serious domestic and regional developmental challenges.
- These emerging powers share the multilateralism and norm-driven approaches of traditional middle powers, but their diplomacy is marked by counter-hegemonic objectives and ideological solidarity, and they are often dominant regional players. Demonstrative ideological solidarity and regional dominance can undermine the middle power credentials of these states.



## THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND POWER IN MIDDLE POWER DIPLOMACY

Although middle powers highlight their normative agendas, scholars emphasise that national interest and the dynamics of the diplomacy–power dynamic are evident. Adam Chapnick's (2000: 203) critique of Canada's efforts to brand itself as a middle power points out that it suits certain states to project themselves as middle powers because it endows them with a certain authority and level of influence and power that they do not necessarily have in practice. This raises the question of whether or not the idea of middlepoweriness is a carefully constructed image to support nation-branding projects that serve national interests more than genuine normative internationalism.

Ungerer (2007: 540) argues that the diplomacy of middle powers is as utilitarian as that of any other category of states. He notes that the self-interest of these states 'is filtered through the practical consideration of when and where middle-ranking states can achieve successful diplomatic outcomes in pursuit of national interests'. Gareth Evans referred to the normative but very pragmatic approach of middle powers as 'enlightened self-interest' (Ungerer 2007: 551).

The utilitarian and self-interest objectives of middle powers are evident elsewhere. When South Africa was unexpectedly invited to join the BRIC (Brazil Russia India China) group of powerful emerging economies during April 2011, South African President Jacob Zuma (2011) used his first address to the new BRICS summit to proclaim 'We are now equal co-architects of a new equitable international system'. On the surface, this sounds like a middle power's projection of a normative global objective. But it also raises the spectre of a state with a power-hungry diplomatic agenda. Jordaan (2003: 167) claims that emerging middle powers actually have a stake in maintaining the broad status quo of

global order and seek reform only where they can shift the balance of power to their own advantage. Regional hegemony like South Africa also exploit their geographical gateway status to legitimise their representative leadership in the global order and to consolidate their own prestige and influence in the regional arena. South Africa's moral leadership was, however, somewhat overshadowed in 2009 when President Obama made his first state visit to Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and chose Ghana as his only destination. The diplomatic message was clear: Ghana, rather than South Africa, was considered the 'most upright citizen' of SSA.

It is clear from new middle power diplomacy practices that there is a connection to national interests and power. The debate about Security Council reform illustrates the diplomacy–power nexus. Whereas traditional middle powers have limited their aspirations to competition for the ten non-permanent seats on the Council, the states in the new middle are much more assertive. Brazil, India and South Africa – to name just a few – are enthusiastic candidates to join the exclusive permanent core, and use every opportunity to remind the world that they are waiting in the wings. Several states in the new, expanded middle are not shy about wielding the hard power of military force. India's acquisition of nuclear arms is clearly an anathema to the aversion traditional middle powers have towards the arms race. Qatar, joined by Egypt, was quick to bomb militants in Libya during August 2014, to the surprise of the United States. South Africa, even during the iconic presidency of Nelson Mandela, intervened militarily in neighbouring Lesotho. These states would be wise to recall Giovanni Botero's (1956 [1589]: 8) sage advice (no doubt drawing on the wisdom gained from his combined Jesuit and diplomatic background) that the leaders of middle powers could also be tempted by aspirations to great power status – something that would place their states at grave risk.

## Key Points

- A carefully constructed image of middle power status supports nation-branding and soft power and can serve the national interest.
- The diplomacy of traditional and new middle powers can be both normative and utilitarian. New middle powers are less reticent about seeking relative power in the diplomatic forums where they wield influence.

## CONCLUSION

Certain states outside of the great power category and located somewhere in the middle of the international system leave a very large footprint in the diplomatic arena. Their international norm-entrepreneurship, penchant for multilateralism and dedication of diplomatic resources to international peace and stability earn them the label of middle powers. The parameters of the category, however, are nebulous and the variation in interpretations attached to the label makes it difficult to compile a consistent set of criteria by which to identify middle powers.

Constructivists remind us that state identity is not fixed, but constructed, which means that states can become, or cease to be, middle powers, based on patterns of behaviour. Whether strategically projected by the state in question, or assigned by other actors, middle power identity is highly contextual and linked to roles the particular state performs in the diplomatic arena. Indeed, it is a fundamental prerequisite for middle power status that it has to be constantly earned through consistency and persistence in diplomacy – it cannot be an *ad hoc* or one-off achievement.

If the middle power category has become a contested space, it is also a congested space. The discourse has recently taken on board analyses of certain emerging powers that emulate middle power behaviour, yet constitutively seem to be the opposite of their traditional, Western counterparts. Their inclusion in the discourse has arguably burdened the

contemporary middle power classification with ‘elasticity, inconsistency, and subjectivity’, as David Cooper (2011: 319) alleges. What is undisputed is that the ‘new middle’ is changing the contours of the diplomacy–power nexus. Their developmental challenges and historical sense of structural marginalisation infuse the diplomacy of these states with ideological vigour, as they challenge the structural hegemony of the international system.

All middle powers are astute diplomatic actors and few commentators would deny that they pursue their national interests. Emerging middle powers seem to have particularly ambitious foreign policies, and their agitation for reform of global governance structures arguably masks aspirations to join the elite clubs of great power politics. Ironically, they reproduce structural hegemony in their various geographical regions. At all levels of diplomatic engagement, however, they display the irreducible characteristic of middle powers, in the sense that diplomacy is their most-favoured instrument of foreign policy.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the body of middle power theory is nurtured by scholars from states that self-identify as middle powers. The fact that these scholars also happen to dominate the domain of diplomatic theory more generally is not a coincidence: they take diplomacy very seriously. Moreover, as the middle power pool stretches to include states from the developing world, so does the concept of middlepowermanship. The corollary is more diverse scholarship, which can only be beneficial to the study of an enduring and universal phenomenon: the diplomacy–power nexus.

## NOTES

- 1 A ‘polypolar’ world implies not simply a multitude of poles but indeed a certain fluidity and transience in the global power constellation. It is marked by overlapping ‘poles’, nascent/fluid identities, and transnational interdependence.

- 2 In terms of African Union classification, Southern Africa is comprised of ten countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Note that reliable statistics for Zimbabwe were not available as of January 2015. However, it is well-known that the country's economy has been in meltdown for more than a decade, as a result of political turmoil and foreign-imposed sanctions.

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# Small State Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

### *Small States in the World System*

Over half the member states of the United Nations are ‘small’ according to the simplest numerical yardstick (fewer than 10 million citizens), and to other, less simple, definitions addressed below. Moreover, a very high proportion of the smaller states have joined the UN after its inception, meaning that their sovereignty was recognized as part of the twentieth-century process of de-colonization and/or after the dismantling of larger state entities. They are not only ‘small’ but ‘new’ states, and building up a national foreign policy and diplomatic apparatus has been a new challenge for them.

The fact that so many of today’s small actors gained statehood in a ‘modern’ international setting, where the rules of diplomacy

are formalized in the Vienna Convention and frameworks for multilateral cooperation exist at many levels from the UN downwards, has set certain common parameters for their functioning. The environment is certainly more propitious than ever before, not just for their survival, but for their chances of having their voice heard in international society. At the same time, the individual circumstances of small states vary as much as those of states in general. They include some of the world’s richest and most peaceful countries (Luxembourg with GDP of US\$ 111,162 per capita), and some of the poorest and most conflict-scarred (Liberia with US\$ 454 per capita) (World Bank, 2014). Their existential challenges depend greatly on where they lie: among friendly larger neighbours, among threatening larger neighbours, or in constellations of equally small entities (e.g. in the Caribbean and West Pacific). Particularly important for their security and welfare is the existence or absence of well-functioning regional organizations – as discussed below.

<sup>†</sup> This Chapter is dedicated to the memory of Alyson J.K. Bailes, a devoted teacher, exceptional scholar, and dear friend. She is deeply missed.



Any generalizations about small states should thus be made with great caution. It is easier to identify certain common challenges they all face, and a finite set of options for responding, than to predict or explain exactly how each small state will frame its diplomacy.

### ***Evolution of Small States' Presence and Role***

The prevalence and importance of small state entities has varied over both space and time. The account by Thucydides of conflicts among ancient Greek city-states is credited with providing the first foundation of 'realism' as a philosophy of international affairs (Morgenthau and Thomson, 1985). The modern craft of diplomacy owes much to ideas and practices developed among the small city-states of Italy during the later Middle Ages and Renaissance (Machiavelli's environment). From the sixteenth century onwards, as some of the world's larger states began to build overseas empires, they encountered similarly large counterparts – like China – in some parts of the world and much smaller, disaggregated political communities in others. The impact of imperial expansion again varied between cases where such small units were combined into large ones (like British India), and cases where they kept a more separate identity as with the Caribbean, East Indian and Pacific islands. In the Northern hemisphere, however, the clear trend up to the end of the nineteenth century was for aggregation, as seen in the creation of a united Italy, united Germany, and the southward and eastward expansion of Imperial Russia.

The twentieth century by contrast was a time of small state proliferation, in several distinct waves. The first flowed from the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian and Turkish Empires around the end of the First World War, although many of the resulting new or re-constituted states are now considered more medium-sized than small. The creation of the League of Nations as a

first experiment in global collective security raised the question of 'equality' for small participating nations (Rappard, 1934) – an issue that would surface again with the United Nations after the Second World War, to be handled notably through the stipulations for Security Council membership. The UN also created a Trusteeship Council in 1945 to protect 11 small territories whose status neither allowed for inclusion in another state nor for full independence at the time (United Nations, n.d.). Other new small nations continued to come into being primarily as a consequence of de-colonization: sometimes peacefully, sometimes after wars of national liberation and/or civil conflicts. Starting with 51 members, the UN doubled in size between 1964 and 1965 and had 159 members by 1990. Currently, it has 193 members following upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia – neither of which processes can safely be said to be complete today.

The next part of this chapter discusses definitions of 'smallness' and introduces the concepts and findings of small state studies, now an established branch of International Relations (cf. the categorization of 'middle powers' in the chapter by Spies). The following sections deal with three levels of diplomatic activity where the special challenges of small states and ways of tackling them can be observed: traditional diplomacy; small states' roles at the UN and small states' relations with the EU, as the most highly-evolved example of a regional organization. The conclusions briefly address the way ahead for small states' role in international affairs (see also Chapter 3 in this Handbook).

### ***Key Points***

- Small states have multiplied in the twentieth to twenty-first century world and, in some ways, find it easier to survive.
- However, small states still vary hugely in terms of security and economic wellbeing.



## DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The fundamental challenge for a small state is its greater vulnerability in the face of larger neighbouring states, together with a lack of means to influence the international system more generally. Today, these relational weaknesses – and the way they can shape a state's self-image – are often seen as equally important with any simple arithmetical measure of smallness. The literature has shifted its focus from trying to come up with a precise definition of what constitutes a small state, concentrating instead on the ability of small states to govern themselves, become economically prosperous and defend themselves from hostile attacks (see e.g. Archer and Nugent, 2002). Starting out with inescapable structural weaknesses linked to their small population (human resources), size of economy and territory, and limited diplomatic, general administrative and military capacity, small states are seen in the literature as having two broad options for trying to compensate.

First, small states need to make certain domestic arrangements in order to tackle their potential volatility. Katzenstein's (1984 and 1985) 'democratic corporatism' is one of the best frameworks yet developed to identify how small states have adopted domestic buffers to ease the constraints of a fluctuating international economy. According to Katzenstein, democratic corporatism in seven small European states (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, Belgium, Austria and Switzerland) provides two things: fast-paced change and flexible adaptation, which is secured through short decision-making chains and corporatist, consensual decision-making; and a capacity to socialize risk by developing a comprehensive welfare state and active labour-market policies. Another form of domestic buffer is administrative capacity. Small states need to develop a capable public administration that can engage in decisive and independent policy making (see, for instance, Thorhallsson, 2012a).

The other option available to a small state, to compensate for its inherent weakness, is to find a protecting state or join an alliance (Keohane, 1969). Small entities have always sought protection by larger neighbours, and the post-Second World War order offered small states the new alternative of seeking protection through membership of regional and multilateral institutions. After a period when some observers stressed small actors' flexibility and similar advantages, the 2008 international financial crisis has again underlined that a complete 'escape from smallness' is unrealistic. It has drawn attention afresh to the importance of political, economical and societal shelter, for small states and by extension for other small populations in semi-independent regions. The viability of small states such as Ireland and Iceland has again been called into question (Thorhallsson and Kirby, 2012; Thorhallsson and Kattel, 2013). For instance, in the run-up to the crash, Iceland lacked the administrative capacity to deal with its new, massive and complex financial sector; it would have benefited from stricter supervision from regional and/or international organizations, and greater domestic willingness to accept external advice. Small states and entities may have to accept that they are not able – at least not in the short run – to acquire knowledge and develop the capacity to deal with compound structures such as the international financial sector. As an alternative solution, small non-independent entities/nations such as Scotland and Greenland are effectively 'sheltering' within the boundaries of larger states (Bailes et al., 2013). In sum: realist logic still demands special small-state techniques both for dealing with neighbouring states and potential protectors and exploring less traditional routes to safety and influence based on sheltering within regional and international institutions (Bailes, 2009). The presence of such options in any case depends on what the given region has to offer – small states must still adapt to conditions created by others.

Membership of bodies such as the UN and the EU does, however, provide small states with an opportunity to influence the international system. Prosperous small states, with financial and administrative means and good ideas that are seen to be beneficial to the wider world, can become ‘norm entrepreneurs’ (Ingebritsen, 2002); the Nordic nations, Switzerland and New Zealand are among well-known examples of this. Small developing nations may also gain a certain prestige or ‘model’ image if they, for example, avoid conflict in an otherwise turbulent part of the world (Namibia, Bhutan); transform themselves after conflict (Liberia); and/or achieve what is widely seen as a deserved independence after oppression (Timor-Leste, South Sudan). Administrative competence, the ability to convince others on a given issue (itself a core diplomatic skill), and adequate peer recognition are of key importance, as discussed further below.

To summarise: small state success depends both on external diplomacy and internal governance, although theory so far has focused little on the links between them. The idea of a domestic buffer for external fluctuations (e.g. democratic corporatism) seems to hold good, but the other factors making for ‘good’ or ‘bad’ internal governance, economic management and external policy forming are probably not so different from those in any other state. Small states show examples both of consensual, coordinated external action, and of division, confusion and misjudgement – including complicity in conflict. For a small player to ‘piggy-back’ on someone else’s (national or institutional) diplomatic agenda might seem a quick fix for weak strategy forming, but it risks general mal-adaptation and also an elite/people cleavage. In the last resort, a small state needs both an external diplomatic strategy realistically adapted to its situation, and a domestic strategy providing a buffer, in order to succeed in its diplomatic relations. Practical problems and potential solutions in this connection will next be explored (see also Chapters 4, 22 and 23 in this Handbook).

## **Key Points**

- Small states are best defined by a lack of relative power, rather than any simple yardstick.
- In modern times, they can alleviate their situation both by domestic buffering and by seeking external shelter from larger states and/or institutions.
- Some small nations enjoy high normative standing and influence in international society.

## **SMALL STATE PREOCCUPATIONS AND PRACTICES: TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY**

This section first addresses the typical imperatives and goals of small state diplomacy, and then some practical questions about how they are pursued.

### ***Imperatives and Generic Solutions***

The theoretical analysis provided above and everyday experience both suggest that approaching international relations ‘without the risk and expense of using force and preferably without causing resentment’ (the definition of diplomacy in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015) is especially pertinent for small states. They typically have few, or no, military means to physically defend their own territory (of the 20-odd UN member states with no standing army, Costa Rica is the largest with a population of 4.58 million and the others are all under 1 million<sup>2</sup>), and little prospect of getting what they want by coercion. Nor can it ever make sense for them to aim at autarky. Their primary aims of survival, independence, economic viability and preservation of identity, and their secondary aims of influence, image and status, depend alike on effective *communication* and interaction with the outside world.

The first function of small states’ diplomacy is to serve these primary goals of survival and wellbeing. Beyond these essentials, there are certain paths that it would be pointless

for small states' diplomats to try to follow. They cannot claim to be global powers, even if they share in global governance notably at the United Nations. They are unlikely to develop distinctive policies of their own on regions beyond their own neighbourhood; and when they join organizations (like the EU) that have collective policies on such matters, they will normally leave the lead to larger and more experienced states, though possibly intervening to help foster consensus.

Yet there are several international roles for which smallness is no disqualification, and often an advantage. The possibility has already been mentioned for small nations to make constructive, innovative proposals as 'norm entrepreneurs'. The harmless and impartial image that makes them credible also makes their most able diplomats and statesmen attractive candidates for international fact-finding missions, investigative commissions and attempts at mediation. In most institutional frameworks where small states assist in peace missions – the UN, EU and regional groupings elsewhere – their representatives are frequently selected as mission commanders/leaders to signal the good intentions of the enterprise. For example, three out of five of the first commanders of UN peacekeeping forces in the Congo (ONUC, 1960–1964) came from the small European non-allied states of Ireland, Norway and Sweden. Small states have further opportunities to play such roles and raise their profiles when they take a turn as the Presidency/Chairmanship in regional and functional organizations, and when hosting multilateral meetings on their territory. They can create their own international groupings for specific small-state causes: *vide* the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) created in 1991, whose 44 current members all face grave consequences from climate change.

Small states not wishing, or able, to ally with protectors often chose neutrality as an alternative during the Cold War, and some relatively influential smaller states such as Sweden, Finland and Costa Rica still hold this or a similar status (Karsh, 1989). Other

small nations have all or part of their territory recognized as de-militarized and/or neutralized, including Finland's Åland Islands and the Norwegian sovereign territory of Svalbard (Spitsbergen). Such statuses provide a good starting-point for norm entrepreneurship including mediation, but classic neutrality is becoming more unusual among the UN's members today.

### ***The Diplomatic Process***

We have seen above how important a small state's internal arrangements, including political culture and attitudes as well as capacities, can be for the quality of its external policies. As also noted, small states' performance is as diverse in this respect as in anything else; but, generally, external affairs will loom larger in public consciousness in small nations given their high levels of dependence. Larger portions of the national elite, including commercial, academic and cultural actors, will be exposed to external issues and activities. As a practical point, small state leaders often have to learn one or more foreign languages merely to communicate abroad, unless they belong to a wider language community like the British Commonwealth or la Francophonie.

Other characteristics of small state diplomacy flow directly from lack of resources (of all kinds). Foreign Ministries, diplomatic service personnel and the Embassy network abroad will all be limited in size. The single largest risk this entails is the 'capture' of a small state's external policy and diplomatic apparatus by ill-intentioned actors either inside or outside the state. This can happen when it is subjugated by a powerful neighbour, when the government is taken over by corrupt and criminal interests, or after some other form of coup (e.g. terrorists, mercenaries). The US invasion of Grenada in 1983 was, for example, triggered by concern about government 'capture' by revolutionaries, while a famous example of a non-state coup was the failed attempt by mercenaries led by

‘Mad Mike’ Hoare in the Seychelles in 1981. A milder alternative is for small states to ‘sell their vote’ by allowing an external actor, often an aid-giver, to dictate the position they take on some specific international issue where they have voting rights. There have, for instance, been extensive debates over ‘vote-buying’ in the International Whaling Commission, where anti-whaling activists from Sir Peter Scott of the World Wildlife Fund onwards have encouraged small nations to join in order to vote against commercial whaling, and pro-whaling nations like Japan have been accused of using aid as an incentive for them to switch votes.

A small diplomatic apparatus cannot indulge in specialization but must keep the overall interests of the state in view. Its members will be ‘generalists’ with little chance to delve deeply into issues, also because of lack of national research capacity and access to classified intelligence. When abroad, they will typically be multi-accredited to a set of neighbouring states or states plus institutions, making their attendance in any one place or series of meetings sporadic. Small states have, however, a number of ways of compensating for such difficulties, including making proportionally greater use of honorary consuls and other non-career appointments (Stringer, 2013). They can hire both national and foreign experts for ad hoc tasks. They may draw talents and personalities from outside the diplomatic service into their representative work, including cultural figures for image-building or business experts for promoting trade. Newly (re-)created small states may also signal a break with past régimes by seeking their representatives from untypical backgrounds. In the Baltic States in the early 1990s, returning emigrés and young, ‘untainted’ people were deliberately given many prominent posts including in diplomatic work.

Given good individual diplomatic skills, even of a generalized kind, a small-state representative can often achieve considerable personal status and impact in traditional as well as in multilateral/institutional diplomacy

(covered below). In a small diplomatic service, for instance, the Ambassador at Moscow may be the country’s only, or leading, Russia expert and will probably be left much leeway by his/her capital to act as he/she thinks best. Rotation practices also tend to be more flexible so that a small-state diplomat may stay longer in a given state or organization, accumulating experience that others respect and increasing the chance of easy access to decision makers. The non-threatening image of many small states – which, as noted above, makes them popular choices for mediation missions and peacekeeping commands – also helps their representatives get closer to policy shapers of all kinds. In practical terms, the limited size of their home-based staffs should reduce the time spent on internal management and often increases their reliance on local employees – also a help in penetrating the local environment, provided they are well chosen (see also Chapters 5, 6 and 12 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Lacking coercive power and exposed to hostile take-overs, small states rely more than average on (peaceful) diplomacy and successful communication.
- Their diplomatic systems are small and mainly non-specialized, but may draw upon strengths from different sectors and profit from skill, experience and a non-threatening profile.

### **SMALL STATES IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS**

In this section we examine how small states can utilize their small public administrations, and small diplomatic services, to defend their interests and have a say within one global (the United Nations) and one regional (the European Union) organization. Can small states overcome their limitations – structural, human, financial – to become active participants in the international system and

specifically, to influence decision-making in such organizations? What tools and means can they use? As a starting-point, they must acknowledge their limitations in military, economic and administrative capacity, and build on particular characteristics of small public administrations such as greater informality, flexibility and officials' freedom of manoeuvre. By practising correct prioritization, tactical bargaining, and cultivating expertise in institutional rules and dynamics, they may pass beyond the mere defence of core national interests to wield positive influence and provide services to the whole institution in such forms as consensus-forming, policy innovation and figure-heading external initiatives. The precise openings available to them will naturally differ from one institution to another, as the following examples show.

### *Small states in the UN system*

UN decision-making is dominated by the five permanent members of the Security Council, although all member states enjoy one vote each in the General Assembly. Small states have had to fight for their equal membership, and there are real inequalities in states' ability to influence UN decisions. For instance, none of the 28 countries with less than 500,000 inhabitants, and only four countries with populations of between 0.5 and 0.99 million, have been elected to the Security Council (Thorhallsson, 2012b). Table 24.1 shows the size of mission of a selected number of small states at the UN.

The International Relations literature accepts that many small states have to forge alliances, cooperate on a range of issues and lobby for particular, favourable solutions.

**Table 24.1 Selected small states in the UN: economic capacity and size of mission**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Population in thousands (2014)<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>GDP per capita (PPP) (2013)<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>No. of people in UN mission (2014)<sup>3</sup></i>
<b>10–5 million</b>			
Belarus	9,608	16,100	10
Switzerland	8,062	54,800	33
Jordan	7,930	6,100	9
Nicaragua	5,849	4,500	7
Kyrgyzstan	5,604	2,500	6
<b>5–1 million</b>			
Georgia	4,936	6,100	8
Liberia	4,092	700	7
Jamaica	2,930	9,000	8
Namibia	2,198	8,200	8
Estonia	1,258	22,400	7
<b>1 million</b>			
Djibouti	810	2,700	6
Guyana	736	8,500	4
Brunei	423	54,800	8
Seychelles	92	25,900	3
Tuvalu	11	3,500	4

<sup>1</sup> Population 2014 estimates

<sup>2</sup> GDP per capita in US dollars (PPP) 2013 estimates

<sup>3</sup> Numbers from member state country websites

Sources: CIA (2014a); CIA (2014b); United Nations (2014)

While analysts disagree on how far they directly influence UN decisions (Keohane, 1969; Waltz, 1986), research has illuminated the approaches most likely to help them succeed in international negotiations.

First, small states need to prioritize and focus their administrative and financial resources on their key interests. A clear focus on a particular issue or issues within a specific policy field gives more hope of success than an ambitious plan to alter the whole sector. For instance, the Nordic states have prioritized women's rights within the UN bodies dealing specially with human rights. Ireland's 2001–2002 membership of the UN Security Council (UNSC) was considered a success because of its pragmatic approach to prioritizing workloads. Its recognized achievements included its robust stance against the proposition to lift the relevant arms embargo when combatants in the Ethiopia/Eritrea conflict had reached an agreement, a position that eventually won the support of other UNSC members (Gillissen, 2006).

Secondly, a small diplomatic service needs to develop administrative competence in areas such as knowledge and initiative and coalition and leadership skills. These are of utmost importance in order to have a say in the complex structure of formal and informal channels of decision-making within the UN (Thorhallsson, 2012b). For instance, Sweden's preparatory work for its 1997–1998 Security Council period included the construction of a database of the issues on the agenda, noting the positions of different members. Subsequently, the knowledge compiled in the database was used to construct mini-seminars for the Swedish delegation (Rydberg, 1998). Another successful strategy is evident in Norway's preparation for membership of the Security Council, which included close cooperation with its knowledge institutions, such as universities, research institutes and non-governmental organizations (Buhaug and Voldhagen, 2001). This groundwork helped Norway to develop skills as a mediator in the Middle East and Sri Lanka and, more specifically, to play a constructive role

in negotiations between Eritrea and Ethiopia where the Norwegians took leadership in the Eritrea–Ethiopia Committee during their UNSC term (Kolby, 2003). Liechtenstein, one of the smallest UN members in terms of inhabitants, has built up a reputation regarding knowledge and expertise through initiatives such as the Princeton University-based Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination – with direct links to the Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein at the UN (Buhaug and Voldhagen, 2001). Hence, the long-serving officials at the Liechtenstein's Permanent Mission have built up capacity to take an active part in discussion on issues such as 'Civilians in armed Conflict' (United Nations, 2005) 'Women, Peace and Security' (United Nations, 2000) and 'Post-conflict Peacebuilding' within the UNSC (United Nations, 2008). Finally and as noted above, during its UNSC membership Ireland proved the value of skilful negotiation tactics, competence and autonomy of officials and informality – typical features of a small public administration/delegation. In the aftermath of 9/11, when the United States showed signs of uncertainty about carrying the issue of the terrorist attacks to the UNSC, the Irish delegation – informally – managed to persuade it to do so (Gillissen, 2006), thus strengthening the institution.

Thirdly, a small state requires a positive image in order to be respected and influential in a particular policy field. Recognized impartiality or a reputation as a norm entrepreneur in the field is of fundamental importance. For instance, as already noted, four of the Nordic states (Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland) have used 'social power' by acting to promote a particular view of the 'good society'. They are seen as norm entrepreneurs in fields of human rights, women's rights, participation in peace operations, humanitarian efforts and environmental protection (Ulriksen, 2006). They have a remarkable track record in supporting the UN, providing, for example, 25 per cent of all military personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping operations during the Cold War (Jakobsen, 2005).



Moreover, the Nordic states have used their positive image and good track record to fill important posts within UN bodies.

To conclude: by applying such features and exploring such options, small states can move beyond being merely reactive participants in the international community. Beyond the basic economic and administrative resources needed, however, they must also have political incentives and the ambition for an active role in the UN. They must be willing to spend time, effort and money on working within the UN institutions, and on finding their niches. Some states simply lack ambition to do so.

Meeting all these criteria is clearly easiest for rich, Western small states, and the best-known examples of developing states making similar impacts come from medium-sized to large ones such as South Africa and Mexico. It is noteworthy that in the Global Peace Index (Vision of Humanity, n.d.) which measures positive international contributions as well as non-violence, only three small(-ish) developing nations appear in the top 40: Bhutan (no. 16), Mauritius (24) and Laos (38), while all five Nordic states are in the top 11. However, diplomats from smaller developing states can stand out through their individual prestige and achievement, such as President Óscar Arias of Costa Rica, a Nobel Peace prize winner for his mediation in Guatemala. Non-Western small states can also create their own influence networks aimed mainly or partly at coordination within the UN, such as AOSIS (already mentioned), the group of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the 105-member Forum of Small States (FOSS) created by Singapore as an engine of its proactive diplomacy (Foreign Ministry of Singapore, n.d.) (see also Chapter 40 in this Handbook).

### ***Small states and the European Union***

Small member states of the EU face structural disadvantages within its decision-making system. Besides their smaller

administrative resources these include fewer votes in the Council and the European Parliament, and limited ability to offer side-payment compared with the larger states. They are regarded as less valuable coalition members (Panke, 2010). Small states must face up to these and other administrative limitations in order to find the best ways to guarantee their interests. One of the main challenges small states face when joining the Union is to figure out how their small national administration, delegation in Brussels, and foreign service in general should work within the EU's decision-making processes. Most EU member states other than Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Spain and Poland can be considered 'small', though their sizes differ enormously. Table 24.2 indicates the capacity of a selected number of small states within the EU.

A small state's diplomats and public officials dealing with European affairs play a central role in adapting to the new reality of life in the EU: negotiating on a daily basis, on issues traditionally viewed as 'domestic affairs', with 27 member states and working within the Union's different institutions. For instance, Ireland did not start to benefit decisively from EU membership until it was administratively prepared to work efficiently within its decision-making processes. Greece has not reached this stage yet, but that has more to do with its history and tradition than its size (Thorhallsson, 2000; Hibou, 2005). On the other hand, there are some features of EU-style integration that directly compensate for some of the limitations of a small-state diplomatic service. Small-state citizens benefit from EU consular cooperation which offers them help (up to and including emergency evacuation) in states where their own country cannot maintain an embassy. The work of the EU's own delegations abroad benefits all members large and small. EU national embassies in each capital meet regularly to exchange information and draw up assessments, from which the smallest staff may have more to learn than others. When

**Table 24.2 Selected small states in the EU: economic capacity, size of foreign service and EU delegation**

Country	Population in thousands (2014) <sup>1</sup>	Total GDP (PPP) in million US\$ (2013) <sup>2</sup>	Size of foreign service (2001) <sup>3</sup>	No. of people in EU mission (2014) <sup>4</sup>
Malta	413	11,220	256	50
Luxembourg	521	42,670	206	40
Estonia	1,258	29,940	479	51
Ireland	4,833	190,400	820	60
Finland	5,269	195,500	1642	62
Slovakia	5,444	133,400	931	64

<sup>1</sup> Population 2014 estimates<sup>2</sup> GDP (PPP) 2013 estimates<sup>3</sup> Foreign service personnel – excluding personnel employed locally by missions abroad. Information collected in Foreign Ministries in April 2001<sup>4</sup> Number of personnel in permanent representation of member states*Sources:* CIA (2014a); CIA (2014b); European Union (2014); Thorhallsson (2004)

serving in the EU Presidency, or appointed as Special Representatives – or for other *ad hoc* functions and missions – small-state diplomats benefit both from the chance to raise their profiles and reputations, and from experiences that might never be open to their homeland in the normal way.

Interestingly, the number of people working in foreign services of small states is proportionally no higher than in the larger states (Thorhallsson, 2004). This underlines why small states must capitalize on qualitative features such as informal communications, flexible decision-making, and the autonomy of officials achieved by giving guidelines rather than instructions to negotiators (except when dealing with important issues). As also noted for the UN, they must prioritize a few policy fields and a few precise issues within these sectors. For instance, Luxembourg has placed most of its effort on securing good deals for its financial services (Thorhallsson, 2000); the Baltic States have done their utmost to adopt the euro and consolidate their security within the Union in response to a possible threat from the East (Rublovskis et al., 2013). Arguably, small states can afford to select and prioritize due to their narrower range of interests compared with larger states. In practice, they have no choice but to

do so given their small administrations and limited economic room for manoeuvre.

Officials in the EU delegations of small states in Brussels play a much wider role than their counterparts in the large states due to the smallness of the bureaucracy. They make ‘domestic’ policies in Brussels and participate in domestic policy-making. They operate using a horizontal approach within their national administration and are, for instance, in direct contact with the main policy-makers situated at the highest level within the administration. They negotiate on behalf of their states, while large states more often send negotiators from ministries. They need deep knowledge on their key national issues, but at the same time – with such small delegations – must be generalists with a good oversight of EU policies. They must often find their own way of participating in the EU decision-making, managing without constant guidance from ministries. A certain amount of trust seems to be built into the small administration because of close networks, and officials in the EU delegation are often given unofficial autonomy to take decisions. All these features allow quicker and more efficient decision-making, and help small states cope with the increased burden of EU membership. Moreover, they

make small states attractive partners for other members, and the European Commission finds them easier to deal with than the larger states with their complex bureaucracy. Thus a single official from a small state, dealing with a particular issue/proposal, may participate in domestic policy-making, take part in policy-making in the Commission, negotiate on behalf of his or her state within different EU institutions in Brussels, take part in the final decision-making in a working group in the Council, advise his/her minister in the Council itself, decide the criteria for implementation in the comitology structure of the Commission, and advise on the implementation of the directive at home. There is a much clearer division between policy-making, negotiation and implementation in larger states (Germany, France, Britain, Italy and Spain) (Thorhallsson, 2000). Interestingly, in the late 1990s, the Netherlands (the largest of the smaller member states at the time) made a special attempt to adapt to these working practices of the other small members. Small states' successes include their ability to secure beneficial deals and manage and implement the EU's most complex and time-consuming policies, the Regional Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Small states try to cooperate with the Commission and influence the initial stages of drafting proposals. They are in greater need of having the Commission on their side during negotiations in the Council, while larger states tend to be more confrontational towards the Commission (Thorhallsson, 2000; Grøn, 2014). At present, the President of the Commission and six out of seven of its Vice-Presidents come from small states (see homepage of the Commission). This places them in a pivotal position within the Commission, but does not mean the Commission automatically favours them when mediating between competing interests within the Union. Small states must still fight their corner with the Commission on specific issues, as described above. In the Council, small states can take as firm an

initial stand as any others, bidding for an early compromise, in order to avoid being pushed into a corner where they would not be regarded as having the same veto right as the big players. They use different, more flexible tactics on issues not of direct interest to them. Here they prefer so-called package deals where they can play off their support in return for beneficial solutions in their own fields of interest (Thorhallsson, 2000; Panke, 2010). This happens, for instance, during the annual deals within the CAP, and in long-term policy planning within the EU's Regional Policy (Thorhallsson, 2015).

To summarize: small states have had to enhance particular features of their national administration and diplomatic service in order to succeed within the complex structure of EU decision-making. They face particular structural disadvantages due to their smallness, but have found ways to limit the effects and to secure their interests within the Union (see also Chapter 25 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Despite resource constraints, small states can gain influence as well as protection in multilateral institutions by correct prioritization, personal skills and adaptability, flexibility and holding institutional posts where available.
- This is more difficult, but not impossible, for small developing states.

### **CONCLUSION**

Small states start with disadvantages that require them to combine internal strengths with external skills merely in order to survive. Except in the world's most peaceful regions, they must expend considerable effort just to build the relationships that lend them strategic, economic and political shelter. For external success in such basic tasks, and even more if seeking positive international

influence, a small nation needs domestic administrative capacity, an enterprising foreign service, and a deliberate decision to spend money and take an active part in defending its interests in all available frameworks. It must develop special, qualitative skills and mobilize all human assets to make up for limitations inter alia in specialized knowledge. The modern world, however, offers some improved conditions and options for well-prepared small players. Integrative regional organizations like the EU give small members many of the benefits of absorption in a larger political unit while respecting their sovereignty and giving them a stronger voice (and range of roles) than realist arithmetic would dictate.

The international community gives a lot to small states, in these ways and also in terms of development aid and disaster relief. What some, if not all, small states give back is a range of positive international contributions, both material and intellectual, including not least the skills of their diplomats. More subtly, they force the development of new multilateral forms of governance (both state and non-state), as much by their needs as by their typically above-average enthusiasm for institution building. As the world becomes more multi-polar and multi-layered, the skills small states have developed for survival may be ones that more and more national diplomats will need to master.

## NOTES

- 1 The authors are grateful for invaluable research assistance from Tómas Joensen at the Centre for Small State Studies, University of Iceland.
- 2 These nations include European micro-states (Andorra, Liechtenstein, Vatican City) and island states in the Caribbean (Grenada, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines) and the Pacific (Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Samoa etc). Six others – Haiti, Iceland, Mauritius, Monaco, Panama and Vanuatu – have limited quasi-military institutions such as coastguards.

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# European Union Diplomacy

Michael Smith

## THE EVOLUTION OF EUROPEAN UNION DIPLOMACY

From the very beginning of the European integration project in the 1950s, there was a need for external representation and the development of quasi-diplomatic practices. Thus the European Coal and Steel Community developed representation in relation to major international partners such as the United States and, following the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the emerging European Economic Community was inevitably required to initiate systems of representation and external action in areas of international trade and economic action more broadly (Spence 2006a, 2009; Smith M. 2006). With the establishment in the 1960s and 1970s of a wide-ranging EEC development policy, there was also a need for new forms of representation, communication and negotiation in relation to developing countries, in the framework of the Lomé Conventions. At the same time, Member State diplomacies had become more coordinated

through the mechanism of European Political Cooperation (EPC), which had originally been a purely informal process of consultation but which was progressively expressed more formally, in particular in the Single European Act (SEA) of 1986 (Nuttall 1992).

The situation was further consolidated with the Maastricht Treaty of 1991 (entering into force in 1993), which established the framework of a Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and even the potential for a common defence policy. The Treaties of Amsterdam and Nice (1997 and 2001) further developed the position, especially in the case of Amsterdam, which established the new role of High Representative for CFSP and also regularised the budgetary provisions – without, however, establishing an independent ‘foreign office’ to support the HR. In this period as well, the EU developed a growing network of Special Representatives to deal with particular regions of conflict, for example the Great Lakes region in central Africa and the Middle East. The growing network of

delegations remained firmly under the control of the Commission, and focused particularly on economic, commercial and development diplomacy (Bruter 1999). After the Nice Treaty, the Convention on a Constitutional Treaty for Europe spent three years and a lot of time and effort on the development of new proposals for 'external action' on behalf of the Union, including the creation of an External Action Service and the further consolidation of the position of High Representative; although the resulting Constitutional Treaty was defeated in 2005 by referenda in France and the Netherlands, many of its proposals were carried forward to the eventual Lisbon Treaty, ratified in 2009.

The result was a hybrid system of deliberation, representation, communication and negotiation. In areas of economic, commercial and development diplomacy, there was a well-established and sophisticated framework for the conduct of a wide-ranging 'Community diplomacy', controlled by the Commission. In areas of 'high policy', encompassing the CFSP and then the Common Security and Defence Policy after the Treaty of Nice, the Member States were supreme, and only admitted the Commission on matters where economic sanctions or similar measures were contemplated (Spence 2006b, 2009–10). Even in the CFSP/CSDP framework, the Member States confined the role of 'European diplomacy' to what were seen as 'second order issues' (Hyde-Price 2007). But in a way this belied the reality, which was increasingly that of a multi-stakeholder and multi-institutional process in which 'European' institutions and Member States were both entangled over an increasing range of international issues. Not only this, but processes of 'Europeanisation' in the national foreign ministries of Member States increasingly meant that the boundary between what was 'European' and what was 'national' had become fuzzy and indistinct (Balfour et al. 2015; Bátorá and Spence 2015; Davis Cross 2007; Hocking and Spence 2005).

These processes and pressures were reflected in the provisions of the Lisbon

Treaty. Although there had been proposals in the Constitutional Treaty for a 'European Foreign Minister', this was amended in the Lisbon Treaty to become a strengthened High Representative, who would not only be the leader of the European External Action Service (EEAS) but would also serve as a Vice-President of the Commission, thereby linking two of the key dimensions of EU diplomacy. Whilst the HRVP was to be the day to day face of EU diplomacy, and the key source of proposals for diplomatic action, the new semi-permanent President of the European Council (PEC) was to represent the EU at his or her level (for example, at summit meetings with heads of state or government). When this was added to the existing external representation role of the President of the European Commission, and the residual role of the rotating Presidency of the European Council of Ministers, there were potentially several 'voices' entitled to speak on behalf of the Union – one of the issues was clearly whether they would speak in concert. The formal Decision establishing the EEAS had to be agreed not only by the Council and the Commission but also by the European Parliament; arguably, the Parliament ended up with leverage over the EEAS that went beyond any enjoyed by a national parliament, in particular in relation to personnel and budgetary matters (Missiroli 2010; Raube 2012).

The EEAS itself was to be composed of three elements. The first was personnel transferred from the External Relations Directorate-General of the Commission and from other relevant areas (for example, the development Directorate-General, since the EEAS would have responsibility for the strategic aspects of development policy). The second consisted of personnel transferred from the relevant parts of the Council Secretariat (which had been the source of support for the HR in previous years, reflecting an inter-governmental as opposed to a supranational perspective). The third was a new element: diplomats from national foreign ministries assigned to the EEAS for a defined period.

The HRVP post itself was filled by (Baroness) Catherine Ashton, who had previously served for a short while as Commissioner for Trade, but who had little experience of diplomacy in general. Although it shared some of the organisational features of the Commission, the EEAS was not like a Commission DG – and for that matter, not like most national diplomatic services. It encompassed not only elements of development policy, but also the Common Security and Defence Policy structures, including a Military Committee and a Military Staff.

Although the EEAS had responsibility for the ‘external action’ of the Union, this did not include trade diplomacy, which was left securely in the Commission – and which of course constituted a large proportion of the concrete diplomatic activity of the EU. Other areas, such as environmental diplomacy, were the subject of blurred lines of responsibility, which expressed themselves in a number of early disputes over who should represent Europe in international negotiations. The example of development policy, as already noted, was central and contentious, since it expressed not only an uneasy division of responsibility and resources, but also divergent views of the aims of development policy itself – was it concerned with a holistic model of development and sustainability, or with the political and security dimensions that might lead in very different directions (Smith M. 2013)?

At the same time as the EEAS was establishing itself in the face of internal challenges, it was faced by a series of external crises. In early 2011, the eruption of the ‘Arab Spring’ in North African countries challenged the EU in an area where it has strong historical and material interests, but also as it transpired in areas of civil unrest and conflict that exposed its lack of ‘hard power’ to back up any diplomatic initiatives. Increasing tensions in central and eastern Europe, culminating in the Ukraine crisis of late 2013 onwards, also subjected EU diplomacy to new challenges in its ‘neighbourhood’, whilst long-standing issues such as those over Iran’s nuclear programme

and human rights in China were also firmly on the agenda. Catherine Ashton compared the challenge to that of flying a plane while the wings were still being bolted on, and it is clear that the EEAS faced a major existential challenge from both within the Union and outside in its first three or four years (Smith M. 2015). As noted later, Ashton’s successor as HRVP, Federica Mogherini, attempted to strengthen the position of the EEAS and its role in coordinating EU external action.

### **Key Points**

- The development of European Union diplomacy has created a hybrid set of institutions, which reflect the provisions of successive treaties as well as the impact of external demands and processes of international change.
- The Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in 2009, made provision for a more unified system of external action, through the European External Action Service and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission, but it also gave rise to competition and tensions in relation to the representation of the Union and the allocation of resources.

### **THE NEW EU DIPLOMACY: DIPLOMATS AND PRACTICES**

As already noted, one of the key areas in which the EEAS represented a diplomatic innovation was in its personnel. With the eventual aim of balanced composition between ex-Commission personnel, ex-Council Secretariat staff and national diplomats on attachment, the EEAS went beyond even the provisions of many established international secretariats – and it was not long before the European Parliament was advocating the opening up of the service to its own officials, with eventual success. Two factors especially conditioned this process: first, the EEAS was being established in a world where national foreign offices (and of

course the existing Brussels institutions with foreign policy aspects) had not disappeared; and second, that as agreed during the establishment of the service in 2009–10, the aim was to do this within an assumption of budget neutrality. As a result, the HRVP and the service as a whole had to fight to obtain recognition of their needs for infrastructure and equipment as well as for personnel and for expertise in appropriate areas. This had inevitable effects on the attitudes and culture of the organisation, creating a defensive stance which only gradually produced a genuine *esprit de corps* (Carta 2012; Juncos and Pomorska 2013, 2014).

A specific personnel, organisational and cultural issue was focused on the EU delegations (Carta 2013; Drieskens 2012; Maurer and Raik 2014). These (see above) had developed as Commission outposts, staffed by Commission officials concentrated in areas such as trade and development policy (Bruter 1999; Spence 2006a). The Lisbon Treaty re-assigned them to be controlled by the EEAS, but given the terms of service of existing staff and budgetary limitations, there was no prospect of them being turned immediately into embassies covering the full spectrum of foreign policy concerns. Important parts of the activities, and of the budgets, controlled by delegations were also still subject to Commission rules and controls. Not only this, but in many capitals there was a need for the delegations to coordinate the activities of a number of Member State embassies, a process to which at least some embassies were likely to be resistant. As a result of the kinds of problems outlined above, there was a strong need from the outset to provide training for all of the EEAS' personnel – not simply to inculcate new and necessary skills, which was the dominant target, but also to begin to build a more homogeneous institutional culture among the 'new EU diplomats' (Davis Cross 2011; Duke 2009, 2012), both in Brussels and in the delegations.

The EEAS and the HRVP began their work in 2010–11 with a focus on innovation in

diplomatic practices, and a clear need to insert themselves into the process of deliberation and agenda setting within the Union's external policies (EEAS 2013; Hemra et al. 2011; Lehne 2011; Spence 2012; Vanhoonacker et al. 2012; Vanhoonacker and Pomorska 2013). There was already a well-established process, based in the Commission, of inter-service consultation, but the HRVP had a major task in firstly proving her credentials and secondly asserting her priorities against those of existing 'authorities'. This was underlined by the need for the Service to establish its own credentials in terms of information gathering and reporting (which in turn linked to the problems of the delegations outlined above). As a result, in her period of office Catherine Ashton had a distinctly mixed record of establishing her status and gaining the attention of those involved in the internal negotiations which precede any external initiatives – although she had some success in coordinating her position with that of DG Enlargement in dealing with the EU's 'neighbourhood', and in outlining the need for attention to the EU's 'strategic partners', there was much less in developing mechanisms of crisis management and making the case for new EU missions in areas of conflict. The overall focus, as Sophie Vanhoonacker and Karolina Pomorska have pointed out (2013), was on the EU as a 'soft power' and the kinds of deliberative policy-making that followed from that position. In many ways this was a continuation of the trends established under CFSP over the previous twenty years.

The post-Lisbon situation saw continuing tensions over the external representation of the EU, although the Treaty was supposed to have addressed at least some of the problems. At the summit level there was greater coherence, with the President of the Commission, the President of the European Council and the HRVP representing the Union in many contexts, joined as appropriate by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and by the President of the European Parliament. But beyond this elevated level, there remained a quite strongly differentiated pattern of

representation, depending on the issues at stake, the location of any event and the perceived allocation of competences as well as the simple credibility of the EEAS and the HRVP.

This mixed picture extended also to communication. Catherine Ashton came into her post promising ‘many voices, one message’, thus yielding to the reality that the EEAS could not hope to channel all of the communications emerging from the Union’s institutions and the Member States. The EEAS was able to assert itself through the reporting and analysis functions performed by the ‘new’ EU delegations, but in some cases traditional reporting patterns were difficult to disrupt (for example in areas of trade and development policy). Nonetheless, early evidence showed that the EEAS was becoming the major information and reporting ‘hub’ in the EU system (Bicchi 2012). On the ‘output’ side, there was clearly a benefit from the existence of a single voice on many matters of diplomacy, and coordination between the EEAS and other institutional actors (the PEC, the relevant Commission DGs for enlargement and for related areas) was a significant net gain.

Finally, it is clear that processes of negotiation surrounding EU diplomacy continued to demonstrate their multi-level character. Thus (not uniquely, but uniquely consistently) the EU’s external negotiating positions are a reflection of an internal negotiation not just about the aims, but also about the scope and the methodologies of the process. Increasingly, not only the Commission and the Member States but also the European Parliament are key actors in this process. Given the continuing focus of very large parts of the EU’s external policies on economic and commercial issues, it is also clear that many of the most material and influential negotiations are not undertaken by the EEAS or the President of the European Council, but by parts of the Commission. The EEAS and the HRVP have demonstrated in a number of cases (the Iranian nuclear question, relations with Serbia) that they are capable of handling extended, complex and politically charged negotiations, but equally

there have been indications that when negotiations also involve more direct methods of coercion, the EU can be sidelined.

These conclusions were borne out by the transition in 2014 from Catherine Ashton as HRVP to her successor, Federica Mogherini. Mogherini addressed the issue of fragmentation and competition between different elements of the EU’s external diplomacy by locating herself at the centre of a cluster of externally oriented directorates-general in the Commission, encouraged by the new President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and by establishing her office in the Commission building. At the same time, she initiated a major review of the EU’s external strategies, calling for a strengthening of coordination and ‘joined up’ policy-making, to remedy precisely the ailments identified in this section.

### **Key Points**

- The post-Lisbon diplomatic structures in the EU were innovative in respect of the composition of the EEAS and the ways in which it could enter into the diplomatic process. In the early days of the EEAS, this led to problems of imbalance between personnel originating from the Commission, the Council Secretariat and member State diplomatic services.
- As diplomatic practices evolved and experience was gained, a greater unity and the beginnings of a diplomatic culture emerged, but this did not eliminate tensions and ‘gaps’ in the EU’s system of diplomacy, nor did it prevent the EU from being marginalised in situations of conflict or coercion.
- The new HRVP appointed in 2014, Federica Mogherini, initiated a number of changes intended to address this situation.

### **THE DIRECTION AND IMPACT OF EU DIPLOMACY**

At least part of the underlying direction of EU diplomacy arises from the Union’s desire to



make itself felt in the world arena – and thus from what might be termed a process of self-realisation or identity construction. In a number of areas, such as development policy or international human rights, the EU has projected itself as a different type of power, and one with a ‘model’ to promote – a model that arises out of its origins as a process of regional integration and as a ‘civilian power’. This has not changed in essence with the development of the new EU system of diplomacy after Lisbon; indeed, one of the first messages to be put out by the EEAS was its intention to ‘do diplomacy differently’, by utilising the EU’s experience as a process of deliberation and integration and its character as a ‘normative power’ (Smith M. 2015). Despite this declared intention, many key types of EU diplomatic action would be familiar to students of national diplomacies. The EU has pursued ‘strategic diplomacy’ with the intention of positioning itself within the world arena and managing its relationships with major partners (Smith M. et al. 2015: Part III). It has pursued ‘structural diplomacy’ with the intention of effecting change in the legal, institutional and even the cultural systems of other partners (for example in sub-Saharan Africa) (Keukeleire et al. 2009; Smith M. et al. 2015: Part IV). Not surprisingly, it has continued to pursue commercial and economic diplomacy, which many would see as being the essence of its status as an international actor (Woolcock 2012). Increasingly, since the Maastricht Treaty, it has pursued diplomacy aimed at conflict prevention or crisis management – at stabilising situations that might threaten other EU interests in international stability or commerce (Whitman and Wolff 2012). Finally, it has pursued a very wide range of diplomatic efforts aimed at enhancing global governance, which many have seen as reflecting its underlying character as a governance system as well as its interests in the promotion of international regulation and institutions (Jørgensen and Laatikainen 2013).

These diplomatic efforts have been pursued in a variety of diplomatic arenas, raising issues

of the EU’s status and of the coordination of EU diplomacy (Koops and Macaj 2015). First, there is the arena of EU enlargement and ‘accession diplomacy’, which deals with those countries deemed suitable for eventual membership (Smith K. 2011). This often overlaps with ‘neighbourhood diplomacy’ – the pursuit of partnerships with those countries surrounding the EU which may never be members, but which (especially in Eastern Europe and the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean) have the capacity to generate a ‘ring of friends’ or a ‘ring of crises’ for the Union. In turn, ‘neighbourhood diplomacy’ can intersect with a key focus of EU diplomatic activity – the generation of stable partnerships with major established or emerging powers. In the case of Russia, this dimension of diplomatic strategy and ‘strategic partnership’ has come under immense strain as crises in Georgia, the Ukraine and elsewhere have erupted (Casier 2015; Smith K. 2011). The EU also pursues partnerships with strategic regional actors, for example with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or the Andean Group in Latin America (Hardacre and Smith 2009). And finally, EU diplomacy is to be seen in the context of multilateral bodies, most obviously the UN, but also especially in those with an economic commercial or environmental focus, such as the G-20, the WTO or the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Jørgensen and Laatikainen 2013; Laatikainen and Smith 2006). There is thus a constant need for effective coordination in EU diplomacy, not only within the Brussels institutions but also – as noted earlier – with the Member States, who have not relinquished their national interests and diplomatic strategies.

What does this mean for the impact of EU diplomacy, both in specific arenas and in terms of world order? As noted above, the EU has promoted itself as a ‘force for good’ and as a different type of diplomatic ‘power’. But it comes up against the contradictions inherent in the quest for a distinct and distinctive



EU diplomatic personality. Its dedication to a wide range of international norms can collide with its more material interests in economic or commercial advantage. Its desire for a distinct EU diplomatic presence has to contend with the continued vitality of national diplomacies within the Union. And its desire to be recognised as a 'power' alongside established and emerging powers within the world arena comes up against the limitations inherent in both its role as (still) a 'civilian' entity and the constraints exercised by the 'internal' diplomacy among member States and institutions. The questions raised about the EU's international credibility by major events such as the sovereign debt crisis and the conflicts in Eastern Europe only add to this impression. As noted by Hill and Smith (2011: Chapter 19), the EU is both a system of international relations in itself, a part of the general process of international relations and a (partial) 'power' in international relations, and this has inevitable implications for its impact on the world arena through diplomacy.

### **Key Points**

- The EU is often presented - and presents itself - as a distinctive type of diplomatic actor, pursuing distinctive aims and ambitions.
- It has developed a range of diplomatic frameworks based on 'strategic' and 'structural' diplomacy, and applies these in a variety of arenas.
- This produces problems of coordination and 'voice' for the Union. It also produces tensions between the EU's normative aims and the material reality of diplomatic bargaining in a number of linked arenas - bilateral, inter-regional and multilateral.

## **EXPLAINING AND UNDERSTANDING EU DIPLOMACY**

The diplomatic system of the EU remains a work in progress, but it is possible to outline some of the key theories and approaches that

have been deployed in order to understand and explain it. In this final section, four such approaches are outlined: institutionalist approaches; approaches focused on actors, stakeholders and roles; approaches based on power, persuasion and norms; and approaches focusing on globalisation and Europeanisation. These are not of course hermetically sealed categories; rather they represent a spectrum of ideas that can be used to explore a complex phenomenon reflecting not only the dynamics of the EU itself but also those of contemporary diplomacy more generally (Hocking and Bátora 2009; Hocking and Smith 2011; Smith M. et al. 2015).

Many scholars working from a base in EU studies have inevitably adopted a range of institutionalist perspectives. These range from explicitly historical institutionalist approaches focusing on the ways in which successive institutional bargains have shaped the development of institutional practices, through those that emphasise processes of rational choice reflecting the positions and preferences of key participants and the links between 'principals' and 'agents', to more sociological approaches showing the ways in which institutional actors develop understandings of the context and seek to behave appropriately within it (Adler-Nissen 2009, 2013; Duke 2011; Smith M.E. 2013). There is also space here for approaches rooted in bureaucratic politics, which show the ways in which bureaucratic actors compete for influence within a broader organisational and political context. Much of what has been said above about the emergence of successive stages in EU diplomacy, and then the tensions created by the establishment of the post-Lisbon institutions, falls well within the purview of these approaches.

Alongside these institutionalist approaches, and often linked to them, may be found approaches centred on actors, stakeholders and roles. As noted at the outset, the EU can be seen as a classic example - if not the original example - of 'multi-stakeholder' diplomacy, and of the kinds of diplomatic environments

that foster a need for ‘integrative diplomacy’ – but as we have seen, these processes are not always trouble-free in a complex institutional and political environment (Hocking and Smith 2011). When it comes to actors in the process, ideas of political or organisational leadership, of what has been described as ‘entrepreneurship’ (Hemra et al. 2011) and of the dispersal of agency can be highly relevant, providing not only a means of analysis but also a means of policy evaluation. The extent to which the EEAS has established itself as a credible or ‘useful’ interlocutor not only within but also outside the Union is strongly related to this set of approaches, and these in turn link to broader considerations of legitimacy which have not been resolved by the early years of the post-Lisbon structures, as well as to the issue of *esprit de corps* identified earlier (Adler-Nissen 2013; Juncos and Pomorska 2014).

If we broaden the focus rather more, to highlight issues of power, persuasion and norms in EU diplomacy, a range of approaches to diplomacy enter into the equation. Within a framework centred on power, it has been argued by structural realists that the EU is essentially a repository of ‘second order’ priorities on the part of Member States, who remain in control of the EU’s diplomatic system (Hyde-Price 2007). But it is clear that there are differences between Member States in terms of their capacity or willingness to redistribute power within the system, and that these matter when it comes to issues of delegation and legitimacy (see above). The EU is consistently classed as a repository of ‘soft power’ (Davis Cross and Melissen 2013) when it comes to international action, and there is no doubt that its capacity to attract and reward has played a major role in processes of enlargement – but there is clearly also a sense in which the EU’s diplomacy is limited by its inability to coerce (except by economic means). If diplomacy is viewed as the capacity to muster, manage and exert state functions in the world arena, then the EU only has this

capacity over a limited part of the spectrum, and this is bound to affect its diplomatic processes. The EU has also been cast as a ‘normative power’, gaining influence because of the ways in which it expressed a distinctive view of the good world; when it comes to the processes of diplomacy, this encapsulates a long term and sometimes rather abstract view of the EU’s status, which is sometimes difficult to marry with the exigencies of diplomatic life, but which undoubtedly affects the ideational context for EU diplomats (Whitman 2011).

Finally, the evolution of the EU’s system of diplomacy is inseparable from processes of globalisation and Europeanisation. At the global level, the EU system itself can be seen as responding to the increasing scope, scale and variety of diplomacy itself; as noted earlier, the EU is in itself a system of intensive and continuous diplomacy among the Member States and other actors, but it is also deeply embedded in a global system of diplomatic ideas, practices and structures (Bátora 2005). In a way, the hybrid status of the EEAS and the post-Lisbon structures more generally can be seen as an attempt to create a ‘state-like’ diplomacy in a world where the EU itself has gone beyond that, let alone other international actors. In this way, it is a reflection of the extent to which Member States and other actors are willing to delegate not only legal competence but also ideational autonomy to the EU system, creating what Jozef Bátora has described as an ‘interstitial’ organisation (Bátora 2013; Emerson et al. 2011; Wessel and van Voeren 2013; Wouters and Duquet 2012). At the same time, processes of Europeanisation have affected not only the creation of the EU’s diplomatic system, but also the (re)shaping of national foreign offices and diplomatic services in the EU – a powerful analysis of the impact of the EU system can be shaped on the basis that its key impacts have been on the national systems of Member States as much as on the European level, and that this is where we need to look for understanding (Balfour et al. 2015).

A number of approaches can be taken to the analysis and evaluation of EU diplomacy. These can focus first on institutions and their evolution, second on actors, stakeholders and roles, third on power, persuasion and norms, and finally on processes of globalisation and Europeanisation. No one approach can capture the full range and implications of EU diplomacy, which provides perhaps the original example of 'multi-stakeholder' processes.

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# American Diplomacy

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Diplomacy is the conduct of the external affairs of a state or, more strictly, of its government. American diplomacy is different from that of most countries. The whole of American society – the ‘nation’ – is in principle involved in it, both as the source of the interests and the ideas on which the country’s policy toward others is based and even as the body that most authentically expresses it. Through the individual and collective activity of its members, it even helps to implement it. Diplomacy, for Americans, thus is not peripheral. Nor is it central in their lives, however.

The ‘first American diplomat’ – the wily and worldly Benjamin Franklin, a former colonial agent in London – no longer represented his former monarch, George III, but instead a sovereign citizenry, the new American people. When in Paris negotiating the French alliance and eventual independence for the United States, he made the most of Americans’ actual and perceived ‘plain’ republican qualities. Franklin, unique in his

virtues and vices, is nonetheless an American exemplar – a model for the citizen-statesman-diplomat as well as inventor and sage.<sup>1</sup> He was the American Self abroad. As Thomas A. Bailey has written in *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, ‘Every citizen in a democracy like the United States is a diplomat, whether he knows it or not’.<sup>2</sup>

Diplomacy is not a role, however, that many Americans are familiar with. They may even oppose it. Diplomacy is not for Americans, despite Franklin’s prime example, a ‘typical’ profession. It is one that is viewed with suspicion as elitist, pseudo-aristocratic, and oversophisticated. Its practitioners have been looked upon as deracinated and effete, and, most damagingly, even as disloyal. The charges made against the US State Department, particularly its ‘China hands’, by Senator Joseph R. McCarthy (Republican, Wisconsin), who feared communist influence in American foreign policy, reflects what has been called the recurrent ‘paranoid’ strain in American politics. That was in the early



Cold War years. The tension between professional diplomacy and populist democracy has persisted, however. Not only conservative groups such as the Tea Party but also advocates of radical change harbor suspicions of the *Corps diplomatique*. Ambassador Stephen W. Bosworth, speaking as the retiring dean of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy and reflecting on the history of US diplomacy and his own decades of service in it, observed that ‘diplomacy does not come easily to a democracy – at least to this one’.

Unlike most European and many other countries, the United States does not have a well-defined, well-established diplomatic tradition. It has been suggested that it even has an ‘anti-diplomatic’ culture, held while at the same time ‘accepting in practice many diplomatic norms and practices’.<sup>3</sup> Among the contributing factors to this duality of world outlook are the country’s geographical remoteness, its revolutionary heritage, its immigrant composition, and also its singular nationalism – or ‘exceptionalism’, as it is nowadays often called by admirers and critics alike. Most profoundly, it can be seen and here will be explained, American diplomacy is shaped by the country’s democratic character.

The challenges that democracy, in general, faces in conducting external relations have long been recognized. Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* (1835) posited that ‘only with difficulty can democracy coordinate the details of a great undertaking, fix on a design, and afterwards follow it with determination through obstacles’. Moreover, democracy cannot plan discreetly. ‘It is hardly capable of combining measures in secret and of patiently awaiting their result’. Its qualities are the opposite of those that ‘in the long term make a people, like an individual, in the end dominate’.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, as a historical fact, the United States did surely come to ‘dominate’ – by stages, the North American continent, the Western Hemisphere, the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans,

and indeed, through its influence, much of the rest of the terrestrial globe. The specific role of diplomacy as a contributor to such hegemony is not fully apparent or sufficiently acknowledged. Rather, the causes of the nation’s growth and influence are most often seen to lie in the abundance of its resources, the increase of its population, its *laissez-faire* economy, its technological inventiveness, and, perhaps above all, the force of its military and naval arms. It was these factors, demonstrably, that supported the international leadership that the United States of America exercised in the several decades following the Second World War. With such strengths, it could be assumed, diplomacy was not really needed.

The diplomatic factor in American history is in truth difficult to isolate, and therefore to weigh and to assess. Part of the problem is conceptual – the lack of a clear distinction between ‘diplomacy’ and ‘foreign policy’.<sup>5</sup> The former, in the view of George F. Kennan and many other American diplomats, perhaps especially older ones and those steeped in European diplomatic tradition, is the proper function – indeed the dedicated province – of a professionally trained career service – knowledgeable, expert, meritocratic, and, frankly, exclusive.<sup>6</sup> The latter, the substance of foreign policy, is considered the responsibility of a government which, whatever political party may be in control, establishes the goals, decides upon the strategy, and must raise the resources for a country’s undertakings abroad. Against this conventional view, that diplomats shouldn’t and don’t make policy, there is the growing realization, shared by many diplomats serving abroad today, and perhaps consular officers among them most of all, that, especially in the absence of well-articulated, overarching national strategy and in a globalizing world, they in their constant interaction with foreign citizens ‘make foreign policy’ every day.<sup>7</sup>

In the United States, both diplomats in the field and officials working administratively at home are subject to democratic control.

The people's will is normally exercised indirectly, through the federal government machinery, and, more remotely, through the electoral system. But it also can be felt very immediately, as in situations of national emergency – the aftermaths of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 or the Al Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon in September 2001, for example. Public opinion – emotion as well as conviction – is a powerful influence in the making of US policy, including the way the country's representatives carry it out. The national 'mood', with its longer-term swings between isolationism and interventionism, as well as sudden shifts of attitude, therefore contribute to 'American diplomacy' too, along with the government establishment.<sup>8</sup> Diplomats need always to be mindful of their ultimate master, the American people and the *vox populi*.

Their focus therefore has to be inward as well as outward. Consuls, appropriately, provide 'citizen services' for traveling Americans. Ambassadors, when on home leave, now are encouraged to speak to local audiences. For Kennan, the demanding American public was an unwelcome presence and at best a distraction. For others with a longer and wider, a more historical view, including Thomas Bailey, democratic interest is the very source of diplomatic legitimacy and, because of the public's involvement, American diplomatic leverage.

### Key Points

- American diplomacy arose from the 'nation' rather than from the state – hence citizens as well as diplomats may be involved in it.
- There remains a tension between the elite and meritocratic tradition of professional diplomacy and an 'anti-diplomatic' populist tendency in American culture.
- The American lexicon does not sharply distinguish between 'diplomacy' and 'foreign policy'. US diplomats, including consuls, in fact sometimes *make* – as well as simply carry out – foreign policy in their daily work abroad.

- Public opinion, and active democratic involvement, is the very foundation of US diplomatic leverage. Without it, American diplomacy is weaker.

## STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

The constitutional framework of the United States makes the determination of foreign policy and the management of diplomacy uniquely – 'exceptionally' – difficult. Its checks-and-balances arrangement, with authority divided ('shared') between the executive branch and the legislative branch, can produce either positive consensus or complete deadlock. As legal scholar Edward S. Corwin famously observed, the US Constitution, with regard to control over America's foreign relations, is 'an invitation to struggle'.<sup>9</sup> Article II, section 2, of the Constitution recognizes the President as Commander in Chief of the armed forces and gives him authority, with the advice and consent of the Senate (a two-thirds majority vote required), to make treaties, and also to appoint ambassadors, ministers, and consuls – all needing Senate approval. Article I, section 8, of the Constitution gives Congress as a whole – a partial successor to the Continental Congress which had authority over *all* policy – the power to collect taxes, regulate commerce, control naturalization, define and punish piracy, declare war, raise and support armies, provide for and maintain a navy, call for a militia, and suppress insurrections and repel invasions. The Founding Father James Madison considered Congress to be at the helm of the ship of state. He himself served in the House of Representatives, where 'All bills for raising Revenues shall originate' (Article I, section 5). The chamber holds the key power of the purse, and thus also can assert itself fiscally against the Presidency – as it did in the 1790s during the struggle over ratification of the commercial treaty that Chief Justice John Jay negotiated with Great Britain.

The separation of powers is just one structural complication. The federal system,

with powers distributed between the central government and the fifty states that now make up the United States, is another. Article X of the Bill of Rights – the Tenth Amendment – declares: ‘The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or’ – in a provision never to be overlooked – ‘to the people’. Although the right of the national government in Washington to conduct the foreign relations of the United States is clear, and generally unchallenged, there are many ways, short of negotiating treaties and addressing war and peace issues, in which individual states and even municipalities as well as their citizens can, and increasingly do, become involved in America’s international transactions and associations. These have included ‘twinning’ relationships with foreign provinces or cities and towns, cultural and educational exchanges, and, especially, business development activities, including the opening of trade-and-investment promotion offices abroad. Subnational authorities also have taken positions on policy issues, with official though non-binding resolutions regarding controversial matters ranging from nuclear weapons to immigration and climate control. Increasingly, their activities and expressions, even if contrary to or well in advance of national policy, are tolerated.<sup>10</sup>

Within the federal administration in Washington itself, there is the complicating fact of an elaborate inter-agency process. There now is a vast multiplicity of government departments and agencies dealing with all aspects of foreign policy, and of diplomacy. Besides the Department of State, these include the US Trade Representative, the Department of Defense, the Central Intelligence Agency and also, on varying occasions, the Treasury, Commerce, Agriculture, Labor, Justice, Energy, and Homeland Security departments – as well as the all-reviewing Office of Management and Budget.<sup>11</sup> Especially when the jurisdictions

of these departments and agencies overlap, as they frequently do, a process for sorting out roles and responsibilities is required. Centralization is an inevitable result. When competing bureaucracies disagree, control tends to gravitate to the President and White House, whose own bureaucratic structure and staffing – and also international roles – have expanded considerably.

In the national security field, the central coordinating mechanism is the National Security Council (NSC), established by act of Congress in 1947. The National Security Advisor, located in the White House and reporting directly to the President, oversees a multi-layered system of committee work – that of the Principals Committee at the Cabinet level and, just beneath it, that of the Deputies Committee where much of the preparatory work is done. At lower levels there are numerous inter-agency working groups dealing with particular assigned tasks. Moreover, although this process is organizationally confined to the executive branch, it is subject, at almost every level, to outside influences – from congressmen, lobbyists, and also foreign diplomats whose countries’ interests may be affected.<sup>12</sup>

The prominence of the National Security Council has been enhanced by its increased responsibility for foreign economic policy along with its statutory responsibility in the defense field – a steady growth that has suggested to theorists the prevalence in the United States of a ‘national security culture’, nourished by the resources of the ‘military-industrial complex’. The undoubted increase of military considerations in US policymaking strongly conditions the organization and also the decision-making processes of American diplomacy. The challenges of the Second World War followed by the onset of the Cold War, with the Korean War and a continuing conflict in Indochina, and in 1962 the ‘eyeball to eyeball’ showdown with the Soviet Union over its shipment of nuclear missiles to Cuba, placed a premium on ‘crisis management’ – and decision making in

the White House.<sup>13</sup> During the Vietnam War, critics decried the rise of an ‘Imperial Presidency’, and a correlative decline of Congress, which sought, with only partial success, to restore a constitutional balance with the War Powers Resolution (1973).<sup>14</sup> The executive–legislative ‘struggle’ that Corwin described is not yet resolved.

Furthermore, the struggle takes place in an increasingly embittered political context. American elections are regular and frequent, with nation-wide elections for the presidency occurring every four years and elections for Senate seats (six-year terms) and House of Representatives seats (two-year terms) occurring every two years. At all levels, if not in every jurisdiction, there is partisanship, which can carry over into international relations when foreign policy matters are discussed. President George Washington in his Farewell Address (1796) warned against the spirit of ‘party’ and with particular emphasis on the dangers posed by foreign influence and undue popular involvement with external issues. By tradition, American politics is supposed to stop ‘at the water’s edge’. After the Second World War, an explicit doctrine of ‘bipartisanship’ in foreign policy developed. In recent years, however, partisan Republican–Democratic discord in Congress has threatened the reaching of agreement even on basic matters such as the national budget – creating an incentive for independent action by the president, presuming to act with popular support.

So extreme has the separation of the legislative function and the executive function become that legal scholar Michael J. Glennon has posited the emergence in the United States of ‘double government’: a hyperpartisan, dysfunctional Congress remote from a security-conscious, centralizing Presidency – the one irresponsible, the other unaccountable.<sup>15</sup> Surely neither anarchy nor autocracy will result, however. The formal structure of the Constitution, upheld by the federal judiciary, and the perdurance and balancing of economic and other interests in the country

itself assure stability and continuity, if not necessarily comity.

Even in a difficult field such as international trade policy, consensus is achievable. Congress, exercising its power to regulate commerce, in June 2015 finally gave the executive branch Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), enabling the administration of President Barack Obama to negotiate trade agreements – a Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP) – that cannot be modified, after the diplomacy is done, by legislative amendments. That does not resolve the problem of determining what the actual substance of US trade policy demands should be, however. Although the executive branch is generally regarded as the more ‘efficient’ part of the bifurcated American governmental system, in a complex area such as trade, where diverse interests must be accommodated, bureaucratic politics rather than central direction and rational planning may determine the bargaining positions that Trade Representative Michael Froman and his team of negotiators may take.

### **Key Points**

- The US Constitution, which separates executive and legislative powers, is ‘an invitation to struggle’ over American foreign relations.
- The federal system – the Tenth Amendment – reserves to the states and people opportunity for direct international involvement.
- The multiplicity of federal departments and agencies necessitates inter-agency coordination, a result of which is increased centralization under the National Security Council and management by White House presidential staff.
- Partisan discord between Republicans and Democrats in Congress has increased incentives for independent foreign policy action by the president.
- The framework of the Constitution, upheld by the judiciary, and the reality and mutual balance of diverse interests in the United States, and within the federal bureaucracy itself, constrain as well as inform American policy and diplomacy.

## POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

There never has been an overall American 'foreign policy' or all-encompassing 'grand strategy'. However, there are certain basic dispositions of the United States in its relationships with the world that still shape what its statesmen, and its ordinary citizens, think should be done – and not done – abroad. A philosophical distinction often is made between Realism and Idealism – that is, between the defense of American *interests* through the exercise of power and the promotion of American *values* by reason and moral example. The Founding Fathers, concerned about the very survival of the new state, were by conviction and of necessity realists, even while imagining, as did Thomas Paine in *Common Sense* (1776), that Americans, in their remote and favored situation, might 'begin the world over again'.

President Washington, in the Farewell Address, commended to his fellow countrymen 'the Great Rule of conduct for us, in regard to Foreign Nations', that 'in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible'. Thomas Jefferson, in his first inaugural address (1801) as president, epitomized this as 'Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations – entangling alliances with none'. Washington, fearful of a risk to the 'American' identity, had been concerned that a people that 'delivers itself to habitual sentiments or love or of hatred toward another becomes a sort of slave to them'. Jefferson, equally cautious, introduced a further maxim of US policy – that of reciprocal obligation: 'That Americans ought never to demand privileges from foreign nations in order not to be obliged to accord them themselves'. As Tocqueville observed: 'These two principles, whose evident justice easily puts them within reach of the crowd, have simplified the external policies of the United States extremely'.<sup>16</sup> The principles underlie American thinking about the world to this day.

Trade expansion and political non-entanglement are what the diplomatic historian

Thomas Bailey characterizes as 'traditional or fundamental' American foreign policies. Along with these must be included the Monroe Doctrine (1823), the 'hands off' warning to Europeans against interfering with the nations of the Western Hemisphere, with whose movements the United States is 'more immediately connected'. They should include as well the Open Door Policy seeking a 'fair field' of competition for American businessmen, particularly in China.

With the Spanish–American War came a shift from a predominantly Realist foreign policy to a more Idealist one. American power by then was greater, which made American moral goals seem more achievable. The US intervention in 1898 in Cuba, weakly held by Spain, was motivated by popular humanitarian feeling as well as by strategic calculations – notably those of Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan and those of Theodore Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Roosevelt's suggestion of exercising an 'international police power', made with regard to the Dominican Republic when he later became president, had idealistic as well as realist elements in it. The apogee of idealism in American foreign policy came with the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, who expressly sought to replace the 'balance of power' with a 'community of power' and to rely primarily on 'the organized opinion of mankind' to uphold the new world order he envisioned, and articulated in the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Both the Realist school and the Idealist school of American thought have increasingly taken account of international institutions, the former having a skeptical and mainly instrumental view of their utility and the latter seeing them as embodiments of universalizable principles, even as proximate systems of global government. Realist thinking and idealist thinking both have, to use the political-scientific term, constructivist implications. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's concept of the 'Four Policemen' (America, Britain, China, and Russia) working together within the 'United Nations' wartime coalition to



maintain international peace and security and then to go on to promote human rights, justice, and progress in the postwar period combined realist and idealist approaches. The result was a constructive achievement: a still-functioning world organization, the United Nations.

President Richard Nixon's and Henry Kissinger's later 'triangular' diplomacy, which was premised more realistically on the self-equilibrating rivalries of the United States, People's Republic of China, and Soviet Union, made possible greater control of Cold War relationships, including the vital strategic nuclear-weapons balance. Ideally, it laid a diplomatic foundation for 'a new structure of peace'.<sup>17</sup> Jimmy Carter and, more dramatically, Ronald Reagan as US presidents proposed not just the limitation, or deep reduction, of nuclear weapons but their total elimination. President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), and his adamant defense of it as a more rational and humane alternative to Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) during the Reykjavik Summit in October 1986, contributed, as even Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev subsequently acknowledged, to the ending of the Cold War.<sup>18</sup>

The US government's Cold War era policy of 'containing' Soviet and also Chinese communist expansion allowed for varying strategies – or 'implementing' policies, as Bailey characterizes the government's designs for carrying out more 'fundamental' policies.<sup>19</sup> John Lewis Gaddis, in *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, demonstrates how, on the basis of differing perceptions of the Soviet threat and also differing assessments of the strengths of the United States itself, 'containment' strategy shifted between *symmetrical*, or site-specific and direct, and *asymmetrical*, or non-site-specific, and more indirect.<sup>20</sup>

There have been wide alternations of strategy and tactics in other areas of American foreign policy as well. In the fields of development assistance and trade-policy negotiations, for instance, 'bilateral' or 'multilateral' lines

of diplomatic approach have at different times been preferred. Even in the field of human rights, where commitments tend to be universal and 'absolute', there can be considerable variation in strategy and tactics, ranging from international legal action to naming and shaming, to 'quiet diplomacy', and to the silent use of economic and other forms of leverage. In the foreign policy and the diplomacy of the administration of President Obama, which can broadly be described as 'engagement', implementing steps of many kinds have been taken not just by the US military or even only by the government itself but also by private persons and organizations operating under government contract and also individuals and groups acting voluntarily. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called this whole-of-society approach 'Civilian power'.<sup>21</sup>

### Key Points

- US foreign policy has been a combination of Realist, or *interests*-based, approaches and Idealist, or *values*-based, approaches, with the latter being expressed more fully and frequently as American power has increased.
- Washington's Farewell Address, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Open Door Notes are 'traditional or fundamental' policy statements that continue to have influence; 'implementing' policies, with their associated strategies and tactics, are designed by presidential administrations to carry out such fundamental policies.
- The Cold War national security policy of 'containment', with its alternating *symmetrical* (direct) and *asymmetrical* (indirect) strategies of opposition to aggression, allowed US diplomacy as well as to shift focus from place to place.
- The Obama administration's 'engagement' policy draws upon society's civilian power as well as the government's own personnel and resources.

### PRINCIPALS AND AGENTS

Foreign affairs are conducted not just by diplomats – that is, by delegated representatives of governments. Leaders – the policymakers



themselves – increasingly also are involved. The interrelationships of diplomats and policymakers – agents to principals and vice versa – is ‘inherently ambivalent’, reflects Ambassador Monteagle Stearns, a US diplomatic veteran. ‘Diplomacy is both servant to and master of foreign policy: servant because the diplomat’s role is to carry out the instructions of political policymakers, master because what the diplomat cannot accomplish, policymakers will usually have to do without’.<sup>22</sup> Diplomats are on the spot, and are in the best position to judge what will work and what will not.

For generations, a widespread assumption among Americans was, as noted, that the country did not need a cadre of professional diplomats at all. Partly this was because of the Revolutionary inheritance: the break from the European states-system, including its social institution of diplomacy. The Washington–Jefferson policy of keeping *political* connections to a minimum contributed to this ‘anti-diplomatic’ bias. The idea of US diplomatic representation in European capitals was, therefore, almost un-American, especially as profitable trading relationships, it was believed, could be developed without formal representation – or with the assistance only of consuls located in a few foreign ports and commercial centers.

The early American consuls represented business (and themselves) perhaps more than they did the US government in their substantive work, even though they were politically appointed. Generally untrained and also poorly compensated, they relied mostly on fees they could collect. Most importantly, they were very loosely supervised. Like America’s diplomats, even fewer in number, consuls functioned in the absence of overall strategic direction or a comprehensive, spelled-out national policy. Their decisions were largely *ad hoc*. The historian Robert Beisner in a compelling essay, *From the Old Diplomacy to the New*, has argued that the United States did not even have a foreign ‘policy’, in the sense of a forward-looking

and uniform set of guidelines for its representatives abroad until well into the decade of the 1890s.<sup>23</sup>

Gradually, the numbers, and also the status, of American citizens appointed to foreign posts grew. The majority still were consuls, many of them party spoilsmen. The earliest US legations, headed by ministers, were established in France (1779), the Netherlands (1781), Spain (1783), the United Kingdom (1785), Portugal (1791), Prussia (1797), Russia (1809), Sweden (1818), and Mexico (1825). Occasionally, high-level political envoys also were dispatched. When President Jefferson in 1803 began negotiations leading to the eventual purchase of Louisiana, he did so by sending his fellow Virginian and friend, James Monroe, as a special envoy to assist Robert R. Livingston, the regular American minister in France. The country of Italy, following its unification, received a US minister in 1861. Boston’s Charles Francis Adams, the American representative in Britain during the Civil War, was formally Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary. There were no US *ambassadors* – with that rank and title – at all until 1893, when former Secretary of State Thomas A. Bayard was sent as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Court of St James’s. The administrative establishment of the Department of State in Washington, DC, itself was tiny, as was its budget – especially in relation to that of some other departments – even then.

Many American presidents – including Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, and Abraham Lincoln in the nineteenth century – have conducted diplomacy themselves. They have done so especially from the time of President Theodore Roosevelt, whose White House was a veritable ‘court’.<sup>24</sup> The new centrality and prominence of the American presidency in international affairs, though partly a product of personality, was more fundamentally a result of the rise of the United States to the position of ‘world power’.<sup>25</sup> Henceforward it was easier for American leaders not only to express the country’s ideals and protect its

interests through their words and decisions but also to be much more active in, personally, promoting them.

President Woodrow Wilson marked a further new phase of American diplomacy – departing from Washington’s ‘Great Rule’ and, some critics thought, even the framework of the US Constitution – by traveling to Europe in 1919 to participate directly in the Paris Peace Conference. A generation later, President Franklin Roosevelt, as Commander-in-Chief in wartime, traveled for meetings in Casablanca, Cairo, Tehran, and Yalta in order both to concert allied war plans and to discuss postwar aims. Had Roosevelt lived, he would have attended the Conference on International Organization in San Francisco, at which the United Nations Organization was born. His successor, Harry Truman, went to Germany after its surrender to join with Marshal Joseph Stalin and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, replaced by his Labour Party successor Clement Attlee, at the Potsdam Conference. These meetings were the origins of Churchill’s term, ‘summits’ – for meetings atop the highest peak of the global power range<sup>26</sup> (see Chapter nineteen in this Handbook).

Since that time, particularly following the 1955 Geneva Summit at which General Dwight D. Eisenhower as US President was present for the United States, presidential engagement in ‘summit diplomacy’ has become almost commonplace. Diplomats, generally less prominent than before, do serve in key advisory and supporting roles, including that of summit ‘sherpas’. Other American ‘principals’ – the Secretary of State and often the National Security Advisor as well as the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Treasury, and other Cabinet members too – more and more engage in high-level international meetings on a range of policy subjects for which they are responsible.

Summits themselves are variable. They can include both friendly and unfriendly countries. There is the Group of Eight – without Vladimir Putin and Russia, again the Group of Seven – in which the American

president and other selected principals participate. There also are many ‘bilateral’ summits, including the annual US–European Union Summit. There is now an annual ‘trilateral’ get-together of the US President with the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of Mexico. The largest Summit in history was the 2000 Millennium Summit held in New York at UN Headquarters during the presidency of Bill Clinton. Even Fidel Castro was present and in the group photograph.

The direct involvement of American presidents in diplomacy has significantly increased the international functions of White House staff members, some of whom themselves have become ‘agents’ in presidentially authorized special missions. The most famous such mission of all was the secret trip made to Beijing in 1971 by Henry Kissinger, when National Security Advisor, in order to prepare the way for President Nixon’s journey to China the following year.<sup>27</sup> Historically, other presidents too have given personal advisers diplomatic roles – notable cases being President Wilson’s use of Colonel Edward House and, a quarter century later, President Roosevelt’s reliance on Harry Hopkins as his surrogate.<sup>28</sup>

Today, the position of Special Representatives and of Special Envoys, chosen to deal with particular situations or issues, has become more formalized. The late Richard Holbrooke, negotiator of the Dayton Accords ending the violent conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, subsequently was appointed Special Representative for the Afghanistan–Pakistan region. When not at work in the field, he was ensconced in a first-floor State Department office with a large staff. No longer are such envoys referred to as ‘troubleshooters’ as earlier were, for example, Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, an experienced businessman-diplomat, or Philip Habib, a versatile Lebanese–American career diplomat who worked in Central America and elsewhere.

The distinction between principals – leaders and department heads – and agents, including resident ambassadors and other emissaries – is

increasingly difficult to draw. The constellation of American diplomacy has expanded. An ambassador in the age of Louis XIV personally 're-presented' a sovereign, and was expected to fill the part with appropriate dignity. A representative of the United States of America today is a stand-in for a whole *people* as well as its political leadership.<sup>29</sup> American diplomats, though diverse, are not yet fully reflective of American society. The Rogers Act of 1924 brought together diplomats and consuls (today in a consular 'cone'), hitherto in completely separate services, to form a single, examination-based Foreign Service of the United States. Until then, and for some time afterward, American diplomacy had a distinctly upper-class character. For many ambassadorial posts, private wealth was a prerequisite. This still is a reality for some positions. There was an assumption of familiarity. The interwar, mostly-male US Foreign Service has been described aptly, and somewhat nostalgically, as 'A Pretty Good Club'.<sup>30</sup>

The US entry into the Second World War significantly enlarged the circle of Americans, both men and women, involved in international work. This factor, along with the democratic purpose of the US war effort itself, considerably liberalized the Foreign Service. A principal goal of the Foreign Service Act of 1946 was to reduce the distinction between Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and civil service staff working for the department. The Act created a Foreign Service Institute for language and other professional training of all personnel, which raised but also equalized skill levels. In 1954, Henry M. Wriston, president of Brown University, recommended in a major report the integration of many Civil Service employees into the Foreign Service itself – 'Wristonization', the process came to be called. The Foreign Service Act of 1980 created a limited-membership Senior Foreign Service modeled on the military hierarchy. With its 'up or out' imperative, it opened up more space, and opportunity, at lower ranks. The Act further made Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) 'members of the Service', thus extending the

democratic effect of the 1980 reform overseas. Today there are approximately 13,000 Foreign Service employees working in positions at home and abroad. All is not well in the department, however. It remains hierarchical, bureaucratic, and micromanagerial – irrespective of its size.<sup>31</sup> For the Foreign Service itself, there is considerable, fully understandable concern about the 'politicization' of the Department – the increase in the number of short-term political appointees at high level, the use of more and more special representatives and coordinators, and a general loss of respect for professionalism including language skills, technical knowledge, and field experience. 'Homogenization' – the breakdown of barriers between the examination-based Foreign Service and Civil Service – resulting from the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) of 1980 is also a concern of the career professionals. The underinvestment of the United States in the people and the training needed to maintain 'the front line' of the country's defenses abroad has placed, in the judgment of the American Academy of Diplomacy, its diplomacy 'at risk'.<sup>32</sup>

In comparison with other US government departments, above all the Defense Department but also the total membership of the 'intelligence community', the number of State Department personnel is very small, even with the employees of the semi-autonomous US Agency for International Development (USAID) added. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, knowing the inadequacy of military measures taken by themselves and, like his Cabinet colleague Hillary Clinton, appreciating the importance of the 'civilian' component of the US presence abroad, spoke out, remarkably, in favor of increased funding for the Department of *State*. He even made some Defense Department money available for the State Department's use. To illustrate his point, he frequently commented that there were more personnel in military marching bands than there were in the US Foreign Service.<sup>33</sup>

The requirements of 'expeditionary diplomacy', including work in the dangerous areas

of Iraq and Afghanistan, have required a whole-of-government approach, as well as involvement of the private sector and help from civil society. In such situations, the military dominates. A Foreign Service officer in them often is a 'Diplomat Among Warriors', as the legendary American diplomat Robert M. Murphy was in North Africa and Europe in the Second World War era.<sup>34</sup> So also, more recently, was the diplomat Ryan Crocker in Baghdad and Kabul – although General David Petraeus false-modestly characterized himself as Ambassador Crocker's 'military wingman'. Nearly all the development-oriented Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Iraq and Afghanistan have been headed by military commanders. CIA officers, too, often have had major, usually clandestine roles in those places. The 'agents' of American diplomacy today have many faces, some of them helmeted and some of them masked.

### Key Points

- Policymakers and diplomats – principals and agents – have an 'ambivalent' relationship, with those in charge depending on those who report to them for their success.
- For much of US history, it was commerce – consular work – rather than high politics – diplomacy – that was the focus of American official activity abroad.
- Presidents themselves, along with their advisers, increasingly have engaged in diplomacy, notably at 'summit' meetings.
- The Foreign Service of the United States has been steadily democratized, though also somewhat homogenized through a politically motivated blending with the Civil Service.
- American 'representation' abroad is today is much more inclusive, with civilian experts, military commanders, and intelligence officers working alongside and sometimes in front of diplomats.

### STYLES AND METHODS

It is rarely commented today that there is an American 'national style'.<sup>35</sup> There remains a basic democratic character of American

society, however, that surely does circumscribe and even inform US diplomacy in general and also specific ways. The multi-talented Benjamin Franklin set the pattern. Lack of pomp was a keynote. Thomas Jefferson as president even wrote his own 'Rules of Etiquette' which, he hoped, would guide social behavior in the new capital, Washington, DC, and also throughout the country. 'When brought together in society, all are perfectly equal, whether foreign or domestic, titled or untitled, in or out of office', he wrote, allowing just one exception: 'Foreign ministers, from the necessity of making themselves known, pay the first visit'. Otherwise, no one should come before others. 'No title being admitted here, those of foreigners give no precedence'. Common American social practice rather than European diplomatic protocol should prevail. This was illustrated by his final 'rule': 'the principle of equality, or of *pêle mêle*' – in order to

'prevent the growth of precedence out of courtesy, the members of the Executive will practice at their own houses, and recommend an adherence to the ancient usage of the country, of gentlemen in mass giving precedence to the ladies in mass, in passing from one apartment where they are assembled into another.'<sup>36</sup>

The rule of *pêle mêle* was demonstrated when the British minister, Anthony Merry, and his wife, expecting to be seated as the guests of honor at a White House dinner, were shocked when, in moving from the drawing room into the dining room, President Jefferson offered his arm not to Mrs Merry but to Dolley Madison, seating her on his right. Others had to take places on their own – *any* seat, first come, first served. So offended were the Merrys that they never entered the White House again. The writer Tom Wolfe, recounting the Jefferson story, finds 'psychological genius' in the cosmopolitan president's act and emphasizes its lasting symbolic importance. It exploded the notion, prevalent in Europe, that 'a certain class of people' were 'predestined to dominate', and that 'ordinary citizens' must live their lives accordingly.

In clear contrast: 'America remains, as it has been from the very beginning, the freest, most open country in the world, encouraging one and all to compete pell-mell for any great goal that exists'.<sup>37</sup> American diplomacy bears the imprint of these social and also presidential origins.

The subsequent history of White House entertaining – during the more contemporary presidencies of John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama, for example – shows a familiar naturalness, if not the overt 'simplicity', of Franklin's and Jefferson's time. The US Foreign Service Institute manual, *Protocol for the Modern Diplomat*, shows the straightforward and unpretentious style carrying over into American diplomacy today, with due pragmatic acceptance of current international norms.<sup>38</sup> Subsequent American presidents have, of course, differed markedly in the ways they conduct themselves, and also in how they make foreign policy. Ambassador Ryan Crocker, when asked what impact changes in administration had on his work as a career diplomat, replied: 'Each administration has its own priorities and style'.<sup>39</sup>

More profoundly, presidencies may differ in the respect they accord to the factor of diplomacy itself. There has been a marked contrast between the initial attitude of President George W. Bush, expressed in his September 20, 2001, address before a joint session of Congress in which he declared, 'Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists', and President Barack Obama's saying in his January 20, 2009, inaugural address: 'To those who cling to power through corruption and deceit and the silencing of dissent, know that you are on the wrong side of history, but that we will extend a hand if you are willing to unclench your fist'.

The importance of differences in presidential style can be exaggerated, for US foreign policy and administrative behavior have been remarkably continuous. However, the memory remains of the Bush administration's launching a war in March 2003 to overthrow

the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq as representing 'The Failure of Diplomacy'.<sup>40</sup> The US government, supported by the British government of Tony Blair, short-circuited the process of multilateral deliberation at the United Nations and the inspection efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That those efforts would ultimately have succeeded cannot, of course, be proven. The contrasting willing-to-engage approach of the Obama administration, though subjected to withering criticism as tantamount to 'appeasement', eventually produced at least short-term results, including restoration of diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba on June 20, 2015, and, of greater strategic importance, the negotiation led by Secretary of State John Kerry, together with the foreign ministers of China, France, Germany, Russia, and the United Kingdom and the European Union's High Representative for external affairs, of a nuclear deal with revolutionary Iran: the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed in Vienna on July 14, 2015.

The actual implementation of the US government's policy of 'engagement' requires multi-faceted and sustained diplomacy, as well as navigation of the shoals of executive-legislative relations and electoral politics. The formation and conduct of American foreign policy is always a two-level game – external and internal – requiring political acrobatics from a negotiator who must jump between the diplomatic and domestic 'tables'.<sup>41</sup> For high-level negotiators such as Secretary Kerry, who himself served in the Senate and chaired its Committee on Foreign Relations, performing the trick is not necessarily easier. To find the right way to talk persuasively abroad and at home requires great sensitivity and skill.

American speech, including its lexicon, reflects broad cultural but also some very particular cultural and social influences. Its elements come from Christian doctrine, legal training, business practice, scientific work, military experience, and even sports enthusiasm (resulting in even diplomats using



phrases like ‘step up to the plate’). With the professionalization of the US Foreign Service, some of whose members come in with postgraduate degrees, specialized academic terms also have entered into the American diplomatic vocabulary – terms like ‘smart power’ being somewhat vague popularizations thereof.

US diplomacy has been accurately described as direct, practical, and results-oriented, rather than ‘high-context’ or relationship-minded. The impatience that American negotiators frequently show, it should however be recognized, often has organizational-institutional rather than sociological causes: not just the regular elections cycle, the two-term-limited presidency, a party-divided Congress, and the inter-agency process but also the insistent demands of the State Department bureaucracy itself. Because they may be the complex results of an internal consensus, laboriously arrived at, US proposals sometimes are presented on a ‘take it or leave it’ basis.<sup>42</sup>

The American policy- and decision-making process can even affect the styles and methods of countries that deal with the United States. The effect is almost systemic. Many governments have learned that in order to be successful in negotiating with the United States they must engage, early, in what elsewhere may be viewed as outright ‘interference’ – even a violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961) – by speaking out publicly and by lobbying. Sometimes they must even pressure state and local governments. ‘All politics is local’, as Speaker of the House of Representatives Thomas P. O’Neill liked to say. Many embassies in Washington know that and now act accordingly. The Canadian government has carried this understanding the furthest, with its Advocacy Secretariat in Washington and, through an ‘Enhanced Representative Initiative’, some sixteen offices, including trade offices, distributed throughout the United States. The Canadian strategy is to intervene quickly, when and where issues originate, before they end up in the Washington gridlock.<sup>43</sup>

The United States, too, intervenes locally – where countries will allow it or cannot prevent it. Lobbying and advocacy are becoming almost universal diplomatic methods. To the extent that they are extrapolated from US domestic politics, they represent an ‘Americanization’ of international diplomacy.<sup>44</sup> Condoleezza Rice, when serving as Secretary of State, boldly espoused what she called ‘transformational diplomacy’, which would reach far beyond the capitals of other countries. She intended progressively to shift US diplomatic assets out of traditional diplomatic centers (mainly away from Europe) to large developing countries such as Nigeria, Egypt, India, and Indonesia in other regions. Some FSOs would be assigned to establish one-person ‘American Presence Posts’ (APPs) in selected large noncapital cities. The repositioning would foster democracy and it would also contribute to world stability. By reaching out directly to the broad populations of countries, influence could be brought to bear on their governments to behave more responsibly, externally as well as internally. Security considerations were not overlooked but they were secondary. Events changed this. Particularly sobering was the attack on an American diplomatic outpost in Benghazi on September 11, 2012, in which J. Christopher Stevens, a career diplomat then serving as US ambassador to Libya, was killed.

### Key Points

- The American style of diplomacy, shaped by the country’s social character, is illustrated by Thomas Jefferson’s egalitarian diplomatic rule of *pêle mêle*, with US protocol standards pragmatically evolving with respect for international norms.
- While the styles of individual US presidencies (those of George W. Bush and Barack Obama, for instance) differ, American foreign policy and diplomatic behavior, including the vocabulary used, reflect long-term and broader and cultural as well as educational influences.
- The methods of US diplomacy, and of countries dealing with the United States, increasingly



include lobbying and advocacy – derived from American domestic politics and suggesting the ‘Americanization’ of international diplomacy.

- The idea of using diplomacy to ‘transform’ other societies by shifting diplomatic assets from capital cities to large urban centers outside capitals, in order to stimulate wider popular participation in government, may have a democratizing effect, but it also exposes diplomats to increased security risks.

## **GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY, AMERICAN DIPLOMACY, AND WORLD DEMOCRACY**

In recent years the communications aspect of American foreign policy, in part because of the greater insecurity that diplomats in the field experience, has become almost its most salient characteristic. ‘Strategic communications’ has come to rival foreign policy strategy itself. From President Franklin Roosevelt’s ‘fireside chats’, which were broadcasted by short-wave radio to audiences overseas, to the Obama administration’s multi-systemed ‘engagement’ with populations elsewhere, communicated via satellite television and social media as well as through regular diplomatic representation, American messages of democracy, anti-terrorism, and world order are being brought to mankind nearly everywhere.

The organizational machinery, like the actual technology used, is impressive. The State Department’s Office of International Media Engagement has six Regional Media Hubs that serve as overseas platforms for reaching audiences around the world: the US–European Media Hub, Brussels; the Dubai Regional Media Hub; the London Regional Media Hub; the Media Hub of the Americas; the African Regional Media Hub; and the East Asia and Pacific Media Hub. The facilities appear to be located in the right places, with the Middle East and Asia being areas of particular concern.

The coverage is physically almost global. The communications technology itself is intended to be democratizing, as it is interactive and it allows for mass participation. ‘Virtual Presence Posts’ – internet sites managed by computer-adept officers, mostly younger staff – give the State Department conversational access to persons for whom US embassies may be geographically and also politically impossible to approach. Not all countries, it should be noted, even have US embassies that are open for business. In the case of Cuba, with its large ‘US Interests Section’ under the protection of the Swiss Embassy now restored to Embassy status, access for Cuban citizens should in time increase. Relations with Iran, despite the conclusion of the nuclear deal, remain problematic. The Embassy of Switzerland in Tehran nominally represents US interests. To maintain some contact at the popular level, the State Department posts statements and messages on a ‘Virtual Embassy of the United States – Tehran, Iran’ ([iran.usembassy.gov](http://iran.usembassy.gov)). However, some terrorism-supporting countries – Syria as well as Iran and North Korea – have for that fundamental reason been shunned, as well as subjected to sanctions and even military pressures and probably also cyber measures.

America’s interests and values from its early days have never permitted the establishment of a completely universal system of formal diplomatic representation, even though Thomas Jefferson as president followed a realistic policy of dealing with the regimes actually in power, if they appeared to be ‘formed by the will of the people’. The inherited policy of de facto recognition was changed by the more idealistic Woodrow Wilson, who refused to recognize the usurper regime of General Victoriano Huerta in revolutionary Mexico. Even without having functioning embassies everywhere, however, America’s access to the minds of the world’s populations today is extensive. How effective this potential contact is, however, another matter.

'We live in a time of widespread connectivity', observes Alec Ross, Senior Advisor for Innovation to Secretary of State Clinton and the steward of the Department's '21st Century Statecraft' agenda. 'Much of the world's population is – and with amazing speed – joining in a common network', he projected.<sup>45</sup> Digital diplomacy, operating within the web, has become a powerful complement to America's traditional diplomacy. The scholar-diplomat Jorge Heine has even suggested that the new 'network' diplomacy could *replace* the old ministry-to-ministry 'club' diplomacy.<sup>46</sup> Human networking, facilitated by technology, does reach hitherto unreached audiences, especially youth and women. Moreover, it enables peoples to communicate with each other – to interconnect. Technology, 'a neutral value', does not by itself 'cause revolutions', Ross has to acknowledge. 'People do'. Nonetheless, the US government's vaunting and support for internet freedom, while 'not implicitly rooted in regime change', can help people 'to exercise rights for their own social, political and economic purposes'.<sup>47</sup>

Will the new US diplomacy – its structures and processes, its policies and strategies, its principals and agents, and its styles and methods – become the diplomatic pattern for the world? Will it have the democratizing effect that has become a central purpose of American foreign policy, reflecting the democratic character of the United States itself?<sup>48</sup> Diplomacy, arguably, is *itself* a form of democracy. It is premised, as Thomas Jefferson appreciated, and Tocqueville noted, on the principle of equality and the reciprocal consideration of others – indeed, the sovereign exchange – of all persons involved in it. The same applies to the world's citizenry. Through technology, citizens everywhere are being empowered – to think, to decide, to act. And to interact. American diplomacy, and the message of democracy it carries, albeit sometimes by force and subterfuge as well as through expressions of reason and truth, offers the world a choice.

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# Russian Post-Soviet Diplomacy

Tatiana Zonova

## THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF RUSSIAN DIPLOMACY

Historically, the initial formation of the Russian model of diplomacy was characterized by the Byzantine tradition of symphony or harmonization of power between the secular and ecclesiastic authorities.<sup>1</sup> From Tsar Peter's era onward a gradual rapprochement with the Western diplomatic system can be observed. However, the Byzantine messianic spirit appeared now and again in both Orthodox and Soviet forms. Even under Soviet-imposed atheism, diplomacy was viewed as a tool for a new revolutionary universalism expressed in terms of 'proletarian internationalism'. Dramatic events at the turn of the end of the 1980s placed an urgent need for a new type of diplomacy on the agenda. Under 'glasnost' and 'perestroika', the last Soviet leader, Gorbachev, attempted to assure greater openness and some de-ideologization of diplomacy.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century a new rapprochement can be observed between the Russian State (looking for a unifying national idea) and the Russian Orthodox Church (looking to recover its past prestige) for the sake of mutual support. Russian diplomatic institutions also emphasize their support for the Church's politics which 'corresponds to one of the oldest and most profound traditions of our diplomacy'.<sup>2</sup>

Armed conflicts, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the spread of international terrorism have all put diplomatic institutions to a severe test. In this framework there are certain limits to what diplomacy can achieve, while power politics and military actions often replace it.

The historical record suggests that frequent changes of Ministers of Foreign Affairs occur during periods of high political instability. On the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union the domestic situation was marked by extreme instability. Once Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze resigned in December 1990, the

new Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh was appointed only by the middle of January 1991. During the August coup he also stepped down. On August 28, the Soviet Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Boris Pankin, was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs; he was the only ambassador who had publicly condemned the coup leaders during the coup. Under his leadership, on September 9, 1991, and for the first time in its history, the Kolleghiya (collective board) of the Ministry announced its voluntary dissolution and the new Minister undertook the formation of a new body. Pankin also publicly announced the expulsion of KGB (secret service) officers from the Ministry and its foreign missions.<sup>3</sup> Further reforms of the diplomatic service envisaged the abolition of trade missions and significant staff reduction in order to allocate quotas for diplomats representing 15 Union republics.

In the course of the transition to market-oriented reforms, the State Council decided to merge the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations. After a 'friendly phone conversation' between President Gorbachev and British Prime Minister John Major,<sup>4</sup> Pankin was appointed Soviet ambassador to the UK, and Shevardnadze became head of the Ministry of External Relations, in office until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

### **Key Points**

- Historically, Russian diplomacy tended to be to a considerable extent ideologized, both religious and laic.
- Periods of political instability bring on drastic structural reforms of the Russian foreign service, which sometimes do not seem to be thoroughly elaborated.

## **THE TRANSFORMATION OF DIPLOMATIC STRUCTURES IN THE NEW RUSSIA**

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union on December 8, 1991, the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) headed by Minister Andrei Kozyrev was renamed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.<sup>5</sup> Boris Yeltsin planned a significant personnel downsizing both in the center and abroad. More than 1,000 diplomats were supposed to resign. However, many young and active diplomats who were able to find more profitable jobs in commercial structures abandoned the Ministry, while the major and better remunerated diplomats continued their careers. Over time, the situation has stabilized. Currently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has around 12,000 personnel. Among them there are about 4,500 professional diplomats, of which approximately a quarter are young people under the age of 30 years.<sup>6</sup>

In the post-Cold War period, the Russian diplomatic service registered a growing number of what are widely known as functional departments. In particular, there emerged departments of new challenges and threats, human rights issues, economic cooperation, and a crisis management center. In addition, a new department dealing with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and a department for relations with the Subjects of the RF,<sup>7</sup> the parliament, and public organizations was established. The foreign policy decision-making process was also changed. According to the Russian Constitution, the President determines the guidelines of foreign policy. The Presidential Administration, the Federal Assembly (Russian legislature) with its Committees on Foreign Affairs, the Council of Ministries (the Government), as well as the Security Council vigorously intervene in the policy-making and decision-making process. So the MFA faces the challenge of coordinating foreign policy and foreign economic activities between various ministries, agencies, and public institutions.<sup>8</sup>

### **Key Points**

- The President determines the guidelines of Russian foreign policy.



- Other bodies taking part in the policy-making and decision-making process include the Presidential Administration, the Federal Assembly, the Council of Ministries, and the Security Council.
- The MFA faces the challenge of coordinating foreign policy and foreign economic activities between various ministries, agencies, and public institutions.

### **NEW TRENDS IN THE RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY AS A FRAMEWORK FOR RUSSIAN DIPLOMACY**

The very first Foreign Policy Concept (1992) reiterated 'its commitment to ensure favorable conditions for the development of the country'.<sup>9</sup> Other stated goals coincided with the foreign policy objectives carried out in the USSR during the 'perestroika' period – for example, ending the Cold War, agreements on arms reduction, openness to the West, the establishment of relations with NATO and the European Union, and accession negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.

Russian leaders needed legitimation and the approval of ongoing reforms by the US, members of the European Community, and other industrial states. Russian diplomacy tried to harmonize its actions with Western politics. From the mid-1990s, the idea of creating a multipolar world and maintaining relationships based on effective multilateralism started to become more and more important for Russia's foreign policy. That is why particular attention was paid to the Russian diplomatic presence in multilateral organizations and fora.

In 1998 Russia established its diplomatic mission to NATO in Brussels. Permanent Missions of Russia were accredited also to the UN, the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, and other international organizations. During his visit to Washington in September 1993, Viktor Chernomyrdin, then Prime Minister, reached

an agreement with the American administration of President Clinton in order to create a Russian–American Commission on Economic and Technological Cooperation, known as the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. At the same time, the Russian media noted that an equal partnership with the US which Russian leaders considered as partnership of the two 'great powers' could be difficult because President Bush had insisted on claiming an American victory over Russia in the Cold War. In 2009 the US–Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission was set up with around 20 working groups aimed at improving cooperation in various areas.<sup>10</sup>

In 1994, the President of the Russian Federation for the first time took part in a meeting of the G-7 in Naples. The summit led to the formation of the G-8. A special Russian envoy, appointed by the Russian President, had to coordinate preparation for the summit. He was assisted by a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and junior officials from various federal agencies. The Russian Interagency Commission on Cooperation with International Financial and Economic Organizations was also involved in those activities, and the Russian draft document was necessarily coordinated with other concerned Russian agencies. The Russian Foreign Minister once a year participated in the meeting of foreign ministers of the G-8 around the time of the opening of the UN General Assembly.<sup>11</sup> Russian officials several times a year went to meet their colleagues in the capital of the state which would host the summit.<sup>12</sup>

In accordance with the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation between Russia and EU in 1994, they established a mechanism of political and diplomatic cooperation. A key role was played by '1 + 2' summits: the Russian President, on the one side, and the Presidents of the European Council and the European Commission, on the other.<sup>13</sup> Their meetings were held twice a year. Other bodies for the implementation of the Agreement were the Council at the ministerial level, the Committee of Senior Officials, as well as

the Parliamentary Cooperation Committee. The RF Government established a governmental Commission for cooperation with the EU, which coordinated the activities of Russian ministries and agencies involved in the partnership with the EU. Russia established its diplomatic mission in Brussels headed by a full Ambassador. As well as diplomats, the staff of the mission was composed of representatives (mostly with basic economic and scientific education) from some other ministries.<sup>14</sup>

Relations with the former Soviet republics officially occupied a dominant place. Since 1992, Russian leaders have said that the 'formation of a new, equal and mutually beneficial relations between Russia, Community of Independent States' countries and other countries of the near abroad' were among the priorities of the Russian foreign policy.<sup>15</sup> However, in practice the policy towards the 'near abroad' was incoherent. From the very beginning the relations with those countries provoked disagreements within the ruling elite. However, the idea of the specifically economic re-integration of post-Soviet space did gain ground. At the turn of the century a gradual integration strategy took precedence. The agreement on the establishment of a customs union, signed by the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, was the first step in this direction, followed by agreement on the Russia–Belarus Union and on the Euro-Asian Economic Union (EAEU). In the opinion of its founders, being an organization of regional economic integration and the subject of international relations, the EAEU was to become an equal partner of the European Union in the framework of the Euro–Atlantic security space, aiming thereby at forging a link between Europe and the Asia Pacific. As noted above, armed conflicts, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the spread of international terrorism has put diplomatic institutions to a severe test. To face the challenges, a Collective Security Treaty Organization was established by Russia and some CIS countries as a military defensive alliance on May 14, 2002.

Russia, as an integral and organic part of the Asia-Pacific region, is also strengthening its presence there as a major precondition for securing continued national, social, and economic development especially in Siberia and the Far East. The increasing engagement of Russia with inter-governmental organizations and dialogue mechanisms – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS forum, the ASEAN Regional Forum, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, the Russia–India–China format, the East Asia Summit, and the Asia–Europe dialogue – is considered to be of key importance in shaping a strong regional and international network of relations.

### **Key Points**

- Initially, modern Russian diplomacy tended to be focused on relations with Western countries, i.e. the US and the EU.
- At the same time, interstate cooperation with former Soviet republics and CIS countries carried a lot of weight in the Russian foreign policy agenda.
- Successively, as modern Russian diplomacy was evolving, its Eastern vector as well as engagement in projects run by multilateral organizations and fora started to gain ground.

## **RUSSIAN NETWORK DIPLOMACY**

In 2008, a new Foreign Policy Concept of the RF was issued.<sup>16</sup> The Concept set a task to 'create [a] favorable external environment for the modernization of Russia'. The authors stated that 'traditional cumbersome military and political alliances can no longer counteract the whole range of modern challenges and threats which are transnational in their nature'.

In the past, Soviet and Russian diplomacy had tried improving the former and creating new diplomatic structures for multilateral interstate cooperation. Over the years,

permanent missions have been accredited to the UN, OSCE, Council of Europe, EU, NATO, IMF, and other international organizations to which Russia belongs. In 2006 in this multilateral context, Minister Sergey Lavrov introduced a new concept of 'network diplomacy'. In his words, 'network diplomacy' should be conducted towards alliances with variable geometry and provide flexible forms of participation in multilateral structures.<sup>17</sup> Primarily, this diplomacy suggested flexible forms of interaction between different groups of countries in order to ensure compliance with the general interests. Thus, 'network diplomacy' should require from political elites of all states the reformulation of national interests so that they are compatible with those of the partners and the various interests of the international community.

Recently the principles of network diplomacy have found practical application in different areas of Russia foreign policy, for example, the development of cooperation within the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

### **Key Points**

- Since 2006 network diplomacy can be regarded as part and parcel of Russian foreign policy, both in theory and practice.
- One of its chief proponents is the incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Sergey Lavrov.

### **RUSSIAN ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY**

The authors of the foreign policy documents emphasized that effective economic diplomacy contributed to the success of market reforms in Russia, strengthening its position in foreign markets, expanding Russian participation in global and regional trade, and economic, monetary, financial, and investment cooperation. The Russian Foreign

Ministry stated that it was willing to create favorable external conditions for the development of the national economy, to protect the national interests in foreign trade and the economic security of the country. In this context, priority was given to the progressive integration of Russia into the world economy. Economic diplomacy provided comprehensive assistance to the Russian business community in matters of foreign economic activity, contributed to the formation of a positive image of Russia abroad, and attracted foreign investments.<sup>18</sup>

Russian governmental structures such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Department for Economic Cooperation, have stepped up their activities in the field of economic diplomacy. All geographic departments of the Ministry devote about half of their activities to matters of trade exchange and investments. At the beginning of the 1990s, some steps were made towards abolishing Trade Representations (which were part of the Soviet embassies abroad) because they were considered to be the result of the Soviet state monopoly on foreign trade.<sup>19</sup> However, despite this, Russia's Trade Representations continue to function in most countries. Being an integral part of the Embassy of the Russian Federation, they are subordinated directly to the Ministry of Economic Development.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, economic diplomacy is coordinated by the MFA Department of Economic Cooperation and there are six other ministries that have the right to direct accession to the international arena. With the MFA partnership are business clubs, numerous conferences, and round-table discussions that bring together businesspeople seeking to enter the global market. However, in this area there remain large, untapped reserves.

Decision-making processes include the participation of the embassies and consulates, as these institutions have a unique opportunity to provide a qualitative assessment of the socio-economic impacts of large-scale projects and some specific information. Of course, a certain amount of information is

contained in data banks, but the most valuable information concerning the particular piece of the market, its strategy and prospects, diplomats collect on the spot, especially in countries with rare languages.

Much attention is paid to Russian participation in multilateral economic structures. Russia has joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), moving from the status of an observer to fully fledged member. It is important that the principles of the WTO are applied to the regulatory framework of the Common Economic Space of Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. With the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Russian businesses developed cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region. The largest regional forum of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) held its Forum in Russia in 2006, and in 2012 Russia was the President of this Forum. The Russian National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation (RNCPEC) is the only Russian organization with the status of an internationally recognized representative of the Russian Federation in international organizations operating outside the UN system.<sup>21</sup> Russia attaches great importance to the development of regional dialogue with the Association of South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN). In Moscow, a Committee of ambassadors of ASEAN countries in Russia holds quarterly meetings with the leadership of the Russian Foreign Ministry. Russia has also joined the East Asia Summit (EAS), the forum 'Asia-Europe' (ASEM), and participates in the Baltic Forum. Russian economic diplomacy was also brought forward within G-8. The core objective of Russia within the G-20 was 'developing a set of measures aimed at boosting sustainable, inclusive and balanced growth and jobs creation around the world'.<sup>22</sup> Despite his quite controversial reception at the Australian summit in 2014, Putin said that the G-20 is a good platform to meet each other, discuss both bilateral relations and global problems, and develop at least some sort of common understanding of what this or that problem is all about, and how to resolve it.<sup>23</sup>

### **Key Points**

- Economic diplomacy is an essential part of the modern Russian foreign policy, with the MFA playing a coordinating role in this field.
- The two key instruments of Russian economic diplomacy are stimulating foreign trade (especially exports) and attracting foreign direct investments.
- Respective measures are realized both on a bilateral and multilateral basis, including frameworks of international and regional economic organizations.

## **RUSSIAN ENERGY DIPLOMACY**

Energy diplomacy is one of the priorities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. It became a significant factor in bilateral and multilateral diplomatic relations. Energy diplomacy involves the MFA, the Ministry for Economic Development, and energy agencies. Together, and with national energy companies, they carry out Russian external energy policy aimed at the protection and defense of national interests in the field of the production, transportation, and consumption of energy. With the direct participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they try to ensure favorable conditions for Russia in world oil markets and strengthen the country's position in the global energy community. Russian diplomats have also developed cooperation with the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), independent oil exporters, and the International Energy Agency, participating in the global energy dialogue and in the Gas Exporting Countries Forum in order to exchange experience, information, and coordination in energy-related matters.<sup>24</sup>

The MFA assists bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the framework of the Community of Independent States, including the Caspian–Black Sea region, and the development of energy cooperation within the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. At the same time in the framework of energy diplomacy, great importance is attached to the development of energy cooperation with

Ukraine, the EU countries, and the US. Since 2011, Russian diplomats have participated in negotiations with China about Russian gas, and a major agreement was signed in 2014. Other agreements about cooperation in the energy sector have been signed with Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Peru, and Brazil.

Steps were taken to support the Russian public, private, and mixed companies in the large-scale investment projects in the energy sector. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs signed a cooperation agreement with the Union of Oil and Gas Producers of Russia, which provides for the creation of conditions for the exchange of information and analytical materials on international energy cooperation, including the improvement of the concept of external energy policy and the development of Russia's Energy Strategy for the period up to 2030, as well as joint seminars and conferences. The MFA, together with the Russian Agency for nuclear energy, signed another agreement for Russian accession to the Nuclear Energy Agency under the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.<sup>25</sup>

Increasing information flows, and increasing demands for analytical work in the energy sector, requires close cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Russian embassies abroad with governmental and non-governmental gas, oil, and electric power companies, and directly with industries with interest in the energy segment of the economy.

### **Key Points**

- Energy diplomacy is a matter of utmost importance for Russia, being a large exporter of oil and gas.
- The Russian MFA makes efforts to coordinate the actions of various public and private national actors in this area.

## **RUSSIAN CULTURAL AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

According to Russian leaders, foreign policy should be free from ideological clichés and

should be based on pragmatism. However, pure pragmatism is not effective. In this framework the promotion of Russian culture, language, and traditional values were considered to be soft power tools and to shape an objective image of Russia. The support for the Russian compatriots living abroad was proclaimed to be 'one of the most important policies of the State'.<sup>26</sup> Yet in May 1999 the Federal Law 'On the state policy of RF in respect of compatriots abroad' entered into force.<sup>27</sup> Russia guaranteed to provide support to its compatriots so that they could enjoy equal rights in foreign states. The concept of 'Russian world' became part of state policy. In 2006, Putin made a call to unite 'all' people who cherish the Russian language and culture wherever they live in the framework of the 'Russian world' and to 'protect [the] rights and legitimate interests of the Russian citizens and compatriots living abroad on the basis of international law and effective bilateral agreements'.<sup>28</sup> Also, the subsequent Concepts of Foreign Policy (2008, 2014) and other official documents reiterated such statements. On April 11, 2015, on the upcoming reunification of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, Minister Lavrov said that support to compatriots living abroad, with the aim of strengthening their ties with the Homeland and protecting their religious rights, constituted the ground for the joint efforts of Russian diplomacy, Russian Church, and other Russian religious organizations.<sup>29</sup>

Public diplomacy (the term appeared in the Foreign Policy Concept of 2008) was considered particularly important to effectively promote the foreign policy interests of Russia, as well as to create abroad a favorable political and business climate for Russia. Russian culture, its famous traditions, and the large number of compatriots living abroad (mainly in the former Soviet republics) became a significant factor in the formation of the image of Russia.

Yet in 2007 the MFA issued its first 'Survey of Russian Foreign Policy'. In particular, it voiced the need to 'diversify' the foreign policy



tools, and underscored the increasing role of 'soft power'. In September 2008, the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (commonly known as Rossotrudnichestvo) was set up by President Medvedev with the aim of 'maintaining Russia's influence in the Commonwealth of Independent States, and to foster friendly ties for the advancement of Russia's political and economic interests in foreign states'.<sup>30</sup> The Agency is an autonomous government agency under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its representatives abroad are Russian Centers of Science and Culture and their branches, which act as part of the diplomatic missions of the Russian Federation, but without inclusion in the list of the staff of diplomatic missions.

For the time being, the representations of Rossotrudnichestvo have been set up in 89 countries.<sup>31</sup> Geographically, they cover territory from America to Japan and from Finland to Argentina. In the near future, along with the opening of new offices and cultural centers, the MFA plans to make greater use of the so-called 'regional principle' when a major cultural center will extend its activities to neighboring countries, where there are no Russian cultural centers. However, for Rossotrudnichestvo the priority is the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Mass-media, social networks, and dialogue platforms are also widely used as tools of public diplomacy: the radio station 'Voice of Russia' broadcasts in 38 languages; the TV channel 'Russia Today' broadcasts in English, Arabic, and Spanish; the newspaper *The Moscow News* is also published in English and Arabic; and the international discussion club 'Valdai' gathers prominent representatives of the world expert community.

Rossotrudnichestvo undertakes efforts in order to promote Russian educational services and develop cooperation with educational institutions in foreign countries. Thousands of people, especially young people, study the Russian language in the

missions of Rossotrudnichestvo around the world. The Agency favors the recruitment of foreign students willing to study in Russian universities, and it keeps in touch with more than 500,000 alumni all over the world.<sup>32</sup> Together with the MFA, Rossotrudnichestvo prepared a draft of the state program (with a focus on CIS countries) aimed at promoting study tours in Russia for promising young representatives of political, business, community, and academic circles.

Rossotrudnichestvo interacts with non-governmental organizations such as the Russian Association for International Cooperation, the Foundation of St Andrew, the Library Fund 'Russian abroad', the Russian Culture Fund, the International Council of Russian Compatriots, and many others. Its media partners include ITAR-TASS, RIA NOVOSTI, TV channels 'Russia Today', 'MIR', 'Voice of Russia', and others.<sup>33</sup>

Building trust is not easy, even for professional diplomats, who are restricted by the instructions of their departments. In Russia, there are nearly a thousand NGOs engaged in politically significant activity who play an important role in the world. Non-governmental actors in public diplomacy are in a more advantageous position in order to present an objective image of Russia and its national and cultural values. They are able to embrace the entire spectrum of political life of their country, not only translating official data, but the opposition's sentiments as well. Public diplomacy carried out by the State institutions should become a catalyst for activities carried out by non-governmental actors. And this synergy is very important. A new Public Council on International Cooperation and Public Diplomacy has been set up under the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation. Recently, some other NGOs appeared, such as the Russian International Affairs Council, the Public Diplomacy Foundation named after Alexander Gorchakov, 'Russian World' Fund, and others. At present, many NGOs have consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The partnership relations of these organizations with the



UN suggest, in particular, the mobilization of public opinion and political pressure through campaigns, as well as co-financing of the UN programs and funds.

### **Key Points**

- Promoting public diplomacy and working with the Russian diaspora abroad became one of the key priorities of Russian foreign policy in the early 2000s.
- Rossotrudnichestvo, an autonomous government agency under the jurisdiction of the MFA, was established in 2008 and is now regarded as the key public diplomacy actor.
- Alongside Rossotrudnichestvo there is a great diversity of non-governmental public diplomacy actors, including mass media companies, and foundations, as well as other NGOs.

## **PARADIPLMACY OF THE RUSSIAN SUBNATIONAL ENTITIES**

In the domain of international affairs, Russia has also to deal with such new topics as regional policy and the relationship between the Central authority and the Subjects (Constituent Members) of Federation.<sup>34</sup> The 85 Subjects of the Russian Federation are supposed to develop their international relations in accordance with the Constitution and the Federal Law 'On the coordination of international and foreign economic relations of the Subjects of the Russian Federation' and other legislative acts.<sup>35</sup> The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, its Department of the relations with the RF Subjects, and other federal bodies of executive power assist Subjects of Russia in the implementation of international and foreign economic cooperation, in strict respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia, using for this purpose the Council of Heads of the Russian Federation Subjects and the Federal Advisory Council on international and foreign economic relations which operate under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The development of regional and cross-border cooperation is an important element of bilateral relations between countries and their regions in trade, investment, humanitarian issues, and other fields. For this purpose, a practice (once the tsarist and then the Soviet one) of appointing representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to a number of major cities has been preserved and expanded. In the MFA there have also been discussions about the idea of appointing diplomatic representatives to each regional governor, to create some sort of International office in all regions.

The Act of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (approved on March 14, 1995) gave the MFA the responsibility of coordinating the international relations of the Subjects, examining regional agreements and other matters, and sharing with them all necessary information. The Advisory Council conducts an expert review of draft regulations governing the activity of the Subjects, prepares recommendations, and summarizes the experience accumulated by regional authorities.

There is also regulation on the representation of the RF Subjects abroad and on relations with foreign partners. The Russian Constitution has a threefold level of authority: federal; joint jurisdiction (Federation and the Subjects); and the Subjects' authority.<sup>36</sup> The Russian Foreign Ministry has decided to provide assistance to the regions to establish and develop their international relations. It has defined the framework of regional international agreements (such agreements are not considered treaties). Such agreements should be concluded only on matters that are within the competence of the Subjects. The international and foreign economic relations of the RF Subjects are governed by their own constitutions and regulations. Most of them determine that the participation of the Subjects in the implementation of international treaties signed by the Federation, and the coordination of their international and economic relations, are matters of joint jurisdiction between the Federal center and

the Subjects. Low-quality investment projects which often do not comply with generally accepted international standards and requirements and which lack knowledge of foreign market conditions create serious difficulties and entail economic, and sometimes political, losses. It is obvious that any lack of coordination between the center and regions and, even more, any dissonance between them, hurts the interests and prestige of the country. That is why regulations that are in conflict with federal regulatory norms are revised in accordance with the decision of the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation.<sup>37</sup>

The bill 'On cross-border cooperation' is currently being debated by the Parliament. It is difficult to overestimate its importance, given that the length of the borders of Russia is more than 60,000 kilometers. For the first time, this law will grant local governments the right to cross-border cooperation and the Subjects of the Federation will be trained to coordinate this activity. The Subjects closely monitor developments in Europe in the framework of inter-regional cross-border cooperation. They also follow the decisions of the Council of Europe on regional issues. In recent years, representatives of nearly 80 Subjects took part in actions promoted by the Council of Europe, establishing a constructive dialogue with their European counterparts and exchanging views on issues of federalism.<sup>38</sup> In particular, much attention is paid to the coordination of the activities of representatives of RF Subjects and local authorities in the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. Due to the recent acute financial crisis, regional conflicts, the spread of corruption, and rampant terrorism such cooperation has acquired special meaning.

It can be expected that the integration processes in the CIS will increase cross-border contacts, transforming them in accordance with this important trend in international regional activity. It is well known that the process of integration within the CIS has

encountered significant obstacles of various kinds. One way to overcome these obstacles and accelerate economic integration and solve problems of a humanitarian character is seen in the large-scale involvement of the Russian Subjects in the regional and cross-border cooperation with their partners from the CIS.

### **Key Points**

- In line with current legislation, Russian subnational entities can take an active part in international relations.
- However, the scope of such an activity is limited by the competences of the above actors, whereas the MFA plays an important role in monitoring and sometimes intervening in these processes.
- Regional and cross-border cooperation is gradually gaining ground, especially with partners from the CIS.

### **RUSSIAN DIPLOMACY VS GENDER PROBLEMS**

Traditionally, in Russia and many other countries, the diplomatic service was meant to be a kind of civilian army which was fighting against the adversary on the field of negotiations and diplomatic stratagems. In the Soviet Union and now in Russia, officially any formal gender barriers are forbidden. However, when the Moscow State Institute for International Relations was set up in 1944 in order to prepare professional diplomats, only men could study there. Later, women were also accepted, but there were very few of them. It was obvious that a woman could become an ambassador only as a political appointee.<sup>39</sup> President Vladimir Putin said in 2002:

Still women are underestimated in diplomacy. Now a considerable number of women civil servants have appeared not because of the choice from among so called 'nomenclature' but because of the everyday reality which gave us many qualified and competent women civil servants. We should

understand that the absence (unlike in many other countries) of so called 'fair' sex representatives in Russian diplomacy can become a weak point in our external political service.<sup>40</sup>

In 2004, 54 percent of 189 newly hired civil servants were women.

Nevertheless, there is considerable room for improvement. Currently, of the top management of the MFA, the minister, his ten deputies, and the heads of 38 departments are men. Only two departments are headed by women. There are no women among the full-rank ambassadors.

Women now represent about one-third of graduates participating in the annual competition for places in the MFA (usually graduates from about 30 Russian universities take part in the competition). As a result, in recent years the percentage of women-diplomats has risen to 15 percent. But this is not an easy process. Old patriarchal habits die hard. Many young women in the early years of their career face both a distrustful attitude towards them and a clear personnel office preference to promote male staff. For the time being, women will still find it hard to advance their careers in the face of old attitudes. Despite a considerable improvement in recent years, some young women in the early years of their career still face a distrustful attitude towards them. The numbers of Russian women diplomats shows an upward trend, but not amongst the top officials of the MFA.

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- 32 [http://5top100-ru.1gb.ru/files/File/inostrannye\\_  
stydeny.pdf](http://5top100-ru.1gb.ru/files/File/inostrannye_stydeny.pdf)
- 33 <http://rs.gov.ru/node/307>
- 34 Constituent members of the Federation called Subjects are republics, provinces, territories, autonomous districts, and federal cities.
- 35 <http://base.garant.ru/179963/>
- 36 Zonova Tatiana, Russian diplomacy: facing regional challenges, in Kishan S. Rana and Jovan Kurbalija (eds) *Foreign Ministries: Managing Diplomatic Networks and Optimizing Value*. Geneva-Malta, 2007, pp. 109–19.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Tatiana Zonova, *Diplomatia: Modeli, Formy, Metody*. Aspekt Press, 2014, pp. 339–40.
- 39 The first one was Aleksandra Kollontai, a Russian revolutionary and member of the Bolshevik party, who in 1923 was sent to Norway as the Soviet ambassador.
- 40 [www.ln.mid.ru](http://www.ln.mid.ru)

## INTERNET RESOURCES

[www.kremlin.ru](http://www.kremlin.ru)  
[www.mid.ru](http://www.mid.ru)

# China's Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

As one of the longest continuous civilizations in world history, China has rich experiences in managing its relations with the outside world. Importantly, these experiences continue to shape contemporary Chinese diplomacy, with regard to questions about which actors conduct foreign relations, how diplomacy is conducted, and what the central purposes of Chinese diplomacy are.

The idea of China as the Central Kingdom was ‘articulated most explicitly’ by the Zhou dynasty (1046 BC–256 BC) (Cohen, 2000: 5). This notion, which had a long-lasting impact on China’s later diplomatic practices, envisaged a hierarchical world system with China sitting at the center. As the highest developed culture within that system, the Chinese King, perceived as the Son of Heaven, had the mandate of Heaven to rule the *Tianxia* (All-under-Heaven) (Zhang, 2001: 53). In reality, the Zhou dynasty only

directly ruled a small heartland of present-day China, and many of its territories were ruled by feudal lords. During the first period of the Zhou dynasty, diplomacy was seen as the prerogative of Zhou kings – feudal entities were not allowed to engage with foreign entities directly without the permission of the Zhou kings. As the Zhou dynasty entered the Spring and Autumn periods (770–475 BC) and especially the Warring States period (475–221 BC), these feudal entities became much stronger and acquired *de facto* independent statehood themselves. Inter-state diplomacy among multiple feudal states of more or less equal powers dominated the diplomatic stage in China. These states engaged in constant alliance-building, deceptions, and conquering through military force. In the end, one of the feudal states, the Qin kingdom, finally conquered China in 221 BC.

The arrival of the Qin dynasty (221 BC–207 AD) marked a turn in Chinese history. It finally established a vast unified empire with a population ‘in the vicinity of fifty to sixty

million' (Cohen, 2000: 5) which was administered by a central authority. Since then, although there have been periods when China became divided and chaotic, as happened in the famous Three Kingdoms period (220 AD–280 AD), in general, subsequent unified Chinese dynasties maintained their status as the overwhelmingly dominant power at the center of the Asian hierarchical international system. The diplomatic institutional expression of this *Pax Sinica* was the tributary system that emerged in the Han dynasty (202 BC–220 AD), after the short-lived Qin dynasty. The defining feature of this tributary system was its hierarchy. The Chinese emperors, as the rulers of the most powerful and developed state, expected the neighboring 'barbarian' tribes and kingdoms to accept and show their diplomatic submission through regular tributary missions to China. In return, the Chinese emperors granted their approval for the rulers to be seen as legitimate, through a process known as *Cefeng* (investiture). Through the production and reproduction of this hierarchical relationship, Chinese emperors showcased their dominating influence in East Asia, so as to enhance their domestic political legitimacy. At the same time, the endorsement from Chinese emperors helped neighboring rulers to establish their political legitimacy at home.

There were three other features of the tributary system that benefitted neighboring rulers: self-autonomy; larger material rewards from the Chinese emperors; and China's obligation to safeguard the national security of the tributary states (He Fangchuan, 1998: 41). While the tributary states were expected to acknowledge their political inferior status to China, Chinese emperors on most occasions refrained from exerting direct control of these states, rather they left local rulers to govern autonomously. Since the central purpose of Chinese emperors in building this tributary system was to enhance their political legitimacy at home, Chinese rulers tended to follow the principle of *Houwangbolai* (giving more and receiving less) when

exchanging gifts during a tributary mission to China. That is, they offered generous economic benefits to maintain the attractiveness of the tributary system to neighboring states. In principle, though not always honoring its obligations, China committed itself to diplomatic practices that maintained peaceful order among the tributary states.

While this China-centered hierarchical international order in East Asia yielded substantial stability, as compared with Europe in the same period (Kang, 2007: 43), the very foundation of this system – the preponderance of Chinese power and the isolation of Asia from the rest of the world – disappeared in the nineteenth century. With the arrival in Asia of Western colonial powers, strengthened with modern technology from the industrial revolution, including advanced military forces, the ailing Chinese dynasty had to cope with the gradual loss of its centrality in Asia (see also Chapter 3 in this Handbook). Starting with the first Opium War (1840–42), China experienced repeated defeats in its conflicts with Western powers. It was forced to cede trading and extraterritorial rights, even territories to colonial powers, and its tributary states fell into the hands of old and new imperial states. In 1894, China was crushed in the war with Japan, a former tributary state in the China-dominated system. In 1911, a republic revolution broke out in China, ending the Qing dynasty and replacing it with the Republic of China. However, that did not end China's miseries. Although a victorious state in the First World War, the German settlement in Shandong province was grabbed by the more powerful Japan, instead of returning to China. In the 1930s, Japan invaded China, occupying almost half of China's territory. The Chinese government attempted to rally international support in its war with Japan but without much success. The tide did not turn until the United States declared war against Japan, following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941.

The fall of China from a Central Kingdom into a 'century of humiliation' unleashed a



nationalistic movement aspiring to save the state of China, if not the empire (Chen, 2005). Eventually, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), combining its communist appeal with the nationalist agenda, became the winning force in the war against Japan and in the following civil war. The People's Republic of China (PRC), founded in October 1949, once again built a strong central government, able to exert direct control over the vast land in the mainland of China. Mao Zedong, assisted by Premier Zhou Enlai, developed a very personalized and centralized Chinese diplomacy. The new red China adopted a 'leaning towards one side' approach in the East–West Cold War rivalry, by signing an alliance treaty with the Soviet Union in 1950, and entered the Korean War in direct military conflict with the United States and its Western allies in 1950. While China was denied diplomatic recognition from most Western powers, in 1954 it co-initiated with India and Myanmar the famous Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, attempting to rally diplomatic support from the developing world. However, with the start of Cultural Revolution in 1966, Chinese domestic politics and foreign policy were radicalized further, calling for world revolution modeled on a Chinese version to challenge all the status quo powers around the world. Amid this radicalization, China's relations with the Soviet Union also deteriorated. China and the Soviet Union engaged in border military conflicts in March and August of 1969, which effectively ended the alliance between the two communist giants. In April 1971, under invitation from the Chinese government, a delegation of American ping-pong players visited China, and effectively reopened people-to-people exchange between the two long-time hostile enemies (see Chapter 50 in this Handbook). This 'Ping-Pong diplomacy' (Kissinger, 1979) sent out a strong signal to the governments and people of the two countries that they were willing to break the ice in the relationship based on their mutual interests in containing the Soviet influence, and paved the way for a

diplomatic rapprochement during President Nixon's 1972 visit to China. At the beginning of the 1970s, China finally established diplomatic relations with most Western countries, and regained its seat in the United Nations, including the permanent seat in the Security Council in 1971, after the General Assembly of the United Nations decided to expel the Republic of China in Taiwan.

A further major diplomatic shift came after Deng Xiaoping rose to the leadership position in the post-Mao era. Under Deng, the Chinese leadership decided in 1978 to shift its central task to economic development through reform and opening-up. As a result, Chinese diplomacy changed: national interests and economic interests in particular triumphed over geopolitical calculations. Throughout the reform era, Chinese diplomacy was tasked by the new leadership to create a peaceful international environment for economic development, to bring in foreign investment, and to secure foreign markets for an export-oriented economic development strategy. Since then, pragmatism has dominated Chinese diplomacy, with its key priority to avoid unnecessary confrontations with other countries, and to ensure a stable and conducive international environment for domestic modernization.

In 2010, after more than three decades of rapid economic development, China once again became the biggest economy in Asia, overtaking Japan. For China, it was an historic moment, particularly when the West was experiencing its worst economic crisis in decades. Feeling the newly gained strength and global influence, and under new leadership, China is now formally embarked on a path towards great power diplomacy, officially entitled as 'major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics' (Wang Yi, 2013).

Throughout its long history, China has experienced four kinds of diplomacy. The first is the diplomacy among multiple states in a divided China, such as in the Spring and Autumn periods, and the Warring States period, where a number of autonomous

states competed with each other. This diplomacy has many features reminiscent of the diplomacy in a modern multi-state system. The second is the diplomacy of maintaining a tributary system around a unified China. Under this kind of diplomacy, China developed a hierarchical diplomatic system around itself in East Asia, short of direct rule of neighboring countries. With the arrival of modern Western powers in Asia, China was drawn into a global system of diplomacy among sovereign states, and not only lost its past preeminence in a geographically isolated Asia, but also succumbed to wills of the new great powers. As a result, China had to conduct a third kind of diplomacy: diplomacy of an inferior semi-sovereign state. Through various strands of revolutions in the twentieth century, China finally fully reestablished itself as a strong sovereign state. Starting from that position, its economic diplomacy from the 1970s paved the way for its reemergence as a great power in the world (see Chapters 22 and 45 in this Handbook). What is unfolding is the fourth kind of Chinese diplomacy: diplomacy of a reemerging power in a global system.

### **Key Points**

- From about 770 BC and up to the twentieth century, China practiced three different forms of diplomacy.
- In the twenty-first century, China's fourth form of diplomacy is that of an emerging great power.

### **CHINA'S DIPLOMATIC INSTITUTIONAL FEATURES**

In contemporary China, the Chinese Communist Party leads every aspect of state affairs, including foreign affairs. Although leaders like Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping did not occupy a leading government position, but rather held positions as party/military leader (Mao) or merely military leader (Deng), they were the final decision makers in China's diplomacy and the chief diplomats

of the country. Since the end of the Cold War, an institutional change in line with the constitution installs the party leader concurrently as the military leader as well as the head of the state. With the constitutional amendment of 2004, the president of China, as head of state, can conduct 'state affairs', in addition to having a more symbolic diplomatic role as specified in the 1982 constitution, such as receiving foreign diplomatic representatives on behalf of the PRC. Moreover, in pursuance of the decisions of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the president appoints or recalls plenipotentiary representatives abroad, and ratifies or abrogates treaties and important agreements concluded with foreign states.<sup>1</sup>

The Chinese premier, as head of the government, is the second most important figure in China's diplomacy. In the earlier years of the PRC, Premier Zhou was also China's foreign minister, according great weight to the Foreign Ministry in the Chinese government system. In Deng's reform era, Vice Premier Qian Qichen also acted as China's foreign minister. However, after Qian, a state councilor is now usually responsible for diplomatic affairs and no longer enjoys a position in the powerful party leadership core, the politburo. A state councilor is a lower ranking official than other vice premiers in the politburo. Moreover, these state councilors do not at the same time hold the position of foreign minister of China. This position is now occupied by professional diplomats who enjoy an even lower political ranking in the Chinese system. The foreign minister's power base within the CCP has continuously declined, even though China's international role is expanding and global issues are growing in complexity. As a result there is a proliferation of foreign policy decision-making entities and the Foreign Ministry must often rely on other agencies for expertise while at the same time competing with them for influence (Jakobson and Knox, 2010: 8). Overall, the head of state has a greatly expanded role in China's diplomacy, while the foreign

minister and the designated superior in the State Council have lost substantial political and government standing since the reform era.

Meanwhile, as part of a trend towards 'corporate pluralization' (Lampton, 2001: 12), other functional ministries play increasingly salient diplomatic roles. The Ministry of Commerce is the main player in China's economic diplomacy. It is responsible for making China's trade and investment policy and negotiating various bilateral and multilateral economic agreements with foreign parties. It is also the ministry which takes the leading role in making and implementing China's aid policy towards other countries. The Defense Ministry is also proactive in conducting China's military diplomacy, developing relations with foreign military forces and conducting joint exercises and non-combat military operations around the world, including participating in UN-led or UN-authorized peace-keeping operations (see Chapter 48 in this Handbook). The National Development and Reform Committee (NDRC), nicknamed the 'mini state council' due to its larger power in overall economic planning in China, plays a leading role in China's climate change diplomacy. The Education Ministry oversees the rapidly growing number of Confucius Institutes around the world and is becoming the key player in China's cultural or public diplomacy. The diplomatic importance of the Finance Ministry, the Public Security Ministry, and the Ministry of Science and Technology in their respective functional areas is another indication of the corporate pluralization trend in China's diplomacy.

Nevertheless, the Foreign Ministry does maintain its overall leadership of China's representations abroad. By the end of 2011, China had diplomatic relations with 172 countries around the world. Some 22 small countries still have 'diplomatic relations' with the 'Republic of China' in Taiwan. In the Chinese embassies and delegations to international organizations, most of the ambassadors and diplomats come from the Foreign Ministry. In addition, a number of

other functional ministries, including the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Culture, also send their staff to embassies, and although in charge of functional affairs, they are subject to the overall leadership of the ambassadors from the Foreign Ministry. There are a few exceptions, such as the Chinese delegation to the WTO, which is appointed and staffed by the Ministry of Commerce, and the Chinese delegation to UNESCO, which is appointed and staffed by the Ministry of Education.

Increasingly, Chinese diplomacy is becoming a 'comprehensive diplomacy' (*Zongti waijiao*), aiming to mobilize various actors outside of the central government and to advance Chinese foreign policy and diplomacy. The National People's Congress, the parliament in the Chinese system, conducts 'parliament diplomacy', both through its constitutional power in deciding the diplomatic budget, appointing senior leaders and ambassadors, and ratifying international agreements and treaties. It also engages with foreign parliaments. The Communist Party performs 'party diplomacy', through its large International Liaison Department. The CCP now has regular relationships with governing parties as well as opposition parties in foreign countries, which allows the CCP leaders to maintain contacts with incumbent or future leaders in foreign countries. In China's relations with North Korea, the CCP's party diplomacy usually plays a more important role than state-to-state diplomacy. China's local governments, including the cities, are active players in China's international engagements. As non-sovereign governmental actors, local governments and cities command sizable resources to support internationalization strategies to promote local economic and social development. They also act as agents of the central government: developing relations with foreign countries when an inter-state relationship is absent or is in difficulties, or financing and hosting major international events, like the 2001

Shanghai APEC Summit or the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. People-to-people diplomacy has a longer tradition in China. When most countries had not established formal diplomatic relationships with China, China adopted a 'promoting official relationship through unofficial ties' (*yiminzuguan*) strategy, through cultivating people-to-people ties and unofficial economic relations in order to pave the way for diplomatic normalization with countries, for example Japan (Xie Yixian, 1999: 94–102) (see Chapter 42 in this Handbook).

With more actors involved, overall leadership of China's diplomacy becomes an issue, even though China is a very centralized state. In 1958, a Foreign Affairs Leading Small Group (FALSG) of the Chinese Communist Party was established within the party to supervise foreign affairs. It is chaired by the president, with the vice president as the deputy chairman. It includes key ministers involved in various functional affairs related to foreign policy. The FALSG is supported by a permanent office, headed by the vice premier/state councilor in charge of foreign affairs and it conducts routine coordination work. But the FALSG is not the only major party organ to exercise leadership over China's diplomacy. The establishment of the new Central National Security Commission (CNSC) of the Chinese Communist Party at the 3rd Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee in November 2013, blurs the general leadership picture. While the CNSC is tasked with domestic security issues, it also deals with international security affairs. It has a much higher political power ranking than the FALSG, since it includes at least three out of seven members of the most powerful Standing Committee of the Politburo of the CCP, whereas the FALSG only has one member. The CNSC is headed by President Xi Jinping, with Premier Li Keqiang and Chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee, Zhang Dejiang, as deputies. Obviously, the CNSC is going to exert more influence in the making of foreign

policy with security implications. How it will work with the FALSG is still to be seen.

### Key Points

- Reflecting a long Chinese tradition and stipulated by the socialist political system, contemporary Chinese diplomacy is highly centralized in the hands of the party leadership. This allowed China to make use of strategic policy-making and implementation of Chinese diplomacy, such as the dramatic shifts in its diplomacy in the 1970s, either to repair its relationship with the United States or shift its central diplomatic objective from preparing for the third world war to assist domestic development.
- As China engages the world in all aspects of functional affairs in a globalized world, segmentation also arises in China as in other countries.
- With the arrival of new leadership under President Xi Jinping, new efforts are being made to recentralize policy-making for the implementation of Chinese diplomacy, to support a more proactive great power diplomacy.

### PATTERNS IN CHINA'S DIPLOMATIC BEHAVIOR

During the reform era at least four main patterns in China's diplomatic behavior can be discerned:

- 1 Partnership bilateralism
- 2 Pragmatic and strategic multilateral diplomacy
- 3 Attractive and coercive use of power
- 4 From reactive diplomacy to proactive major power diplomacy

#### Partnership Bilateralism

As Wu Jianmin points out, since the founding of the new China, 'for a fairly long period, Chinese diplomacy was mainly a bilateral one, while multilateral diplomacy played a very limited role in the conduct of Chinese diplomacy' (Wu, 2006: 10). Two main reasons explain why bilateralism, rather than

multilateralism, occupied the central place. First, starting from the sovereignty principle on which Chinese foreign policy has been based since the founding of the PRC, China has been reluctant to engage in sovereignty-eroding multilateral institutions, insisting on consensus as the most preferred method to reach international agreement. Second, China's bad experience of being denied memberships in the multilateral institutions in the 1950s and 1960s left it no choice but to pursue bilateral diplomacy. From the early 1990s, Chinese bilateral diplomacy developed a very distinctive feature, in the sense of building bilateral partnerships with all the major states, neighboring states, and developing states. So far, China has established 'strategic partnership' relationships with more than 30 states and regional blocs, in addition to numerous 'cooperative partnerships' with other countries, with the former being attached greater priority in China's diplomacy and being more comprehensive in terms of cooperation. The key point to be noted is that a partnership is not alliance. Even with its closest partner, Russia (which enjoys a strategic partnership of coordination with China), China does not intend to upgrade the relationship into a mutual security alliance (see Chapter 27 in this Handbook). While in China there is a growing call for building China's own alliance networks, as all Western powers do (Yan Xuetong, 2013), the mainstream view is still in favor the non-alliance principle. For China, bilateral partnerships can develop cooperation among the states, but can avoid security obligations which might jeopardize China's sovereignty, independence and autonomy.

### ***Pragmatic and Strategic Multilateral Diplomacy***

In the present era of globalization, a growing number of issues are becoming regional, global, or involving multiple stakeholders, and thus require multilateral solutions. A demand of this kind poses challenges to the

traditional diplomatic strategy of sovereign states, including China. To cope with the globalization challenges, Chinese diplomacy has gradually embraced a multilateral component, which aims to establish multilateral rules and norms through the consent of the relevant states, based on respect for each state's sovereignty.

Pragmatic multilateralism has been the defining feature of China's multilateralism in the twentieth century since China returned to the United Nations in 1971. During this period, China made efforts to gain memberships in the existing multilateral institutions, particularly those institutions which could offer China recognition and benefits for its domestic development. Chinese participation in these multilateral settings is seen as essential for China to regain international recognition and support for its economic developments, even though their rules are set by other states and are not always favorable to China and other developing states. This pragmatism means China's multilateralism is a selective one: it is willing to join those institutions which promote cooperation based on strict sovereignty principles and can offer resources for supporting Chinese development, while it is reluctant to join those institutions which regulate domestic behaviors of the member states, like human rights regimes. Western observers thus tend to lament this selective attitude of China's multilateral diplomacy, with some saying that 'Beijing sought many of the rights and privileges of a great power without accepting most of the attendant obligations and responsibilities' (Medeiros and Fravel, 2003: 24).

Since the end of the twentieth century, having joined most of the existing institutions, China's multilateral diplomacy developed a strategic dimension. China started to initiate new multilateral institutions, like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Six-party talks over the North Korean nuclear issue, the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, a new BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) based in Shanghai from 2015, and



a new Beijing-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) from 2016. Such strategic multilateralism is seen as a major platform to reconcile the different interests of the like-minded countries, and to seek through consensus joint solutions to common problems. By initiating and supporting these institutions, China can also secure its own interests and status in the world.

China's strategic multilateralism also aims to reform the existing international institutions. For example, China doesn't intend to join the G-8 because it believes that it cannot deal with developing countries on equal footing and it cannot promote international democracy – both, goals of Chinese diplomacy. However, during the global financial crisis China actively supported the convening of G-20 meetings where developing states have a fair representation. China has also voiced its support for including more developing states in the UN Security Council, and demanded a greater voice for the developing states in the World Bank and IMF. Witnessing the long delay of the Congress of the United States to reform the IMF and World Bank, China is more determined to push new financial institutions, such as the NDB and AIIB, on the one hand, to generate new resources for regional and global governance and, on the other hand, to exert greater pressures on dominating powers in the existing global institutions to reform.

### ***Attractive and Coercive Use of Power***

Since China shifted its diplomatic priority to secure a favorable international environment for domestic development, Chinese diplomacy has mostly relied on the 'attractive' use of its economic power. As a poor developing country in the earlier years of the reform era, China's immense untapped domestic market and its vast low-cost labor force were the main sources of attraction to foreign investors and developed countries. China's policy

to encourage foreign trade and investment led developed countries to have a huge interest in entering the Chinese market and prompted Western countries to maintain at least working relations with China even after the end of the Cold War. After 2010 when China became the second largest national market, its attractive market power is increasingly seen as an instrument for expanding China's global influence. In the words of Chinese President Xi Jinping, it is a 'ballast stone' to stabilize the competitive relationship between China and Western powers, particularly between China and the United States.<sup>2</sup> China has turned itself from a receiver of foreign aid and investment to a rapidly growing aid donor and investor in the world and its neighborhood. It can use aid, low-interest loans, and investment to support economies around the world, no matter developed or developing, or to devote financial contributions to strengthen the mainstream international institutions, like the IMF, as well as creating new institutions, like the BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

With regard to the non-material power of attraction, Chinese researchers were quick to pick up Joseph Nye's term of 'soft power', arguing that soft power should be a key instrument for Chinese diplomacy (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook). In 2007, then Chinese president Hu Jintao formally proclaimed that China should make more efforts to boost Chinese 'cultural soft power' (Hu Jintao, 2007). Learning from the cultural promotion practice of the Europeans, like the British Council and the Goethe Institute in Germany, China launched the Confucius Institute initiative in 2004. In just a decade, in terms of the total number of these institutes and their geographical coverage, China has already surpassed its European teachers. By the end of 2013, China had established 440 Confucius institutes and 646 Confucius classrooms around the world. Confucius institutes are located in 115 countries: 93 in 32 Asian countries; 37 in 27 African countries; 149 in 37



European countries; 144 in North and South America; and 17 in 3 Oceania countries.<sup>3</sup> They are focal points for promoting Chinese language, cultural, and two-way exchanges. The Chinese government also set up scholarship funds to encourage foreign students to study in China, and effectively quadrupled the number of foreign students studying in China since 2003.

Combining the attractive power of both economic (material) and cultural (non-material) resources, China has cultivated its soft power influence, particularly among developing countries (Kurlantzick, 2007). This approach demonstrates a Chinese view on soft power: that soft power does not exist in the nature of certain resources of power but rather it has to be nurtured through a soft use of power (Li Mingjiang, 2009: 3). Soft power does not just come from the attraction of non-material resources, like culture, political values and appealing foreign policy, but also come from the attraction of material interests, such as a profitable market or provision of foreign aid.

While attractive power still occupies the central place in China's diplomacy, coercive diplomacy is more frequently used than in the past, mostly in ways of using non-military means to enforce Chinese interests or force others to change their specific policies (see Chapter 38 in this Handbook). China is using economic sanctions to inflict economic costs for those countries which are perceived to lend support for the separatist movements in China, like those in Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang. For instance, in recent years, China has taken measures to curb economic relations with countries whose highest leaders received the Dalai Lama, the exiled religious leader of Tibetans who, from China's perspective, has an intention to separate Tibet from China. One study shows that, during the Hu Jintao era, countries officially receiving the Dalai Lama at the highest political level were punished through a reduction of their exports to China (Fuchs and Klann, 2013). Another example of China's recent

coercive diplomacy is its maritime disputes with Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Since 2010 China has more frequently used its civilian law enforcement forces, such as civilian coast guard ships, to exert its territorial claims in the East China Sea and the South China Sea, in addition to implicit economic sanctions against these countries.

### ***From Reactive Diplomacy to Proactive Major Power Diplomacy***

To concentrate on China's domestic development in a Western-dominated post-Cold War world, Deng Xiaoping in 1990 cautioned Chinese leaders to 'keep low profile and then do something' in diplomacy. As a result China refrained in most cases from confronting the major powers and tried to put aside its territorial disputes with its neighbors. China most often reacted to international events, rather than seeking to directly shape the outside world. This diplomatic passivity reflected a new priority for domestic development, but it also revealed an unique view of China's role in the world in the early stage of the reform era: namely, that developing its own economy and achieving the rapid enhancement of the welfare of the Chinese population (a quarter of the world's population) would be a 'true contribution to the human kind' (Deng Xiaoping, 1993: 224).

With the enhancement of Chinese power and global influence, demands for a more proactive diplomacy are on the rise within China, as well as outside of China, as countries around the world are pressing China to undertake more international responsibilities. China started to embrace the concept of a 'responsible state' from the 1996–1997 Asian financial crisis, when China decided not to devalue its currency in the context of region-wide currency collapse in East Asia, and furthermore, to lend emergency loans to those crisis-hit countries (Xia Liping, 2001). In the 2005 UN special summit meeting, then Chinese President Hu Jintao laid out a more

proactive foreign policy strategy, calling for the building of 'a harmonious world', where states can be equal and have mutual trust, where common security can be achieved, where win-win cooperation leads to common prosperity and where the diversity of civilizations could be maintained.

With the arrival in 2013 of the new leadership under President Xi Jinping, proactive great power diplomacy is proclaimed as the central feature of Chinese diplomacy. In the words of the current Chinese foreign minister, Wang Yi, 'China's diplomacy in the new era has taken on a more global perspective with a more enterprising and innovative spirit' (Wang Yi, 2013: 6). Clearly, the sense of rising Chinese power gives Chinese leaders new confidence in pursuing proactive diplomacy, which is backed up by a recentralized decision-making structure centered on the newly created Central National Security Commission (CNSC), the combined use of hard and soft power, clearer strategic guidelines, and more forceful pursuit of China's national and global interests.

### **Key Points**

- China's diplomacy is becoming proactive, but still with its distinctive features: as a sovereign country, China favors bilateralism, in the form of partnerships, not alliances.
- As a globalizing state, though a late comer in multilateral diplomacy, China is now a major player in existing multilateral institutions, and also a new driving force of new institutions.
- As a growing power, China is also attempting to develop its smart power strategy in its diplomacy, by cultivating its own version of soft power while opening up to the role of hard power.

## **CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF CHINA'S DIPLOMATIC TRANSFORMATION**

To understand Chinese diplomacy in the past and the future, there are three angles that deserve our attention. The first is the

revolutionary legacy of the twentieth century. This nationalist-socialist revolution left a nationalist legacy on contemporary Chinese diplomacy: to obtain and maintain a strong, independent sovereign state after being humiliated by colonial powers for a century. Although sovereignty is an imported idea from Europe, with the establishment of the PRC, China became one of the strongest proponents of sovereignty in the world, seeing the value of the sovereignty principle in protecting weaker countries from interference by the strong and rich countries. Since national unification with Taiwan is not finished, and national unity is still challenged in Tibet and Xinjiang, sovereignty matters will continue to have a high priority in Chinese diplomacy.

The socialist legacy matters in at least three ways. First, socialism led by the Chinese Communist Party created a centralized country, which also implies a Chinese centralized diplomacy. With the key foreign policy decision-making and implementation power being wielded by the government and its party leadership, it means that 'Of all the large countries, China has had the greatest freedom to maneuver, act on grand strategy, shift alignments, and conduct a strategic foreign policy in the rational pursuit of national interest' (Nathan and Ross, 1997: 14). The second impact is that China has developed its solidarity with other developing countries, believing that it shares features with them: for example, the similar experience of colonialism or semi-colonialism; a similar priority in development and upholding sovereignty; and opposing foreign interference in domestic affairs (see also Chapters 3 and 24 in this Handbook). Third, with regard to the existing international system, which was created mostly by the Western powers after the end of Second World War, China has a revisionist intention to reform the system in order to better secure its own interests and those of fellow developing countries.

China's diplomacy of the past and the future can be seen from a second angle: the developmentalist legacy from the reform era.

The reform and opening-up process initiated by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s brought China into an international system created mostly under the auspices of the Western powers. China reversed some of its past oppositions to the principles and codes of conduct of that system, for example, accepting freer trade under the WTO, peace keeping and non-proliferation. Rational calculation of economic interests in a globalized economy, as argued by liberalism and the socialization of China in the international system, as articulated by constructivism, do make sense in explaining China's search for integration into the global economy, cooperation in bilateral relations, and more responsible involvement in global governance. As China's development agenda is far from accomplished, this legacy will continue to be one of the main shaping forces for future Chinese diplomacy.

The third angle is the 'Central Kingdom' mentality, which is being revived as China's power rises. In the twentieth century, China sought to create a state strong enough to protect it from the bullying of the colonial powers. As it enters the twenty-first century, China is quickly finding that it is finally rising to a great power status: it is the biggest economy in Asia; it has the largest foreign currency reserve in the world; it is a veto-wielding permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations; and a recognized nuclear power. This sense of Chinese power is revealed in a speech on May 4, 2014 by the Chinese President, Xi Jinping, at Beijing University, in which he states, 'We are, more than any time in the history, closer to [realizing] the aim of great rejuvenation of [the] Chinese nation; and more than [at] any time in the history, we have the confidence and capacity to realize this aim.'<sup>4</sup> This shift of mind could explain China's changing diplomatic behaviors, such as more forceful defense of its territorial and maritime interests, and greater efforts to use its resources to create new international institutions, like BRICS Development Bank, which have the potential to challenge the existing mainstream global and regional institutions.

To understand China's future diplomacy, each of the three angles cannot be ignored, and the configuration of their confluence will shape the unfolding future path. Many of the guiding principles for future Chinese diplomacy would still be derived from the revolutionary legacy: sovereignty, non-interference, bilateralism, and solidarity with developing countries. From the developmentalist legacy, it is anticipated that China will still devote most of its efforts to domestic development, to addressing the income inequality in the society, to cleaning its environment and to enhancing national unity. To achieve that, following the past successful diplomacy of cooperation and integration will be the most natural choice for China.

Under the present new great power diplomacy, China is expected to seek a much more enhanced status in global diplomacy, supported by its growing hard and soft power resources and the attractive and coercive use of them. Nevertheless, this great power diplomacy in general may develop on the basis of the other two legacies – the revolutionary and the developmental – rather than be a fundamental departure from them. Such a scenario would entail that a status-seeking China would not abandon its sovereignty and non-interference principles in general, and would resist the temptation to rebuild a modern version of a tributary system around it in Asia. Rather it would seek to enhance its influence through the provision of new public goods and so-called 'creative involvement' (Wang Yizhou, 2011) and more proactive involvement in inter-state and intra-state conflict resolutions while respecting sovereignty of other countries. Partnership bilateralism will be pursued in a more strategic way, and some of these partnerships may be upgraded to a very high level, but China will refrain from building a security alliance network. China will not attempt to overthrow the existing international institutions, but will create new institutions to suit its own interests, while using them to press for reforms within the existing institutions. It will mostly rely on attractive

power in its diplomacy rather than coercive power, even though the latter will be available more often than in the past.

### Key Points

- China's past and present diplomacy can be understood from three angles: the nationalist-socialist revolutionary legacy of the twentieth century; the developmentalist legacy of the late 1970s reform era; and the Central Kingdom mentality that partly informs China's present diplomacy as an emerging great power.
- To understand China's future diplomacy these three angles cannot be ignored.

### CONCLUSION

The return of China as a great power is one of the defining feature in today's global diplomacy. Having its experiences in an ancient multi-state system, a China-centered hierarchical system and a West-centered hierarchical system, China finds itself as a reemerging power in a globalized multi-state system. It has no chance to rebuild a China-centered world as it did before, it also has managed to lift itself from an inferior status in a West-dominated world. As a reemerging power in a globalized multi-state system, China is becoming both a rule-shaper and rule-taker at the same time. With its distinctive diplomacy, its centralization of policy-making and its emphasis on sovereignty, bilateral partnerships, strategic multilateralism and attractive power, China is making inroads in enhancing its international status and influence, while at the same time not causing the systemic disruption often associated with the process of power transition.

There are uncertainties, however, which cannot be dismissed easily. Important voices in the Chinese society may like the idea of a new *Pax Sinica*. The 'pivot to Asia' strategy of the Obama administration of the United States fuels mistrust in China (Lieberthal and

Wang, 2012) and a worry that the US is staging containment diplomacy towards China. Therefore, in the coming formative years of China's new great power diplomacy, smart diplomacy is what every country needs to adopt to ensure that the world can adapt to a reemerging China, and China can be a force for development, peace and cooperation. For China, the central challenges are how to develop a new balance between its desire to become a leading world power and its adherence to the sovereignty principle, and how to mainly focus on its attractive power while coercive diplomacy is becoming a more viable instrument for its diplomacy.

### NOTES

- 1 Article 81, Constitution of the People's Republic of China, Full text after amendment on March 14, 2004. [http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Constitution/2007-11/15/content\\_1372966.htm](http://www.npc.gov.cn/englishnpc/Constitution/2007-11/15/content_1372966.htm)
- 2 'President Xi Jinping meets with U.S. president's special representative and treasury secretary Jacob Lew, urging both sides to promote China-U.S. economic relations through respect and win-win cooperation', March 19, 2013. <http://www.chinaembassy.se/eng/xwdt/t1023474.htm>
- 3 [http://www.hanban.org/confuciousinstitutes/node\\_10961.htm](http://www.hanban.org/confuciousinstitutes/node_10961.htm). Accessed on March 26, 2014.
- 4 *Renmin Ribao* [People's Daily], May 5, 2014. <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2014/0505/c1001-24973097.html>

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# Diplomacy in East Asia

Pauline Kerr

## INTRODUCTION

There are many analyses of ‘European diplomacy’<sup>1</sup> but few of ‘East Asian diplomacy’.<sup>2</sup> One reason for this is that the Asia-Pacific is a geographic construct whereas Europe is both a geographic and an institutional construct centred on the European Union (EU). EU diplomacy is characterised, among other things, by a trend towards supranational diplomatic practices and away from national practices (Spence, 2009) (see Chapter 25 in this Handbook). The establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) is part of this trend. Diplomacy in East Asia (and the Asia-Pacific) is characterised more by national rather than supranational practices (and interests and identities), with little evidence of substantive change.

There is little point then in trying to analyse diplomacy in East Asia in terms of supranational practices. Rather, it would be more useful to focus on the diplomatic practices of the individual countries with other regional and

extra-regional political entities, bilaterally and multilaterally. In the latter case, any collective identity is in reality a coalition of individual national interests, not supranational interests, as the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the most advanced regional multilateral arrangement, demonstrates.

If we cannot meaningfully refer to an East Asian diplomacy in a supranational sense then the question is, what are some of the main characteristics and trends in the diplomatic approaches of the individual countries and what are the different and similar approaches of these countries that could support theoretic generalisations about diplomacy in East Asia? The question is important in the light of claims that the twenty-first century is the Asian Century, that many of the countries in East Asia are the economic foundations for that claim, and that today economics is high politics alongside political and security issues.

It’s a difficult question to answer. Surprisingly, there are few comprehensive and rigorous studies of diplomacy in the



region that support generalisations.<sup>3</sup> There are numerous studies of the regional context and the foreign policies of East Asian countries but these tend to conflate events and policy with diplomacy. That is, the latter tend to gloss over the distinction between foreign policy as an outcome of foreign policy making processes and the diplomatic processes involved in policy implementation and, to a lesser degree, the diplomatic reporting required for policy formulation and adjustments. Even the intricacies of foreign policy making – for example, detailed analyses of domestic and international factors – that help explain the policy outcomes and positions of East Asian states seem under-investigated in the academic literature. Those studies that do focus on diplomacy often concentrate on a particular type of diplomacy, recently for example, public diplomacy (Melissen and Sohn, 2015). There are few studies that adopt a comprehensive analysis of the many different types of diplomacy (consular, commercial, summit, digital, sport, environmental, and so on) at play in the region and that compare and contrast these practices in terms of diplomatic processes, structures, instruments, actors, drivers and effectiveness.

The question is also perplexing. If this is the Asian Century then there should be studies that explain the diplomatic processes behind it, just as there are numerous studies that help to explain other momentous events, such as the rise and fall of the Roman Empire and the Cold War. Yet, such analyses – of the diplomatic processes, instruments, structures and actors behind the evolution of the Asian Century – are hard to find, at least in English. The question is perplexing too because scholars consistently call for more and better diplomatic practices and more studies of diplomacy to address some quite dire problems in the region. For example, Douglas Paal's critical review of diplomacy in Northeast Asia argues that 'Responsible officials should be deputized and timetables established to stabilize and ultimately normalize the region's diplomacy'

(2014). Likewise, Corneliu Bjola points out that 'there is no common understanding yet about how the rise of China should be diplomatically addressed' (2013: 17). Yet again these types of calls continue in the main to be unanswered. How then to proceed with an examination of diplomacy in East Asia?

In the absence of comprehensive and robust research on diplomacy in East Asia that would support a proper evaluation of the practice, the aim of this chapter is necessarily limited to examining informed commentary. Much of this commentary is about two types of regional diplomacy – multilateral economic diplomacy and multilateral security diplomacy. An examination of these two areas of diplomatic practice can be thought of as case studies that have the potential to produce general hypotheses for further studies that compare and contrast other types of diplomacy that regional countries practice.

The focus on regional multilateral diplomacy is useful because it involves most regional countries (and others) and shows how a variety of countries practise this type of diplomacy, plus it highlights the fact that multilateral diplomacy is a major innovation in East Asia since the end of the Cold War, and finally it is, maybe, possible to analyse it in within a short chapter. The focus has its limitations of course. Like any other single issue focus, any generalisations to other types of diplomacy will need to be treated with care. But it's a start.

The chapter first provides a brief account of how the history of diplomacy in East Asia is commonly depicted, to provide some background to the present situation, particularly with regard to multilateral diplomacy. Second, it focusses on two regional economic mega negotiations, the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP)<sup>4</sup> and the Asian Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), to identify some characteristics of diplomacy in this arena. Third, it focusses briefly on multilateral security diplomacy, noting two security forums, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus

(ADMM-Plus), again to identify characteristics of diplomacy. Finally, it summarises the findings and discusses their potential for generalisations and hypotheses for further research.

The chapter argues that from an examination of these types of diplomacy several general observations about multilateral diplomacy in East Asia can be made which potentially inform hypotheses for further research on other types of diplomacy in East Asia.

### **Key Points**

- Unlike 'European diplomacy', 'East Asian diplomacy' is more concerned with national rather than supranational practices.
- Despite the claim that the twenty-first century is the Asian Century, there is little comprehensive and rigorous analysis of diplomacy in East Asia.
- This chapter examines two areas – multilateral economic and security diplomacy – which could be the basis of generalisations for hypotheses about the characteristics of diplomacy in East Asia.

## **HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF DIPLOMACY IN EAST ASIA**

Many references to diplomacy in East Asia start with acknowledgement that it has ancient regional origins which are equally important to, though less well known than, those in Western diplomatic histories. The latter tend to find the antecedents of modern diplomacy in the hierarchical and religious practices of kings of tribes in the Near East thousands of years ago or in the communications of rulers and merchants in the Italian city-states of the fifteenth century. Accounts of East Asian diplomacy, while not making claims to be the antecedents of modern diplomacy, also go back over a thousand years, for example to the Zhou dynasty (1100–221 BCE) when Chinese emperors ruled under a mandate from Heaven (see Chapter 28 in this Handbook), just like the kings of Mesopotamia (now modern Iraq).

In many respects the domination of diplomacy by powerful political entities, be they kings, emperors or leaders of modern nation states, is reflected throughout most of the evolution of diplomacy in East Asia. The Chinese empire's tribute system, which operated as far back as the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), had both ceremonial and functional diplomatic objectives for regulating foreign relations between China and countries either bordering or near China. The tributary countries followed protocols that appeared to pay public deference to the emperor, who in return provided some economic and other material goods and some autonomy and security.

The decline of the tributary system in the nineteenth century and the rise of a European diplomatic culture – based on sovereignty, the nation-state, the treaty system, and diplomatic law – in principle lessened the region's hierarchical diplomatic structures. However, in reality it had both positive and negative consequences. On the one hand, some semblance of equality under international law became embedded in the region which in later years facilitated the decolonisation of many states. On the other hand, diplomacy was used to entrench the interests of strong colonial powers over weaker states. For example, imperial Japan during the late 1800s 'negotiated' legal treaties with China and Korea that resulted in zero-sum outcomes in Japan's favour.

Diplomacy during the Cold War period continued to be dominated by balance of power dynamics between the powerful states. The diplomatic metaphor that depicted China's big power diplomacy was 'leaning to one side'. It was manifest in China's 1950 Treaty of Friendship with the communist Soviet Union and its support for communist North Korea in the Korean War. But China by the late 1960s, following various disagreements and its 1969 border war with the Soviet Union, was leaning diplomatically towards another great power relationship, this time with the US. On 6 April 1971, China invited an American ping-pong team visiting Japan to visit China. This event was the start of what

became known as ping-pong diplomacy and an example of successful public diplomacy which helped thaw both Chinese and Western public opinion (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook). Not until the end of the Cold War, however, did diplomacy in East Asia begin to become less dominated by big power dynamics and bilateralism and more amenable to multilateral diplomacy.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomacy in East Asia, like diplomacy in many other regions such as the Middle East and Europe, has ancient origins.
- For much of East Asia's history, diplomacy has been dominated by the big powers.
- Not until the end of the Cold War did multilateral diplomacy take hold.

### **SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF CONTEMPORARY MULTILATERAL ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY IN EAST ASIA**

One of the defining characteristics of East Asia since the end of the Cold War is the growing number of multilateral arrangements.<sup>5</sup> Some twenty years ago, with the exception of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), this was not the case. At that time regional multilateral diplomacy, that is processes supporting interaction between more than two countries, was something that diplomats practised infrequently.

Today the situation is quite different. Although bilateral diplomacy is still the more common practice,<sup>6</sup> nonetheless regional diplomats spend a lot of their time attending the economic, security and political meetings connected to the numerous regional multilateral arrangements. Today, leaders' summits, meetings of economic, foreign and defence ministers as well as preparatory senior officials' meetings (SOMs) are routine events (see Chapter 19 in this Handbook).

The most cooperative arena of multilateral diplomacy, particularly within the last five years, is economic diplomacy, focussed on trade and investment negotiations.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the several quite long standing economic arrangements (see note 5), there are two new mega trade and investment multilateral negotiations now underway: the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP), which started in 2008, and the Asian Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which was established in 2012. These new mega regional negotiations are driven by several concerns, among them the incompletion of the Doha Round and the inadequacy of the numerous bilateral preferential trade arrangements in the Asia-Pacific for addressing the 'new cross-regional and multilateral trade issues', such as 'the growth of production networks' (Drysdale, 2013).

On the one hand, the two sets of negotiations are encouraging efforts to foster cooperative economic diplomacy between the respective members. The TPP, comprising 12 members<sup>8</sup> from both sides of the Pacific, 'is an exceptional trade agreement in its ambitious coverage of issues and the emphasis on new regulations' (Palit, 2013). On the other hand, the TPP negotiations also involve considerable competition between countries around a number of issues. For example, around 'WTO plus' and 'WTO extra' issues as well as the measures for new regulatory convergence, for example domestic behind-the-border obstacles.<sup>9</sup>

The other major negotiation underway, the RCEP, signals an impressive Asian-track effort by some 16 member countries<sup>10</sup> to establish a comprehensive and cooperative approach to regional trade and investment. Its aim, which is less ambitious in terms of standards than the TPP, is not to replace existing ASEAN FTAs but rather to improve and coordinate them. Like the TPP, the RCEP also faces strong competitive dynamics among its members. For example, countries that support the harmonisation of all the existing bilateral FTAs are reluctant to agree to integrating politically sensitive 'flexibility'

clauses for the least developed ASEAN member states (Menon, 2013).

Looking beyond the internal cooperative and competitive diplomatic dynamics of each mega regional negotiation, of more concern is that both are driven by external competitive geostrategic and economic strategic dynamics, not least those between the US and China. The TPP is strongly supported by the US. China is not a member. The RCEP is strongly supported by China, and the US is not a member. Many in China consider the TPP to be the economic dimension of the US military 'pivot' to Asia. China's reliance on foreign trade and investment for its growth, notwithstanding the recent shift to a new five year plan with more focus on a domestic consumer and services economy, causes many Chinese to see the TPP as a competitive dynamic by the US and Japan to curtail China's future growth and therefore its power (Richardson, 2013), in effect to diplomatically and structurally restrain China.

From the US perspective, the TPP ensures its comparative advantage in trade and investment by cementing US interests in advancing 'WTO plus' issues and 'WTO extra' subjects (Palit, 2013). These US economic objectives do not complement China's present objectives. China puts less emphasis on WTO plus issues and its domestic regulations would not meet many of the TPP's gold standards. The TPP helps the US to promote its own template of economic diplomacy, economic rules and norms: not just for the Asia-Pacific, but also for other regional agreements (see Chapter 45 in this Handbook). The US template competes with China's present, less liberalised economic diplomacy template and it challenges China's ambition to exert some diplomatic leadership in global economic governance.

In comparison to the TPP, the RCEP gives China several favourable options. One is to counterbalance some of the geostrategic and economic strategic competitive dynamics associated with US dominance of the TPP. A second option is that the RCEP offers a negotiating template that, unlike the TPP, presently

suits China and many other Asian countries. It is non-binding and voluntary and better accommodates the different development stages of Asian economies which have less emphasis on the WTO plus and WTO extra issues. Thus, this template enables China to work with the ASEANs as a regional partner rather than be seen as a threat. It is therefore an asset for China's public diplomacy strategies towards ASEAN audiences and its soft power attractiveness. A third option is that the RCEP better supports China's need for essential supply chains to Japan and South Korea, as well as ASEAN. Through these networks China imports large amounts of 'intermediates, parts and components ... which are processed and assembled in the mainland, and exported to third country markets such as the US and Europe' (Palit, 2013).

The two mega economic negotiations show that multilateral and bilateral diplomacy, while often seen to be different, proceed simultaneously and influence each other. For example, the multilateral RCEP aims to harmonise the bilateral FTAs. Both mega negotiations have an effect on other types of diplomacy. The US-led TPP, for example, influences trilateral FTA negotiations between China, Japan and South Korea. Once it became clear that Japan intended to join the TPP China became more flexible on a trilateral investment agreement. The negotiations are an important focus of summit diplomacy between leaders and are seen as important symbols of future diplomatic leadership in Asia. As Barfield argues, 'the TPP is now not just a trade agreement: it has huge diplomatic and security implications for US forward strategy in the Asia-Pacific' (Barfield, 2014).

The mega negotiations show that the choice between adopting different types of diplomacy usually has more to do with pragmatism than principle, whatever the lofty declarations of practitioners and academics. For example, Vietnam, which traditionally has had close bilateral economic and political diplomatic relations with its communist partner China, is pursuing omnidirectional

diplomacy, participating in both the China-led RCEP and the US-led TPP (Huong, 2014). Given the great difficulties Vietnam has complying with the TPP's more demanding gold regulatory standards, its choice to join the TPP has less to do with principles of multilateralism and more to do with pragmatic calculations. A closer diplomatic relationship with the US gives it more diplomatic options and is a possible form of preventive diplomacy in its tense relationship with China over their respective maritime claims in the South China Sea/Paracels Islands. Pragmatic considerations are driven in part by the linkages between issue areas, in this case economic, security and political issues, rather than the virtues of multilateral diplomacy.

These types of political sensitivities between regional countries are often reflected in diplomatic metaphors. In Vietnam's case, reference is made to its 'clumping bamboo' diplomacy. According to a distinguished Vietnamese diplomat, the logic is that 'the more interdependent ties we can cultivate, the easier we can maintain our independence and self-reliance, like an ivory bamboo that will easily fall by standing alone but grow firmly in clumps' (Do, 2014). Metaphors rather than explicit statements might be seen as part of the smoke and mirrors diplomacy in East Asia.

The diplomatic actors involved in the mega negotiations are quite diverse. For example, with regard to the RCEP, at one level it involves the leaders of the 16 participating countries, who launched the negotiations on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit on 20 November 2012. The next levels of actors are the economic and trade ministers, government officials from different departments (trade, finance, treasury, foreign affairs and others) who, depending on the issue, bring in a variety of non-state actors – for example, from the business, scientific, legal, think-tank, research institutes and academic communities. These communities in East Asia (and the Asia-Pacific) often operate within respected track-two economic organisations that provide valuable economic research and policy

advice. For example, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) established in 1980 comprises academic, business and industry participants plus government officials in their non-official capacity. Newer track-two economic groupings include the Network of East Asian Think Tanks (NEAT) established in 2003, the Council on East Asian Community established in 2004 and the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) established in 2008 (Kerr and Taylor, 2013).

However, the diplomatic actors who exercise most power and influence in economic diplomacy in East Asia are state officials. The primary function of the track-two groupings is to support or at least not to challenge state-centric interests and to serve industry and encourage public-private partnerships. As Yasumasa Komori suggests in his study of regional economic track-two diplomacy, 'The relationships between track-one and track-two are more hierarchical than horizontal in the sense that states remain the primary actors in shaping the Asia-Pacific regional governance mechanism' (2009: 328).

Overall, economic diplomacy involving the two multilateral mega negotiations is having a profound effect on the region and beyond. As Palit argues, 'the progress on the TPP negotiations, and the counter-response produced through the RCEP, are reorganizing the trade architecture of the Asia-Pacific into distinct blocs based on specific negotiating templates. These blocs are also reflecting the strategic economic interests of the US and China' (Palit, 2013). Moreover, the effect of the two negotiations goes beyond the Asia-Pacific. With three mega trade and investment liberalising blocs now on the agenda – the TPP, RCEP and TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) – competition to conclude and ratify the first agreement is strong. If there is insufficient robust WTO governance then whoever finalises a bloc first will dominate economic diplomacy by 'setting key rules and standards for global commerce in the 21st century' (Richardson, 2013).



## Key Points

- Economic diplomacy, in particular trade and investment, is the most active arena of multilateral diplomacy and negotiation in East Asia.
- The two mega negotiations on trade and investment, the TPP and RCEP, demonstrate that East Asian economic multilateral diplomacy has several characteristics, suggestive of generalisations for informing hypotheses. These are discussed later in the chapter.

## SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF MULTILATERAL SECURITY/POLITICAL DIPLOMACY

Although national interests and identities are dominant, there is explicit emphasis on diplomatic dialogue in East Asia and this is true of a very contentious regional issue: multilateral security diplomacy. The aim is to keep communication channels open and facilitate a very Asian process of ‘getting-to-know’ the other, of socialisation, which takes place independently of or prior to negotiation processes. Nonetheless, while there is an explicit emphasis on the importance of diplomatic dialogue, the practice itself waxes and wanes. For example, the Six Party Talks on North Korea’s nuclear programmes are an off-on forum for dialogue. Likewise the Japanese and Chinese meetings on maritime issues, including the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands dispute, stop and start depending on security and political incidents in both countries.

Furthermore, notwithstanding the explicit emphasis on diplomatic dialogue, there is implicit stress on diplomatic signals and on vary degrees of threats that warn of foreclosure on compromise, concessions and win-win outcomes if these weaken national or identity interests. For example, China’s 2014 unprecedented deployment of a mega oil-drilling platform in disputed waters within Vietnam’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) was, among other things, a signal to Vietnam

and other ASEAN claimants in the South China Sea that dialogue and negotiation on the issues are unlikely to involve concessions from China. At the same time, China’s early removal of the platform was, among other things, a signal that it is aware of Vietnam’s ‘clumping bamboo’ diplomacy and does not wish to see its broader diplomatic relationship undermined by Vietnam’s improving diplomatic relationship with the US. The cycle of dialogue and warning signals is likely to continue.

Hence in the security arena there is much less actual meaningful multilateral cooperation than in the economic area. States in the region continue to have limited trust in each other. Many are rapidly modernising their defence capabilities. There are signs of competitive arms racing dynamics underway in North East Asia around maritime force structures, such as submarines. Many argue that regional multilateral security forums, like the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), are failing to sufficiently curb traditional state-to-state competition, for example between the US and China, China and Japan, and between countries involved in maritime disputes in the South China Sea.

The ARF, which in 1944 was the first and is thus the longest standing region-wide multilateral security arrangement, continues to focus on dialogue rather than evolving towards its original agenda to establish concrete practical confidence building measures and preventive diplomacy mechanisms. Despite some limited progress, such as incorporating the functional benefits of the ASEAN Secretariat and having back-to-back meetings with the regional track-two body, the Council for Security Cooperation Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), there is continuing resistance to deepening the quasi-institutional structure of the ARF.

Nonetheless there are indications that multilateral security diplomacy is an ongoing objective in East Asia. There are growing formal networks and meetings at the military level, between regional defence ministers and military personnel. The 2006 annual



security dialogues between ASEAN defence ministers in the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meetings, the ADMM, was followed in 2010 by the ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus, involving ASEAN's dialogue partners, among them the defence ministers from the US and China.<sup>11</sup> Subsequent meetings have been held. The Shangri-La dialogue, a semi-official (or track 1.5) meeting, is another meeting of defence and other government officials and non-officials. As See Seng Tan points out in his chapter on military diplomacy in this Handbook, military diplomacy has a pragmatic and conservative culture of capacity building and 'Arguably, what the capacity arrangements within the ADMM-Plus have ... enabled is an embryonic regional capacity in preventive diplomacy – ironically, the very thing the ARF has not been able to implement' (Chapter 48, page 597).

However, critics note that in the main these meetings presently focus on non-traditional security issues, such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) and counterterrorism, rather than traditional state-to-state tensions, for example between the US and China, and between regional countries involved in the East China Sea and the South China Sea disputes. This suggests that there is a continuing deficit of strategic trust among the major powers and, more generally, many regional states.

### **Key Points**

- Although diplomatic dialogue around issues of security is explicitly emphasised, in practice it waxes and wanes and is challenged by diplomatic signals and warnings that diplomatic concessions that affect national interests and identities are unlikely to be forthcoming.
- The key characteristic of security multilateral diplomacy is its national, state-centric focus and competition in varying degrees. Within these boundaries, military diplomacy is a relatively new and encouraging development, but it is presently mostly concerned with non-traditional security issues.

### **DEVELOPING GENERALISATIONS AND HYPOTHESES?**

From this brief analysis of economic and security multilateral diplomacy in East Asia it is possible to discern that it has several characteristics. To organise these characteristics into generalisations which could serve as hypotheses about diplomacy more generally in East Asia it is useful to consider some generic terms commonly used in diplomatic studies as frameworks for analysis, such as diplomatic processes, structures, instruments, actors and drivers.

Most of the key characteristics below appear to be connected to diplomatic processes, and include the following:

- Diplomacy is more concerned with national rather than supranational practices, interests and identities.
- Diplomacy exhibits cooperative and competitive dynamics, though the latter is probably more common both between regional countries (particularly between China and Japan) and the US and China.
- Diplomacy between the US and China is most often driven by economic and geostrategic competition, showing that each country's preference is to have diplomatic leadership over the rules and governance of global economic diplomacy and the regional security architecture.
- Diplomacy is influenced strongly by the roles of the major powers, just as it has been historically.
- Diplomacy is guided more by pragmatic rather than principled approaches; pragmatism is partly due to diplomatic linkages between issue areas, such as economics, security and political issues, and partly to a conservative outlook that aims for capacity building outcomes.
- The choice between bilateral and multilateral diplomacy is guided by pragmatic considerations and the two processes often run in parallel and influence each other and other types of diplomacy.
- Negotiated multilateral agreements aim for non-binding and voluntary outcomes, thus enabling states to have control over outcomes, avoid rigorous implementation and withdraw if conditions don't suit them (as North Korea does frequently).

- Multilateral negotiations usually result in a variety of arrangements, none of which at the moment replicate institutions like the EU. Rather, there are: ad hoc arrangements focussed on particular issues, such as the Six-Party Talks (6PTs) and the negotiations on a Code of Conduct (COC) for the South China Sea; informal and most likely long standing arrangements, such as the East Asian Summit (EAS); quasi-institutional arrangements such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF); and stronger institutional arrangements like ASEAN. Moreover, the membership of these forums is relatively small.
- The process of security diplomatic dialogue is explicitly endorsed as a regional norm; however, its actual practice varies and it is often accompanied by diplomatic signals of implicit threats and diplomatic metaphors, all of which suggest that diplomacy in East Asia can involve smoke and mirrors dynamics.
- Depending on the issue area, diplomacy involves a variety of diplomatic structures and diplomatic actors. Economic multilateral diplomacy involves several ministries, particularly trade and finance, the business communities and some other non-state actors such as economic policy experts from universities, track-two organisations and think-tanks. Security multilateral diplomacy in its traditional military guise involves defence departments and foreign ministries and, in its non-traditional form, defence and foreign ministries and non-state actors expert in the particular issue, such as environmental degradation or disaster and humanitarian relief. Overall, non-state actors act as consultants to governments rather than being key players in active policy making processes, which are dominated by officials. Nonetheless, new technologies, such as ICT and Internet, and Sina Weibo (a Chinese mobile social media platform) provide citizens with a diplomatic instrument to voice their ideas and concerns to officials who more than ever have to manage domestic and international audiences. Likewise, these new technologies are generating stronger public diplomacy strategies among East Asian states.

These generalisations, extracted from the examination of multilateral economic and security diplomacy, potentially inform hypotheses for further research on East Asian diplomacy.

## CONCLUSION

The generalisations above are just the beginning. Even in the areas under discussion, each generalisation suggested needs further research and elaboration. For example, much more needs to be known about the power and influence of different diplomatic actors in multilateral economic and security diplomacy in the digital age: that is, who has what type of power, over what issues, and under what conditions. Then after that comes the refinement of hypotheses and their operationalisation. There is a vast, important and exciting research project waiting for scholars. Unless the challenge is taken up and more is understood about diplomacy in East Asia, the rise of the Asian Century may be followed unnecessarily by its fall.

## NOTES

- 1 See Chapter 25 in this Handbook.
- 2 East Asia comprises countries in Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia.
- 3 Among the few exceptions are Brian Hocking (ed.) (1999); Kishan Rana (2008); and studies on the ASEAN Way as a diplomatic code of conduct; Matthew Davies (2016).
- 4 Although the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations reached agreement on 5 October 2015 (after this chapter was written), the diplomatic and political dynamics described in the chapter continue to inform analysis of multilateral economic diplomacy in East Asia.
- 5 Regional economic arrangements are the most numerous. Among the most important are APEC, ASEAN plus China, ASEAN plus 3 (China, Japan and South Korea), ASEAN plus other dialogue partner states and, recently, two new possible multilateral arrangements: the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Plan (RCEP). Multilateral security arrangements include the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD), ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ASEAN DMM), ASEAN Plus Defence Ministers' Meeting, Six Party Talks (SPT), the Five Powers Defence Arrangements (FPDA), the Malacca Straits Patrol (MSP) and the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Finally there are arrangements that include a mix of economic, security and political issues, such as the East Asian

Summit (EAS), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), ASEAN/Europe Meeting (ASEM) and talks around the Declaration of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea (COC) between ASEAN and China. Of course many of the other arrangements mentioned earlier involve this mix of economic, political and security issues to varying degrees.

- 6 In the economic field, numerous bilateral Free Trade Arrangements (FTAs) have been negotiated and others are in the pipeline. Plus there are long-standing security bilateral arrangements, such as the separate treaties that the US has with Australia, Japan and South Korea, all of which are presently being strengthened as part of the US 'pivot' to the Asia-Pacific.
- 7 As Stephen Woolcock explains, 'Economic diplomacy should be understood as decision making and negotiation in core issues of international economic relations' (Woolcock, 2013: 210).
- 8 The TPP includes the United States, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, New Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam.
- 9 There are different positions on 'WTO plus' issues, such as 'wider and deeper elimination of tariff barriers' and 'removal of technical barriers to trade (TBT)', to name just a few (Palit, 2013). Equally competitive will be negotiations over 'WTO extra' subjects, those that go 'beyond the WTO's current mandate' (Palit, 2013). These include environmental and labour standards, government procurement, and competition policy. Another issue where competition will be strong is the TPP's aim to establish new regulatory convergence among its members: such as, 'minimizing obstructions created by differences in domestic regulations that are "behind the border" factors', which add to trade costs and affect the competitiveness of exporters to their market access prospects (Palit, 2013).
- 10 The RCEP includes ASEAN +6 (i.e. the 10 ASEANs plus Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand).
- 11 Apart from the ten ASEAN countries, other countries attending are the US, India, Australia, China, New Zealand, South Korea and Russia.

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# Latin American Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

After the close of the 2003 World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico, United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick unleashed a stinging attack on Brazil and its Latin American partners in the G-20 trade negotiating coalition. Lamenting the failure to reach agreement on the US/EU proposal to conclude the Doha round, Zoellick (2003) bemoaned Brazil's 'tactics of confrontation', refusal to compromise and insistence on a 'massive list of required changes' to the chairperson's discussion text. These tensions between the Brazilian-led G-20 negotiating coalition and the US offer a highly illustrative entry point to understanding the key elements of contemporary Latin American diplomacy, the subject of this chapter. In order to grapple with the practice and precepts of Latin American diplomacy we will draw out five points embedded within

post-Cancun rhetorical fracas and amplify them through reference to other cases and the conceptual thinking of scholars and analysts based in the region. The approach we take in our analysis of Latin American diplomacy is predominantly at the state level, examining the patterns and habits of interaction exhibited by governments in the region.

## CHANGING TRADITIONAL VIEWS: LATIN AMERICA IS NOT A HOMOGENOUS ENTITY

Perhaps the cleverest element of Zoellick's blast against Brazil was the emphasis on how the G-20 not only violated pan-Southern solidarity by rejecting a text from the Thai WTO Director General Supachai Panitchpakdi, but also abrogated the supposedly entrenched idea of intra-Latin American unity. As Zoellick highlighted, the text blocked by the G-20 was drafted by the WTO's General

Council chairperson Carlos Pérez del Castillo, Uruguay's ambassador to the organization. The meeting itself was chaired by Mexican foreign minister Luis Ernesto Derbez, who attempted to broker an agreement between the contending parties.

In his ire, Zoellick appeared to be assuming Latin America can be viewed as a homogeneous unit with consistent shared interests and attitudes. The region is instead comprised of countries possessing a wide range of geographic, demographic, economic and historical characteristics impacting their independent foreign policy positions. 'Latin America' as a 'unity' is itself an externally devised notion floated by the French in the 1830s in an effort to create an implicit sense of alliance between the region and Romance-language European countries engaged in a struggle with their Anglo-Saxon and Slavic neighbours.

The French idea of 'Latin America' as a contiguous unit did stick in the Washington policy consciousness during the 1800s when gunboat diplomacy undergirded US efforts to establish the Western Hemisphere as its exclusive zone of influence. Repeated iterations of US policy towards the Americas took a rather simplified approach to exerting hegemony over the region through approaches such as the Monroe Doctrine (1823), the 'Big Stick' policy (1901), the 'Good Neighbour' policy (1933), the 'Alliance for Progress' (1961) and the 'Enterprise for the Americas' initiative (1990) (see also Chapter 26 in this Handbook). In aggregate these initiatives reinforced belief in US dominance over the region, an analytical assumption that remains predominant in much English-language work on Latin American foreign relations (for example, Hakim, 2006; Oppenheimer, 2007). While attractive for the US, regional countries found themselves somewhat marginalized and were left feeling alternately undervalued, left out or bullied.

While there has been important variation in how Washington has attempted to manage the different countries, the general tone and approach has started from a remarkably similar place whether the US counterpart was

Brazil, Bolivia, Costa Rica or Mexico. Even the regional organizations spanning the hemisphere, such as the Organization of American States, have been seen as opportunistic tools for Washington, not forums within which to engage in serious problem-solving or issue management. Per the tradition initiated with the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, Latin America has remained a question of bilateral management and control for Washington that holds little interests absent crises requiring attention from the highest level of policy makers, a situation amplified since the 9/11 attacks and launch of the War on Terror (Hakim, 2006). In some respects such simplification makes sense to US policy makers preoccupied with Islamic radicalization and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. With intra-continental war in the Americas highly unlikely, the security concerns dominating policy are of a non-traditional variety such as narcotrafficking, transnational criminal networks, and migration, all areas that receive more of a policing response from Washington than serious multilateral security engagement. South America's states implicitly recognize that, far from being outside of Washington's geopolitical concerns, they are, on the contrary, a preferential area for the United States' preventive, and perhaps even hasty, unilateral interference (Villa et al., 2015). Frustration with the simplistic approach to regional security issues from the US has combined with commodity boom-fuelled economic independence to further feed a differentiation of foreign policies in the Americas and a sustained drift away from reliance upon the US.

Northern tendencies to reduce the varied countries of Latin America to a single stereotype is in part explicable by three important characteristics of the region's foreign relations and integration into the international system. First is a geographic consideration, namely that Latin America is a long way from the most active laneways of US and European history over the last two centuries: the North Atlantic and the Middle East. Married to this is the second factor, which is the decidedly limited



ability, let alone desire, of any country in the region to project power into other parts of the world. The Second World War saw only one regional country – Brazil – actively enter the hostilities, and this at the last moment and just in time to join the invasion of Italy (Lochery, 2014). In more contemporary times Latin American countries have either stood out for their refusal to be drawn into foreign entanglements – Chile was severely politically castigated by the US for dissenting in the UNSC on the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Muñoz, 2008) – or limited themselves to generally modest peace-keeping contributions, often in coalition with other regional countries (Kenkel, 2013). Bellicosity would thus seem to be outside the ‘Latin’ diplomatic character, a factor reinforced by the notable shortage of major inter-state armed conflicts in the region, with the most recent serious one being the 1932–35 War of the Chaco between Bolivia and Paraguay.

The combination of somewhat comparable histories of Iberian colonization, geographic continuity on a common continental land mass, and similarities in language – Brazilian diplomats speak fluent Spanish – combines with an absence of serious inter-state armed conflict to help build a sense that the region is harmonious and relatively homogenous. Overlooked in this surface-level sketch is the persistence of entrenched tensions and conflicts in the region. Brazil and Mexico have soft contending ambitions for regional leadership, with Argentina often staking its own claim as well. The Bolivian armed forces are led by an admiral as a sustained note of protest against what it claims as Chile’s illegal seizure of its coastal provinces during the 1879–83 War of the Pacific. Peru, too, has border complaints against Chile from that nineteenth century war and only recently settled an additional border conflict with Ecuador in 1998, a dispute which dated from 1942 and saw a series of skirmishes and casualties throughout the twentieth century. Venezuela has ongoing border disagreements with its littoral neighbours and went so far as to bomb Guyanese dredging barges

in 2007 (Starbroek News, 2007). Costa Rica and Nicaragua continue to bicker over disputed border territory and had entered into arbitration in The Hague in 2010.

If we expand the list of territorial disputes in the region to include trade disagreements, political contretemps, historical misunderstandings and other forms of regional rivalry we end up with a fairly extensive catalogue of dissent and discord in Latin America. Indeed, simply keeping track of the intra-Mercosur disputes between Argentina and Brazil along with the related attempts at bilateral relationship management has resulted in a substantial sub-discipline in the fields of regionalism and Latin American studies. What matters for understanding Latin American diplomacy is that these very real disagreements have a tendency to become of second-order importance to regional diplomats when faced with the need to unify in the face of pressure from a US or Europe that either dismissively tries to aggregate the region into a single, easy to manage unit, or pursues a strategy of divide and conquer to maintain implicit and explicit dominance. This pressure has had a major influence on how Latin American countries approach diplomacy and how they self-consciously exploit the externally created identity of Latin America.

### Key Points

- Latin America is a region of heterogeneous countries, each with important differences in history, culture, geography, economics and society.
- The US has a historical tendency to treat the region as a homogenous bloc, a habit repeated by other extra-regional actors.
- Latin America stands out for the absence of war as a dispute resolving mechanism.

### NOT QUITE UNITY, NOT QUITE COALITION

As events at the 2003 Cancun WTO ministerial and the subsequent round of defections

and new memberships in the G-20 negotiating coalition demonstrated, there is an active recognition amongst Latin American countries that from time to time there will be significant policy differences in international affairs. Where the region differs significantly from other areas of the world is that episodic or even lasting differences on a particular foreign policy issue are not seen as a source of crisis or harbinger of collapsing bilateral relations. Linguistic similarities and a certain degree of cultural affinity across the region have combined with a sense of ever-present pressure from the US to create if not agreement amongst the region's actors, at least a habit of speaking before leaping. The result is certainly not a unity in diplomatic practice or an absence of conflict, but rather the rise of something unique to the cultural and political circumstances of Latin America.

Having just suggested it is a mistake to view Latin America as a homogenous unit, there are a number of cultural, historical and linguistic characteristics that nevertheless make it considerably easier for the region's leaders to communicate quickly and fluently. Married to this are a combination of regional force balance and the geographical isolation of border areas to make traditional notions of bandwagoning and balancing from the Realist school of International Relations unusual diplomatic strategies in the region (Flemes and Wehner, 2013; Schenoni, 2014). In place of these US and European-informed approaches to the creation of order is a more legalistic approach emphasizing negotiation and an almost juridical approach to the management of international affairs.

Thanks to an accommodative and legalistic predilection for talking through disagreements, Latin America has become notable for the absence of inter-state conflicts. The 1932–35 Chaco War between Paraguay and Bolivia dates as the last significant inter-state war in South America, far outmatching in seriousness the 1969 'Football' war between El Salvador and Honduras (Cable, 1969; Farcau, 1996). Although there are unsolved disputes in the region, like the Chile–Peru maritime

border dispute and Bolivia's complaints that Chile illegally seized Antofagasta during the 1879–83 War of the Pacific, resolution is consistently sought through negotiation and arbitration, not armed invasion. Even when conflict has erupted, such as the brief periods of shooting between Ecuador and Peru in 1995 or Venezuela's muscular approach to disputed territories with Colombia and Guyana, the tensions appear reluctant and are quickly brought to the negotiating table by other regional countries. This sort of accommodative approach to potential disputes has a long historical tradition, extending as far back as the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, which saw Portugal and Spain peacefully accept Papal mediation to divide the 'New World'. While the intervening actors have subsequently changed and the process has become more regularized over the last fifty years, the fundamental tendency to avoid armed conflict remains.

Perhaps the best theorizing of the lack of inter-state armed hostility with Latin America can be found in the *concertación* approach to diplomatic management advanced by Argentine scholar Federico Merke (2015). The term *concertación* has no simple translation into English, being a reflection of an Ibero-American tradition of managing difference and dissent in politics such that it can become a strength rather than source of discord. At the heart lies an informally institutionalized process of summitry and discussion in lieu of power politics (see Chapter 19 in this Handbook). Escalation in Latin American terms means the convocation of presidential diplomacy to discuss the matter of dissent, not the deployment of military forces to border regions. More significantly, it is often not just the presidents of the directly affected countries that meet, but rather the region's leadership or a delegated sub-grouping of ministers or national presidents.

Although there are a series of semi-regular presidential summits through groupings such as Unasur, Mercosur, CELAC and so on, the *concertación* process is not entrenched in a formalized framework, but rather exists as a

convention embedded in the region's shared legalistic approach to international affairs (see Chapter 15 in this Handbook). Chief amongst the legal norms driving *concertación* are the interlinked principles of sovereignty and non-aggression. Although precise interpretations are debated, there is cross-national agreement in Latin America that respect of international law is essential for mutual security and that great emphasis should be placed upon setting and observing the rules. Two interrelated factors play a role in this preference for talking through conflict rather than fighting it out. First is the comparative weakness of the armed forces throughout the region. Although individually capable, none of the region's armed forces have received the sort of investment necessary to make them a viable expeditionary force, a factor reflected in global military power rankings. Moreover, there is no popular or political desire to engage in this kind of expenditure, particularly in the face of the still considerable poverty challenges found in each regional country. Layered on top of this is a more cultural factor that points towards a general desire to find an amicable solution to disagreements.

The depth of *concertación* strategies of avoiding military conflict have been highlighted over the last fifteen years as substantial increases in military expenditure by many regional countries have resulted in increases in mutual confidence, not a rise of distrust-fuelled arms races (Villa and Weiffen, 2014). According to the 2015 edition of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) Military Expenditure Database, Latin American countries collectively spent US\$694 billion from 2005 to 2014, led by Brazil at US\$337 billion, Colombia at US\$105 billion, and Mexico at US\$59 billion (SIPRI, 2015). Significantly, this expenditure has not been driven by the rise of pressing external threats, but instead by a set of complex internal conflict-related and non-conflict-related motives connected to the new security challenges side-lined by US policy makers as well as national development

concerns. For example, replacing and upgrading old weaponry is explicitly framed by countries such as Brazil as an avenue for building the national industrial base and accelerating domestic technological mastery in key fields such as engineering and information technology (Ministério da Defesa, 2012).

A central example of how the *concertación* mechanism works to defuse disagreements and prevent escalation to serious conflict came in July 2010 when the Colombia armed forces, acting on intelligence from the US, crossed over the border with Ecuador to bomb a base set up by the Colombian FARC insurgent movement. Ecuador was understandably incensed with the violation of its sovereignty and president Rafael Correa made his feelings clear to his Colombian counterpart Alvaro Uribe. Bolivian president Evo Morales voiced his disapproval and expressed strong support for Ecuador. Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, who was never on a particularly friendly basis with Uribe, fulminated and went so far as to order his military to the border.

At this point the *concertación* institution was activated through a meeting of Unasur foreign ministers in Quito. Pressure to avoid a war no one in the region wanted came swiftly from countries as ideologically varied as Brazil, Chile and Peru, and extensive dialogue was initiated. The result was a rapid reduction in tensions and the path towards a South American presidential summit where Ecuador and Colombia agreed on a way forward for dealing with the FARC and the most vocal protagonists in the dispute – Uribe and Chávez – duly, if reluctantly, gave each other a *grande abrazo* to officially set the unfortunate event in the past.

The *concertación* mechanism functions effectively in part because it is undergirded by a busy agenda of presidential and ministerial meetings every year, including those for well-known regional groupings like Mercosur, Unasur, CELAC and the OAS in addition to whatever bilateral visits and consultations may be scheduled. While these frequent meetings do not always result in shared positions or consensus on what the region should do,

it does mean the different countries in the region are aware of each other's respective positions. Moreover, when a decision is made to take a collective position forward it often carries extra weight in global forums because it is grounded in a regional reconciliation of the same sorts of competing interests found at the international level. This was precisely the process that caused Zoellick so much angst in Cancun. The G-20 position was not reached in an ad hoc manner at Cancun, but instead stemmed from extended discussions over the six months prior to the ministerial meeting with India and Brazil organizing the member countries around the discussion of alternate positions. Similar approaches were seen in the Free Trade Area of the Americas talks when the Mercosur countries and increasingly the rest of South America worked to coordinate positions before heading to negotiating sessions with the US and Canada. Since the mid-2000s there has been a rise in intra-South American security coordination through the South American Defence Council. While not extending to become a classical security community – arguably something not necessary in South America – or a NATO-like entity, regular meetings, consultations, and joint exercises and training by the region's armed forces are further building mutual confidence in an area which is seeing significant increases in defence spending by a number of countries.

Another important trait of Latin American diplomatic culture underpinning the *concertación* process is what Brazilians call *cordialidade*. Presented by Brazilian historian Sergio Buarque de Holanda (2012), the concept is explained as being something of an opposition to Anglo-Saxon rational culture, suggesting instead that Brazilians 'think with the heart' resulting in marked preference to avoid conflict and instead find a mutually amicable solution to problems (Cervo, 2008; Kern, 2013). Advancement of personal and national interests is by no means discarded. Instead, greater effort is devoted to searching out space where contending desires can be aligned, not cast in opposition.

Extending the idea of *cordialidade* to Latin American international relations, the concept provides an emotionally grounded explanation for the solidity of Merke's *concertación* process of diplomatic management. In practical terms it can quite literally result in regional presidents being encouraged by their peers to step back from the brink to 'hug it out'. Thus, *cordialidade* as an attribute of presidential leadership is not a mere gesture of politeness, but a political tool to mediate and approximate distant or extreme behaviours with a 'familial' mediation quietly conducted behind closed doors, not aired in public. As former Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso recounts in his memoirs, the 1999 Ibero-American Summit in Havana saw this process in action when successive Latin American leaders bluntly warned Castro he needed to liberalize political and economic life on the island or risk losing all his regime had accomplished. Tellingly, these warnings were delivered at the closed-doors dinner amongst the leaders and not repeated in any of the public events related to the Summit (Cardoso, 2006: 640–3).

### Key Points

- An informally institutionalized habit of frequent presidential summits facilitates the *concertación* process, which allows the resolution of disagreements before they become serious conflicts.
- The international legal principles of sovereignty and non-aggression are the cornerstones of the common normative framework underpinning Latin American diplomatic practice.
- Parallel legal and cultural histories contribute to a foreign policy habit of talking until consensus is reached rather than engaging in unnecessary high stakes brinkmanship.

### AUTONOMIST COLLECTIVIZATION

There is certainly space for forgiving casual observers of Latin American foreign policy

who insist on seeing the region as a single entity despite its heterogeneity. Although it is very difficult to successfully argue there is a common approach to foreign policy throughout the Americas (Hey, 1997, 1998; Mora and Hey, 2003; Gardini and Lambert, 2011), we can usefully talk about one large shared concern. Irrespective of how a specific country in Latin America goes about framing its foreign policy strategies, an underlying concern is with the preservation of autonomy. The pattern of US foreign policy towards Latin America briefly outlined above carries with it a long tradition of either directly intervening in the region or bringing enormous pressure to bear on regional countries, which in turn provides some of the rationale underpinning the turn to a habit of *concertación* in the region.

The repeated response from Latin American countries to these pressures has been to collectivize positions through ad hoc groupings. Whether in trade talks such as the WTO and FTAA, inter-American political forum such as the OAS, or international organizations such as the UN, it is not unusual to see groups of like-minded Latin American countries picking from the panoply of regional groupings to not only add density to their position, but also gain political shelter through collectivization. An insightful case in point was the 2005 Organization of American States General Assembly, where the almost forgotten ALADI trade grouping was revived to kill the host US's proposal to turn the OAS into a type of hemispheric democratic policeman.

Joint action is also seen on a more localized level. In Canberra the Latin American diplomatic community has informally become known as the 'wolf pack' because of its willingness to join forces in search of access to the Australian Government that might otherwise be impossible. For example, where the Australian foreign minister might be reluctant to meet individually with the ambassador from El Salvador, Colombia or even Brazil, the prospect of covering an entire region with a single meeting combining the Latin American diplomatic corps has proven an

attractive engagement option with ministers from all sides of the political spectrum.

Both the concern with protecting national autonomy and collectively acting on an ad hoc basis to secure it have very strong intellectual roots in the region, particularly in the dependency analyses stemming from the hard empirical research conducted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in the 1950s and 1960s. The path-breaking research by Raúl Prebisch (1951) published in the first ECLAC economic survey of the region set out the problem of declining terms of trade, which meant the region's natural resource exporting countries would constantly have to sell increasing volumes of product to maintain the same income. Compounding the challenge of constantly declining values of national exports was the need to rely on areas like the US and Europe not only for the capital needed to develop, but also for the technology to keep pace economically. Pushing the analysis further, the more critical elements of the dependency school put forward arguments that the Northern core countries were engaged in an almost calculated set of policies to ensure Latin American countries would remain dependent and underdeveloped.

Arlene Tickner (2014) has translated the essence of Prebisch's declining terms of trade argument into foreign policy practice, arguing that an 'autonomist' strategy permeates the region. The central challenge she highlights for regional foreign policy planners is one of maintaining a degree of national policy autonomy to pursue the domestic and international goals of the country in question. Three factors are central to the common *problématique* faced by most Latin American diplomats. The first relates to economic power and the challenges countries in the region have historically faced with growing the economy while managing precarious debt levels and unstable financial systems. This automatically restricts the room for manoeuvre and effectively limits the range of open foreign policy options.



Second is a straightforward question of policy independence. Autonomy as conceived by Max Weber (1978) assumes that there is a difference between 'a mere freedom of contract' and the privilege of 'regulating his relations with others by his own transactions'. This differentiation is central to understanding Tickner's (2003) characterization of a Latin American view of the world, what she calls the *Latin America hybrid* approach, drawing on elements of dependency theory, classical realism and complex interdependence. Under the Latin American hybrid approach, hierarchical relations of domination and interdependence characterize the international system. The state, viewed in relatively non-problematic terms, becomes the principal actor in the international sphere, followed by other types of economic actors such as multinational corporations.

The twentieth century contains many examples of the US exerting enormous political pressure on countries in the region to follow specific domestic and international policy tracks. While the directness of this pressure has certainly varied from de facto invasion in parts of Central America to supportive backroom whisperings to the generals of 1960s Brazil, what remains common is the existence of a persistent external lobby on national governments. Much of the anti-American bluster of 2000s foreign policy discourse in countries as varied as Venezuela, Argentina, Ecuador and Brazil has been a direct response to the history of direct and indirect US infringement of national autonomy in the region. Significantly, the heated rhetoric has frequently proven to be little more than a smokescreen for public consumption while bilateral cooperation continues to grow quietly in the background.

Both of these first two elements are reflected in the third factor, which is a general political, economic and military weakness on the global stage, which creates serious challenges for many regional countries seeking to advance and protect their national interests. The danger here is that agreements framed and

rules written in international institutions will place unwanted restrictions on the national autonomy of regional countries and further marginalize their position at global decision-making tables. Here the habit of *concertación* has proven particularly useful for working not only collectively to protect the autonomy of Latin American governments, but also for collaborating with governments from other regions to advance shared concerns. Married to this has been an attitudinal shift throughout the Americas in the 2000s that has seen a dramatic rise in the self-confidence of various regional countries to pursue independent foreign policies (Burgess, 2005). Examples include Venezuela's hard turn to the left with its Bolivarian initiatives, Brazil's push to expand South-South linkages with a major emphasis on Africa, and the formation of the Westward-oriented Pacific Alliance by Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. In each of these examples the new direction has been followed without any apparent need for US approval, be it passive or active.

The rising sense of self-confidence and willingness to proactively advance national foreign policy priorities is also found amongst the traditionally minor international players in the region. A case in point is Paraguay's active involvement within the WTO as a vocal protagonist in the small land-locked states movement during the 2000s. In addition to consistently raising the challenges faced by land-locked countries within the WTO's global trading regime, the otherwise diplomatically near-silent Paraguay went so far as to convene a meeting of thirty-one land-locked countries in Asunción in 2005 to articulate a series of shared concerns and search for common approaches to shared Doha round concerns (Oxford Analytica, 2005).

### Key Points

- Repeated pressures from the US have created a habit in Latin America of looking for collective solutions and seeking strength in numbers behind common positions.



- Collective Latin American positions in international forums are often the result of intra-continental negotiations that mirror the sorts of tensions found globally.
- A central, unifying goal of Latin American foreign policy is maintenance of domestic policy autonomy.
- Regional countries happily collaborate when necessary, but are equally content to independently pursue their core diplomatic agenda.

## STRUCTURAL, NOT RELATIVE POWER GAMES

Paraguay's attempts to coordinate an issue-specific negotiating coalition within the WTO share a significant conceptual similarity with the Cancun ministerial meeting story at the start of this chapter. Much of mainstream North American International Relations theory is focused on questions of relative power and capability. Indeed, foreign policy analyses and the investigation of diplomatic strategies are focused on motivations crossed with capacities to pursue specific goals. The focus consequently becomes one of having enough power to compel the action of another actor to proceed in a manner it might not otherwise choose. While questions of relative power are not absent from Latin American diplomatic practice, the underlying autonomist imperative and the practice of *concertación* have shifted practical focus from questions of relative power to those of structural power.

One of the common foundational challenges Latin American diplomats have historically had to address when seeking to engage a new issue on the global stage is how they would obtain not just access to the discussion process, but also a voice at the table bringing some impact on the end result. Drawing on the autonomist principles outlined by Tickner (2014), the recurring problem diplomats from nearly all regional countries lament is the extent to which the nature of the international system – the structures of global governance – actively marginalize all but a handful of core countries. Magnifying this challenge is a

predominantly North Atlantic-driven focus that sidelines the serious questions of socio-economic development that are the main public policy concern in Latin America, but an esoteric philanthropic foreign aid endeavour for Northern governments.

Latin American diplomacy is consequently focused tightly on what Susan Strange (1994) would have called questions of structural power, aiming to redirect not just the terms of debate in the international system, but also how international institutions operate. The result is an apparent focus on multilateralism and the development and activation of international regimes and organizations. In part this is necessary because even if the largest regional countries like Brazil and Mexico had the inclination, they lack the material and political resources needed to advance their agenda by wielding relative power differences to impose their will. Attention is consequently turned to contesting and reinterpreting international norms and the institutions enforcing and supporting them. While this can create an impression that various Latin American countries are at times being obstructionist or wantonly destructive, reality is somewhat more complicated. Engagement with global governance structures is underpinned by an abiding desire to maintain the current international system, but in a form that is more 'inclusive' and 'democratic'. After all, the existing normative and institutional framework provides an effective security blanket and clear set of rules within which to pursue national development goals.

What is contested is the 'undemocratic' nature of some of the global governance frameworks, which are seen to be excessively captured by Northern interests. One of the recurrent examples highlighted by Latin American countries are the Bretton Woods Institutions, which have an entrenched voting pattern that ensures US and European economic interests will continue to prevail irrespective of shifts in global economic power. The response from the region is not disengagement with these institutions, but rather

the erection of parallel systems that offer alternatives. In this context most analysts would immediately point to the rise of the BRICS Bank and its enthusiastic embrace by many Latin American countries. More telling are small institutions, such as the Banco del Sur, which is a sort of mini Inter-American Development Bank intended to advance regional infrastructure investment. On a technocratic level, the ALADI Reciprocal Credit Convention offers an avenue for bypassing Northern financial intermediation by facilitating direct currency transfers between member countries via Central Bank swaps that avoid the need to translate transactions into US dollars. The point to these examples is not that they seek to challenge or overturn the existing global economic governance system, but rather that they look to broaden it and thus improve the structural insertion of regional countries, which in turn works to vouchsafe a bit more autonomy and independence.

### **Key Points**

- Latin American diplomacy is predominantly concerned with questions of structural power relating to the rules and norms of the international system, not relative power concerns about forcing action by other countries.
- A shared perception in the region is that Latin American interests are structurally excluded from global governance regimes reflecting North Atlantic priorities.
- Many global governance institutions such as the World Bank are perceived throughout Latin America as being fundamentally undemocratic in nature and operation.

### **DEVELOPMENT AS PRIORITY**

For over a century Latin American foreign policy has focused on the ‘dream of development,’ seeking to modernize the region’s predominantly rural, enclave economies and transform them into industrialized, high consumption societies. In diplomatic terms the

problem facing Latin America has been structural in that the terms of reference for international debates and negotiations either do not include the region’s legitimate developmental concerns or assumes they are historical curiosities of little concern to serious countries. The persistent challenge has thus been to get past a preconceived notion of Latin American countries as being financial basket cases or banana republics condemned to the role of commodity producer.

One of the strategies Latin American countries have pursued in an effort to accelerate domestic socio-economic development has been the formation of regional blocs. While this tradition extends back to the 1960s, it is only after the lost decade of the 1980s that region formation in Latin America appears to have taken effective form. Where previous attempts at economic regionalism were marked by high levels of protectionism and internal squabbles about the distribution of industrial production sites, the wave of blocs formed from the 1990s represent a different type of endeavour explicitly aiming to collectively achieve enhanced insertion in the post-Cold War globalized economy as a new route to national development.

The turn to the ‘new’ regionalism in the 1990s also combined with the region’s transition to democracy, interweaving processes of economic and political liberalization such that domestic reforms were buttressed by a regional environment not only conducive to change, but actively supportive of it.

In the first half of the 1990s, the Andean Pact (Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela) intensified integration through an ‘Open Skies’ policy and established a free trade zone and a common external tariff. Similarly, negotiations extending back into the early 1980s led directly to 1990 talks to form a common market between Brazil and Argentina, which resulted in the 1991 Treaty of Asunción joining those two countries as well as Paraguay and Uruguay into the Common Market of the South, Mercosur. Both the Andean Pact and Mercosur followed

a broadly neoliberal agenda focused on opening markets and ‘behaving well’, economic strategies used by diplomats to establish the region internationally as one of serious, politically and economically stable countries worthy of investment and inclusion in global governance councils. Perhaps the ultimate expression of this came with Mexico’s formation of NAFTA with Canada and the USA in 1994. The combined effect of these different processes apparently had some serious impact on US attitudes towards the region, prompting the Clinton presidency to propose the formation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas at the 1994 Miami Summit of the Americas (Arashiro, 2011).

A decade into the twenty-first century, much of the economic steam appeared to have gone out of the regional projects launched in the 1990s. Squabbles over market access marred the most successful example, Mercosur. Notions of expanding the Southern Cone bloc into a wider Union of South American Nations, Unasur, appeared to lack the necessary economic fundament, particularly if a hard look was taken at intra-South American trade. Matters are further confused if attention is turned to the institutional frameworks for these regional projects. Mercosur has yet to make effective use of its internal dispute resolution system and the bloc’s parliament remains something of a toothless kitten (Malamud and Dri, 2013). On a continental level Unasur lacks any substantive decision-making power and one of its most interesting ventures, the South American Defence College, has yet to begin actual pedagogical operations. Even the most expansive Latin American venture, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Nations (CELAC), has neither a permanent home, nor an institutionalized secretariat.

Despite the myriad challenges facing the various regional groupings throughout Latin America, the turn to regionalism persists. A significant factor contributing to the perseverance of the regionalist ethos in Latin America lies in the very developmental prerogatives

central to this section of the chapter. Latin American countries have adopted integration processes as an expression of their need to grow, be recognised, and deal with their global governance demands. Although Unasur lacks economic substance, it has made great strides in health policy coordination (Riggirozzi, 2014) and confidence building amongst the region’s military forces. Mercosur’s apparent unending economic tensions create serious challenges for the respective member-state presidents, but also compel frequent high level meetings to coordinate international negotiating positions as well as the sharing of expertise in more prosaic areas of public policy such as phytosanitary controls in the cattle industry or the cross border provision of health and education services in remote areas. On a scholarly level, academics have begun referring to the persistence of regional cooperation in the Americas as the rise of ‘post-hegemonic’ regionalism, meaning inter-state cooperation and coordination driven by something other than neoliberal economic principles (Riggirozzi and Tussie, 2012). While the aptness of this characterization is open to debate, the sense that regionalism is offering non-fungible development goods, and that these are central foreign policy goals in Latin America, is a consideration to keep in mind when treating with Latin American diplomatic agendas.

### **Key Points**

- National socio-economic development remains the overriding public policy priority throughout the region and has a major influence on diplomatic practice.
- The formation of regional blocs has emerged as one strategy for attempting to accelerate national development and collectively enhance influence internationally.
- While regional integration may seem to be questionable as an economic success in the region, it has offered significant benefits in terms of capacity building and the sharing of best practices in social and development policy.

## CONCLUSION

As we have argued in this chapter, there is a mistaken tendency to view Latin America as a near-homogeneous whole with shared foreign policy priorities. The confusion stems from a double movement in regional diplomacy that sees simultaneous coordination and fragmentation between Latin American states. A degree of unification amongst the region's countries stems from the need to manage relations with the US, which historically has often approached Latin America as a single entity that can be marginalized and manipulated to suit the political whims of Washington. Resisting this pressure and preserving space for autonomous policy making on a domestic and regional level has frequently driven Latin American countries to act in what seems like a bloc. But, as this chapter explains, viewing the region as a unity overstates the extent to which there is commonality of purpose and ambition. Rather than the language of alliance, we argue a better understanding can be found in the concepts of *concertación* and *cordialidade*.

The idea of *concertación* eliminates the false notion of regional unity and instead unpacks the ad hoc nature of intra-regional cooperation and the habits of, if not coordination, at least advance notification to neighbours of diplomatic positions on regional and international issues. If a coalition is useful, it is formed; if not, dissent and conflict is avoided through communication. This points to *cordialidade*, the second central element for understanding Latin American diplomacy. It is not so much that conflict must be avoided, but rather than efforts should be devoted to minimizing its deleterious impacts in order to keep disagreements at the level of friendly differences of opinion, not national security threatening clashes of will. Application of these two concepts is increasingly being fed by a growing sense of self-confidence throughout the region as the legacy of the commodity boom, internally

driven development and shifts in global power patterns increase the range of options that countries see open. The extent to which this will result in significant changes in the patterns of diplomatic behaviour mapped out in this chapter remains to be seen.

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# Middle East Diplomacy

Stephan Stetter

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines Middle East diplomacy, being informed in particular by historical sociology, global history and social theory. The first two perspectives – historical sociology and global history – direct attention towards the *longue durée* (Braudel 1996) shaping Middle East diplomacy over the last millennia in general and since the nineteenth century more specifically. The latter – social theory – highlights the changing social and political environment within which Middle East diplomacy unfolds. These are in particular the credentials of modern world society/culture, on the one hand, and a global political system characterized by considerable underlying hierarchies both in colonial and postcolonial environs, on the other. Both dimensions are discussed in the second section. Departing from this understanding, the third section discusses three major sites of Middle East practice/struggles in this context of modern world society – namely diplomatic

anxiety understood as the discursive battleground of Middle East diplomacy; popular, transnational and cultural diplomacy as key arenas; and sublime diplomacy as the site at which the social purpose of diplomacy is constantly re-constructed.

## DIPLOMACY AND THE MIDDLE EAST: *LONGUE DURÉE* AND WORLD SOCIETY

### *History of Middle East Diplomacy*

As the editors of this Handbook explain, diplomacy, broadly conceived, concerns the representation and advocacy of positions and interests, the implementation of policies, and the regulation of relations between political identities, including both state and non-state actors (see Introduction). Diplomacy in other words relates to the professionalized practice of conducting international relations by shaping imaginaries of the Other and the Self (Der Derian 1987), both contemporary and



historically – and with a view to possible futures. And at the heart of this professionalized practice is communication, ‘verbal and nonverbal, intentional or unintentional’ so that diplomacy ‘may be described as a universal communications network, in which the exchange of signals is a professional preoccupation’ (Jönsson 1996: 191; Albert et al. 2008).

There could, from this perspective that highlights communication, professionalization and identity, hardly be a world region better suited to the study of diplomacy than the Middle East. As the ancient Amarna letters testify, the Middle East constitutes one of the early sites of broadly documented professionalized diplomatic communications and identity-based encounters in human history. In the case at hand this is the ‘Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty and other states of the ancient Near East’ in the mid-fourteenth century BCE (Cohen and Westbrook 1996: 1). The Amarna letters as well as other texts of that period, such as the Hebrew Bible, cover a wide range of diplomatic relations between Middle Eastern great powers, independent and vassal states and non-state units of the day. And the letters present to us the various practices of international relations these entities engaged in, including ‘dynastic questions, particularly marriage, the exchange of gifts, alliance and strategic matters, trade, legal problems, the mechanics of diplomacy’ (ibid.).

Three and a half thousand years later these practices do still characterize the universe of Middle East diplomacy. One difference with current times, however, concerns how the *universal communications network* underpinning Middle East diplomacy has, geographically speaking, a global rather than primarily regional outlook. Yet, also in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, dynastic issues, such as the succession from father to son in republican and monarchic Arab states, shape Middle East diplomacy. And so do alliance-building and strategic matters as in policies by Middle East states (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami 2002), as well as the various attempts by the United

States to forge broad coalitions including Arab and other Middle Eastern states in the first and second Iraq war as well as in the so-called war on terror against Al-Qaeda since 2001 and the war against ISIS since 2014. We also see a millennia-old centrality of trade in Middle East diplomacy, from Amarna, to the trans-regional trading system managed by the Nabataeans up to the emergence and evolution of global energy diplomacy, ever since the Anglo-Persian Oil Company discovered the first major oil fields in Persia in 1908 (ibid.). Legal problems are also an infinite diplomatic concern, such as legal struggles over the application of international law in the context of the UN Hariri Tribunal or the acceptance of Palestine, in 2015, as a state party to the Rome Protocol, i.e. the International Criminal Court (ICC). So, has at least marriage ceased to be important in Middle East diplomatic practice? Not really. The marriage between Jordan’s King Abdullah II and his wife Rania, a Palestinian, was widely received not only as a love affair – aka ‘celebrity diplomacy’ (see Chapter 43 in this Handbook) – in which the yellow press took considerable interest. It was simultaneously understood that this is a marriage that carried a great deal of diplomatic symbolism in re-inscribing Jordan’s symbolic power over the Holy Sites in East Jerusalem, which are Occupied Palestinian Territory under international law, annexed by Israel in 1967, but for which Jordan remains a custodian. This marriage was also widely perceived as a signal of reconciliation directed towards Jordanian society, a diplomatic micro-cosmos in which Palestinians are the majority in numbers but second to the ‘local’ Bedouins as far as political influence in the royal system of the Hashemite monarchy – itself originating from the Hejaz region in the Arabian peninsula – is concerned.

Thus, even when studied over the course of millennia, investigating Middle East diplomacy confirms the observation made by Iver B. Neumann that ‘the tasks of diplomacy do not really offer much in terms of newness – there are no ongoing “tectonic shifts” in

diplomatic practices' (Neumann 2013: 3). Yet, at the same time something is changing. That change pertains not so much to internal features of diplomacy still revolving around communication, identity and professionalization. Instead, change is relevant insofar as the political and social environment to which diplomatic practice relates undergoes transformations (see also Sharp 2009; Constantinou and Der Derian 2010; Constantinou 2013).

### ***Diplomacy and the Social and Political Horizons of World Society***

As I discuss in greater detail below, by addressing some key sites of Middle East diplomacy, the major 'change in the general political and social fields that surround diplomacy' (Neumann 2013: 3), including Middle East diplomacy, has been the emergence of a globalized world culture and forms of global governmentality since the mid-nineteenth century. It is, in other words, the structural embedding of the Middle East in modern world society (Stetter 2008) 'based on an ever-increasing density of global life [that] keeps changing the old, familiar diplomatic sites and creating new ones by bringing in agents, bringing on new procedures and dismantling old ones' (Neumann 2013: 3). In short, studying Middle East diplomatic practice requires hooking up this analysis with historically informed social theories that address changing social and political horizons. As far as the former is concerned I refer primarily to the emergence and evolution of modern world society; as far as the latter is concerned I address the underlying hierarchies in world politics, both in colonial and postcolonial environs – and, possibly, their dialectical synthesis into a global post-post-colonial worldwide 'liberation geography' (Dabashi 2012: 11). This is not to argue that encounters with temporal or geographical Others can be entirely reduced to the notion of global social horizons. Thus, Muammar Qaddafi invoked ideas about pan-African

identity, whereas recourse to ancient Egyptian civilization is part of modern Egypt's domestic and diplomatic identity. Yet, also such diplomatic practices can hardly be conceived of without taking recourse to broader world societal horizons in modern diplomacy, such as the idea of regional integration as far as pan-African identity is concerned or the importance of respect and tradition in stabilizing modern identities (and claims to be a proper nation-state) when ancient heritage in Egypt comes into play.

The nineteenth century is highlighted in Global History and Historical Sociology as an age of major societal and political transformation on a world-wide scale (Hobden and Hobson 2002). This transformation is marked by at least three processes that also underpin transformations of Middle East diplomacy, namely the rise of a modern world culture, the pervasiveness of modern governmentalities and, lastly, the predicaments of a stratified global political system. Firstly, on a societal level, we observe the emergence and global diffusion of modern world culture defined on the basis of rationalization, universalization and scientization. This modern world culture engenders *inter alia* new and powerful ideas about individual subjectivities and social agency, i.e. models of legitimized actorhood (Meyer and Jepperson 2000). In the Middle East this can, for example, be studied with a view to the emergence of political Islam. Political Islam is, as Dietrich Jung (Jung 2011) highlighted in a study of the Islamist reformer Muhammad Abduh, a distinctively modern phenomenon based on newly emerging imaginaries of social purpose and the role of individual and collective groups in transforming society – and this includes ideas about conducting trans-boundary relations within the Islamic world and towards the West (*ibid.*). Modern world culture also underpins the rise of nationalism during the nineteenth century in Egypt, amongst pan-Arab nationalists, Maronites in Lebanon or the Zionist movement in Palestine, which all claimed ethnic/national self-determination and engaged in

various diplomatic practices geared towards domestic constituency as well as regional and global powers in order to foster this goal.

Secondly, this process goes hand in hand with the spread of modern, global governmentalities (Larner and Walters 2004), resulting amongst others in a massive expansion of policy areas in which political engineering and biopolitical control of populations by both nation-states and international bodies are now considered necessary for ensuring societal progress, e.g. in education, agriculture, health policy or economic development. It thus underpins the reform and growth of state bureaucracies and international organizations since the mid-nineteenth century, both in Europe and the Middle East (for Egypt see Jacob 2011). This includes the reform of military and diplomatic services in the region, a famous example being the way the Ottoman Empire adapted both domestically and in its foreign relations to broader societal transformations associated with bureaucratization, capitalism, functional differentiation, legal positivism, urbanization, individualization and others. Modern governmentalities are also visible in the manifold multilateral activities of regional and international organizations, in particular since the establishment of the UN and the Arab League, that deal with a broad range of policy-issues such as regional security, peace-building, education, development and others.

Yet, and thirdly, what distinguished the Middle East and other non-Western regions such as the Balkans, East Asia or sub-Saharan Africa from the West was the linkage of this social transformation with a political horizon shaped by a great degree of stratification (Albert et al. 2013), aka Western dominance, in particular Great Britain at the time. In short, the underpinnings of nineteenth century world political order were based on colonialism as one of international society's key primary institutions (Buzan 2004; Keene 2002), thereby justifying relatively persistent patterns of stratified inequality between the West as the self-proclaimed standard-bearer of civilization vis-à-vis the rest of the world, such

as the Middle East, that were either construed lacking such standards or at least had to be educated and guided by Europeans in order to acquire this status one day. Arguably, this inequality and the perception thereof also underpin much of the nervous diplomatic practice surrounding the diplomatic negotiations between the P5+1 powers and Iran. These negotiations have as much to do with shifts in the regional balance of power feared by some (Arab states, Israel) and aspired to by others (Iran) as with an underlying debate about the future role of the US in regional politics, i.e. a perception of a deeper structural inequality in world politics that continues to turn extra-regional support into a premium objective in contemporary Middle East diplomacy.

### **Key Points**

- A benchmark date in Middle East diplomacy is the nineteenth century, when the (diplomatic) encounter between the West and the Middle East intensified, in particular in the context of colonialism and anti-colonial opposition to this 'stratified' global political order.
- At the same time, and based on isomorphism, this sparked the setting-up of 'modern' professionalized diplomatic services, often trying to prevent or overcome colonialism by emulating ideas about modern diplomacy, e.g. in Egypt, Iran and the late Ottoman Empire as well as in postcolonial states in the region.

### **SITES OF MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY**

Departing from this understanding of diplomacy being embedded in larger historical, social and political horizons, I will in the following address three major sites of Middle East practice/struggles in this context of modern world society: diplomatic anxiety understood as the discursive battleground of Middle East diplomacy; popular, transnational and cultural diplomacy as key arenas; and sublime diplomacy as the site at which the social purpose of diplomacy is constantly re-constructed.

## ***Diplomatic Anxiety***

This double embedding in a rapidly transforming societal order and in a hierarchical international political system has posed a major challenge regarding the place of the Middle East in modern world society, although it needs to be acknowledged that the Middle East is not the only world region struggling with these predicaments of modernity. Note that the emergence of modern world society has also been a major challenge in the West (Alexander 2013). This double embedding nevertheless had its direct repercussions on Middle East diplomacy, more precisely on what Pinar Bilgin has defined as Middle East anxieties (Bilgin 2012). Diplomatic anxiety constituted a twofold challenge for Middle Eastern states and for those entities that aspired and still, like for example the Kurds, aspire to statehood. On the one hand, it entailed the adaptation of diplomatic structures to emergent global expectations about how a 'modern' diplomacy looks and operates, e.g. in relation to attire, etiquette and various practices of conducting 'proper' bilateral and multilateral relations. Thus, the Ottoman Empire and Persia in the late nineteenth century and then, in the early twentieth century, the Jewish self-administration in Palestine and various Arab nationalist movements established diplomatic services that allowed these states and would-be-states to 'play the game of sovereignty' (Aalberts 2010) by maintaining bi- and multilateral relations with other entities, primarily states and international bodies. Yet, on the other hand, Middle East actors engaged in this already quite challenging organizational transformation under immense distress. They were anxious to avoid being colonized or exploited by Western powers. This is what the Ottoman Empire and, later, the Republic of Turkey as well as Persia/Iran feared, and what defined the fate of Arabs that sought independence and self-determination after Britain and France took over former territories of the Ottoman Empire following World War I.

The visit of Sultan Abdülaziz at the World Fair in Paris in 1867 is a case in point for these key features of Middle East diplomatic anxiety (see Bilgin 2014). On the one hand, and in breaking with entrenched beliefs of the High Porte about its supreme status, the Sultan and his diplomatic corps engaged in 'modern' diplomatic practice; a total of 41 national delegations were present at the fair and this was the first foreign state visit of a Sultan to the West outside the context of warfare, a crash course in 'modern' bilateralism (with France) and multilateralism (in relation to the other states being present). On the other hand, however, this engagement with modern diplomacy did not happen from a position of strength. Thus, the Ottoman Empire was already at this time under great pressure to maintain its political status in international society. Its decline was visible first and foremost in the loss of territorial possessions in Europe, the increasing dependence on European advisors in the context of Ottoman military and economic reform and, finally, the growing influence of European powers within the Sultan's realm. The latter happened in particular through the diplomatic practice of offering so-called Capitulations to Europeans. While this has been an old diplomatic practice, it changed its character during the nineteenth century in that Capitulations were no longer a privilege granted by the Sultan to foreign representatives in an autonomous manner. Capitulations instead increasingly became a power tool in the hands of the West through which, since the 1870s, states such as Austria-Hungary, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Russia forged diplomatic relations with local, often Christian constituencies, thereby furthering the internal fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire in this age of nationalism. In some places, such as Jerusalem, formally and until 1917 an Ottoman Sandžak (i.e. Ottoman administrative province), it was now European ambassadors that effectively governed the place and competed for influence, conducting a 'war of the consuls' (Wasserstein 2001: 14–44), with Ottoman authorities being on the

retreat. With the formal establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 this diplomatic anxiety did not fade away. Although formal colonization no longer constituted an immediate threat, the fear of a Western-sponsored plan to disintegrate Turkey endured. The so-called Sèvres-syndrome, named after the city in which the Ottoman Empire had to accept far-reaching territorial and sovereignty-related concessions dictated by the victorious powers of World War I, penetrates postcolonial diplomatic anxiety in Turkey until today (Bilgin 2012).

This oscillation between adaptation of diplomatic structures, on the one hand, and an underlying diplomatic anxiety in relation to actual or potential colonial aspirations or a fear of being merely a pawn in a basically Western game of power, on the other, not only shaped Ottoman and Turkish politics. It also underpinned Persian diplomacy and the diplomatic conduct of entities such as the short-lived Arab National Congress and the Zionist movement in Palestine, which were striving for self-determination through a mix of various forms of resistance and sophisticated diplomatic action meant to garner not only domestic but also intra-regional and Western support for independence – and a simultaneous fear of falling prey to political or economic interests of the West. One word of caution, however, is at place here. For it would be incorrect to regard this turn to ‘modern’ diplomacy as an imposition of foreign practices. Modernity, including modern diplomacy, is not a Western innovation but a global transformation that has a ‘deep history’ (Comaroff and Comaroff 2011: 7) in regions beyond the West, including the various encounters with the modern condition in the Middle East. As the case of the High Porte makes clear, the diplomatic culture of international society in the nineteenth century owed as much as to ‘new’ diplomatic practices as it did to ‘old’ Byzantine elements, many of which were cherished by the Ottoman Empire (see below on sublime diplomacy). That is why Neumann (2013: 26) concludes

that, ‘if we add that the Ottoman practices owed much to Byzantine ones, it would certainly be correct to view modern diplomacy as an Ottoman-European hybridisation’.

Take the example of Sultan Abdülaziz’s state visit to Paris. The fact that many Europeans were surprised about the ‘modern’ appearance of the Sultan and his diplomatic corps (Bilgin 2014) attests as much to these shared European–Middle Eastern roots of modern diplomacy as to the underlying Orientalist imaginaries in the West about the Middle East, both historically and contemporary, that gave rise to Middle East diplomatic anxiety in the first place, but also to the perception (and anxiety) in Western diplomatic discourse about the Middle East being a perennial conflict site that had to be governed, managed and contained. While the status of colonialism as a primary institution of international society crumbled, postcolonial underpinnings of the contemporary global order inform Middle East diplomatic anxieties until today. Thus, formal and informal hierarchies in international society, often privileging the West, continue to shape in/securities in the Middle East, e.g. in the context of contemporary Iranian or Turkish diplomacy. Similar observations can be made with a view to Egyptian anxieties about ‘foreign plots’ meant to undermine Egypt’s stability, Iranian anxieties about being encircled by the US and its Sunni allies – a fear nurtured by the historical experience with the US-sponsored coup d’état against Prime Minister Mossadegh in 1953 – as well as Israeli anxieties about the Jewish state’s survival (Hinnebusch and Ehteshami 2002). It would, however, be wrong to regard diplomatic anxiety as nothing but a reactive force that solely leads to geostrategic alliance-building, ‘realist’ policies and military action. There is also a productive side underpinning diplomatic anxiety. Thus, Middle East diplomatic anxiety also engenders new ‘modern’ forms of multilateral organization meant to strengthen the Middle East’s collective weight in world politics, a



prominent example being the establishment of OPEC through which the oil-exporting countries in the region not only fostered their status in relation to importing nations in the West but also increased their diplomatic status as 'responsible' actors on a global scale (Richert 2014). Diplomatic anxieties of that sort also informed the 'game of Arab politics' (Barnett 1998: 7) in the years after Arab nations gained independence. Thus, this game was not only taking place on a bilateral level but was mitigated, after the failure of the Baghdad Pact (*ibid.*: 108–20), through a newly founded regional multilateral organization, namely the Arab League. Back then, and to some degree still today, Arab identity politics revolved around the defining issues of 'Arab states' relationship to [Arab] unification, the West, and confrontation with Zionism' (*ibid.*: 17). Anxieties, however, not only related to extra-regional (West) and intra-regional (Iran, Israel, at times Turkey) outsiders, but shaped intra-Arab diplomatic practice too. More precisely, Arab leaders of the 1950s and 1960s feared Egyptian President Gamal Abd-El Nasr's actual or potential interventions in domestic politics in Jordan, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere. Also today, the game of Arab/Middle East politics is characterized by such diplomatic anxieties that revolve around the alleged or real destabilizing impact of the 'Shiite crescent' (as Abdullah II named it) or around the destabilizing impact of powerful regional actors such as Saudi-Arabia, Turkey, Qatar and others on the situation in Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine and Syria.

What is central about diplomatic anxiety is, thus, that this practice is deeply entangled with the underlying hierarchies of Middle East politics. It remains to be seen if the dialectic between Western and Middle Eastern postcolonial anxieties will any time soon synthesize into a 'cosmopolitan worldliness' (Dabashi 2012: 11) based on some kind of Habermasian post-ethnic/world-ethical diplomacy. Notions of the Self and Other constructed and reified in Middle East

diplomatic encounters attest for the time being to Wallerstein's (1990) observation that indeed identity is the 'cultural battleground of modernity', including modern diplomacy. Given the 'deep perturbation' of Middle East politics at global, regional, national and local levels by logics of conflict (Stetter 2008), diplomatic anxiety is, thus, as much a consequence of a strong antagonization of identities in Middle East diplomatic encounters as it is about reifying such notions of the Self and the Other in everyday diplomatic practice.

### ***Popular, Transnational and Cultural Diplomacy as Key Arenas***

Diplomatic anxiety stands in a close interrelation with what can be termed Middle East popular diplomacy. Popular diplomacy is a distinctively modern practice insofar as it is based on a direct, symbiotic relationship between rulers and modern subjects. It is not about a diplomatic game that largely takes place in and between royal courts and foreign ministries or only about 'soft power' instruments used in foreign policy to win the hearts and minds of Others (Nye 2008), but one that stresses the centrality of public opinion and the need for decision-makers to ensure that their policies are supported by a wider national and international audience. In contrast to public diplomacy, these Others are not conceived of as 'objects' to be targeted but, e.g. by invoking mass mobilization and lobbying, as active and at least semi-autonomous subjects to engage with. Popular diplomacy has strong historical roots in the modern Middle East, and in other non-Western regions, due to the importance liberation and independence movements attributed to the fostering of national identities and mass mobilization in support of their diplomatic strive for self-determination and sovereignty (Reus-Smit 2011).

But popular diplomacy is not only about the practice of mobilizing national opinion,



e.g. how the 'Arab street' has been used and, simultaneously, constrained by various autocratic Arab rulers. Popular diplomacy has a distinctively international dimension too. For example, Nasr's policy of using *Saut Al-Arab* [*The Voice of the Arabs*], an Egyptian radio station broadcasting throughout the Middle East, was a powerful diplomatic tool that allowed Nasr to transmit his political ideas into other Arab states, forging pan-Arab identities and side-lining other Arab leaders (Barnett 1998). Similar arguments are made today about Qatari popular diplomacy, namely the role of the satellite TV station Al-Jazeera, based in Doha, and its role in augmenting Qatar's diplomatic status and political influence throughout the region, e.g. in the context of Al-Jazeera's role in de-legitimizing autocratic rulers such as Mubarak, Assad or Ben Ali (but of course not the Emir of Qatar himself) in the context of the Arab uprisings since 2011. Another example is Israeli and Palestinian popular diplomacy. Both sides invest considerable resources in reaching out in particular to Western publics. *Hasbara* (Hebrew for public diplomacy) even is a formally recognized pillar of Israeli foreign policy (Cummings 2012) – a practice diligently exercised as well by the PLO, both in its early-years populist diplomacy (Matar 2013) as well as the more recent forms of popular diplomacy pursued by the Palestinian Authority, e.g. when attempting to mobilize in particular Western publics in support of Palestine's statehood bid at the UN.

Popular diplomacy thus attests to the transformation of diplomacy in light of major societal changes that render the wider public an integral and active subject of diplomatic practice. This wider public is, thus, not a passive or at least reactive site of diplomacy as implicitly implied by notions of public diplomacy, which assume that state bodies still tend to take the lead. It also legitimizes and gives rise to what can be referred to as transnational diplomacy, the participation of a growing number of actors that actively shape new sites of diplomacy beyond international

society, e.g. the role of the non-governmental pro-Palestinian BDS (aka boycott, divestment, and sanctions) movement, directed against Israel/Israel's occupation, in constructing 'Global Palestine' (Collins 2012). As Neumann (2013: 14) observes, 'the number and kinds of sites where diplomacy plays out seem to be mushrooming'. And this is also the case in Middle East diplomacy, where sub-state actors such as Hezbollah or the Kurdish autonomous government in Iraq engage in diplomatic practice and conduct diplomacy autonomously from the nation-states within which they are based. It also relates to domestic groups that play a prominent role in limiting the manoeuvring space of national governments in relation to their diplomatic conduct, e.g. Islamist organizations in Jordan that put pressure on the government to limit diplomatic relations with Israel after the 1994 peace treaty between Israel and Jordan, or the Yesha council of Israeli settlers that mobilizes public opinion in Israel against a freeze of settlement activities, a key diplomatic demand raised routinely by the international community.

The most prominent site of transnational diplomacy then arguably is the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in particular in relation to peace building. Note that the Oslo process between Israel and the PLO was, on the Israeli side, not initiated by the state. In fact, maintaining contact with PLO representatives was a criminal act in Israel prior to the Oslo Agreements. Yet notwithstanding this policy, it was an Israeli NGO, namely the Economic Cooperation Foundation (ECF), that held the first secret talks with the PLO, only then cautiously informing the Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres about the positive signals for a peace agreement between both sides (Hirschfield and Roling 2000). On a much broader scale, NGOs such as the transnational International Crisis Group (ICG) have become part of the globalized site of transnational diplomacy in the sphere of conflict governance (Nabo and Stetter 2012) by gathering information about the

interests of conflict parties, proposing 'realistic' and 'rational' scenarios for conflict resolution and, more generally speaking, forging 'knowledge' about the various conflicts in the Middle East and how to properly address them (ibid.).

One of the key functions of modern diplomacy, formally organized in the context of the United Nations and symbolized through ideas such as a shared human heritage and the equality of people, is to engage in diplomatic rituals of cultural dialogue that celebrate humanity (Stetter 2005; for a related perspective see Constantinou 2013). Cultural dialogue is a diplomatic site that is based on an understanding of a shared, yet fragmented, global order in which as a result of 'globalization' civilizations have to find ways of peaceful co-existence that leave their (imagined) traditions intact (see Anderson 2006). As Dietrich Jung's study of cultural encounters between European and Muslim intellectuals shows, such cultural encounters and joint dialogues about co-existence in a rapidly globalizing world in which traditions have to be valued and cherished is a diplomatic practice that dates back to the nineteenth century (Jung 2011). Today, states often market this idea by highlighting their nation's unique placement between 'tradition and modernity' in order to attract foreign visitors. Tourism has become a key site of cultural diplomatic practice, and this is also the case throughout the Middle East (Hazbun 2004).

As a (non-military) response to the attacks by Al-Qaeda on the US on 11 September 2001, cultural dialogue has become an even more prominent playing field of Middle East diplomacy. The EU promotes cultural dialogues in its relations with the Middle East and has set up the Alexandria-based Anna-Lindh-Foundation to promote this idea of cultural dialogue as a cornerstone of EU foreign policy in the context of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), in addition to the manifold technocratic diplomatic linkages the EU maintains, mainly between the European Commission and Middle East governments.

Moreover, engaging in cultural dialogue, in particular dialogue between religions, has become a standard practice of diplomacy, the Middle East occupying a central place in that regard (Abu-Nimer et al. 2007). In 1967 the Vatican set up its Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. However, Middle East actors play a particularly prominent role in contemporary inter-religious dialogue as a diplomatic practice, in particular Arab monarchies, e.g. the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. This is actually one example of the roots of modern diplomacy in the Middle East, other examples being the ability not least of Arab nations to render the Israel/Palestine conflict a key component in the development of international law (Stetter forthcoming). Thus, while religion is often sidelined in 'professionalized' Western diplomatic discourse, it is firmly established as a tool for peace-building and coexistence on a global level not only but also through the active agency of Middle East diplomacy, thereby globalizing some of the positive experiences (or rather myths about what is perceived to be positive) of religious co-existence that existed in the Middle East for centuries.

### ***Sublime Diplomacy***

A final site to be discussed here is what Iver Neumann refers to as sublime diplomacy, namely the 'set of aesthetics' (Neumann 2013: 143) any diplomacy needs. The sublime element of diplomacy defines its social purpose: that its aesthetics, if successful, 'will alter the state of the opposite numbers and in so doing mentally knock them off site' (ibid.). Diplomacy is as much about creating impressiveness and about the indirect power resting with configurations of the sublime as it is about information, negotiation, threats and compromise. It is worth thinking about the effects the display of aesthetics produces on others, the extravagancies of Libyan ruler Muammar Qaddafi, who resided in his own desert tents protected by well-dressed female officers during

diplomatic visits, being a particularly glamorous example.

Neumann suggests a genealogy of three layers of modern sublime diplomacy. The first layer relates to ‘inducing effects’ through the display of (manipulative) grandeur (ibid.), a practice originating particularly in Byzantine diplomacy, thereby attesting to the aforementioned argument that modern diplomacy is a *global mélange* (Pieterse 2009) of European and Middle Eastern practices. One only needs to think here of the grandeur displayed by Gulf state monarchies – e.g. in dress code, architecture, and rituals such as falconry – and how this used to impress others in diplomatic encounters, with the objective to turn states such as Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates from peripheral states into (urban) centres of world society in which humanity celebrates itself, e.g. at Formula One races, the FIFA World Cup, or at museums and campuses that mirror both the diversity of cultures and the shared beauty of humankind unified through art and education.

A second layer of sublime diplomacy and one that originated in early modernity with the ‘formation of a public sphere’ (Neumann 2013: 144) is the ‘mystique of diplomacy’. Diplomacy became part of social dialogues, but it was largely watched by the public from a distance – at this layer, and on a global scale, ‘people still follow and guess what is going on in diplomacy and they feel suitably relieved when terror has been kept at bay’ (ibid.) thanks to the disinterested services of leaders and professional diplomats. The orchestration of strong leadership as a bulwark against terror and insecurity by leaders such as Mubarak and Al-Sissi in Egypt, Netanyahu in Israel or Erdogan in Turkey, as well as the display of shuttle diplomacy by professional diplomats such as Henry Kissinger, Joschka Fischer, John Kerry and Mohammad Javad Zarif, draws from this mysticisms of the sublime, as does the hope invested, rather counterfactually, in figures such as UN mediator Lahman Brahimi or Tony Blair, the Representative of the Middle

East Quartet in relation to their attempts to redeem local populations and humankind from the grievances of the Syrian civil war or the Israel–Palestine conflict.

Of course, in modernity, diplomacy has lost much of its mystical appeal and, therefore, Neumann rightfully highlights a third layer of sublime diplomacy, its mundane and noble, yet never-ending, role in fostering global goods. The aesthetics of diplomacy rely on its irretrievability. The globe is a space to be governed, and diplomacy is a cornerstone of global governmentality. This is because:

the world is in constant need of mediation. The demand for the good offices of diplomats never stops – it is infinite. There is always more diplomatic energy to spend. Perhaps diplomatic practice cannot be said to be sublime – but the task at which it is directed, the upkeep of social peace and the industry of the world’s subjects, certainly is. (Neumann 2013: 142–3)

This third layer of sublime diplomacy thus not only relates to mediation in terms of peace-building, such as the diffusion of models like transitional justice (e.g. the Hariri Tribunal) or peacekeeping operations to the Middle East. These are some of the ‘good’ offices diplomatic actors – leaders, NGOs, international organizations, judges – offer conflict-ridden societies in the Middle East.

Probably even more important though, the third layer of sublime diplomacy comprises a much wider range of biopolitical interventions meant to render Middle Eastern societies more compatible with modern world culture and bringing about inner-worldly redemption from societal ills. Such ‘sustainable diplomacies’ (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010: 7) are, for example, the rationale underpinning the Arab Human Development Reports (AHDR), which originated from diplomatic encounters coordinated by the UNDP, and which came up with a long list of prescriptions for how to overcome what was sketched in these reports as a self-inflicted, self-Orientalizing lack of progress in Arab nations. They also figure prominently in the education

activities of the UNRWA in Palestinian refugee camps, the water sanitation policy of the WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Program in Lebanon, or the refugee policy of the UNHCR in Libya. There is always a crisis somewhere – a conflict, water quality, educational injustices, exclusion, economic distress – and the most sublime task of Middle East diplomacy is to spend its energy tackling these problems.

### Key Points

- Middle East diplomacy is deeply embedded in discourses and practices of postcolonial diplomatic anxieties. This shapes policies to ensure independence and autonomy from the West in the region, and fears of the Middle East as a chaotic and conflictive realm of danger in the West.
- Middle East diplomacy has moved from the level of high politics to what I call popular diplomacy that relies on and imagines everyday practices and individuals not as objects of diplomacy but as potentially active subjects. This also underpins transnational diplomacy (involvement of sub-state political actors) and cultural diplomacy (invoking tradition and practices of religious/cultural dialogue).
- Finally, sublime diplomacy gives purpose to traditional bilateral and multilateral diplomacy by giving it an aura of grandeur and, increasingly, a technocratic, problem-solving outlook. Middle East diplomacy has to reconcile the grandeur of states, leaders and families with displays of sustainability, e.g. showing that Middle East diplomacy cares about the need of individuals in welfare, education, etc. and not just in grand games.

### CONCLUSION: SPACES OF INTERVENTION AND DIPLOMATIC SITES

As I have highlighted in this article, Middle East diplomacy comprises much more than the *shuttle diplomacy* of politicians from Henry Kissinger to John Kerry, who present themselves and are presented by others as effective mediators and peacemakers. It is

also, and even in a conflict-ridden region such as the Middle East much more than, the art of alliance building. Middle East diplomacy, as diplomacy on other referent objects, is first of all a process of social imagination – in this case rendering this region, or parts thereof, a locale that requires political intervention and the good offices of professionalized *and* everyday, public diplomatic practice. The Middle East is such a locale at which crises and spaces of intervention are identified. Then, and in order to manage and solve these problems, various forms of global governmentalities are set in place. Peace-building, human development, neo-liberal economics, inter-religious dialogue and humanitarian refugee policies are only some examples of such ‘modern’ prescriptions meant to remedy at least some of the symptoms of crisis. The diplomat – in the form of the politician, the bureaucrat, the religious leader, the NGO campaigner, the soldier, the developmental worker or simply the sensitive tourist or any other individual – is the modern subject that is called upon to actively contribute to bettering the world's fate in countless popular diplomacy dialogues that engender diplomatic actorhood for states, leaders, NGOs and individuals.

At the same time, however, this post-postcolonial ‘cosmopolitan worldliness’ (Dabashi 2012: 11) remains, for the time being, entangled with deeper structures of inequality, hierarchy and stratification in world politics that reify this region and its people as a site of problems and intervention rather than solution to the world's problems, the aftermath of the Arab Spring arguably reinforcing this imaginary. The Orientalist imaginary of the Middle East as a zone of conflict and backwardness, thereby justifying all sorts of interventions by states, alliances, NGOs and international organizations from the region and beyond, attests to this. Attesting to the hybrid nature of modern diplomacy as a *mélange* of Western and non-Western sources, Middle East diplomacy is, notwithstanding these hierarchies, today unimaginable without the highly legitimized input from actors and

ideas from the region, and not only because Arabic is one of the six official languages of the UN. This confirms the argument that 'for postcolonial diplomacy to be a credible proposition, it must appear to be inclusive of non-Western diplomatic norms as well' (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010: 12). The paradox of contemporary postcolonial Middle East diplomacy thus is that it is based on broad and highly legitimized participation by 'local' and regional actors, e.g. in shaping UN resolutions and international law and staffing international organizations while being entangled with a global political order based on path-dependent inequalities. The practice of Middle East diplomacy paradoxically challenges and reifies its postcolonial underpinnings, yet it stands to reason that this fosters rather than erodes the status of Middle East diplomacy as a key cultural battleground in modern diplomatic encounters (see also Chapters 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 25, 32 and 53 in this Handbook).

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# African Diplomacy

Asteris Huliaras and Konstantinos Magliveras

## **DIPLOMACY IN AFRICA: FROM PRE-COLONIAL TO POST-COLONIAL TIMES**

African diplomacy has a long history. As early as the sixteenth century many centralized states of pre-colonial western and eastern Africa had developed sophisticated diplomatic practices. These practices were based on customary law and, for some historians, could be regarded as the first steps to a permanent or continuous diplomacy (Smith 1976: 9).

Pre-colonial African diplomacy linked the coastal and forest states of West and East Africa with the savannah lands to the north. It also regulated contacts of these states with the Arab world and the Ottoman Empire as well as with a variety of European traders, missionaries, hunters and travellers. Diplomatic activity in pre-colonial Africa exhibits several similarities to that developed in feudal Europe: in Africa 'treaties were negotiated, frontiers (of trade and authority more often than of territory) were delimited, past disputes were settled, and potential crises argued away' (Irwin 1975: 83).

The dispatch of dignitaries, often referred to as 'messengers', 'linguists' or 'heralds', was common in pre-colonial Africa (Smith 1976: 7–27; Adjaye 1996). These individuals and their possessions often enjoyed a measure of immunity. They also carried something similar to 'diplomatic credentials'. For example, representatives of the Asante kingdom carried a staff that was topped by the figure of a hand holding an egg. This image was designed to 'convey the warning that neither the king nor his representative should press a matter too hard nor treat it too lightly' (Smith 1976: 12). In some African states, gradually a class of officials emerged 'who were specialists in the conduct of foreign relations and may fairly be described as professional diplomats' (Irwin 1975: 82).

A practice that resembles contemporary diplomacy was the 'deliberate' and 'tortuous' pace of negotiations (Smith 1976: 16). As Irwin (1975: 83) notes:

the literature of African exploration is full of the exasperated comments of travelers held up by what seemed to them unwarranted delays and

exactions. The more perceptive of these travelers came in time to see method in what they had early regarded as bloody-mindedness.

Public flattering and exchange of gifts were common practices. A West African custom was the eating of kola nuts, a stimulant that allowed negotiators to stay awake throughout the night. The mutual breaking of kola nuts was also the usual sign of peace (Smith 1976: 18).

Nevertheless and despite similarities with medieval Europe, African pre-colonial diplomacy differed in two important aspects: there was neither a single religion as Christianity nor a powerful and respected institution comparable to the papacy that could help organize international relations at the highest level. Thus, in contrast to medieval European rulers that met one another frequently to settle disputes, African leaders 'rarely if ever, met face to face' (Irwin 1975: 83).

Despite a diplomacy that aimed at preventing conflict and promoting cooperation, pre-colonial Africa was far from peaceful. Warfare was considered as a legitimate foreign policy tool to satisfy both political and economic ends (Ajayi and Smith 1971). For example, in the eighteenth century, the leaders of the Oyo Empire pursued war as an annual or bi-annual exercise.

Pre-colonial African diplomacy was heavily influenced by Islam and contacts with the Europeans (Smith 1973). The first contributed literacy and led, at least in the Islamized states of West and East Africa and Asante, to the evolution of chanceries. For example, the Bornu state maintained official relations with the Ottoman Empire for almost three centuries. The second influence, though facilitating communication between Africa and the rest of the world through the spread of European languages, did not have an immediate impact on African diplomatic practices. Thus, the resident embassy of sixteenth century Europe did not spread in the continent until the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, from very early on, the natives in West and Central Africa had a very clear idea of what a treaty with the

Arabs or the Europeans meant: though they could not read, they memorized the terms and, if its clauses were not kept by the co-signed party, they resorted to war (Irwin 1975: 84).

European penetration to Africa in the nineteenth century was initially slow. However, in the late 1870s it began to escalate into a fierce scramble for territory. The Berlin Conference (1884–5) signified the beginning of Africa's partition. There had been a variety of motives for European colonialism. Geopolitical calculations and economic interests were among the most important. However, European statesmen did not always control imperial expansion. Private interests also played a role – for example, British missionaries and traders pressurized their home governments to extend the colonial boundaries inland.

Resistance, negotiation and adaptation were the means by which Africans sought to defend their societies. Constrained by military inferiority, the leaders of the continent had 'to decide whether to fight or negotiate with invaders seeking to convert their paper-partition into power on the ground' (Iliffe 1997: 193). Amidst complex calculations (ranging from domestic rivalries to maintaining sources of income like slave trading) of how to react to European conquest, African polities were deeply divided between war and peace parties. In Buganda, the weaker Protestant party used the British forces as allies to secure its predominance over Roman Catholic, Muslim and traditionalist parties (Iliffe 1997: 194). In Sokoto, a minority fought to the death, while others preferred withdrawal, departing eastwards towards Mecca (Iliffe 1997: 194). Zaira, another polity on poor terms with Sokoto, opened its gates. On the contrary, Kano strengthened its walls but completely failed to stop invading British forces. Locally dominant, militarized polities were not the only ones dominated by hawks. Stateless people who lived amidst continuous inter-village warfare and cherished their own notions of honour, also violently resisted European expansion (Iliffe

1997: 195). However, it soon became clear that it was impossible to hold out against the superior European forces. It was African military incapacity rather than poor diplomacy that made the European partition possible.

Colonialism in Africa lasted for less than a century. Throughout these years the representation of Africans was the prerogative of European capitals. There was much diplomacy about Africa but little African diplomacy, at least at the official level. Only when the states of the continent became formally independent – mainly in the 1960s – did the era of modern African state diplomacy begin. A well-known exception is Ethiopian diplomacy in the League of Nations. In April 1923, Ras Tafari, the heir to the throne of Ethiopia, submitted an application for his country's membership to the League of Nations. Britain opposed the application on the grounds that Ethiopia was not yet 'sufficiently civilized' and politically cohesive to warrant it (Iadarola 1975: 601). However, thanks to the support of France, Ethiopia became a member of the League. It was there that Ras Tafari, subsequently Emperor Haile Selassie, delivered in 1936 his famous speech condemning the use of chemical weapons by Italy in the second Italo-Ethiopian War.

The attack on Ethiopia by Mussolini's forces mobilized a new actor in African diplomacy: the former slaves in the New World. For the African diaspora, Christian Ethiopia had become the 'heart of African civilization', 'the place, the symbol, the idea and the promise' (Cohen 1997: 37). In 1935 some 20,000 Afro-American protesters, some bearing Ethiopian flags, marched in a 1935 rally to New York's Madison Square. Others attacked their Italian neighbours (Cohen 1997: 39). It was the first sign of a politicization of the African diaspora that would become an important actor in African diplomacy in the 1970s and the 1980s (Akyeampong 2000).

In Africa itself, throughout the colonial years, there were also important non-state diplomatic actors. Traditional rulers in Nigeria, notables in East Africa and tribal leaders in

Central Africa often enjoyed a high level of autonomy. Thus they became masters in negotiating with colonial authorities. Church leaders, army commanders and trade unionists created a 'bottom up African diplomacy' that was informal, elaborate and flexible but which also remained largely unrecorded in the continent's history. As a result, its important successes are fragmented in hundreds of individual stories, personal biographies and anthropological studies and the full picture of its impact on colonialism but also on post-colonial foreign policies (as many of these individuals occupied government positions) remains rather unclear. However, this 'hidden diplomacy' was definitely more present in British colonies where colonial rule was usually less direct.

The diplomacy of most independent African countries had two objectives: first, ensure state survival and second, safeguard domestic regimes. As the common experience in post-colonial Africa (with very few exceptions) 'was that territories came first, and the state was established inside them' (Clapham 1996: 47), securing territorial integrity became the main priority. The problem was the arbitrariness of African boundaries inherited from the colonial era: 44 per cent were straight lines, most countries had only a limited ability to defend them and there were many groups that would welcome wholesale challenges to them (Herbst 1989: 676). To ensure their territorial integrity, African states formed the Organisation of African Unity and decided as early as 1964 to respect the borders existing on their achievement of national independence (Herbst 1989: 676). In the decades that followed, African boundaries were more stable than those of any other continent. The emergence of Eritrea in 1993 and – to a lesser extent – South Sudan in 2011 did not seem to contravene the OAU boundary doctrine. In fact, both cases were more a return to colonial boundaries.

Morocco and Somalia questioned the sanctity of colonial boundaries in the 1970s by respectively invading Western Sahara and the Ethiopian Ogaden. At different times, some

African leaders supported secessionist attempts in Congo, Ethiopia, Angola, Ghana and Nigeria (Neuberger 1986: 80–1). Tanzania's Nyerere even criticized his Organisation of African Unity colleagues for not recognizing Biafra (Mwakikagile 2010). However, the majority of African governments rejected the possibility of secession and the territorial integrity norm was kept as a sacrosanct dogma. African diplomacy cherished the two aspects of 'negative sovereignty' (Jackson 1990): respect of existing frontiers and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states (see also Chapters 3 and 5 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- African diplomacy has a long history that is recorded back to the sixteenth century.
- Colonialism created new non-state diplomatic actors.
- The main challenge for African diplomacy at independence was the arbitrariness of colonial boundaries.

## TAKING SIDES: AFRICA IN THE COLD WAR

African foreign policies also reflected state elites' desire to defend their regimes against domestic opposition. Regime survival became *the* main objective of African diplomacy in the Cold War era, a period which posed new challenges to African security. At first glance, Africa had no reason to be caught in the superpower rivalry. The continent was too poor and too peripheral to trouble Cold War warriors. However, as the United States and the Soviet Union became locked in a nuclear stalemate in Europe, Africa became a territory of strategic competition. The critical question for Africans was whether to opt for alignment or non-alignment. For the most secure leaders, like Tanzania's Nyerere, non-alignment initially appeared as the most gratifying choice.

Post-independence African diplomacy reflected deep fears of exploitation from both the West and East and emphasized the need to reduce the penetration of both the superpowers and the former colonial powers (Harris 1970: 60–82). Ideology played a crucial role. African foreign policies were often overly discursive. References to the 'slave trade', the 'crimes of colonial powers', 'the plunder of African resources' and 'economic exploitation' were common themes in African leaders' speeches in multilateral fora. 'Neo-colonial attitudes' and 'neo-imperialism' were castigated. Ian Smith's Rhodesia and South Africa's white-dominated regime were considered as 'internal enemies' that were 'supported' and 'sustained' by non-African powers. African diplomacy also regarded international developments through a continental lens. For example, one of the reasons why Africans supported the Palestinian cause was that they saw 'significant similarities' between apartheid and Israeli policies in the occupied territories (Mazrui 1977).

However, as the high expectations of the benefits that the end of colonialism could bring waned and the Cold War rivalry escalated, African leaders were forced to choose sides, forming alliances with one of the two superpowers or strengthening their ties with their former colonial powers (especially France).

Economic considerations (attracting investment and aid) were crucial in African alignment decisions. Resources were crucial in helping regimes stay in power. Gradually, an international patron–client relationship emerged. Smaller and more vulnerable states were obviously more likely to opt for a client role. But they were not alone: all African elites faced the same multiple constraints of 'poverty, disunity, domestic expectations and external penetration' (Clapham 1977: 79). Not unexpectedly, internal calculations affected the foreign policies of every single country of the continent.

Steven David (1991) has argued that many African decision-makers, presiding over fragile regimes that faced serious domestic

opposition, were forced to 'omni-balance' between external and internal pressures. For example, the Emperor Haile-Selassie of Ethiopia was firmly aligned with the United States but also used contacts with the Soviet Union to weaken communist support for Eritrean secessionists (Clapham 1996: 64).

Attempting to balance external and domestic needs, many African elites faced potential contradictions. If the primary threat was internal, as was often the case, regimes aligned with an external power to get resources and assistance. But governments were not the only actors. Various armed groups, usually originating in the countryside and often attacking across state frontiers, were contesting incumbent regimes. These groups largely relied on outside support. In the pre-independence period, insurgencies were associated with the cause of 'liberation' and were supported by the Soviet Union and its allies. In the Cold War era, several new types of insurgencies emerged: separatist, reform and warlord groups searched for external support. In Southern Africa, right-wing insurgencies trying to destabilize Soviet clients (e.g. Angola and Mozambique) found support in South Africa and Rhodesia. In other cases insurgencies were linked to pre-colonial fault lines that were exacerbated by government policies (e.g. Sudan) and were supported by other regional governments in a logic of tit-for-tat. In Central and later western Africa (e.g. Liberia and Sierra Leone) rebels were involved in extensive looting of mineral resources which they would sell abroad. The international connections of all these armed groups extended from 'neighbouring states whose regimes [we]re hostile to the government of the "target state" against which the insurgency [wa]s directed, to the global alliance structures which dominated international politics' (Clapham 1998: 15). Regimes such as those in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda and Rwanda that had gained power through insurgency did not 'refrain from supporting movements which they readily equated with their former selves' (Clapham 1998: 16).

Private interests including mercenaries, mining companies and diasporic communities helped create a complex 'insurgency diplomacy'. External resources (ranging from illegal external trade to the control of access to resources) were critical for rebel movements, giving rise to a non-state *economic* diplomacy with insurgency leaders controlling diamond sales and delivering stolen foreign aid.

The African diplomacy of the bipolar era has rarely attracted more than a passing reference in most histories of the Cold War that usually focus on conflicts in Korea, Vietnam and the Cuban missile crisis. Indeed, economic scarcity and political fragility made African regimes extremely dependent on foreign support with limited ability to influence local and regional developments. But this does not mean that African governments were necessarily or always the puppets of foreign powers. As the superpowers and their allies acted competitively, African actors have been able to retain at least some margin for manoeuvre. In many cases, the obvious existence of patron-client relationships did hide the often important role of African agency. African governments, in return to access to strategic sites and minerals, demanded concessions from foreign powers. If the material resources given were considered inadequate, regimes used their sovereign power to play one patron off against the other. For example, during his 30-year reign, Zaire's President Mobutu Sese Seko became an expert in manipulating foreign patrons, including the CIA, Belgium, France, West Germany, Saudi Arabia and even China and the IMF (Thomson 2000: 149). Even the smaller and weaker states found ways to manipulate their patrons, securing military and development aid, cheap loans, technical assistance and external military interventions to keep incumbents in power. For example, the Major Mathieu Kerekou regime in Benin, one of the poorest countries in Africa, first approached the Soviet Union, but was later flexible enough to restore relations with Benin's former colonial master, France, receiving aid that allowed his regime



to remain in power for 18 years (Decalo 1997). And Congo-Brazzaville, even more surprisingly, was successful in maintaining simultaneously excellent relations with both Moscow and Paris, combining a 'socialist state' with a privatized economy (Clark 1997) (see also Chapters 4 and 22 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- African diplomacy in the post-independence era aimed at securing regime survival.
- The proliferation of armed groups in the Cold War era led to the development of an 'insurgency diplomacy'.

## **RIISING AFRICA: CHINA, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE ROLE OF NON-STATE ACTORS**

The end of the Cold War had a negative impact on the geostrategic importance of Africa. For almost a decade after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Africa was a marginal region for international politics (Taylor and Williams 2004). Foreign embassies and military bases were closed and aid declined. The withdrawal of superpowers gave more freedom for manoeuvre to African foreign policies. However, this freedom was distributed unequally. Regional powers, such as Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, found more scope to develop a stronger regional presence. Conversely, weaker states that previously had little influence beyond their regions, had fewer opportunities for more autonomous foreign policies in relation to their more powerful neighbours.

But this era of marginalization did not last for long. Since the turn of the century, global interest for developments in Africa has considerably increased. Several factors explain this change of Africa's role in global politics, including higher economic growth rates, a democratization trend and threats to international security emanating from Africa (including terrorism, drugs trade and

naval piracy). However, probably the most important factor was China's involvement in African affairs. In the twenty-first century, the growth of Chinese–African relations has been both unprecedented and impressive. Trying to secure raw materials and open new markets, China has not only become Africa's most significant trade partner, but also an important investor and a generous donor. Chinese aid came with no political or economic conditionalities. This gave African diplomacy greater freedom than it had before (Alden 2007).

After independence, the executive branches have maintained a considerable amount of autonomy in foreign-policy decision making in Africa. Even within the executives, it was the presidents and their collaborators that have defined the national interest. In many countries the legacy of neopatrimonialism led to a diplomacy that privileged presidential rule with no competition from countervailing institutions. Interest groups like big business, media, political parties and legislatures had very limited influence. The publics remained largely uninterested in foreign policy even in countries with democratically elected governments. In general, there was very little domestic pressure to change foreign policy priorities.

However, African diplomacy has evolved from its initial idealistic post-independence period to a more security-oriented agenda in the Cold War period and, finally, to complex objectives and elaborate tactics in the post-bipolar era. It has shifted in terms of actors (from states and presidents to multiple players), issues (from strategic to economic themes) and levels (from national and regional to global) (Shaw and Nyang'oro 1999). For many African states the emphasis is now on 'low' and not on 'high' politics, with issues like debt and conditionalities dominating foreign policy agendas. African foreign policies became less state- or strategic-centric. African diplomacy is not any more the monopoly of the state and African foreign relations have become increasingly economic in content and transnational in character. Foreign aid has



shifted from a largely bilateral engagement with the former colonial powers to increased multilateral interactions with a wide array of donors, ranging from international financial institutions to non-governmental organizations. Individual celebrities, religious groups and ad hoc alliances of private actors (like the Save Darfur Coalition) have de-nationalized African diplomacy that is now faced with new challenges and opportunities to promote foreign investment, attract aid and solve conflicts through mediation and peacekeeping.

From a post-colonial point of view, African diplomacy seemed to 'internalize' the West's new views on development. In the early 1990s, multilateral institutions like the World Bank (1989: 60) started to promote the idea that 'good governance' is a necessary condition for sustainable economic development. As most bilateral donors followed the new mantra, African governments faced strong pressure to *combine* democratic reforms with neo-liberal economic policies. Despite its many shortcomings (ignoring alternative conceptions of democracy and shielding the West from democratic scrutiny), the 'good governance' discourse 'construct[ed] democracy as relevant only within countries and not within international institutions and relations' (Abrahamsen 2003: 203).

Thus, the 'good governance' agenda threatened to undermine and sideline the global aspirations of African diplomacy. The fact that many African institutions adopted the new discourse could endanger the 'structural' idea that Africa's problems stemmed from 'external' rather than 'internal' deficiencies.

However, African diplomacy proved more dynamic than many have expected. In the United Nations, where Africa forms the largest regional block of countries (one quarter of the General Assembly), African diplomats were very active in promoting institutional reform (especially in world trade). And in the WTO, Africans have moved from playing a relatively passive role 'to engaging in a concerted effort to increase influence, build capacity to scrutinize proposals and to

reject those who run counter to the declared developmental goals of the post-Seattle Doha "Development" Round' (Brown and Harman 2013: 6). In short, the 'good governance' agenda seemed to complement rather than antagonize African diplomacy. Quite the contrary: it gave new impetus into diplomatic relations within Africa through, for example, the NEPAD's Peer Review mechanism.

Nevertheless, there is also continuity in African foreign policy decision-making. In general, individual leaders still hold considerable sway over policy decisions, though in a few countries like South Africa career diplomats, various ministries and business interests increasingly influence policy outcomes (Siko 2014).

Democratic consolidation has also affected African diplomacy. When Nelson Mandela was elected President in South Africa, he promised a foreign policy based on the promotion of human rights (Mandela 1993). However, both Mandela and his successor, Thabo Mbeki, did not implement fully the new principle. South Africa asked for sanctions on Sani Abacha's Nigeria and supported the creation of the International Criminal Court (Barber 2005). However, at the same time, Pretoria developed close relations with the 'brother leader' Muammar Qadhafi of Libya and sided with Russia and China in the Security Council on the issue of Myanmar. Thabo Mbeki's 'silent diplomacy' towards Zimbabwe – in sharp contrast to London's policy – seemed to reflect the support that Mugabe had offered the African National Congress in the apartheid years (Lipton 2009). Under Jacob Zuma, Mbeki's successor, South African foreign policy appeared to be even more contradictory: South Africa refused to give a visa to the Dalai Lama for participating in a meeting of Nobel Peace Laureates while it welcomed Omar al Bashir of Sudan who faces an indictment by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity (*The Economist* 2015).

Clientelism is probably the more persistent characteristic of almost all African diplomatic

services throughout the post-colonial period. In almost all countries, there is fierce competition and pressure on political patrons for the best diplomatic jobs (London, Paris, Washington, Brussels, Berlin, etc.). As Ian Taylor (2010: 4) observes, ‘in many African countries, those who hold the highest diplomatic ranks are not the best qualified – they are just the best connected’. This continues to have an obviously negative impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of African diplomacy. For example, the diplomatic corps of Nigeria has seen numerous appointments of political hacks and discarded military officers (Taylor 2010: 4) (see also Chapters 28, 45 and 46 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- In the post-Cold War era, Africa diplomacy faced the marginalization of the continent in international affairs. However, higher economic growth rates and the rise of Chinese–African trade led to a renewed international interest for the continent. This gave African diplomacy more freedom to manoeuvre.
- Despite a new development discourse that emphasized domestic politics, African diplomacy was active in fora like the UN and the WTO, asking for reform of the international economic architecture.

### **FOSTERING MULTILATERALISM: FROM THE OAU TO THE AFRICAN UNION**

Multilateralism has played a very important role in African diplomacy in both the bipolar and the post-bipolar era. As many states of the continent had limited means for diplomatic representation, they found the United Nations system to be an indispensable framework. At its inception, the UN had only four African members (Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia and South Africa). However, after the 1960s, tens of independent African states joined their Asian and Latin American counterparts to form a very large majority in the General

Assembly, able to pass resolutions even if they were opposed by the powerful Western states. African members have used UN resolutions, *inter alia*, to have sanctions imposed against Southern Rhodesia, to have an arms embargo ordered against South Africa, and to recognize SWAPO as the legitimate representative of the Namibian people. They also promoted fresh ideas, such as the call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Finally they were instrumental in augmenting the scope of human rights’ protection by adding economic and social rights.

Africa’s diplomatic presence on the international plane has been principally undertaken by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and, after its demise in 2002, by the African Union. When the OAU was established in 1963, it had three principal goals. First, by transcending ethnic and national differences, to promote pan-Africanism as a mode of cooperation among all Member States in response to the aspirations of their peoples for brotherhood and solidarity. Second, to safeguard and consolidate the hard-won independence, and to assist the remaining lands under colonial rule to become sovereign states, even if that entailed the use of force. Third, to eradicate racial discrimination and apartheid. Equality, justice and dignity were the legitimate aspirations of African peoples. It soon became obvious that the latter two goals would be materialized only if they were internationalized. To that extent, the assistance offered by other transnational institutions would be of crucial importance. Thus, from a very early stage on, African states realized the diplomatic advantages of acting in a uniform manner and, particularly, in the General Assembly of the United Nations (UNGA), where they expected to find other states sympathetic to their goals (e.g. the non-aligned countries). The African Group of Members was established in the UNGA in the mid-1960s; it currently numbers 55 states.

In addition, African states saw the diplomatic potential of joining forces on the international plane specifically with the Arab world.

Their aim was to pursue mutual positions in matters of shared interest in the anticipation that they will be succoured by the countries participating in the Arab League, which had been established in 1945. The First Afro-Arab Summit, an initiative of the OAU, was held in Cairo in March 1977; the choice of venue no doubt showed the prominent diplomatic position that Egypt had in both intergovernmental institutions. On account of the African–Arab rapprochement it is not surprising that Africa has consistently been most supportive of the Palestinian cause and its claim to statehood. Indeed, Palestine has always been regarded as an African cause: already in 1970, the OAU set up the African Committee on the Question of Palestine to support its struggle to end the Israeli occupation. Five years later, the OAU Assembly adopted, together with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), a strategy for liberating Palestine from the ‘Zionist racist colonialism’.<sup>1</sup> Africa’s intense diplomatic support for the Palestinian cause has continued until today. In November 2012, it was instrumental in securing that the UNGA upgraded the status of Palestine to that of non-Member observer state by virtue of Resolution 67/19. In June 2015, the AU called upon all countries (and not only its Member States) to recognize the State of Palestine and support its admission in international institutions (a move which, at least diplomatically, is tantamount to regarding Palestine as a sovereign independent state) as well as to boycott Israeli products from the occupied territories.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the AU has often asked the USA to lift the ‘unjustifiable’ economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.<sup>3</sup>

As more and more African states have gained independence, the impact of the African Group in transnational fora has also grown (Mathews 1988). The struggle against apartheid, which was organized and directed by the OAU, intensified on the world arena. In 1968, Cameroon argued before the Second Committee of the UNGA that the admission of a large number of African states had resulted

in finally bringing racial discrimination to its attention. The OAU was always looking for the right moment to have the Republic of South Africa (RSA) expelled from the UN on account of its official policy of apartheid. It was partly achieved in November 1974 when the RSA was ostracized from the UNGA Twenty-Ninth Session; the fact that the current Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was President of that Session no doubt played a role.<sup>4</sup> The RSA was also excluded from subsequent sessions, forcing it to take the decision to suspend its participation in the UN (Magliveras 1999: 209–22).

Undoubtedly, isolating the RSA from the UN was a major diplomatic victory for the OAU, which, with the invariable help of Arab countries, had orchestrated it for a long period of time. It had started in 1964 when the World Health Organization voted overwhelmingly to have the RSA suspended from membership.<sup>5</sup> Although Africa’s diplomatic efforts concentrated on the RSA, the OAU also attacked Portugal and South Rhodesia for their apartheid-related policies. Thus, in October 1966 the African Group was successful in carrying on a decision at the 14th Session of the UNESCO Conference authorizing the Director General not to invite their governments to participate in future conferences and activities until they had abandoned racial discrimination (Osakwe 1972: 146–8).

Africa’s diplomatic initiatives were not restricted to excluding those states practising apartheid and/or striving to maintain their colonies from international fora where diplomacy is practised. They were additionally geared towards persuading the international community that these practices, while being condemned as ethically unacceptable, must also be prohibited and made international crimes. These efforts culminated in a number of instruments which were adopted by the UNGA with wide-ranging consequences for both international relations and international law. Moreover they were manifested during global events, e.g. at the first International Conference on Human Rights (1968), where apartheid was

condemned as a 'crime against humanity'.<sup>6</sup> The most important UNGA instruments are the following three: Resolution 1514(XV) of 14 December 1960 containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which regarded colonialism as a denial of fundamental human rights; Resolution 2621 (XXV) of 12 October 1970 declaring that colonialism in all forms and manifestations is a crime; and Resolution 3068(XXVIII) of 30 November 1973 approving the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. The latter currently has 109 contracting parties and the last country to ratify it was Palestine in April 2014. For the successful adoption of these instruments Africa relied again on the diplomatic support of the Arab Group.

Future events showed rather clearly that a diplomatic *quid pro quo* relationship had existed between African and Arab countries. Thus, not long after Africa's success in turning colonialism and apartheid into international crimes, the Arab world, taking cue from it, demanded that the global community treat Zionism in the same way as apartheid. In November 1975, and with the full backing of the African Group, Arab Member States comfortably passed UNGA Resolution 3379(XXX) determining that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination (72 votes in favour to 35 against with 32 abstentions). However, due to a different constellation in inter-state relations at the time, the Arab diplomacy was unsuccessful in expressly branding Zionism as an international crime.

While the OAU was not particularly successful in tackling internal African problems and scourges, on the international diplomatic front it could boast many and significant achievements. In July 2002 the OAU was finally laid to rest and with it the quest for pan-Africanism. The African Union (AU) took over as the new, fresh and dynamic pan-African institution well-endowed to be active in the political, socio-economic and security

fields (Don Nanjira 2010: 240). From the outset, the AU was given a demanding foreign policy agenda: to establish the necessary conditions enabling Africa to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations. Moreover, it was asked to encourage international cooperation within the confines of the UN Charter and to work with 'international partners' in the eradication of diseases and the promotion of good health. Thus, whereas during the OAU era the talk was on eradicating apartheid and alien domination, the talk now was on eradicating contagious illnesses and viruses in conjunction with the so-called 'international partners', a term which has been rather over-used in AU parlance. While good relations with the 'international partners' is an indication of advanced diplomatic capabilities by the AU, it is submitted that the latter has over-relied on the former (Magliveras and Naldi 2014: 69–70).

In recent years, more than half of the annual AU budget has been covered by the 'international partners' (an unprecedented state of affairs in intergovernmental organizations); characteristic AU activities such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) would not have survived had it not been for their contributions. For the 2016 Financial Year, of the total AU budget of US\$416,867,326, only US\$169,833,340 will be granted from Member States and the remaining will be secured from 'international partners'.<sup>7</sup> This poses a real dilemma to African diplomacy because these 'partners' include the former (and distasted) colonial powers and their multilateral institutions, primarily the European Union, as well as new(ish) 'partners', such as China, the long-term consequences of whose involvement in the continent have not been fully evaluated. Even though after a long period of inaction the AU has promised self-reliance in its funding,<sup>8</sup> it is submitted that the actions it plans to promote will not bring about the desired effects. The handling of such complicated matters, which form part of the

'African solutions to African problems' rhetoric, requires a different kind of diplomatic approach. However, it would appear that the era of African leaders with a continental vision, including Thabo Mbeki (the inaugural AU President) and Muammar Qadhafi (the AU President in 2009–10), has come to an end and ground-breaking ideas and forward thinking are rather in short supply.

Another aspect of African diplomacy radically amended with the advent of the AU was the abandonment of the sacred principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of Member States. This was a principle to which the OAU had slavishly adhered. It was often invoked to avoid interfering and preventing crimes against humanity, acts of genocide and other grave violations of humanitarian law (Burundi in the 1980s and Rwanda in the 1990s are examples). Thus, Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act endows it with the right to intervene in a collective fashion when grave circumstances – understood as war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and serious threats to a legitimate legal order – are present in a Member State and it is necessary to restore peace and stability (Kuwali 2009). The AU is probably unique among intergovernmental organizations to be granted a right of intervention in such express terms.

Moreover, Article 4(j) contains a second instance of interference in domestic affairs, albeit voluntary in nature. It refers to the Member States' right to request the AU to intervene in order to restore peace and security. This provision raises a crucial point of interpretation: may intervention be demanded only by those Members affected by breached peace and security or by any Member State? In other words, do all Members have a legitimate interest to ask the AU to intervene even if they might not be in the least affected? Although the latter interpretation has been supported (Kioko 2003: 817), it presupposes supranational elements, which the AU arguably does not currently possess. It is a matter of considerable regret that, despite the many situations where civil strife, internal wars,

coups d'état, etc. have taken place resulting in massive loss of human lives, it has not been possible for African diplomacy to overcome the ankyloses of the past and intervene. At some stage, African leaders should uphold the lofty principles to which they have been paying lip service. The AU has the diplomatic tools to assist them.

Carrying on from the twentieth century, during our century African diplomacy has continued to be heavily drawn into the question of reforming the UN, including the Security Council (UNSC). Already in 1997, the OAU's common position advocated that Africa ought to be given two permanent seats in any future UNSC enlargement.<sup>9</sup> 2005 was a seminal year. Not only did the AU revive the discussion on UN reform and seek ways to secure to the continent a voice in multilateral negotiations and institutions<sup>10</sup> but, once again, the African Group of States showed that it was capable of pushing its proposals through the UN. Thus, African diplomacy was successful in shifting a new UN entity, the Peacebuilding Commission, closer to the UNGA and away from the UNSC, which was to have the central role as advocated by the European Union, Russia, China and others.<sup>11</sup> Finally the Fourth Extraordinary AU Assembly Session entrusted the promotion of the African positions on UN reform to a Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government.<sup>12</sup> The fact that the Committee has not achieved any tangible results but has rather recycled existing proposals arguably shows the limitations in pursuing complex diplomatic goals at a multilateral institution (namely the UN) where too many vested interests intermingle.<sup>13</sup>

The AU has constantly attempted to promote common African positions in a series of global conferences and deliberations. In the summer of 2015 it urged the African group of negotiators in the climate change deliberations to maintain their unity and continue representing African interests in the current UN Framework Convention on Climate Change process, which culminated in a summit meeting in Paris in December 2015.<sup>14</sup> The relevant



practice shows that the AU Assembly establishes ad hoc bodies to devise common positions vis-à-vis global initiatives of specific interest to Africa. These bodies do the groundwork and report to the Assembly, which usually rubberstamps their propositions, while the actual promoting of the agreed positions is undertaken by the so-called African Group of Negotiators (AGN). Depending on the subject matter of the discussions, this task may additionally be undertaken by the Member States themselves. For example, in relation to the UN Summit on the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, which took place in September 2015, the Assembly had asked the AGN in New York to remain engaged insisting, at the same time, that individual Member States should attend it at the 'highest political level'.<sup>15</sup>

Another characteristic aspect of African diplomacy is the centralized system of determining which candidatures (whether Member States or African dignitaries) will receive collective AU support to be elected in the organs of international institutions. Thus, in early 2015, Senegal and Egypt were endorsed for the post of non-permanent members in the UNSC for the period 2016–17.<sup>16</sup> The election was held on 15 October 2015 during the 70th session of the UNGA in which Senegal secured the impressive number of 187 votes (out of the 193 UN Member States) and Egypt 179 votes.

It is a well-known fact that Africa continues to be plagued by inter-state and, particularly, intra-state armed conflicts. Since the advent of the AU their number appears to have been contained. This could be explained by the diplomatic prevention mechanisms which have been created. Collectively they form the so-called African Security and Peace Architecture (ASPA), which was established by the AU in collaboration with the African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with terms of reference the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in the continent. These mechanisms include a very active and powerful Peace and Security Council (PSC), a Panel of Wise Men, and an African Standby Force.

The European Union has contributed significantly to the financial upkeep of the ASPA through the African Peace Facility (APF), which constitutes the main source of funding to support the AU and RECs efforts in the area of peace and security: almost €2 billion has been allocated to the APF since 2004. The PSC has been praised for its hand-on approach to address conflicts as they unfold. The wide use of sanctions as well as its mediation especially in coups d'état has resulted in diplomatic successes. However, the participation in it of Member States not meeting the standards of rule of law and human rights protection is problematic (Vorrath 2012).

The relationship between the AU and the RECs is delineated in Article 16 of the Protocol creating the PSC, concluded in 2002. It provides that the RECs are part of the overall AU security architecture but the AU has the primary responsibility for promoting peace, security and stability in the continent. Therefore, the AU harmonizes and coordinates the activities of the RECs to ensure consistency with its own objectives and principles. Despite the AU's position of primacy, the RECs have had a quite distinguished experience in peacekeeping already from the OAU era. In December 1989, the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) created a peacekeeping force, the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), which, at an international level, attracted favourable attention for its involvement in the civil wars in Liberia (1990–2005), in Sierra Leone (1997–2005), in Guinea-Bissau (1998–9) and in Côte d'Ivoire (2005–10). Other RECs with a peace and security dimension include the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The latter adopted in February 2000 a Protocol establishing a Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX), whose components resemble those of the ASPA.



Notwithstanding the AU's overall coordination of the RECs' activities, the latter, both collectively and individually, have promoted their own diplomatic efforts on the international plane. A recent characteristic example is the High-Level briefing on the so-called Agenda 2063, which was presented in New York to the UN Member States in October 2014. Agenda 2063, lodged by the AU at its 50th Anniversary in May 2013, is meant to be the vehicle assisting Africa in expanding the achieved progress, exploiting all possible opportunities and ensuring its future socio-economic transformation. The RECs used this event as a global platform to discuss their respective roles in the realization of Agenda 2063, and how to strengthen their collaboration with the AU.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the Framework Document on Agenda 2063, which was circulated by the UN Commission on 15 September 2015, talks about the need for all Member States to harmonize their policies on international relations and to speak with one voice so as to ensure better gains on the global arena.

Another area where the AU has been promoting a specific agenda at a continental level and the RECs have pursued their own diplomatic efforts is free trade and the quest for economic integration. Thus, while at its 25th Ordinary Session (June 2015) the AU Assembly, after considerable delay, launched the negotiations for a Continental Free Trade Area,<sup>18</sup> a week earlier the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC) and the SADC had signed a declaration launching their own Tripartite Free Trade Area.<sup>19</sup> From a diplomatic perspective, the fact that there is an overlap of membership among the RECs and, at the same time, all their Member States also participate in the AU may not be a problem, because it offers RECs a dynamic in addressing common problems and challenges not only in economic development but also in politics and security, social and human development, natural resources, health, food security, etc. This dynamic could also affect the AU positively considering that its

programmes and actions often fail to reach the intended recipients (see also Chapter 40 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- The OAU and the AU have successfully promoted their agendas on the international plane.
- There have always been strong diplomatic relations between Africa and the Arab world.
- Africa relies considerably on international partnerships to support national and regional projects.
- Apart from the AU, the Pan-African diplomacy is also shaped by the African Regional Economic Communities.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is clear that the main factor that determined changes in African diplomacy has been the end of the Cold War. However, domestic factors (democratization and economic reform) have clearly affected its development. The emergence of new non-state actors in Africa's international relations, the rise of multilateralism and a move from security to economics are the main trends in twenty-first-century African diplomacy. Future developments will very much depend on the future of African Union and sub-regional institutions. There has been much progress in recent years on regional integration, but African multilateral diplomacy continues to remain weak. The ability of the AU to articulate a collective voice depends to a large extent on the ability of its two strongest Member States, South Africa and Nigeria, to operate in concert. In 1999, when Nigeria returned to civilian rule, the two states cooperated closely and Africa enjoyed a 'golden age' of diplomacy (Landsberg 2012; Abegunrin 2009). However, the collapse of this cooperation leads us to the conclusion that the dynamism of the late 1990s has largely waned and African diplomacy continues to suffer from fragmentation (see also Chapter 33 in this Handbook).

## NOTES

- 1 OAU Assembly, Resolution on the Question of Palestine, AHG/Resolution 77(XII), 1 August 1975. All OAU/AU documents are available at [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)
- 2 AU Assembly, Declaration on the Situation in Palestine and the Middle East, Assembly/AU/Decl.4(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 3 Lastly under AU Assembly, Resolution on Recent Developments in Cuba-United States of America Relations, Assembly/AU/Res.2(XXIV), 31 January 2015.
- 4 Cf. OAU Council of Ministers, Resolution on the Expulsion of South Africa from the Twenty Ninth Session of the United Nations General Assembly, CM/Res.392(XXIV), 21 February 1975.
- 5 WHO, World Health Assembly, Resolution 17.50, 19 March 1964.
- 6 Proclamation of Teheran, Final Act of the International Conference on Human Rights, April–May 1968, U.N. Doc. A/CONF. 32/41.
- 7 AU Assembly, Decision on the Budget of the African Union for the 2016 Financial Year, Assembly/AU/Dec.577(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 8 Cf. AU Assembly, Declaration on Self-Reliance, Assembly/AU/Decl.5(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 9 OAU Assembly, Harare Declaration of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU on the Reform of the UN Security Council, AHG/Decl.3 (XXXIII), 4 June 1997.
- 10 See, inter alia, the AU Common African Position on the Proposed Reform of the United Nations (the Ezulwini Consensus) adopted by Member States on 8 March 2005, and AU Assembly, Sirte Declaration on the Reform of the United Nations, Assembly/AU/Decl.2(V), 5 July 2005.
- 11 The Peacebuilding Commission was established by simultaneous decisions of the UNGA (Resolution 60/180) and the UNSC (Resolution 1645(2005)) on 10 December 2005.
- 12 AU Assembly, Decision on the Reform of the Security Council of the United Nations, Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(IV), 4 August 2005.
- 13 AU Assembly, Decision on the Sixteenth Report of the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council, Assembly/AU/Dec.574(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 14 AU Assembly, Decision on Africa's Engagements in the Global Climate Negotiations, Assembly/AU/Dec.580(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 15 AU Assembly, Decision on the High Level Committee (HLC) on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Assembly/AU/Dec.573(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 16 AU Executive Council, Decision on the African Candidatures within the International System, EX.CL/Dec.872(XXVI), 27 January 2015.
- 17 See Concept Note for the Briefing by African Regional Economic Communities to the Member States of the United Nations on 'The Role of Africa's Regional Economic Communities in Consolidating Peace, Security, Governance and Development in the Context of Agenda 2063', 1 October 2014, UN Headquarters, New York, available at: <http://www.un.org/>
- 18 AU Assembly, Decision on the Launch of Continental Free Trade Area Negotiations, Assembly/AU/569(XXV), 15 June 2015.
- 19 Communiqué of the Third COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Summit, Vision: Towards a Single Market, Theme: Deepening COMESA-EAC-SADC Integration, 10 June 2015, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, available at <http://www.sadc.int/>

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# Southern African Diplomacy

Stephen Chan

Diplomatic overtures were made towards sub-Saharan Africa well before the independence process began. The 1955 Bandung Conference, which was the ideological predecessor of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), saw China's Chou En Lai deliberately court the future continent. Other NAM actors, such as India, also assured goodwill was extended to the new states – so that, when Zambia became independent in 1964 with only 100 university graduates, many of the emerging political elite were given scholarships to achieve Indian degrees. From the very beginning, the new states sought a unified political voice and diplomatic presence in world affairs. This proved to be more rhetorical than real, but the first Prime Minister of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, in 1963 achieved his vision of an Organisation of African Unity where, at the very least, it was hoped that, together, African states could punch above their individual weights.

The United Kingdom, as a major colonial power, on the eve of granting independence

to most of its possessions, sought a moral high ground for diplomatic effect as well as out of genuine concern. UK Prime Minister Harold Macmillan's 1960 'Wind of Change' speech in the apartheid South African parliament was one of the great political speeches of his era, but it had a very determined diplomatic agenda – which was to maintain and cultivate, for reasons of trade and mineral exploitation, the new black-ruled states.

But all these interventions and initiatives involved senior political figures – Chou, Nkrumah and Macmillan were all Prime Ministers – and this characterised relations with Africa, particularly diplomatic relations within Africa, for most of the years of independence and, to an extent, still does today. The role of foreign ministries, and e.g. their research departments, has always been secondary to foreign policy initiatives proposed and conducted above their heads. Even in a well-developed state, in apartheid South Africa, at the height of its militarised destabilisation operations against the surrounding

black-ruled 'frontline states' from 1976 to 1988, the foreign ministry had no research department or capacity devoted to the study of other African states. As apartheid entered its final phase, on the eve of the release of Nelson Mandela and the beginning of a 4-year cycle of negotiations, the new South African President F.W. de Klerk travelled to Victoria Falls to meet Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda; the agenda included the unbanning of the ANC, but Kaunda went into those talks without any briefing materials on de Klerk, because neither his own office nor his foreign ministry had any.

The existence of racism and systems of racial discrimination in the south of the continent exercised African diplomacy for many years. This was a concern for all of Africa, but particularly those states near South Africa, who grouped themselves together as the 'frontline states'. This political grouping paralleled the economic grouping that became first SADCC (Southern African Development Coordination Conference), and then SADC (Southern African Development Community). There were deep concerns over the situations in Rhodesia and South Africa. Curiously, the Portuguese colonies were never the subject of extensive diplomatic initiatives from within Africa until after their independence. Accordingly, this chapter proceeds to discuss illustrative case examples from the diplomatic history of the Southern African region as it concerns Rhodesia and South Africa, before extending it to African Union diplomacy and the great issues ahead.

## **THE RHODESIAN ISSUE AND THE ROLE OF ZAMBIA**

Zambia gained independence in 1964 and, only a year later, white-minority-ruled Rhodesia made a Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) from Great Britain – rather than accept the 'wind of change' blowing towards black majority rule. The two

neighbouring countries had shared some colonial history, but this meant that almost all the road and rail routes led from Zambia, through Rhodesia, to South African ports. As Rhodesia militarised itself to resist a (distantly) possible British invasion, Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda pondered his options. He could easily be economically squeezed by Rhodesia. His fledgling army was no match for a Rhodesia backed by apartheid South Africa. Kaunda himself had been schooled in Ghandian pacific doctrines, so he attempted diplomacy both to ease the plight of his own country and to seek a settlement to the quarrel between black and white next door.

Simultaneously, he had no choice but to lend support to those black groups in Rhodesia who sought to resist white rule. Those groups, however, were divided. Different groups attracted different foreign support in those Cold War years. Kaunda and Tanzania's Julius Nyerere favoured different factions, as did the Soviet Union and China. Keeping a common purpose among friends and different resistance groups, while resisting pressure from the white south, became major diplomatic preoccupations for Kaunda.

The Chinese entered the picture in 1970, with the beginning of the construction of a railway linking Zambia to the Tanzanian port of Dar es Salaam. This was a 5-year project hoping to ease the transport and economic stranglehold Rhodesia and South Africa held over Zambia. At the same time, and this became most apparent by the mid-1970s, the Soviet Union was falling behind the liberation faction led by Joshua Nkomo, which was also favoured and hosted in Zambia by Kaunda. China threw support behind the faction that in 1976 came to be led by Robert Mugabe. But the accession of Mugabe to the leadership of that faction came only after the 1975 assassination of his predecessor, Herbert Chitepo, and Mugabe's brief imprisonment by Kaunda, before escaping to Mozambique.

China had also supported the liberation movement that achieved independence for Mozambique in 1975, but it was in Angola



where the Cold War became spectacularly hot, with both the Soviet Union and Cuba siding with the eventually victorious Marxist faction against those favoured by the USA and China. This victory was secured in 1976, with Cuban troops playing a critical role. It was against the imminent intervention of the great states in surrounding countries that Kaunda and South Africa's Prime Minister Vorster convened the Victoria Falls Conference in August 1975 to seek a way forward over Rhodesia. They sat in a train carriage parked on the tracks across the Knife Edge Bridge that linked the two sides of the Falls. On the Rhodesian side, Vorster and his delegation sat, and Kaunda and the liberation parties – temporarily unified for these talks – sat on the Zambian side. A line on the bridge outside demarcated the border.

Although these talks were unsuccessful, they inaugurated a series of talks brokered by the great powers. The Geneva talks in 1976, involving US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, were followed by the 1977 Anglo-American initiative led by the US's UN ambassador Andrew Young and British foreign secretary David Owen. Throughout, Kaunda maintained an active interest and his standing and efforts were rewarded when, in 1979, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) was held in Lusaka, Zambia, with Rhodesia as the most contentious issue under discussion, and with a seemingly intractable British prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, determined to resist Commonwealth pressure to increase the British role in forcing majority rule upon the breakaway colony. In fact, behind the scenes, Thatcher's foreign secretary, Lord Carrington, and his people, particularly Sir Anthony Duff, had been frantically busy seeking both US and wider African agreement over diplomatic ways forward. Simultaneously, Kaunda's foreign policy advisor, Mark Chona, was similarly engaged in a frantic shuttle diplomacy between African capitals, seeking to gather support for a more forceful way forward. This represented the first time in Zambian diplomacy when it could

be said that someone who was not President Kaunda was in the diplomatic limelight and vitally necessary to the settlement of a key diplomatic issue.

At the CHOGM, Kaunda was chairman, but the lobbying of Margaret Thatcher was orchestrated by Commonwealth secretary-general Shridath Ramphal, and involved Julius Nyerere, Jamaica's Michael Manley, and Australia's Malcolm Fraser. Kaunda thus became involved as a key figure in a multilateral movement at head of government or head of state level. The resulting negotiations among all Rhodesian parties at London's Lancaster House towards the end of 1979 saw Carrington now as chairman, but Ramphal again orchestrating the tactics of the guerrilla parties, with Nyerere and Mozambique's president Machel acting with Ramphal to direct Mugabe's negotiating line; and Kaunda's working with Ramphal to direct the negotiating line of the other major guerrilla party's leader, Joshua Nkomo. In fact, Mugabe and Nkomo sat as a unified bloc in the negotiations, but remained often separately advised. Kaunda could therefore claim to have been a major diplomatic force in the subsequent independence of Zimbabwe as a majority-ruled country in the wake of white-ruled Rhodesia. He began as a solitary Zambian diplomatic actor, later worked in tandem with Mark Chona, and finally worked within a multilateral framework.

### **Key Point**

- Zambian diplomacy was essential in fostering African alliances on the Rhodesian issue and negotiating the independence of Zimbabwe.

## **ZIMBABWEAN DIPLOMACY**

The new country immediately faced the problem of apartheid South Africa on its borders and, from 1982, an up-scaled South African

plan to destabilise the surrounding countries. This was named 'Total Strategy' and, in 1982, South African commandos destroyed the Zimbabwean airforce. It also increased support for rebel groups in the region. In Mozambique, it sponsored the RENAMO (*Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana*) insurrection, which both used child soldiers and seriously weakened the recently independent country. In 1986, Zimbabwe hosted the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement. India's Rajiv Gandhi spoke of a combined non-aligned military force marching on Pretoria, and Zimbabwean troops entered Mozambique in strength to win back territory for the government of President Machel, and to secure transport networks eastwards to avoid dependency on the networks that went through South Africa. It meant the diplomacy of the young state of Zimbabwe was born from conflict.

Two things should be said here. Unlike Zambia up to 1979, the Zimbabwean diplomatic efforts were multilateral, through the NAM; and the foreign ministry as well as the defence ministry were much more involved than their counterparts were in Zambia. Even so, events in the early 1990s began to showcase President Mugabe. This was less the case in terms of economic diplomacy and negotiations with the IMF, in which economic planning minister Bernard Chidzero was prominent. But even at the 1991 CHOGM, held in Harare to celebrate just over 10 years of independence secured partly by Commonwealth efforts, Mugabe was the star of what was meant to have been a multi-lateral show. A retrospectively ironic Harare Declaration on Human Rights was launched under his chairmanship, and this has, sometimes less effectively than others, moderated Commonwealth membership and acted as a yardstick of acceptable basic governance. Two things occurred in 1992, however, that revealed in different ways the centrality of Mugabe to foreign policy.

The first was the huge drought that swept the country and threatened food supplies.

Negotiating for food stuffs to be brought in via South Africa and using South African rail wagons seemed the only viable solution to a dire situation. Mugabe could not bring himself to initiate discussions with a regime that, even though it had freed Nelson Mandela, unbanned the ANC, and was involved in protracted negotiations over its future, was still officially a white-minority-ruled state. He used the death of his wife, Sally, as a reason to absent himself for a protracted time from the country as he mourned her at a country retreat in Ireland. The government, left in the caretaking hands of Joshua Nkomo, immediately began discussions with the South Africans and food was shipped in – but these discussions would not have started had Mugabe stayed in place and, perhaps knowing that, he deliberately absented himself to allow a distasteful foreign policy decision to be taken by others.

The second was the negotiations over a settlement in Mozambique between the government and the RENAMO rebel movement that had been sponsored and supported by South Africa. Negotiations had begun under the auspices first of the Catholic Bishop of Beira, then the Santo Egidio monastery in Italy, the Vatican and finally the Italian government. But critical and huge gaps remained between the two sides and, although the Zimbabwean government had been involved in the talks, as had private individuals such as Tiny Rowland, heading the huge multinational Lonrho, and Mozambican delegations from both sides had visited Harare, it took a face-to-face meeting between Mugabe himself and the rebel leader, Alfonso Dhlakama, in Malawi before a real breakthrough occurred, leading to a settlement in Rome. In those Malawian talks, Mugabe was not accompanied by his foreign minister and, in fact, the talks had probably been arranged by the CIA. At the discussions, it was a solo Mugabe effort and it was fair that he was accorded a privileged position of centrality at the signature of the peace accords. The years 1990 to 1992 probably saw Mugabe at the height of his

diplomatic influence, which had begun with the NAM summit in 1986. It did not translate into economic diplomacy as he failed to secure donor backing for a land buy-out package from white farmers in the aftermath of the drought – thus storing up tensions that exploded with the land grabs in 2000. But, as an international actor in political diplomacy, Mugabe was both a solo star and someone who featured multilaterally, and was then seen as a diplomatic ally of both China and the US. Sometimes his foreign ministry was involved in events, and sometimes not. It was a complex balancing act which has since come undone.

### **Key Point**

- Zimbabwean diplomacy was a complex balancing act with regard to developments in South Africa and the civil war in Mozambique.

## **ANGOLA, NAMIBIA AND CHANGES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The eventual release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 did not come without much protracted preparatory work. Again, this involved Zambia, particularly as the ANC (African National Congress) had its exile headquarters in Lusaka, as did the Namibian liberation group, SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation). Zambia devoted little time to SWAPO's affairs, but much to the ANC's. Both the ANC and SWAPO shared a common problem and that was the apartheid government in Pretoria, so Lusaka and Pretoria became a pair of diplomatic poles in the struggle for the region. Lusaka played almost no important role in the independence of Namibia. That was a diplomatic effort chaired by the US Assistant Secretary of State, Chester Crocker, after Cuban forces had once again turned the tide of war against the South Africans at the 1988 battle of Cuito

Cuanavale in Angola – leading to South African military withdrawal from both Angola and Namibia.

But the beginnings of meaningful diplomacy over South Africa began in Lusaka not with an official Zambian government involvement, or any intervention by Kenneth Kaunda. It came about in 1984 as a curious Track Two diplomatic effort, probably encouraged by Pretoria, and recognised as no ordinary Track Two effort by Lusaka. It involved the visit to the ANC in Lusaka by a South African Academic, Professor H.W. van der Merwe, and newspaper editor, Piet Muller. These two met the ANC and reported back to Pretoria that, in their opinion, official talks could be fruitful. There followed, over the next five years, a series of Track Two encounters, one in Dakar, Senegal, involving business leaders, before Track One meetings were held in the UK.

Proponents of Track Two diplomacy make much of these meetings but, without the 1988 South African military defeat at Cuito Cuanavale, and the consequent end of Total Strategy, it is doubtful that diplomatic efforts of any sort could have borne fruit. Even so, they represented the first time Track Two was used to even tangential effect in a multi-nation African conflict. Defeat, at the hands of Cuban-led forces with Soviet aircraft and Soviet pilots, led to the fall of South African President Botha, and it was this, together with his replacement by F.W. de Klerk, that led to a surprise 1989 summit between de Klerk and Kaunda beside the Victoria Falls. There was no railway carriage this time astride a border line, but de Klerk was firmly on Zambian soil, and the diplomatic symbolism of that was immense. Both sides denied that Mandela's release was an agenda item, but in the following year Mandela was released and the ANC unbanned, and internal negotiations began about a majority-ruled South Africa. For this, Kaunda could claim some credit, especially as other front-line Presidents, such as Nyerere, had warned against the meeting. However, it was not the

only activity involving Zambia as the host of the ANC that was involved.

Here, the diplomatic intervention of the Commonwealth, by now led by Secretary-General Emeka Anyaoku from Nigeria, was of great importance. The convening of the 1986 Commonwealth Eminent persons, led by Australia's Malcolm Fraser and Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo, two former national leaders, and their visit to South Africa pending a decision to impose Commonwealth sanctions on South Africa, was key to a multinational sanctions effort. Although Margaret Thatcher's UK refused to introduce sanctions, the Eminent Persons' report was highly influential in the decision of other European states to do so. The economic pressure this introduced into the South African situation in the two years leading up the military defeat at Cuito Cuanavale was a necessary part of cumulative pressure on the apartheid state leading to its decision to enter negotiations with the ANC. The Eminent Persons was a sort of political variant of groups like the Brandt Commission of 1980, whereby esteemed and senior retired political figures brought their collective wisdom to bear on delicate and seemingly intractable problems. The latter-day Elders group that formed originally around the retired Nelson Mandela is only a latest incarnation of the formula. The role of Obasanjo in the Eminent Persons was of great importance as, on the group's visit to South Africa, he effectively became the first truly senior African statesman to be received in an apartheid environment. This was a first fully fledged outing for Obasanjo into diplomatic activities beyond Nigeria, and he was to engage in more such activities, both when he became President again, and as an individual.

### **Key Point**

- Bilateral, multilateral, Track Two and Eminent Persons' diplomacies were employed to different degrees in settling the Angolan, Namibian and South African conflicts.

## **SOUTH AFRICAN DIPLOMACY**

With the advent of majority-rule in South Africa, it was natural that the country would act in diplomatic affairs. It established itself, with Nigeria and the AU, as part of the 'big three' troika of African diplomacy. Kaunda had been defeated in elections in 1991, and Zambia no longer had a person of his international stature to insert into any diplomatic equation. However, Nelson Mandela proved not adroit at diplomacy. His well-meant and moral intervention at the 1995 Auckland CHOGM about the fate of Ken Saro Wiwa in Nigeria was seen as diplomatically clumsy. And it was on his watch in 1998, but when he was absent from the country, that South African military forces invaded Lesotho – to disastrous effect, not just for the Lesothans but for the reputation of the newly integrated South African forces. It was a botched operation. However, Jacob Zuma was despatched by Mandela's successor, Thabo Mbeki, to seek to restore some sense of peace and order in the ethnic conflicts of Burundi in 2004 to good effect. But South African diplomacy as a fully credible, if controversial, force had to await the personal interventions of Thabo Mbeki.

The advent of Mbeki diplomacy also saw for the first time in Africa a consistent ethos behind diplomacy. Mbeki is best known for his mediation after the disputed 2008 Zimbabwean elections. He was not the first senior figure to mediate in the protracted Zimbabwean crisis that began after the seizures of white-owned farms in 2000. Obasanjo, as part of a Commonwealth effort in the early 2000s, earned himself the opprobrium of both Mugabe and the opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai. Nor was the power-sharing formula that Mbeki used in his 2008–9 mediation at that stage original. Kofi Anan, no longer UN secretary-general, but an elder global figure, had forced through a power-sharing compromise after the disputed 2007 Kenyan elections – one with a sting in

its tail to do with future indictments before the International Criminal Court for those behind the intensity of the electoral violence. It was Mbeki who had pioneered the formula of extensive power sharing in the Democratic Republic of Congo where, in 2002, to defuse the antagonisms of regional barons and warlords against one another and centralised government as a whole, he instituted a series of regional administrations and a form of proportional rule within the Cabinet. All claimants to power had a place at the central seat of power as well as their own regional seats of power. It was this ethos of inclusivity that he brought to Zimbabwe.

The ethos is in many ways laudable. It reasons that much of the political violence in African jurisdictions is because of a winner-takes-all form of electoral process. Those who lose are left with nothing. Being in the political 'wilderness' also means a lack of access to means of patronage and forms of corruption. If any electoral winner was required also to accommodate the 'losers' in some proportional scheme, no one would ever feel they had lost everything and could have the means to placate their constituencies until the next electoral contest. The problem with this ethos, with inclusivity and discouragement of political violence at its core, and with a genuine democratic value to do with, e.g. those who had achieved 49 per cent of the vote against the victor's 51 per cent receiving 49 per cent of the political offices available, is that, in operational terms, it encouraged the proliferation of often duplicate or meaningless Cabinet positions in order to give the 'losers' their 'rightful' proportion. In larger terms, it meant in the case of Zimbabwe the prioritisation of inclusivity as a value over electoral democratic preference. Morgan Tsvangirai, by the estimation of most observers, had won the Presidency. In the protracted mediation led by Mbeki afterwards, he was awarded only a specially created Prime Ministership, and Robert Mugabe retained the Presidency. Peace and inclusivity were victors, but the actual meaning of a democratic

contest and its outcome as a popular preference was lost. The fact that the power-sharing arrangement did in fact stabilise the turmoil that had become the Zimbabwean economy is incidental. The Mbeki formula was not only a mediation between claimants to power but also a hierarchical arrangement of values.

### **Key Point**

- Post-apartheid South Africa has acquired a leading role in African diplomatic affairs, particularly with regard to the mediation of conflicts.

## **THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE GREAT ISSUES AHEAD**

African Union efforts in Darfur to find a lasting diplomatic solution have been led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki (2009–14) and Mbeki sought to instigate a version of the power-sharing formula he had pioneered in both the Democratic Republic of Congo (2002) and, contentiously, in Zimbabwe (2007–8) – but these have been unsuccessful. President Jacob Zuma of South Africa briefly attempted the same inclusiveness peace formula in the Libyan crisis in 2011, again under AU colours.

Norms such as the 'responsibility to protect' have had a hard time gaining unanimous adherence within the AU. Slowly, however, the norm is gaining traction and this owes somewhat to deliberations within the AU's Peace and Security Council (established 2004), which has the African Standby Force as an associated programme. In fact the Standby Force is a series of regional such forces, and it was the SADC (Southern African Development Community) military initiative, involving South African and Tanzanian troops, that engaged the Congolese M23 rebels in 2013. Their success, under both SADC and UN Security Council resolutions, was treated as a military victory, but owed



greatly to sustained diplomatic pressure on Rwanda's President Kagame from the UN.

The AU as a whole requires the development of its diplomatic and peacekeeping capacities. Rapid deployment forces, or standby forces, are still in their infancy, and there are huge question marks over the exact relationship between the AU and the US AFRICOM. It was French forces that intervened in Mali against Islamic insurgents in 2014, because an AU force could not be mustered in time.

On the electoral issue front, it is still unclear as to the exact mechanisms that exist between the AU and NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development), where foreign funds reward good electoral practice but where the AU has no real intervening voice. AU electoral observation missions do not and by and large have not attempted the extensive outreach attempted by groups such as the Carter Center.

It is unclear how the AU, or indeed African governments individually, can deal with the advent of business-led diplomacy. Powerful oligarchic figures with vast international connections and dealings can conduct diplomacy entirely independently of governments. Tiny Rowland of Lonrho could do this. The Oppenheimer family could do this. Nigeria's Aliko Dangote can do this. It may take such figures to negotiate variations in the Chinese investment model in Africa – something the AU has no capacity to do – but which both businessmen and governments such as Angola are now being able to do. Someone like South Africa's Moletshi Mbeki, who uses South African capital to ranch-raise cattle in Sudan, for export to China, exemplifies the sort of transnational operation that is outside the capacity of the AU.

Certainly the AU needs to clarify its dealings with the International Criminal Court and upgrade its capacity to represent its members in the G20 and with the EU.

As for individual countries, there is still no common template for diplomatic and foreign ministry training, and foreign ministries remain routinely disregarded by presidents

who preside over foreign policy, often inexpertly. Multilateral and intergovernmental organs can be disregarded or overruled by powerful governments. The 2010 suspension of the SADC tribunal at the insistence of Zimbabwe, when compensation claims for seized lands were brought before it, is a case in point. If African organs have no cohesion and adherence, then in a field like diplomacy it would be finally futile to talk of 'African' or 'Southern African' diplomacy as opposed to the diplomacy of separate states.

South Africa's membership of the BRICS group and the G20, and the competition between South Africa and Nigeria for a seat on any reformed UN Security Council, might indicate that the most powerful African states see diplomatic futures for themselves of both an economic and political kind that is divorced from resolutions of the AU and a sense of the continent as a whole.

Although there is much confusion often in the foreign policy formulation in many African states, and still much deference within the Francophonic states to the foreign policy emphases of France, it must be said that foreign policy and high-level diplomacy remain by and large within the hands of presidents. What Kaunda foreshadowed, and which was the kind of mantle taken up by Obasanjo and Mbeki, is very much the case of others without their skills. In that sense, Graham Allison's 'rational actor' model is the key model pertaining to African diplomacy – even if the game is often to discern the long-term 'rationality' of diplomatic movements designed or even extemporised as manoeuvres for short-term benefit.

Track Two diplomacy has not had huge successes. There has never been an African 'Oslo' breakthrough as occurred over Palestine. There are, however, the continuing efforts of South Africa's Brenthurst Foundation to establish a series of 'in principle' agreements on intractable issues, involving former heads of state and other senior African figures. However, the advent of electronic media means that ordinary citizens can



themselves be diplomatic actors in petitioning the outside world of abuses within their own states. The story of African diplomacy may, in many ways, a little more than 50 years after the wave of sub-Saharan independence, be just beginning (see also Chapters 3, 32 and 40 in this Handbook).

## FURTHER READING

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# Developing States Diplomacy

Stephen Calleya

## INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations, the world today consists of 193 states.<sup>1</sup> A number of these states are small developing states. The number of small states proliferated in the aftermath of the Second World War. This was most evident during the decolonisation period which lasted from the late 1940s to the late 1960s. Many of these countries emerged as newly independent states having gained their independence from former European colonial empires.

This chapter aims to focus on *small developing states*. Hence, countries such as China, India and Brazil, while still considered developing countries, cannot be included in such an assessment due to the large size of their population, landmass and natural resources.

The small developing countries are those countries that have limited resources. Their foreign policy agenda is significantly influenced by their geographic size and location, the limited human and natural resources at

their disposal and the geo-political regional framework they operate in. Certain questions that immediately need to be addressed in such a study include:

- What are the strategic mechanisms that small developing states employ?
- What are the primary motivations that guide developing states' diplomacy?
- How do small developing states pursue their strategic mechanisms in order to achieve their objectives?
- Since they have limited resources in their Foreign Service, what are the strategic selective decisions that small developing states choose?

The objective of this chapter is to identify the challenges that small developing countries face and trends in their foreign policy decision-making track record. After examining the challenges that they must address, the chapter also aims to assess how their foreign policy is devised in order to tackle those challenges and thus remain relevant in the international society of states. This analysis

will also explore future options available to small developing states to help them maintain a relevant stance in an ever changing international system of states. Before doing this, it is important to first discuss the definition of 'small developing state' and what constitutes such a state.

## Definition

The issue of defining a small state is a complex one. In recent decades, numerous scholars have proposed different definitions. However, no common theoretical definition had been established and there is no universal consensus on even the 'developing' part of the phrase. Moreover, although International Relations scholars as a rule tend to speak of 'states', despite some difference of connotation, the term is interchangeable with 'countries' and even 'small powers'.<sup>2</sup>

Roderick Pace states that a satisfactory definition of small state has still not been found.<sup>3</sup> Milan Jazbec is also of the same thought and he cites two reasons from the scholar Niels Amstrup for this; first, the concept of *size* is still unclear as a defining feature; and second, since the definition has been almost totally focused on the independent variable of size, the quest for defining a small state has ignored the dependent variable, which is *behaviour*.<sup>4</sup>

From a review of literature, Jeanne A.K. Hey identifies three types of small states which include:

- *microstates*, which have populations which are below the 1 million mark;
- *developed small states* such as The Netherlands, Austria, Belgium and Switzerland;
- '*Third World*'<sup>5</sup> *small states*, which include the newly independent states from Africa, Asia and Latin America that achieved their independence from the former European empires during the decolonisation period.<sup>6</sup>

Size has been often been used as a criterion when trying to define what a small state is.

This use of size also creates differences because size is not an absolute concept but a relative one. Size can refer to the landmass and population.

The figures set for defining population size vary. David Vital sets an upper limit of around 20–30 million inhabitants for the population of a small developing state.<sup>7</sup> Simon Kuznets sets the upper limit to 10 million people.<sup>8</sup> In its overview of small states, the World Bank states that more than a quarter of its member states have a population of 1.5 million inhabitants or less.<sup>9</sup> In its publication, *A Future for Small States: Overcoming Vulnerability*, the Commonwealth also used the 1.5 million threshold and this comprised 49 countries (at the time publication), 42 of which are developing countries.<sup>10</sup>

When it comes to identifying developing states, the World Bank in 2014 listed 145 developing countries, including EU members such as Bulgaria and Romania, while the WTO allows its members to subscribe to the group of either developed or developing countries. UNCTAD considers developing countries to number around one hundred.<sup>11</sup>

## CHALLENGES TO SMALL DEVELOPING STATES

When one focuses on the challenges to small developing states, the term *vulnerability* is a very important one. Vulnerability is defined as being 'especially susceptible to risk of harm'.<sup>12</sup> All states face vulnerability, but for small states, it is 'inherent vulnerability' because small states do not have large populations and their economic capacity is limited.<sup>13</sup>

The inherent vulnerability is derived from security challenges faced by the small states. While post-Cold War security challenges are no longer as geopolitical in nature as they were during the Cold War at the time of intense superpower rivalry between the United States of America (USA) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), some small

states continue to be directly influenced by great power geopolitical rivalry, as highlighted by the proxy war in and around Syria since 2011 and the military clash in Georgia/South Ossetia/Abkhazia in 2008.

Even during the later stage of the Cold War, during the 1980s, small states started becoming aware of their enhanced vulnerability and this is exemplified in the US intervention in Grenada.<sup>14</sup> More recently, reference to the new concept of Small Vulnerable Economies, as used by the WTO and other international Organisations, has also become the norm.<sup>15</sup>

Post-Cold War security is multidimensional in nature and transnational. This is the *broad multifunctional approach*, which is characterised by: (1) the shift from traditional threats to security to new threats such as internal conflicts, civil wars, transnational terrorism, genocide, climate change and natural disasters; (2) the acceptance that these threats are of an international nature and that there should be a collective effort in dealing with them; (3) the emergence of non-state actors and possible effects on the capabilities of states and asymmetrical violence; and (4) the rise of international and regional institutions' role in dealing with peace and security, which is due to the broadening of the definition of security.<sup>16</sup>

Security is an issue of great concern for small developing states. Security threats to small developing states can take the form of either political/military or economic and environmental challenges. Bailes et al. divide security vulnerability to small developing countries into four categories:

- *Military, 'hard' security*, which includes military invasion, being caught in crossfire, blackmail, economic blockade, external subversion through political coups and the fomenting of internal conflict.
- *Non-state violence* being done by non-state actors such as terrorist groups, smugglers and organised criminal networks.
- *Economic security* where vulnerability is evident in the limited resources of small developing states which makes the economy highly dependent on

imports, a non-diversified economy and high exposure to international markets which can be beneficial in terms of trade but damaging if an economic crisis hits.

- *Accidents and natural hazards* such as severe earthquakes, pandemics and, even more severe for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the rise of sea water levels due to global warming.<sup>17</sup>

The above four categories of security vulnerability should not necessarily be seen in isolation but can also be present in combination of some or all, thus aggravating the security situation to a genuinely precarious situation.

Economic vulnerability is also a very serious issue. Lino Briguglio outlines the Economic Vulnerability Index, which consists of criteria such as: (a) openness in the economy; (b) concentration on exports; (c) dependence on imports of high strategic value such as food and fuel; and (d) small states being peripheral.<sup>18</sup>

The report *Small States: Meeting Challenges in the Global Economy* lists the factors that are brought about by small size and which can have negative effects on the economy of small developing states, including:

- Remoteness and insularity;
- Susceptibility to natural disasters;
- Limited institutional capacity;
- Limited diversification;
- Openness;
- Access to external capital;
- Poverty.<sup>19</sup>

*Remoteness and insularity* refers to the location of small developing states away from the centres of commerce.<sup>20</sup> Due to this, small developing states in particular have to pay higher costs for transporting goods for exports than larger states that may be in a similar geographical position. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face particularly high costs because they are more insular and small.<sup>21</sup> This, in turn, places SIDS in a disadvantageous position when it comes to attracting Foreign Direct Investment.<sup>22</sup>

*Income volatility* is also an issue for small states because of their dependence on international trade and markets which can affect income negatively if economic crises or natural disasters strike.<sup>23</sup>

*Susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental change* adds to the vulnerability of small developing states from the point of view of environmental security – the consequences of such disasters include serious damage to the infrastructure and the high costs to repair it.<sup>24</sup> Global warming brings with it the threat of a rise in sea water levels which would have a direct impact on SIDS, even extinction.<sup>25</sup> Other serious consequences of climate change include pandemics, putting pressure on freshwater resources, and a negative impact on food security in terms of production.<sup>26</sup> Former President of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, highlighted the severe threat posed by global warming to SIDS such as Maldives and under his administration and initiative the Climate Vulnerable Forum was founded in November 2009 just prior to the Copenhagen Summit<sup>27</sup> (see Chapter 49 in this Handbook).

*Limited institutional capability* is a tough challenge for small developing states. This refers to the limited resources of small states, which in turn means that small states do not have the resources needed to support the functions of government, for example providing services such as education, health care, justice, combatting corruption and having a fully-fledged Foreign Service.<sup>28</sup> The sovereignty of the small developing states, hence, becomes a limited one. They also do not have enough resources to train personnel.

The latter, i.e. the Foreign Service, is particularly important for this chapter because this means that small developing states have to concentrate their diplomatic resources where they are most needed, especially when it comes to their diplomatic missions in International Organisations. As a result, small states have regularly made use of their respective missions at the United Nations to deal with bilateral issues with missions

of those states where they do not have diplomatic missions, a trend some of the other larger countries have subsequently adopted in an effort to curtail costs (see chapter 24 in this Handbook).

Another important perspective to take into consideration when it comes to the participation of small developing states in international organisations is the fact that the inherent challenge of budgetary limitations of some of these states often leads to their inability to pay annual international organisation membership fees, which results in them being deprived of the right to vote. Several newly independent small states that have rushed to reinforce their international positions by joining such international organisations have soon found their enthusiasm restricted by their inability to meet membership fees.

Among the challenges confronting the Foreign Service of small developing states one must also include the difficulty for Consular Services of addressing the ever-increasing needs of their citizens as a result of both rising population mobility and higher expectations for improved and faster service and in times of crises. Scarce resources and skeleton staffs require smaller states to have to be able to mobilise their resources quickly and exert more efforts in order to be prepared to meet the changing nature of citizen demands.

One factor that can assist in raising the foreign policy profile of small states is the existence of organised and influential Diasporas. Several small states have sought to utilise Diasporas by creating government departments or ministries for Diaspora and also by sharing such experiences with countries in similar situations.

*Limited diversification* is related to the smallness of the states being discussed in this chapter. The economies of small states are mostly dependent on a single export, which brings with it an unhealthy dependency; also, small states are more often than not dependent on strategic imports such as energy supplies and industrial materials.<sup>29</sup>

*Openness* has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include the crucial interaction in the international economy and world trade which has the benefit of enabling access to a variety of products and cheaper prices.<sup>30</sup> On the negative side, while exposure to international trade has its benefits, the same exposure leads to increased economic vulnerability in the wake of bad worldwide economic situations.<sup>31</sup>

*Access to external capital* is available to small developing states in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA), official aid, and importantly, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), all of which are very important sources of capital flows.<sup>32</sup> Foreign companies can help nourish the private sector in the small developing state and bring expertise.

*Poverty* remains a serious hurdle for small developing states to tackle, although one has to note that in the case of many small developing states, the education and health indicator are better than those of the larger developing states.<sup>33</sup>

## FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGIES OF SMALL DEVELOPING STATES: REMAINING RELEVANT IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

In this section, the main objective is to examine the strategic mechanisms and the selective strategic choices that small developing states choose in order to mitigate the weaknesses posed by their inherent vulnerability and remain relevant in the international society of states. Hence, while in the previous section the lens was focused on the *vulnerability* of small developing states, in this section the focus will be on their *resilience*.

Why and how do small developing states pursue such mechanisms? Small developing states face two strategic choices:

- *Defensive* – the focus is on achieving autonomy and an avoidance of foreign entanglements.<sup>34</sup>

- *Proactive* – participating in international co-operative schemes such as international organisations, regional initiatives and partnerships.<sup>35</sup>

In the interdependent world, the defensive option would lead to isolation while the second gives an opportunity for small developing states to engage in the international system.

In order to preserve their national security from external military attacks or threats from larger states, small states often opt for any of the following three options: (a) military protection from a neighbouring large state; (b) military protection from a remote power; and (c) alliance with other states, i.e. balancing.<sup>36</sup> The first two options are associated with bandwagoning while the third is associated with multilateralism. The following case study is about bilateral co-operation with a great power as a means to ensure security and survival.

## CASE STUDY: PARTICIPATION OF PACIFIC MICROSTATES IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM IN 2003

The four Pacific microstates that participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 were the Marshall Island, the Federal States of Micronesia, Tonga Palau and the Solomon Islands.<sup>37</sup> Why would these small island states participate in a military operation in a faraway region? Anders Wivel and Kajsa Ji Noe Oest provide an explanation. The motivations for participating with the USA were based on the belief held by microstates that participation in ‘coalitions of the willing’ would help in enhancing their own security and help in gaining them economic rewards.<sup>38</sup>

Such strategic choices are based on the theory of Realism. Microstates do not have the capacity to have their own defence forces, so bandwagoning with a foreign power such as the USA helps in reassuring their physical survival, and also possibly balances against domestic threats.<sup>39</sup> It is also important to notice that four of the five microstates that



participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom had signed defence agreements with the USA, and the most relevant one was the Compact of Free Association (CFA) under which the signatories Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands allowed the USA 'full authority and responsibility for security and defence'.<sup>40</sup> While the microstates had the right to conduct their foreign policy, the CFA obliged them to not make foreign policy decisions which contradicted US security and defence responsibilities.<sup>41</sup> This agreement demonstrates the dependence the participating microstates have on US security guarantees. This also demonstrated how *bilateralism* is one of the strategic mechanisms of small developing states.

The Marshall Islands, Palau and Micronesia are also very much dependent on US bilateral aid when it comes to their economies, another motivation for joining the coalition of the willing.<sup>42</sup> They also use the US dollar as their currency.<sup>43</sup> Historically, the Pacific microstates were exchanged between various European colonial empires and, later, Japan. After the Second World War, the five microstates that participated in the ousting of Saddam Hussein followed a policy of alliance with the USA in exchange for a security guarantee, a policy that became known as *strategic denial*.<sup>44</sup>

## SMALL STATES AND MULTILATERALISM

Another strategic mechanism in the foreign policy of small developing states is *multilateralism*. This is seen in the importance of international organisations for small states. Legally speaking, all states in the international system are considered equal. However, at a political level the international community of states is not a level playing field. Hence, international organisations are regarded as useful vehicles where small states, especially the underdeveloped ones, can amplify their voices. The comparative advantage that international organisations

provide small developing states is the reason why such states seek to raise the profile and authority of such entities. Raimo Väyrynen states that 'Usually, international institutions are the best friends of small states'.<sup>45</sup> Being integrated into international organisations gives small developing states the opportunity to reduce the insecurities stemming from vulnerability and allows them to participate in the processes occurring within the international organisations.<sup>46</sup>

The universal international organisation, the United Nations is based, like many others, on the *one nation, one vote* principle. This gives the smaller members of the international community a higher level platform that they would otherwise be unable to attain. The diverse and large nature of the United Nations provides small states with a conducive context within which they are able to forge alliances in a more flexible manner than would otherwise be the case.

In this context it is important to clarify that while the principle of one nation, one vote applies to the General Assembly, decision-making is different in the Security Council, which is authorised to pass decisions on important matters of peace and security, and is the only global international body where the decisions taken are binding for all members. Small developing states are unlikely to ever have the opportunity to manoeuvre at the UN security Council, even if they succeed in making it there, as the big five permanent members can always exercise their right of veto.

In contrast, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is one specific sector where small states seek to advance their interests on a regular basis by aligning themselves with other like-minded states, given the fact that UNCTAD provides support to developing states when it comes to negotiation of trade agreements.<sup>47</sup>

At the end of the first session of UNCTAD, on 15 June 1964, developing countries formed the Group of 77 (G-77) and this development took place with the 'Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Developing Countries'.<sup>48</sup>

The objective behind the formation of the G-77 was to provide developing countries with the tools to 'to articulate and promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the United Nations system, and promote South-South cooperation for development'.<sup>49</sup> Throughout the 1970s, the structure of the world economy was debated, and developing countries criticised the post-Second World War economic arrangement known as the Bretton Woods system.<sup>50</sup> There was general consensus among small states that the rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (nowadays, the World Trade Organization) were not helping them tackle their needs.<sup>51</sup>

Other international institutions which have been of major importance to developing countries include the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

### ***Regional Integration***

For small states, and even more, the micro-states, regional integration provides many benefits. In recent decades there has been a proliferation of Regional Integration Agreements (RIA).

The case study highlighted here to illustrate this benefit is the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). CARICOM came into effect on 1 August 1973 with the Treaty of Chaguaramas.<sup>52</sup> This agreement between this grouping of countries was the culmination of years of work dedicated to promoting regional integration in microstates formerly known as the West Indies. CARICOM consists of 15 members. CARICOM's objectives include:

- a) 'improved standards of living and work;
- b) full employment of labour and other factors of production;
- c) accelerated, co-ordinated and sustained economic development and convergence;

- d) expansion of trade and economic relations with third States;
- e) enhanced levels of international competitiveness;
- f) organisation for increased production and productivity;
- g) the achievement of a greater measure of economic leverage and effectiveness of Member States in dealing with third States, groups of States and entities of any description;
- h) enhanced co-ordination of Member States' foreign and [foreign] economic policies; and
- i) enhanced functional co-operation, including –
  - i. more efficient operation of common services and activities for the benefit of its peoples;
  - ii. accelerated promotion of greater understanding among its peoples and the advancement of their social, cultural and technological development;
  - iii. intensified activities in areas such as health, education, transportation, telecommunications'.<sup>53</sup>

In 2001, there was further progress toward integration with the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), and the objectives behind CSME included:

- free movement of goods, labour, services and capital;
- common external trade policy;
- harmonisation of tax regimes;
- creation of a monetary union;
- establishment of a single currency.<sup>54</sup>

As a Regional Integration Agreement, CARICOM was instrumental in bringing together the Caribbean microstates, which has strengthened their position in international negotiations.<sup>55</sup>

### **CASE STUDY: MALTA AND ITS FOREIGN SERVICE**

With a population of 420,000, Malta is often classified as a microstate. Like other small states Malta must seek to maximise opportunities in international relations if it is to realise its foreign policy strategic objectives. Malta's Representations Overseas (MROs) include 21 Embassies, four Permanent Representations,

three High Commissions, five Consulates-General, one Commercial Office/Consulate and one Representative Office.<sup>56</sup> Although, traditionally, MROs are concerned with political and consular work, MROs have also been successfully involved in facilitating business and commerce, promoting tourism and cultural exchanges.<sup>57</sup> Commercial and economic diplomacy are very important for the economy of Malta, in particular for the attraction of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

In a recent report the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta has been advised to provide continuous training to its diplomats, especially those to be posted overseas in the field of economic diplomacy.<sup>58</sup> The idea of appointing Roving Ambassadors who would seek to identify opportunities for developing commerce and economic relation with countries and regions where there are no MROs was also proposed.<sup>59</sup> To assist in the task of attracting more FDI, the number of Honorary Consuls in important international business hubs should be increased.<sup>60</sup> It was advocated that Malta should also redouble its efforts to strengthen economic relations with emerging economic powers such as China and India, as well as in the Arabian Gulf with countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.<sup>61</sup> The report also recommended that there should be more engagement with the Maltese Diaspora in order to assess what commercial and business opportunities may be promoted.<sup>62</sup>

A report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) acknowledged that Malta has been able to counter the impact of the international economic downturn since 2008 and praised its macroeconomics policies. However, the IMF also stressed that Malta had to carry out a more ambitious reform initiative including policies aimed at enhancing female participation in the workforce, attracting higher levels of FDI, increasing investment in Research and Development, and introducing legislation that strengthens transparency and accountability in the business and judicial sectors.<sup>63</sup> Ever since it

gained EU membership, Malta has continued to accelerate reforms related to good governance. Malta's competitiveness has been significantly strengthened since joining the European Union in May 2004, given that it has fully adhered to the EU *acquis communautaire*. Improving good governance is a prerequisite for small developing countries seeking to play a more influential role in international organisations.

Malta has also been active in the United Nations. The most important contribution was on 17 August 1967, when the then Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to the United Nations, Arvid Pardo, presented a memorandum to the UN Secretary-General which requested for the following item to be inserted in the agenda of the Twenty-Second Session of the General Assembly: 'Examination of the question of the reservation exclusively for peaceful purposes of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, and the sub-soil thereof, underlying the high seas beyond the limits of present national jurisdiction, and the use of their resources in the interest of mankind.'<sup>64</sup>

On 18 December 1967, the UN General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution which in three years led to a Declaration of Principles that was also unanimously approved.<sup>65</sup> In this Declaration of Principles, it was accepted that 'the sea-bed and ocean floor, and the sub-soil thereof, beyond the limits of jurisdiction ... as well as the resources of the area are THE COMMON HERITAGE OF MANKIND'.<sup>66</sup> From this emerged the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and on 30 April 1982, the final text of the new Convention was adopted with 130 votes in favour, four against and 17 abstentions.<sup>67</sup> During the Final Act of the Conference in December 1982, there was approval by consensus and 117 states put their signature to the Final Act.<sup>68</sup>

In 1969, the Maltese delegation at the UN General Assembly formally brought to the agenda the issue of the ageing and in 1971 Malta introduced the resolution on the

'Question of the Elderly and the Aged'.<sup>69</sup> Malta's initiative helped to increase the attention the United Nations gave to the elderly and this was demonstrated in Vienna in 1982, when the World Assembly on the Aging convened.<sup>70</sup> During this Assembly, the Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging was adopted and it focused on issues related to elderly people as well as the long-term implications of having ageing populations, be they social and economic.<sup>71</sup> When one looks at countries facing serious demographic challenges related to an ageing population, one can observe Malta's foresight. Malta's initiative on the ageing led to the Agreement to establish in Malta the International Institute on Aging, and this agreement between the UN and the Government of Malta took place on 9 October 1987.<sup>72</sup> The UN Secretary-General officially opened the International Institute on Aging in April 1988.

At the UN, Malta has also been vocal on climate change. On 9 September 1988, the Government of Malta made a request to the UN Secretary-General for the inclusion of an item to the agenda of the Forty-third Session of the General Assembly which was named 'Conservation of Climate as part of the Common Heritage of Mankind'.<sup>73</sup> This was followed by a draft resolution by Malta which was adopted by unanimity by the UN General Assembly and it became Resolution 43/53 with the title 'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind'.<sup>74</sup> This resolution described 'climate change as the Common Concern of Mankind'.<sup>75</sup> The result of this initiative, and hence the resolution, was that the mandate on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was strengthened.<sup>76</sup>

## CONCLUSION

This assessment provides an overview of the main factors that influence the diplomacy of small developing states. This includes a

review of the main factors that determine the role that small states can play in contemporary international relations. In addition to basic attributes such as geographic size, natural resources and the system of education and health care available, other factors such as remoteness, insularity, limited institutional capacity, limited diversification of resources and access to private sector investment have also been examined.

An effort has also been made to identify what distinguishes the diplomacy of small developing states in comparison to other states in the international system and which factors influence their strategic planning and guide their decision making process. Which specific challenges must small developing states overcome when implementing their respective diplomatic initiatives?

The geostrategic realities that influence small developing states dictate that such states focus at a global level on multilateral diplomacy. Multilateral diplomacy enables such states to maximise their influence by articulating policy positions that are of strategic relevance in their respective region, such as the transnational security challenges of climate change, organised crime and terrorism. Apart from situations where it is clear that a small state is acting as a proxy of a larger power, small developing states also have the comparative advantage of not being automatically perceived by other states in the international system as having an ulterior motive when raising the profile of sensitive issues in international relations.

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PART IV

# TYPES OF DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT





# Public Diplomacy

Ellen Huijgh<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

Public diplomacy is a term, concept, practice and multidisciplinary field of study. As a diplomatic practice, which preceded its conceptual and scholarly foundations, it centers on diplomatic communication between political entities (kings in ancient times and nation-states today) and people (that is, publics), usually in foreign countries but, according to some accounts, also domestic publics. Like many other tools of diplomacy, public diplomacy continues to evolve in response to societal changes such as democratization, globalization and the communication's revolution, and it may well influence some of those changes (see also Chapter 44 in this Handbook). As a multidisciplinary field of study that inspires multiple definitions and practices that often go beyond those associated with diplomacy and diplomatic studies, public diplomacy is a blooming area of scholarship and practice.

This chapter argues that the evolution of public diplomacy can be usefully understood

as comprising several conceptually related stages: traditional diplomacy; new diplomacy; and another stage that appears to present a more integrative approach. Perhaps controversially, it also argues that there is a domestic dimension to public diplomacy (directed to domestic civil society as publics, partners and actors), and that several governments' conceptualizations, which emphasize international publics, often contrast with their practices, which emphasize interaction with domestic publics. This more comprehensive approach sees public diplomacy's international and domestic dimensions as stepping stones on a continuum of public participation that is central to international policymaking and conduct. Finally, given the recent evolutions of public diplomacy mentioned above, the future of public diplomacy, especially its integrative evolution, is hard to predict without more theoretical and empirical research. This chapter thus traces the evolution of public diplomacy through its different stages (see Table 35.1) and concludes with some suggestions for future research on the integrative public diplomacy approach.

## ORIGINS

One of the first uses of the term ‘public diplomacy’ was in an 1856 edition of *The Times*, where it was employed as a synonym for ‘civility’ to contrast that behavior with what might be seen as the less-than-civil posturing of US President Franklin Pierce (*The Times*, 1856: 6; Cull, 2008a: 19–24). This type of usage, however, fails to reflect the rich history of practice behind the term. The earliest evidence of public diplomacy’s practice can be found in public discourses from before the state became the primary geopolitical actor. For example, diplomatic messages and treaties dating back to 2500 BC have been found in the Middle East, with royal envoys exchanging gifts and kings promoting relations via early ‘city diplomacy’, as well as cases of ancient Greece’s negotiations of treatments, and Roman diplomacy imposing its objectives on, client states (Cohen, 2013: 19, 23).

Understanding the origins of public diplomacy practice, however, is determined more by recognizing that it is an intrinsic part of the ongoing democratization of international policymaking and conduct, rather than by trying to find an exact point of origin. Democratization processes often move from more indirect (for example, electing representatives and parliamentary representation) to more direct forms of participation by people. Although it is often forgotten that public diplomacy has non-democratic origins too (including Soviet practices after the revolution, or powers with non-democratic features such as China investing heavily in public diplomacy),<sup>2</sup> it thrives in a context of participatory democracy that emphasizes widespread constituent participation in governmental systems and policymaking. Yet despite participatory democracy’s past manifestations, such as the Iroquois Confederacy, Athens’ civic gatherings (albeit limited by the exclusion of women and slaves) and the Swiss Cantons of the Middle Ages (Roussopoulos and Benello, 2015), concrete practices were not evident until the twentieth

century, when practical implementations of participatory democracy began again (such as its promotion and use as a major theme by the American Left in the 1960s) (Miller, 2011).

Public diplomacy, understood as the practice of states’ one-way communication with foreign publics, appears partly to coincide with the evolution of twentieth-century participatory democracy, especially in North America. It is also associated with another twentieth-century development, the two world wars. During the Great War of 1914–18, public diplomacy was often used to inform populations about the war and influence foreign publics. The term was adopted as a more modern mantle and alternative to the by then discredited term ‘propaganda’, which was seen as systematically manipulating people’s cognitions and behavior to serve the intent of the propagandist (Auerbach and Castronovo, 2013).

Modern use of the term of public diplomacy is associated with the United States, even though it is clear that it has earlier origins. Scholars continue to associate the term with the description coined in 1965 by Dean Edmund A. Gullion of Tufts University’s Fletcher School as the ‘transnational flow of information and ideas’ and his view that:

[...] public diplomacy deals with the influence of public attitudes on the formation and execution of foreign policies. It encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy; the cultivation by governments of public opinion in other countries; the interaction of private groups and interests in one country with those of another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as between diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the processes of inter-cultural communications.<sup>3</sup>

Use of the term, however, did not come about without hiccups. For some, putting ‘public’ and ‘diplomacy’ together seemed contradictory. The vision of diplomacy as the relationships between governments, with only states being diplomatic actors and non-state actors’ roles being largely ignored, was certainly not conducive to public diplomacy. The 1961

Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations confirmed that diplomacy had little to do with interacting with the ordinary public (United Nations, 2005).

### Key Points

- Public diplomacy is a practice, term and field of study. Its practice as diplomatic engagement with people naturally preceded the term and studies on it.
- Understanding the origins of public diplomacy practice is determined more by recognizing that it is an intrinsic part of the ongoing democratization of international policymaking and conduct,

rather than by trying to find an exact point of origin.

- Although having earlier origins, public diplomacy is associated with the United States and particularly the Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy at the Fletcher School, and encompasses dimensions of international relations beyond traditional diplomacy.

### TRADITIONAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Traditional diplomacy evolved in several stages. In the first half of the twentieth century, public diplomacy was seen as an offshoot

**Table 35.1 Summary of the stages in public diplomacy**

Traditional PD: twentieth century	<i>B E Y O N D</i>	New PD: twenty-first century
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear boundaries between foreign and domestic, states and civil society</li> <li>• State-to-state diplomacy</li> <li>• Established rules and norms</li> <li>• Fewer diplomatic actors, fewer people, fewer issues</li> <li>• Industrial age technologies: print, radio, television</li> <li>• Hierarchical, state-centered, top-down</li> <li>• Information dissemination, message design and delivery</li> <li>• One-to-many (unidirectional)</li> <li>• Less information, more attention</li> <li>• Foreign ministries: gatekeepers, primary actors in foreign affairs</li> <li>• War on the battlefield: between state-actors</li> <li>• Cultural barriers</li> <li>• Public diplomacy is episodic and peripheral to diplomacy</li> <li>• Government-to-people public diplomacy</li> <li>• Passive audience (indirect participation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>N</i></li> <li><i>E</i></li> <li><i>W</i></li> <li>=</li> <li><i>I</i></li> <li><i>N</i></li> <li><i>T</i></li> <li><i>E</i></li> <li><i>G</i></li> <li><i>R</i></li> <li><i>A</i></li> <li><i>T</i></li> <li><i>I</i></li> <li><i>V</i></li> <li><i>E</i></li> <li><i>PD</i></li> <li>=</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permeable and non-existent boundaries, power diffusion</li> <li>• Polycentric diplomacy: above, below, and beyond the state</li> <li>• Emerging rules and norms</li> <li>• More diplomatic actors, more people, more issues</li> <li>• Digital age technologies: traditional and social media</li> <li>• Networked, horizontal</li> <li>• Relational, collaborative: message exchange, dialogue and mutual understanding, and collaborative policy networks</li> <li>• Many-to-many (multidirectional)</li> <li>• More information, less attention</li> <li>• Whole-of-government diplomacy: foreign ministries as subsets, important but not primary</li> <li>• Armed conflict among the people: between state and non-state actors</li> <li>• Incorporate cultural diversity</li> <li>• Public diplomacy as enduring and central to diplomacy</li> <li>• Many state, regional, sub-state and civil-society actors in public diplomacy</li> <li>• Active audience (direct participation)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign publics</li> <li>• Persuade by 'wars of ideas': meta-narratives</li> <li>• Get the message right, pre-formed and static message</li> <li>• Shaping images of the sender</li> <li>• Dominated by US and UK experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The best of both</li> <li>Complementarities instead of Contradictories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreign and domestic actors as publics, partners, independent actors</li> <li>• Understand, influence, engage and collaborate in global public spheres: multiple narratives</li> <li>• Understand what others perceive, co-created and dynamic</li> <li>• Influencing policy agendas by shaping policy attitudes</li> <li>• US, European and (later) non-Western experiences</li> </ul>

Sources: Gregory (2014: 29); Zaharna (2010: 113); Cull (2009: 14)



of diplomacy and by some as a less-biased type of propaganda. During the world wars, it amounted to one-way dissemination of information mainly aimed at influencing domestic and foreign publics, and disinterested in dialogue or relationship-building. As well as the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany propagating their respective ideologies, public diplomacy was largely dominated by the United States (Committee on Public Information) and Great Britain (British Propaganda Office). These agencies were created with the aim of influencing and mobilizing domestic publics via available media about American and British participation in the First World War, creating enthusiasm for the war effort and enlisting public support against foreign attempts to undercut American and British war aims (see Arndt, 2005; Taylor, 1999).

Public diplomacy flourished during the second half of the twentieth century, including during the Cold War (1947–91). Both the United States and the Soviet Union (Caute, 2004) supplemented their own programs through support of their respective proxies in the developing world (Africa and Asia). The intent of public diplomacy was not only to inform and justify actions to both publics, but also to convince the enemy of their ideological, economic and political convictions.

Public diplomacy gradually adopted new methods and forms of media, such as cultural and broadcasting activities, and involved new – although still state-sponsored – stakeholders. As well as the most listened to international radio stations in the world – such as the BBC World Service, Voice of America, *Radio France Internationale* and *Deutsche Welle* – the English version of the Russian political newspaper *Pravda* was notorious in the West as the official mouthpiece of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Western nongovernment actors, such as former practitioners and scholars, contributed to a broadening of knowledge about public diplomacy, and additional expertise was derived from the range of promotional activities undertaken by the United States

Information Agency (USIA) from 1953–99. For example, USIA undertook a wide range of overseas information programs and aimed to promote mutual understanding between the United States and other nations by conducting educational and cultural activities (of which the best known are the Fulbright exchange program and International Visitors program) (Cull, 2008b).<sup>4</sup>

Traditional public diplomacy in the late twentieth century thus incorporated a wide variety of practices, such as information management and cultural promotion. Cultural institutes across Europe (such as Germany's *Goethe Institut*, the UK's British Council and France's *Alliance Française*) organized cultural events and exchange programs. European countries, in contrast to the United States, developed a more proactive and geographically and thematically targeted style of public diplomacy. The aim was to promote international cultural relations, mutual understanding and knowledge in a less heavy-handed manner.

An important conceptual development with policy implications was made in the 1980s by US academic and former official Joseph Nye. Nye coined the concept 'soft power', contrasting it with hard power (that is, the use of coercive diplomacy, threat of military intervention, or implementation of economic sanctions). Nye later developed the concept in greater detail, when in the Preface of his 2004 book he suggested that

[Soft power] is the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies. When our policies are seen as legitimate in the eyes of others, our soft power is enhanced (Nye, 2004: x).

Public diplomacy practice and literature have been significantly inspired and shaped by Nye's writings on the connections between public diplomacy and soft power, as public diplomacy is seen as one of soft power's key instruments. Annual soft-power surveys, such as by *Monocle* magazine, are nowadays

much in demand, with Germany apparently leading the pack in 2013. In Asia there is much interest in soft power and public diplomacy. In Europe, EU leaders and academics are keen to use the concept in describing how the EU used a 'soft (normative/ethical) approach' to enlargement, handling its international relations and solving (internal) differences (see Landaburu, 2006; Manners, 2002).

Globalization and the communication's revolution were the most important twentieth-century developments affecting the practice of traditional public diplomacy. Technological advances in communications – such as digital technology and its far-reaching variety of applications – substantially influenced thinking about the methods, risks, promise and limitations of traditional public diplomacy. In reaction to the vicissitudes of the twentieth century, there was further growth in public diplomacy practice with these technologies and methods coming into play, which became internationally known as the 'new public diplomacy'.

## **NEW PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND 'BEYOND THE NEW'**

Twenty-first-century public diplomacy, or what is now called 'new public diplomacy', has several origins. Many in the academic community called for governments to update public practices in light of societal changes. European scholars joined the US-dominated debate about such issues as the impacts of globalization, increased online and offline mobility, the growing number of diplomatic actors and the insertion of domestic publics into an area typically reserved for officials. The call for change was also partly a counter-reaction to US diplomacy and public diplomacy, which had been forged in the heat of the 9/11 'war on terror' and was dominated by considerations of national security. It was also inspired by forward-looking studies by a new generation of academics and by some

countries' advanced public diplomacy practices. The Canadian government, for instance, had been influenced by the 1997 International Campaign to Ban Landmines, led by non-state actors and domestic civil society, to support an international treaty banning landmines.

In European public diplomacy relative newcomers, such as the supranational institution of the European Union (EU) and sub-states, challenged traditional practices, for example through their introspective focus on domestic audiences and not just international publics. To a certain extent, they forced nation-states out of their comfort zone. For example, sub-states' public diplomacy can aim to create a distance from the main state and build a different – even competitive – perception abroad, especially if independence referenda are on the horizon. The Public Diplomacy Council of Catalonia (previously the *Patronat Catalunya Món*), for instance, is a public–private consortium set up by the Catalan government to promote international awareness of Catalonia – and especially its distinctiveness from Spain – through economic, digital and citizens' diplomacy with other countries. The EU's public diplomacy may differ in scope, purpose and complexity from its members (Cross and Melissen, 2013) and its drive for unity and a collaborative image abroad may seem threatening to nations if this chips away at members' sovereignty. However, some sub-national governments, such as California and municipalities in Asia, have shown that collaboration on public diplomacy with nation-states is within reach (such as on climate change and new security issues) (see Wang, 2006). Moreover, apart from the EU, other international organizations with a large public diplomacy department, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), are laboratories for collaborative and multi-actor public diplomacy. Seib argues that supranational institutions have potential if they can continue to deliver benefits to their members while respecting their distinctiveness (Seib, 2014).

The 'new' prefix for public diplomacy has rapidly achieved traction, and it has helped the field and practice of public diplomacy to bloom and crystallize twenty-first-century public diplomacy's key normative characteristics. Contemporary public diplomacy needs to – or should – encompass at least two features: first, a multi-actor approach, with many actors above and below the level of national government and different types of nongovernmental actors at home and abroad; and second, the formation of relations between them through dialogue and networking activities. With regard to digital applications that need to be incorporated into new public diplomacy, this concerns the 'internet moment' in international policy, involving an amalgam of digital diplomacy applications, some more effective than others. The United States invests heavily in what it terms twenty-first-century statecraft, with multi-language Twitter feeds, Facebook accounts and participation in other social media networks, combined with many other actions, such as the Civil Society 2.0 initiative.<sup>5</sup> A dark side also exists to digital communication, as shown by Islamic State extremists whose members' medieval brutality is equaled only by the sophistication of their communications. They have mastered the use of state-of-the-art videos, ground images shot from drones and multilingual Twitter messages intended to appeal to youths, recruit fighters and intimidate enemies (Shane and Hubbard, 2014).

As well as by increased digitalization, a new public diplomacy approach is reinforced by the involvement of non-state actors: religious actors; sub-state units; international, multinational and nongovernmental organizations; multinational corporations; and individuals. The idea of non-state public diplomacy is encouraged by academic work that reflects governance tendencies to include civil society (Edwards, 2011; Levi-Faur, 2012; Hochstetler, 2013). This work is reinforced by examining the role of non-state organizations such as Greenpeace, Amnesty International and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the

role of individuals, including Nelson Mandela (after leaving office) and Martin Luther King. Unintentional or not, this emphasis on the role of non-state actors in public diplomacy has divided the governmental and nongovernmental spheres, because it has pushed non-state actors onto the main stage and has challenged the legitimacy of states and their outdated structures, methods and techniques (Bieler, 2000; Sending and Neumann, 2006; Hocking, 2012).

Another approach that stimulated the role of non-state actors in new public diplomacy is the broader notion of 'polylateralism', set in motion by Geoffrey Wiseman (Wiseman, 2004 and 2010). Polyilateralism refers to a third dimension in diplomacy, in addition to bilateralism and multilateralism. It involves the conduct of relations between official – such as a state, several states acting together, or a state-based international organization – and at least one unofficial non-state entity. In this view, state and non-state actors develop regular diplomatic relations, including reporting, communication, negotiation and representation activities, without 'mutual recognition as sovereign, equivalent entities' being necessary (Wiseman, 2010: 27).

Considering non-state actors as public diplomacy actors is widely accepted when governments consult them and develop partnerships with them. The idea that they operate independently from states as public diplomacy actors remains contested and the subject of debate among scholars and practitioners. Non-state actors are generally categorized as diplomatic actors if they act as an agent or on behalf of a government. If they act independently (without the government), they are often considered governance actors serving public interest (Gregory, 2016: 8–13, 18, 19). Other less actor and goal-oriented criteria are process-oriented, implying that whether the actor performing public diplomacy is or is not a state is less relevant than the legitimacy and effectiveness of any given actor serving (inter)national public interests (Cooper et al., 2008; La Porte, 2012).

'Non-state diplomacy' has largely become integrated into the new public diplomacy approach and is challenging traditional diplomacy's boundaries. This is most obvious in the proposition of a public diplomacy 'for and by the public', often referred to as people-to-people or citizen diplomacy (Mueller, 2009) (see Chapter 42 in this Handbook). This is often considered an advanced stage of new public diplomacy, as it is closely related to long-term relationship-building and intercultural relations, with the role of government less clearly present (Huijgh, 2011a). However, investments in people-to-people initiatives remain fragile. For example, despite attempts by some Israeli and Palestinian citizen groups to bridge differences, military conflict can override people-to-people efforts.

As the new public diplomacy approach and people-to-people focus become more prevalent, awareness of domestic citizens' roles surfaces. The domestic dimension of public diplomacy must be understood within this broader context and public diplomacy's evolution over time (Huijgh, 2011b and 2012). An initial aversion to including domestic citizens in the conception of public diplomacy remains, however, because of the (US-influenced) tradition and now outdated definition of public diplomacy as directed toward foreign publics only, even if public diplomacy practices in these countries show involvement by domestic non-state actors. In the virtually connected and interdependent world of today, this view is thus open to challenge. Some newcomers, such as supranational organizations, sub-states and Asian countries, that have learnt from predecessors' pitfalls, have had less difficulty than Western nation-states including a domestic dimension in public diplomacy.

Despite the risk of involving domestic publics in public diplomacy action as a purely political tool or for electoral gains, the benefits are clear: namely, creating public understanding and support for a government's international policy, substantiating a government's outreach to foreign publics and increasing its outside knowledge; and

thus consolidating overall credibility, legitimacy and efficiency at home and abroad. Among the examples are the popular speaker programs (the Dutch 'In Dialogue with the MFA', India's distinguished lecture series and Indonesia's Foreign Policy Breakfast Forum).

Including a domestic dimension in public diplomacy does not separate the domestic and international components; rather, it highlights that there is a holistic/integrative approach to public involvement at home and abroad. In this more comprehensive approach, public diplomacy's international and domestic dimensions can be seen as stepping stones on a continuum of public participation (including traditional and new practices implemented at varying speeds) that is central to international policymaking and conduct. The degree to which specific publics (through their expertise, effectiveness and legitimacy) can become important governmental partners prevails over whether they are international or domestic (Huijgh, 2012).

Another aspect of new public diplomacy is the multidisciplinary embracing of the term. As well as diplomatic studies, communication science scholarship has helped to shape the study of public diplomacy by providing insights into the characteristics of its practice, including evaluation, engagement, advocacy and opinion research. Earlier groundbreaking conceptualizations – such as Walter Lippmann's 'public opinion' (1997 [1922]), Jürgen Habermas's 'public sphere' (1962) and Manuel Castell's 'network society' (1996) – had provided a broader perspective and foundation for public diplomacy research on bottom-up dialogic models of engagement, networks and global civil society's role. Furthermore, public diplomacy scholarship now investigates a series of sub-categories, such as public relations, strategic communication and nation-branding (Gregory, 2008: 274–90; Huijgh et al., 2013). Communication studies influenced thinking about public diplomacy to such an extent that academics from this discipline sometimes equate public diplomacy with communication, or consider

it as an end in itself. In contrast, diplomatic studies scholars usually consider public diplomacy as one of many communication tools for achieving the goal of international policy cooperation.

While diplomacy and communication studies may provide the majority of insights, other disciplines, such as the behavioral sciences and security studies, also mold new public diplomacy. They provide seeds of thought and conceptual frameworks, but also different angles from which to study public diplomacy's facets. This multidisciplinary approach not only influences the body and nature of the literature, but also adds to the credibility and legitimacy of the research field.

The notion of public diplomacy that goes beyond new public diplomacy is often labeled as 'beyond the new' public diplomacy. It originates in scholars' reactions to the over-juxtaposition of the new public diplomacy with traditional public diplomacy, and attempts to find conceptual clarity and ways of thinking about the future of public diplomacy (Melissen, 2013: 440–2). Other efforts aim at untangling the new public diplomacy approach from its normative newness and vagueness, by providing more concrete insights on networks (the structure), collaboration (the process) and relations (competitiveness, and how they can be leveraged for collaboration) (Zaharna et al., 2013). An essential advancement is the gradual shift from a debate dominated by the nature of actors toward their relationships and patterns of interaction. This recent scholarship recognizes that the 'new' versus 'traditional' categories are rather sterile, that the overlaps between them are largely ignored and suffer from a strong normative judgment.

### Key Points

- Twentieth-century public diplomacy, or traditional public diplomacy, is conceptualized as information-messaging, cultural projection and international reputation management. Twenty-first-century diplomacy, or new public diplomacy,

is built upon the idea of the formation of relations through dialogue and networking activities by many actors above and below the level of national government and different types of non-governmental actors at home and abroad.

- As the new public diplomacy focus on the role of non-state actors becomes more prevalent, awareness of domestic citizens' roles surfaces. Including a domestic dimension in public diplomacy does not separate the domestic and international components; rather, it highlights that there is a holistic approach to public involvement at home and abroad.
- The 'beyond the new' public diplomacy is a label originating in scholars' reactions to the over-juxtaposition of 'traditional' and 'new' public diplomacy, which stresses complementarities over compartments.

### FUTURE PUBLIC DIPLOMACY: AVENUES FOR RESEARCH

In thinking about the future of public diplomacy and further adjusting it to the contemporary context, one of the most productive scholarly areas is the integrative/comprehensive or holistic approach, which reflects the more fluid context wherein public diplomacy acquires shape today. This is partly also a reaction to the unveiling of (mis)leading assumptions influencing twenty-first-century diplomacy and new public diplomacy (Hocking, 2012: 73–92), caused by categorical thinking that focuses on rigid pre-existing categories (such as hierarchies/networks, old/new, domestic/foreign, state/non-state) and highlighting differences rather than possible overlaps and commonalities, especially in public diplomacy research. The integrative approach is thought to have the potential to temper categorical thinking in (public) diplomacy and promote complementarities between public diplomacy's past and present. As recently formulated by Hocking et al. (2012: 4), it stresses the need to combine several outlooks, including: change and continuity (pre-modern, modern and post-modern structures and processes); old and new



elements; agendas and arenas (domestic and international policy, development, defense and diplomacy, and local, national and global issues); interaction between actors (within the state, below and above, and non-state actors at home and abroad); and integration within the diplomatic process and structures (public diplomacy in diplomatic practice, a whole-of-government national diplomatic system).

Diplomatic studies' adoption of holistic approaches partly aims at reinserting diplomacy, or reclaiming the practice of public diplomacy and the 'public' dimension that was emphasized by communication studies. Reclaiming public diplomacy is necessary, because its usage has expanded so much that it has become a generic term, without a particular focus. Public diplomacy seems to have become a victim of its own success. Moreover, for some scholars (Gregory, 2014: 6–7; 2016: 6–8), public diplomacy has become the heartbeat of all diplomatic actors' thoughts and actions, and therefore has less value as a separate term and conceptual subset of diplomacy. Consequentially, it is gradually defined as diplomacy's public dimension.

While the holistic approach holds promise, it remains more rhetoric than reality. For it to become widespread practice rather than an ideal, scholars and practitioners need avenues to shape it further and put it into practice. This chapter thus modestly suggests some of the many potential paths for exploring and researching the integrative approach in the future, such as suggestions to include non-state actors and build upon the digital dimension in the integrative research, study the use of applied communication and horizontal management techniques to orchestrate an amalgam of actors, and theoretically analyze the integrative approach in a Constructivist International Relations frame of thought. The chapter also encourages further exploration of the integrative approach through studying empirical cases – that of collaboration between the emerging powers – that goes beyond non-geographical groupings and regional views.

The first suggestion above entails the actors and a digital dimension in integrative public diplomacy. Namely, alongside understanding how agencies of state-based diplomacy are adapting to change, it is equally important to understand non-state actors' communication patterns and strategies in facing the challenges posed by integrative diplomacy. While clearly acknowledging the importance of non-state actors, analysis so far has mainly focused on state-related diplomatic mechanisms in relation to a rapidly evolving landscape where growing involvement by international non-state entities is critical (Hocking et al., 2013). Non-state actors can contribute to a balanced public diplomacy strategy that integrates agenda-setting, narrative elaboration and interaction with other players. In driving the development of new strategies for communication and influence, engagement techniques and the creation of opportunities for dialogue, non-state actors can in turn contribute to putting the integrative diplomacy approach further into practice, although this will require further exploration. While non-state actors are becoming more influential in international policymaking, digital innovations are meanwhile revolutionizing the institutionalized modes of communication. This is a future challenge for state and non-state actors alike, as it demands a more integrative approach of the policy agenda, rules and norms, and roles and relationships in diplomacy. The digital dimension of public diplomacy is increasingly attracting attention, but poses a steep learning curve and needs further exploration that focuses on the practical applications of information and communications technology for diplomacy, instead of worrying about the technicalities (Bjola & Holmes 2015; Slotman, 2014).

The second suggestion is that – with a myriad of actors involved and public diplomacy employed in governmental departments other than foreign affairs (development, defense, environment and health, etc.) – public diplomacy becomes a whole-of-government responsibility. To realize this ideal, questions



not only arise about who should lead and why, but also about how to manage all these international policy-related public involvement activities. Insights from applied communication studies can contribute to methods for managing the vast array of intra- and interdepartmental public diplomacy activities conducted at home and abroad.

For example, 'integrated corporate communication' is one path to explore managing public diplomacy at the whole-of-government level (Van Riel, 2011 and 2012). Applied to public diplomacy, organizational communication is useful for building long-term relationships with foreign and domestic publics. Management communication is useful for preventing fragmentation, by coordinating the increasing number of different state and non-state actors engaged in public diplomacy. Finally, marketing communication instruments and short-term management activity can contribute to the organization of informational messaging and gathering, although they will be less effective in enhancing the process of dialogue (Huijgh, 2011b).

Another path to explore is holistic management practices. This starts from an acknowledgement that organizations act within the context of both their external and internal environments (including foreign and domestic actors and policies, and broader power diffusions). The aim is not to simplify relationships among different systems, but to fathom the complexity and illuminate opportunities and trouble spots. The criteria for success depend less on structure, sequential plans, rules and certainty and more on adaptability, process audits, simultaneous assessment and movement, a concentration on values, quality of interaction, managing interdependent relationships and flexibility (Marshak, 1995; Witchel, 2003; Knight, 2004).

Moreover, these techniques are not only useful for governments, but are also relevant for international non-state actors trying to manage their members from various societies (the so-called whole-of-society level). Such techniques, in essence, relate to attempts to

solve the broader riddle of public diplomacy as part of a more systematic networked future diplomacy, and the way in which international relations will be understood and practiced in the years to come.

The third suggestion mentioned above is to reinforce the theoretical body of the holistic approach with theoretical insights from the discipline of International Relations, in particular Constructivist thought. When considering public diplomacy as a multidimensional and increasingly integrative endeavor, 'holistic constructivism' is noteworthy (see Nia, 2001: 282–83; Reus-Smit, 2001: 201; Bozdaglioglu, 2007: 142). It provides a framework through which a more efficacious and logical integrated approach to the public involvement of state and non-state actors at home and abroad might support further research. Some Constructivist scholars (Sending et al., 2011: 540) are convinced that how states behave and define their goals is determined by the multiple ideational and intersubjectively shared frameworks within which they operate – a central claim of Constructivism. Over time, changes in these frameworks will result in the development of new organizing principles between states, potentially reshaping the parameters of diplomatic practice, such as the integrative approach is.

The fourth suggestion is to investigate the future of the integrative approach in more empirical settings, such as those surrounding emerging powers that have the potential to collaborate beyond geographical and regional views. Views from other regions inform thinking about the future of public diplomacy. Driven by global competition for the attention of publics, many Asian countries in the 1990s began to entertain the concept of soft power and possible connections with its application through public diplomacy. Subsequently, some scholars sought to delineate East Asian from Western public diplomacy, stressing its more strategic nature and greater recognition of the regional and domestic dimension (Lee and Melissen, 2011; Melissen and Sohn, 2015). China's approach to soft power and public diplomacy has overshadowed literature on

other Asian approaches, and can be characterized in several ways, namely: the importance the Chinese government attaches to public diplomacy as an offensive and defensive instrument; its hierarchical, state-centered strategic approach; its interconnection with international policymaking and conduct; and its attention to both the domestic and international dimensions. China's rhetoric on relational public diplomacy policies does not, however, always fit with its concrete practices at both the international and domestic levels (D'Hooghe, 2014: 353–55).

As well as regional views, public diplomacy has also been informed recently by insights from geographically disparate groupings of countries, such as the 'emerging powers', which are bound by their economic status rather than geographic location. Several terms cover the notion of emerging powers, mainly from the fields of finance and economics, with the goal of creating a list of the most promising markets for investors around the world, such as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, coined by Goldman Sachs analyst Jim O'Neill) and acronyms including MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey) and CIVETS (Colombia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Egypt, Turkey and South Africa) that have followed it. Emerging powers are classified according to their economic performance (steady rapid growth in GDP, increasing foreign direct investment and trade activities), international policies in regional and international affairs (sovereignty claims, regional or global leadership, fulfilling responsibilities in international affairs) and their stage of domestic political development (democratization, civil rights movements, etc.) (see Chapter 23 in this Handbook).

It is within this last criterion that the development of public diplomacy as an expression of international policy democratization would logically be situated. Yet within the group of emerging powers, the degree of economic power does not necessarily correlate with the degree of democracy, public diplomacy and the role of civil society. Emerging powers such as Indonesia, Brazil, South Korea and South

Africa are relatively young democracies. Indonesia and Turkey have both preferred to use democratization rather than economic growth as their dominant public diplomacy narrative at home and abroad, though this recently changed (Huijgh 2016a, 2016b).

However, increased economic growth does not always lead to increased public diplomacy as an expression of democratization. China stresses its economic success as its dominant public diplomacy theme, thus both attracting regional and Western countries to China and raising their concerns about China's future intentions. Nevertheless, despite differences, there seems to be an arguably positive relationship between increasing economic performance and growing investment in public diplomacy. Emerging powers increasingly seek a greater voice and engagement in international affairs, partly to support their economic relations with other countries, and public diplomacy is seen as one of the tools for achieving this objective.

Yet, being part of an international grouping does not necessarily result in more strategic partnerships or an increase of public diplomacy among members, although Turkey and Indonesia sought public diplomacy alliances on interfaith problems and interreligious relations. The heterogeneity of public diplomacy styles among a grouping of emerging powers need not, however, challenge unified action. The MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, (South) Korea, Turkey and Australia) group of emerging middle powers, established in 2013, for instance, aims to pursue joint public diplomacy, as became clear at the first MIKTA academic seminar in August 2014 in Mexico City. It can be hoped that this is but the dawn of more empirical cases and greater study on integrative public diplomacy in the future.

### **Key Points**

- While the increasingly promoted integrative approach among scholars holds promise for tempering categorical thinking and combining past

and present outlooks, it is more rhetoric than reality. For it to become a widespread practice rather than an ideal, scholars and practitioners need more conceptual and empirical case-study research to solidify this approach.

- Some suggestions for exploring the integrative approach are to: (1) increasingly research the role and contribution of non-state actors and use of digital tools; (2) theoretically analyze the integrative approach in a constructive frame of thought; (3) study the use of applied communication and horizontal management techniques to orchestrate the amalgam of actors involved and put into practice the public diplomacy part of a more systematic networked diplomacy; (4) study empirical cases – of collaboration among the emerging powers – that go beyond non-geographical groupings and regional views.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter examines the evolution of public diplomacy practice and its future trends. The term ‘public diplomacy’ has become a generic concept, having grown popular in conjunction with the increase in actors, issues and methods that it encompasses. The explosion of attention given to public diplomacy scholarship and practice has transformed it into a multidisciplinary field, molded mainly through communication and diplomatic studies. The practice of public diplomacy precedes and nourishes it as a term and field of research. It is a reflection of democratization tendencies in international policy and diplomacy, and is subject to changing contexts, conceptualizations and practices. It is thus place- and time-related and often presented as a fluid transition from traditional, to the new, and beyond the new public diplomacy.

Looking to the future, recent scholarship advocates more holistic and integrative conceptualizations that emphasize the complementarities between these pre-existing categories and their insights. However, more concrete empirical case-study analysis and

larger theoretical body are required to validate ideals and implement them.

## NOTES

- 1 The author would like to thank the numerous public diplomacy scholars with whom conversations on this topic provided enriching insights, and is particularly indebted to Jan Melissen and Pauline Kerr for their invaluable feedback on this chapter.
- 2 The author is grateful to the reviewer for this comment.
- 3 See ‘What is diplomacy?’, <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Murrow/Diplomacy>
- 4 See <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/usia/usiahome/factshe.htm>
- 5 See more at <http://www.state.gov/statecraft/cs20/index.htm>

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# Quiet and Secret Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

The vast bulk of diplomatic activity goes unpublicised and largely unnoticed. Why, then, should ‘quiet’ and ‘secret’ diplomacy be singled out for special attention? The answers to this question are complex, but four elements stand out. First, negotiations carried out behind a veil of secrecy or under a cloak of silence can result in *faits accomplis* from which innocent people may be the main losers. Second, an alleged need for secrecy may be used to protect vested or sectional interests. Third, in democratic systems where ordinary people enjoy the right periodically to change their rulers without bloodshed, informed decisions may be possible only if voters have full access to information about what their rulers have been doing. Fourth, if most diplomatic activity is carried out in secret, one may lose the ability to learn lessons from past successes and failures as a way of improving diplomatic performance in the future. These factors do not in and of

themselves establish an insuperable barrier to the use of quiet or secret diplomacy, but they do create the need for careful evaluation of the circumstances in which secret or quiet diplomacy may or may not be deemed desirable.

At the outset, it is important to clarify what we mean by ‘quiet’ and ‘secret’ diplomacy. The former is perhaps the easier to pin down. ‘Quiet diplomacy’ is simply diplomacy that is not advertised by the participants. Those participants may be quite willing if quizzed about it to admit that it has been taking place, and perhaps to supply information about its content or substance, but they do not go out of their way to draw attention to it. This may be because they think that the issues involved are arcane or technical, and of little interest to a wider public; but it may also be because they see some virtue in handling issues away from the glare of publicity. As we shall see shortly, certain types of issues can potentially benefit very much from such discretion. The idea of ‘secret diplomacy’ is rather more complex. Secrecy needs to be distinguished



from confidentiality. Almost any diplomatic engagement is likely to have some elements which are highly confidential. Delegations acting on instructions from their capitals will not share their instructions with other delegations (except by accidentally leaving documents unsecured). This is not, however, a manifestation of 'secret diplomacy'. Furthermore, that some discussions may take place behind closed doors does not of itself mean that 'secret diplomacy' is occurring. If this were the case, virtually all diplomatic engagement would potentially qualify as secret diplomacy. Rather, 'secret diplomacy' arises when the *very fact of a diplomatic engagement's taking place* is itself concealed.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first offers a brief overview of secrecy and diplomacy, noting that the very nature of the world in which diplomacy emerged meant that most activities associated with diplomacy remained hidden from most people. The second looks at a range of arguments advanced to defend secret diplomacy, while the third canvasses arguments critical of secrecy. The fourth sets out some of the challenges to secret diplomacy in the twenty-first century.

## SOME HISTORY

Secrecy has a venerable history, especially in the sphere of international affairs. 'Secrecy', wrote de Vera in the seventeenth century, 'is expressly recommended in all of the actions of the perfect ambassador; it is the foundation of the edifice, the helm of the ship, the bridle on the horse, and the cause of success in that at which one is aiming' (quoted in Berridge 2004: 91). In his famous study *The Torment of Secrecy*, Edward Shils, defining secrecy as 'the compulsory withholding of knowledge, reinforced by the prospect of sanctions for disclosure', argued that '*Raison d'état* as a barrier to publicity and a generator of secrecy obtained its maximum power in

the domain of foreign policy and, above all, of military policy' (Shils 1956: 25, 26). Yet until relatively modern times, information could be obtained and spread only in slow and laborious ways, even if it was not secret. Whilst the interception of documents or the interrogation of suspects are far from modern developments – Sir Francis Walsingham pioneered these techniques when pursuing Papist plots during the reign of Elizabeth I (Alford 2011) – it was only in much more recent periods that technological innovation, beginning with the telegraph, the telephone and the camera, provided the means by which information obtained by piercing a veil of secrecy could be put to rapid operational use. This was of course so critically important during the Second World War, when automated code-breaking came into its own, that it is easy to forget that the preservation of secrecy was much less of an issue until twentieth-century developments made the violation of secrecy much more feasible.

With the increase in risk that secrecy would be compromised, measures came to be taken in both domestic and international spheres to underpin secrecy and confidentiality. In a number of states, domestic legislation for the protection of 'official secrets' came to be enacted, legislation of which the British *Official Secrets Act 1889* was a prototype. Furthermore, official legislation could be augmented by mechanisms amounting to self-censorship of the press; for example, within the British Commonwealth there developed the mechanism of so-called 'D Notices', first used in the United Kingdom in 1912, by which the government was able to signal to the press that a particular issue was of national security importance and therefore should not be covered. 'D Notices' were for the most part not legally enforceable, and in some countries it would have been difficult to find any constitutional basis for their promulgation; nonetheless, they proved effective means for preserving secrecy in respect of certain issues. Beyond domestic practices, diplomatic law preserved confidentiality and

secrecy indirectly via the immunities (see Chapter 16 in this Handbook) granted to diplomatic premises and means of communication that were eventually codified in the 1961 *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations*. The inviolability of diplomatic communications can be defended as a matter of principle, but even more so on the pragmatic basis that without such protections, much valuable diplomatic intercourse simply would not take place.

This is not to say that these principles of diplomatic law were uniformly respected (see Chapter 15 in this Handbook). On the contrary, diplomatic history is replete with examples of attempts to use surreptitious mechanisms to obtain access to information subject to the protection of such principles. For example, when the Earl of Perth was British ambassador to Italy in the 1930s, the ‘security of his embassy was fatally breached by the Italian secret service, a fact which he totally refused to recognize, even when Lady Perth’s tiara vanished from the Embassy safe’ (Watt 1989: 85). Such problems were particularly common during the Cold War, during which the United States experienced the remarkable humiliation of constructing a new embassy building in Moscow which could not then be used because it had been riddled with Soviet listening devices during the construction period. One writer labelled it ‘a stark monument to one of the most embarrassing failures of American diplomacy and intelligence in decades’ (Sciolino 1988). (Of course, protected means of communication such as diplomatic bags can also be misused, a classic case being the discovery of an anaesthetised former Nigerian minister in a diplomatic crate at Stansted Airport in 1984 (Kleiner 2010: 186)).

One other area of secrecy, often overlooked, deserves some attention, and that relates to the health of political leaders. For understandable reasons, leaders have preferred to go into negotiations with an image of robust good health; and more generally, a state may feel that it is less likely to be

threatened if its leadership appears stable and in control. There is thus a long history of states going to inordinate lengths to disguise fragility at the top. On occasion this may have led to major problems during diplomatic crises. For example, a recent study by the former British Foreign Secretary Lord Owen, who was a medical practitioner before entering politics, suggests *inter alia* that the course of the 1956 Suez crisis may well have been affected by the ill health of the British Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden, and even more so by the amphetamines with which he was being treated. It was not a secret that Eden had had health problems even before becoming Prime Minister; what *was* a secret was the nature of the treatment he had received (Owen 2009: 138).

On occasion, major health problems of leaders *have* been successfully kept secret. Sir Winston Churchill’s June 1953 stroke was concealed from the public, and the Shah of Iran was a cancer patient well before the outbreak of the 1978–9 Iranian revolution, as was French President Mitterrand from a mere six months after the commencement of his presidency in 1981 (see Owen 2009: 191–249). Perhaps the most dramatic examples, however, relate to Presidents of the United States (Crispell and Gomez 1988). President Woodrow Wilson, ironically a strong proponent of open diplomacy, suffered two debilitating strokes, on 25 September and 2 October 1919, which his wife and doctor went to elaborate lengths to hide. One consequence was that he was unable to lobby effectively for the Treaty of Versailles, which in November 1919 the US Senate declined to ratify. President Franklin D. Roosevelt from 1943 suffered from severe hypertension and congestive heart failure that contributed to the massive cerebral haemorrhage from which he died in April 1945. Public comments on Roosevelt’s health by his doctor, Admiral Ross McIntire, were for the most part fiction, and while it probably goes too far to suggest that health problems compromised his performance during the February 1945 negotiations at Yalta

(see Ferrell 1998: 106–7), in the eyes of experienced medical practitioners he was clearly a very ill man by that stage. Finally, President John F. Kennedy had twice received the Last Rites of the Roman Catholic Church *before* he became president in 1961, a result of the Addison's Disease from which he had long suffered, and which was kept secret from the American public and the wider world during his presidency.

If one seeks to identify the point at which secret diplomacy became a matter of genuine controversy, it was almost certainly at the time in the aftermath of the First World War when the diplomatic processes that had immediately preceded the outbreak of the conflict were subject to a post-mortem examination. On the one hand, the interests of the various parties to the conflict were extremely complex (for detailed discussions see Cassels 1984; Fromkin 2004; Clark 2012; MacMillan 2013), as were the 'chains of causation' (Lebow 2010: 93) that led to its outbreak. This can make it somewhat unfair to lay the blame for the conflagration solely at the door of secret diplomacy. There were some extremely belligerent figures walking the European stage, ranging from Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany to the Austrian Chief of the General Staff Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf to the hothead terrorists of the Black Hand (*Crna Ruka*); and the assassination in June 1914 of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir apparent to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, brought their various agendas into play. In a real sense, the story of the period between the assassination of the Archduke in late June and the outbreak of a general European war in early August is one of misperception and misunderstanding (Clark 1980: 104–7). Yet there is no doubt that the *reputation* of diplomacy was grievously harmed by the war, and to the extent that it enjoyed a peculiar mystique, that probably suffered irreparable damage as well. Secret diplomacy certainly persisted, but in a much more sceptical environment than had earlier been the case.

## Key Points

- Many states have taken steps to protect the secrecy of their own documents and negotiating positions.
- Secrecy has commonly been used to hide the frailty of political leaders charged with negotiating on behalf of their countries.
- The outbreak of the First World War did much to damage the reputation of secret diplomacy.

## ARGUMENTS FOR QUIET AND SECRET DIPLOMACY

Evaluating secret diplomacy as a phenomenon is methodologically complex. Mussolini's Foreign Minister in 1930s Italy, Count Ciano, wrote in his diary that victory finds a hundred fathers but defeat is an orphan (Muggeridge 1947: 502). In secret diplomacy, however, even 'victory' may go unadvertised, or only capture analysts' attention long after the events in question. For this reason, it makes more sense to discuss *a priori* the arguments for and against quiet and secret diplomacy than to attempt to build some kind of data set for evaluation which will likely be fatally flawed.

One of the more curious features of arguments in favour of quiet and secret diplomacy is that rather similar arguments have been put forward by writers from radically different traditions of international relations scholarship. From within the Realist tradition, the diplomatist Sir Harold Nicolson was a fierce critic of the idea of open diplomacy, although he was strongly opposed to secret treaties and commitments. For Nicolson, open diplomacy was an invitation to public grandstanding and ever-more secretive meetings at which the real discussions took place (see Otte 2001: 164; see also Drinkwater 2005: 102–8). From within the modern school of peace research, Nicolson's views were very much echoed by the influential writer John Burton. While Dr Burton at the outset of his career had served as Secretary of the Australian Department

of External Affairs from 1947 to 1950, his scholarly writings took him in a very different direction from Realism, and his comments on 'traditional diplomacy' were extremely critical (Burton 1968: 199–204). Nonetheless, he was emphatic (*inter alia* in conversation with this writer) that peace negotiations, if they were to have much prospect of success, needed to take place in secrecy. What united these different perspectives was the tacit understanding that diplomats and negotiators are typically entangled in complex two-level games, seeking to reconcile the desire for a successful outcome in negotiations with a range of other pressures to which they are exposed as agents and political actors (see Putnam 1988). Holding negotiations in the glare of publicity invites those who are dissatisfied with their trajectory to move into aggressive spoiler mode, doing their best to sabotage a process in its entirety. In this sense, the ability to present a *fait accompli* at the end of a process has its value as well as its dangers.

A very clear illustration of this came with Dr Henry Kissinger's secret visit to China in July 1971. With cooperation from Pakistan, Kissinger was able to visit China without attracting any attention. The whole issue of China was an intensely controversial one in US domestic politics. The establishment of a Communist regime on the Chinese mainland in 1949 had led to furious debate in the US around the question of 'who lost China'. Richard Nixon, who by 1971 was US President, had had no qualms in the 1950s in moving in Republican circles where this kind of rhetoric was a staple element of the political diet. For this reason, any attempt by the United States to re-engage with mainland China risked domestic political consequences, the more so because China itself was only beginning to emerge from the political convulsions associated with its 'Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution' from 1965. The last thing a US president in Nixon's position wanted was to be publicly rebuffed by the Chinese. Kissinger's successful visit

allowed Nixon to announce that he would visit China in 1972 (see Kissinger 1979: 684–787; 2011: 236–74). Nixon's visit was widely regarded as a sensational diplomatic achievement. Certainly both Kissinger and Nixon regarded the breakthrough over China as a pivotal development in international affairs, and went to great lengths to ensure that it encountered no stumbling blocks, one consequence being an unfortunate US silence over massacres by Pakistan in what was to become the new state of Bangladesh (see Bass 2013). Secret diplomacy, even when very productive, can have its downsides.

One of the strongest arguments against open diplomacy is actually that of practicality, at least where issues of high policy are concerned. A potent illustration of this can be seen from Woodrow Wilson's attempt to change the character of diplomatic interaction. The first of his famous 'Fourteen Points', set out in a speech to the US Congress on 8 January 1918, referred to 'Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view'. The negotiations that led to the Treaty of Versailles saw Wilson depart from this model. Nicolson, who was a participant in the conference, wrote that the Treaty:

was certainly an open covenant since its terms were published before they were submitted to the approval of the sovereign authority in the several signatory States. Yet with equal certainty it was not 'openly arrived at'. In fact few negotiations in history have been so secret, or indeed so occult. (Nicolson 1950: 83)

Where quiet diplomacy is concerned, one of the strongest arguments in its favour is that it can prevent the pursuit of desirable objectives from being complicated by such issues as fear of 'loss of face'. States typically care about their reputations: as Thomas Hobbes remarked in *Leviathan*, 'Reputation of power, is power' (Hobbes 1996; see also Mercer 1996; Walter 2009). If one state is seeking

favours or concessions from another, it pays not to insult or offend it. One area where this is particularly important is consular work. This label embraces a wide range of activities (Dickie 2007; Lee and Quigley 2008; Maley 2011), but one of the most important is the provision of assistance to one's nationals who find themselves at odds with the law of a foreign country in which they are travelling or living. Governments often find themselves under pressure from media outlets to react stridently in defence of such people, but there is little to suggest that politicising a consular matter is likely to prove rewarding unless the state doing so is a powerful one. While a quiet approach will not necessarily resolve the situation either, it is certainly worth trying before a state moves to adopt more vociferous tactics.

Another area where a quiet approach is likely to predominate is the vexed one of making deals with terrorists. The rhetoric of political leaders might lead one to believe that there is a strong norm prohibiting such engagement. In the real world, the picture is a more complex one. It is much easier to be heroic when one's own citizens are in no danger from terrorists than when they are directly threatened. For example, in 2004 the Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer described the Philippines as a 'marshmallow' when it advanced the withdrawal of its troops from Iraq in order to secure the release by a terrorist group of a kidnapped Filipino truck driver, Angelo de la Cruz. The Minister's comment provoked anti-Australian demonstrations in the Philippines, and a sharp rebuke to the Australian Ambassador (Forbes 2004). Yet in December 1999, when an Australian citizen was on board Indian Airlines flight IC814 that was hijacked to Kandahar after taking off from Kathmandu (see Misra 2000), the same Minister's response was starkly different. The standoff was resolved when India released three militants in its custody, one of whom was subsequently convicted in Pakistan for the 2002 murder of *Wall Street Journal*

correspondent Daniel Pearl. Minister Downer showed no inclination to describe the Indians as marshmallows; on the contrary, he issued a statement on 31 December 1999 in which he stated that he was 'delighted by the recent news that there has been a peaceful resolution of the hostage crisis in Kandahar', and acknowledged the 'role played by the Indian government ... which has led to the peaceful resolution of this hostage situation' (Downer 1999). The literature on negotiating with terrorists makes it clear that such negotiations typically involve very different approaches from those which characterise state-to-state diplomacy (see Pruitt 2006; Faure 2008) and almost always occur quietly or secretly unless in the midst of a crisis provoked by hostage-taking or an aircraft hijacking. The principal reason is that of moral hazard: the fear that if terrorist tactics are seen to be producing rewards for terrorists, more actors may be tempted to adopt them.

### Key Points

- Secret diplomacy militates against comprehensive analysis, since key cases (or data points) are likely to be missing.
- Secrecy may serve to protect sensitive negotiations from attack by 'spoilers' who want to see diplomacy fail.
- Secrecy may be important in facilitating engagement with groups with whom state actors do not want to appear to be engaging, such as terrorists or hostage-takers.

### ARGUMENTS AGAINST QUIET AND SECRET DIPLOMACY

While, as we have seen, there are a number of arguments in favour of quiet or secret diplomacy, there are also strong arguments against these practices. Secrecy may be exceedingly difficult to maintain, and the consequences may be dire if what has actually gone on becomes a matter of public knowledge.



A rather dramatic example of this came with the 1956 Suez crisis. As has now been comprehensively documented, Israel, the United Kingdom and France at a meeting on 22–4 October 1956 responded to Egypt's nationalisation of the Suez Canal by plotting that Israel would launch a large-scale attack on Egyptian forces and that the British and French governments would then demand that Egypt accept temporary occupation of key positions on the Canal by the Anglo-French forces. Astoundingly, the terms of this conspiracy were actually committed to paper in the so-called Protocol of Sèvres (Shlaim 1997). The Israeli attack and the Anglo-French intervention proceeded exactly as planned, but unravelled spectacularly in the face of criticism of Britain's action both at home and abroad. Amidst wild scenes in the House of Commons on 1 November 1956, a well-informed Conservative MP, William Yates (who had a background in intelligence in the Middle East and subsequently elaborated on his conclusions in a conversation with this writer), stated that 'I have been to France and I have come to the conclusion that Her Majesty's Government have been involved in an international conspiracy'. This soon became received opinion amongst experts: two weeks later, Sir Harold Nicolson wrote in his diary that 'I have always believed that there was some collusion between the French and the Israelis to which we were a consenting party. If the story gets out, I do not see how the government can survive. It is an utterly disgraceful tale' (Nicolson 1968: 319). Faced with US opposition, the British had no option but to back down in favour of a UN peacekeeping force, and the architect of Britain's policy, Prime Minister Eden, resigned on health grounds shortly thereafter.

Secrecy may also militate against appropriate lessons being learned from diplomatic experience. A very interesting recent example of this relates to the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis. It is now widely accepted that one of the key contributors to a resolution of

the crisis was an understanding reached by US President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita S. Khrushchev that the US would withdraw Jupiter missiles from Turkey once the Soviet Union had dismantled the missile bases that were being constructed on Cuba. This was a 'trade' that had been proposed relatively early in the crisis by the US Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson; and which was then agreed at a meeting in the Oval Office in the White House on 27 October 1962. Absent from that meeting was US Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson, who was not an insider in Kennedy's circle. Furthermore, it appears that when Johnson became President of the United States following the assassination of Kennedy in November 1963, none of those who had been present at the 27 October 1962 meeting took steps to acquaint Johnson with what had happened. While it is a matter of speculation to what extent Johnson's subsequent behaviour with respect to Vietnam (see Brodie 1973) might have been shaped by 'lessons of Cuba', the historian Sheldon M. Stern has argued that:

in conversations with McGeorge Bundy in late 1965 and early 1966, Johnson specifically alluded to Kennedy's allegedly tough stand in October 1962, and Bundy made no effort to set the record straight. Instead, Johnson went to his grave in 1973 believing that his predecessor had threatened the use of U.S. military power to successfully force the Soviet Union to back down. (Stern 2012: 153)

Furthermore, in certain circumstances official secrecy can have the effect of encouraging the flourishing of rumours, amongst both elites and masses. When Radio Liberty in 1986 broadcast information that pointed to a nuclear accident at Chernobyl in Ukraine, the absence of any official account of what had happened led rumours to spread rapidly. Recognition of the danger that this could pose seems to have been one of the factors underpinning Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's shift to a policy of *glasnost* (candour). The problem with rumours is



that baseless claims can obtain traction and contribute to the emergence of ‘information cascades’ that can fundamentally reshape political behaviour (see Sunstein 2014).

One form of secret diplomacy that has maintained a reasonably good reputation is back-channel negotiation as a form of problem-solving. This was used by President Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis when the US Attorney-General, the President’s brother Robert Kennedy, was a trusted and credible channel for the sending of messages to the Soviet leadership. However, there can also be problems associated with secret back-channel negotiations. On occasion those who play roles in such discussions may lack some of the professional skills of analysis and communication that one associates with career diplomats. This can lead to confusion, and in certain circumstances even dangerous misperception. In addition, back-channel negotiations, if they lead to outcomes that some critical players find unappealing, can stimulate vigorous attempts to prevent any progress at the phase of implementation (Wanis-St. John 2006). They are thus not a panacea, but rather one tool that in certain limited circumstances may have a constructive role to play.

### Key Points

- Secret undertakings may become known to the public, damaging the reputations of those who sought to act secretly.
- Secrecy may prevent leaders from learning important lesson for the future.
- Secrecy may cause rumours to spread, with detrimental consequences for those who opted for secrecy.

## CHALLENGES FACING QUIET AND SECRET DIPLOMACY

The era of secret diplomacy is hardly over. The role of Norway in the early 1990s in orchestrating the secret discussions between the Israelis

and the Palestinians that led to the establishment of the Palestinian Authority shows that this is the case. But at the same time, the challenges in maintaining secrecy are more difficult now than at any time in the past, and once secrecy is violated, information can spread very far indeed. It may go too far to speak of a ‘crisis’ for secret diplomacy, but it would be an unwise political figure who counted on anything remaining secret for too long.

One reason for this is the determination of investigative media. Even in countries such as the United States, there was long a tradition of accepting constraints imposed on reporting by political leaderships. During the time of President Franklin Roosevelt, the broad rule governing reporting was that in general anything said by the President was ‘off the record’, and it was only with specific permission that his words could be quoted. All this changed with the Watergate scandal that engulfed the presidency of Richard Nixon in 1973–4, leading to his resignation. Nixon had sought to use spurious claims of national security to justify the cover-up of the burglary by people close to the White House of the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate Hotel (see Emery 1995). After this was exposed, media were much less inclined to show undue respect to Presidents, let alone more junior officials.

Another factor making it difficult to maintain secrecy is the multiplicity of agents and agencies that can now be involved in diplomatic interaction. With complex issues coming up for discussion, it is more and more the case that participants in diplomatic engagement come not just from foreign ministries, but from functional ministries and agencies that may have expertise with respect to particular questions under discussion. When this is the case, the prospects that at some point information will leak out about what has been under discussion tend to grow. Adding to this problem is that of *deliberate* leaking by politicians, which may be intended to wrong-foot their domestic opponents, but may also be designed to put pressure on other parties in

the context of negotiations, or even to sabotage those negotiations if they do not seem to be going in a direction with which a party is happy. Finally, the move towards the preservation of information in digital as opposed to 'hard copy' form has proved a boon for those who wish to put information in the public domain, as the activities of WikiLeaks and Edward Snowden have made clear in recent times (see Greenwald 2014).

Political developments in other countries can also put secrecy at risk. Secret diplomacy by definition involves engagement between agents of a number of powers, and while one may be quite confident of one's ability to preserve secrecy in the circles over which one has control, this is simply not the case with respect to the other participants in a negotiation. This may be because information is subject to disclosure through orders of a court; or it may be because of the routine opening of archives after a set period of time; or it may be because dramatic political change, such as occurred with the collapse of the Soviet Union, leads information to become available that otherwise almost certainly would have remained hidden. For political actors who care about their historical reputations, it is worth bearing these risks in mind.

It is easy to be cynical about quiet diplomacy, to see it as amounting to little more than two ostriches having an underground conversation. It is equally easy to be sceptical about the claims made for secrecy, especially since Watergate exposed how easily such claims can be misused for domestic political purposes. One of the reasons why observers may feel uneasy about certain types of secrecy is that it may be necessary to lie in order to protect that secrecy. Lying is not necessarily evil or wrong. In a fascinating study of rescuers of Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, the authors offered the following story about one of the rescuers they interviewed:

We also noted that during the war our rescuers deviated wildly from the standards they claimed to have been given by their role models. 'Always tell the truth, that's my motto!' Peter told us. 'But,

Peter,' we protested, 'you just told us you lied like crazy during the war.' Peter laughed. 'Oh, well, that was different'. (Monroe et al. 1990: 111)

Indeed it was. Lying also has a long history in international relations (Mearsheimer 2011), but a diplomat who acquires a reputation for telling lies is likely to experience a catastrophic fall in credibility. It pays therefore, in conclusion, to reflect on what kind of ethical considerations might appropriately underpin secret diplomacy. Given that deontological ethics will likely generate a dim view of lying, a broad temptation for those seeking to defend quiet or secret diplomacy is to approach the issue from a consequentialist point of view, assessing the appropriateness of behaviour in terms of the consequences which flow from it. The difficulty with this, however, is that what consequences are likely to flow from secret diplomacy as a phenomenon is far from clear: as noted earlier, it is not possible to produce comprehensive data sets of past experience from which conclusions for the future might be drawn.

A more promising approach, therefore, is that which has been recently defended by Corneliu Bjola, drawing on the idea of ethics without ontology. As Bjola puts it, 'the ethical theory I propose is not informed by abstract normative principles applicable to any circumstances and at any time. Instead, it draws on the actors' own ethical beliefs and practical experiences to probe the normative relevance of the arguments they propose' (Bjola 2014: 91). Taking the US 'extraordinary rendition program' (see Grey 2006) as a case study, he argues that 'secret diplomacy is ethically unjustifiable when actors fail to invoke normatively relevant principles of justification, inappropriately apply them to the context of the case and when the moral reasoning process suffers from deficient levels of critical reflection concerning the broader implications of the intended actions for diplomatic conduct'. (Bjola 2014: 97). This does not provide a magic formula to determine when quiet or secret diplomacy is a good thing, but it does suggest useful ways in which one might go about exploring this question.

## Key Points

- Active media make the maintenance of secrecy more and more difficult.
- Secrecy is hard to maintain when many different actors are involved in diplomatic process, and leaking information may serve their individual interests.
- Secrecy is hard to evaluate ethically from either deontological or consequentialist perspectives; a situational approach may prove more illuminating.

## CONCLUSION

One common usage of the word 'diplomatic' implies discretion, that is, behaviour that is 'tactful or subtle' (Bull 1977: 163). Tact or subtlety rarely involve broadcasting information to a wide audience, and for this reason, quiet or secret diplomacy is likely to retain a place in the repertoire of professional diplomats and political leaders. In certain circumstances it can be a very valuable problem-solving tool. But that said, secrecy is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain in a globalised, media-dominated world, and actions that take place in the shadows but then fall under a spotlight may well come to be seen as suspect or even sinister (and sometimes rightly so). For this reason, the decision to opt for secrecy is one that should be taken with considerable care.

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# Crisis Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

To the casual observer perpetual crisis seems to be the dominant characteristic of the contemporary international system. The corollary of this is that crisis diplomacy is constantly in demand to prevent crisis leading to disaster. With continued globalisation and the interconnected nature of modern societies, crises everywhere are then the concern of all governments and international organisations. They hold particular importance for policy makers, especially those who hold high office, for how they handle crisis is often how history judges their role. The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, is known more for his alleged policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany than his other achievements, such as laying the foundations for the welfare state. Similarly, the American president Lyndon Johnson's Great Society legislation is overshadowed by his role in escalating the Vietnam War.

Crises today are not only perpetual, they are very complex and far reaching, encompassing

many different types of threats, issues and actors. For example the rise of the Islamic State (IS) is having far-reaching effects way beyond where it began. IS's expansion into Iraq is threatening that country's very existence and millions of refugees are putting pressure on the surrounding nations; foreign-born militants are worrying their home governments, fearful that they will return radicalised; and Iran's intervention is worrying Washington as the USA is concerned about Iran's dominance in the region. This chapter examines definitions of crisis and crisis diplomacy, some of its conceptual developments, theoretical principles, practical tools (including mediation, negotiation and the use of force) and finally its future prospects. This chapter argues that crisis diplomacy is a key process in International Relations. It has developed a great deal in recent years, taking into account the changing nature of the international system to redefine its core theories and explore new tools and techniques to help its practitioners work successfully in the modern world.

The discipline has become more context specific, adapting to deal with new and different crisis. The crises the international community faces are much more varied than they were in the past, and incorporate all manner of different events and dangers – not all of them military based. How to adapt and deal with these crises is one of the key growth areas for the study and research of crisis diplomacy.

## DEFINITIONS OF INTERNATIONAL CRISIS

International crises are unavoidable by-products of the anarchic nature of the international system. States have a tendency to compete with each other for power and to pursue their national interests, and on occasion this escalates into a crisis and sometimes the use of force. For Kenneth Waltz, 'force is a means of achieving the external ends of states because there exists no consistent, reliable process of reconciling the conflicts of interests that inevitably arise among similar units in a condition of anarchy' (Waltz 2001: 238).

Yet despite the wide use of the term 'international crisis', it has no agreed definition (Acuto 2011: 521). Many definitions (Williams 1976: 22, Richardson 1994: 12, Young 1967: 10, Taeyoung 2003: 7) were proffered during periods when state-to-state conflict was the dominant form of international crisis.

Phil Williams explores the problems associated with defining a crisis in his book, *Crisis Management*. He suggests that two separate terms be used, foreign policy crisis and international crisis. He defines a foreign policy crisis as 'an urgent problem facing a single government' and an international crisis 'involves certain kinds of stress and strains in the relationship between governments' (Williams 1976: 22). The term foreign policy crisis is not commonly used in literature or by policy makers in the way Williams defines it. This may be because with a more interconnected international system any foreign crisis

facing a government would likely involve other states as well, thus making it an international crisis according to Williams' definition, with any other situation coming under the auspice of domestic crisis, or a national emergency. Williams also explores the issues associated with perspective. A crisis to one person or state is not necessarily a crisis to another. Disparity of perspective can even exist between two actors both involved in the same crisis. The Vietnam War demonstrates this: while substantial assets were committed and heavy casualties suffered by the USA, it did not wage the almost total war that North Vietnam did (Williams 1976: 21).

In his work, *Crisis Diplomacy*, James Richardson explores the debate on the issue of defining a crisis. He breaks the definition down into three types: as an *abrupt systematic change or turning point*, a *certain class of decision making*, and a *situation with a high risk of war* (Richardson 1994: 10). These three types deal with the patterns of interactions between states, the decision makers at the heart of the crisis and how they reacted to any forewarning, and how they cope with the pressures placed upon them, and finally the specific issues which lead decision makers to believe there is a serious risk of war. Richardson's three types have pros and cons, however. Today these state-centric definitions have less value because interstate conflicts average less than 1 per decade (Human Security Report Project 2013: Figure 1.3) and hence they no longer completely describe the situations that modern crisis diplomacy wrestles with now or will in the future.

Rather than interstate conflict, intrastate conflicts, and intrastate conflicts with foreign involvement, are currently the most common forms of armed conflict or the political tensions which constitute many modern crises. Indeed modern crises have become increasingly more complex, involving more states and a wider array of 'non-state' actors.

Crises, however, should not only be defined as those situations which involve an element of violent conflict. The rise of globalisation and fast worldwide travel has created a situation



where dangers that were once confined to a single state can now pose global security threats. Nana Poku frames the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa in crisis terms (Poku 2002), and Gwyn Prins goes further to argue that a crisis is any global security concern (Prins 2004). The HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the 2003 SARS, 2009 H1N1, and 2014–15 Ebola outbreaks are four examples of global security crises, broadly defined. Economic crisis must also be considered. The devastating effect that economic downturns can have on the world was demonstrated only recently following the Global Financial Crash of 2008, and the still ongoing Eurozone crisis. These must also be considered along with other crises, especially as they have the potential to affect many more lives than traditional conflict-based crises. Mindful of the broader array of threats that can constitute a crisis, Michael Acuto's definition that 'An international crisis is the abrupt enhancement of disruptive relations as a result of a perceived threat to the system or to the lives of those who compose it' (Acuto 2011: 526) will be adopted in this chapter.

### **Key Points**

- International crises are a constant in world politics. They have existed in one form or another for as long as states and different actors have existed.
- Definitions of an international crisis are evolving: traditional, narrow state-centric definitions are being supplemented with broader understandings encompassing such threats as intrastate conflict and non-military global threats, like epidemics and economic instability.
- The development of instantaneous communication and easy access to worldwide travel has meant that a wider array of states and actors are involved in crises of all kinds.

### **CRISIS DIPLOMACY: DEFINITIONS AND DEBATE**

Perhaps unsurprisingly, alongside the lack of agreement on what constitutes an agreed

definition of a crisis there is an equal disagreement about the nature of crisis diplomacy. The concept itself comes from Robert McNamara's comment during the Cuban Missile Crisis that 'there is no longer any such thing as strategy, only crisis management' (Williams 1983: 144). He uses 'strategy' as a synonym for diplomacy, and implicit in this definition of diplomacy, given the context, was that crises themselves were the common enemy and it was central to the role of diplomacy to resolve the crisis and avert catastrophe. More recent scholarship, however, problematizes this approach as only applicable to 'normal' diplomacy and contrasts it with more subversive or revolutionary attempts to manufacture or make crisis as a way to challenge legitimacy, security or the status quo. Costas Constantinou cites Mahatma Gandhi and Ho Chi Ming as examples of crisis makers who sought radical change through the manufacturing of international crisis (Constantinou 2015). More traditional treatments of crisis diplomacy, however, use a different dichotomy but one which also speaks to these modern interpretations.

Williams suggests there are two schools of thought about the meaning of crisis diplomacy. The first has the sole objective of peacefully resolving the confrontation, and avoiding all-out war. The second sees it as an exercise in winning, with the main objective being to make the enemy capitulate and back down, therefore furthering one's own ambitions (Williams 1976: 28). In a sense this second definition would embrace crisis makers who provoked the crisis in order to try to 'win' from it. These are clearly on completely opposite sides of the spectrum, and actions taken by actors following these schools will differ. Essentially, followers of the first school will choose any option that makes war less likely, with high-risk strategies being avoided. Success is defined in terms of war being avoided and where high-risk strategies have a greater risk of failure. In this approach the crisis is approached as if it were a common enemy to be dealt with

through diplomacy rather than the process polarising the situation by characterising the problem as being the other party. The second school sees the capitulation of the other state as the primary objective, and high-risk strategies are acted upon, the sole restraining factor being the ratio of gains to losses (Williams 1976: 27). An example here could be German mobilisation in 1914, which was intended to coerce its neighbours into backing down and accepting its will.

While there are some who place their definition of crisis diplomacy into one of these two schools, there are issues with doing so. Leslie Lipson leans towards the avoidance of war side with her view that crisis diplomacy is 'reaching a solution acceptable to both sides without resorting to force' (Taeyoung 2003: 10). This underplays the conflict itself. Whereas William Kinter and David Schwarz fall firmly into the winning the war school with their definition that crisis diplomacy is 'winning a crisis while at the same time keeping it within tolerable limits of danger and risk to both sides' (Taeyoung 2003: 10). In this case, Kinter and Schwarz almost ignore the issue of controlling a crisis and steering it towards a peaceful conclusion.

We argue in this chapter that crisis diplomacy should sit somewhere in the middle, combining elements of both schools. We also argue that attempts to define and frame crisis diplomacy that focus on state-to-state interactions are too narrow and need to be supplemented with broader definitions. Because interstate conflicts are rare and intrastate conflicts and threats from non-state actors are more common, the focus of crisis diplomacy needs to be broadened. States still play a major role in dealing with these crises and are the primary actors in crisis diplomacy. However, other significant actors, for example international organisations (IOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs), are crucial to resolving crises.

Crisis diplomacy is more than a concept that needs to be defined, it is a practical strategy. For example, NATO sees it as one of its

fundamental security strategies, involving both military and non-military responses to security challenges, which can be military or non-military, natural, technological or humanitarian problems (NATO 2011). The United Nations' crisis diplomacy strategy is to 'help parties in conflict settle disputes peacefully' (UN *Diplomacy and Mediation* n.d.). We agree with William's characterisation of crisis diplomacy:

The essence of skilful crisis management lies in the reconciliation of the competing pressures which are inherent in the dual nature of crises .... Crisis management requires that policy-makers not only recognize the inherent dilemmas, but that they are willing and able to make the difficult trade-offs that are required. (Williams 1991: 146)

### Key Points

- The definition of crisis diplomacy should sit somewhere in the middle of Williams' two schools of thought, winning and furthering one's own ambitions vs ensuring peace by avoiding war at all cost. It should combine elements of both.
- Crisis diplomacy is a vital practical strategy used by governments, international organisations and NGOs worldwide.

## THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Crisis diplomacy is a practical tool to be used in real-world situations. As such, contributors to the field have worked to produce theoretical principles which aid in its use when dealing with a real crisis. These principles focus on different aspects of the crisis. One such area is the role of decision makers. They should ensure that a system of multiple advocacy is in place to provide them with information and advice from multiple sources including dissenting opinions (Richardson 1994: 27). They should maintain close political control over all the orders given, thus avoiding the risk of decisions deviating from an overall strategy (Richardson 1994: 27).

Actions and objectives should be clear to their opponent, thus avoiding the risk that confusion will lead to greater risk of escalation (Richardson 1994: 30). Similarly, it is important that the opponent's view is understood. This is a difficult task, however, and it is necessary for decision makers to try and understand how their opposite number will respond (Richardson 1994: 29).

Maintaining flexible options is an important principle; it means that options are not taken if they prevent another one from being used next (Richardson 1994: 28). For example, embargoes/sanctions do not rule out the possibility of future military action, but a military strike would represent an escalation that would limit the effectiveness of any actions (see Chapter 38 in this Handbook). Similarly, reducing time pressure not only is important to allow the greatest range of options to be taken, but it is imperative that an adequate amount of time is given for the other actor to consider and respond without stress (Richardson 1994: 29).

The overall objectives must also be considered. Having tightly defined limited objectives which avoid challenging the vital interests of the other actor serves as a basis for negotiation and settlement (Richardson 1994: 28). By focusing on specific achievable goals, decision makers increase the likelihood that both sides can come to an acceptable agreement. Opportunistic and less defined objectives risk extending the crisis with little chance of achieving the objectives.

There certainly is criticism of some of these principles, both from academics and policy makers. Henry Kissinger is critical of reducing time pressure on the basis that while it might actually facilitate the gradual escalation of the crisis. He wrote in his memoirs:

In my view what seems 'balanced' and 'safe' in a crisis is often the most risky. Gradual escalation tempts the opponent to match every move ... A leader must choose carefully and thoughtfully the issues over which to face confrontation. He should do so only for major objectives. Once he is committed, however, his obligation is to end the confrontation rapidly ... He must be prepared to escalate rapidly

and brutally to a point where the opponent can no longer afford to experiment. (Kissinger 2014)

As a result of such criticism it might be argued that these principles should not be seen as hard rules to be applied to all crises without fail, but more as potential guidelines. With the nature and definition of a crisis changing to reflect the modern international system, theories of crisis diplomacy will have to adapt to deal with criticisms such as those expressed by Kissinger. The effects of a much wider range of factors and different actors will have to be taken into account.

These principles are useful for an understanding of crisis diplomacy and how it is utilised by diplomats, and policy and decision makers. However, like the definitions of crisis and crisis diplomacy, the appropriate principles to use in a crisis are context specific. The above principles also rely on an assumption that all crises are manageable and can be resolved without escalation to war. This is not the case if one side sees an advantage in engaging in war or sees the issue as so vital to their national interests that compromise is not an option (Richardson 1994: 31). However true this may be, the likely outcomes of not trying to resolve the crisis are significantly more damaging, and in the nuclear age potentially cataclysmic. With crisis moving away from state-on-state situations to include a wider array of issues, there is a need for further research into how well suited the principles discussed above are when dealing with different type of crisis such as economic, health and natural. A further potential area of research is how these principles should be adapted to deal with the changing nature of global power and the move to a more multipolar system.

## Key Points

- Research into crisis diplomacy has led to the development of several principles which should guide practitioners when engaging in crisis diplomacy in a real world setting.

- These principles should be used as guidelines rather than hard and fast rules for how to deal with crisis.
- With the shift away from 'traditional' state-on-state crisis, the increase in non-armed conflicts and the continuing move to a more multipolar world, there is need for further research into how crisis diplomacy will develop to meet these new challenges.

## THE PRACTICE OF CRISIS DIPLOMACY: CONSTRAINTS AND PROBLEMS

The change in the nature of international crises has resulted in reconceptualisations of crisis diplomacy practice. As crises have moved away from the classical interstate conflicts towards those raging within states, the issue of sovereignty has become an important issue. It is worth noting that the issue of sovereignty is less prominent in economic and health crises, though there are certainly situations where it is an important factor. The Libyan crisis was a demonstration of the most radical new aspects of crisis diplomacy, the putting into practice of the doctrine of Responsibility to Protect (R2P). R2P was conceptualised in the *2000 International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty* (IDRC 2001). The core principle of R2P is that:

state sovereignty implies responsibility, and the primary responsibility for the protection of its people lies with the state itself. Where a population is suffering serious harm as a result of internal war, insurgency, repression or state failure, and the state in question is unwilling or unable to halt or avert it, the principle of non-intervention yields to the international responsibility to protect. (IDRC 2001: XI)

The reconceptualisation of sovereignty followed the UN's failure on numerous occasions to act in the face of horrific violence instigated by states on their own citizens.<sup>1</sup> By enacting R2P in the Libyan case the UN gave the UK/French-led NATO force the

legitimacy to defend Libyan rebels in Benghazi following Gaddafi's threatened slaughter (Heneghan 2011). This military support led directly to the overthrow of the Gaddafi regime.

Some argue that the Libyan crisis has established R2P as a fundamental practice of modern crisis diplomacy (CIC 2012). However, many questions continue to be raised. Several governments, including Russia (Pidd 2011) and South Africa (*USA Today* 2012), believe that the NATO-led force grossly overstepped the original UN mandate. NATO argues that the only way to resolve the crisis was to remove the Gaddafi regime. The fallout from this apparent overreach is having an effect on how the international community now deals with crises.

The question of legitimacy to intervene is also becoming problematic at the national level. In 2013, the United Kingdom's Prime Minister, David Cameron, lost a vote in his own parliament on the UK's possible military action against the Syrian government. Such was the reticence by some British parliamentarians to intervene, that when David Cameron sought approval to join the air campaign against Islamic State, this was originally only approved for targets inside Iraq. Strikes against targets inside Syria were later approved in December 2015; however, this was only after the massacre in Paris in November 2015, and the downing of a Russian passenger plane over Egypt in October 2015.

The Libyan crisis showed the increased importance of regional organisations in crisis diplomacy. The Arab League's request for intervention was a crucial element in the Security Council's deliberations on whether to intervene (Freeman et al. 2011). In 2002, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said 'regional security organisations have never been more important than today' (Annan 2002). The rationale for this is that regional organisations are better suited to act on crises that occur within their region. Their success in this has been mixed. Depending

on their size they often have very limited budgets, for example the African Union's annual budget in 2003 was \$32 million (Cilliers 2008: 16). This reliance on outside funding leads to the inevitable problem of donor interest. However, smaller regional organisations have successfully lobbied for intervention from the UN and larger bodies. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) successfully lobbied for assistance in Mali's Northern crisis (Melly 2012). Lack of resources affects the UN as well. There have been occasions when the Security Council was willing to act but member states were unwilling to provide the resources required (Roberts and Zaum 2010: 8). This situation has only worsened since the 2008 global financial crisis. This makes further empty promises more likely, unless national interests are at stake.

The primary reason for lack of engagement in international crisis diplomacy is states' national interest. This is particularly an issue with the P5 members of the UN's Security Council, all of whom carry a veto on any UN action. UN attempts to resolve the crisis in Syria and Ukraine will be in danger of being vetoed by Russia, who has significant national interest in the first and is actively involved in the second. Russia began its own military intervention in September 2015. This is firmly on the side of the Syrian government, and targets all opposition forces, including the Islamic State. This can be considered a proxy war with the US, which seeks to remove Assad from power (Cotton 2015). Adam Roberts and Dominik Zaum describe the UN as a 'selective security' institution, when examining how it responds to crises (Roberts and Zaum 2010: 7). It is often used by major powers to solve some crises, while it is ignored by them during others. The P5 are much more willing to act on what Richard Gowan describes as 'second-order problems' in Africa than on those in Eurasia or the Middle East (Gowan 2014: 49). This damages the UN's legitimacy as a crisis management institution. It wasn't always so. The

UN was able to act in Suez, Congo and Korea despite heavy P5 involvement in those crises. This contemporary lack of action and the corrosion of legitimacy have also had the effect that rising and ambitious regional powers have become more emboldened to act with their own interests in mind. For example, in the absence of firm action on Syria by the UN, Saudi Arabia stepped up its supply of weapons to the Syrian rebels in 2013/2014, and publically criticised the UN and the West's inaction (McElroy 2013). These challenges to the UN's role increase the number of actors involved in a crisis, with each pursuing different strategies, with their own national interests in mind, further increasing the risk of a crisis escalating.

It would, however, be an exaggeration to claim that the UN has had no successes. The OPCW–UN joint mission to resolve the 2013 Syrian chemical weapon crisis has been highly successful. In a little over a year 96 per cent of Syria's chemical weapon stockpile has been destroyed (OPCW 2014). Meanwhile in South Sudan, despite a rocky start, the peacekeepers have been protecting 80,000 civilians while the crisis unfolds (Gowan 2014: 45). While the success of these missions is to be applauded as they undoubtedly saved lives, both were smaller parts of larger conflicts, and the deployment and success of the missions did not directly affect the outcome of that conflict or the national interests of any of the P5.

### **Key Points**

- The development and use of Responsibility to Protect and the move to link a state's sovereignty to its responsibility to its citizens has had a significant impact on the debate regarding intervention, both for and against.
- Regional organisations are seen to have a much bigger part to play in the resolution of regional crisis.
- Despite changes in the international system, national interest still play a vital role in determining what, if any, action will be taken.



## PRACTICAL TOOLS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Policy makers have a range of tools at their disposal to resolve a crisis, the choice and effectiveness of each one will depend on the specific crisis and the tools of implementation. The overall objective of the tools is to change the behaviour of the actors involved through either influence or interaction, and they fall into non-military and military categories.

Sanctions and embargoes are non-military tools that are frequently used in crisis diplomacy. The use of sanctions increased drastically in the 25 years following the end of the Cold War (Wallenstein 2007: 240). They are used to influence a state or actor into changing their behaviour. Sanctions and embargoes can be applied to almost anything. The most common are financial, import/export licences, arms and travel. As well as being chosen for the crisis in hand, each one will be imposed to achieve a specific change in the actor's behaviour. Their effectiveness is mixed, and the contribution a sanction regime had on any subsequent change is contentious. Financial sanctions have been placed on Iran to resolve the ongoing nuclear crisis. When these were increased in 2012 (UK Government 2012) the effect was dramatic: Iran's oil revenue plummeted and its GDP shrank by \$160 billion (Coles 2013). Is it a coincidence that shortly after this shock the negotiations resumed? There is no firm agreement on the cause. Financial sanctions were imposed on Russia in response to its involvement in the Ukraine crisis. Will these be effective? There are significant differences between Iran and Russia; the latter is much more integrated in the world economy, and provides nearly 30 per cent of the EU's supply of gas (Noack 2014). It is unsurprising then that the sanctions did not target the gas industry. This perfectly demonstrates one of the major obstacles to the use of sanctions in crisis diplomacy. Sanctions on smaller, less economically connected states can be applied with little to no financial risk to those applying

them. However, as soon as sanctions are considered for a major power, those imposing the actions begin to think about their own national interest first and crisis resolution second.

The weakness of sanctions as a tool for crisis diplomacy is that unless correctly targeted they can be very damaging to innocent groups within a state without achieving their stated objective. Those targeted by the sanctions are invariably in a position of power where they can pass on the cost to others, usually their own citizens. The effectiveness of sanctions against states also depends on the nature of the regime they are targeting. The more authoritarian a regime, the more able it is to spin the increased cost and suffering caused by the sanctions as the aggressive actions of the international community. The danger that sanctions will harm innocent civilians instead of the regimes they are supposed to be targeting increases the risk that the enforcer will fall into the sanctions termination trap – they cannot stop the sanctions in fear of appearing to back down yet their moral authority is severely damaged by the harm that is being done to innocent civilians (Thakur 2013: 83).

The damage that sanctions can cause was demonstrated when the UN imposed economic sanctions on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait. These sanctions devastated the economy and caused terrible suffering to the Iraqi people through malnutrition and outbreaks of disease (Gordan 2011: 315). This led to a call for more research into how sanctions could be used to deliver the required impact but without hurting civilians. *Smart sanctions* were the outcome of this research, and were hailed as an 'elegant and powerful solution' (Gordan 2011: 331). They are designed to target specific areas in a bid to hurt regimes or groups within a state, and can vary in scale from travel bans on specific individuals to embargoes of entire industries, such as arms. The success of smart sanctions has been mixed – often they still had effects on innocent civilians, for example, arms embargoes can cripple the self-defence capabilities of victims (Gordan 2011: 332). There is perhaps a danger that



by naming them ‘smart sanctions’ the debate on their impact has been partially silenced. Further research and work needs to be done to continually improve smart sanctions.

While sanctions can be effective, their use in the Ukraine crisis highlights one of the fundamental problems in crisis diplomacy in the modern world. When one of the actors involved in the crisis is a major world power, then the tools of crisis diplomacy are limited by that actor’s power. In the Ukraine example, sanctions have been used against Russia, but the exclusion of the gas industry perhaps shows that their limited use reveals an international community that is unable, or is unwilling, to go further in resolving the crisis because of their national interests.

The use of sanctions relies on other states to abide by them, and traditionally the US and EU as the major economic powers had the greatest effect on a sanctions regime. This position is still secured; however, with the rise of the BRICS, the dominance of the US and EU is reducing. This has the knock-on effect that whether the rising powers abide by the sanctions or not will have a greater and greater impact.

### ***Negotiation and Mediation***

Negotiation and mediation should be considered the ideal way for crisis diplomacy to be conducted (see Chapters 17 and 18 in this Handbook). As a result it is the arena where skilled diplomats can have their most important role and impact. Negotiation is ‘the process of combing conflicting positions into a joint agreement’ (Zartman 2009: 322). Mediation is the process used by disputants to resolve their differences with the help of an outside party. This is done by searching for a mutually acceptable solution and to counter a move towards win–lose strategies (Kressel 2006, 726). Mediation works in situations where an outside actor is needed to bridge an almost intractable divide. Crisis born out of long-standing tribal or ethnic divisions,

or where there is a history of violence or oppression on one side, are examples of when independent mediation is needed. The crisis following South Sudan’s independence is one such example; the long-standing divisions and angry history which exists makes unassisted negotiations unlikely.

There are problems with the use of negotiation and mediation in crisis diplomacy, which stem from the factors that must be present for them to be effective: identifying parties and compatible interests. In most situations the identification of parties is straightforward, but in the more complicated crisis that the world is now facing there are situations where this presents a problem. The Syrian and Ukraine crises demonstrate this. In Syria it has been noted by commanders and policy makers that the opposition to Assad is made up of a huge array of different actors, all with different ambitions and levels of influence. Identifying, and then selecting, which group to try and engage in mediation with Assad presents a difficult – almost impossible – problem. The situation in Ukraine also sees a multitude of different groups arranged against Kiev, with the added difficulty of Russian forces being involved – while all the time the Russian government refuses to admit this. How can successful mediation take place if a significant portion of one side claims not to be involved at all?

Negotiations and mediation can be affected by other factors within the international system. The International Criminal Court issued a warrant for Muammar Gaddafi’s arrest three months after the NATO-led mission had started (ICC 2011), while the mediation teams were still attempting to find a resolution to the violence. By issuing an arrest warrant for war crimes, the ICC may have damaged the mediation efforts by reducing Gaddafi’s willingness to deal. Successful negotiation mediation by the international community requires a much more systematic and joined-up approach.

Negotiation and mediation are not reserved for conflicts alone. Non-military crises such

as epidemics require careful negotiation to ensure the crisis is contained. These negotiations will deal with issues such as access to areas of a country, discussing concerns with local communities, and gaining support for inoculation campaigns. An extra level of complexity is added due to the higher numbers of NGOs involved in these crises, who are very often the first ones on the ground and provide the majority of the personnel.

The underlying problem with negotiation and mediation is that they require all the actors involved in the crisis to participate, and it needs the international community to be willing to negotiate with those involved. The Islamic State crisis demonstrates this perfectly. Islamic State is not interested in negotiating, and even if it was, its conditions would be incompatible and unacceptable with all others involved in the crisis. With the murder of American and British hostages, it is unlikely that either the US or UK would consider negotiating with Islamic State.

### ***Use of Force***

The use of force is the ultimate back-up to the other tools available in crisis diplomacy. With the continued advancement of military technology and the still disproportionate level of military power held by Western powers, especially the US, the force options available are wide ranging. Air power and long-range missiles were the primary weapons in Libya, whereas ground troops were deployed in the 2013 Mali crisis. Use of force in a crisis does not necessarily have to mean an outbreak of combat, but rather that military tools are used to prevent actions by the actors involved. The blockade in the Cuban Missile Crisis is an example of this. The American blockade bought time for other crisis diplomacy tools to resolve the situation. It also demonstrates one of the fundamental factors of crisis diplomacy, one that is particularly important when considering the use of force: that one must maintain

flexible options. In Cuba's case if Kennedy had ordered airstrikes, as some were advising him, this had the potential to quickly escalate the crisis to a point where a full-scale military confrontation was inevitable. The use of a blockade allowed other tools to be used, while keeping the option open for later airstrikes if they were deemed necessary. When the use of force is authorised in a crisis situation it is important that it doesn't end the negotiations or mediation efforts. As soon as military operations start it becomes much harder for negotiations and mediation to succeed. This is why they must be closely linked to one another, with force being used with a clear objective. In the case of Libya, while NATO forces were conducting airstrikes the African Union (AU) was tasked with continuing efforts for a diplomatic solution. It soon became abundantly clear that there was no real linkage between the two efforts; AU requests for additional funds from the EU were delayed for weeks, and proposals were quashed (DeWaal 2012). The use of force in Libya, initially to defend Benghazi but later used much more widely, certainly emboldened the rebels, and eventually enabled them to overthrow the regime. In the same way as the ICC warrant made Gaddafi's willingness to negotiate less likely, the support the rebels received may have diminished their readiness to negotiate.

There are, however, crises when the only response is the use of force. The rise of the Islamic State in 2014 would appear such an example. The mishandling of sectarian diversion and the disfranchisement of Sunni Muslims by the al-Maliki government which created the circumstances that allowed for IS to spread so rapidly through Northern Iraq require long-term solutions. However, the immediate crisis of IS rampaging across Iraq, committing mass killings and brutalizing civilians, could only be met with force, supplying weaponry to the Kurdish Peshmerga, and targeted air and drone strikes to assist their efforts.

If force is used in support of one side of the crisis then they are invariably bolstered

by that support, like in Libya. In situations where there are multiple actors allied with the intervening force, it can enhance one of them over another. For example, it could be argued that the support that the US is giving to the Iraqi Kurds in their fight against IS also brings the possibility of an independent Kurdish state a step closer.

Since the Iraq War, the use of force by Western states has become increasingly unpopular domestically. While airstrikes from manned aircraft and drones are still tolerated because they are seen to carry almost no risk of casualties to service personnel, there has grown a real aversion to 'boots on the ground'. This reluctance to use the full range of military assets at their disposal demonstrates once again the problem of national interest in crisis diplomacy. The risk of soldiers returning in body bags makes full military intervention in a crisis extremely dangerous politically. Problems emerge when the actors involved are states with significant military capabilities capable of shooting down drones or aircraft, or a nuclear deterrent. There is essentially no chance of force being used in Ukraine by the international community, even if this were to be the most effective solution. Similarly, it is unlikely that air power will be used in Syria against the Assad regime due to its highly developed air defence system.

The use of force in crisis diplomacy is something that should never be considered lightly, and is not a solution by itself. Simply destroying the regime, or group, will not resolve the underlying cause of the crisis. For example, the Libyan intervention cannot now be considered a success story. NATO assisted in removing the Gaddafi regime, yet the situation that remains is one of multiple warring factions, extra-judicial killings, and chaos (Fadel 2014). Fundamentally, the use of force should always be accompanied by an equally supported diplomatic strategy – they should work together to resolve the crisis. Relying on weaponry alone won't work.

## Key Points

- The use of sanctions should be carefully tailored to the specific crisis. Broad sanctions have the potential to cause massive harm to civilian populations.
- Negotiations and mediation should be engaged in at every level of a crisis.
- Military force remains the ultimate back-up to the other tools used in crisis diplomacy. It should be used sparingly and only when absolutely necessary. Its use should not signal the end of negotiations.
- These tools should be used together as part of an overall strategy for resolving the crisis.

## THE FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR CRISIS DIPLOMACY

With the rise of intrastate conflicts and crises involving non-state actors, the field of crisis diplomacy is becoming more complex. The crises that are facing the international community will need the concerted efforts and support of states, and international and regional organisations. There needs to be a much more joined-up approach to the use of different crisis diplomacy tools and a longer term view of the effects that these can have. The interconnectedness of modern crises must be better understood and accounted for. While hindsight is a wonderful thing, lessons should be learned from the Libya and Syria–Islamic state crises. The international community helped in Libya, but did not in Syria. The prolonged nature of the Syrian crisis enabled the rise of Sunni extremists from which the Islamic State was born and the enduring crisis that they created.

All the crisis management tools that have been discussed serve a role; their use must be on a case by case basis with strategies and objectives defined for the specific crisis at hand. More importantly, with the increasing multipolar nature of the international system, brought on as a result of the rising powers beginning to flex their international muscles, there must be a concerted effort to build an

established consensus on the major aspects of crisis management and how they interact, and how the international community can greater support these efforts.

Sanctions must be better integrated into the diplomatic process – rather than simply punishing regimes, their use must be more focused on creating incentives to engage in dialogue. The suffering these sanctions can cause to innocent civilians must be better integrated into their planning.

The concept of Responsibility to Protect is seen by many as a positive step forward in terms of humanitarian intervention. There are, however, very real concerns as to when and how it should be used, or not used. Its utilisation in the Libyan case and the possible overreach of NATO forces has presented challenges for supporters of the principle. The Libyan case demonstrates the difficulty of separating R2P from the national interests of the states involved. However, its acceptance by the UN and the subsequent enshrinement in the UN Charter means that states will no longer be able to hide behind sovereignty when committing brutal acts on their own people, is seen by many as a positive step (UN Charter, n.d.). The use of R2P and force in crisis diplomacy must be accompanied by substantial plans and commitments of resources to post-crisis management. The intervention in Libya resolved one crisis but the vacuum created by Gaddafi's death caused another to emerge.

Crisis diplomacy and its tools must be utilised for crises that do not fall into the traditional definitions of crisis. The 2014 Ebola outbreak was declared a 'social crisis, a humanitarian crisis, an economic crisis, and a threat to national security' by the Director General of the World Health Organization, Dr Margaret Chan (Chan 2014). With the increased interconnectedness of the international community, crises like the Ebola outbreak, even if they pose no realistic threat to the lives of Western citizens, pose a real threat to international stability and must be addressed accordingly.

The definition of international crisis has changed, and the states, organisations and actors involved in crisis diplomacy need to recognise this shift and adapt and evolve the tools they use to resolve modern crises. Future research on crisis diplomacy should focus on the interconnectedness of crisis. Work should be done to examine what the resolution of a crisis will create and this should be closely linked with post-crisis management to ensure that the solution of one crisis does not inadvertently lead to another. Additionally, despite the work done to redefine crisis diplomacy it is still too often seen as concerning armed conflicts. This must be addressed, as the world is facing more crises that do not fall into this category – Ebola, HIV, climate change, economic instability. These have the potential to be far more devastating than many armed conflicts. Crisis diplomacy must look at how best to resolve these crises.

## NOTE

- 1 Kosovo, 5000 dead (Erlanger, 1999), East Timor, 150,000 dead (Jones 2008: 193) and Rwanda, 1 million dead (Jones 2008: 190).

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# Coercive Diplomacy

Peter Viggo Jakobsen

## INTRODUCTION

No diplomacy relying only upon the threat of force can ever claim to be both intelligent and peaceful. No diplomacy that would stake everything on persuasion and compromise deserves to be called intelligent. (Morgenthau 1948: 565)

Coercive diplomacy, the use of military threats and/or limited force in support of diplomatic negotiations, is as old as the institution of diplomacy. Thucydides describes several instances where Athens and Sparta use military threats as part of their negotiation strategies in his account of the fifth century BC Peloponnesian War; Frederick the Great is attributed the statement that ‘diplomacy without military power is like music without instruments’; American President Theodore Roosevelt believed in speaking softly while carrying a big stick; and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan found that: ‘if diplomacy is to succeed, it must be backed both by force and by fairness’ (Annan 1998).

That the practice of coercive diplomacy is old and used routinely does not make it well-understood or popular, however. Some readers probably find it strange, even inappropriate, for a handbook on diplomacy to contain a chapter on coercive diplomacy. The concept of coercive diplomacy is often regarded as an oxymoron because military coercion and diplomacy are seen as mutually exclusive alternatives employing different instruments and serving very different ends. Whereas military coercion relies on threats and limited use of force (sticks) to coerce adversaries to do something against their will, diplomacy relies on negotiation, positive inducements (carrots) and assurances to solve conflicts peacefully and to develop ‘friendly relations among nations’ as the *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* (1961) puts it. Use of military threats and force is commonly regarded as evidence that diplomacy has failed and as undermining the prospects of diplomatic success.

This perception is not unfounded since coercive diplomacy has a relatively poor track

record. Recent studies analysing Western use of coercive diplomacy find seven successes in 22 attempts (Art and Cronin 2003: 387) and six successes in 36 attempts respectively (Jakobsen 2010: 291), and that use of force was required in most cases. This modest success rate has convinced some scholars that coercive diplomacy should not be attempted at all (Ganguly and Kraig 2005). This widespread view that coercive diplomacy often has unsuccessful outcomes may also stem from the fact that the concept is less understood and less studied than the related concepts of peace, war and diplomacy, which are all at the core of large, well-established research programmes complete with university departments, educational programmes, research centres and think tanks. Whereas you can get an MA, a PhD or a chair in peace, war or diplomacy studies, the same is not true with respect to coercive diplomacy. Moreover, scholars and practitioners studying and practising the art of coercive diplomacy disagree among themselves on terminology, on the amount of force allowed, and on the requirements for success (see Table 38.1). The only thing they do agree on is that coercive diplomacy is a high-risk, hard-to-use strategy with a limited chance of success in war threatening confrontations (Bratton 2005; Jakobsen 2011). (See Chapter 37 in the Handbook.)

This chapter's review of the coercive diplomacy field focuses on works meeting three requirements. First, they must include both sticks and carrots in their conceptualisation of the strategy and study their interaction. Second, they must define the objective of the strategy as war avoidance, that is, as a strategy that actors employ in order to achieve their goals without resorting to war. Third, they must aspire to be policy relevant and seek to bridge the gap between theory and practice that is characterising much contemporary international relations theory (Jentleson 2002; Walt 2005). In keeping with this Handbook's focus on diplomacy, this chapter scrutinizes the coercive diplomacy literature analysing how military threats and symbolic/limited use of force can be used in tandem with diplomatic instruments (carrots and assurances) to resolve crises and conflicts short of war. These rules of engagement exclude the much larger literatures which focus solely on military coercion involving the use of threats and limited force or carrots and assurances, or regard carrots and sticks as competing instruments. These writings will only be included to the extent that they have influenced the coercive diplomacy literature in focus here.

**Table 38.1 Comparing diplomacy, coercion and war**

	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Diplomacy</i>	<i>Military coercion</i>		<i>Full-scale war</i>
<i>Dimension</i>		<i>Coercive diplomacy</i>	<i>Compellence/ coercive war</i>		
<b>Instruments</b>	Persuasion, positive incentives and assurances	(Military) threats and/or symbolic use of force coupled with carrots and assurances	Military threats and use of limited force		Decisive or brute force
<b>Purpose</b>	Peaceful settlement of disputes	Obtain compliance without escalating beyond symbolic use of force	Obtain compliance without defeating the enemy		Impose compliance through military defeat
<b>Requirements for success</b>	Adversary cooperation and overlapping interests	Adversary cooperation and overlapping interests	Adversary cooperation and overlapping interests		Control: adversary cooperation and common interests not required

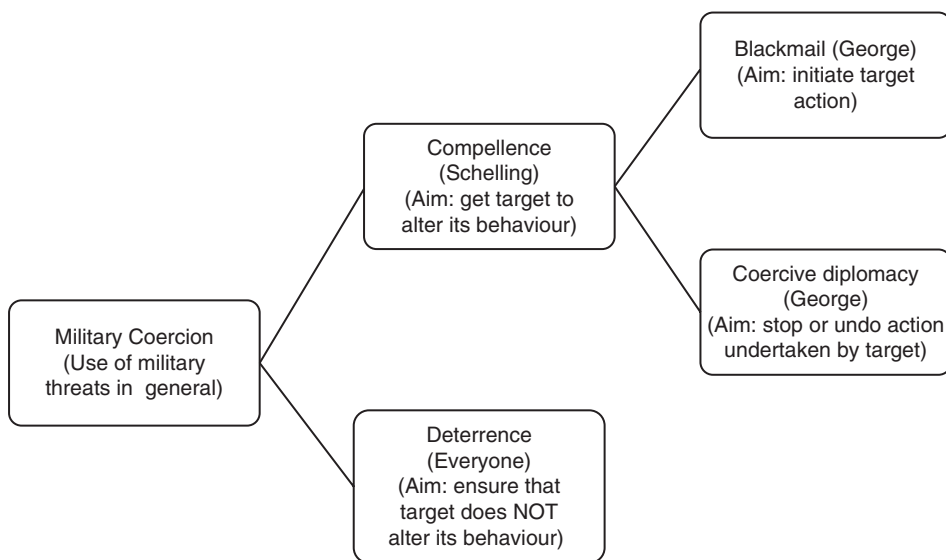
Source: Jakobsen (2015)

## COERCIVE DIPLOMACY – THE ANALYTICAL CONCEPT

Alexander L. George (2003: 464), who developed the concept, conceived it as part of a broader influence theory that combines threats and use of symbolic force (sticks) with positive inducements (carrots) and reassurances. The name of the game is to ‘influence’ to avoid war rather than to ‘defeat’ or ‘control’ to win (see Table 38.1). The stick is employed in support of diplomacy to enhance the prospects of a negotiated settlement. Its use should therefore be kept to a minimum and coupled with carrots and reassurances. Threats should only be employed reactively to stop or undo undesirable actions (for instance military attacks) already undertaken by an opponent. This reactive use of threats distinguishes coercive diplomacy from other threat-based strategies such as deterrence and compellence. A deterrent threat is issued pro-actively in order to prevent the target from acting in the first place, for example to prevent a military attack. Deterrent threats constituted the core of the

West’s efforts to prevent a Soviet attack on Western Europe during the Cold War. The difference between coercive diplomacy and compellence is that the latter also allows for the pro-active use of military threats and limited force in order to coerce the target to do something, for instance give up territory. Russia’s almost bloodless annexation of the Crimea in 2014 is a case in point as the Russian government relied on the implied threat of full-scale invasion (brute force) to coerce the Ukrainian government to withdraw its forces from the Crimean peninsula without a fight. George refers to such pro-active use of military threats as blackmail (see Figure 38.1), whereas Schelling would categorize it as compellence.

In George’s formulation, the stick is seen as constitutive of and necessary, but rarely sufficient, for coercive diplomacy success: a mutually acceptable negotiated settlement. The stick is necessary to instil fear of unacceptable escalation in the minds of the target leadership in order to get it to the negotiation table. But is it also necessary to give the target carrots to allow it to comply with the coercer’s



**Figure 38.1 Conceptual overview**

Source: adapted from Jakobsen (1998: 12) for this chapter. Reproduced with permission from Palgrave Macmillan.

demands without losing face and to reassure it that compliance will not result in additional demands and more threats in the future.

moved through since coercive diplomacy was born as a separate field of inquiry during the Cold War.

### Key Points

- Coercive diplomacy is a diplomatic strategy combining military threats and symbolic use of force with carrots and reassurances in order to resolve war-threatening crises and armed conflicts short of full-scale war.
- Coercive diplomacy theorists seek to bridge the carrot-stick gap characterising much of the literature on crisis and conflict management.
- Carrots, reassurances, military threats and symbolic use of force are not alternatives but interdependent instruments that can reinforce or undermine each other depending on the circumstances.

## THEORIES AND PRACTICE – THE EVOLUTION OF THE FIELD

The principal determinant shaping the field of coercive diplomacy has been the desire to assist US policy makers in avoiding war and keeping the use of force to a minimum. The link between theory and practice has been intimate, which is why this section presents the evolution of the field as driven by the principal policy challenges characterising the three different strategic eras the world has

### *The Cold War: Avoiding Nuclear War and Controlling Escalation*

George got interested in coercive diplomacy when he conducted a classified study at the Rand Corporation seeking to identify the conditions under which the US could escalate its use of air power in Vietnam (Operation Rolling Thunder) without risking nuclear war with the Soviet Union and China (George 1965). This study later formed the basis for the classic, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (George et al. 1971). Thomas Schelling also sought to understand how military threats and limited use of force could be used for bargaining purposes so that nuclear war could be avoided. He coined the term compellence and identified five necessary conditions for coercive success that has since formed the basis of all military coercion theories, including the coercive component of George's concept (see Box 38.1).

Whereas Schelling never operationalised his theory and was reluctant to use it as a basis for advising the US government on how to conduct Operation Rolling Thunder (Kaplan 1983: 330–6), George explicitly sought to develop a policy-relevant theory

#### **Box 38.1 Schelling's five conditions for coercive (compellence) success**

- 1 The threat conveyed must be sufficiently potent to convince the adversary that the costs of non-compliance will be unbearable.
- 2 The threat must be credible in the mind of the adversary; he/she must be convinced that the coercer has the will and the capability to execute it in case of non-compliance.
- 3 The adversary must be given time to comply with the demand.
- 4 The coercer must assure the adversary that compliance will not lead to more demands in the future.
- 5 The conflict must not be perceived as zero-sum. A degree of common interest in avoiding the resort to full-scale war must exist. Each side must be persuaded that it can gain more by bargaining than by trying unilaterally to take what it wants by force.

Source: Schelling (1966: 1, 3–4, 69–76, 89). Box reproduced from Jakobsen (2012a: 245) with permission from Oxford University Press.

that could help US policy makers manage real-life crises. He and his associates identified five contextual factors that should be taken into consideration when the use of coercive diplomacy was contemplated and nine success conditions favouring its use (see Box 38.2). They rejected the unitary rational actor assumption that Schelling's theory was based on in favour of empirically derived behavioural models of the adversaries in order to reduce the risk that cultural misunderstandings and psychological biases would cause coercive diplomacy to fail (George et al. 1971; George and Simons 1994).

The emphasis on war avoidance and escalation control so visible in the writings of both George and Schelling was a natural consequence of the Cold War context. The risk that a crisis would draw in the United States and the Soviet Union and escalate into a thermonuclear war meant that full-scale use of force was seen as too risky by most thinkers and policy makers. As a result, the study of

military coercion focused far more on deterrence than on coercive diplomacy or compellence during the Cold War.

### **Key Points**

- Coercive diplomacy was developed with the ambition to assist US policy makers to resolve their Cold War confrontations with the Soviet Union.
- The fear of nuclear escalation led to the emphasis on war avoidance, minimum use of force and peaceful conflict resolution.

### ***The Humanitarian 1990s: The Quest for Coercive Credibility***

The scope for using military coercion changed completely with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Military threats and force could now be used on a far greater scale without the risk of great power confrontations and nuclear escalation, but the perceived national interest and

#### **Box 38.2 George and Simons' coercive diplomacy framework**

##### **Contextual factors**

- 1 Global strategic environment
- 2 Type of provocation
- 3 Image of war
- 4 Unilateral or coalitional coercive diplomacy
- 5 The isolation of the adversary

##### **Conditions favouring success**

- 1 Clarity of objective
- 2 Strength of motivation
- 3 *Asymmetry of motivation\**
- 4 *Sense of urgency\**
- 5 Strong leadership
- 6 Domestic support
- 7 International support
- 8 *Adversary fear of unacceptable escalation\**
- 9 *Clarity concerning the precise terms of settlement of the crisis\**

\*These four conditions are considered 'particularly significant' for success.

Source: George and Simons (1994: 271–4, 287–8, 292). Box reproduced from Jakobsen (2012a: 245) with permission from Oxford University Press.

hence motivation for doing so was lower since every crisis and conflict was no longer regarded as part of a larger struggle for global power. Instead, crisis and conflict management efforts were increasingly justified by humanitarian concerns and so-called ‘humanitarian interventions’ came to the fore (Liberia, Northern Iraq, Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Kosovo, East Timor, Sierra Leone). In this context, coercive diplomacy emerged as a strategy of choice for coalitions of states (mostly led by the United States) who wanted to stop human suffering caused by intra-state conflicts, but were reluctant to put their troops in harm’s way to do so. Yet as George’s framework underlines (see Box 38.2), coercive diplomacy rarely succeeds if the asymmetry of motivation favours the target, and threat credibility proved difficult to establish for the Western powers, who made no attempt to hide their fear of casualties or their reluctance to use force (Jakobsen 1998).

The difficulties highlighted by the increased resort to ‘humanitarian’ coercion triggered a new scholarly interest in the concept. Unsurprisingly, the problem of establishing credibility took centre stage in these studies, and George’s insistence on keeping the use of force to a minimum came under fire from scholars viewing graduated escalation strategies as a recipe for failure. In their view, the best way to avoid war was to threaten the adversary with military defeat (Freedman 1998; Jakobsen 1998; Pape 1996). There was no point in reducing threat credibility and potency by keeping the use of force to a minimum now that the risk of great power war had receded. Jakobsen’s *ideal policy* illustrates this

line of thinking (see Box 38.3). Drawing on the works of George and Schelling, it sought to enhance threat credibility and potency by emphasising the need to threaten the opponent with quick defeat or denial of objectives and the need to issue deadlines for compliance. Failure to heed these recommendations was regarded as a recipe for failure. This refinement of coercive diplomacy allowed for far greater use of force than George. Jakobsen defines use of force as ‘limited’ and as part of a coercive diplomacy strategy as long as it does not force compliance upon the target but leaves the latter with a choice between continued resistance or compliance. Isolated use of air and sea power would in accordance with this definition count as limited use of force regardless of the number of munitions expended (Jakobsen 1998: 14–17). Following George it also emphasised the need to couple the stick with carrots and assurances to enhance the scope for negotiated solutions, and this insistence set it apart from the much larger debate that was triggered by the heavy reliance on coercive air power characterising US crisis and conflict management during this era (Byman and Waxman 2000; Pape 1996). The air power debate was problematic from a coercive diplomacy perspective because it ignored the crucial role that carrots and assurances played in Western crisis and conflict management (Jakobsen 2000).

### Key Points

- The end of the Cold War facilitated the use of coercive diplomacy by removing the risk of great power war and nuclear escalation.

#### Box 38.3 Jakobsen’s *ideal policy*

- 1 A threat of force to defeat the opponent or deny their objectives quickly with little cost.
- 2 A deadline for compliance.
- 3 An assurance to the adversary against future demands.
- 4 An offer of inducements for compliance.

Source: Jakobsen (1998: 4). Box reproduced from Jakobsen (2012a: 246) with permission from Oxford University Press.



- It proved very difficult for Western-led coalitions to use coercive diplomacy to end humanitarian suffering.
- These problems led to new studies advocating greater use of force than George's original conceptualisation allowed for.

### ***The War on Terror: More Coercion Than Diplomacy***

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 (9/11) removed the reluctance to use force and the fear of casualties that had shaped the conduct of American-led coercive diplomacy in the 1990s. The Bush Administration declared war on terrorist groups and 'rogue' states that sponsored terrorism and sought to acquire weapons of mass destruction (The White House 2002: 13–15), employed brute force to defeat and overthrow the regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq, and threatened to do the same to Iran, North Korea and Libya. While effective with respect to removing the two regimes, the brute force option involved high costs. The American decision to go to war in Iraq in 2003 triggered widespread international condemnation and alienated many traditional friends and allies. Moreover, the United States soon found itself fighting insurgencies in both Afghanistan and Iraq,

and North Korea and Iran stepped up their nuclear programmes.

Coercive diplomacy scholars reacted to this change in US foreign policy by recommending a greater reliance on diplomacy. The concern from the 1990s that US coercive diplomacy was undermined by a transparent unwillingness to use force (see Box 38.3) was now replaced by the concern that it was being undermined by excessive use of force. Thus Art and Cronin (2003) edited a major study of US post-Cold War coercive diplomacy arguing that George had been right to insist that coercive diplomacy should allow for symbolic use of force only. Similarly, Jentleson and Whytock (2005–6) proposed a new framework emphasising that the coercer's strategy should focus on the importance of proportionality between ends and means, reciprocity and economic as opposed to military coercion (see Box 38.4). Jentleson and Whytock argued on the basis of an empirical case study that threats of regime change were counterproductive, and that the Bush Administration was wrong in claiming that Libya's decision to give up its weapons of mass destruction in 2003 had been caused by the fall of Saddam Hussein and American threats of regime change. The need for a balanced approach to coercive diplomacy was also emphasised by other scholars (Blechman and Brumberg 2010; Jakobsen 2012b).

#### **Box 38.4 Jentleson and Whytock's coercive diplomacy framework**

##### **Coercer strategy**

- 1 Proportionality between ends and means.
- 2 Reciprocity – linkage between the coercer's carrots and the target's concessions.
- 3 Coercive credibility – threats must be perceived to enhance costs of non-compliance.

##### **Target's domestic politics and economy**

- 1 Is internal political support and regime security served by compliance or resistance?
- 2 What are the economic costs of compliance versus resistance?
- 3 Do domestic elites act as circuit breakers or transmission belts for the coercive pressure?

*Source:* Jentleson and Whytock (2005/06: 51–5). Box reproduced from Jakobsen (2012a: 248) with permission from Oxford University Press.

The era also witnessed a greater interest in obtaining a better understanding of the targets, since a poor understanding of their culture, motivations, vulnerabilities, capacity for counter-coercion, mindset and decision-making processes was regarded as a major source of the problems that the United States was facing in its war against terror (see Box 38.4). The result was a number of works emphasising (strategic) cultural awareness, the development of psychological profiles, and actionable intelligence as necessary requirements for coercive diplomacy success (Byman and Waxman 2002; Bolland 2006; Crenshaw 2003; Morgan 2003; Tarzi 2005); considerations that also featured prominently in the booming literature on counterinsurgency. Jentleson and Whytock's focus on the target's domestic politics and economic elites is indicative of this trend. They highlighted the importance of these actors by demonstrating empirically how Libya's surprise decision to give up its weapons of mass destruction programmes in part could be explained by the pressure that economic elites hurt by international sanctions had exerted on Libya's leader Gaddafi to persuade him to terminate these programmes.

### **Key Points**

- The heavy US reliance on brute force in response to the 9/11 attacks prompted coercive diplomacy scholars to make the case for a more balanced approach relying on both carrots and sticks.
- Practical difficulties with respect to understanding adversary behaviour and their capacity for counter-coercion resulted in research highlighting these challenging requirements for success.

### ***A Hybrid Future: More Actors, Greater Complexity, New Challenges***

Russia's annexation of the Crimea and its active support for separatists in eastern Ukraine in 2014 and China's growing assertiveness over sovereignty issues in the East

and South China Seas suggest that we are entering a new strategic era where confrontations among the world's (nuclear armed) great powers will become more frequent. These confrontations are unlikely to result in new Cold Wars in either Europe or East Asia as some have suggested (Legvold 2014; Lucas 2014; Mearsheimer 2010; Room for debate 2012). The Cold War only involved two superpowers and was global in scope. The new era has a higher number of great powers, who, except for the United States, have a primarily regional outlook and reach. They are also more interdependent economically than the United States and the Soviet Union ever were. These features suggest a more regionalised world order where conflict in one region is unlikely to spill over into another, but where more regional confrontations occur as declining status quo powers seek to resist demands from the rising powers for a greater say in the running of regional affairs. Since this dynamic is most likely to exacerbate the current instability plaguing Sub-Saharan Africa and the area stretching from Morocco to Pakistan, the future practice of coercive diplomacy is likely to feature elements from the Cold War, the 1990s and the war on terror as all the main challenges and opponents characterising these eras interact in the era we are entering.

The resort to coercive diplomacy will increase for the simple reason that the number of actors willing and capable to use military coercion and force in pursuit of their objectives is rising. The rise of new regional powers and the proliferation of militant non-state actors with regional/global reach, such as al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, Hizbollah and al-Shabaab, will increase the number of challenges that status quo oriented actors will employ coercive diplomacy to resolve. They will do so for a mixture of the reasons already spelled out above: a strong interest in war avoidance, fear of (nuclear) escalation, a reluctance to use force and put troops in harm's way to stop mass violations of human rights, or a strong determination to threaten and use force to protect national security.

The increasing number of actors and their different nature (state and non-state) will further complicate the use of coercive diplomacy. Sometimes the principal opponent will be nuclear armed as was the case in the Ukraine crisis between the Western powers and Russia; sometimes the opponent will be a much weaker fragile state. At other times, it will be non-state actors using coercion and force in pursuit of political, ideological or criminal objectives. Yet the opponent may also be a hybrid, that is, a coalition of actors spanning these three categories that employs a variety of overt and covert military (conventional, irregular and terrorist), economic and political methods in an integrated way to achieve their objectives (Hoffman 2009). While this is not entirely new, it complicates the use of coercive diplomacy, forcing the coercer to target a higher number of actors and hostile actions simultaneously. The Ukraine crisis erupting in 2014 is a case in point as Russia skilfully integrated the actions of Ukrainian separatists in the Crimea and Eastern Ukraine with its own use of conventional, irregular, political, economic, cyber and informational means in order to coerce the Ukrainian government to end its rapprochement with the EU and NATO and accept its place in a Russian sphere of influence.

### **Key Points**

- The emerging strategic era features all the actors and challenges that have characterised the three previous ones.
- The rise of hybrid opponents using all their means of power in unexpected and asymmetric ways will greatly complicate the effective use of coercive diplomacy.

### **FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE**

As in the past, the emerging strategic era will create new and context specific policy challenges. Some of these are as yet unknown,

others are already visible. A key challenge arising from the changing distribution of global power and increasing number of actors (state and non-state) capable and willing to use force to challenge the status quo is the need to move away from the US-centric bias that has characterised the study of coercive diplomacy since its inception during the Cold War. The number of studies examining how other actors than the United States employ coercive diplomacy and other forms of military coercion is growing (Aras 2009; Ohnishi 2012; Thies and Bratton 2004; Zhao 1999–2000), but more are needed in order to give us a better understanding of how and to what extent cultural factors, regime/actor-type variables and different views of war produce behaviours that differ from the ones predicted by a rational actor model.

In addition to addressing context specific challenges, coercive diplomacy scholars must also address the generic problems that have hampered theoretical progress in the field since its inception. They include a failure to integrate qualitative and quantitative methods, vague definitions of key concepts and variables, and lack of systematic and rigorous empirical analysis of generally accepted propositions (Bratton 2005; Jakobsen 2011; Larson 2012). Yet the single most important challenge facing the study and practice of coercive diplomacy is how to get its central finding across: that strategies combining sticks, carrots and assurances have a far better track record with respect to resolving crises and conflict short of war than strategies relying solely on sticks or on carrots and assurances (Art and Cronin 2003; Blechman and Wittes 1999; Davis 2000; George and Simons 1994; Greffenius and Jungil 1992; Jakobsen 1998, 2010; Snyder and Diesing 1977).

This key finding has thus far been overshadowed completely by coercive diplomacy's low rate of success. This has given rise to the widespread perception that coercive diplomacy is an oxymoron and that use of military threats and use of force undermines diplomacy and the prospects for peace.

The practice and study of coercive diplomacy prove this perception wrong. It clearly shows that skilful use of coercive diplomacy can resolve crises and conflicts short of full-scale war when the conditions are right. Unfortunately, our understanding of these conditions remains wanting in several respects. More research and scholarly attention are needed if we want to realize more of the potential for peaceful conflict resolution that coercive diplomacy does hold.

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# Revolutionary Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

The first use of the term ‘revolutionary diplomacy’ was, almost certainly, in a series of volumes commissioned by the US Senate in 1888, whose aim was to document the diplomatic correspondence of the American Revolution.<sup>2</sup> In this context the term simply referred to the communications of the American revolutionaries with France, Spain and other countries. Similarly, states enjoying formal diplomatic relations with a state undergoing a revolution against an established government inevitably confront numerous issues in determining whether and at what point they should transfer their official recognition of that state from one government to another. Some adopt the simple principle that recognition should be accorded to the government that is clearly exercising ‘effective control’ while others take a range of political factors into account. For example, while the UK moved rapidly to recognise the new Communist government of China in

1949, the USA, for various reasons, withheld recognition until 1978, as it had done earlier with the Soviet Union. Here I shall be focusing upon a different usage of the term ‘revolutionary diplomacy’, one denoting states whose relations with other states are revolutionary because they are based on fundamentally different principles than those on the basis of which states traditionally conduct their relations with each other (see Chapter 10 in this Handbook).

Orthodox diplomacy is based on principles developed over the last five hundred years, mainly by the leading European powers. Here, the underlying assumption is that states form a sort of international society marked by certain common interests, norms, rules and institutions. Given that the fundamental criterion for membership of this society is the sovereign status of its members – their right to govern themselves as they choose – the ‘societal’ aspects of this community of states are inevitably somewhat more limited than, for example, those prevailing in a



national community, with a common culture and laws enforced by police and upheld by courts. Rules and enforcement mechanisms in what Hedley Bull refers to as the 'anarchical society' of states are more limited and revolve around upholding the basis of international society – sovereignty itself. Hence diplomacy, as an institution of international society, has the purpose of enabling states to find peaceful means of negotiating and resolving their differences without compromising their sovereign equality. In this sense diplomats function, in effect, as the personal embodiment of this society: they stand for the sovereign states which are its members.

The leading works on diplomacy all attempt to derive their understanding of the key features of diplomacy from this underlying notion of a society of states (see Chapter 8 in this Handbook). Satow,<sup>3</sup> for example, defines diplomacy as 'the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations ... or, more briefly still, the conduct of business between states by peaceful means'. Nicolson's ideal diplomat possessed an enviable list of personal qualities: 'truth, accuracy, calm, patience, good temper, modesty, loyalty'. For Berridge,<sup>4</sup> diplomacy is 'the conduct of international relations by negotiation rather than force, propaganda or recourse to law, and by other peaceful means (such as gathering information or engendering goodwill) which are directly or indirectly designed to promote negotiation'. De Callières'<sup>5</sup> classic work specifically relates the practice of diplomacy to the existence of a community of states in Europe, a usage followed by Watson, who talks of diplomacy as involving the adjustment of the differing interests of states through bargaining and compromise and through an awareness not merely of reason of state but of '*raison de système*' or of the interests of international society as a whole.

The revolutions that I am considering here are not about the smooth running of anything but about fundamental change. They frequently invoke violent rather than peaceful means of achieving change and proceed from

ideologically derived black-and-white views of the world rather than the subtle flexibility required of Satow's diplomats. Although there are many such animals as cool headed revolutionaries, it would be hard to find one possessing even half of Nicolson's<sup>6</sup> list of diplomatic qualities. Finally, the idea that diplomats represent not merely their own countries but the common interests of international society as a whole has little resonance with revolutionaries, who, if they have a conception of international society, see it as an oppressive, unequal and immoral structure of power.

The intrinsic conceptual antagonism between diplomacy and revolution is reflected in the mutual perceptions of the individuals who are the prime actors in each process. Even such a moderate revolutionary as Thomas Jefferson saw diplomacy as 'the pest of the peace of the world' and believed there to be little point in sending Americans abroad to perform diplomatic tasks because, being honest republicans, they would inevitably be outwitted by less virtuous Europeans.<sup>7</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed by Washington, John Adams and others. The underlying concern here was essentially the same as can be found in many revolutionary states: fear that the revolutionary society might be contaminated by too much contact with foreigners who did not share its ideals, which made diplomacy automatically suspect. Even as late as 1885 an American Senator could still lament:

This diplomatic service is working our ruin by creating a desire for foreign customs and foreign follies. The disease is imported by our returning diplomats and by the foreign ambassadors sent here by monarchs and despots to corrupt and destroy our American ideals.<sup>8</sup>

So deeply ingrained in the American psyche was this distrust of diplomacy that it was not until well into the twentieth century that the United States felt able to devote significant resources to the development of a professional diplomatic service (see Chapter 26 in this Handbook). And if such sentiments could

be so widespread in the least ideological of the major revolutionary states, they inevitably emerged with even greater force in revolutions that proceeded from more doctrinaire mind-sets, such as the French Revolution and the various revolutions inspired by Marxism or Islam.

For their part, diplomats were no less hostile towards certain revolutions. A study of the American Foreign Service during the years after the Bolshevik Revolution, for example, has shown how the American diplomats developed a profound antipathy towards the Soviet Union, whose diplomats they saw as bent upon subversion.<sup>9</sup> Even more seriously, so far as their professional sensibilities were concerned, the Americans believed the Soviets to be systematically undermining the basic principles that had governed the diplomatic system to that point. If, as appeared to be the case to the American diplomats, their Soviet counterparts saw diplomacy merely as another arena of global class struggle, this made a mockery of any conception of diplomacy as a means of bringing about compromises and other kinds of peaceful settlement of international disputes (see Chapter 27 in this Handbook).

Apprehensions of this kind were first expressed with regard to the French Revolution. Although European international relations before 1789 could hardly be said to have been a model of harmony and goodwill, there was a widespread belief that states conducted their affairs within certain self-imposed limitations and in accordance with generally understood principles of chivalry and courtesy which derived from the aristocratic code of honour shared by all European leaders and were embodied in the institution of diplomacy. The French Revolution was thought by many to place all this in jeopardy. In the words of the Austrian Chancellor, Kaunitz, in a note to Austrian diplomats in July 1791, the spread of the 'spirit of insubordination and revolt' was so menacing that all governments needed to 'make common cause in order to preserve the public peace,

the tranquillity of states, the inviolability of possessions and the good faith of treaties'. The prosperity and harmony of Europe, he continued, were 'intimately linked to a community of interests of all kinds, of internal administration, of gentle and calm manners, of well-informed opinions, and of a beneficent and pure religion, which groups them all in a single family of nations'. This could be threatened not only by the Revolution but, Kaunitz perceptively added, by the necessary counter-measures that would have to be taken against it.<sup>10</sup> The work of diplomats was, for example, inevitably affected by the increasing attention paid by the international community to the internal affairs of states: one by-product of the international counter-revolution after 1789. This may perhaps be seen as an early sign of what were to be increasingly important phenomena in the next 200 years: the growing role of non-state actors in many aspects of international affairs and the corresponding expansion of the international arena from the narrow confines of formal diplomacy to numerous public domains.

### **Key Points**

- Diplomacy as an institution of an international society is founded on the principle of sovereignty, but both the idea of an international society and conventional diplomacy are challenged by revolutionary states.
- The early and continuing US distaste for diplomacy shows that even the least ideological of revolutionary states had problems with diplomacy.
- There were hostile reactions to the French Revolution by conservative forces and international society itself was affected.

### **THE REVOLUTIONARY VIEW OF DIPLOMACY**

Revolutionary states are not identical and the problems some of them have caused for the institution of diplomacy are not unique to

revolutionary situations. There have, for example, been many violations of diplomatic immunity by states that could in no sense be termed 'revolutionary'. Therefore, to talk of a general phenomenon of 'revolutionary diplomacy' is inevitably to oversimplify a more complex reality. With that proviso, it is nonetheless possible to discern certain recurring problems in the interaction between revolutionary states and diplomacy.

The first, which has already been alluded to, derives from the contrast between the contrasting normative assumptions and world views that underpin revolution and diplomacy. Numerous revolutions, including the French, Soviet, Cuban, Chinese and Iranian, proceeded from an ideology that conceived of the world in transnational rather than interstate terms. In theory, at least, the world was seen as divided into peoples or classes or believers and unbelievers rather than states, which are interpreted by various revolutionary ideologies as false or unnatural ways of dividing humanity. There is an obvious contrast between such views and the diplomats' conception of themselves as the personification of the sovereign state. Similarly, the common revolutionary notion of an inevitable conflict between the ideas and classes represented by the revolution and the forces that are hostile to the revolution because it threatens their demise is clearly incompatible with the underlying principle of diplomacy that states share a common interest in the continued smooth functioning of international society that enables them to accept a set of common rules, norms and institutions and seek consensual means of resolving their differences. In Engels' words: 'diplomats of all countries constitute a secret league as against the exoteric public and will never compromise one another openly'.<sup>11</sup>

This fundamental difference of principle is at the heart of the many specific problems that revolutions have caused for diplomacy. If the revolutionary state has an intrinsic suspicion of foreigners this is hardly likely to make the task of the diplomat any easier

and revolutionary states have been foremost in imposing restrictions on the freedom of diplomats to travel within their host countries and to make contact with the local population. When revolutionary states undergo a period of internal terror, as was the case with France, Russia and China, amongst others, diplomats may find it virtually impossible to engage in the most innocent of conversations with the locals whose lives may be endangered simply by virtue of having been seen talking to foreigners.<sup>12</sup> Even in more normal times the diplomats' ability to communicate with individuals may be severely constrained, as a former British ambassador to Moscow discovered: 'The normal role of the foreign diplomatist, which is essentially to get to know the important people and to gain their co-operation by discussion and personal influence was almost wholly ruled out'.<sup>13</sup> Conversely, revolutionary diplomats have gone to some lengths to pursue 'people's diplomacy', or to develop links with fellow believers in their receiving country, most comprehensively when Moscow dominated the world communist movement.

Numerous other petty restrictions, all arising from the same fear of contamination by 'counter-revolutionary forces', may also add to the difficulties faced by diplomats. For example, for many years foreign diplomats in the Soviet Union had to organise all their domestic requirements, from a theatre ticket to a plumbing job, through a single government department, the Burobin.

A related problem, in the sense that it arises from the same suspicion of foreigners and, by association, those citizens of the revolutionary state who consort with them, is evident in the frequent unwillingness of revolutionary states to entrust the conduct of their foreign relations entirely to professional diplomats, who might lack the necessary ideological commitment. The French Revolution was the first of many revolutionary states to decide to send out trustworthy political agents to keep a watchful eye on French diplomats, arguing that '... it is important that those who are

involved in the general administration of the Republic do not serve merely with probity; it is necessary that the agents of the Republic are its most zealous and ardent partisans' and that removal from the revolutionary scene combined with unavoidable contact with anti-revolutionary foreigners might dilute their enthusiasm for the Revolution.<sup>14</sup> These agents were the forerunners of the political commissars who accompanied Soviet diplomats and, in a more extreme version, the Red Guards who replaced Chinese diplomats during the Cultural Revolution, when they were charged with implementing 'Chairman Mao's revolutionary diplomatic line'. China's *People's Daily* newspaper hailed the Red Guard diplomats as 'proletarian diplomatic fighters', whose role was to 'show a dauntless revolutionary spirit, a firm and correct political orientation, an unconquerable fighting will'.<sup>15</sup>

From the perspective of conventional diplomatic practice the greatest problem arises from the revolutionary view of diplomacy as merely another form of struggle against the world-wide enemies of the revolution. Even as late as 1964 a Soviet handbook on diplomacy could argue:

The theoretical foundation of Soviet diplomatic activity is a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the international situation, of the laws of social development, of the laws of class struggle ... a Marxist-Leninist evaluation of international events and the formulation of a line of diplomatic struggle on this basis is a powerful element in Soviet diplomacy.<sup>16</sup>

This issue manifested itself in several distinct ways. First, encounters with such diplomats inevitably had a very large propaganda component, which exacerbated the task of reaching agreement through negotiation. Even one-to-one meetings could be affected in this way, as illustrated in the culture clash evident in the first meeting between the British Consul General to Vietnam and his Cuban opposite number in 1966:

He addressed me didactically ... on the principles of Marxism-Leninism and the inevitability of the triumph of communism throughout the world. I

saw no reason to put up with this and politely pointed out to him that diplomatic relations, which Cuba and the UK enjoyed, were between states and should exclude ideological polemic or the export of political theory.<sup>17</sup>

The same envoy experienced a somewhat worse discourtesy when China's *chargé d'affaires* during the Cultural Revolution greeted him by spitting in his face.<sup>18</sup>

The use of diplomacy for propaganda purposes is merely one facet of a potentially more serious problem: that diplomats may perceive their prime function to be that of spreading the revolutionary cause. The suspicion that revolutionary diplomats may be actively engaged in internal subversion has bedevilled relations between revolutionary and non-revolutionary states since Oliver Cromwell's emissary to Spain pronounced the imminent arrival of the Spanish revolution on his first day there.<sup>19</sup> Even where diplomats are not engaged in revolutionary activities in their receiving state itself, they may sometimes use their embassy as a base for proselytising the revolution elsewhere. One notorious case here involved the French revolutionary diplomat, Genêt, who was sent to the United States in 1793 with instructions to foster anti-monarchical sentiments in those parts of North America that were still controlled by Spain and England. Although he regarded France as a friend of the United States, his activities clearly hindered American efforts to remain neutral in the revolutionary wars and he was expelled. Similarly, the French representative in Madrid in 1795, Mangourit, after making various undiplomatic comments about the Spanish king, was obliged to withdraw after only seven months, while other French diplomats saw their role primarily as one of spreading the new revolutionary values.<sup>20</sup> Missionary activities of this kind have been a part of the diplomacy of many other revolutionary countries including most communist states and Iran. As Trotsky argued of his fellow Bolsheviks, they 'do not belong to the diplomatic school. We ought rather to be considered as soldiers of the revolution'.

## Key Points

- Recurring problems from the time of Cromwell in the interaction between revolutionary states and diplomacy include subversive activities by the revolutionaries and restrictions on the work of conventional diplomats.
- There are contrasting normative assumptions and world views of revolutionary and non-revolutionary states.
- Revolutionary diplomacy suffered early problems in France, the Soviet Union and China.

## RELATIONS WITH 'BOURGEOIS' STATES

Revolutionary regimes frequently go through a period when their hold on power is uncertain and their legitimacy challenged by their predecessors and other contenders. In such circumstances there is often a tendency for such conflicts to spill over into other countries and for revolutionary diplomats to compromise their positions by becoming involved with perceived enemies of the revolution who have escaped to other countries. Even where the revolutionary state refrains from such conduct itself, it may find its diplomats targeted by its enemies abroad, as was the case of a number of White Russian assassinations of Soviet diplomats during the 1920s.<sup>21</sup> A related problem in recent years has been the tactic of kidnapping and sometimes killing diplomats by revolutionary groups opposed to established governments as a means of disrupting the government's external relations.

The ideologically based conviction that international relations with non-revolutionary states must of necessity consist of a form of struggle pending the universal triumph of the revolutionary cause has seriously affected diplomatic relations. This was particularly the case where the Soviet Union was concerned. In the early days of the Bolshevik regime the Soviets assumed that all encounters with the West would inevitably take the form of an

overt or disguised struggle between socialism and capitalism. The revolutionary purpose of participating in such negotiations was to exploit them for propaganda purposes, with the aim of putting their enemies on trial before world opinion, as Trotsky candidly explained in 1917, in discussing his tactics at the forthcoming Brest-Litovsk conference. Demonstrating an early awareness of the opportunities presented by technological developments in communications, he noted that the details of all negotiations would be 'taken down and reported by radio-telegraphists to all peoples, who will be the judges of our discussions'; the overall objective was to reveal the truth about 'the diplomacy of all imperialists'.<sup>22</sup>

The manoeuvres of the Bolsheviks during November 1917 perfectly illustrated their belief that diplomacy was revolutionary struggle by other means. They had published the secret treaties and now issued a call for an armistice on terms that no belligerent power could possibly accept. When their appeal met with its inevitable lack of response, they used this as propaganda against the allied governments. In a radio broadcast on 28 November to the peoples of the belligerent countries, they made traditional ('reactionary') diplomacy an explicit target of their attacks.<sup>23</sup>

When world revolution failed to materialise the Soviets made some adjustments to their approach to diplomacy, opting for a general observance of the conventional norms of diplomacy in their formal relations with other states, while continuing to support world revolution through their 'alternative' diplomatic arm, the Comintern. But their negotiating tactics showed little fundamental change since they remained convinced that those they were negotiating with were implacable enemies. As one reporter noted of Molotov's attitude during the 1947 London Foreign Ministers meeting: 'He is innately suspicious. He seeks for hidden meanings and tricks where there are none. He takes it for granted that his opponents are trying to trick him and put over something nefarious'.<sup>24</sup>



The generally negative attitude of the Soviets towards negotiations probably also resulted in their frequently noted tendency to treat any offered concession as a sign of weakness and to immediately raise the stakes. Diplomatic relations with foreign powers, in the words of an American ambassador to Moscow, tended to be seen by the Soviets as 'armistice relations', pending renewal of open battle.<sup>25</sup>

The negotiating style of Communist China in its first three decades often paralleled that of the Soviet Union, suggesting that this was essentially a product of ideological preconditioning rather than Russian national culture. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–72) the Chinese went far beyond even Soviet conceptions of diplomacy as a form of struggle. One observer characterised their approach to diplomacy during this period as 'unremitting, implacable effort by diplomatic guerrilla warfare', in contrast to the orthodox version of diplomatic negotiations, which he saw as based on 'a natural desire for a common outcome by the accommodation of some mutual conflict and by the development of a common understanding'.<sup>26</sup>

Revolutionary states sometimes attempted to distinguish between their relations with other such states and the rest of the (non-revolutionary) world. Talleyrand was the first to attempt such a distinction between French relations with other republics, notably the United States, with whom it was possible to conclude 'solemn treaties of friendship' and relations with old regime states with whom only 'temporary conventions concerning political and commercial interests' were possible. Typically, this was seen by Talleyrand as an expedient way of overcoming revolutionary aversion to diplomacy, but the policy took an extreme turn in 1795, when only the United States and Switzerland received representatives of full ambassadorial status. Similarly, the Soviet Union used the phrase 'international relations of a new type' to refer to diplomacy among members of the socialist camp. On the other hand, when revolutionary states fell out with each other, the acrimony

between them tended to descend to levels below that of their relations with supposed ideological enemies.

### **Key Points**

- Internal conflicts in revolutionary states can spill over into other countries, especially where opponents of a particular revolution have fled to neighbouring countries.
- There have been attacks on diplomats both in the revolutionary states where mobs have burnt down embassies and on the diplomats from the revolutionary states by exiles opposed to the revolution.
- The negotiating styles of the Soviet Union and China were marked by suspicion and negativity.

## **REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE INSTITUTION OF DIPLOMACY**

Although revolutionaries are not alone in their ability to disregard the rules and conventions of diplomatic relations, their ideologies may legitimate systematic abuse of the institution of diplomacy. Expulsion of diplomats for supporting terrorist activity or for importing arms in the diplomatic bag, for example, have frequently involved diplomats from states founded on revolutions. Similarly, violation of the fundamental norm of diplomatic immunity has often occurred in revolutionary states – for instance when Iran held American diplomats hostage after the 1979 revolution there. Islamic law itself formally acknowledges the principle of diplomatic inviolability<sup>27</sup> (see Chapter 16 in this Handbook). However, in the interpretation of the Ayatollah Khomeini this principle took a poor second place to the need to guard against 'control' by foreigners and to the even more all-embracing 'interests of Islam'. Khomeini established what amounted to a separate diplomatic system to ensure that his edicts were implemented.<sup>28</sup> The Chinese Cultural Revolutionaries were even more dismissive



of the standard diplomatic conventions, asserting 'diplomatic immunity is a product of bourgeois norms'. Interestingly, however, when the possibility of holding foreign diplomats hostage was debated by the French revolutionaries, it was done in the context of fears that other governments might not respect the rights of French envoys.<sup>29</sup> In other words, when the French Assembly considered hostage taking, it did so as a means of enforcing compliance by other states with the established principles of international law. Indeed some of the worst violations of diplomatic immunity during the French Revolution were perpetrated by its opponents, as when Austria captured and imprisoned two fully accredited French diplomats in 1793.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the central point here is that revolutions help to create an atmosphere in which respect for the conventions of international society tends to diminish on all sides.

The impact of revolutionary states on rules and conventions has been felt even in relatively trivial areas, such as dress and etiquette. Both American and French diplomats went to some lengths to demonstrate republican simplicity in their attire. And when a would-be-helpful French diplomat tried to advise the first American diplomats sent to Paris to pay more heed to observing existing diplomatic formalities, John Adams brusquely informed him that 'the dignity of North America does not consist in diplomatic ceremonials or any of the subtleties of etiquette; it consists solely in reason, justice, truth, the rights of mankind and the interests of the nations of Europe'. Similarly, when Litvinov, who was sent to London by the Bolsheviks to try to obtain British recognition, was not accorded the status that would have been due to a properly accredited diplomat, he claimed 'like Mr Trotsky, I do not attach much importance to matters of etiquette and unnecessary formalities'.<sup>31</sup>

The matter of diplomatic titles has also exercised the minds of revolutionaries over the last 200 years. For many years after winning independence, the United States maintained a

studied amateurism in its approach to foreign relations, including keeping many missions at consular level only. During the early years of the French Revolution, proposals were put forward to replace the then current range of diplomatic titles with the single title *nonce de France* (French nuncio), while other questions of etiquette were carefully scrutinised with a view to arriving at politically correct alternatives.<sup>32</sup>

Diplomatic ranks in the Soviet Union were abolished in 1918, being replaced with the single title of Polpred (plenipotentiary). At the same time the Bolsheviks made known their intention to treat equally all foreign diplomats regardless of their ranks. However, as early as 1922, Andrei Sabanin, a member of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID), had noted the disadvantages of the Soviet policy with regard to diplomatic ranks, arguing that it put Soviet diplomats in an impossible position, since they were unable to claim the status (and associated benefits) to which they were entitled under 'bourgeois' diplomatic norms.<sup>33</sup> This plea, from one of the few Russian diplomats practising before October 1917 to have been allowed to continue, was followed in 1924 by a partial bow to the inevitable: the distinction 'with the title of ambassador' was bestowed upon certain Polpreds. In a more recent case, when Colonel Gaddafi renamed the Libyan embassies 'People's Bureaux' in 1979, this was initially objected to by many receiving states and not accepted by a few, who were concerned that such embassies might have a similarly unorthodox view of their functions.<sup>34</sup>

### Key Points

- There have been specific examples of the abuse of diplomacy such as importing arms in the diplomatic bag, supporting terrorist acts in receiving countries and holding diplomats hostage.
- Revolutionary diplomats' contempt for various diplomatic formalities include dress, ceremonials and etiquette.
- Revolutionary states have searched for alternative diplomatic titles and ranks.

## CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE

As the discussion to this point suggests, revolutions and revolutionary states pose a multifaceted challenge to diplomacy: a challenge that has its roots in the fundamental ideological incompatibility between the two but that can extend to a wide ranging abuse of diplomatic privileges, a disregard for various diplomatic niceties and a distrust by the revolutionary leadership of even its own professional diplomats. Faced with such a sweeping assault on the basic principles of classical diplomacy, non-revolutionary governments have had little choice but to respond in ways which also undermined the traditional role of the diplomat. These included, for instance, a greater tendency to rely on summit diplomacy with the masters of the revolutionary diplomats on the assumption that there was little point in negotiating with individuals who lacked the freedom and status their non-revolutionary counterparts possessed (see Chapter 19 in this Handbook). There have also been developments of what one might classify as 'track 2 diplomacy', where unofficial meetings of private individuals from the revolutionary state and its non-revolutionary opponents have discussed their differences, the first such meeting taking place in 1960 after the shooting down of the American U2 spy plane over the Soviet Union.<sup>35</sup> In addition, all states have been obliged to play the new game of public diplomacy, to prepare against terrorism and subversion and to engage in the relentless propaganda war that was a basic element in revolutionary diplomacy<sup>36</sup> (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook). They have also felt obliged to respond in kind to restrictions placed upon their own diplomats by revolutionary states. On balance, therefore, the impact of revolutionary states upon the institution of diplomacy has been profoundly negative. No single change in diplomatic practices may be attributed solely to the impact of

revolutionary states since other factors, including technology and the imperatives of the modern democratic state, have probably played a greater part, but some impact is undeniable. The same may be said of the larger picture of the evolution of international society in its entirety. As Paul Sharp suggests, international societies in one sense are 'sites of continual arguments about how life is and ought to be organised'.<sup>37</sup> The increasing emphasis on seeking collective solutions to numerous problems – including those identified by revolutionary states – in multilateral negotiations is part of this process and one which, to some extent, may be seen as one of the long term consequences of revolutions.

This, however, is not the whole picture since diplomacy has also had a significant impact upon revolutionary states. A common experience of such states in the immediate aftermath of their revolution has been the discovery that, whatever their longer term aspirations to transform the world in their own image, for the present they had little choice but to accept international society on its own terms unless they desired total isolation. The paradigmatic case here was Soviet Russia. On 14 January 1918, the Bolsheviks arrested the Rumanian Ambassador to Russia but, faced with a unanimous protest by the entire diplomatic corps on the grounds that this violated rules 'respected for centuries by all governments', they released him on the following day.<sup>38</sup> This was the first of numerous adaptations of Soviet diplomacy to the international society within which it found itself unavoidably located. At first such changes, which ranged from adopting the conservative clothing styles of diplomats to agreeing in treaties not to promote revolution, were explained by Soviet ideologues as necessary tactical manoeuvres in a world that was still dominated by enemies of the Revolution. In other words, Moscow was, in theory, pursuing a dual policy in which the objectives remained the same but temporary concessions had to be made to take account of certain unfortunate realities. It was not until the Gorbachev era in

the 1980s that Soviet leaders felt able openly to acknowledge that there might actually be some intrinsic value in the international rules and conventions which they had initially adopted as a cynical tactic. As Gorbachev's foreign minister, Shevardnadze, explained: 'we should not pretend, Comrades, that norms and notions of what is proper, of what is called civilized conduct in the world community do not concern us. If you want to be accepted in it you must observe them'.<sup>39</sup>

It is easy to see why diplomacy has been a particular target of revolutionary states. Especially in its eighteenth and nineteenth century forms, diplomacy represented everything that revolutionary states tend to stand against. It was an activity carried out by aristocrats who saw themselves as the physical incarnation of international society and the upholders of international order and whose role was to endeavour to achieve agreement and compromise solutions through secret negotiations that were to be conducted in accordance with well-established rules of courtesy and etiquette. Furthermore, traditional diplomacy belongs in a world governed by such assumptions as reason of state, the primacy of foreign policy over domestic considerations and the rights of great powers. In its fundamental principles, in its form and in its content, therefore, diplomacy could be seen as the antithesis of revolutionary values and the encounter between the two has been consistently uneasy.

Yet it has been virtually impossible for revolutionary states to avoid becoming involved in conventional diplomacy. However transnational or universal their conception of themselves, they have been unable to escape the only kind of identity that legitimised their existence in the eyes of others: sovereign statehood, a status that conferred benefits as well as obligations. But statehood entailed membership of a society of sovereign states whose chief medium of communication is through diplomacy. Whatever public and private reservations revolutionary states may have had about the operational norms and

conventions of diplomacy, in most cases they found it difficult to conduct their formal relations by other means. Revolutions have threatened and, to a limited extent, changed diplomacy but the institution has survived.

### Key Points

- Varying responses of non-revolutionary states to the challenges posed by revolutionary states include a greater emphasis on summit diplomacy, public diplomacy and track 2 diplomacy.
- There has been a broad impact of revolutions on international society, including collective responses to some of the issues raised by revolutions.
- There have been violations of diplomatic immunity by several states, including Iran in 1979, despite Islamic injunctions against such violations.
- Once a revolutionary group wins leadership of a state it unavoidably forms part of a world of other states and finds some acceptance of the established practices of the rest of the world is unavoidable – a process one can term 'socialisation'.

### CONCLUSION

This chapter has considered the impact of states which, following a revolution, attempt to transfer their revolutionary doctrines to their international relations. The specific effects of this endeavour have included a generally suspicious attitude towards the institution of diplomacy by the revolutionary states and a corresponding concern by established states that the revolutionary state might seek to export its doctrines and practices. From as early as the English Civil War, revolutionary states have seen themselves as representing some larger entity, whether that be the opponents of monarchy, the rights of peoples to live as free nations, the working class or, in Islam, the *umma* – the community of believers. In all of these cases diplomacy has been seen as a form of struggle by the revolutionary states. The responses by the

established powers have at times led to armed conflict, as in the case of the French revolutionary wars, or to the more complex range of confrontations that characterised the Cold War. The many other impacts of revolution on diplomacy have included violations of diplomatic immunity and contempt by the revolutionaries for many of the formal aspects of diplomacy.

One rather pressing question to which this discussion gives rise is whether Islamist extremism in general and the so-called Islamic State (IS) in particular form the latest chapter in the ongoing saga of revolutionary diplomacy. A consistent theme in some Islamist writings since the seventh century has been a particularly bellicose interpretation of the doctrines of *jihad* as requiring struggle against all non-believers until all the world is united in a single caliphate.<sup>40</sup> The notion of a caliphate is itself a denial of the principle that there can be several distinct Muslim states, which, of course, is the claim to legitimacy of IS.

While there can be no denying that IS may be seen as representing the latest twist in the long tale of revolutionary challenges to the prevailing world order, there are several reasons why it is extremely unlikely to rise to the level of threat posed by the French and Russian revolutions. First, all members of the international society of sovereign states share the same interest in preventing any serious contender to an alternative order. Second, as it has in the past, international society is in the process of developing both violent and non-violent means of dealing with the various forms of Islamist extremism. Finally, when the murderous tactics of IS have caused even Al-Qaeda to protest, it is unlikely that any serious attempt will be made to engage in negotiations with IS. While nothing is impossible, it is hard to envisage a scenario where the outside world decides to employ diplomacy with a more civilised IS embarked upon the normal processes of socialisation rather than continuing to work towards its total destruction.

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# Conference Diplomacy

Paul Meerts

## INTRODUCTION

Conference diplomacy can be defined as *multiparty diplomatic negotiation*, where diplomatic negotiation can be regarded as an ‘exchange of concessions and compensations in a framework of international order accepted by sovereign entities’ (Meerts 2015: 11) (see Chapter 17 in this Handbook). Multiparty means complexity, which will have positive and negative effects on the process of give and take between the representatives of the parties involved (Crump and Zartman 2003). One positive effect is the inclusion of stakeholders – that is, those countries and other concerned parties such as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations – that have an interest in the negotiation process at hand. Including the relevant actors will enhance the probability that the conference’s outcomes will be implemented. The negative side of inclusion, however, is the ability of spoilers among the stakeholders to prevent an outcome that is undesirable to them, or to

weaken the final agreement in such a way that it will be harmless to their interests and thereby ineffective for the collective whole.

Most conferences nowadays are focal points in a long-term ongoing negotiation process, often in the framework of an inter-governmental organization such as the United Nations, African Union, Gulf Cooperation Council, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Organization of American States, or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (Walker 2004). Being structured and with a history of precedents as well as a perspective of the future, these conferences form relatively stable structures that allow for more or less successful outcomes by protecting the processes (Meerts 2015: 313). The example of the European Union as an intergovernmental and supranational organization shows how important this is for effective decision-making. However, such organizations have an interest in being relevant on their own merits. They might thus give priority to their own needs, instead of those of the community that they represent.



Not all conference diplomacy is undertaken within the framework of international organizations. In cases of conflicts, where negotiation will rather be defined as ‘war by peaceful means’, conferences can be a one-time event that is not embedded in an international organizational structure. In this case, the negotiation process will be relatively unprotected and thereby more vulnerable to power dynamics. Although unhampered by a bureaucratic structure, the process in such one-time events has to manage without organizational protection, making it vulnerable to failure. Although conference diplomacy is multilateral by definition, bilateral, trilateral, and plurilateral negotiations are essential components of its processes. Plurilateral negotiating, which involves bargaining among several, but not too many, negotiators, will normally be done away from the table, either in corridors or behind closed doors in small rooms, but it might well happen in the conference room during breaks, in so-called ‘huddles’. Huddles are flexible groups of negotiators that continuously change, trying to prepare for successful progress during the formal sessions. This interchange between formality and informality is an important characteristic of conference diplomacy, as are the notions of procedural frameworks, which involve such factors as rules and regulations, time and timing, power and persuasion, and diplomatic behavior and political statements (Kaufmann 1996).

This chapter examines conference diplomacy by looking at its evolution, the procedures and processes of international negotiation, the role of negotiators and the countries and organizations that they represent, and negotiators’ strategies and tactics, as well as the prospects for conference diplomacy in the near future.

### **Key Points**

- Conference diplomacy is a multilateral diplomatic negotiation process that is often part of an ongoing negotiation process within a multilateral organization.

- The multilateral organization protects the negotiation processes and this protection enhances the effectiveness of negotiation as an alternative to warfare.
- Formal sessions help to keep the order; informal sessions are essential for the give and take and thereby enable progress in the negotiation process.

### **THE EVOLUTION OF CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY**

Tracing the evolution of international diplomatic negotiation from early times shows how some aspects became a regulated multilateral process that supported conference diplomacy. It is evident from ancient clay tablets that negotiators in the Middle East some 5,000 years ago were negotiating and exchanging treaties. In those early times, diplomatic negotiations were bilateral meetings between absolute rulers or the councils of city-states, which sometimes negotiated directly, but normally sent their envoys to bargain with the other party. In Renaissance Italy, the city-states not only used special representatives, but also established more or less permanent diplomatic posts in each other’s towns. Diplomacy thus became more regulated, and regulations are, this chapter contends, beneficial for effective negotiation. Machiavelli, who is often portrayed as a manipulative diplomatic player, nonetheless saw the importance of regulating diplomatic relations. Diplomacy thus slowly but surely became more complex, as more adversaries had to deal with more conflicts between them. Negotiation was not always enough to settle disputes, however, so mediators were asked to help the opponents to solve their mutual problems (see Chapter 18 in this Handbook). These third parties were negotiators who either had no stake in the conflict, or were non-contending stakeholders who wanted the conflict to end. The next step was diplomatic negotiations in which more than two parties participated. The most famous of the early conferences were those held in

Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years War in the Holy Roman Empire of German nations, as well as the Eighty Years War between the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of the United Netherlands.

The Peace of Westphalia changed the meaning of sovereignty. It was concluded in 1648 through a series of bilateral negotiations in the cities of Münster and Osnabrück, and it declared for the first time that all countries were legally equal. Westphalia is widely seen as the mother of all diplomatic conferences and the beginning of the era of procedural frameworks, because it helped to create more effective negotiation processes as an alternative to warfare (Holsti 1991). Essentially, the conference was an assembly of conferences – that is, the parties came together in official ceremonial meetings and, while these acted as focal points, the real bargaining took place elsewhere, most of the time in secret (see Chapter 36 in this Handbook). In the case of Westphalia, the countries negotiated in each other's places of residence, often indirectly through Italian mediators sent by the Pope and Venice. These officials, who studied the letters handed over to them by the ambassadors who took part in the Westphalia negotiations, often pressed for changes to make the demands more acceptable to their opponent.

Two hundred years later, the Congress of Vienna (1814–15) became the first plurilateral negotiation, although not yet multilateral, as the number of real negotiating parties was kept at five: Russia; Austria; Prussia; Great Britain; and (as a latecomer) France. Interestingly, the rulers realized that they should not exclude a major power like France, even if France had lost the war. Excluded, however, were the other interested countries and parties. They were consulted, but the five did not allow them to be part of the decision-making process. The outsiders were kept busy by salons, operas, ballets, balls, excursions, and fireworks that kept them away from the inner circle, who decided for them. Some middle powers, such as Bavaria, were allowed some influence when they acted as go-betweens.

The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 ended the First World War and became a major event in the history of diplomacy. As with the Vienna conference, representatives of hundreds of sovereignties presented their credentials in Paris, but only five were included in the inner circle: the United States; France; Great Britain; Italy; and Japan. Moreover, the negotiation was *de facto* trilateral, as Japan did not really participate and Italy's role was comparatively weak. Other countries had a more important role to play in Paris than in Vienna, and voiced their concerns in separate meetings. In that sense, a multilateral process surrounded the 'exclusive zone' of the inner circle comprising the five major players. Some 'outsiders' were particularly successful in overruling the principle of self-determination, including Romania and Poland, which were regarded as functioning as buffers against the Soviet Union and were therefore allowed to annex huge territories with non-nationals such as Hungarians and Ukrainians. Others, such as the fledgling major powers of Germany and the Soviet Union, were kept outside the negotiation process. This exclusion from the conference had grave consequences for the future and demonstrates that inclusion helps to create an effective negotiation process, whereas exclusion can be the source of ineffective implementation.

The League of Nations (1919–46) could be regarded as the first fully fledged multilateral negotiation process. It did some good work in resolving territorial questions after the First World War, but in the security field it did not live up to expectations. Until the mid-twentieth century, bilateral, trilateral, and plurilateral negotiations dominated the political and diplomatic scene, like those in Munich in 1938 with Germany, Italy, Great Britain, and France, and during and after the Second World War with the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom. It was only with the San Francisco Conference in 1945, which created the United Nations, that a reasonably effective multilateral diplomatic conference came into existence

(Holsti 1991). Its strong plurilateral nucleus, the United Nations Security Council, helped to reduce complexity and enhance efficiency.

Through the institutionalization of rules and regulations, such organizations enhanced the effectiveness of conference diplomacy and the processes of international negotiation, while also securing and sanctioning their implementation. The growth in the number and quality of international organizations strengthened diplomacy as an instrument in managing international affairs through negotiation instead of warfare (Meerts 2015).

### **Key Points**

- Changes occurred in the understanding of sovereignty and the need for sovereignties to work together because of interdependency.
- There was growth in the number of diplomatic conferences and the creation of international organizations stabilizing international relations between sovereign states.
- As the number of participating states has a negative impact on a negotiation process's effectiveness, the dilemma of inclusiveness and exclusiveness comes to the fore.

## **THE NATURE OF CONTEMPORARY CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY: PROCESS, PEOPLE, AND POWER**

### **Process**

Diplomatic conferences are complex and complicated. They require a process, or rules of procedure, to guide the proceedings of the main actors in the conference – that is, the negotiating parties' delegations, groupings of parties (caucuses), formal and informal mediators and facilitators, president of the overall meeting, the chairs of sub-meetings, and last but not least the secretariat. A draft text has to be prepared in consultation with others. It will then be circulated among those who were not involved in the informal drafting, after

which it has to be deposited with the secretariat. The secretariat translates the text into the conference's formal languages and circulates the text as an official document. The text's sponsors give an oral introduction, after which there is a debate. Amendments and sub-amendments might be introduced, circulated, and debated and voted upon. A negotiation working group of country representatives and conference staff could be installed by the president of the conference, and its outcomes will be debated and voted upon by the plenary. After a decision has been taken, delegations might wish to explain their votes or interpret the resolution (Kaufmann 1996).

The negotiation process can be divided into stages, but these will not follow each other in a neat sequential way. Indeed, negotiations tend to be circular – that is, negotiations proceed in a certain direction, then fall back to an earlier stage, usually because countries are hesitant to make decisions early. To negotiate is to take risks, and diplomats are rarely risk-takers, particularly in complex conference situations where their political bosses and their parliament are absent, yet have to be consulted before a negotiation process comes to an end. This, together with the multitude of issues and actors involved, plus the many rules of procedure and a complex, sometimes nontransparent international institution, ensures that the negotiation process in diplomatic conferences is slow and painful. Moreover, elections in democratic countries can topple governments, and even if they do not, it is often wise to stall the negotiation process for a few months before elections, or go to the other extreme and hasten its conclusion. There can also be shifts in the international arena that might have a negative influence on the proceedings, although sometimes the opposite can also be true.

In practice, the negotiation process starts with a pre-negotiation phase, followed by an exploration phase, selection phase, decision-making phase, and a post-agreement or implementation phase. In many organizations these cycles are connected to earlier

negotiation processes, as well as to future ones. The process is part of a wider political process, involving other issues, present, past, and future. The chronology is of great importance. The shadow of the past – that is, positive or negative experiences with the other parties – can either drive the negotiation forward or stall it, and even destroy it. Emotional issues can block progress, even if these issues are rooted in the distant past. Examples of a negative shadow of the past can be found in traumas such as the defeat of the Serbs against the Turks in Kosovo in 1389, the slaughtering of the Armenians in 1915, or more recently the events in the Balkans during the breakup of the former Yugoslavia. In some past cases, including the defeats of the French nobility by the British longbowmen at the battles of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt (in 1346, 1356 and 1415), the events have been digested and have become ongoing good-humored sport between French and British diplomats. In other cases, however, past events, such as the Japanese atrocities during the Second World War, have not been forgotten by the Koreans and the Chinese, and linger over present-day negotiations.

After the pre-negotiation process, which is often the most difficult phase, when adversaries sometimes have to be dragged to the negotiation table, a process of exploration will follow. This process of exploration is very much influenced by culture. Some cultures are very results-oriented and negotiators will feel that they are wasting their time if the real bargaining phase has not begun. Other cultures see it as vital for a good outcome to take a lot of time in getting to know the subject matter and the interests and personalities of the opponents. A mismatch between these perceptions might derail the whole negotiation. The same is true for the selection phase, which is a mixture of exploration and bargaining that avoids finite decision-making. Decision-making concludes the negotiation process as such. Finally, there is the post-negotiation phase, in which the agreement will have to be ratified and implemented.

The main decision-making procedures are unanimity, consensus, and voting. Under unanimity, all parties will have to give a positive vote to the final contract; under consensus, some parties might abstain; and under voting, there can be simple or qualified majority voting. The procedure of decision-making can have an enormous impact on the substance of the agreement, especially if there are numerous parties with different expectations. The more parties there are, the stricter the rules should be for the organization to be an effective decision-making apparatus. Under consensus, parties have veto rights and can therefore easily spoil the process. This spoiling can be limited by introducing decision-making by qualified or even simple majority voting, as opposing countries might then be sidelined. However, even if one group of countries can outvote the others, the countries will normally pretend that consensus has been reached. Neither countries nor people like to lose face. The United Nations Security Council is an interesting example of a combination of a consensus and a voting system. A Security Council resolution will be adopted if nine of the fifteen members are in favor, provided that there is no veto against it.

There are many different ways to approach the process of negotiation (Jönsson 2001). The linear way presented above is very 'Western', as if negotiation is a chess game, with an opening, mid-, and endgame. In China, however, there is the perception that the negotiating process should rather be seen as a spiral, in a circular way, connected to events in the past and the future. Other countries focus on the overlapping interests of the parties, and the question of to what extent there is common ground (Iklé 1964). It is also possible to see the negotiation as a process of concession-making. In Russian culture, concession by one party is often seen as a sign of weakness, while in US culture, concession-making is regarded as a rational way to connect to the other party and to push things forward.

## People

A second aspect of diplomatic conferences concerns the role of people. Individual negotiators can influence the outcome of the processes in conference diplomacy. People matter. Of course, this depends very much on their position in the conference proceedings, which country they represent, and how high they are in the hierarchy of their delegation and ministry. It also depends on the culture from which the negotiators come. In cultures with huge power differences, the negotiators' position will be stronger than in egalitarian cultures. The same is true for diplomats from so-called high-context cultures and those from individualistic societies (Cohen 1997).

The role that diplomats hold in conferences has varied over time. Diplomats in bygone centuries were, in theory, even more dependent on their masters than they are today. After a failed negotiation, the absolute ruler might decide to behead the negotiator, or at least to have his beard shaved off. In reality, however, it might well be that the professional diplomat of the past was more influential than his political master. For example, during the Westphalia Conferences (1648), the absolute rulers were far away in their capitals and could hardly connect with their representatives, not least because the civil war was raging around the cities of Münster and Osnabrück. Furthermore, the diplomats had much in common: they spoke the same language (Latin), and had common norms and values of chivalry.

Remarkably, despite the many challenges to professional negotiators discussed above, this common culture shared by European diplomats during the Westphalian period can be recognized within the diplomatic corps of today (see Chapter 14 in this Handbook). Some 300 years later, there is a common diplomatic negotiation culture in the world. Diplomats speak a common language (English, although French is still strongly present), but more importantly, they understand that give and take are absolutely vital.

Although diplomats are representing their country or institution, their nationality is slowly but truly becoming of less importance. They get to know each other, so the usual stereotypes, while not withering away, lose their political significance. Perhaps this is the greatest value of the huge conference diplomacy system: through day-by-day contacts in a strong common context, the shadow of the past has become more and more irrelevant.

One explanation for why the common diplomatic culture faded between Westphalia and today's global system is that professional diplomatic negotiators have always been under threat from politicians, whether sovereign dynasties in the past, or elected and non-elected professional politicians today. Slowly but surely the politicians moved into the realm of conference diplomacy. As one of the first politicians at the negotiating table, Tsar Alexander I of Russia mingled with diplomatic negotiators such as Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, Klemens von Metternich, Karl August von Hardenberg, and Henry Robert Stewart Castlereagh. They were *de jure* ministers, and thus politicians, and they were indeed agents of their imperial and royal masters, or their parliament. De facto, however, they commonly decided on the fate of Europe, with the Tsar as the odd man out. During the course of the eighteenth century, the politicians became more and more influential, but there was still no clear separation between them and the diplomatic negotiators. In Paris in 1919, however, with the presence of US President Woodrow Wilson, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau, and British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, the rulers themselves obtained a dominant place at the table.

From the Paris conference onwards, politicians started to push the diplomats aside, so that they increasingly became agents who relied on the mandate of their chiefs (see Chapter 7 in this Handbook). On the one hand, this is favorable for the negotiation process in a conference diplomacy setting, as the highest in rank can take decisions without much



consultation with their constituencies, thus enhancing decision-making and making it more effective. On the other hand, however, it is disadvantageous, as these decisions might be taken on the spur of the moment, as was clearly visible in Paris and during negotiations in Munich and Yalta, as well as during the top-level meetings during the Cold War. If the chemistry between leaders is good, as it was between US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, the negotiations will proceed in a positive direction. Both leaders, for example, convinced their own delegations to start meaningful negotiations, although their underlings were very hesitant about doing so. This is all the more interesting because the political visions of the two leaders were diametrically opposite. Yet they had a common personal feeling, and this proved to be more important.

Other examples include the good chemistry between French President François Mitterrand and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, or at least a kind of common understanding – even if they have completely opposite opinions – such as between Russia's President Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Yet there are also examples of leaders who dislike(d) each other, such as French President Jacques Chirac and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi. As politicians often have strong egos, the necessity to defend their reputation might lead to 'egotiation' (Meerts 2015: 219–42), a situation in which the face of the political leader takes precedence over the interests of the country.

Modern communication technology might undermine the position of the diplomatic negotiator: it enhances the growing grip of the political leader on his or her diplomatic agents, and it increases transparency, which limits the professional negotiator's autonomy over the negotiation process, not least because ordinary civil servants and non-state actors can participate or influence negotiations (see Chapter 44 in this Handbook). These 'new' actors seem to be everywhere in diplomatic

conferences and in several cases they marginalize diplomatic negotiators to the extent that one can question how meaningful the future diplomat will be. Conference diplomacy might become 'undiplomatized', meaning that common conference norms and values might be ameliorated and diplomatic culture weakened, resulting in negotiations becoming less smooth, more bureaucratized, and perhaps more politicized. This could lead to less-effective international negotiation processes, more stalemates, and more unresolved conflicts. The positive impact of the development of protective regimes might thus be undone by the erosion of the processes themselves (Hale *et al.* 2013).

### **Power**

A third aspect of contemporary conference diplomacy concerns the issue of power. The differences in power between parties in diplomatic conferences are, of course, of great importance in understanding why the process has led to a certain outcome. Power, however, is not one-dimensional. A country can have huge power resources, but that does not mean that it can apply this power to any situation on the ground. There is also 'situational power'. This concept can be relevant to the process of negotiation, which is itself a situational process. This means that diplomats can enhance their structural resources through 'process power', such as looking for allies and support from domestic and international constituencies, being well informed and experienced, or being charismatic and legitimate. Too much power difference can be problematic, but some difference in power can be helpful for reaching satisfactory conclusions (Zartman and Rubin 2000).

Dominant powers can have both negative and positive roles in diplomatic conferences. They can exclude parties, which may lead to unresolved conflicts, as the excluded parties might not be willing to comply in implementing the agreements. Yet dominant powers can



also be the motor behind diplomatic conferences, which would otherwise end in the middle of nowhere. So-called middle powers can help to smooth relationships between the more and the less powerful (see Chapter 23 in this Handbook). However, if the great powers cannot and do not want to cooperate, diplomatic conferences will be of no avail (see Chapter 22 in this Handbook). In many cases, the great powers do not really care about the conflict at hand; rather, they are anxious about the power balance between them and other dominant players in the world. The downfall of the Soviet Union gave rise to a unipolar world, in which the United States assumed that there was no other power to counterbalance it. As a result, the United States believed it had to be the reality on the ground that acted as a barrier against further power expansion, with wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as a consequence. Powerful countries can get entrapped by weaker opponents. A rational decision to take action might lead to an irrational situation in which the less powerful state gains a hold over the more powerful. Entrapment, then, is ‘a decision-making process in which [actors] strengthen their commitment to a previously chosen, although failing, course of action to justify or recover their prior investments’ (Brockner and Rubin 1985: 5).

Diplomatic conferences help to soften power asymmetry among the negotiating parties. The rules and regulations, common norms and values, and perhaps the organizational culture of the institution might prevent the powerful nations from running amok. Yet in the end, it is politics that decides the outcome of diplomatic conferences. If the permanent members of the UN Security Council are at odds with each other, nothing will move. The situation in Syria since 2011 is an example of the impossibility of putting an end to the fighting if the interested great powers have more opposing than common interests. Non-intervention in Syria is also a signal of the enhanced awareness of the Security Council’s permanent members about the

dangers and consequences of interventions. They recognize the potential for entrapment. Powerful actors use and misuse diplomatic conferences for their own interests. Yet these conferences allow the smaller powers to gain some shelter against the stronger countries’ overt power. When part of a conference, smaller powers cannot be totally overlooked, hence the smaller countries’ interest in the process of European conference diplomacy. They are an institutional part of the negotiation process and, although their position can be more or less ignored at the very end, being ignored completely will not be likely. If Germany, France, and the United Kingdom agree on the necessity for certain steps, not much can be brought against them. Decisions will be made according to their wishes. If they cannot agree, however, the process of European conference decision-making will come to a dead end, and countries will have to wait for, or work on, the political or economic context to change. The strength of the international organization thus plays an important role in equalizing the power differences of the member states through common rules, regulations, understandings, and values. It prevents the major powers from forcing smaller powers into agreements that weaker member states do not like. This, in turn, enhances the confidence of the small countries – and most EU members are small – in a fair outcome, therefore enhancing the effectiveness of the negotiation processes.

### **Key Points**

- There are different stages in the negotiation process, such as exploration and decision-making. The lengths of these stages vary by culture.
- The position, character, experience, and ego of negotiators have quite an impact on the flow and outcome of the negotiation process.
- Power is important and can be structural and situational. In some cases situational power proves to be more effective than structural power resources, thereby enhancing the chances of minor parties being the winner.

## PERSPECTIVES ON CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY: PRESENT AND FUTURE

One of the earliest examples of negotiation analysis is *The Art of Negotiating with Sovereign Princes*, by the French diplomat François de Callières (Callières 1716). After the Second World War, research on negotiation increased. A range of academics tried to qualify or quantify the processes of international negotiation, both inside and outside diplomatic conferences. The main aim of all these studies is to explain the outcome by the process that unfolded. This approach was, and still is, problematic. There are so many factors of influence, from the characteristics of the process itself, the people and parties involved, to the organizational and power-related context in which these negotiations flow to their end-stage. Moreover, research on these factors continues to be difficult to conduct. A fundamental issue remains the practitioners' unwillingness to allow researchers (and trainers) to sit in on real negotiation processes. Another problem concerns methodology: for example, the impact of culture on the researcher's analysis and on the trainer in diplomatic negotiation. It is hardly possible to have a value-free approach. Perhaps this is not disastrous in itself, so long as those involved are well aware of their biases. Moreover, these various problems can be addressed in international academic conferences, negotiation programs, and through international academic journals such as *International Negotiation*. For example, the Processes of International Negotiation (PIN) program tries to explain the mechanics of conference diplomacy by mainly qualitative analysis, while the Group Decision and Negotiation (GDN) program focuses more on the quantitative aspects.

Training for conference diplomats is essential in order for them to be as effective as possible in defending the interests of their country or organization. Parallel to research on negotiation, seminars on training diplomats have gradually come to the fore.

Understanding the importance of diplomacy in establishing a powerful position in Europe, Cardinal de Richelieu founded the first diplomatic academy in 1626. Negotiation seminars for diplomats were, however, slow to develop. While many diplomatic academies were established after the Second World War – with an exception being the diplomatic academy of Vienna, which was established in 1754 as the 'Oriental Academy' – training on conference diplomacy was in short supply. There were seminars for commercial negotiation, but the first seminars for diplomats only appeared in the 1960s, mainly in the form of simulation games. It was only in the 1990s that real diplomatic negotiation training came to flourish, and even today it is a scarce commodity. Interestingly enough, one would expect practitioners to help researchers to understand the intricacies of diplomatic bargaining, while researchers would then instruct the trainers, who could thereby train new practitioners. This is, however, not the case. These three specializations – practitioners, researchers, and trainers – stand alone and seldom exchange their findings. Simulated negotiations are of great help, and attempts to come as close as possible to reality are quite successful, but in the end it is not the real thing. Nevertheless, for those who want to get a feel for conference diplomacy, the family board game 'Diplomacy' is the best experience one can get, although friendships might be damaged forever (Sharp 1978). It is said to be the favorite board game of Henry Kissinger!

As for conference diplomacy itself, its future role is not expected to diminish. Indeed, it will be of greater significance in the coming years, as its alternative – warfare – is becoming more and more costly in terms of human and material losses. While two-thirds of the conflicts in the last 50 years have been decided through conference diplomacy, one-third was ended by military victory by one party over the other (Mack 2007: 35). This trend of the growing significance of ending conflicts through words instead of weapons is expected to continue in the coming decades.

(*Conflict Barometer* 2012: 2–3). However, the nature of diplomatic negotiation and conference diplomacy will change. Diplomats are expected to play a less prominent role, outflanked by politicians on the one hand and ordinary civil servants on the other (Melissen and van Staden 2000). Moreover, one sees the growing influence of non-state actors, from non-governmental organizations to individuals working through social media. The impact of these constituencies on conference diplomacy will grow accordingly, and, along with more transparency, diplomatic negotiations will be more boxed in and lack the relative autonomy needed to be effective.

In view of the observations above, a few recommendations are useful. First, it would be wise to give researchers and trainers access to real negotiation processes in diplomatic conferences. By studying the flow of these processes and the diplomats' behavior, valuable material for analysis and thereby for training new practitioners can be obtained. Additionally, these negotiation experts could be used as process consultants during conference diplomacy sessions, as miscommunication, mismanagement of the proceedings, and bad strategies and tactics are major problems in negotiation. Conferences often fail because of negotiators' inability to oversee the situation and to understand the real significance of their opponents' internal and external positions.

Second, the diplomat might specialize further and become the main communicator in the process of merging the interests of countries and organizations into one outcome by which all the parties can abide. This means that the diplomat will have to connect more effectively with other civil servants and representatives who operate in the international arena, instead of focusing so much on diplomatic colleagues, which might breed 'group-think', becoming too inward-looking. If diplomats do not become more outward-looking, they will make themselves irrelevant in the future.

Third, diplomats will have to manage their political masters and their constituencies, and

the media, in a more modern and forthcoming way, which will not be easy. Public diplomacy is of the essence here, as the populace back home, and sometimes the politicians as well, have no real understanding of the possibilities and impossibilities of the negotiation process.

Last but not least, conference diplomacy itself will have to be reformed, and this might prove to be the most difficult task of all. This can be seen with the ongoing problems in reforming the UN Security Council, the EU's struggle to restructure itself in order to be more effective after enlargement, and the failed attempts to make the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) more effective in the face of Chinese moves to claim islands in the South China Sea. Reforming the conferences themselves is difficult. It involves political will, and political will depends on synergy among the member states' interests, and the (im)balance between cooperation and competition. The world's growing interdependence stresses the need for closer cooperation. In order to cooperate more effectively, conference diplomacy is still one of the most important instruments in helping to create some world order. This order is not self-evident and eternal. 'Every international order must sooner or later face the impact of two tendencies challenging its cohesion: either a redefinition of legitimacy or a significant shift of the balance of power' (Kissinger 2014: 365). It is up to conference diplomacy to manage these changes.

### Key Points

- Practitioners, researchers, and trainers should try to work more closely together in order to enhance the effectiveness of conference diplomacy.
- It would be useful to find some kind of arrangement that will harmonize relationships among politicians, diplomats, and civil servants.
- The effectiveness of many diplomatic conferences and organizations will have to be enhanced for them to remain important international players, but as they often have to reform themselves, not much can be expected from this modernization.

## CONCLUSION

Conference diplomacy is a paradox: it is the most legitimate and inclusive mode of diplomatic negotiation and therefore the most representative, but the multitude of actors limits its effectiveness. Conference diplomacy is of great importance. The future depends on the decisions that countries and organizations take concerning, for example, climate change, the global economy, and the internal and external conflicts that abound. Negotiations inside and outside diplomatic conferences are the most effective tool for dealing with the opposing and concurring needs of all the parties involved. Both the number of issues and parties are growing. Conference diplomacy started some 300 years ago, but established its organizational format only 100 years ago. It is therefore a relatively recent phenomenon in human history. It is enormously helpful in protecting the vulnerable process of international negotiation from failure, thereby creating a legitimate and valid alternative to violence.

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# City Diplomacy

Michele Acuto

## DIPLOMACY, BY *CITIES*?

It is now commonplace, well beyond studies of architecture and planning, to hear the claim that ‘more than half of the world’s population lives in urban areas’ and that by 2050 this might grow to as much as two-thirds of humanity.<sup>1</sup> Today cities are seen as critical engines driving the global economy, global information flows and the worldwide mobility of goods and people. We can now comfortably argue that urban issues overlap extensively with some key areas of international affairs. For quite some time, just a few scholars of international relations theory (IR) and global governance have recognised this (Alger 1990; Hobbs 1994; Amen et al. 2011; Acuto 2010). The growing global emphasis on cities is also taking place beyond the discipline where the fascination for the ‘urban age’ is rampant (Brenner and Schmid 2014). A critical question for the diplomatic studies community is therefore whether we can

associate diplomacy, as practice as much as an institution, to cities.

In this chapter I argue that the idea of ‘city diplomacy’ (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007) is an apt testing ground for the intersection between diplomatic and urban practices. When considering the intricate possibilities of city diplomacy we confront the limitations of our traditional views of international relations (as the domain of the ‘international system’) and of our established diplomatic institutions (as the structure of mediated politics among nations). City diplomacy helps us expand this narrow horizon, reacquaint ourselves with the *long durée* of world politics, and appreciate the networked patterns that cities are weaving in international affairs. To make this argument the chapter explores the long affair between cities and diplomacy, the challenges in studying city diplomacy, the advances and limitations of practices of city diplomacy and concludes with observations about its future.



## CITIES AND DIPLOMACY: A LONG AFFAIR

Many contemporary accounts of the international activities of cities tend to focus on the present and future. Talk of the urban age and of the possibilities of ‘smart’, ‘networked’ or ‘innovative’ cities all too often obscures the past that led to this urbanised world. By contrast, planning, geography and urban studies often account for the long-lived impact of cities. One of the great contemporary urbanists, Peter Hall, dedicates countless pages to illustrate the intertwined evolution of ‘cities in civilization’ (1998) and to how some cities in particular, those he termed ‘world cities’ (Hall 1966), are now critical nodes in aggregating and mobilising the human condition. Likewise, Peter Taylor illuminates the possibility of ‘putting cities first’ in the description of civilisations and international orders. As Taylor argues in his book *Extraordinary Cities*, cities are and have always been linked to other cities and other places, and this connectivity is not just a feature of present-day conditions, but of millennia of geopolitical ‘tangos’ with states, empires and global processes (Taylor 2013). Cities, in short, are a permanent feature of (world) politics.

As I have argued elsewhere with my colleague Parag Khanna (Acuto and Khanna 2013), to appreciate the political role of the city in the twenty-first century, we must remember that cities are arguably humanity’s oldest diplomatic actors. Ancient Mesopotamian and Anatolian cities engaged in regular exchanges of envoys to establish mutual recognition and trade missions. Medieval and Renaissance diplomacy was similarly dominated by city-states, particularly in Italy and northern Europe with the Hanseatic League, whose intense diplomatic competition and interactions helped to undermine the Holy Roman Empire, while fuelling the commercial revolution and voyages of exploration across the Atlantic and to Asia. Even after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, widely marked as the transition to sovereign nation-states,

diplomacy remained a heterogeneous affair until the post-Napoleonic Congress of Vienna in 1815. Nation-states have therefore only been the (nearly) exclusive diplomatic actors for less than two centuries. Even then cities (and other sub-national entities) have continuously maintained regular ‘paradiplomatic’ (Aldecoa and Keating, 1999) contacts on disparate matters, ranging from environmental management (through organisations such as United Cities and Local Governments, or UCLG) or nuclear disarmament (through Mayors for Peace) (see Chapters 7, 8 and 49 in this Handbook).

Studying city diplomacy, then, tells us a broader story of world politics than much of the discipline of IR: cities have historically conducted diplomatic activities, such as communication and representation, far beyond the life of the nation-state Westphalian system. We can speak of a city ‘diplomacy’ (following from Nicolson 2001 and Jönsson and Hall 2005) here because: (1) city representatives are connecting and negotiating internationally on behalf of (political) constituencies; (2) this involves embassies and envoys, as well as heads of (local) government; and (3) it involves mediation and agreement by cities both between third party actors as well as on their own behalf.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, early modern Italian city-states played a critical role in the development of these core notions of diplomatic relations. Frigo (2000) provides solid evidence that in the Italian peninsula, Florence, Mantua, Modena or ‘city kingdoms’ like Naples, developed diplomatic instruments and foreign relationships with each other. There is a heritage of diplomatic activities developed over many centuries that is reflected in contemporary diplomatic studies of economic diplomacy, small state diplomacy, religious diplomacy and international negotiation and mediation (see Chapters 45, 24, 47, 17 and 18 in this Handbook). Similarly, studies of earlier diplomatic activities by cities include security and secret diplomacy (see Chapter 36 in this Handbook). Robert Finlay’s account of *Venice*



*Besieged* (2008) documents the intricate and refined diplomatic web of the Serenissima (the Republic of Venice) throughout its spice trade wars, clashes with other Mediterranean city-states, and diplomatic manoeuvring during the Ottoman–Habsburg conflict. In short, while often presented as ‘new’, innovative and future-oriented, city diplomacy is in practice a stable feature of world politics beyond international relations.

This is, however, only a partial and Northern-biased account of the long history of city diplomacy. As with the issue of power and the demand for comprehensive review of the urban ‘imprint’ on global governance, the historiography of city diplomacy is conspicuously absent from libraries and class reading lists. The ultimate book on the deep legacy of cities on the formation, change and ultimately future of diplomacy remains to be written, and likewise the city diplomacy of the countries included in the ‘Global South’ (Parnell and Robinson 2012) is badly in need of closer, systematic and critical attention.

### Key Points

- The international role of cities is well acknowledged in disciplines other than International Relations theory (IR), but a systematic *political* analysis of this is lacking.
- Many contemporary diplomatic instruments and practices, such as economic diplomacy and secret diplomacy, have a heritage in earlier city diplomacy.

## THE SCHOLARSHIP AND ITS LIMITS

The major challenge that diplomatic analysts face at present is the limitations of a scholarship on city diplomacy. When looking for explicit analysis of the *diplomatic* practices of cities (not just international connections, branding or networking), researchers generally face a paucity of analysis. To date, just a handful of authors and institutions have dealt directly with this topic. For instance, the

Netherlands Institute of International Affairs has undertaken some preliminary explorations of city diplomacy (van der Pluijm and Melissen 2007), seeking to categorise the modalities and domains in which cities perform international relations. Likewise, in the US, Chad Alger (2010) has unpacked the formation of a few ‘early’ inter-state organisations of local governments, like the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) or Metropolis, specifically examining their relation to the UN system. Overall, the scholarship on the ‘external relations’ (Alger 1990) of cities is scattered across a few academic disciplines other than IR. And within IR, systematic attention to the intersection between cities and the core institutions of diplomacy, as understood in this Handbook, is only tangential to other geopolitical considerations.

That said, some of the paradiplomacy debates of the 1990s, albeit rarely theorising city diplomacy *per se*, left important theoretical propositions which can inform the study of city diplomacy. In the context of these discussions on the foreign relations of sub-national entities, Brian Hocking (1993) introduced a particularly relevant perspective on the growing influence of non-traditional diplomatic actors. While criticising the idea of paradiplomacy he described the political geography of diplomacy as a ‘multilayered’ context, within which states *and* non-central governments can project their interests at both the international and national level. Similar to Geoff Wiseman’s idea of ‘polylateral diplomacy’ (2010) as the international relations between governmental and ‘non-official entities’, Hocking (1993: 3) described international relations as a multilevel political environment spanning subnational, national and international arenas, ‘where the achievement of goals at one level of political activity demands an ability to operate in the others’. Shedding new light upon the complexities of diplomacy in the variegated political landscape of the late twentieth century, this view offers interesting possibilities for studying the diplomacy of cities.

This is not to say, however, that broader analyses of cities' external relations are of no use to understanding the diplomatic role of cities. It is important to acknowledge that there is some solid, albeit often overlooked, literature on the capacity of cities to link across state boundaries with peers, non-governmental entities and multilateral bodies. This is not limited to urban studies and historical accounts of cities and civilisations. Rather, it is in geography that a prolific set of scholars, like Michele Betsill and Harriet Bulkeley (2004), have engaged with the role of transnational municipal networks, or simply 'city networks' in environmental politics. This body of literature, mostly developed in the early 2000s, points to how cities are developing networked urban connectivity in global governance in order to cope with the limitations of the international system and the constraints of economic downturns.

Considering the implication for global environmental governance by, not just *in*, global cities (like Los Angeles), Bulkeley and Schroeder (2012: 744) have sought to demonstrate the need to go beyond the great divide, arguing that roles of international actors (as state or non-state) and forms of authority (public or private) are 'not pre-given, but [are] determined through the process of governing' – a statement that hits at the heart of the assumption that 'diplomacy' is a nation-state affair. This once again echoes the reality sketched by Hocking, and the complex diplomatic engagements in which cities are entangled. In this sense, a focus on city diplomacy opens up exciting possibilities for meaningful and transferable considerations for IR as a whole, not simply diplomatic studies.

Following this pathway, younger interdisciplinary scholars have recently ventured prolifically into the creation and international politics of city networks. This is now a useful and provocative collection of emerging work that could make the study of city diplomacy even more relevant to academic and policy research. For instance, Taedong Lee (2013) and Sofie Bouteligier (2012) unpack the inner dynamics of city networks, and illustrate how

the logic and the factors that drive local governments' transnational activities may differ from those of nation-states, and constitute a new force in twenty-first-century world politics (also see Gordon 2013 and Setzer 2014). Likewise, Simon Curtis (2011) illustrates how the rise of global cities challenges IR scholars 'to consider how many of the assumptions that the discipline makes about the modern international system are being destabilised'.

These are just some of the works by young interdisciplinary scholars that are blazing a trail for the current (and next) generation of international and diplomatic scholars. We can now embrace the complexity of city diplomacy, its networked impact and the many pressing questions that the rise of cities in world affairs is putting on the front pages of many key journals in the field. So, as the public as well as major international actors turn their attention to the role of mayors in world affairs, we are now required to offer a scholarly and understandable assessment of the diplomatic capacity of cities. The extent, collective impact and influence of city networks on global governance is largely limited to case studies and rare comparative investigations: we now need more systematic and critical appraisals of the actual impact of city diplomacy.

### Key Points

- In, and beyond, IR 'city diplomacy' is still a scattered and anecdotal scholarship.
- Yet, some theoretical developments are now well rooted in human geography and the study of city networks.
- There is an encouraging 'new generation' of city diplomacy scholars emerging in IR.

### CITIES AND DIPLOMATIC INSTITUTIONS

The emerging research, public interest and historical roots of the urbanisation of society all point to the possibilities for a productive

scholarship of city diplomacy. However, we should not assume that these academic limitations mean there is a lack of city diplomacy practice. On the contrary, cities in developing and developed countries have to date sustained city diplomacy efforts across a wide range of global challenges. For instance, United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), which covers over 1000 cities and 155 national urban networks, has had for nearly a decade a formal Committee on Development Cooperation and City Diplomacy, tasked with proposing and developing policies on issues related to local government international development cooperation and international relations. Amidst other tasks, the Committee has been liaising directly with the OECD to set up a structural mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of aid on local governments throughout the world. UCLG has now a substantial advocacy role on the OECD Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and the United Nations Development Cooperation Forum, and likewise it has had continuing lobbying efforts for greater city input in the Sustainable Development Goals process. The network aims to condense and communicate key policy messages on aid from the vast UCLG membership, sustain participation in international conferences and meetings, and foster common efforts. This highlights how cities are not only individual diplomatic actors, but rather, as many other international players in this Handbook, can also create transnational structures like city networks that have the ability, as per UCLG's mission, to 'represent and defend the interests of local governments on the world's stage'.

While encouraging, these efforts often remain rather limited to discussions between municipal officers, or between cities, international organisations and business entities. Little space is left for evaluation of their overall effectiveness, especially in concert with academic research. Moreover, little is being done to satisfy the demand for systematic diplomatic training to better prepare

this burgeoning cadre of 'more-than-local' municipal officers. If we want to step beyond rhetoric and develop a critical and useful scholarship of city diplomacy, it is crucial to start by mapping how this practice compares with discussions within diplomatic studies about the 'essence of diplomacy' (Jönsson and Hall 2005). In order to do so, I rely here on a brief overview of the role of cities vis-à-vis two sets of the main 'diplomatic institutions' contained in this Handbook: embassies (see Chapter 12 in this Handbook) and international recognition.

### ***Embassies, Foreign Offices and Ambassadors***

Cities have been showcasing a limited but steady capacity to develop a number of diplomatic institutions, which are similar in form to embassies and diplomatic corps, and which are now part of cities' international outreach and international organisation. To begin with, while rarely associated with them, cities have a variety of bodies that in form and function present very close parallels to the diplomatic staples of the 'embassy' and the 'foreign office' (see Chapter 5 in this Handbook). In major global cities, such as Tokyo or Paris, these are represented by dedicated international relations offices tasked specifically with promoting the city abroad and forging cross-national connections. These offices take the shape of either paradiplomatic branches of the city council or, in an increasing number of instances, public-private bodies set up specifically for promotion, public diplomacy and networking purposes. For example, in the British capital, the Mayor of London in April 2011 launched London & Partners, which is a not-for-profit public-private partnership, with additional support from key commercial partners like the Barclays group. It was set up to link the remits of the capital's three promotional agencies – Think London, Study London and Visit London – into one single public diplomacy body for London, capable

of representing the city with one voice to all audiences in the UK and internationally, and therefore building the city's international reputation and global business network (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook).

Different from (and in addition to) more traditional paradiplomatic activities, these institutions at the city level focus on cultural-economic activities rather than systematising networks of cooperation or promoting political connections. Not surprisingly, the self-professed mission of London & Partners is 'to tell London's story brilliantly'. It is important, then, to acknowledge how cities have become increasingly proficient at fostering business, commercial, inter-municipal, and more broadly 'non-traditional' international linkages beyond just setting up policy collaborations.

Another example of the cities developing their own diplomatic institutions is New York City's global arm. Formerly 'The Sister City Program of the City of New York, Inc.', the now New York City Global Partners, Inc. is a not-for-profit body set up in 1962 by the Mayor's Office for International Affairs to connect the City of New York with 'other leading world cities by promoting exchange among policymakers and citizens alike'. So, while the Office for International Affairs is designed to maintain international linkages, Global Partners Inc. tends to focus more on forging and fostering (profitable) connections with a wider array of non-governmental actors. The programme was originally based on the model of Sister Cities International, a non-profit citizen diplomacy network active since 1956, and was developed to systematise relationships with Beijing, Budapest, Cairo, Jerusalem, Johannesburg, London, Madrid, Rome, Santo Domingo and Tokyo. In 2006, the programme was restructured and renamed to engage with additional foreign cities and extend more explicitly into the business sector, engaging in substantive programming with more than one hundred cities, fostering not only city-to-city cooperation but also student exchange, and international summits in New

York that have engaged numerous cities and international business actors.

The experience of London and New York points to a broader trend. While cities have for a long time focused on city-to-city cooperation only (in particular in the last century), the practices of city diplomacy and city networking generally are now expanding beyond the 'sister city' approach, demonstrating greater 'catalytic diplomacy' (Hocking 2004) initiatives aimed at pooling a variety of actors, governmental and non-government, towards an urban agenda for international affairs.

### ***International Recognition, Summitry and Collaboration***

International endeavours, whether by states or other actors, demand two-way communications and the establishment of a common 'playing field' on which to 'mediate the estrangement' (Der Derian 1987) among international players. Cities are not exempt from this need for *international recognition*, another key institution of diplomacy. Once again there is evidence here of cities playing a prominent role in world politics.

This starts with an urban shift away from just national politics. Amidst many international bodies, the European Commission is, for instance, increasingly targeting cities as important (para) diplomatic actors and cornerstones of the EU's subsidiarity principle even in external affairs. For example, the 2012 EU-China Mayors' Forum promoted an 'EU-China Urbanisation Partnership' to address urbanization challenges in China through cooperative EU-China efforts between stakeholders at national, regional and local levels. The Forum was convened in the spirit that: 'Given the array of challenges they face in adapting to the "urban century," China and Europe have a strong interest in working together to build better cities'. While still representative of a national (or regional) project *on*, rather than *by*, cities, this is one of the many instances of enrolment and thus

recognition of local government in processes aimed at reinforcing international cooperation and stability. The Forum included EU and Chinese mayors and a variety of delegations of city planners, local businesses and NGOs, and was devised to share experience in sustainable, integrated and efficient urban solutions. While purely consultative, peer-to-peer connections, paradiplomatic exchanges between local governments and urban stakeholders, involving, for instance, the Chinese Association of Mayors and the European Covenant of Mayors in a range of cross-sector activities and multi-player events, all hold important potential to manage geopolitical shifts and East–West relations. While the state level often suffers directly the turbulence of geopolitics, at the city level technical, exchange and collaboration networks can persist similarly to ‘track II’ initiatives now common in diplomacy. In this spirit, the Forum tackled a number of the challenges that modern cities face, such as increasingly mobile urbanites, increased traffic and problems of waste management. Likewise, it revealed possible avenues for city-driven cooperation between China and Europe in meeting the demands of China’s urban billion.

Increased international recognition for city diplomacy has also been the result of vast summitry activities by cities since the early nineties (see Chapter 19 in this Handbook). Beyond the ‘potential’ influence of top-down initiatives like the EU–China Mayors’ Forum, cities themselves have been very industrious in maintaining regular international fora, and even more importantly in producing extensive and sometimes innovative international frameworks (for cooperation but also standard setting) out of these. As I have argued elsewhere (Acuto 2013a), an example of this type of regime-building capacity is the Istanbul Water Consensus – an initiative by Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş and ICLEI that now gathers more than 1,000 cities across more than 56 countries. Building on the ‘Local Government Declaration on Water’ of 2006 (promoted by Mexico City) – which expressed

local leaders’ awareness concerning water and sanitation and called on national governments for more effective sustainability partnerships – the Consensus not only advocates urban solutions with central governments, but also undertakes comprehensive assessments and inventories of water policies to facilitate city diplomacy exchanges. Examples such as the Water Consensus indicate the increase in mayor-sponsored regimes, particularly the ones that in addition to their regulatory purposes also aim to pool resources in order to expand the policy-making capacity of the group and individual cities.

Cities are increasingly demanding that international audiences take them and their worldview much more seriously, while substantiating these requests with clear diplomatic outcomes like the Water Consensus. The sprawl in city-based networking and the growing enmeshment of city politics with key transnational actors like the World Bank certainly suggest that cities are playing an ever-increasing role in safeguarding urban security. Equally, it testifies the recognition of cities by multilateral bodies, and not just states, reinforcing the capacity of cities to be meaningful ‘actors’ in international processes. The recently launched Global Network for Safer Cities (GNSC) is a case in point. Led by the United Nations, the GNSC aims to equip local authorities and urban stakeholders with the tools to deliver and maintain urban security. GNSC follows the footsteps of successful examples of city-to-city cooperation like the C40 Group or Eurocities, which are today quite active components in the international response to issues like climate change, inequality and diversity. The UN system’s attention is demonstrating here not only recognition, but also trust in the capacity of cities to deliver international frameworks (regimes and institutions) that emphasise the networked influence of cities in global governance.

Pooling their network power, cities seem to be increasingly capable of responding to pressing challenges arising locally and globally.



For instance, GNSC is progressively formalising the large pool of cities (77 in 24 countries), and the UN is already providing technical support in terms of improving urban safety. Likewise, global networks can have a ‘webbing’ networked effect at a national and local level: GNSC has already received firm commitments for national sub-networks on Safer Cities in several key countries affected by urban insecurity like Mexico, Colombia and South Africa. GNSC is not alone in this effort. For example, the European Forum on Urban Security has been connecting municipalities and non-governmental actors in the sphere of urban safety ever since 1987, and with 250 European members it is a solid networking entrepreneur in prompting joint training and city-to-city learning.

### **Key Points**

- Cities have (para)diplomatic branches comparable to classic diplomatic corps institutions, but the overall trends are pushing towards more and more ‘quango’ international affairs bodies focused more specifically on public diplomacy.
- Cities have a growing recognition by states and multilateral organisations as legitimate actors in international cooperation.
- This recognition is coupled with a growing buy-in for their capacity to forge networked structures for cross-regional collaboration.

### **CITY DIPLOMACY: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE AND BLINDSPOTS**

Embassies, summits, public diplomacy, regimes and mediated activities all point to the mounting evidence, and success, of city diplomacy in the present world order. Nonetheless, if in aggregate the diplomatic role of cities scores quite favourably in terms of traditional diplomatic institutions, there remain some substantial diplomatic ‘blindspots’ that neither the city diplomacy literature or practice seem to address with much accuracy.

As with many other subnational diplomatic actors, the diplomatic role of cities raises the problem of representation. In some cases, city leaders are elected by constituencies that include not only national citizens, but also urban residents more generally. For instance, in the UK, registered European Union residents generally bear the same rights as citizens in electing mayors (as in the Greater London Authority), and in Sweden voting for local elections is allowed for all foreign residents with a three years residence. This is not the norm, but representation is also complicated by the fact that, owing to the political nature of their positions, most active mayors in international affairs would not be considered legitimate international representatives of their metropolises by all of their constituents (see Chapter 21 in this Handbook).

Critical for a more complete understanding of the diplomatic impact and capacity of cities is also a more systematic study of their international legal dimension (see Chapter 15 in this Handbook). Work by Israeli lawyer Yishai Blank (2005) on ‘the city and the world’ represents a rarity for its legalistic account of localities as a ‘normative mediator between the world and the state’ and for its analysis of how metropolises intersect with a variety of ‘spheres’ of international law. Yet these considerations are extremely limited and demand closer attention by the diplomatic community. Issues of legality, representation and normative mediation stand at the heart of those processes of international legitimacy, regime building and transnational collaboration and will define the diplomatic influence of cities in the current global order.

This leads to one last important theoretical blindspot that demands closer attention: the issue of power. Undoubtedly, the growing interest in urban issues as part of global sustainability, development or security discussions affects the study and practice of international relations and diplomacy. A small example of this is that the United Nations Secretary General recently appointed former New York Mayor Michael



Bloomberg – who has been chairing the influential global network of cities called Climate Leadership Group (C40) – to become the UN Special Representative for Cities and Climate Change. Although evidence from initiatives like C40 or institutions like the UN indicates that cities are having a growing *influence* on international affairs this consideration is, at the moment, rarely followed by its logical counterpart, the question of power. Do cities have growing *power* over international relations and diplomatic affairs? And, equally, what are the sources, media and modes of cities' power in world politics? As a recent book edited by Simon Curtis (2014) points out, we need to pay closer attention to the mechanisms that are empowering cities to stand the ground of other international actors and stake rightful claims to take part in global governance. This means charting a clearer agenda to understand the power that cities have to partake in both traditional (e.g. UN) and non-traditional (e.g. city networks) international processes. As such, diplomatic scholars should pay equal attention not only to cities' power *over* international affairs (in terms of coercive clout), or power *to* influence diplomatic processes (in terms of potential capacity). Rather, there is also mounting evidence that cities can leverage a form of power *with* other cities, NGOs and business (in terms of shared coercion and potential) – a 'network power' (Acuto 2010) that, while not so 'soft' as it might appear, is a critical tool for diplomatic influence. Overall, all too often the popularity of cities is only matched by superficial attention to the global trends of urbanisation, forgetting the (long) past of city diplomacy, barely unpacking its (extensive) international practices, and turning a blind eye to thornier issues such as legality, representativeness and power.

Once we have acknowledged the limitations and blindspots of current inquiries into city diplomacy, we can then start focusing a more systematic eye on how the role of mayors in the twenty-first century is changing, and how the participation of city leaders

in policymaking at the international level is endowing them with influence formerly reserved for diplomatic officials at the state level. The trend toward urbanisation seems unlikely to lose speed in the near future, and so mayors will likely continue to increase their policymaking clout. Thus analytical frameworks for studying international relations and global governance must adapt to a new reality: one where non-state actors, including cities and their leaders, are exerting increasing influence over the means and goals of international diplomacy.

Were we to end our assessment of the diplomatic capacity of cities at the institutions of the embassy and the foreign office, the picture painted above would most definitely be a rather partial and structuralist one. On the contrary, the diplomatic practices of cities, even more than their ambassadorial capacity, are well entrenched in global challenges and transnational processes and well rooted into the international system. As I suggest above, city diplomacy has a long-lived history and a pervasive network presence in global governance. Yet, the systematic appreciation of cities in diplomatic studies, if not more broadly in IR, rarely goes beyond the rhetoric of the 'urban age' and some sporadic attention to the negotiations of city networks. This is an evident limitation: the state of the art of city diplomacy, in academia and policy research, is lagging far behind the momentous emergence of cities as international actors. The wind might be changing, but there is still much theoretical and empirical terrain to be covered.

### Key Points

- The legal status and legal implications of city diplomacy are at present largely overlooked with possibly critical accountability and political consequences.
- There is a need for a more systematic assessment of city diplomacy's range of 'coercive' and 'soft' powers (power *over*, *to* and *with*) in international processes.

## CONCLUSION

By looking back at the past of city diplomacy we can appreciate a story that stretches far deeper into the history of civilisation than the study of the international system might suggest. The diplomatic entrepreneurship of cities reminds diplomatic and international studies of a key necessity: moving beyond the classic notions of 'international system' and 'diplomacy' is a near mandatory step in order to appreciate the complexity of the emergence of cities in world politics. This move is not necessarily a rejection of IR's core tenets: cities do interact with, and in many instances benefit from, the system of state-centric institutions and processes that is still shaping much of world politics. Likewise, cities do mirror, and seek recognition from, the international system (Bouteligier 2012).

If we contemplate present city diplomacy we are then confronted with a changing, but somewhat hopeful, scenario. Cities have a demonstrated track record in terms of transnational networking, agenda-setting and resource mobilisation. This all points to a substantial capacity to confront global challenges via city diplomacy, whether international processes are stalling or not. Equally, multiple generations of city networks signify the capacity of cities to adapt, at least in part, to the changing nature of international relations: city diplomacy has withstood the ebbs of the international order by partly shifting its modalities, adapting to the neoliberal climate of world affairs, and by benefiting from the new geographies of globalisation. As illustrated above, this has predominantly taken the shape of a move from sister cities connections to city-to-city cooperation and polyilateral city networking with IGOs and NGOs, linking deeply with the corporate and industry worlds, and cutting across the spectrum of global governance from environment, to culture or security. If we look towards the future of city diplomacy, finally, we can likely see how cities are weaving a networked texture of trans-national, inter-national and sub-national connections.

City networks are now a pervasive reality in global governance, and city diplomacy raises a plethora of critical and influential questions for the practice of international relations and for the contemporary shape of world politics. City diplomacy, seen from this angle, is at the same time a reminder of the heritage and the present possibilities of diplomatic studies.

## NOTES

- 1 Rather than providing an extensive list of references on the rate of urbanisation, see the work by David Satterthwaite and the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED) at <http://pubs.iied.org/10709IIED.html> (last accessed 8 September 2014).
- 2 For brevity, I am not including in this chapter the instances whereby 'city diplomacy' takes place *within* the spatial constraints of the city itself, as in the case of the Olympics or Expos. I have elaborated on this case more extensively in Acuto (2013b).

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# Citizen Diplomacy

Melissa Conley Tyler and Craig Beyerinck

## INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy has traditionally been defined as the work of diplomatic officers sanctioned and sent by their home country to represent it abroad. Hedley Bull (1977: 170–1) outlines diplomacy's main functions as facilitating communication, negotiating agreements, gathering intelligence and minimising friction in the practice of international relations between states. It has long been the major institution for conducting relations between states.

Though the practice of diplomacy has always been adaptive, it has recently had to flex sharply to accommodate the changes brought by globalisation and technological change (Kerr and Wiseman, 2012). One change is the increasing discussion of citizen diplomacy. Generally defined: 'Citizen diplomacy ... is about how citizens as private individuals can make a difference in world affairs' (McDonald, 1991: 119).

Those who practise traditional diplomacy have not universally embraced the concept

of citizen diplomacy. It is understandable that a profession that has enjoyed relative exclusivity is reluctant to embrace the concept that anyone can be a 'citizen diplomat'. As Cooper (2013: 41) points out, 'the push to extend the status of diplomat is fraught with contestation. To call oneself a diplomat as in the case of "citizen diplomacy" is very subjective and arguably even flimsy'.

The term 'citizen diplomacy' is relatively new, gaining wider currency after being used by Hillary Clinton (Gregory, 2011: 360). It raises the question of whether those without official diplomatic status are engaging in diplomacy in any meaningful sense or if the term 'citizen diplomacy' is merely a loose metaphor for everyday people engaging in cross-border relations. For example, Gregory (2011: 359) does not consider most cross-border relationships to be citizen diplomacy and chooses instead to define this as 'cultural internationalism' (see Chapter 8 in this Handbook).

This chapter will outline how citizen diplomacy has developed and what citizen diplomacy

actors do. It explores emerging trends in citizen diplomacy and ways in which it can be theoretically understood. Due to the contested definition of citizen diplomacy, two understandings will be discussed: as a metaphor to describe people who participate in cross-border interactions (citizen-led citizen diplomacy) and as a term used when private citizens are involved in state-sanctioned diplomatic interactions (state-led citizen diplomacy). This chapter shows that citizen diplomacy is a highly contested term that may or may not add to our understanding of the impact of people-to-people contact on diplomacy.

### Key Points

- The classification of some actors as citizen diplomats is contentious.
- The term citizen diplomacy can be used either as a metaphor for those who are involved in international interactions in some way (citizen-led citizen diplomacy) or, more narrowly, to refer to the use of citizens in more traditional forms of diplomacy (state-led citizen diplomacy).

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

People have always interacted across borders and this has long been a part of how countries and foreign publics have viewed each other (Sharp, 2001: 143). Over the centuries, inter-community and interstate relations have been shaped by a variety of actors, including unofficial ones. In addition to the traditional role of diplomats as officially representing their state, a range of actors such as traders, missionaries, authors and artists have contributed both positively and negatively to how their countries are viewed abroad.

Not surprisingly, governments have had a strong preference for valuing official diplomats as the true bearers of a state's image and message over everyday citizens who are involved in cross-border interactions. Official

diplomats have the responsibility for managing government-to-government relations and communication with foreign publics (public diplomacy). Over time, and especially with the communications revolution, the public diplomacy aspect of officials' work has become very significant (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook).

Recognising traditional diplomacy as the sole driving force of international relations is, however, problematic when considering the many different examples of cross-cultural exchanges throughout history. For example, the Greeks used *proxenoi*, or the citizens of other city-states domiciled in Athens, to represent other governments' interests in Athens (Black, 2010: 20). As Black states, 'part of the history of diplomacy is the account of how far these processes have been conducted through, or under the control of, the formal mechanism of diplomacy. In practice, this has always been the case only to a limited extent' (Black, 2010: 14).

A contentious example of citizen diplomacy is when George Logan, a private US citizen, negotiated the de-escalation of Franco-American tensions in Paris in 1798. His actions led France to lift its embargo and release US ships and seamen. Despite the positive outcome of this interaction, the US passed the 1799 Logan Act which prohibits private citizens from undertaking diplomatic negotiations (Chataway, 1998: 269).

It may have been more possible to restrict citizens' international role when it was relatively difficult for anyone not affiliated with the state to travel abroad due to logistic and financial constraints. However, citizens now have more opportunities to participate in cross-border interaction due to relatively inexpensive international travel and communications technology. These developments have led to debate on the role of citizen diplomacy and how it should be defined.

### Citizen Diplomacy as a Metaphor

One way to understand citizen diplomacy is as a loose term for cross-cultural interaction:

‘the work people do to connect across national differences ... directed at building the kinds of understandings, relationships, and actions needed to build a more peaceful and prosperous world’ (The Coalition for Citizen Diplomacy, quoted in Hovey and Weinberg, 2009: 45).

The vague nature of this definition means that the term citizen diplomacy can be applied to a wide range of actors. It is through such wide-reaching definitions that the terms ‘diplomat’ and ‘diplomacy’ have come to be associated with cultural and sporting activities and the notion that anyone, and thus everyone, abroad can be a ‘diplomat’ for their country (Black, 2010: 12). The definition can even sometimes be stretched to encompass local citizens who interact with foreigners in their own country as well as people who participate in social action that is visible on a global stage.

Officials who consider themselves to be ‘proper’ diplomatic actors can view this development in an extremely negative light (Marshall, 1949: 83). Not unlike the use of ‘war’ as a metaphor in phrases such as the ‘war on drugs’, the term ‘citizen diplomacy’ has widened the activities with which diplomacy is associated, thus making it a metaphor for a person or activity that in some way affects states’ foreign interests (Black, 2010: 13). As Melissen (2013: 436) states, citizen diplomacy can be ‘a metaphor for the democratization of diplomacy, with multiple actors playing a role in what was once an area restricted to a few’.

### ***Involvement of Citizens in Official Diplomacy***

By contrast, traditional actors would generally only use the term ‘citizen diplomacy’ in instances where civil society actors are formally involved in official diplomatic activity. Despite resistance to such involvement from those who believe that involving civil society actors adds ‘too many unpredictable and uncontrollable elements to diplomatic processes forged over centuries’ (Williams et al.,

2008: 182), there are situations where citizens are specifically selected by the state to participate in some type of diplomatic activity.

There are examples of states involving citizens in diplomatic forums over many decades, such as involving 42 civil society organisations in the United Nations San Francisco Conference (Marshall, 1949: 85–6) or US President Eisenhower bringing together US and Soviet citizens to discuss relations between their countries at the 1959 Dartmouth Conference (McDonald, 1991: 206). States often encourage citizen diplomacy in situations where there are limited official relations, for example between the US and Cuba or North Korea (Hovey and Weinberg, 2009: 45).

Contemporary state-sanctioned cross-border citizen interaction can be seen on topics such as climate change, child soldiers and many others where civil society actors are invited by officials to form part of international discussions and negotiations. A high-profile example is the UNFCCC on climate change where civil society organisations, scientific experts and individual citizens are involved in discussions.

This type of citizen diplomacy was born from the realisation in the early 1960s that traditional diplomacy cannot fix everything (Sharp, 2001: 132). The resulting reorientation of diplomacy to include more non-state actors has allowed traditional diplomats to benefit from expert advice and the ability to be closer to their own publics (Shale, 2006: 197). While concerns remain about the potentially abrasive effects and difficulties of controlling the actions of those who are only loosely affiliated with the state, as practice is evolving today, non-state and non-official actors are playing an increasingly large role (Melissen, 2013: 450).

### ***Key Points***

- The actions of private citizens have long played a role in interstate relations, despite a preference by states for officially-sanctioned diplomacy.
- Ease of travel and communication have led to a growing role for private citizens in relations between states.



## ACTIVITIES, ROLES AND ACTORS IN CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

The debate about the meaning of citizen diplomacy has implications for understanding the activities, roles and relationships of actors in citizen diplomacy.

### *People-to-People Contact*

Defining citizen diplomacy in its broadest sense as a metaphor means that many actors and their actions can be thought of as being part of it. People-to-people contact across borders can occur in a wide range of areas including international tourism, international sports matches, academia, business and cultural exchanges (Rana, 2011: 260). There is no limit on the citizens who can potentially be involved whether through study abroad, youth exchanges, sister city relationships, inter-faith dialogue and many other ways.

This type of people-to-people contact can have a demonstrable impact on how a country is viewed by citizens of other countries. Personal experience is a big factor in forming positive or negative views on other countries. Sustained, long-term and authentic interaction with foreign nationals is a very important factor in national image in an information-saturated world where 'you are what you seem' (Copeland, 2009: 161).

A good example of this type of citizen diplomacy is the role played by expatriates simply by living and interacting abroad (Gregory, 2011: 359). Their relatively long residence in a country and regular interaction with locals means that they can influence how their country is viewed. From the perspective of official diplomats, this is potentially a resource to help socialise foreign populations to new ideas before and after diplomatic efforts (Hochstetler, 2013: 176).

Given that it would be impossible for a state to control the myriad people-to-people interaction that occurs through tourism, education and other exchange, the question for states is

whether they can or should form some relationship with these activities. By allowing citizens who take part in cross-border interactions to be distantly associated with their state, a practice that states have little say in to begin with, states can potentially benefit from any positive image that their citizens convey through close interaction with foreign individuals. An example of such co-option can be government use of track two diplomacy where non-officials engage in dialogue which is independent of, but linked with, the state (McDonald, 1991: 119).

There are a number of examples of state-funded activities that bring citizens from different countries together such as the US Fulbright and Peace Corps programmes and a range of scholarships and international visitor programmes (Gregory, 2011: 351–2). Such programmes are predicated on the belief that people-to-people contact can lead to long-lasting and deep connections with the potential to create a strong bond between countries.

However, there is a limit to how far states should try to insert themselves into these people-to-people interactions. A clear benefit of citizen-led citizen diplomacy is its ability to remain untouched by government officials, or at least to be regarded as such. Its strength is the perception that interaction is not based on strategic interests and is not an advertising or political campaign (Sharp, 2009: 287). In support of this, Gregory (2011: 353) suggests that citizen diplomacy is best used by states to 'to understand cultures, attitudes, and behaviour; build and manage relationships, and influence thoughts and mobilise actions to advance their interests and values'. No matter what form citizen diplomacy takes, much of its legitimacy and impact comes from the belief that the messages being conveyed are authentic and untouched by government officials.

### *Citizen Involvement in Official Diplomacy*

As well as encouraging or exploiting people-to-people contact by its citizens, states can

go further and sanction private citizens to play some type of diplomatic role (state-led citizen diplomacy). Examples can be explicit, such as when states invite non-officials to represent their country in negotiations, or implicit, as in the case of ex-officials meeting with other governments where some continuing official connection is assumed. Sharp (2001: 137–41) identifies five ways in which citizens can become citizen diplomats: as a go-between; as a representative of a sectoral, regional or local economic interest; as a lobbyist or advocate; as a subverter or transformer of existing policies; or as an autonomous agent. All except the last may be state-sanctioned.

Involving private citizens in diplomatic activity has a number of benefits for states. For example, by virtue of not being directly affiliated with a government body, citizen diplomats can facilitate indirect communication between governments that do not communicate officially. There are clear benefits to states in using independent individuals to hold talks with ‘enemy’ countries.

States can also benefit from bringing citizens’ expertise in a certain area to negotiations and meetings. Citizens, whether individuals or through organised groups, can bring valuable technical expertise and detail to negotiating teams. This can even extend to foreign citizens; an interesting example of this is the non-profit organisation Independent Diplomat (2015), which provides diplomatic advice and services to governments including assisting states to sanction private citizens from other countries to represent them in diplomatic processes.

It appears that governments are increasing their investment in and acceptance of such activities. They have perhaps decided that the benefits of involving citizens in diplomacy outweighs the risk that as private citizens they may advocate for a cause that is not necessarily government-sanctioned.

If the goal of diplomacy is to create a conducive environment to pursue a country’s national interest, both people-to-people contact and some involvement by citizens

in traditional diplomacy can play a role. Regardless of how citizen and state-led diplomacy seeks to engage foreign publics and governments, both rely on the presence of someone who, in one way or another, is seen as a representative of their country. The simple presence of this person can influence how that country is regarded by foreign individuals and governments. As Gopin (2009: 161–2) states, ‘the citizen diplomat embodies symbol. A person comes from one civilization and enters into another, with everyone fully aware that this person is crossing over boundaries of tension, distrust, and conflict. The act of arrival *itself* and the presence in the new civilization becomes a symbolic gesture.’

### Key Points

- People-to-people contact between citizens can have benefits including forming deep and long-lasting relationships that are perceived as authentic and untouched by government.
- There are a number of examples of state-sanctioned citizen involvement in official diplomacy where citizens assist the state with their expertise.

## EMERGING TRENDS AND CHANGES TO THE PRACTICE OF CITIZEN DIPLOMACY

The neat division between ‘citizen’ and ‘official’ diplomacy is being challenged by changes to modern diplomatic practice. Citizen diplomacy should be understood in the context of broader trends that have seen the move from ‘club’ to ‘network’ diplomacy (Thakur, 2013). Using this definition, ‘club diplomacy’, or classical diplomacy, refers to a time when diplomats met primarily with other government officials and the occasional businessperson. In contrast, in ‘network diplomacy’ a greater number of actors are involved in policy-making processes with a devolution of power traditionally concentrated by the state to many more actors (Heine, 2013: 60–3).

In other words, diplomacy has transformed from 'a stiff waltz of rituals and protocol among states alone' to become 'a jazzy dance among coalitions of ministries, companies, churches, foundations, universities, activists, and other wilful, enterprising individuals who cooperate to achieve specific goals' (Khanna, 2011: 22). As Seib (2012: 106) puts it, '[b]alancing recognition of historical context with the pressures generated by new information and communication technologies will require a new approach to the construction of diplomacy and to being a diplomat'.

This means that traditional diplomats are now more likely to spend more of their time on public diplomacy in an attempt to broadcast messages and reach a much wider audience; the development and growing use of communication tools is making traditional diplomacy more responsive to citizens' concerns (Hochstetler, 2013: 188). Sharp and Wiseman (2012: 119) go so far as to say 'public diplomacy is now so central to diplomacy that it is no longer helpful to treat it as a sub-set of diplomatic practice'.

This change to the practice of traditional diplomacy is important for citizen diplomacy (Copeland, 2009: 169): the convergence between the two means there is a growing acceptance of official engagement with citizen diplomats to fill the gaps found between local and foreign publics and traditional diplomatic practices. This is being acknowledged by some traditional diplomatic actors. For example, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton went as far as calling on students to become 'citizen ambassadors' when using social networking to build partnerships and expose and fight the oppression that followed presidential elections in Iran (Sharp and Wiseman, 2012: 172).

Citizen diplomacy helps deal with the distrust among publics of traditional diplomats and diplomacy in general, born out of the relative secrecy in which communications have traditionally been carried out. While government-led public diplomacy can be a good tool to promote a country's image abroad, maintaining positive images can be

thwarted, as can be seen with China, by poor domestic policies and actions (Seib, 2012: 119). Longer-term and unregulated interaction with everyday citizens can help to maintain a country's positive image.

Citizen diplomacy has the advantages of transparency, responsiveness and wide application (Sharp, 2001: 147). There are actors in and outside of the government who have come to realise that citizen diplomacy can address some cross-border issues in ways that traditional diplomacy cannot (Williams et al., 2008: 189). For example, citizen diplomacy operationalised through non-government organisations and interest groups has achieved great success in addressing the issues of landmines, international crimes, child soldiers, explosive remnants of war and rights for disabled persons.

Even though today's diplomatic landscape is being influenced by the 'growing number, expanding role and increasing influence of non-state actors', the practice of traditional diplomacy is not being crowded out or replaced by citizen diplomacy; instead, it is working to supplement and support its more traditional twin (Thakur, 2013: 77). Both citizen and traditional diplomacy can use strategies traditionally reserved for the latter but, as Copeland (2009: 162) states, 'their content, purpose, and practice are evolving'. While this is understandable, in that the two entities' goals may be the same, 'their roles are not the same' (Gregory, 2011: 357).

As alluded to by Gopin (2009: 164), neither traditional nor citizen diplomacy can be effective in achieving state goals without the other. 'There are also many actors in addition to states interacting ... in an increasingly networked web of national and international diplomacy' (Thakur, 2013: 84). For example, both citizen-led diplomacy and more traditional approaches to diplomacy have been needed to make progress on arms control issues, such as small arms, indicating that official diplomacy is still an important part of a country's diplomatic toolkit (Williams et al., 2008: 194).

## Key Points

- The transition from 'club' to 'network' diplomacy has created closer interaction between diplomats and foreign publics.
- Changes in diplomatic practice mean a growing place for citizen diplomacy to fill the gaps found between publics and traditional diplomatic practice.

## UNDERSTANDING CITIZEN DIPLOMACY THROUGH THEORETICAL APPROACHES

In order to understand what diplomacy is today it is important to look at what diplomacy meant in its most classical sense. By looking at diplomatic practice throughout history, it is clear that citizen diplomacy is in fact merely enjoying a revival: it is on top of this that what is now understood to be traditional diplomacy is built. As such, ways of thinking about diplomacy only need to be revisited and revised in order to develop a way of thinking about a diplomatic practice that is applicable to today's context, rather than completely made anew.

In considering arguments about what diplomacy is and what role citizens can and do play a role in it, Sharp (2001) outlines two approaches with which to conceptualise the craft: 'no change' and 'all change'. The 'no change' approach views the world as being divided into sovereign states, which are its most powerful actors, and finds these states to be the most authentic expression of political interests available. As such, the no change approach maintains that only those who officially represent states can be considered to be diplomats (Sharp, 2001: 142). This approach, as suggested by the name, prizes official interaction above all else. By contrast, from the 'all change' perspective, '[t]echnology, democracy, and education are combining to erode the sovereignty of the modern territorial state and ... the sovereignty of those who determine what is to be regarded as important

and what is not' (Sharp, 2001: 143). This approach supports the modern day changes that are taking place in the practice of diplomacy. The reality may be between these two approaches.

Taking another look at Bull's (1977: 170–1) functions of diplomacy between states (facilitating communication, negotiating agreements, gathering intelligence and minimising friction in international relations), it is clear that citizen diplomacy can also be used to carry out diplomatic functions. Not only have both types of citizen diplomacy and traditional diplomacy worked together to fill gaps in each other's work, but they have also worked to address the needs of newly opened avenues of interaction. According to Williams et al. (2008: 187–8), 'the most notable feature of the "new diplomacy" has been the partnership formed between key governments and civil society to achieve common humanitarian aims'. Partnerships between government and civil society have proven to be very useful and allow these two previously separate actors to adjust strategies, goals and thinking based on the work of the other, bringing about a more streamlined and efficient use of resources.

The proper development and use of citizen diplomacy tools is important because '[d]iplomats are only part of the process by which information is obtained, and often are not the most important part' (Black, 2010: 14). This fundamental change in how diplomacy is practised 'requires fundamental reappraisal of missions, skills and structures – transformation, rather than adaptation, in institutions, methods and priorities' (Gregory, 2011: 354). It is for this reason that citizen diplomats, as Sharp (2001: 148) says, should be 'courted, coddled and educated' by traditional diplomatic actors and institutions.

Citizen diplomacy's revival should be understood in the wider context of the expanding opportunities there are for interaction as a result of globalisation (Chataway, 1998: 271), including the deep and widespread impact of the revolution in information and communication

technology and travel. According to Copeland (2009: 170): 'Globalization is causing the center of diplomatic gravity to move, as it were, down the mountain, shifting the action off the peaks and into the populated valleys – out of the chancellery and into the street.'

### Key Points

- Two ways to conceptualise changes to diplomatic practice are 'no change', which favours traditional diplomatic practice, and 'all change', which prefers the changes being made to diplomacy.
- Citizen diplomacy can combine with traditional diplomacy to fulfil diplomatic needs.

### CONCLUSION

Diplomacy has always been a cornerstone of the way societies interact. It is the definition of what constitutes a diplomat and diplomacy that is highly contentious. This is uncomfortable in a field that craves strict definitions. This chapter has offered examples of what citizen diplomacy can be taken to mean in order to contribute to the growing literature that attempts to define citizen diplomacy and its trends. As suggested throughout this chapter, difficulties in defining citizen diplomacy arise from different views on the definition and role of non-official actors in the institution of diplomacy. This suggests that the term may not add to our understanding of the conduct of diplomacy; however, the term is in common use and cannot be ignored.

The facets of citizen diplomacy identified in this chapter can be broadly defined in two distinct categories: citizen-led diplomacy and state-led diplomacy. These delineations can also be thought of in terms of using the term citizen diplomacy as a metaphor for people whose actions have some impact on international perceptions or as a term used for when states utilise citizens in official diplomacy. The operationalisation of both types of citizen diplomacy can ensure that each benefits

from the other. The inevitable and continuing change to how diplomacy is thought of is greatly due to the successes of citizen diplomacy in many areas. This change has led to the reconceptualisation of diplomacy to include at least some aspects of citizen-led diplomacy.

In the face of the changing practice of diplomacy, there is an ongoing debate about the continued importance of traditional diplomacy and the growing role of citizen diplomacy. While Chataway (1998: 272) believes that traditional diplomacy is slowly becoming obsolete in the face of rising citizen diplomacy, this chapter has argued that traditional diplomacy is instead taking on more diverse roles and co-opting citizen diplomacy into its practice. As Copeland (2009: 178) states, diplomacy needs 'the construction of a bigger, better tent with larger, more diverse, crowds inside'. This new tent is needed for states to fulfil traditional and new roles as well as for citizen and state-led diplomacy to work efficiently together.

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# Celebrity Diplomacy

Mark Wheeler

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the rise of transnational forms of celebrity diplomacy – the employment of well-known or famous individuals to publicize international causes and to engage in foreign policy decision-making circles. International governmental organizations (IGOs) including the United Nations (UN) have a long-standing tradition of appointing Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace. In turn, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Red Cross, Oxfam and Save the Children, have been represented by celebrity advocates. These developments emerged from a transition from state-centric to public diplomatic state-people and people-people initiatives (see Chapters 35 and 42 in this Handbook). A new ‘currency’ of public diplomacy has occurred in which emotion and rhetoric help shape the outcome of international affairs. Moreover, with the rise of 24/7 news programming and the accompanying ‘CNN effect’ on foreign

polymaking and the social media, there has been a reconfiguration of international public opinion from elite interest to grassroots representation.

Invariably, this use of celebrity diplomats is presented as an anti-democratic phenomenon in which celebrities are accused of reinforcing global North–South stereotypes by academics working within the fields of political communications, media studies and development studies (Kellner, 2010; Polman, 2011; Kapoor, 2012). Conversely, the International Relations scholar Andrew F. Cooper conceives celebrity diplomacy as an alternative form of agency in which stars fill the void in public trust vacated by the international political classes (Cooper, 2008). Within this schema, celebrity diplomacy contrasts with Westphalian traditions founded on the values of state security and hard power. Consequently, proponents of celebrity diplomacy claim that stars provide a greater openness in diplomatic endeavours, thereby constructing a consensus for local,

supranational and global initiatives. These types of 'track-2' diplomacy mean that stars not only bring public attention to international activities but can apply pressure for meaningful change in foreign policymaking. These concerns accord to Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, which refers to the ability to affect reform through the processes of attraction rather than coercion or payment (Nye, 2004).

This chapter will analyse, assess and explain whether celebrity diplomats have effected a 'politics of attraction' through which they may legitimize their positions within the global public sphere. Such soft power potential will be unpacked to ask if celebrities can effectively lend their weight to transnational forms of diplomatic engagement. Consequently, this chapter will situate celebrity diplomacy within a broader view of the concepts associated with public diplomacy; provide case studies in relation to IGOs, NGOs and 'go it alone' forms of humanitarian initiatives (Bono, Bob Geldof); and will discuss the creditability (or not) of these types of celebrity-driven 'affective capacities'. As Geoffrey Wiseman notes, 'we are investing our emotions, our time and our money in celebrity activities and [need to know] whether this is a sound investment' (Wiseman, 2009: 5). This chapter argues that celebrity diplomacy is an important phenomenon which cannot be ignored as it is creating new forms of diplomatic endeavour in the arena of international affairs.

## **CELEBRITY DIPLOMACY AS PART OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY**

The traditions of diplomacy have been seen as a coordination of state interests with broader conceptions of collective security and economic power. The mechanisms of bargaining and cooperation have been utilized as a diplomatic 'currency' for example by British Foreign Office mandarins, ambassadors and United States (US) State Department officials.

This has been presented as being part of a Realist discourse in which matters of ethics and emotional value are secondary to the complexities of the global state system. Moreover, public diplomacy – in which governments influence international attitudes regarding their national images – remained defined by state interest and power. While the communication of intercultural interests existed beyond the traditional forms of diplomacy, governmental ministers, embassy diplomats and consular officials used public relations strategies to effect agendas within the international media. Further, cultural, arts and exchange based diplomatic initiatives were developed by state-sponsored institutions such as the United States Information Agency (USIA), the British Council, the Voice of America and the British Broadcasting Corporation's (BBC) World Service (Cull, 2010).

However, as the nature of media coverage has expanded with the rise of 24/7 global news programming in which the decentralization and fragmentation of opinion has intensified, these traditions of diplomacy are being challenged (see Chapter 8 in this Handbook). Moreover, the rise of social media networks places a greater emphasis on interactive and person-to-person communications. These developments have been tied together with a democratization of foreign policy in which global concerns are placed on the popular agenda. Therefore, a 'new public diplomacy' has emerged in the wake of alternative communications through which non-state actors (NSAs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) have promoted cultural interchanges to mobilize public interest to advance their causes (Melissen, 2011).

In this respect, a new 'currency' of public diplomacy emerges in which emotional rhetoric and values become key bargaining tools. Geoffrey Pigman comments that CSOs, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Greenpeace, use direct action techniques to become newsworthy and achieve public visibility. Pigman also notes that so-called 'eminent person diplomats'

have made their presence felt on the international stage through developments such as the Elders Programme to raise public awareness and affect diplomatic responses about the war in Darfur (Pigman, 2010: 88–9). This initiative was constructed by the musician Peter Gabriel and the Virgin Media entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson and included the late South African President Nelson Mandela and former US President Jimmy Carter.

Within this sub-category, Pigman comments that celebrities have influenced humanitarian initiatives (for example, through Live Aid, Live-8, and numerous charities in telethons), and that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have used Goodwill Ambassadors (Pigman, 2010: 97). This proliferation of celebrity representations reflects a broader set of social, political and international changes within diplomatic practices. As Pigman points out (2010: 96–7):

It makes sense to consider the activities of these individuals as diplomacy because, importantly – at least when they are successful – they and the messages that they bear are received by the interlocutor with which they wish to communicate. They are accredited as having standing and legitimacy by the counterparts to whom they seek to negotiate. They are engaging in the core diplomatic functions of representation and communication ... and by doing so they play a key role in mediating estrangement between other actors.

Therefore, celebrity activists have shifted the focus away from state-directed types of public diplomacy to bring attention to more cosmopolitan concerns related to global citizenship and mutual solidarity. Lisa Tsaliki, Christos A. Frangonikolopoulos and Asteris Huliaras argue that celebrity activists can 'bridge' the gap between Western audiences and faraway tragedies by using their fame to publicize international events (Tsaliki et al., 2011: 299). Celebrity diplomats provide a creditable lead 'through the "non-confrontational" reordering of political and economic forces in the service of global

goals' (Tsaliki et al., 2011: 300). Through their charismatic authority they complement the work of NGOs to establish a discourse within the global civil society about such organizations' activities.

In turn, Andrew Cooper maintains that if public diplomacy is married to more open-ended versions of individual agency, then traditional forms of state-centric diplomacy are eroded (Cooper, 2008: 2). He argues that celebrity diplomacy creates a new 'space' in which stars provide a conduit between the public and foreign affairs to overcome the 'disconnect' which has occurred as official diplomats have sought to husband information rather than share it (Cooper, 2008: 113–14). Consequently, celebrities can provide points of identification to mobilize public opinion for diplomatic reform. Therefore, Cooper identifies celebrity diplomacy as an alternative form of agency (see Chapter 7 in this Handbook) which has the potential to define international communication agendas:

The power of agency – and ... its adaptive capabilities ... – is captured by the continued rise of Angelina Jolie ... Jolie has exhibited many of the potential strengths, in part because of her ability to mix art and real life. Starring in adventure films in exotic locations provided added credibility to her frontline activity as a UN Goodwill Ambassador and her more recent ventures into freelance diplomatic activity. It also reflected an immense amount of personal growth ... caused by ... [her] ... growing appreciation of what her role could be. (Cooper, 2008: 116)

Cooper contends that celebrities not only draw public attention and actively promote causes but are ideational figures who frame and sell ideas within the international community (Cooper, 2008: 10). This enables them to employ their rhetorical power within the centres of diplomatic power, such as the US Department of State and the United Nations. Cooper defines this as the 'Bonoization' of diplomacy, suggesting that celebrity advocates, such as the U2 singer Bono (Paul David Hewson), have placed causes such as world debt on the international agenda.

Further, he argues that decision-makers can benefit from the favourable public opinion engendered through such an association with celebrities. This mutuality of interests means that celebrities can gain an unprecedented amount of face-to-face time with leaders, meaning that stars may advance their causes.

Cooper's celebrity diplomacy thesis accords with Joseph Nye's concept of soft power as it suggests that change occurs through attraction rather than 'carrots or sticks' (Nye, 2004). In terms of nation states, this power derives from the legitimacy of a society's culture, political ideals, and policies directed towards other countries. At the more individualist level, Cooper contends that celebrity diplomats have utilized the politics of attraction to legitimize themselves within the global public sphere and to access networks of power (Cooper, 2008: 10). This 'soft power potential' has meant celebrity diplomats have lent their weight to 'sell' transnational campaigns within a commercially driven news media. In this manner, celebrities have utilized their star power to affect pressure upon diplomats, international policymakers and national leaders. Therefore, it remains necessary to consider the activities, roles and techniques that celebrities have used in order to examine the nature and extent of their influence within the diplomatic arena.

### **Key Points**

- Traditional forms of diplomacy are being challenged by the rise of public diplomacy.
- The rise of global communications means that international public opinion is a growing resource which is contested by both elite and grassroots organizations.
- Celebrity diplomacy has emerged as there has been a democratization of the foreign policy process.
- Celebrity diplomacy shares a number of characteristics with soft power, such as the politics of attraction.

## **HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORANEOUS FORMS OF CELEBRITY DIPLOMACY: THE UNITED NATIONS, NGOS AND FREELANCE ACTIVISTS**

Pigman makes a useful distinction between those celebrities who have represented a supra-national institution and others who have endorsed international causes, such as Live Aid or Product RED (Pigman, 2010: 87). In the case of the former, there is a significant history of celebrity endorsement concerning IGOs and NGOs. This has been complemented by the rise of more freelance forms of celebrity diplomacy, such as Bob Geldof's emotive response to the famines in Ethiopia with the initial creation of Band Aid and release of the 'Feed the World' charity single leading to the Live Aid Global concerts in 1985.

When UNICEF appointed the movie actor Danny Kaye in 1954 as its first Ambassador-at-large, it was the start of the UN's policy to employ celebrities to raise funds, affect diplomatic agendas and draw attention to development causes. As 'Mr UNICEF' Kaye, and his fellow Goodwill Ambassador Peter Ustinov, were seen as good international citizens who could engender a 'thick layer of goodwill for UNICEF' (Ling, 1984: 9). The celebrity who provided the template for this 'glamorous ... conformity' was Audrey Hepburn (Cooper, 2008: 18). She made visits to Ethiopia and Somalia with little fear for her personal safety, met African Leaders and took causes to the US Senate. Hepburn used her fame to promote UNICEF's humanitarian causes and refused to take political sides by insisting the worst violence in Africa was widespread poverty (Ling, 1984: 20).

As celebrity activity in the 1980s and 1990s increased, with the further employment of Goodwill Ambassadors by UNICEF and other agencies, notably the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Health Organization (WHO), celebrities decided to

become politically engaged. In this transformative era of celebrity diplomacy stars felt that they should use their fame to expose human rights injustices. This led to several UN Goodwill Ambassadors, including Richard Gere and Mia Farrow, going distinctly off-message when they criticized the organization's moral stance. Another Goodwill Ambassador, Harry Belafonte, even accused George W. Bush of being 'the greatest terrorist in the world' when visiting the late Venezuela President Hugh Chavez.

When Kofi Annan was appointed as the UN Secretary-General in 1997, he oversaw a public relations revolution which engaged in the wide-scale employment of Goodwill Ambassadors. He believed celebrities could influence international public opinion to support the UN's goals of idealism and universalism. Moreover, the usage of celebrity diplomacy intensified with Annan's creation of Messengers of Peace drawn from famous individuals who could perpetuate the aims of the UN Charter. For instance, George Clooney became a Messenger of Peace because he supported NGO projects in war-torn Darfur. He was seen to be effective in fronting a humanitarian campaign forged from a coalition of groups ranging from political liberals, the African-American community and the Christian Right. In 2007, he co-founded a non-profit organization called Not on Our Watch to bring resolution to the conflict in Darfur and draw attention to human rights abuses in Burma, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

In raising the UN's profile for liberal internationalism, the most spectacular success is the film actress Angelina Jolie whose image was transformed from a Hollywood wild-child to a credible celebrity diplomat. Undoubtedly, she knows that her fame, beauty and photogenic qualities can attract the world's media to promote the causes she endorses. Yet, Jolie's emotive responses were seen to be legitimate when she published her diaries about her visits to refugee camps, which appeared to be serious and well-informed. Therefore, Jolie's activism

epitomized Annan's belief that through celebrity diplomacy the UN's mission for universalism would be enhanced.

These forms of transnational star activism have moved beyond the institutional confines of the UN as NGOs have used global celebrities to publicize their activities and direct media attention to issues. For instance, Jolie has worked independently from the UN and has collaborated with Peter Gabriel in his Witness Programme, which documents human rights abuses and establishes policies for international justice. Similarly, the singer Annie Lennox has accompanied her role as a United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) Goodwill Ambassador with active support for Amnesty International, Greenpeace and Burma UK. The American Red Cross utilizes a 50-member Celebrity Cabinet that includes Jamie Lee Curtis, Jane Seymour, L.L. Cool J. and Jackie Chan.

In matching up the celebrity with the NGO, the 'fit' between the motivations of a celebrity and a charity is a priority. One of the most successful linkages occurred when the late Princess Diana became an advocate for the banning of landmines when she agreed to endorse the Mines Advisory Group (MAG). She had become involved with MAG when representing UK Red Cross as part of her responsibilities as the wife of Prince Charles. However, she realized her image of 'glamour with compassion' could deliver a message for which she had a very personal concern. In making her trips to Angola and Bosnia to publicize the landmines issue, Princess Diana's enthusiasm for the cause was evident from her comment that: 'This is the type of format I've been looking for' (Cooper, 2008: 26).

Yet events and media perceptions also shaped how the landmines message was publicized and received. Princess Diana was due to attend the first major ceremony concerning the banning of landmines on 1 September 1997 when she was killed in a car crash in Paris. However, she was so closely associated with the cause that her influence on the



campaign proved to be instrumental even after her death. Bob Geldof had some time before this understood that a royal seal of approval, in his case from Prince Charles and Princess Diana's attendance at the opening of his 1985 Live Aid show, was necessary to provide credibility for the entire enterprise of aid (Geldof, 2005).

Geldof's globally televised Live Aid shows reconfigured the public's attitude towards charities by demonstrating that fundraising could be desirable. On 24 October 1984, the BBC News correspondent Michael Buerk filed a devastating report about the widespread starvation of Ethiopian refugees in camps at Korem. In the resulting outpouring of public grief the horrified Geldof, the front man of a fading post-punk band The Boomtown Rats, became an unlikely celebrity humanitarian. He cajoled 45 UK pop stars including Bono, George Michael and Sting to form Band Aid, which recorded a charity single 'Do They Know it's Christmas' (1984). The record raised millions of pounds. This led to Geldof quite forcefully persuading celebrities such as Bowie, Paul McCartney, Mick Jagger, Lionel Ritchie and Elton John, along with bands including Dire Straits, Queen, U2 and The Who, into performing at the simultaneous Live Aid concerts in London and Philadelphia on 13 July 1985.

The media spectacle brought the plight of the starving Ethiopians to the attention of two billion viewers across 160 countries and challenged them to contribute to the cause, not least due to Geldof's impatience. Because the BBC failed to effectively advertise the phone numbers available for public donations, only a relatively small amount of money had been raised. Consequently, Live Aid is remembered for Geldof's (in)famous outburst on a pre-watershed channel which has inaccurately gone down in folklore as 'Give me the Fucking Money!' Live Aid raised a global total of £50 million and Geldof's indignant behaviour was seen to be crucial to its success (Gray, 2005).

Geldof's anger has been a key determinant in his approach to international relations.

Cooper contends that he is an 'anti-diplomat' who smashes through the niceties of diplomacy to achieve his goals (Cooper, 2008: 52). His verbal belligerence and desire for personal recognition has been countered by his genuine sense of compassion, organizational skills and realization of the power of public spectacle. It is noted that Geldof, whatever responses he arouses, has demonstrated a long-term commitment to his endeavours. Further, U2 became a major international act on the back of their appearance within the globally televised Live Aid concerts and their front-man Bono has utilized his fame to break down the spheres of entertainment and global advocacy to become *the* celebrity spokesman on human rights.

Bono has been responsible for tilting much of the focus of celebrity advocacy toward poverty in the developing states of the global economy (Cooper, 2008). He has placed an emphasis on direct action and building effective institutions, while using his fame to gain an inside track to lobby governments. The rock singer is the co-founder and remains the public face of the One Campaign and DATA (Debt, Aids, Trade Africa) which promote the ending of extreme poverty, the fighting of the AIDs pandemic and international debt relief. He was also instrumental, along with Jeffrey Sachs, Bobby Shriver and Paul Farmer, in the construction of Product RED, which combined celebrity activism with corporate social responsibility (Nike, Apple, Gap) to support the Global Fund in its fight to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in Africa.

As a regular speaker at the G8, the Davos World Economic Forum and World Bank meetings, Bono's views on aid and debt relief for developing nations have garnered the attention of world leaders, senior policymakers, NGOs, the media and the public. Consequently, he has utilized his position as a global performer to bring politicians and corporate executives together (Jackson, 2008: 218). Undoubtedly, Bono has demonstrated tenacity in establishing political alliances not



only with liberal figures such as Bill Clinton and Bill Gates but with George W. Bush and Jesse Helms, the late arch-conservative Senator from North Carolina. He attended Republican as well as Democratic National Conventions to extend his message and mobilize support for his causes. In this manner he achieved cross-party consensus for the Jubilee 2000 debt relief alliance in Africa and placed the issue firmly on the political agenda in Washington. These forms of political expedience have been necessary to achieve the greater good of aid reform.

Cooper notes how Bono has used his fame to gain entrance to the corridors of power by appealing to modern leaders such as Tony Blair and Bill Clinton due to their fascination with popular culture (Cooper, 2008: 38). Yet, as he has engaged with compromised leaders such as George W. Bush and Blair, alongside illiberal figures such as Vladimir Putin, Bono has been accused of being an impotent 'bard of the powerful' (Monbiot, 2005). Others have suggested that Bono's proclamations have been a good way of selling tickets for his band and assuaging Western consumer guilt. With the increase in celebrity diplomacy, the worth of such activism has been questioned and its impact on cultural and political practices has become more controversial.

### **Key Points**

- Celebrity diplomacy has been associated with IGOs such as the UN and most especially the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassadors scheme.
- There was an exponential increase in UN Goodwill Ambassadors when former Secretary-General Kofi Annan engaged in a public relations revolution designed to promote the UN's liberal international values.
- Increasingly, NGOS such as Amnesty and Greenpeace have developed ambassadors' schemes.
- Freelance celebrity diplomats such as Bob Geldof and Bono have grown in importance through charitable records, globally televised concerts and their use of their fame to enter into key decision-making arenas.

### **QUESTIONING THE WORTH OF CELEBRITY DIPLOMACY**

The critiques of celebrity diplomacy have several dimensions. Some celebrity diplomats are accused of debasing the quality of international debate, diverting attention from worthy causes to those which are 'sexy' and failing to represent the disenfranchised. They are criticized for being superficial and unaccountable. Concerns are raised that Goodwill Ambassadors trivialize the UN's mission. Mark D. Alleyne argues that the UN's deployment of Goodwill Ambassadors has been elitist and ethno-centric. He maintains that the employment of celebrities was part of a general malaise in which a desperate UN incorporated public relations techniques into its marketing so that the international media would provide it with a favourable coverage (Alleyne, 2005: 176). Essentially, Alleyne argues that this is a shallow approach to solving crises, reinforcing ethnic stereotypes by perpetuating an imbalanced view of need and offering 'a primarily meliorative approach, giving succour to the incapacitated rather than hope for a better life through programmes of education, consciousness-raising and cultural affirmation' (Alleyne, 2003: 77).

Moreover, Lisa Richey and Stefano Ponte contend the celebrity activism that occurred in relation to 'Band Aid' was commoditized into 'Brand Aid'. This meant that major corporations and celebrities combined to support charities aimed at African poverty. As these apparently ethical forms of behaviour sell 'suffering' to the public, Richey and Ponte argue that aid causes have become 'brands' to be bought and sold in the global marketplace. Product RED marked the point wherein there was a fusion of consumption and social causes so that, 'the primary goal of RED is not to push governments to do their part, but to push consumers to do theirs through exercising their choices' (Richey and Ponte, 2011: 33–4).

Consequently, Richey and Ponte argue that this apparent altruism provides another

means through which corporations may market themselves in relation to the growing concerns of lifestyle, culture and identity. Thus, corporations such as Amex and Armani (sponsors of Product RED) gained from developing 'responsible practices' so that they can brand themselves to a wider consumer base. However, by focusing the public attention on the plight of 'distant others' they deflect the focus away from their own dubious behaviour in exploiting cheap labour forces in developing states. In this respect, celebrities lend credence and validate such 'ethical' corporate behaviour.

Within this schema, Ilan Kapoor contends that the ideological underpinnings of celebrity advocacy are not so much about humanitarianism as about perpetuating a 'post-democratic' political system which may be characterized by neo-liberalism, self-promotion, brand marketing and the reinforcement of elite-centred politics (Kapoor, 2012). Thus, Geldof and Bono's involvement in Live-8 is criticized for sloganizing poverty, deflecting the public's attention away from the viability of aid and being co-opted by an unaccountable political class (Polman, 2011). Concurrently, anti-poverty campaigners such as Making Poverty History argue that Live-8 wilfully undermines their messages of 'Justice not Charity', steals the media agenda and depoliticizes the cause through its construction of a dependency culture (Monbiot, 2005).

Therefore, this has meant that instead of Geldof and Bono acting as humane philanthropists, in reality they have reinforced the West's neo-colonial rule over the Global South. According to Andrew Darnton and Martin Kirk, the 'Live Aid Legacy' has established an inequitable relationship between 'Powerful Givers' and 'Grateful Receivers' (Darnton and Kirk, 2011: 6). This dominant paradigm has meant that aid will 'magically' release the 'victims' from the shackles of Southern societies. Within this apparently benevolent narrative the focus on the indigenous peoples' needs rather than the facilitation of their creativity has been used to

'police' the boundaries of the public's imagination (Yrjölä, 2011: 187; Dieter and Kumar, 2008).

Such criticisms suggest that this cluster of celebrity activists remain North-centric actors. Jemima Repo and Riina Yrjölä maintain that the values of celebrity diplomacy preserve global stereotypes. Principally, Bono, Geldof and Jolie are represented as selfless Western crusaders dedicated to alleviating the suffering of Africans who exist outside of the 'civilized' processes of development, progress, peace and human security. Therefore, celebrities and 'Africa' operate under assumed roles which are presented as part of a wider discourse about the natural order of world politics (Repo and Yrjölä, 2011: 57). Celebrity diplomacy indicates an underlying cultural imperialism which has abused 'the Third World [so that] the latter becomes [a stage] for First World self-promotion and hero-worship, and [the] dumping ground for humanitarian ideals and fantasies' (Kapoor, 2011).

However, despite the validity of these criticisms, a more nuanced approach to celebrity diplomacy is required. For instance, in a commercially dictated global media, the escalation of UN Goodwill Ambassadors and Messenger of Peace Programmes was one of the few realistic responses open to Annan and his successor Ban Ki-Moon, along with NGOs, to promote the international community's activities (Kellner, 2010: 123). The ability of celebrity advocates to bring focus to international campaigns, to impact on diplomatic agendas and to advocate global principles has been of significant worth in seeking resolution in a period of sustained international conflict.

### **Key Points**

- Celebrity diplomats have been accused of trivializing the debates about poverty and humanitarian reforms.
- They serve to reinforce a dominant Western paradigm that indigenous people are 'victims'.

- They have been understood as supporting the values of global capitalism, reinforcing the power of cultural imperialism and assuaging consumer guilt.
- Celebrity diplomats have a greater degree of autonomy than their critics realize and are necessary to publicize key issues in a commercially driven global media.

## CONCLUSION

In analysing celebrity involvement in diplomatic initiatives, a mixed picture has emerged. UN Goodwill Ambassadors and Messengers of Peace, NGO endorsers and famous activists have used their star power to affect pressure upon diplomats, international policymakers and national leaders. As the critiques of celebrity advocates have indicated, there are dangers in over-simplifying complex forms of international diplomacy, utilizing emotional responses and becoming servants of the power elite. However, celebrities have promoted alternative discourses, and have developed credible diplomatic interventions. As Ira Wagman comments, the analysis must now move beyond the polarities of 'help or hurt' to consider why 'celebrities turn to diplomatic issues, why specific celebrities team up with particular institutions, and what each has to gain' (Wagman, 2014). Therefore, while remaining critically engaged with the processes of celebrity diplomacy, it is necessary to engage with the implications for opportunity and reform that have become manifest in an open-minded and intellectually curious fashion.

In moving the debate along, it should be noted that as celebrities have become more politically conscious they have brought about new forms of diplomatic engagement which have indicated a transformation from a state-centric to more populist approaches to international relations. These reforms have occurred within a construct of global collaboration so that networks of institutional and ideological power facilitate diplomatic

reforms. Thus, in soft power terms, the politics of attraction within celebrity-led campaigns such as Make Poverty History and Product RED have facilitated greater forms of agency to alleviate global suffering. Further, the dialogue between celebrities and the public has allowed for new opportunities for public diplomatic engagement. This has reflected a willingness within audiences to accept celebrities as authentic advocates due to the public's identification with stars. Consequently, the celebritization of international politics must not be simply dismissed as an erosion of the diplomatic order but should be understood as part of the transformation processes which are occurring within public diplomacy.

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# Digital Diplomacy

Eytan Gilboa

## INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have created a global connectivity that has challenged diplomacy but also created opportunities for more effective and innovative practice. This connectivity has facilitated two-way communication between governments and foreign publics, between peoples and governments, and between and among peoples. Diplomats can now reach and engage large audiences, and citizens can influence foreign policy and diplomacy as never before. They can also employ ICTs for listening to the wishes, praise, criticism and reservations of both domestic and foreign audiences. Although states still remain the dominant actors in international relations, ‘networking’ – the informal sharing of information and services among individuals, groups and institutions having a common interest – has altered the global power structure. Adjustment of governments to ICTs was slow but now foreign ministries

and diplomatic legations have created, developed and adopted new Digital Diplomacy (DD) strategies designed to connect cultures, increase awareness, and advocate policy positions (Sarukhan et al., 2012).

Much of the existing research on DD is limited and has been conducted mostly on the American experience and public diplomacy (PD) (Digital Diplomacy Bibliography, 2014; Gilboa, 2016a) (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook). This isn’t surprising because the US was the first to adopt DD, has been conducting the most intensive DD in the world and American scholars have dominated research in this field. Yet, the massive concentration of research and analysis on the US experience is limited because it may have missed significant national and cultural differences and idiosyncrasies. Many examples and illustrations in this chapter are taken from the American case, but they exist in somewhat less developed formats in the diplomatic establishment of many countries.



## DEFINITIONS

DD is a relatively new term created by the need to explain and analyze the effects of ICTs, especially the internet and social media, on the conduct of foreign policy and diplomacy. Scholars and practitioners haven't yet found a definition of DD that all can agree on. DD is often equated, contrasted, or confused with terms such as 'ediplomacy,' 'cyber diplomacy,' 'virtual diplomacy,' 'real-time diplomacy,' 'networked diplomacy' or 'social diplomacy'. Secretary of State John Kerry (2013) equated DD with diplomacy: 'the term digital diplomacy is almost redundant – it is just diplomacy, period'. While DD is increasingly dominating traditional government-to-government relations and new government-to-people and people-to-people relations, non-digital diplomacy still covers many more areas and issues.

A frequently used definition refers to DD 'as the use of the Web, ICTs, and social media tools to engage in diplomatic activities and carry out foreign policy objectives' (Sandre, 2013: 9). DD is conducted via digital-based platforms and tools including websites, blogs, social networks and smartphones. The web networks of Facebook and Twitter have become especially popular channels for communication between politicians and officials and the public, and between and among peoples. Hence the terms: 'Facebook diplomacy' and 'Twiplomacy.'

DD is often equated with PD because the latter is extensively employed to reach diverse audiences (Gilboa, 2016b). Initially, in 2002, the State Department (State) introduced the term ediplomacy, and created a special office to plan and organize relevant programs in eight different areas, only one of which was PD. The others were knowledge management, information management, consular communication and response, disaster response, internet freedom, external resources and policy planning (Hanson, 2012a). Cohen argued that DD utilization for effective and innovative communication and advocacy is PD, while

utilization for empowering citizens, promoting greater accountability and building capacity is statecraft (cited in Larson, 2010).

As PD is an integral part of diplomacy and foreign policy, equating DD only with PD is misleading because DD serves other significant areas of diplomacy. Equating DD with diplomacy is also misleading because diplomacy is conducted in several areas where ICTs are absent, such as negotiations and meetings between leaders and diplomats with government officials and heads of companies and organizations. DD also shouldn't be equated with ediplomacy, because DD only provides ICTs for the implementation of ediplomacy programs. The most useful approach to DD is to view it as an instrument of diplomacy, based on ICTs and serving both traditional and new foreign policy goals of states and non-state actors.

## EVOLUTION

DD has developed in several stages defined by vision, rapid technological innovations and organizational adoptions by foreign ministries. Already in 1968, Leonard Marks, the Director of the US Information Agency, envisioned a global computer network that would dramatically connect people in the world (Cull, 2013: 123–4). Thirty years later, the Center for Strategic and International Studies published a report generated by a group of scholars, diplomats, journalists and businessmen predicting that the internet would become the central nervous system of international relations (Robison & Fulton, 1998). Dizard (2001) wrote one of the first books on digital diplomacy and complained about the slow, reluctant adjustment of State to the challenges and opportunities of the information age.

This approach, however, turned around after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The US decided that the battle for the hearts and minds of people, especially in the Middle East, would have to be a central component



of their response to the attacks (Hallams, 2010; Hayden, 2012). In 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell established the first task-force of ediplomacy which later became the Office of ediplomacy (Hanson, 2012b). Until 2009, however, this unit was very small, with a staff of six employees focusing on the use of ICTs for internal purposes.

Powell's successor, Condoleezza Rice, introduced 'Transformational Diplomacy,' which included a major plan for more and better use of ICTs across the Department of State. In 2006, she established the Digital Outreach Team (DOT) to counter misinformation and explain US policies through direct engagement with the Muslim world. The breakthrough came under her successor Hilary Clinton, who adopted a far-reaching vision of DD programs and tools under the umbrella of her Twenty-first-century Statecraft initiative (Lichtenstein, 2010; Sandre, 2015). Clinton's approach well matched the overall characterization of Obama as the first American digital president.

Diplomacy 1.0 refers to the passive presentation and consumption of content, primarily via email and websites. This format characterized the DD pursued during the administration of President George W. Bush. Diplomacy 2.0, coined in 2008, primarily refers to interactivity, sharing user-generated content via platforms such as blogs, forums, Wikipedia, Flickr, and the social media networks of Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Google+. In Diplomacy 1.0, communication went vertically and only in one direction, from governments downward; in Diplomacy 2.0 it has been interactive and horizontal.

### **Key Points**

- The evolution of DD was slow due to the stiff organizational structure and norms of foreign ministries.
- Dramatic events such as the 9/11 terror attacks, and visionary foreign ministers such as Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, inspired better and faster DD practices.

### **EFFECTS**

Diplomats and scholars have argued that DD is only a new instrument designed to achieve the traditional goals of diplomacy. The counter argument is that it has caused a paradigmatic shift, completely changing the environment and conduct of diplomacy and the role of diplomats (Graffy, 2009; Seib, 2012; Bjola and Holmes, 2015; Sandre, 2015). Ross (2011) has suggested that ICTs have 'disrupted' international relations by creating and using new and innovative channels for diplomatic activity.

The information revolution has changed the balance of power between governments and citizens. Institutions became less powerful and the people became more powerful. It has multiplied and diversified the number of actors and interests involved in foreign policymaking, and has created opportunities for collaboration among them. Foreign ministries have more tools to disseminate more information, more effectively and more quickly. At the same time, citizens are demanding more transparency and accountability, and are debating foreign policy choices with policymakers and among themselves. ICTs inspired the emergence of 'citizen diplomacy' – ordinary citizens representing their country and even negotiating with the officials and citizens of other countries (see Chapter 42 in this Handbook). This way, DD enables politicians and officials to monitor and listen to domestic and foreign perceptions of their policies and programs.

DD is also an effective tool to bypass the controlled media in authoritarian states. During the initial phases of the vicious civil war in Syria, US ambassador Robert Ford extensively used the US embassy's Facebook page to bypass the Syrian government's heavy censorship. He wanted to reach as many ordinary Syrians as possible and tell them the truth about the atrocities (Barry, 2011). DD has been also very effective in humanitarian aid and the crisis management of natural disasters such as the earthquakes in Haiti and Japan (Harris, 2013).

DD is more effective for reaching young people, who are more versed in ICTs than older people. About half of the world's population is under 30 and lives on-line. Ministries of Foreign Affairs have initiated and implemented projects to meet this challenge. The State Department created a program to help young international activists to seek reforms. In 2008, Facebook was used to organize a strong international protest against the FARC guerrillas in Colombia. The protest led to the establishment of the Alliance of Youth Movement, a platform for similar cyber activism (Cartalucci, 2011).

### **Key Points**

- The debate about the effects of DD on diplomacy cuts across both scholars and practitioners.
- There is more agreement now that DD has significantly changed the diplomatic landscape and isn't merely one new tool of diplomacy.

## **DD AND THE FOREIGN SERVICE**

DD has altered the role of diplomats. One of the main functions of diplomats has always been to gather information about the places they serve in. Since much of this information is now available on the internet, this function has become less significant. Yet, 'human intelligence' didn't disappear when new sophisticated spying technologies, such as satellites, were developed and activated. Likewise, diplomats still directly receive sensitive information from policymakers that isn't available from open sources, and are therefore in a much better position to assess the importance and validity of the information that is available on the internet.

DD has atomized the Foreign Service and created tension between diplomats stationed abroad and foreign ministries (Sarukhan et al., 2012). The Foreign Service is very hierarchical. Official statements and activities in the field require authorization from headquarters which could take days, because they have to

be cautious and consistent with overall policy. On the other hand, DD requires fast and sometimes spontaneous responses to developing events. If diplomats have to wait too long for authorization, they lose the conversation and are excluded from the discussion. Consequently, diplomats have become much more independent and assertive. This has led to fruitful engagement but also to blowbacks, the unintended adverse results of a political action or situation. In November 2013, the British Ambassador to Lebanon, Tom Fletcher (2014), wrote a letter to mark the 70th anniversary of the Lebanese republic. He listed achievements but also antagonized many Lebanese by offering 'some unsolicited critical advice.'

Veteran diplomats think that DD has gone too far, is too risky and should be limited. Other diplomats admit that DD is risky, especially in social media, but is still worth pursuing because the alternative is to forfeit a critical instrument (Wichowski, 2013; Sandre, 2015). The solution is to better train diplomats to use DD and trust them to make an effort to avoid mistakes and to increase collaboration and consultation between the traditional and the DD diplomats, both at the embassy level and between embassy and headquarters. Diplomats have always needed to be aware of cultural and religious sensitivities, but today this imperative is even more significant because once a message is posted on Facebook or Twitter, it quickly spreads all over the world. Foreign Service manuals can help to reduce the risks, but they tell diplomats mostly what not to do. They all require significant revisions and adjustments to DD.

DD has inspired innovations such as the Virtual Student Foreign Service (2014), which began in 2009 and was designed to engage civil society in the work of the government by harnessing the expertise and digital excellence of US citizen students. The students have contributed skills and creativity entirely remotely to numerous projects in areas such as human rights, environmental protection and economics, sponsored by several departments and agencies.

DD has also inspired the establishment of virtual embassies. In 2007, Sweden opened the first virtual embassy in the virtual world of Second Life (<http://secondlife.com/>). It more resembles the routine work of the cultural attaché office as it offers information about Swedish culture, tours of museums and on-line courses. In 2011, the US opened a virtual embassy in Teheran, Iran, which broke diplomatic relations with the US after the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis (Ryan and Frantz, 2014: 8). This virtual embassy was designed to create a direct channel of information and dialogue with the Iranian public. In the absence of its ability to establish diplomatic relations with Arab states, in 2013 Israel founded its first virtual embassy on Twitter to promote dialogue with the population of six gulf countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Abu Dhabi. In these cases, the virtual embassies substituted the functions of real embassies in states where normal diplomatic relations couldn't be established or were broken. The virtual embassies had only limited success. The US virtual embassy in Teheran didn't help to inspire a widespread resistance to the Iranian extreme theocracy, and Sweden closed its virtual embassy in 2013.

### **Key Points**

- DD has created a dilemma for the Foreign Service because it requires fast responses which could be careless and counterproductive.
- On the other hand, it offers opportunities to establish innovative mechanisms for diplomacy such as virtual embassies and, in the case of the US, a Student Foreign Service.

### **TWIPLOMACY**

Twitter was developed in 2006 and has become a very popular DD instrument (Sandre, 2013, 2015; Bastianello, 2014). In

2014, about three quarters of world leaders had a Twitter account compared to only half in 2012. Leaders and government agencies including embassies use Twitter to document their most significant daily activities, to communicate with foreign and domestic audiences, to answer questions and comments, and to exchange views in open forums with their colleagues and counterparts. In the networked world, diplomats have to be outstanding communicators.

Any foreign policy, particularly of great and intermediate powers, is too complex to explain in 140 characters. It is difficult to succinctly compose but easy to read and follow. Twitter forces diplomats to distill their government's message to its essence. Twitter is best to send quick messages or to amplify them. It is also best for gathering information on leaders and major political, economic and social processes. Leaders and foreign ministers use Twitter to promote longer presentations that they place in blogs or in other forums. Tweets are used to initiate a communication with foreign leaders, and move them to the traditional government-to-government diplomacy. In May 2012, the Swedish foreign minister, Carl Bildt, was unable to connect with the foreign minister of Bahrain, Khalid Al Khalifa. He tweeted him and got an immediate response on Twitter and on the phone (Sandre, 2013: 28).

Re-tweets amplify messages. Three communities in foreign countries are especially relevant: the local media, the diplomatic community and the home state diaspora. Ministries and embassies push national media outlets in foreign countries to cite as many tweets as possible, written and transmitted by agencies as well as by embassies and other diplomatic legations. The diplomatic community in any country often follows what colleagues are tweeting and disseminating messages to their own audiences. This practice is especially effective when countries collaborate on certain issues or adopt similar opinions.

A few examples demonstrate Twiplomacy (Sandre, 2013: 30–3). British foreign minister William Hague initiated a ‘Meet the Foreign Secretary’ channel to improve his relations with domestic and foreign audiences. He solicited tweets on questions such as the idea, innovation, or trend that will have the greatest impact on the world in the next 20 years, or the priorities the Foreign Office should adopt for the next year. Susan Rice, the US Ambassador to the UN, was the first to use Twitter from the closed doors of the UN Security Council, and became one of the most followed diplomats in the world. When in 2010 Dino Patti Djalal became the Indonesian Ambassador to the US, he said he would be Indonesia’s first ‘Twitter Ambassador.’ In two years he got around 100,000 followers and became the most followed ambassador in Washington. When Michael McFaul became US ambassador to Russia in 2011, he pioneered the use of Twitter as an embassy tool. He explained that Twitter allowed him to interact with a high school student in Vladivostok or a minister in the Russian government without having to go through the Russian government (Landler, 2014).

In 2009, the US employed Twitter to encourage protests in Iran against the regime’s rigging of the presidential elections. The effort, however, boomeranged because the Basij paramilitaries used Twitter to identify, hunt and execute protesters (Burns and Eltham, 2009). Sometimes, information alone can’t cope with violent repression, and social media can even become a double-edged sword.

### Key Points

- Twiplomacy is used for several purposes but mostly for fast and concise exchanges.
- Diplomats who know best when and how to use Twitter become popular, attract many followers and have more opportunities to influence leaders and public opinion. Yet, chatting on social media is difficult to record and evaluate, and Twiplomacy is seen in several countries, like China, as intrusive.

## AUDIENCES

Traditional diplomacy was used only in connection with foreign governments and peoples. DD is much broader and is used to reach and engage three types of audiences: internal, domestic and foreign. Internal audience refers to people and units inside the ministry of foreign affairs and other relevant agencies. The domestic audience is citizens and residents of a country. The foreign audience is people in another country or around the world.

Foreign ministries first used DD for internal purposes. It helped to better coordinate policies, programs, responses and initiatives with other branches of the foreign policy and national security establishment. It also significantly assisted the steering, oversight and evaluation of diplomatic activities. The Department of State developed several DD tools for internal communication and coordination (Hanson, 2012a), based on digital concepts such as Wikipedia and Facebook. Search was established in 2004 and functions as a documentation archive. Communities@State was inaugurated in 2005 and contains issue specific blogs. Diplopedia was established in 2006. It looks like Wikipedia and performs similar functions of providing information on people, events, processes and so on. Sounding Board was founded in 2009 and serves as a platform to solicit ideas and innovation directly from State’s employees. Established in 2011, Corridor, like LinkedIn, is a professional networking site.

In the globalization and information age, the traditional distinction between domestic and foreign policy and between domestic and foreign audiences has become blurred (see Chapter 5 in this Handbook). In the past, the life of ordinary citizens was not affected by developments and events in other parts of the world – they were not interested in foreign affairs, didn’t know much about them and trusted their leaders to formulate and implement the right policies. Today, all these elements have changed. The life of citizens is affected by world events and people want to

know more and to participate in discussions about foreign policy.

In view of these transformations, policy-makers employ DD, especially social media, for several functions: to investigate what the public thinks about foreign policy choices; to educate the public about foreign policy and international relations; to explain challenges and alternative means to address them; and to cultivate public support for policies they have selected. This use of DD could be called domestic DD. The Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade was the first ministry of foreign affairs to consult the domestic public via DD and other means on foreign policy priorities (Potter, 2008: 126).

### **Key Points**

- DD is employed to reach and engage three different audiences: internal, domestic and foreign.
- The challenge is how to formulate and transmit messages that would meet the different needs and interests of each audience.

### **DIGITAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY (DPD)**

DPD reaches foreign audiences. ICTs have significantly affected the practice and theory of PD because they have created a global arena for direct information dissemination and interactivity. Almost all states and non-state actors maintain websites and blogs to present their history, policies, values, culture, science and other achievements as well as positions on current affairs and policies. During diplomacy 1.0, ICTs provided actors with ample opportunities to present themselves in creative textual and visual formats designed to cultivate positive support or attack opponents. The cumulative effect of using ICTs for self-promotion has created competing e-images. NGOs and terrorist organizations have been particularly effective in using ICTs to promote their causes and actions. Wikipedia, written by ordinary citizens from

all over the world, is now a significant source of information worldwide (Byrne and Johnston, 2015). The interactive social media created public diplomacy 2.0 (Dale, 2009).

PD is pursued via several instruments such as advocacy, media relations, cultural diplomacy, international exchanges, international broadcasting, nation-branding and international public relations. Most of these instruments include a digital component. For example, international exchanges are conducted in a traditional way, but if participants in a specific program interact among themselves and with sponsoring institutions via Facebook or Twitter, they create digital international exchanges (Ryan and Frantz, 2014: 7).

Very few studies have examined the organizational and planning aspects of DPD. Zhang (2013) identified four phases in DPD strategic issue management: (1) fermenting; (2) proactive; (3) reactive; and (4) new fermenting. Social media are largely tactical tools in the first and the last phases, and may become strategic tools in the proactive and reactive phases, in which diplomats may use them to reinforce a favorable viral trend, build an agenda, or respond to a conflict. Park and Lim (2014) found that Japan had a strong internal DPD network infrastructure achieved through dispersed connections and partnerships, while Korea had a centralized network, including a limited number of dominant actors. This comparative analysis of DPD is rare. Kersaint (2014) is also an exception. She closely compared the DPDs of the US and Germany and identified both differences and similarities.

Several studies found poor and ineffective utilization of DPD. Nurmi (2012) revealed that the Finnish missions abroad failed to exploit DPD for dialogue and interactivity, and instead employed them as traditional media. Grincheva (2012) used the rhetorical lenses of the European discourse on cultural agenda and found that the UK DD hardly went beyond the traditional cultural promotion. Natarajan (2014) examined uses of narratives in India's PD and concluded that DPD



should be used only within the context of a larger set of diplomatic practices.

Considerable research was conducted on the DPD of President Barack Obama. Khatib et al. (2012) examined efforts to engage Arab audiences in Obama's Cairo speech of June 4, 2009. They exposed the limits of DPD in trying to engage hostile audiences. Ciolek (2010) analyzed the use of Facebook by the US embassy in Jakarta to engage young Indonesians in dialogue about Obama's visit to Indonesia in 2010. In just a few months, the Facebook pages for the embassy and two consulates had more fans than all other US embassies and missions combined. Hayden et al. (2013) investigated information generated by the US embassy Facebook sites in Bangladesh, Egypt and Pakistan in the 2012 presidential elections. Much of the communication on these sites were 'praise and blame' of Obama and American political institutions. All these studies, however, present only isolated and disconnected islands of research.

### **Key Points**

- DPD is the most researched area in DD. Researchers have used similar methods: quantitative content analysis of messages, responses and exchanges, interviews with policymakers and diplomats, and data collection and analysis with techniques employed in internet studies.
- The different and interesting studies, however, have not yet produced cumulative knowledge. The main reason for this deficiency is the absence of a clear and rigorous research agenda.

### **LIMITS AND CHALLENGES**

The enthusiasm around DD has obscured several lingering challenges and problems. DD isn't a magic solution to weaknesses in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. DD has to be connected not only to people but also to strategic purposes and national communication strategies. At times,

it seems that the medium, rather than critical interests, has become the main message. DD offers tools. Selection of a tool has to be based on clear goals and strategies, otherwise it would be floating directionless. DD doesn't replace traditional government-to-government diplomacy and the new media doesn't replace the traditional media (newspapers, radio and television). There is a clear need for a balance between traditional diplomacy and DD, between soft and hard power, between the new and the traditional media and between governments and citizens.

DD can be used for both good and ill purposes. DD seems to punish moderation and amplify the messages of extreme and violent movements. Terrorist organizations have effectively used social media to recruit fighters and supporters, raise funds, glorify actions, challenge rules and norms and delegitimize states and regimes (Weimann, 2014). This practice can be vividly seen in the appalling use of social media since 2014 by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist organization. Despite the innovative DD efforts of the State Department's Center for Strategic Counterterrorism and Communication, it seems that the West hasn't yet been able to mount an effective DD counter campaign.

Julian Assange's WikiLeaks and Edward Snowden's revelations about abuses in the American military and national security system demonstrate how ICTs can be used to damage and embarrass the foreign policy and national security establishment (Cull, 2011). They also demonstrate the importance of the traditional media even in the information age. Both Assange and Snowden assembled and posted a large volume of secret information on the web, but used newspapers and networks to reach elites and gain credibility.

Measuring the impact of DD is difficult (Wallin, 2013). Several organizations and private companies have established DD monitoring systems and built big data banks. These sources provide interesting statistical information on the spread and popularity of social media accounts and networks.



Each focuses on certain dimensions of DD. Twitalyzer (2014) developed a 0-to-100 index that combines influence, number of followers and frequency of message writing. Burson-Marsteller (2014) monitors and analyzes Twitter accounts of leaders and governments. Agence France Presse (2014) established in 2012 the e-diplomacy hub for monitoring, visualizing, analyzing and measuring the presence and influence of diplomatic actors on Twitter across the globe and in real time.

Technical counting of contacts, the number of followers on a Facebook page of a ministry or an embassy, the number of times people use content, or the number of re-tweets are insufficient to verify engagement processes and content. If the same people follow each other, they won't reach the diverse audiences they claim to have been engaging with. Twitter can only be an effective DD tool when it leads to an open conversation, not to a monologue.

Sending messages has become easier but also challenging. Leaders and organizations use ICTs as alternative channels to push the same message. But the best use of ICTs is to offer information, context and analysis that otherwise isn't available. Leaders are still sending one message in a native language for the domestic audience and another in English to foreign audiences. This practice is quickly and easily exposed and doesn't work anymore. When so many people and organizations employ DD, the challenge is how to keep a consistent message, how to avoid sending content that people don't want and how to add a personal tone to an official position. With so many networks, the challenge is also how to select a specific platform to send a specific message, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, or Google+.

## CONCLUSION

Experts have claimed that Diplomacy 2.0 is already obsolete but the next phase is confused and being debated. Several are already

using the term Diplomacy 3.0, but others prefer terms such as 'networking.' For the Department of State, Diplomacy 3.0 is one essential pillar of foreign policy with the other two being defense and development. Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, the initiator of the Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy, thinks that Diplomacy 3.0 means replacing national DD and social media with collaborative international effort and multilateral digital diplomacy (Sandre, 2014, 2015).

Scholars have argued that networks are much more significant than a specific technology or platform (Zharana et al., 2013). Any transition from diplomacy 2.0 to another phase will have to resemble the quantum leap found in the transition from diplomacy 1.0 to diplomacy 2.0. Diplomacy 3.0 will exist only after social media has been further developed or even replaced by a newer technology or conceptual paradigm.

Scholars and diplomats argue that the most powerful nations in the future will be those with the most connections and those at the center of the most networks, rather than those with the largest armies. Similar statements were made after the end of the Cold War, but given the current high levels of intra- and interstate violence, these assessments may be premature. Even if Slaughter (2009) is correct and 'connectedness' is 'power,' there is still much to investigate into how different types of connections and networks are initiated, developed and maintained.

DD provides new tools for diplomats to make foreign policy and diplomacy more efficient, more inclusive and more engaging. In using DD, however, diplomats must be careful not to undermine traditional relationships. In certain situations, face-to-face communication is the preferred method – not DD (Vanc, 2012). Based on scholarly research and practical experience, several experts have suggested useful guidelines for the cautious and effective utilization of DD. These principles could help to address the limitations and challenges of DD (Glassman, 2008; Cull, 2011: 7; Sandre, 2013: 60–70; Sandre, 2015).

DD is an exciting developing field for both research and practice. Research on DD, however, is especially difficult because ICTs are invented, developed, modified and applied very rapidly, generating new processes and patterns of diplomacy that need constant monitoring and updating. Research on DD is also challenging because it requires a complex multi-disciplinary effort, new and innovative methods and frameworks for analysis, and much greater collaboration between scholars and practitioners. There are many gaps to bridge but also many new skilled scholars and experts ready to fill them up.

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# Economic Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

Globalisation and shifting power balances between the West and other countries, particularly those in the Asia-Pacific region, are creating new incentives for governments everywhere to rethink the balance between their different national interests. In addition, pressing global issues, such as climate change and scarcity of natural resources (for example, water, energy and minerals) are growing challenges for governments (see Chapter 49 in this Handbook). Economic diplomacy is central to all these issues. Although it is certainly not a new phenomenon, the end of the Western-dominated era of free-market capitalism marks a new episode in its conceptual and practical evolution. The revolution in communications technologies acts both as a facilitator of and a challenge to such change (see Chapter 44 in this Handbook). As institutions at the domestic and the multilateral level, such as ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) and the World Bank, are adapting to

this new reality, national diplomatic systems (NDS) are also changing (see Chapter 5 in this Handbook).

Given this context, this chapter raises several questions about economic diplomacy. Is economic diplomacy defined differently across disciplines and across countries? What debates underlie the re-emergence of economic diplomacy in foreign affairs? How do governments adjust their strategy and practice in this field? And what are the consequences for national diplomatic systems and foreign policy at large?

To answer these questions, this chapter adopts a diplomatic studies perspective and argues that the concept and practice of economic diplomacy is becoming more comprehensive, covering at least three types of diplomatic activity: trade and investment promotion (commercial diplomacy); negotiations on economic agreements (trade diplomacy); and development cooperation. As governments seek new and innovative ways to advance decision-making in these fields,

the practice and institutional organisation of economic diplomacy is undergoing significant change. Such change is not unidirectional, however, and there is significant variation in countries' national diplomatic systems, that is, the set of institutions and actors, configured for the management of a state's international environment (Hocking, 2013: 126–7). The chapter also argues that, although a broader network of sub-state and non-state actors is becoming involved in economic diplomacy, the state remains the primary actor. Government officials continue to represent and mediate the interests of business as well as civil society interests to political and public entities abroad. However, in this process the balance between advocating narrow sectoral interests and the more general concerns of domestic citizens and global public goods remains a precarious one.

### **Key Points**

- Economic diplomacy is certainly not a new phenomenon, but globalisation and shifting power balances are making it a more important diplomatic instrument in foreign affairs for governments throughout the world.
- Economic diplomacy is becoming increasingly comprehensive, as both strategy and practice.

### **EVOLVING THINKING ON ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH**

In recent years governments have strengthened the economic aspects of foreign policy. For many developed countries in the West, more attention to national economic interests is a sensible response to increased competition from emerging economies, growing financial constraints, and demands for transparency, accountability and result-driven policies at home. For the governments of developing countries, economic diplomacy is primarily a means to build a coherent

economic approach to foreign policy, while simultaneously converting their growing economic muscle into political leverage (see Chapter 34 in this Handbook). For rising powers, 'great power economic diplomacy' is a means to realise power transition and reshape the global order (Zhang, 2014) (see Chapters 28 and 29 in this Handbook). While China is the most recent example of this, Britain, the United States, the European Union (EU) and Japan have followed similar paths.

Clearly, when seen from a diplomatic studies perspective, economic diplomacy serves both economic and politico-strategic goals. Thus a comprehensive definition of economic diplomacy would see it as an umbrella term that refers to both the use of political means as leverage in international negotiations with the aim of enhancing national economic prosperity, and the use of economic leverage to increase a country's political stability. Activities subsumed under this umbrella term range considerably, from trade and investment promotion (including through economic missions and intelligence sharing) and negotiations on economic and financial agreements, to inducements such as development assistance and coercive measures like economic sanctions.

Also from a diplomatic studies perspective on economic diplomacy it is useful to mention some distinctions and what is not emphasised. Economic diplomacy is distinct from business diplomacy in that a public sector agent – a government agency, an official or a political figure – is the principal actor (see Chapter 46 in this Handbook). While the private sector is either actively or passively involved, businesses or their representatives are not the focus of analysis. An economist's approach to economic diplomacy is also distinctive for its focus on quantitative cost–benefit analyses that adopt an economic logic to identify where and when economic diplomacy works. This includes analyses of the effectiveness of one or more instruments, of economic diplomacy between particular



(groups of) countries, or of specific industrial sectors or goods. Such economic studies often investigate geographical patterns in international trade and diplomacy by use of the so-called gravity model to trade (see, for example, Van Bergeijk and Brakman, 2010). While economic diplomacy can have a multidisciplinary focus with contributions from rich research traditions, this chapter follows the approach taken by most MFAs: that is, it addresses the subject from a diplomatic studies perspective that emphasises a qualitative approach and an inherent political logic.

In practical terms in recent years, individual governments of developed countries, from Germany to Australia, have refocused on core strategic and economic interests and strengthening relationships with key partners. This is apparent from governments' strategy documents<sup>1</sup> and greater investments in economic diplomacy capabilities, including the opening of more representations with an economic focus and the appointment of diplomats with economic credentials (to promote trade, investment and cooperation in the field of innovation or agriculture, for example). Governments have also strengthened economic diplomacy activities, such as economic missions led by high-level political figures to promising markets, and negotiations on bilateral and regional economic agreements, including free trade agreements. In the multilateral context, economic diplomacy is also high on the agenda. More generally, developed and developing countries note the growing importance of economic and financial diplomacy and the challenge of 'state capitalism'.<sup>2</sup> This is hardly surprising as governments in latecomer countries commonly play an important role in industries that are operated by the private sector; for example, in sectors such as water management, energy, agriculture and harbour development.

For all countries, the growing challenges of security and stability are another reason to invest in economic diplomacy. Building closer ties or partnerships with some countries and

not with others denotes not mere diplomatic signalling (see Chapter 6 in this Handbook) but constitutes real attempts to avoid isolation, create coalitions and to improve stability – for example, the bilateral relationship of China and Japan and their respective relations to neighbouring countries in the Asia-Pacific, which both regional powers seek to court. Both Beijing and Tokyo employ a variety of economic diplomacy instruments, including comprehensive economic partnership agreements and development cooperation projects, in an attempt to strengthen their relative position towards the other. A similar game is being played by the EU and Russia in their bilateral relationship and neighbourhood region.

In economic diplomacy, broadly conceived, economic/commercial interests and political interests reinforce one another and should be seen in tandem. Economic diplomacy is thus an umbrella term, involving several strands that may be more economic or more political in purpose (Okano-Heijmans, 2013: esp. 27–33; Bayne and Woolcock, 2013: esp. 2–13). Moreover, it includes a range of activities that are largely economic in character, such as commercial diplomacy (that is, generic and sector/company-specific trade and investment promotion) as well as trade diplomacy (i.e. negotiations between two or more countries that support economic transactions and trade and/or investment agreements). But economic diplomacy also involves more politically-motivated attempts to influence others, either through positive engagement (the premier example being development or economic cooperation) or by less benign means, such as sanctions.

The question of whether and when it is legitimate or desirable for governments to engage in economic diplomacy or not continues to be a matter of fierce debate, in which scholars of varying backgrounds emphasise diverging points. In general, it is probably fair to say that the role of a governmental network as a broker towards other governments is less disputed than direct financial or

other government support to their own businesses in their activities abroad. Concerns about ‘fair competition’ and ‘level-playing field’ are often heard from economists, both to criticise others for supporting domestic companies as well as to legitimise their own government support by other than financial means. Political scientists emphasise that no fair or equal standard can be created for all countries; the differences between countries’ levels of development, political and economic systems, types of home industries, natural endowments, and political power of influence are simply too big. These divergences also explain the different conceptualisations and practices of economic diplomacy between countries and regions, and are an important reason why there can be no ‘one-size-fits-all-approach’ to economic diplomacy.

Within diplomatic studies, economic diplomacy is distinguished from other forms of diplomacy in two ways (Woolcock and Bayne, 2013: 389–90). First, MFAs are not necessarily leading the decision-making processes. Economic diplomacy also involves various ‘line ministries’ such as those involved in economic affairs, agriculture and infrastructure, as well as development cooperation and climate change. The second distinguishing feature of economic diplomacy is its significant link with private sector bodies. This is a natural result of the fact that the direct beneficiaries of economic diplomacy are, to a significant degree, non-government agencies – that is, small and medium-sized enterprises as well as big business. Importantly, the goals sought by these two beneficiaries – government entities on the one hand, and the private sector on the other – differ substantially. While private sector entities principally aim for economic merit, most governments and for that matter non-governmental agencies and civil society organisations, strive for so-called global public goods, such as robust institutions to manage climate change, scarce natural resources (water and energy, for example) and international stability.

Taken together, these two distinctive features of economic diplomacy make decision-making in economic diplomacy an extremely complex process. More than any other form of diplomacy, the management of economic diplomacy involves a variety of state actors at the national, provincial and local levels. Furthermore, a significant number of non-state actors, including an extremely diverse private sector as well as civil society organisations, have a stake in the government’s economic diplomacy.

### **Key Points**

- There are different economic and political motivations to employ economic diplomacy in foreign affairs, especially between developed and developing countries.
- Whether or not and when it is legitimate or desirable for the government to engage in economic diplomacy continues to be a matter of fierce debate.
- Decision-making in economic diplomacy is a complex issue because there is a diversity of state and non-state stakeholders which aim for different economic and political outcomes.

## **THE NEXUS BETWEEN COMMERCE, TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT**

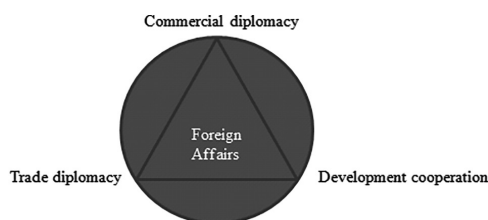
As governments are actively re-emphasising economic diplomacy in their foreign policy, there is a common trend towards developing stronger linkages between three strands of economic diplomacy: trade diplomacy, commercial diplomacy and development cooperation. These economic diplomacy tools are employed most regularly in times of relative peace, that is, when there is no need to resort to more extreme instruments such as sanctions or, worse still, declarations of war. Commercial diplomacy, trade diplomacy and development cooperation were largely separated until the 1990s, when the more developed countries in the West largely dominated

global political and economic affairs. The more recent trend, however, has been back to greater linkages between the three (see Figure 45.1). In Europe and the United States, this change is spurred by the growing presence and influence of a group of countries that is not necessarily inclined to follow the rules and conventions of the game of international politics and economics that developed in the aftermath of the Second World War. For their part, latecomer countries, including Asian, post-colonial and transition states, have for a long time openly adhered to the comprehensive approach to economic diplomacy. This may be explained by the viscosity of global governance and international political and financial institutions, and therefore the greater dependency of the governments of emerging countries on economic tools and commercial relations to strengthen their position in international relations.

Of the various economic diplomacy strands, commercial diplomacy probably has the broadest consensus and the most developed body of literature. Economic diplomacy is sometimes even equated with commercial diplomacy, particularly by those who have a dominantly economic take on the subject. Trade and investment promotion – at both the general level and more specifically, via business advocacy – is a task that all governments perform in some way. In general terms, the three key activities are: providing (market and technology) intelligence; offering concrete hands-on assistance, including with

trade questions, market access issues and trade missions; and providing partner search and networking support (Jones-Bos et al., 2012: 137). These tasks can be performed by specialised trade and investment support offices at home and/or by embassies or other representations abroad. The location of important new markets and production bases thus guides government decisions to focus activities on a certain country or region, as do the depth and breadth of economic relations and the involvement of the other country's government in the market. In other words, the more substantial the links between the public and private sectors in a particular country, the greater the incentive for others to invest in commercial diplomacy in relations with that country.

Development cooperation can be an expression of economic diplomacy in two rather distinct, although not mutually exclusive ways, when seen from the perspective of the country providing such assistance. First, it can be employed with the primary aim to promote more political objectives such as good governance, democracy or human rights. This approach has been adopted by European countries: their activities have often been commissioned to non-governmental agencies and geographically focused on the African continent. Another approach, which is more readily adopted by non-Western and new players in the field, largely emphasises economic objectives. The rhetoric is one of adding to the economic strength of the recipient and providing assistance, by linking assistance to trade and investment. To emphasise the mutual gains, this is commonly labelled economic cooperation rather than development assistance/aid. While Japan in the 1970s was an early example of this approach, the Japanese government has partly adjusted its policies in order to appease Western concerns of 'tied aid' – that is, of using development policies to promote its own private sector interests. The rise of new players with similar approaches to Japan of old – including China, India and Brazil – now puts Japan in a middle



**Figure 45.1** The trinity in economic diplomacy

*Source:* Author's compilation.

position, as a country that aims for both economic and political objectives. Pressured by new players and financial constraints at home, European countries are evolving in a direction that resembles that of Japan, albeit coming from the opposite end. Slowly but steadily they are overcoming the long-held taboo that development and profit can go hand in hand, and becoming more mercantilist themselves.

Trade diplomacy has become a popular policy instrument for governments since the 1990s. This conforms with the argument that governments are more likely to employ economic tools for political and foreign policy purposes during periods of systemic change. The scare of economic crises in various parts of the world prompted countries to work together in different ways, and the failure of the multilateral trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha round further contributed to this trend. Trade diplomacy thereby shifted focus from unilateral liberalisation backed up by WTO commitments to preferential liberalisation through bilateral and (inter) regional free trade agreements. Importantly, the motivations to engage in such talks are not just economic ones such as trade liberalisation, preferential market access and trade diversion. Rather, and increasingly so, they involve a variety of economic, political, legal and geostrategic considerations. Negotiations have come to involve issues of norm setting, rivalry for influence, strengthening of partnerships, and resource allocation. Hence, the concept of trade *diplomacy*, rather than trade *policy*. This politicisation of trade diplomacy has been most apparent in the Asia-Pacific, where negotiations on trade, investment and financial agreements play a major role in the competition for influence (see, for example, Das, 2014 and Chapter 29 in this Handbook). While the European Union, on behalf of its member states, remains largely committed to economic goals, aiming for economically 'high-quality' and 'deep' agreements, its latest strategy document of October 2015 also

evidences a shift in this direction (European Commission, 2015).

As strategies and practice evolve in all three strands of economic diplomacy, linkages between the various fields are multiplying. The conflation of trade and investment promotion (commercial diplomacy) and development cooperation has been characteristic of many non-Western players and is now becoming increasingly apparent including in countries like Denmark and Australia. But development issues also increasingly feature in trade agreements, which come to involve much more than economic issues alone. Economic partnership agreements, for example, have been conceived – next to free trade agreements – as a way to move beyond issues of trade alone, and may also involve cooperation in the field of energy and environment, science and technology, trade and investment promotion and tourism.

### Key Points

- In the evolution of economic diplomacy, the three strands of commercial diplomacy, trade diplomacy and positive incentives are becoming increasingly interlinked.
- Trade and investment promotion remains the most traditional task of economic diplomacy and is becoming more important as different forms of capitalisms meet.
- In developed countries in the West, the idea that development cooperation can go hand in hand with trade and development promotion is once again gaining acceptance.
- Negotiations about international trade rules are proliferating at the regional and bilateral level, and are becoming more politicised.

### DIPLOMATIC ACTORS AND ORGANISATION

Although the state is by no means the only actor in economic diplomacy, it remains the most central one. Vast differences exist, however, in the extent to which governments are

active in the field of economic diplomacy, as well as in how the interlinkages between politics and economics are strategised and institutionalised.

Which responsibilities a state takes up in the field of economic diplomacy differs substantially between countries. In countries that adhere to a stricter separation between state and market – mostly developed, neoliberal market economies – governments generally take a back seat, playing the role of facilitator. In countries at an earlier stage of development, governments tend to adopt a greater role, including steering and guiding certain sectors of the economy. This is no different from earlier times when European countries started to develop in the nineteenth century. But the level of development is not the only indicator of the extent of state involvement in the market. Differences also exist between countries and regions. A common characteristic of governments of many Asian countries, for example, is the fact that they strategically allocate resources to spur growth of a vastly diverse private sector at home and abroad. This may be the largest difference compared with countries in the Middle East and Russia, where state-owned natural resource industries dominate the private sector – making for a narrow, state-led economic diplomacy focused on the energy sector. Variations between Asian states, in turn, lie in whether the strong role of the state is organised in formal ways – such as in China, Vietnam and Singapore – or more informally – as in Japan, South Korea and Indonesia (Okano-Heijmans, 2012: 275–7).

When unpacking the various players that comprise ‘the state’ as an actor in economic diplomacy, it is instructive to think in terms of the national diplomatic system (NDS) – that is, a set of institutions and actors, configured for the management of a state’s international environment (Hocking, 2013: 126–7). MFAs and the network of overseas representation are one characteristic feature that has assumed particular significance within this system. But they operate in an increasingly complex network that manages foreign affairs. Other

ministries and semi-governmental agencies involved in the field of economic diplomacy include those in charge of trade and economic affairs, agriculture, infrastructure, as well as development cooperation and climate change. No matter the level of development or the politico-economic culture of a country, all share the continuous challenge of optimising extremely complex decision-making processes in economic diplomacy.

In an attempt to improve coordination between the various dimensions of foreign economic affairs, governments have tried to overcome the traditional and pragmatic, but unnatural, separation between politics and economics, or between MFAs and other departments involved. In some countries this resulted in a more or less formal arrangement between the MFA and the economic or trade departments, of which the so-called ‘Concordat’ in the Netherlands is one example (Serry, 1999). This agreement notwithstanding, the Dutch Department for Foreign Economic Affairs continues to be an ‘odd-man-out’ in both the MFA and the Ministry of Economic Affairs. As a result, it has moved back and forth several times between the two ministries. For much the same reasons, in the 1980s and 1990s a number of countries – including Australia, Canada and Argentina – amalgamated the foreign office with the trade department. That this is also a less than ideal way to deal with the challenge is illustrated by the comment of an Australian diplomat, who said that this was a ‘shotgun marriage, but ultimately well worth it’ (quoted in Mills, 2013: 407). (Australia took amalgamation further – see below.) In South Korea, a similar merger took place in 1998 but was undone ten years thereafter.

A more recent trend concerns the merging of the offices responsible for foreign affairs, trade and development. In Australia the conservative government, when led by Prime Minister Tony Abbott, amalgamated the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). In the

Netherlands and Denmark, where the MFA took up responsibility for development cooperation years ago, foreign trade was added in recent years. The rationale offered was that alignment of policies will improve policy coherence on priority issues and will result in the greater overall impact of efforts. An unanticipated result, however, has been that organisations that traditionally concerned themselves with development cooperation are now also making their voice heard on trade policy.<sup>3</sup> The government therefore increasingly needs to consider the voice of domestic stakeholders engaged in development in international trade negotiations. A similar process of institutionalising links between commerce, trade and development in foreign affairs has been taking place in Canada. Here, foreign affairs and trade had amalgamated decades ago, and development was added in 2014. Also the EU, which holds trade negotiating authority for its 28 member states, now formally links trade and development, stating that its policies aim to put trade at the service of development and poverty reduction.<sup>4</sup>

In those countries where the various economic diplomacy strands are merged, there is, as before, a minister with responsibility for international development and another minister responsible for trade. Both ministers' powers derive from those of the minister of foreign affairs, however. They are thus subordinate to the foreign minister, even if for practical reasons the development and trade ministers are allowed quite a degree of latitude. When looking at trade negotiations in particular, one finds that countries have come up with diverging solutions to enhance coordination between ministries and to ensure that non-economic issues are also considered. In the European Union, the chief negotiator – and his staff – are all from the Directorate-General for Trade, while the chief negotiator of trade negotiations in Japan is always an MFA official. Norway takes a middle road, by putting the foreign ministry in charge of multilateral trade issues and having the Ministry of Trade taking care of

bilateral (Melchior et al., 2013: 63), whereas in the United States, the Office of the Trade Representative (USTR) has a direct link to the President and his Cabinet as it is part of the Executive Office.

The renewed emphasis on economic diplomacy is also a driver of adjustments that many governments are making in their diplomatic network. New representations – embassies, consulates (-general) and/or trade representative offices – are opened in large countries where presence in the capital city alone does not match economic potentialities (see Chapter 12 in this Handbook). This is a particularly interesting trend in those countries that are scaling down representation abroad more generally, such as the Netherlands. At the same time, new initiatives are being developed to limit the number of closures, such as asking fees for economic diplomacy activities including 'matchmaking' for companies. Japan, for its part, is adding to its number of representations despite financial constraints more broadly, with a particular focus on new posts in Africa. Despite having formal diplomatic ties with more African countries than China, however, it has fewer diplomats stationed on the continent than its giant neighbour. For its part, France is a frontrunner in emphasising the role of territorial (local) collectivities, complementing that of the state. The assets of French regions are deemed significant in terms of international competitiveness and attractiveness. Amongst others, this has resulted in activism by the EU as a trade negotiator to include 'geographical indications' in trade agreements as a way to protect trade names and trademarks used in relation to food products identified with a particular region.

While the above illustrates the challenges of managing interests and responsibilities between ministries, economic diplomacy obviously involves many more actors than representatives of nation-state governments alone. Economic diplomacy involves government-to-government relations, but is increasingly also about the build-up of government-to-business networks and the



opening up of these networks for the private sector and for the economy at large. As in other fields of diplomacy, the e-revolution greatly contributes to the brokering and information gathering by practitioners of economic diplomacy.<sup>5</sup> A network of relevant actors can generate an overall capacity to search, find, analyse and disseminate the kind of strategically relevant information that most private actors do not readily possess. Political will is of course another vital ingredient and, indeed, a necessary condition. So is the recognition that a sophisticated economic diplomacy offers possibilities for a country's private sector and its foreign policy goals.

The extreme diversity of the private sector stands in stark contrast to the limited capabilities of governments, however. After all, the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises differ substantially from those of large companies that have greater financial and network capacity to perform certain economic diplomacy functions themselves. And this is not all: other actors, including chambers of commerce, business federations and civil society organisations, make their voices heard on economic diplomacy. Their aims may include calls for sustainable trade, reducing the power of big business, greater transparency of government, and attention to human rights and labour standards.

The fact that non-state actors have a stake in economic diplomacy, however, is not to say that they have a significant say. Trade diplomacy, for example, is said to continue to consist primarily of private negotiations between trade ministry officials representing particular governments, while business and civil society interests are still mediated and represented, for the most part, by government diplomats (Pigman and Vickers, 2012). Likewise, while non-state actors have a significant stake in commercial diplomacy and in development cooperation, they do not actually take part in negotiations with foreign public counterparts. Rather, they are better characterised as pressure groups, trying to steer government policy in a certain direction,

and as consumers of government facilitation (in the case of commercial diplomacy) or as executors of government policy (in the case of development cooperation).

### Key Points

- MFAs, as key players in the National Diplomatic System, are adapting to the evolving dimensions of economic diplomacy and incorporating various elements of it, especially as it concerns responsibility for trade and development.
- Choices for how to reorganise the extremely complex decision-making process in economic diplomacy depend in part on the level of development and the politico-economic culture of a particular country.
- Although many non-state actors – including the diverse private sector and a variety of civil society organisations – have a stake in economic diplomacy, they do not necessarily have a significant say.

### ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY TOWARDS THE FUTURE

One important side-effect of the global and financial crisis that started at the end of the 2000s, is that it discredited Western standards for other countries. The *laissez faire*-style capitalism and economic diplomacy as a means to primarily further political and economic liberal values (such as free market capitalism, liberal democracy and civil liberties) thereby lost much of its appeal. Instead, a more comprehensive approach that pragmatically links trade, investment and development for economic and strategic purposes is gaining ground. This trend is reinforced by the growing power and influence of China, as well as India, Brazil and others and confirmed by the renewed emphasis in recent years in European countries on a new economic diplomacy that emphasises national economic interests.

The redistribution of global power in the twenty-first century is also having an impact on economic diplomacy in the field of economic

governance. First, the trend is towards more bilateral and regional economic diplomacy, at the expense of multilateralism. Trade negotiations, for example, are moving away from the truly multilateral talks under the auspices of the WTO and resulting in a strengthening of competitive multilateralism. Separately, EU countries are becoming partners and competitors in commercial diplomacy. A second change that the evolution of economic diplomacy is having on economic governance concerns the emergence of new governance structures, at least partly at the expense of existing ones. As an example of the latter, consider the comment of one expert in the field of development cooperation that South Korea in 2010 may well have been the last non-Western country to join the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) – an organisation that risks losing relevance as a club of traditional donors.<sup>6</sup> New governance structures established in 2014 include the New Development Bank, initiated by the BRICS-countries, and the China-led Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank. Although these institutions still face major practical and strategic challenges, they are probably the two most prominent examples of what may be new multilateral economic diplomacy in the making.

### **Key Points**

- The global and financial crisis that started at the end of the 2000s discredited Western ways as standards for other countries, including in the field of economic diplomacy.
- In economic governance, multilateralism is losing ground against more bilateral and regional economic diplomacy and new governance structures are being created.

### **CONCLUSION**

Historically, economic diplomacy takes a more prominent place in foreign policy during periods of change. It is thus no

coincidence that economic diplomacy is gaining in importance once again as the international system is shifting from a multilateral towards a multipolar order (Rood et al., 2015). Confronted with the viscosity of global governance and international political and financial institutions, the governments of emerging countries primarily employ economic diplomacy – rather than political influence or military force – to strengthen their position. This is leading to Western countries rethinking the balance between their different national interests, resulting in a renewed emphasis on their economic diplomacy.

As a result of this there is an increased emphasis on pragmatic linkages between commercial diplomacy, trade diplomacy and development cooperation in developed countries. This is recognisable in policies at home and abroad, as well as in the reorganisation of government institutions, where MFAs are increasingly taking up responsibility for trade and development. For their part, late-comer countries have long weighed political considerations more substantially in their economic diplomacy, pragmatically linking trade, investment and development.

In an increasingly competitive world where political and economic power is in flux and financial constraints are increasing, countries need to make clear decisions about where their priorities lie. While a comprehensive approach to economic diplomacy should not be mistaken for killing three birds with one stone, it can be instrumental in turning tomorrow's challenges into today's opportunities. Making environmental protection a feature of economic diplomacy, and focusing activities on industries that contribute to this cause, is one way of doing this. Established powers in the West have reason to protect the political-economic model and fundamental values that took years to develop, but they should not be afraid to comply with necessary adjustments to the structural design of global economic governance. At the domestic level, this means that a long-term, thought out strategy is required in order to be successful. If

the revival of economic diplomacy is to keep a benign character, however, governments are well advised to invest in new economic governance structures and to limit their economic diplomacy to activities where the government has real added value; that is, where domestic economic interests intersect with the basic needs of citizens throughout the world in terms of security and prosperity.

## NOTES

- 1 See, for example: *Shaping Globalization – Expanding Partnerships – Sharing Responsibility: A Strategy Paper by the German Government*, Berlin, 2012; and *The Coalition's Policy for Foreign Affairs*, Canberra, September 2013.
- 2 'The Foreign Ministry at a tipping point', unpublished Post-Conference Report of The Foreign Ministry of the Future Conference, Brussels, 10–11 July 2011.
- 3 Meeting with a Dutch MFA official, May 2014.
- 4 Official website of the European Union: <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/>.
- 5 The implications of the internet revolution on diplomacy at large are discussed in Chapter 44 in this Handbook.
- 6 At present the OECD-DAC consists of 29 members, comprising the United States, Japan, South Korea and European countries.

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# Business Diplomacy

Huub Ruël and Tim Wolters

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization has a major impact on how multinational national corporations (MNCs) are organized nowadays. Statistics from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) show that the number of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) has risen in the last 30 years (UNCTAD, 2011). Doing business internationally requires MNCs to deal with various local requirements, national laws, and international agreements, negotiated by different international groups such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) (Saner and Yiu, 2005). MNCs need the capability to cope with complex interactions with multiple stakeholders such as foreign government representatives and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Despite today's globalized economy, it is still governments that play an important role in providing access to business opportunities (Boddewyn and Brewer, 1994; Hillman et al., 1999). Indeed, Luo (2001) states that, 'from an MNC's perspective, its foreign operations

increasingly depend on educational, technological, and industrial infrastructures built by host governments' (p. 403). Especially in emerging or recently emerged economies, governments are key stakeholders in the economy, and without their support operating successfully in these economies is almost impossible. MNCs that are able to get this support, and as a result access these opportunities, will enjoy a greater competitive advantage (Schuler et al., 2002). However, getting access to business opportunities is just one aspect. In order to operate successfully in the long term, MNCs need legitimacy: 'a generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desired, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions' (Suchman, 1995: 574). For this, MNCs should negotiate and make compromises with local governments, while simultaneously taking into account the wishes and demands of the international and national NGOs that oversee international firms in conducting business (Saner and Yiu, 2005).

Saner et al. (2000) explain which developments have caused these complexities. First of all, the public has become more critical and demanding towards corporate governance. Their voice can have a great influence on an MNC's reputation and therefore cannot be ignored. This effect is enhanced now that the public has unlimited access to all kinds of communication channels, news sources, and business information (Ruël, 2013). Second, emerging markets such as Indonesia, China, Russia, India, Turkey, and Brazil will entail challenges that MNCs need to take into account, such as weak institutional settings, cultural aspects, and strong government roles (Saner et al., 2000). The third development concerns the emergence of a variety of NGOs and communities. Saner et al. emphasize that environmental standards and working conditions should be taken into account in order to prevent conflicts that can damage an MNC's image. Ruël (2013) adds an explanation of what might have caused the complexities MNCs face in today's business environment. He argues that developed markets are frequently entered by developing market MNCs. This has fueled fear among businesses and governments in developed economies. This increased competition heightens the necessity for firms to build upon positive relationships in foreign business environments, even in developed, 'easy to access' markets. Second, governments, MNCs, and NGOs need to collaborate in order to cope with global challenges such as reducing poverty, climate change, and building sustainable economies.

In order to survive in this complex and rapid changing business environment, international businesses need to engage in business diplomacy (Saner et al., 2000; Muldoon, 2005; Ruël, 2013).

### Key Points

- Globalization has changed the roles and relationships between MNCs, governments, NGOs, local pressure groups, and society.

- To survive in today's international business landscape, MNCs need to create legitimacy by interacting and building upon positive relationships with all stakeholders.
- MNCs should therefore engage in business diplomacy.

## BUSINESS DIPLOMACY DEFINED

In the context of this chapter, we consider business diplomacy and corporate diplomacy as describing the same concept. From now on, business diplomacy will be termed a synonym for corporate diplomacy.

Business diplomacy as a concept is relatively new in the literature (see Chapter 45 in this Handbook). At the end of the twentieth century, it began to be dealt with at an academic level. One of the first references originates from the early 1990s in an International Relations publication by Strange (1992). She recognized the increasing importance of firms and market forces in world politics and described new, emerging forms of diplomacy. Strange (1996) claims that governments are losing authority and impact, despite paradoxically that the number of government rules and regulations in different aspects of societies has increased. Markets are dominating and the role of large and international firms is so significant that governments are competing to have them within their national borders. As a consequence firms have entered the diplomatic arena as an actor.

The concept was also noted in International Management and International Business studies (London, 1999; Saner et al., 2000; Muldoon, 2005; Saner and Yiu, 2005), Behavioral Science studies (Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte, 2009), Communication Management studies (Macnamara, 2011) and the General Management literature (Amann et al., 2007). However, consistency about what exactly is business diplomacy has still not emerged.

Until the 1980s diplomacy was defined in terms of a dialogue or the formal communication between states (e.g. Watson, 1982; Berridge, 1995). In this view only states are recognized as



diplomatic actors. This changed when the cold war ended and the 'global economy' took off (see Chapters 2 and 8 in this Handbook). New actors entered the diplomatic arena such as supranational organizations (e.g. the European Union), or multilateral organizations (United Nations, World Trade Organization, IMF, World Bank), non-governmental organizations (Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, The Red Cross), and last but not least large international businesses such as oil companies, financial companies, technology companies and many others. Due to their size, impact, or public support, they have become diplomatic actors in their own right (Ruël, 2013). In this context, Heine (2008) observes a shift from the 'club model' of diplomacy, where diplomats mostly meet with host country government officials, to a 'network model' of diplomacy, with a much larger body of and a more diverse set of players with whom diplomats have to engage, among others representatives from companies. This view implies a broader definition of diplomacy than the 'cold-war' one. Melissen (2005) includes citizens and civil society in foreign countries as well in the definition of diplomacy (see also Chapter 42 in this Handbook). Central to the question of what diplomacy actually is are the aspects representation and communication.

Overall, in the literature, the terms 'business diplomacy' and 'corporate diplomacy' are not generally recognized and only a limited number of scholars have applied these terms. For example, Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte (2009) define corporate diplomacy as 'a process to develop a corporation's power and legitimacy' (p. 561). In their work, an organization is considered as a member in a stakeholder network instead of a profit-making entity. In his book on corporate diplomacy, Steger (2003) states, 'Corporate diplomacy is an attempt to manage systematically and professionally the business environment in such a way as to ensure that "business is done smoothly," basically with an unquestioned "license to operate" and an interaction that leads to mutual adaptation

between corporations and society' (pp. 6–7). According to Saner et al. (2000), 'business diplomacy management involves influencing economic and social actors to create and seize new business opportunities; working with rule-making international bodies whose decisions affect international business; forestalling potential conflicts with stakeholders and minimizing political risks; and using multiple international forums and media channels to safeguard corporate image and reputation' (p. 85). In accordance, Saner and Yiu (2005) state, 'Business diplomacy pertains to the management of interfaces between the global company and its multiple non-business counterparts (such as NGOs, governments, political parties, media and other representatives of civil societies) and external constituencies' (p. 302). As a final example, Macnamara (2011) states that 'corporate diplomacy would require corporations to engage in ongoing dialogue with publics guided by specific principles and with mechanisms in place to balance power, amortize conflicts, facilitate negotiation, and maintain relationships even in the face of outright disagreement' (p. 321).

What at least seems central to these definitions of business diplomacy and corporate diplomacy is the acknowledgment of a stakeholder perspective of companies rather than a shareholder perspective. On other aspects, however, such as the goals of business diplomacy, its contexts, and how business diplomacy differs from existing concepts such as lobbying or corporate political activity, the existing literature is far from clear.

This is also reflected in the way scholars describe the person who is conducting business diplomacy. Some scholars consider a business diplomat to be a business environment manager (Saner et al., 2000; Muldoon, 2005) or an organizational change manager (Saner et al., 2000; Saner and Yiu, 2005), or consider business diplomacy to be a leadership style (London, 1999) or a strategic management tool (Monteiro, 2013). This confusing picture asks for a thorough analysis of what exactly is business diplomacy and for a clear definition.

## ***Related Concepts***

Although the concepts of business diplomacy may not be widely recognized and well defined, the literature on the business–government relationship, or business as political actors, is quite extensive and informative to the scholarly conversation on how to define business diplomacy. The most important related concepts are: corporate political activity (Hansen and Mitchel, 2000; Hillman et al., 2004; Hadani, 2011; Lux et al., 2012; Dahan et al., 2013; etc.), corporate political strategy (Keim and Baysinger, 1988; Baron, 1997; Hillman et al., 1999; Hillman, 2003), strategic political management (Oliver and Holzinger, 2008), MNC global governance (Levy and Prakash, 2003; Detomasi, 2007; Kourula and Laasonen, 2010), MNC–host government relationships (Boddewyn and Brewer, 1994; Moon and Lado, 2000; Luo, 2001; Bartkus and Davis, 2008; Skippari and Pajunen, 2010), and politically oriented corporate social responsibility (Shirodkar et al., 2013). We will briefly discuss these concepts.

Corporate political activity (CPA) represents a ‘strategy whereby firms attempt to influence government policymaking, to advance their strategic goals; [and that] firm owners may benefit from it’ (Hadani, 2011: 945). Corporations use political activities to avoid or influence expensive regulations and safeguard potential sales (Hansen and Mitchell, 2000). Corporations engage in CPA practices more and more often as they increasingly expand their business operations across borders in which more political actors and institutions are involved (Hillman et al., 2004).

Corporate political strategies (CPS) are also directed at influencing public policy outcomes in order to create the best possible business climate for the firm (Keim and Baysinger, 1988; Baron, 1997; Hillman et al., 1999; Hillman, 2003). ‘Strategic political management (SPM) refers to the set of strategic actions that are planned and enacted by firms for purposes of maximizing economic returns from the political environment’ (Oliver and

Holzinger, 2008: 3). In this sense, CPA, CPS, and SPM describe similar phenomena.

MNC global governance emphasizes that stakeholder commitments of MNCs go well beyond simply complying with the laws and regulations (Detomasi, 2007). The author states: ‘An indication that MNCs increasingly accept broader stakeholder obligation is the current emphasis many of them place on developing or renewing their public commitment to the broad domain of corporate social responsibility (CSR)’ (p. 223). By taking stakeholder interests into account, MNCs can reduce their political, social, and media risks and obtain better local market insights. Eventually, this can improve an MNC’s competitive advantage. Muldoon (2005) stresses the relevance of the terms ‘corporate social responsibility’ (CSR) and ‘corporate citizenship’. The author explains that the extent to which MNCs engage in stakeholder commitment significantly determines the success of an organization. This effect seems to be getting stronger as NGOs are increasing in number and size (Kourula and Laasonen, 2010).

The concept of MNC–host government relationships covers a wide range of the literature regarding relationship building. The importance of MNC–host government relationships is recognized by Boddewyn and Brewer (1994). According to these authors, these relationships are critical for an MNC’s potential to expand internationally as host governments control the parameters of localization, production, and investment. Building upon MNC–host government relationships is a process in which governments and MNCs need each other’s resources to achieve their economic goals (Luo, 2001).

Politically oriented CSR activities, are defined as:

broadly consisting of corporate actions that are politically-oriented, but simultaneously aiming to achieve at least one social objective, either in the short-term or the long-term. In effect, we argue that although these activities are communicated as ‘CSR activities’, the underlying goal in implementing

these is to influence public policy or to seek political resources (Shirodkar et al., 2013: 2).

This concept of politically oriented CSR activities' can best be seen as a combination between CSR and CPA.

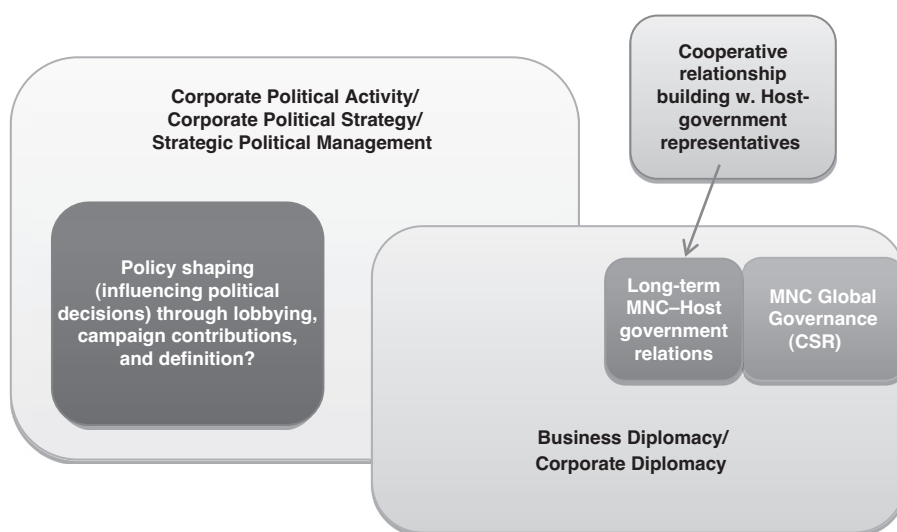
Having discussed concepts related to business diplomacy, it helps to define what business diplomacy exactly is.

### ***Defining Business Diplomacy***

In order to develop a clear and complete definition of business diplomacy, it is important to understand how concepts are related. As mentioned in the beginning of this section, we consider business diplomacy to be a synonym for corporate diplomacy. The same applies to CPA, CPS, and SPM: all three concepts describe the same process and related elements. For the purpose of simplification, the term CPA will be used as a common denominator to describe all three concepts. In our research on business diplomacy (Ruël et al., 2013a), we explained that business diplomacy differs from CPA. CPA mainly focuses on influencing public policymakers (in the home

country, and more and more in foreign countries) to benefit the firm, whereas business diplomacy is concerned with the creation of long-term, positive relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders (economic and non-economic) in order to create legitimacy in a foreign business environment (p. 39). Lobbying is an element of CPA and serves here as a tool for influencing public policymakers. Activities such as lobbying and campaign contributions have a specific, short-term focus and are therefore excluded from the definition of business diplomacy (Ruël et al., 2013a).

We also recognized a certain degree of overlap between business diplomacy and CPA. Both concepts are aimed at influencing parties in the external environment of the organization. However, this is where the similarity stops. The concepts MNC–host government relations and global governance can best be regarded as elements of business diplomacy. In order to create legitimacy and obtain a license to operate, MNCs need to build upon relationships with host governments and foreign non-governmental actors. Figure 46.1 shows how the previously discussed concepts are related to business diplomacy.



**Figure 46.1 Business diplomacy and its related concepts (Ruël et al., 2013a)**

As a result of our structured literature analysis (Ruël et al., 2013a), Ruël (2013) proposed the following definition: ‘Business diplomacy is the representation and communication activities deployed by international businesses with host government representatives and non-governmental representatives in order to establish and sustain a positive relationship to maintain legitimacy, and a license to operate’ (p. 41). Businesses may have all the legal rights necessary to operate in a foreign business environment, but may not be welcomed and accepted by the local community and society. Legitimacy in this context of business diplomacy means that a business firm is accepted by the local community and society by which it is surrounded physically.

Business diplomacy has three focus points that distinguish it from other related concepts: its focus on foreign governments and non-governmental stakeholders, its focus on the establishment and nurturing of long-term positive relationships, and its focus on the creation of legitimacy in a foreign business environment as the ultimate goal.

Now we have defined business diplomacy we can distinguish it from related types of diplomacy, namely commercial diplomacy and economic diplomacy.

Lee (2004) defines commercial diplomacy as ‘the work of a network of public and private actors who manage commercial relations using diplomatic channels and processes’ (p. 51). Commercial diplomacy considers the interests of both business and government. ‘Successful commercial diplomacy gains access to new markets and serves the home country economy, and the idea that successful international business is just a matter of a clear business strategy and good business management is naïve and outdated’ (Ruël, 2013: 19). So, while business diplomacy can be described as a business-driven approach in maintaining long-term relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders, commercial diplomacy is driven by a network of business

and government representatives aimed at the promotion of home country business in foreign countries by using diplomatic channels (Ruël, 2013). Commercial diplomacy is often considered to be the same as economic diplomacy (Mercier, 2007). Indeed, both have an overarching economic objective (Potter, 2004). However, economic diplomacy has a general focus and is concerned with economic policy issues and trade agreements (Woolcock, 2013), whereas commercial diplomacy is much more specific and particularly focused on business support (Yiu and Saner, 2003; Kostecki and Naray, 2007; Mercier, 2007; Naray, 2008; Okano-Heijmans, 2010).

### **Key Points**

- The term business diplomacy is not generally recognized; it is a relatively new term.
- Related concepts are corporate political activity, corporate political strategy, strategic political management, MNC global governance, and MNC–host government relationships.
- Business diplomacy differs from these concepts in that its focus is on foreign governments and non-governmental stakeholders, it involves establishing and sustaining long-term positive relationships, and its ultimate goal is to create legitimacy in a foreign business environment.
- Unlike economic and commercial diplomacy, business diplomacy is a business-driven approach.

## **THE EMERGENCE OF BUSINESS DIPLOMACY**

Globalization has considerably changed the international business landscape and MNCs. Rising demands from the surrounding business environments have increased the role and responsibilities of corporations, especially when operating internationally (Monteiro, 2013). Survival in today’s complex business environment no longer depends on an MNC’s efficiency and competitiveness

only (Muldoon, 2005). Other important factors that will determine the continuity of the organization are managing complex interactions with governments, multilateral institutions, and social movements. According to Muldoon (2005), MNCs need to build upon long-term cooperative stakeholder relationships, thereby implementing strategies that address social and environmental concerns. In accordance, Nartey (2013) states: 'By understanding who the stakeholders are and strategically forming ties to engender cooperation and reduce conflict with these stakeholders, the firm favorably shapes its nonmarket environment to facilitate market-based operations and benefits' (p. 10). There is a shift from a shareholder view to a stakeholder model in MNCs, and in order to obtain a license to operate, MNCs should respond to the expectations of various stakeholders and thus engage in business diplomacy (Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte, 2009). These authors explain that corporate diplomacy entails that a firm actively participates in society, thereby contributing to wealth creation, employment, and quality products and services. Through corporate diplomacy, firms can increase their power and legitimacy. Muldoon (2005) recognizes the public affairs function as the diplomatic engine to manage a corporation's reputation in the global landscape:

The corporate public affairs profession has evolved over the last decade or so from its traditional role as an internal 'PR' agency focusing primarily on corporate communications and media relations to a multifaceted and strategic corporate function that encompasses public policy and issues management, government and investor relations, corporate philanthropy and community relations, business ethics, corporate social responsibility and citizenship, and crisis management. (Muldoon, 2005: 354)

The importance of business diplomacy is recognized by only a few MNCs, and most global companies hire former political diplomats to manage the complex interactions with foreign government representatives (Saner et al., 2000). As international and

local interest groups increasingly put demands on MNCs, it is no longer sufficient to rely solely on the experiences of former diplomats. 'Instead, firms must develop diplomatic know-how from within and help their own global managers acquire competence as business diplomacy managers' (Saner et al., 2000: 88). Business diplomacy know-how should be dispersed throughout the organization by global business managers. 'Global companies can improve their effectiveness by setting up a business diplomacy management function and by developing and utilizing competent business diplomacy managers' (Saner et al., 2000: 80).

### **Key Points**

- Doing business successfully in today's international business environment requires MNCs to move away from one-sided shareholder models and, instead, become active members of stakeholder networks.
- MNCs should develop knowledge about and skills on how to conduct diplomacy.

### **BUSINESS DIPLOMACY IN MNCs: EMPIRICAL STUDIES' RESULTS**

Although several researchers have stressed the relevance of business diplomacy (Saner et al., 2000; Muldoon, 2005; Saner and Yiu, 2005; Amann et al., 2007; Ordeix-Rigo and Duarte, 2009; Macnamara, 2011; Monteiro, 2013), it is not actually clear from the literature how MNCs engage in it. We reduced this knowledge gap in the literature by conducting empirical research into how MNCs conduct business diplomacy in practice (Ruël et al., 2013a).

In order to create an in-depth understanding of this relatively underexplored topic, we designed an exploratory qualitative study in which eight large Dutch MNCs were surveyed. We operationalized the concept of business diplomacy and distinguished six



dimensions: business diplomacy intensity, policy clarity, breadth, responsibility, means deployment, and resource availability.

Business diplomacy *intensity* reflects the extent to which a company actively establishes and sustains positive relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders. This dimension indicates how intensively the company executes business diplomacy.

The second dimension, *policy clarity*, reflects the extent to which an MNC has a clear and organization-wide policy on how to establish and sustain these relationships. This dimension indicates whether there are formal/written rules for business diplomacy, or whether informal/unwritten guidelines exist.

Business diplomacy *breadth* reflects the extent to which establishing and sustaining these relationships is done by every company representative. This dimension also indicates whether employees consider themselves as representatives of their organization when they are in contact with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders.

Business diplomacy *responsibility* reflects the extent to which the company's responsibility for establishing and sustaining positive relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders lies with its headquarters or within the foreign subsidiaries, or whether they are both partly responsible. This dimension indicates whether business diplomacy is set by the headquarters for the whole organization (centralized), whether a framework of guidelines is set by the headquarters in which a foreign subsidiary has some degree of freedom to act, or whether subsidiary executives are free to decide upon how to conduct business diplomacy (decentralized).

The fifth dimension, *means deployment*, reflects the extent to which the company deploys a diversity of means for establishing and sustaining positive relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders. It indicates

which means, methods, and channels (e.g. social meetings, public forums, seminars, local government debates, media channels, ethics, sponsor activities, etc.) are used by the firm for business diplomacy.

Finally, business diplomacy *resource availability* reflects the extent to which the company uses multiple firm resources (e.g. financial, time, knowledge) for establishing and sustaining these relationships.

By means of in-depth interviews we conceived a rich picture of how business diplomacy is enacted by and embedded in MNCs. Our research findings suggest that seven out of eight MNCs conduct business diplomacy intensively. None of the eight MNCs applies a clear organization-wide policy for business diplomacy. Instead, general guidelines for business diplomacy and business values and principles were set in place for these matters. The research findings also showed that in none of the eight MNCs were all employees involved in establishing and maintaining positive relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders, such as international interest groups and local communities. Although business diplomacy is seen here as a management responsibility, all eight MNC respondents emphasized that all employees need to consider themselves as representatives of the organization when they are in contact with stakeholders of the business, and hence should adhere to the general codes of conduct. Such codes may, for example, prescribe that employees have to interact in a respectful way with local communities and may not get involved in illegal activities. Furthermore, the research findings showed that in all eight MNCs the responsibility for business diplomacy is mainly decentralized to the foreign subsidiary level. The MNC respondents in the study explained that the foreign subsidiary managers had the best insight into their local markets and stakeholders. For this reason, the foreign subsidiaries have a certain degree of freedom in adapting business diplomacy to the specific characteristics of their local



business market. MNCs deploy a wide range of means for business diplomacy: meetings, forums, direct stakeholder dialogues, events, industry associations, social partnerships, and social projects. Although all eight MNCs invest time and financial resources in business diplomacy, there are no specific training programs that teach managers how to set up and maintain stakeholder relationships.

The first thing we noticed during the interviews was that seven out of eight MNCs recognized and defined business diplomacy as an important long-term activity, aimed at establishing and sustaining legitimacy in all foreign business environments, meaning that business operations are accepted by the local environment and society. Empirical research by Amann et al. (2007) has also illustrated the importance of business diplomacy for managing external pressures in today's business environment. Illustrative in-depth case studies on four companies have shown that irrespective of the level of external pressure, MNCs with a diplomatic attitude are definitely better able to manage external pressures and obtain a 'license to operate' than those with a tough, conflict-risking attitude. Amann et al. (2007) conclude that MNCs need to look beyond short-term profit maximization. Instead, MNCs should take the political landscape and media into consideration. MNCs should notice and understand stakeholder issues and develop adequate means for solving them. 'The opposite, such as denial as the first reaction, misinformation, no sense of urgency, absence of a stakeholder dialogue, lacking credibility and dearth of proactivity build-up goodwill before things may go wrong, are still quite prevalent in today's corporate world, regardless of their obvious drawbacks' (p. 48). Through business diplomacy, future incidents can be managed more successfully.

Our study (Ruël et al., 2013a) showed that none of the eight MNCs had an actual business diplomacy function or department. Instead, departments like Government Affairs, Corporate Communications, Public

Relations, and Public Affairs are concerned with such activities. Our study also reveals that the MNC respondents recognize the value of business diplomacy training programs. Such training programs should involve, for example, geopolitical analysis skills, stakeholder analysis skills, intercultural communication skills, and negotiation skills. Yet, there is an absence of such training programs in these eight MNCs.

Several researchers have already conducted research into what encourages firms to become active influencers of government policies. For example, Lux et al. (2011) and Hillman et al. (2004) explored whether firm-, industry-, and institutional-level factors influence a firm's engagement in the political arena to influence policymaking processes. Ruël et al. (2013b) conducted a study into the determinants of business diplomacy. The authors explored whether firm characteristics, industry type, and institutional development influence the approach and organization of business diplomacy. In this quantitative study the same six business diplomacy dimensions as in our other study (Ruël et al., 2013a) were measured by surveying 50 Western (United States and Western Europe) MNC subsidiaries in Asia. The research findings of Ruël et al. (2013b) suggest that firm-level characteristics and industry type determine the approach and organization of business diplomacy for some dimensions. The study results reveal *inter alia* that firm size is positively related to policy clarity, meaning that larger MNCs are more likely to have a clear business diplomacy policy than smaller MNCs. This means that first of all they do have a policy on the goals of and the way how to conduct business diplomacy that is clearly set and accessible for all organization members.

The authors also examined whether the type of MNC affects the approach and organization of business diplomacy. For that purpose, they used the typology of Bartlett and Ghoshal (1989), in which the level of local responsiveness and global integration declares whether a firm is characterized as

transnational, multinational, global, or international. Their results imply that the level of global integration is positively related to business diplomacy intensity, breadth, means deployment, and resource availability. Local responsiveness is positively related to business diplomacy breadth and responsibility, suggesting that MNCs with a higher level of local responsiveness have a broader approach towards establishing and sustaining positive relationships with foreign government representatives and non-governmental stakeholders, and that the responsibility is more often centralized to the headquarters level. The latter conclusion contradicts our qualitative research findings (Ruël et al., 2013a), in which all eight MNC respondents indicated that the business diplomacy responsibility lies at the subsidiary level so that it can be adjusted to the specific characteristics of their local markets. In the quantitative research of Ruël et al. (2013b), no evidence was found of a relationship between the institutional setting of a host country and the approach and organization of business diplomacy. Our study findings (Ruël et al., 2013a) do suggest that industry-specific factors determine the degree of intensity with which MNCs conduct business diplomacy. During the interviews we observed that particularly MNCs that operate in sensitive industries, such as financial services or the oil business, conduct business diplomacy intensively. The MNC respondents explained that large projects in these industries directly affect populations, and hence are always associated with foreign governments and NGOs. Our findings furthermore suggest that the intensity also depends on the institutional settings of the countries in which they operate. MNCs that operate in weak institutional settings recognize that personal networks are essential for survival. Hence, they are more likely to conduct business diplomacy intensively. One MNC in our study only operates in three Western European countries in which the institutional settings are highly developed. Business diplomacy is conducted with low intensity in this MNC. Indeed, the

empirical study of Monteiro (2013) showed that the firm-specific context (country of origin, culture, dimension, sector, etc.) should be taken into account because these moderators affect the relevance level of the business diplomacy tool in managing the foreign business environment.

### **Key Points**

- Little empirical research has been conducted into business diplomacy. The existing empirical research has so far focused on the importance, the execution, and the determinants of business diplomacy.
- By measuring six business diplomacy dimensions, our research (Ruël et al., 2013a) created in-depth insight into how business diplomacy is enacted by and organized in MNCs.
- Empirical study findings furthermore suggest that the execution of business diplomacy is determined by firm-, industry-, and institutional-level factors.

### **CONCLUSION**

The goal of this chapter was to deepen our understanding of the relatively untapped concept of business diplomacy. We started out by highlighting the evolving circumstances in today's complex and rapidly changing international business environment. Due to globalization, changes are taking place in the roles and relationships between businesses, governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This has tremendously impacted the way of doing business internationally as business operations are closely monitored by a multitude of stakeholder groups. Operating successfully among these complexities requires multinational organizations (MNCs) to become diplomatic actors and interact with host governments, NGOs, and pressure groups. Therefore, MNCs should develop business diplomacy knowhow and skills, such as geopolitical analysis skills, stakeholder management skills, intercultural

communication skills, and negotiation skills. Business diplomacy can be defined as the representation and communication activities deployed by international businesses with host government representatives and non-governmental representatives in order to establish and sustain a positive relationship to maintain legitimacy and a license to operate.

The big question is how? How do global companies manage these complexities and pressures, and how do they set up these relationships? It is rather difficult to answer these questions since hardly any empirical research has been conducted in this direction. Results of our empirical study were presented in this chapter and have enhanced and enriched our understanding of how business diplomacy is enacted by and organized in MNCs.

Still, there is a great need for further in-depth, case study-based research into how global companies conduct business diplomacy around the world. In addition, future research will focus on: how small and medium-sized firms establish positive, long-term relationships with multiple stakeholder groups as they expand their business across borders; different types of business diplomacy; risks of business diplomacy; the actors involved in business diplomacy; business diplomacy instruments; and the determinants and outcomes of business diplomacy.

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# Religion and Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to outline the evolution of the contributions scholars have made toward analyzing the religious dimension of International Relations (IR) and its implications for the practice of diplomacy. To this end, this chapter will present the following: scholarly sources of information that influence the study of religion and diplomacy; the primary challenges IR and Diplomacy Studies confront when studying religion and diplomacy; the contribution of Religious Studies to constructing diplomatic strategies; recommendations for contemporary state-based diplomatic practices around religion; and the role of religion in a new sustainable diplomacy which reflects the worldview of Ecological Realism. This chapter will argue that having a sophisticated understanding of religion and its influence on political actors, cultures, institutions and the work of promoting transnational cooperation is essential for twenty-first-century diplomats.

When examining the religious dimension in the analysis and practice of diplomacy, it is important to first distinguish between two broad categories of analysis. The first category, which comes under the rubric of *religion and diplomacy*, refers principally to the influence of religion on the practice of track-one diplomacy among nation-state actors. The second category, *faith-based diplomacy*, generally refers to the practice of diplomacy on the part of track-two actors in the form of religious institutions, religiously affiliated NGOs and/or individual practitioners of a religious tradition. While these two categories provide a useful initial framework for analysis, in practice they often do not operate discretely.

This chapter is informed by the work of Paul Sharp, put forward in his volume *Diplomatic Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge, 2009). Sharp defines the work of diplomats as being embodied in three injunctions: ‘be slow to judge,’ ‘be ready to appease,’ and ‘doubt most universals.’<sup>1</sup> He notes that the work of diplomacy takes place in a space that is



separate from the space nation-states or groups that diplomats themselves inhabit, and is most successful when it acknowledges the ‘realities of people’s differences and separateness, rather than their similarities and togetherness’<sup>2</sup> (see Chapter 1 in this Handbook). Sharp frames his own analysis of a diplomatic tradition of thought in light of Martin Wight’s three classifications of international theories: radicalism, rationalism and realism, arguing that diplomats must be able to manage three types of relations. These include *encounter relations* (between people meeting for the first time), *discovery relations* (between people seeking to find out more about and enjoying closer relations with each other), and *re-encounter relations* (where people stay in touch, but keep one another at arm’s length).<sup>3</sup> For Sharp, all of these relations require acknowledging the reality of pluralism, both in terms of the fact that relations between different groups of people are different, and that the membership of international society itself is defined by the pluralism of its character. In this milieu, notes Sharp, the diplomat works as a ‘professional stranger’ who seeks to ‘become familiar with and to those with whom they have relations.’<sup>4</sup> Sharp’s definition of the work of diplomats is quite useful in framing the work of interrogating the religious dimension of diplomacy, in both descriptive and prescriptive ways. This conclusion is underscored by Sharp’s noting that ‘we should not expect religions and religious thought to be enemies of diplomacy and the relations it sustains.’<sup>5</sup> This chapter will argue that Sharp’s description of diplomacy and the framework of analysis he provides offer useful insights that illumine why successfully engaging the religious dimension of transnational relations is essential for both practitioners and scholars of diplomacy.

## RELIGION AND DIPLOMACY: ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIELD

According to Scott Thomas, scholars of IR and diplomacy have been historically

predisposed to viewing their discipline in secular terms, a fact which can be traced back to what he refers to as the ‘Westphalian presumption,’ leading theorists to the conclusion that ‘religious and cultural pluralism cannot be accommodated in international public life.’<sup>6</sup> Thomas observes that the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia, which brought the Thirty Years War to an end, ended the legitimacy of religion as a source of international conflict through recognizing the state as the dominant actor, usurping the former role of the Catholic Church.<sup>7</sup> As a result, Thomas argues, the dominance of *raison d’etat* (reason of state) was established as the foundational principle of relations among nation-states, leaving behind ‘religion as the basis of foreign policy.’<sup>8</sup>

The origin of modern systematic efforts to examine the religious dimension in the analysis and practice of track-one and track-two diplomacy can be traced to a number of sources, including scholars who have examined the anthropological, cultural and historical dimensions of domestic and regional political systems and their ultimate influence on relations among nation-states. With the 1994 publication of Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson’s edited volume, *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, a number of these strands of inquiry converged.<sup>9</sup> The authors featured in that volume provided a number of compelling arguments underscoring the utility of considering the influence of religion on IR, with clear prescriptions for the practice of diplomacy. Johnston himself argued that a post-Cold War analysis of international relations necessitated a consideration of international conflict that privileges the influence of communal identity, including race, ethnicity, nationality and – ultimately – religion.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, Johnston emphasized that pathways to cooperation among nation-states could be promoted through the identification of ‘shared spiritual convictions or values,’ which emerge from religion as it is practiced and understood by national populations and their

representatives.<sup>11</sup> Johnston emphasized that such an analysis does not present an 'either-or' choice between a secular or religious understanding of relations among nation-states. Rather, such an approach necessitates an integration of political, economic and security concerns with those of the moral claims which emerge from religions as they are practiced and understood by the citizens of each respective national population.<sup>12</sup>

*Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft* also contained a powerful critique of what Edward Luttwak referred to as the 'Enlightenment prejudice' of the long dominant *realist* or *realpolitik* approach to IR analysis.<sup>13</sup> According to Luttwak, the secularist-materialist assumptions of *realpolitik*, which have persisted well beyond political realism's Cold War heyday, have led many scholars of IR and diplomacy to fail to consider the influence of religion in relations among nation states due to two factors. The first of these, Luttwak argues, is grounded in the desire of many foundational thinkers of IR theory to have their discipline viewed as a hard science, where power can be measured in quantitative ways, most commonly in military, economic, or geopolitical terms. Luttwak holds that the second factor in play is a historically intellectual bias among many scholars of international politics against the validity of religion as an abiding influence in advanced societies, resulting in a worldview which privileges what he calls a 'dogmatic secularism.' According to Luttwak, this worldview emerges from 'the mistaken Enlightenment prediction that the progress of knowledge and the influence of religion were mutually exclusive.'<sup>14</sup> The conversation that emerged in the wake of the publication of the Johnston and Sampson volume crystallized in December of 2000, when the journal *Millennium* published an issue devoted to the subject of religion and international relations that proved to be a watershed document.<sup>15</sup> This publication captured the attention of a much broader audience regarding the importance of what has ultimately come

to be known as the *postsecular* approach to analyzing relations between nation-states, which privileges the resilience of religious traditions in modern life and thus in the practice and analysis of IR and diplomacy.

## **RECOGNIZING THE COMPLEXITY OF RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS CULTURE IN IR AND DIPLOMACY SCHOLARSHIP**

Practitioners and scholars of international politics who engage the religious dimension must grapple with the complexity of analyzing religion itself, as it is understood by both scholars and practitioners of religion alike. Religious Studies is among the most disciplinarily diverse fields in the humanities. Scholars of religion include those who pursue active roles in the fields of anthropology, linguistics, historiography, art, sociology, philosophy, theology, ethics, and culture, among others. As a result, normative understandings of what religion is, as well as how it impacts the lives of individuals and communities, requires substantial contributions from a multiplicity of disciplinary perspectives. At the same time, understanding the influence of religion on the population of a nation-state and its diplomatic representatives requires conceding that many different manifestations of religious belief and understanding across a broad political/ideological spectrum can co-exist simultaneously, even within one movement of one tradition in a single nation-state. Such real complexities initially undermine the efforts of many scholars and practitioners of diplomacy to easily categorize or predict the predispositions of any one actor or community with regard to the influence of religion in their lives, or upon their political worldview or praxis.

A further challenge for scholars and practitioners of diplomacy is the work of distinguishing between the influence of *religion* on political actors who are practitioners of a tradition versus the influence of *religious*

*culture* on an entire population, including both practitioners and non-practitioners. The term *religious culture* refers to a particular dimension of the social milieu in which all people live; it is most often distinguished by geographic locale, ethnicity and nationality. Religious culture teaches individuals and communities to understand and use language and metaphors, and conveys moral norms that originated from dominant religious traditions that remain vital and intelligible. This is true even if those who engage such language, metaphors or ethical claims understand themselves to be entirely secular. As a political phenomenon, religious culture can come into play in the following contexts: (1) in the use of religious symbols or language by a national government or other actors to convey particular meaning or justify ostensibly secular actions in the eyes of domestic populations or international actors; (2) through the use of religious language and/or imagery as a vehicle for conveying meaning and value among members of a specific domestic or transnational population; (3) as an appeal by the state or influential individuals or groups to ethical norms drawn from what were originally religious sources (particularly, but not exclusively, the dominant religious tradition of a particular nation-state); (4) through the cultivation by national leaders of the perception that the state acts in concert with, or out of sincere respect toward, the dominant religious institutions and traditions of the nation-state; and (5) via the governmental use of both actual and perceived connectivities with religious institutions or fidelity to broadly acknowledged religious traditions to fortify the legitimacy of state leadership and its apparatuses in the eyes of the national population. In light of the importance of religious culture, scholars and practitioners of diplomacy who wish to understand the influence of religion on domestic and transnational exchanges are therefore compelled to not only interrogate the influence of religion on elite political actors, but also on the lives of ordinary people on the ground.

An additional challenge posed to scholars and practitioners of diplomacy who engage religion is the task of distinguishing the ways practitioners interpret their tradition. These lenses can range across a broad scale; from highly doctrinal understandings which cleave to the normative teachings of elite religious leaders and theologians, to highly 'folkloric' beliefs and practices which radically depart from mainstream, broadly-acknowledged truth claims, and all points in between. The pitfalls of accepting a one-dimensional static definition of any religious tradition and assuming it is normative has arguably been the source of some of the most spectacular blunders of late twentieth and early twenty-first-century Western foreign policy, most notably in terms of actors associated with Christian religious cultures failing to understand the role of Islam in the lives of their Near Eastern counterparts (see also Chapter 31 in this Handbook). In the absence of a sophisticated understanding of the religious dimension in the lives of people on the ground, the dynamic nature of religion as it is actually understood and lived out defies the efforts of diplomats to easily anticipate political outcomes. Examples of this include: (1) the inability of Western policy makers to distinguish between the religio-historical aspirations of Sunni and Shi'i Muslims in Iraq; (2) the failure to anticipate the evolving interpretations of Islam and their relationship to political praxis among Afghani Mujahideen and later the Taliban; and (3) the surprise many Western analysts expressed by what they initially interpreted to be the 'irrational' behavior of Iranian religio-political leaders before and after the fall of the Shah.

### **THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES TO CONSTRUCTING DIPLOMATIC STRATEGIES**

Because of the breadth and depth of knowledge necessary to understand religion and its

influence on both individuals as well as national populations, the time has now come to systematically broaden the sources of information practitioners and scholars of diplomacy draw on in their analyses. They must concede that just as one must draw on the work of economists in order to produce a sophisticated analysis of international politics, so too must scholars and practitioners of diplomacy now acknowledge the importance of approaching their discipline in light of the work of scholars of religion.

With this claim in mind, I was invited to present a workshop on religion and diplomacy for the largest undergraduate department of Religious Studies in the United States.<sup>16</sup> After presenting a synopsis of my most recent work, I posed a question to the assembled group of scholars. I asked them what information they would want diplomats and scholars of diplomacy to integrate into their work in order that it reflect a sophisticated understanding of religion. Their answers produced a set of questions that they believe diplomats should be asking about religion as it exists in the countries they are engaging. They also included a number of observations about the nuances of understanding religion that must be acknowledged by any diplomat who wishes to engage the religious dimension of culture and its attendant influence on the political lives of those who live within a particular religious culture. Their advice, which I will now present under disciplinary categories, outlines what can be seen as a set of recommendations for diplomats and scholars of diplomacy.

The historians of religion wished to remind practitioners and scholars of diplomacy that historical narratives which engage religion – like all historical narratives – are made by highly subjective individuals whose own social locations must first be critically examined before their conclusions can be integrated into policy formation. The historians also pointed out that modern religious historiographies are neither pre-modern nor modern, and are never linear. They noted

that histories of religion and their attendant impact on culture and political life are constructed by individuals. These individuals are reflecting on symbolic beings emerging from circumstances produced by competing mythical narratives. For example, in regard to Islam one must carefully distinguish between what we can know about Muhammad the man, what he has come to symbolize to the ongoing construction of Islamic jurisprudence, and the way he is understood by highly diverse and divergent Muslim populations.

The anthropologists of religion pointed out the need for diplomats to be aware of *positionality*, which refers to the fact that substantive conclusions drawn about political actors and populations are always made in light of observing people and movements in and from particular geographic and social locations. In other words, diplomats must resist the temptation to craft generalizations about broad cross sections of a population based only on the observation of particular groups. At the same time, positionality calls attention to the fact that diplomats themselves will draw particular conclusions based on their own social locations and specific experiences. The anthropologists went on to make a number of observations about the necessary field work that they believe diplomats must engage in if they are to come away with truly useful understandings of the role of religion in the political and cultural formation of any population. They observed that special attention must be devoted to try to understand how people understand themselves. This can be done, they noted, by carefully and unobtrusively observing people in their everyday lives – particularly in the way peoples' lives interface with and respond to the religious cultures they inhabit. Thus, the anthropologists argued that diplomats must engage in a deeper level of fieldwork and possess proficiency level language skills. In addition, they recommended that diplomats acknowledge how their questions reflect their own identities, concerns and pre-existing beliefs about the population and its traditions being examined.

The theologians and ethicists of religion recommended that diplomats focus their attention on both the inter-religious and intra-religious conflicts in the populations they are examining. Any prominent group associated with one interpretation of a religious tradition today may or may not be in power tomorrow, and their particular interpretation of their own tradition may or may not be normative or even considered constructive by the majority of people they represent or claim to represent. For this reason, credible religio-political analysis must also include a sophisticated understanding of the implicit theological positions of any group being examined, including the degree to which dominant theological positions are associated with exclusivist claims (i.e. one particular group claiming to represent the only 'true' religion). At the same time, diplomats could benefit from understanding the degree to which the current leadership of a nation-state and their possible successors are theologically and politically committed to promoting sustainable inter-religious engagement among communities of different religious traditions. Religious diversity among the members of ruling parties and their adversaries could be viewed as a potential advantage for long-term influence in a government and even a region, especially if such diversity is based on coalitions that have been formed non-coercively. These same theological categories will also be of great help to diplomats who seek to understand the ethical claims and guiding moral norms of any group influenced by a specific religious culture. This knowledge could potentially be of great assistance when assessing the most fruitful paths to bring people to the negotiating table, and even assessing how negotiations might more quickly be brought to a place which Andrea Bartoli refers to as 'ripeness'<sup>17</sup> (see Chapters 17 and 18 in this Handbook). Only after the above questions are answered about the historically normative interpretations of a religious tradition in any particular nation-state can a political analyst hope to understand the more fundamentalist

interpretations of the same tradition. Many scholars and practitioners of diplomacy who struggle to interpret and predict the rhetoric and actions of non-normative, fundamentalist interpretations of a tradition do so because they begin their consideration of a tradition through the lens of an extremist's theological interpretation, without first understanding the root of the tradition from which the extremist's position has departed.

Finally, the scholars of sacred texts implored scholars and practitioners of diplomacy to not begin with sacred texts in their efforts to understand what practitioners of a religious tradition actually believe. The first problem with such an approach is rooted in the many challenges of accurately translating sacred texts. Secondly, there is the necessity of becoming familiar with the significant body of knowledge required to understand the history and diversity of the texts' interpreters and the dominant and non-dominant interpretations that are linked to them. Thus, for the purpose of diplomacy, religions themselves cannot be defined by their sacred texts, even though the narratives which specific movements and groups choose to employ when justifying their moral claims often reference them. In truth, determining how and why particular individuals are favored to interpret texts over others and the role of the sacred texts in a community are actually more important for understanding the religious dimension of the political lives of a group than the texts themselves. For this reason, an astute analysis of the current conversations about a text or the popular extra-textual conversations associated with the sacred text can serve as an invaluable window into what a community values, expects, fears, or desires.

## **RELIGION AND THE CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE AND ANALYSIS OF DIPLOMACY**

In examining the ways religion informs the practice of track-one diplomacy, one must



consider the role of religion and religious culture on multiple levels. While some nations will designate religious figures as special envoys or ambassadors, others will select the location of diplomatic missions to reflect either the normative religious claims of the host country, or the religious identity of their own nation. Approaches to inter-state negotiation styles may also reflect religious moral claims or sensibilities associated with religious cultures. Other track-one diplomatic practices reflect sensitivities to the reality of religion or religious culture. The place of religion in shaping diplomatic state practice regarding protocol or etiquette is one example of this, be it in the form of wearing religiously respectful clothing when called for, the serving of appropriate food reflecting religious laws, or other inter-personal practices that reflect both understanding of and respect toward the religious faith or religious culture of one's counterparts.

On a broader, national level, one must consider the relationship of religion and diplomacy in nations whose political identity is profoundly and institutionally linked to a religious identity. Saudi Arabia's ruling House of Saud's direct relationship with the Wahhabist interpretation of Sunni Islam (a derivation of Salafism) is a clear example of this. This is particularly true with regards to Saudi Arabia's relations with its regional Muslim neighbors, who are unlikely to be able to uncouple the exclusivist claims of Wahhabism from the way Saudi Arabia's foreign policy and the diplomatic efforts that represent it are received and understood. Less obvious to some is the influence of religion in relationships and approaches to diplomacy cultivated among nations whose religious cultures are Christian. It can be argued, for example, that Serbia's and Russia's shared Orthodox Christian identities created a connectivity which served to deepen their relationship and approach to diplomacy in the post-Soviet era; a connectivity which could be seen as subsequently impacting the United States' approach to its role in crafting the

Dayton Accords. Even more subtle to many is the role of the common Christian religious-cultural identity shared by the membership of the European Union, and its impact on both the diplomatic relations among EU member states and with those outside the EU borders – most particularly with the Islam-identified nation-states of North Africa and Turkey.

While many other observations can be made regarding the past and present roles of religion in the practice of diplomacy, the level of religious illiteracy that persists among architects of foreign policy suggests the need to reimagine the role of the twenty-first-century diplomat. This role would name the diplomat as one who has been given a greater capacity to impact foreign policy formation in light of his or her ability to interpret and convey a sophisticated understanding to senior policy makers of the role of religion and religious culture in the lives of ordinary people on the ground. This role reflects the advantages Sharp describes as being afforded the diplomat, who inhabits a space that lends itself to observing and naming facts that are not readily apparent to those they represent. Recent events unfolding in the Near East alone underscore the value of such a new role. The rise of Daesh (ISIL) should arguably not have come as the surprise it appears to have been to many Western analysts, nor should the manner and degree to which the territorial integrity of Iraq, Syria and Yemen have been impacted by competing actors whose identities are significantly shaped by different movements within Islam. All of these developments have an explicit and profound religious dimension – in their roots, their evolution and in the future implications of what is unfolding. The role of Saudi Arabia, through its muscular exportation and diffusion of a non-normative expression of Islam, is intrinsically connected to many of these developments – a fact which remains misunderstood or even unknown to many who continue to principally view relations among nations through a secularist-materialist lens.



## Key Points

- The study of religion is complex by its very nature. Understanding religion and its subsequent influence on the practice of diplomacy requires the input of anthropologists, linguists, historiographers, sociologists, philosophers, theologians and ethicists, among others.
- Examining the influence of religion on the practice of diplomacy requires analysis of the influence of *religion* as it is practiced and serves to influence nation-state leaders and their representatives, as well as the way *religious culture* can influence an entire population, including those who understand themselves to be entirely secular.
- Understanding religion in the context of diplomacy requires an understanding of the normative, traditional components of a religious tradition. One cannot claim to understand 'extremist' versions of a tradition unless one first understands the normative or mainstream expression of the religion itself.
- Analyzing the influence of religion on the practice of diplomacy requires acknowledging that one movement or one interpretation of a religious tradition by a political actor does not necessarily provide insights into the tradition as it is understood or practiced by an entire national population, its diversity of practitioners, or multiplicity of interpretations.

## FAITH-BASED DIPLOMACY

Faith-based diplomacy can initially be understood as the practice of diplomacy on the part of track-two actors which can come in the form of religious institutions, religiously affiliated NGOs and/or individual practitioners of a religious tradition, though faith-based diplomacy is also present in track-one diplomacy as well. According to Scott Thomas, faith-based diplomacy 'can be distinguished ... from traditional models of peacemaking and conflict resolution by its holistic approach to the sociopolitical healing of ... conflict.'<sup>18</sup> Thomas notes that faith-based diplomacy also distinguishes itself from traditional diplomacy through its emphasis on the ethical claim of its

praxis: 'the restoration of the political order that has suffered from war and injustice, and the reconciliation of individuals and social groups'<sup>19</sup> (see Chapter 10 in this Handbook).

While the ethical dimension of secular diplomacy presents its own set of assumptions, practices and goals, the moral norms central to the practice of faith-based diplomacy distinguish themselves from their secular counterparts in that they are openly acknowledged as directly connected to the religious identity of the religion's practitioners. The religious identity of those who practice faith-based diplomacy can offer some tangible advantages, if in fact the actors in question are perceived to be politically neutral. The credibility of those practicing diplomacy from a faith-based position is also often enhanced by their being associated with a cross-culturally respected set of values associated with their religious tradition.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, some practitioners of faith-based diplomacy have the advantage of being tangibly connected to multiple communities that are crucial to the promotion of long-term peace building in the region of the conflict being mediated.

## FAITH-BASED DIPLOMACY IN TRACK-TWO DIPLOMACY

One of the more well-known Western-based NGOs associated with faith-based diplomacy is the World Council of Churches (WCC). Based in Geneva, Switzerland, the WCC is one of the most important institutional outgrowths of the European ecumenical movement. Representing over 500 million Christians worldwide, the WCC's membership includes most of the world's Orthodox churches, as well as scores of Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed congregations, with member churches in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and Oceania. Because the WCC represents such a large and diverse transnational constituency, its programs and policy statements

provide the international community with well-vetted contributions from an explicitly faith-based perspective to international discourses on human rights, economic development, ecological sustainability, defense spending, indigenous rights and the rights of women, among the broad array of its social justice focused efforts. The WCC has long maintained a presence at the United Nations, where its policy statements have found their way into the language of UN resolutions.

The Italian Catholic Community of Sant'Egidio is a powerful example of a community devoted to the practice of faith-based diplomacy. Founded in 1969 in Rome, the Community of Sant'Egidio served in a central role in the mediation efforts that led to the end of the civil war in Mozambique, as well as making important contributions to peacemaking efforts in Algeria, the Balkans, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The track-two mediation efforts that the Community employs stand in marked contrast to many normative approaches to diplomacy. In their efforts in Mozambique, representatives of Sant'Egidio described their approach to the work of mediation as one that was pursued from a position of absolute powerlessness, forcing the actors in conflict to take responsibility for the work of peacemaking. As a non-governmental body, which is not subject to the same pressures or time constraints of many nation-states, Sant'Egidio was able to invite representatives from both sides of the Mozambiquan conflict to Rome, to enter into an open ended process which did not engender many of the common methods of coercion employed by third party track-one mediators. The philosophy of the Community of Sant'Egidio is that war is the mother of poverty. Hence, the Community's work also includes a substantial effort to combat poverty, and through its actions promote its goal of embodying its interpretation of the Gospel narrative, which features an understanding of Jesus as one who modeled non-violence, a belief in prayer and the power of persuasion from a position of ostensible powerlessness.

Faith-based diplomacy can also be practiced on an intimate scale, an approach that holds the potential to engender a transnational impact. One example of this approach can be found in the Parents Circle Family Forum (PCFF), a joint Palestinian-Israeli organization comprising 600 Jewish, Muslim and Christian families, all of whom have lost a family member as a result of the prolonged conflict. Established in 1995 by Yitzhak Frankental and a group of bereaved Israeli families, the PCFF initially began in cooperation with a group of Palestinian families from Gaza, 'who identified with the call to prevent further bereavement through dialogue, tolerance, peace and reconciliation.'<sup>21</sup> When the ties between these groups were cut off by the second Intifada, the PCFF continued its work by establishing connections between Israeli families and Palestinian families in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The PCFF operates out of the belief that joint activities have shown that reconciliation between individuals and nations is possible, and that reconciliation is a prerequisite to building a sustainable peace. While the PCFF does not officially provide a stated position on the political resolution of the conflict, most members favor a two-state solution. The PCFF is managed jointly by a professional staff of Israelis and Palestinians working in two offices, the Palestinian office in El'ram and the Israeli office in Ramat Ef'al, Tel Aviv.<sup>22</sup>

The Amman-based Royal Strategic Studies Centre (RISSC) provides an intra-religious approach to faith-based peace building among Muslims. An independent research entity affiliated with the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, the RISSC is an international Islamic non-governmental institute, whose work focuses on protecting, preserving and propagating what it describes as a 'traditional, orthodox, moderate interpretation of Islam,' in an effort to provide a consensus based counterpoint to claims by Islamic groups that many mainstream Muslims would interpret as extremist, and thus far afield of historically agreed upon Islamic beliefs

and ethical claims. The Three Points of the Amman Message offers three core claims which define an inclusive, non-sectarian interpretation of Islam: (1) the validity of all eight Mathhabs (legal schools) of Sunni, Shi'i and Ibadhi Islam; of traditional Islamic Theology; of Islamic Mysticism (Sufism); and of traditional Salafi thought, which provided a concise and broadly inclusive definition of who is a Muslim; (2) that mainstream, traditional Islam forbids takfir (declarations of apostasy) between Muslims; and (3) a Mathahib-based set of preconditions for the issuing of fatwas, thereby exposing ignorant and illegitimate edicts in the name of Islam.

There are many other examples of institutions, NGOs and individuals who practice faith-based diplomacy. As one considers these, it is helpful to broaden normative definitions of diplomacy to include a more comprehensive understanding of what diplomacy is and what it could be. Citizen diplomats, aid organizations, and domestic efforts at peace and reconciliation across boundaries of religious difference that have transnational implications arguably all fall within this category. In this regard, faith-based diplomacy holds the potential to go well beyond an exclusive engagement with actors who identify themselves as practitioners of a specific religious tradition. Faith-based diplomacy also opens the door to a different discourse and diplomatic praxis with regards to naming and acting on ethical claims. Simultaneously, those who practice faith-based diplomacy who wish to engage the root causes of poverty, ecological unsustainability, racism, or gender discrimination effectively are obliged to acknowledge that comprehensive and sustainable solutions to these challenges are, by necessity, transnational.

## **FAITH-BASED DIPLOMACY IN TRACK-ONE DIPLOMACY**

While many clear examples of faith-based diplomacy are evident in track-two diplomacy,

there are certainly others that fall under the category of track-one efforts. One clear example is the phenomenon of heads of state who profess to craft their approach to diplomacy out of a set of convictions and moral claims rooted in a professed faith tradition, whether or not the nation they represent is institutionally committed to representing a religious tradition. One example of this could arguably be seen in the US presidency of Jimmy Carter, who rhetorically framed his commitment to peacebuilding in the Middle East and tying aid to the human rights records of its recipients to the moral claims of his own interpretation of Christianity. However, while on a broad scale one can cite enough clear examples to come to provisional conclusions about the driving motives of particular heads of state, such observations can also be contested. To what degree Iran's approach to international relations (and subsequently diplomatic practices) reflects the Muslim identity and Islamic moral claims of its leaders, and to what degree they simply reflect the same secular pragmatism one can identify in the actions of non-religiously identified states, is difficult to quantify. The value of scholars of religion and scholars and practitioners of diplomacy working together to examine questions such as these suggests itself quite clearly in this case and many others like it.

## **Key Points**

- Faith-based diplomacy distinguishes itself from traditional diplomacy through its emphasis on the ethical claim of its praxis: the restoration of the political order that has suffered from war and injustice, and the reconciliation of individuals and social groups.
- Faith-based diplomacy opens the door to a discourse and diplomatic praxis that directly engages the work of naming and acting on ethical claims, which are readily apprehensible to a broad cross section of a national, or even transnational population.
- The credibility of those practicing diplomacy from a faith-based position is often enhanced if

they are perceived as being politically neutral, or by their being associated with a cross-culturally respected set of values drawn from their religious tradition.

### **A NEW DIPLOMATIC WORLDVIEW: RELIGION, ECOLOGICAL REALISM AND A NEW LANGUAGE OF DIPLOMACY**

The prospect of critically analyzing the tremendous diversity of perspectives within even one religious tradition and its impact on the political worldviews of its practitioners is daunting. The inability to generalize about competing and divergent interpretations of religion, their contradictory historical, theological and ethical claims, and the multiplicity of ways that such beliefs are manifested in political exchanges can ostensibly thwart any efforts to create easy consensus across boundaries of difference. At the same time, to acknowledge such realities would seem to comprehensively undermine any lingering efforts to view IR (or for that matter the analysis and practice of diplomacy) as a scientific discipline. This of course opens the door to acknowledging the truth of Paul Sharp's assertion that the knowledge that informs the practice of diplomacy is intrinsically qualitative, by virtue of the highly pluralistic realm in which it operates.

Thus, one must ask this question: given the pluralistic reality in which diplomacy takes place, how do diplomats best approach the work of cultivating an environment which promotes consensus, cooperation and peace-building? Identifying a common language and common goals are arguably central to this task. While the historic language of diplomacy was a European one – French – a modern sustainable diplomacy must find a lingua franca and set of objectives that does not privilege one culture, geographic region, or religious tradition over the other (see Chapter 20 in this Handbook). One strong

candidate for a new language of diplomacy is found in the common ecosphere and the transnational bioregions that straddle the borders of individual nation-states. These shared realities on the ground are being revealed through the common threats posed by climate change, transnational resource scarcity, and the intricacies of human migration tied to other cross border realities such as poverty and the human labor requirements of agriculture. Crafting new approaches to foreign policy and the practice of diplomacy in light of these realities is the foundation of a new method of analyzing relations between nation-states that I call *ecological realism* (see Chapter 49 in this Handbook).

Ecological realism understands relations between nation-states as an ecocentric rather than an anthropocentric endeavor, one that defines long-term power in terms of a nation-state's and bioregion's capacity for ecological sustainability, rather than exclusively through its monetary or military capacities. This diplomatic worldview acknowledges that regardless of national identity, all people require potable water, arable land and breathable air, and the long-term preservation of all three of these resources cannot be achieved in the absence of a sustained level of transnational cooperation. For this reason, ecological realism groups nation-states together first and foremost in terms of their common bioregions, rather than exclusively through human-drawn borders.<sup>23</sup>

The ecological resilience of human communities in the context of the global ecological crisis is dependent upon the willingness of national governments and individuals to substantially change long established behaviors. Such changes will require tremendous courage and transnational coalition building, on the level of sub-state diplomacy as well as relations between nation-states. The role of the diplomat will be pivotal in achieving this goal. Most current consumption patterns, waste disposal methods, definitions of value and economic systems all privilege short-term gain over long-term sustainability. The transition

to a sustainable diplomacy informed by the insights of ecological realism will require a level of willingness and creativity that an exclusively secular-materialist worldview is hard pressed to invoke. This is because the ecological crisis is not just a material crisis – it is a crisis that arguably contains a spiritual dimension. Applying a sophisticated understanding of the religious traditions that have influenced political cultures and motivated individuals will be central to the diplomatic task at hand: leveraging extant religious moral claims that honor the ecosphere in the work of increasing transnational cooperation. Such moral claims exist in a diversity of forms in every religious tradition. The success of such efforts will require substantially increasing the level of cooperation and coordination between practitioners of track-one and track-two diplomacy. A disciplinary commitment to deepen the religious literacy of the practitioners of diplomacy of every type will be central to achieving this goal.

## NOTES

- 1 Sharp, Paul, *Diplomatic Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, 296.
- 2 Ibid, 309.
- 3 Ibid, 10.
- 4 Ibid, 99.
- 5 Ibid, 295.
- 6 Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 33.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Johnston, Douglas and Cynthia Sampson, eds. *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- 10 Douglas Johnston, 'Introduction: Beyond Power Politics,' in Johnston, Douglas and Cynthia Sampson, eds, *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, 3.
- 11 Ibid, 5.
- 12 Ibid.

- 13 Edward Luttwak, 'The Missing Dimension,' in Johnston, Douglas and Cynthia Sampson, eds. *Religion, The Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, 9–10.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 See the Bibliography for all the contributions to the Millennium volume.
- 16 The department of Religious Studies of DePaul University is composed of 19 full-time historians, anthropologists, linguists, ethicists and theologians, and includes scholars of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and a number of Indigenous Traditions. The workshop being referenced took place at DePaul University, Chicago, on June 5, 2009.
- 17 Bartoli, Andrea, 'Christianity and Peacebuilding,' in Coward, Harold and Gordon S. Smith, eds, *Religion and Peacebuilding*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004, 147–68.
- 18 Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations: The Struggle for the Soul of the Twenty-First Century*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 184.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid, 185.
- 21 For more on the work of the PCFF, see their website, [www.theparentscircle.com](http://www.theparentscircle.com) (accessed 28/8/14).
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 For a more detailed description of Ecological Realism see Wellman, David Joseph, 'The Promise of Sustainable Diplomacy: Refining the Praxis of Ecological Realism,' in Constantinou, Costas M. and James Der Darian, eds, *Sustainable Diplomacies*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 25–45.

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# Military Diplomacy

See Seng Tan

## INTRODUCTION

Military diplomacy has often been described as an oxymoron. Militaries exist to wage wars or deter them by force whereas diplomacy involves the use of negotiation and dialogue to achieve national goals. The idea of armed warriors, the epitome of what scholars call ‘hard power’, engaging in the diplomatic arts, or ‘soft power’, might indeed seem incongruous to some (George, 2014; Nye, 2004). However, not resorting to the use of force or the threat of it to realize one’s political and military objectives is a strategy long appreciated by military leaders. In *The Art of War*, the Chinese strategist Sun Tzu reckoned the subduing of one’s enemy without using force as ‘the supreme art of war’ (Sun Tzu, 1963: 77–8). Britain’s wartime leader, Winston Churchill, famously opined that talking (or ‘jaw jaw’ in his words) is preferable to warring (Evans, 2012: 35). During the Cold War years, reassurance, restraint and mutually agreed norms of

competition, all of which involved significant diplomatic skill and effort, were arguably as central as deterrence to ensuring that nuclear war did not break out between the Soviets and the Americans (Stein, 1991).

The ending of the Cold War led to the drawdown of military forces worldwide – albeit the Asia Pacific has proved a notable exception – and growing attention to threats to societies of a nonconventional and often transnational nature. In response, national defence establishments and militaries have had to redefine their mission and retool themselves in support of their expanded roles (Huntington, 1993; Moskos et al., 1999; Wong, 2001). There has also been a marked increase in the involvement of militaries worldwide in activities and arrangements that are putatively *diplomatic* in approach. While the absence in the post-Cold War era of an explicit enemy posing a common and unambiguous strategic threat to all has undoubtedly facilitated international peace and stability, it has also engendered a collective

sense of uncertainty over who precisely one's friends and foes are (Baylis et al., 2014; Fris, 2013). Military diplomacy therefore serves as a useful enterprise through which states and their militaries interact with one another and presumably learn more about others' capabilities and intentions.

This chapter briefly examines the following about military diplomacy: how it has been defined in the literature and how it differs from the ancillary idea of defence diplomacy; how it has been variously applied by countries and militaries and for what ends; how it has been increasingly applied in and through multilateral modalities; and, finally, its limitations.

### Key Points

- Not using force or the threat of it to achieve one's political and military goals is a time-honoured strategy.
- Militaries today participate in diplomatic activities and arrangements as part of their adaptation to the changing strategic environment and their evolving mission.

### DEFINING MILITARY DIPLOMACY

A useful place to begin this discussion is to highlight what others think military diplomacy is not. As concepts go, *military* diplomacy and *defence* diplomacy, often used interchangeably in the academic literature, are not quite the same even though they clearly overlap. Du Plessis (2008) has persuasively argued that military diplomacy consists strictly of military-to-military – meaning, the armed forces rather than the civilian ministries and agencies that support them – relations and arrangements, whereas defence diplomacy is a broader category that includes both the uniformed and civilian components of the defence establishment. As sensible as this analytical distinction is, military diplomacy has nonetheless evolved to

such a complex extent today that it is at times difficult to differentiate between what properly constitutes military and civilian. In a key sense, this development is a function of the increasingly holistic and 'hybridized' nature of international conflict as well as the complexity of security environments in which militaries have to operate today (Baldwin, 1995; Elhefnawy, 2004; Tan, 2005, 2015). While the distinction between military diplomacy and defence diplomacy should nonetheless be maintained, suffice to say for our immediate purposes that many if not most of the ostensibly 'civilian' facets of defence diplomacy – such as the Munich Security Conference or the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue – either include the active participation of uniformed personnel or incorporate military-to-military activities (Capie and Taylor, 2010a; Ischinger, 2014; Tan, 2012). Hence, to speak today of military diplomacy as practically synonymous with defence diplomacy, even as we acknowledge their conceptual distinctiveness, is not entirely farfetched.

Just as there is no universally accepted definition for defence diplomacy (Mulloy, 2007), the same could be said of military diplomacy. Broadly speaking, military diplomacy involves the deliberate application by a nation of its military assets and resources, in nonviolent ways and in bilateral or multilateral settings, to attain positive outcomes for its security. An authoritative study, contrasting the related enterprise of defence diplomacy with the traditional military roles of defence, deterrence, compellence or intervention, has defined it as 'the peacetime cooperative use of armed forces and related infrastructure ... as a tool of foreign and security policy' (Cottey and Forster, 2013: 6) – a description that befits military diplomacy as well. Increasingly, it has also come to be seen as an enterprise that aims to contribute to the security of the nations and/or communities with which the initiating nation is engaging (Tan and Singh, 2012). The contributions in question could range from the provision of assistance in support of the efforts

by needy countries to develop their armed forces ('capacity building') to considerably more challenging tasks such as preventing conflicts from arising among opposing groups ('preventive diplomacy') to settling conflicts and disputes that have arisen ('conflict resolution') (Cottey and Forster, 2013; Zyck and Muggah, 2012). An early post-Cold War attempt at a comprehensive definition of military or defence diplomacy comes from the British Government, which argued in 2000 that its armed forces must be trained and equipped 'to dispel hostility, build and maintain trust and assist in the development of democratically accountable armed forces [elsewhere], thereby making a significant contribution to conflict prevention and resolution' (UK Ministry of Defence, 2000). A concrete example of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) focus on preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution is the formation of its Comprehensive Crisis and Operations Management Centre (CCOMC). Based at Mons in Belgium, the centre furnishes military (and civilian) military expertise on crisis identification, planning, operations, reconstruction and stabilization capabilities (Simón, 2014: 224).

Thus understood, the goals of military diplomacy can either be conservative or transformative. While states may desire the same end – interstate peace and stability – the paths they take to realize that could differ markedly. The British and NATO examples cited in the preceding paragraph suggest the use of military diplomacy by states to achieve particular transformative ends, namely, to democratize civilian–military relations in target countries and ensure their armed forces are democratically accountable. On the other hand, military diplomacy is also used by states for largely conservative or pragmatic purposes. One analyst has offered at least six pragmatic ends: build interoperability and capacity among allies and partners; build strategic depth in one's regional backyard; gain influence in countries where the military is a key actor; better apprehend the strategic cultures

of other states; build 'crisis-proof' bilateral relationships through establishing bilateral networks and improving mutual understanding; and build the capacity of other states and their militaries to contribute to shared tasks (Wesley, 2011). That said, if strategy, according to the British strategist Basil Liddell Hart, is principally about the allocation and application of 'military means to fulfil the ends of policy' (Liddell Hart, 1967: 321), then neither the conservative nor transformative versions of military diplomacy fall far from the tree of strategy, so to speak.

Moreover, while the accent of military diplomacy is on cooperation and reassurance, it does not automatically follow that competition and deterrence therefore have no place in military diplomacy. After all, it has been employed by countries to counterbalance their adversaries through strengthening cooperation with their allies and security partners and sourcing for new ones (Clinton, 2011; Manning, 2013; Swistek, 2012). In the case of India, it has been argued that countries such as Indonesia, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Vietnam occupy a prominent place in New Delhi's strategic thinking because those countries either have antagonistic relations or uneasy relations with China, and as such are appropriate partners with whom India should engage using military diplomacy (Jha, 2011). For a global power such as the United States, the importance of military diplomacy has grown even as America's military footprint has diminished in many parts of the world as a consequence of defence cuts and greater reliance on its allies to carry a bigger share of their joint security responsibilities than they might have hitherto done (Lord and Erickson, 2014; Obama, 2014). In the face of such constraints, military diplomacy has allowed the United States to keep a decent semblance of its forward presence through maintaining access points with countries that are receptive to Washington's policies (Shea, 2005). For example, under the 1990 memorandum (and its 1998 addendum) signed between the United States and Singapore

concerning the former's use of the latter's facilities, Singapore grants the US military access to the air base at Paya Lebar, the naval base at Changi, and the port of Sembawang where Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific (COMLOG WESTPAC) – the unit responsible for coordinating US Pacific Command (PACOM) military exercises – is based (Tan, 2014).

Notwithstanding the more conservative uses described above, it is safe to say, however, that military diplomacy has increasingly assumed a more *inclusive* conception of security wherein security is pursued *with* and not simply against others (Haacke and Morada, 2010; Ponsard, 2007). For instance, it has been argued that the aim of military diplomacy is to increase interstate stability and security 'by changing attitudes and perceptions' of decision makers (Jha, 2011: 48). Similarly, others have noted that the emphasis in military-to-military engagements have shifted over the years from the provision of assistance to needy countries for building their own defence forces to collaboration and the mutual promotion of harmony and peace and building trust in the strategic environment shared by engagers and recipients (Bateman et al., 2013). In this respect, military diplomacy provides countries with an alternative strategy to coercive diplomacy (see Chapter 38 in this Handbook), whose utility has increasingly come under question (Art and Cronin, 2003; Jentleson, 2006).

### Key Points

- Often used interchangeably, military diplomacy and defence diplomacy are, however, not the same. In recent times, civilian facets of defence diplomacy have nonetheless seen greater involvement by their military counterparts, complicating further the distinction between those two types of diplomacy.
- Military diplomacy involves the peacetime cooperative use of military assets and resources as a means of a country's foreign and security policy.
- The goals of military diplomacy include both the conservative/pragmatic (e.g., build capacity and interoperability, improve mutual understanding) and the transformative (e.g., resolve conflicts, develop democratically accountable armed forces).
- Military diplomacy aims to be inclusive and reassuring without rejecting the more exclusive logics of competition and deterrence.

### DOING MILITARY DIPLOMACY

Military diplomacy comprises a wide range of activities. Activities that befit military diplomacy include: bilateral and multilateral contacts between senior commanders and service chiefs; the appointment of defence attachés to foreign countries; bilateral defence cooperation agreements; training of foreign military personnel; provision of expertise and advice on the democratic control of armed forces, defence management and military technical areas; contacts and exchanges between military personnel and units, and ship visits; placement of military personnel in the armed forces or defence ministries of partner countries; deployment of training teams; provision of military equipment and other material aid; and bilateral or multilateral military exercises for training purposes (Cottey and Forster, 2013). The significance which states attach to military diplomacy today is evidenced by the quality of assets and quantity of resources they are willing to commit to the enterprise. For instance, going well beyond 'protocol, alcohol, and cholesterol' – the standard joke about defence attachés of yore – the strategic importance today of attachés to helping their governments and defence establishments realize their political and military objectives is such that countries now regularly send only their best and brightest military people abroad (Shea, 2005).

States engage in military diplomacy to strengthen ties with other likeminded states. The idea here is to develop mutually beneficial relationships with the armed forces of

countries – some with whom they might even be competing economically or engaged in soft balancing – to contribute to a stable international and regional environment (Chong et al., 2008). The formation in 2010 of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus or ADMM-Plus by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional organization formed in 1967, with eight of its dialogue partners (Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea and the United States) is an instance of Southeast Asian countries seeking to enhance their security regionalism through strengthening military-to-military ties with outside powers and 'stakeholders' (Capie and Taylor, 2010b; Tan, 2013).

States also engage in military diplomacy to develop confidence, trust and transparency with past, present or potential rivals they seek to reassure or over which they want to keep a watchful eye. It is used to build and enhance cooperative capacities with partners new and old, as well as with former foes (Swistek, 2012). As a former US Pacific Command chief once remarked, the problem with countries caught up in security dilemmas has less to do with their respective force structures than with the shared proclivity of their leaders for zero-sum, balance of power mind sets and ambiguous intentions (Blair and Hanley, 2001). While the specific aims and objectives of nations participating in military diplomacy might differ, 'the crux is that they work together to develop an environment of peace and trust' (Muthanna, 2011: 3). For example, military-to-military ties between Russia and the United States have particularly been aimed at overcoming the barriers to trust from 'years of staring at each other across the Fulda Gap' (Holinger, 2007: 59). Similarly, in the case of Vietnam and the United States, military-to-military ties between the two former foes have benefited from the evolving cooperative partnership between the National Defense University in Washington, DC, and the National Defence Academy in Hanoi (Stern, 2012). In the case of China-US

ties, it has been argued that the expansion of regular contact between military elites and at the lower levels would raise the benefits of engagement for both Beijing and Washington while increasing the costs to both should ties be severed (Harold, 2013). In other words, as a strategy of engagement, the success of military diplomacy relies on the logic of frequency of contact and communication. According to Admiral Mike Mullen, the former chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, strategic trust comes about through 'more frequent discussion, more exercises, [and] more personnel exchanges' (Mullen, 2011).

Finally, states engage in military diplomacy with the aim to establish and enhance not only the professionalization of the armed forces of target countries but, crucially, their democratic accountability. According to a British Member of Parliament and shadow defence secretary, military diplomacy is about the minimization of hostility, the building and maintenance of trust and the provision of assistance in the development of democratically accountable armed forces and military strategies (Murphy, 2012). Likewise, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) has identified the facilitation of defence or security sector reform, the establishment of peace support operations in conflict and post-conflict theatres that involve military and civilian participation, and the development of arms control and disarmament mechanisms and confidence and security building measures in response to security problems posed by changing security environments as the elements of military diplomacy (DCAF, 2007). The resumption by the United States of its International Military and Education Training (IMET) programmes with Indonesia, which Washington had suspended following allegations of human rights abuses by the Indonesian military in East Timor in the late 1990s, was effected with reform of the Indonesian national military (TNI) clearly in mind and in the context of Indonesia's democratic transition (International Crisis Group, 2001).



On the other hand, military diplomacy has also been employed not as a driver to bring about political change but offered as a 'reward' for continued change. For example, former US defence secretary Leon Panetta told a Shangri-La Dialogue audience in 2012 that America would be prepared to establish military ties with Myanmar if the country were to continue with its democratic reforms and improve its human rights record. To that end, it has been suggested Myanmar could be invited to participate in US-sponsored military exercises such as Cobra Gold in Thailand, the maritime Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercises or the US Navy's Pacific Partnership programme (Hiebert, 2012). Britain's planned resumption of military ties with Myanmar has similarly identified reform of its armed forces, the Tatmadaw, and continuation of the peace process begun by President U Thein Sein as the key reasons behind its decision (Hiebert and Nguyen, 2013).

### **Key Points**

- Military diplomacy comprises a wide range of activities conducted bilaterally and multilaterally.
- Military diplomacy is used to enhance ties with friendly states, build transparency and trust with rival states, professionalize and develop democratically accountable armed forces, and reward and strengthen ongoing democratic transitions.

### **MULTILATERALIZING MILITARY DIPLOMACY**

One of the more intriguing developments regarding military diplomacy has to do with the growing patterns of multilateral interaction and cooperation among militaries. As a multilateral collective defence organization, NATO is a natural institutional locus for multilateral military ties (Schimmelfennig, 2005). On the other hand, as a region long defined

by security bilateralism as a result of its Cold War architecture of bilateral alliances and bilateral security relationships (Acharya, 1990), the Asia Pacific has in recent years hosted a growing experiment with security multilateralism (see Chapter 29 in this Handbook). But rather than the institutional singularity embodied in Europe by the European Union (EU), multilateralism in the Asia Pacific is akin to what Francis Fukuyama (2007), commenting on the global institutional landscape, has termed 'multi-multilateralism': burgeoning webs or concentric circles of interlocking and overlapping ties and arrangements (Frost, 2008; Green and Gill, 2009; Tan, 2009; Tow, 2002). A concrete example is the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), an annual gathering of foreign ministers (as well as defence officials) from twenty-six Asia Pacific countries and the EU, the ADMM-Plus, the eighteen-country forum of defence ministers, the East Asia Summit (EAS), a leaders-led forum whose membership corresponds with that of the ADMM-Plus, and the Shangri-La Dialogue, a semi-official (or 'Track 1.5') annual confab of defence leaders, practitioners and intellectuals. In addition to these, military-to-military engagements have proliferated all over the Asia Pacific region to the extent that analysts, accurately or otherwise, have resorted to labels such as 'webs' and 'communities' to describe those emerging relationships (Blair and Hanley, 2001; Tan and Singh, 2012). The US Pacific Command (US PACOM), for instance, is pursuing military-to-military activities within existing bilateral frameworks, while encouraging the development of more multilateral venues and new strategic partnerships with Asia-Pacific countries (Keating and McCaffrey, 2007).

Some see utility in such a complex architecture for avoiding gridlock when negotiations which become toxic in one institutional setting can presumably continue unhindered in another more salubrious setting (Cha, 2011). Others have warned

against the potential dangers of duplication and overlap in an increasingly crowded domain of security cooperation (Bisley, 2009; Taylor, 2011; Tow and Taylor, 2010). More often than not, defence practitioners tend to view those multilateral arrangements as consultative mechanisms for countries to resolve differences and clarify misunderstandings. Mechanisms such as the ADMM-Plus ‘help to prevent miscalculations, and entrench a culture of peaceful resolution of disputes in the region’, while the opportunities they furnish for increased interaction and networking ‘form the basis for exploring new areas of cooperation’ (Tan, 2002). In the face of common security challenges, states have few better options than to develop multilateral approaches and habits of cooperation which require effective policy coordination and, more often than not, military-to-military cooperation (Blair and Hanley, 2001). For example, it has been argued that the ADMM-Plus serves as ‘an easy and natural venue for defence leaders to get to know one another and share information. It also serves as a vehicle for joint exercises on counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), maritime security, military medicine, and peace-keeping’ (Bower, 2013). In June 2013, the ADMM-Plus undertook exercises in HADR and military medicine in Brunei, where Chinese and American troops conducted joint training for the first time. In September 2013, ADMM-Plus exercises in counterterrorism and maritime security were held in Indonesia and Australia respectively. In February 2014, the ADMM-Plus conducted a table-top exercise on peacekeeping operations in the Philippines. Arguably, what the capacity building arrangements within the ADMM-Plus have also enabled is an embryonic regional capability in preventive diplomacy – ironically, the very thing the ARF has not been able to implement (Tan, 2011). In the same way, the US PACOM’s engagement with Southeast Asian armed

forces has been described as a ‘significant enabler’, providing the region with capacity, training, resources and a framework for regional security cooperation (Wheeler and Weinstock, 2007).

### Key Points

- Military diplomacy in the Asia Pacific has developed into a multilateral enterprise.
- Despite serious reservations with the ‘multilateral’ character of Asia Pacific security cooperation, the ADMM-Plus, US PACOM-based and other multilateral modalities have facilitated and enhanced military-to-military cooperation among regional countries.

### THE LIMITATIONS OF MILITARY DIPLOMACY

However, the conduct of military diplomacy does not automatically or always lead to improved ties. Despite China’s longstanding *pauk phaw* (fraternal) relationship with Myanmar and its provision of arms to the latter, mutual distrust persists between both countries and their armed forces (Hiebert and Nguyen, 2013). Moreover, countries at times hold divergent perspectives on the goals of their military relationship. As a leading democracy and global military power, the United States is used to transparency and expects it in the context of its military relationship with, say, China. As such, Americans see their military ties with the Chinese as an opportunity to apprehend how People’s Liberation Army (PLA) elites think, convey American expectations, and deter by showcasing their advanced capabilities. On their part, the Chinese, unused to transparency and indeed suspicious of it, see their ties with the Americans as an opportunity to learn how better to modernize their own military without revealing their own weaknesses (Harold, 2013).

## Key Point

- Military diplomacy has not always contributed to enhancing strategic trust and improving relations between and among countries.

## CONCLUSION

The goals of military diplomacy have been about conservation as much as innovation. This serves as a cautionary note against unrealistic expectations regarding what it can achieve, particularly where transformative military diplomacy is concerned. Yet the same holds true of pragmatic or conservative military diplomacy aimed at mitigating the negative consequences of security dilemmas. As evidenced by its rise and popularity in the post-Cold War era, military diplomacy is more appropriate for risk-based security situations than threat-based ones. That said, in regions like the Asia Pacific where tensions between regional powers could rise as a consequence of on-going maritime and territorial disputes, military diplomacy has arguably been used by countries to enhance partnerships and build coalitions against their competitors. Where military diplomacy ends and mutual defence cooperation against a common threat begins is to imply that military diplomacy is defined by the aims and intentions behind particular activities rather than the activities themselves.

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# Environmental Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

The term ‘environmental diplomacy’ remains nascent and contested in terms of definitions. For International Relations relations scholars, the definitional frame is around negotiations between nation-states on environmental governance. However, for interdisciplinary scholars of environmental studies, the term has a broader meaning around negotiations concerned with conflict resolution over natural resources as well as instrumental use of the environment in resolving disputes and building peace (see Chapter 17 in this Handbook). Just as views of diplomacy are evolving from an exclusive focus on Track 1 (between state representatives) process to a more inclusive Track 2 enterprise (between stakeholders), so too must the views on environmental diplomacy (see Chapters 2 and 8 in this Handbook). For the purposes of this Handbook, we will endeavor to posit a more inclusive and expansive view of environmental diplomacy (Track 2) that is gaining traction in

ecological discourse, along with outlining major agreements (Track 1) that became turning points in the evolution of modern environmentalism and sustainable development.

The term environmental diplomacy acquired currency after the formation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1973, given the prominence that environmental issues received soon thereafter. However, it could be argued that environmental diplomatic efforts could be traced back to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling which was initially signed by 15 nations in 1946 and came into force in 1948. The broader use of the term became common after the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly known as the Earth Summit (or the Rio Summit, after its venue: Rio de Janeiro, Brazil). The advent of this international forum bringing together world leaders prompted attention from scholars in fields such as international law, political science, and regional planning.

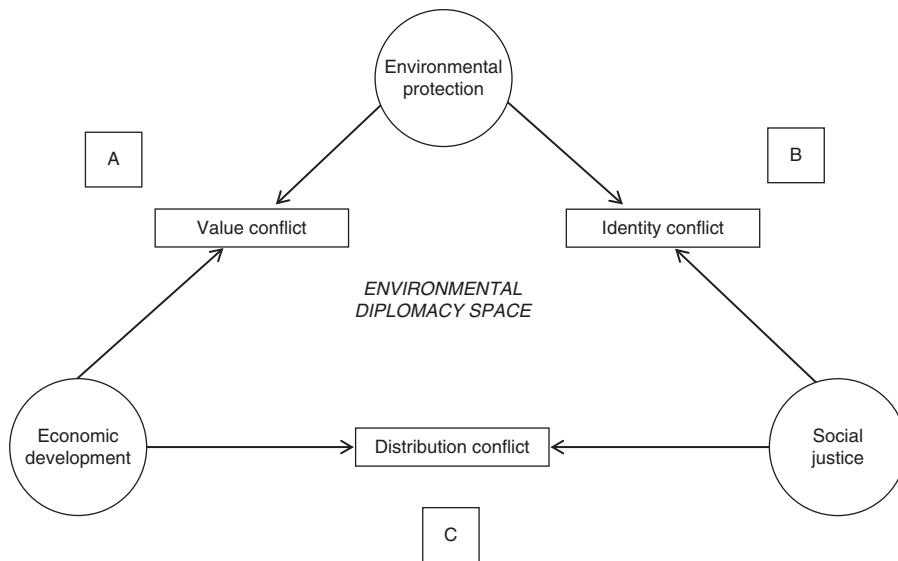


Lawrence Susskind, the founder of the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program, published the book *Environmental Diplomacy* in 1994 which gave broader appeal to the term and its usage (the second edition of the book was published 20 years later; Susskind and Ali, 2014). In its original connotation, Susskind had intended the term to encompass multilateral environmental agreements and how best to negotiate them in the context of broader international security priorities. Diplomacy was conceived very much in the tradition of Westphalian interactions between nation-states. Thus environmental diplomacy in this conventional view was also considered in the context of interactions between nation-states on environmental policy. The term connoted the resolution of any international disputes over managing the global environment (such as the Antarctic Treaty) or a proactive treaty process to manage the global commons (such as with ozone depletion or climate change). However, the contemporary usage of the term has broadened to consider ways of resolving environmental conflicts that emanate from efforts at conservation prioritization. At times the term is also used to consider pathways by which the environment can instrumentally be used in diplomatic activities between adversaries – a genre of literature in this arena is also referred to as ‘environmental peace-building’.

Environmental conflicts occur at the intersection of ecology and society and are thus bound by natural systems constraints on the one hand and social values on the other. What is important to note is that environmental conflicts are about governing ecosystems and the value we may want to place in conserving such common resource domains for the future generations. Ecologists have a long-term perspective of the future and a more holistic understanding of global problems and therefore they avoid the trap of discounting the future more than do economists, whose accounting processes pose tremendous challenges for environmental conflict resolution and decision making (Ali, 2003;

Speth, 2005). We can name three key underlying components of any environmental conflict which are in synch with the literature on sustainable development: environmental protection; economic development; and social justice. These are represented in Figure 49.1 in terms of their connectivity and a typology of conflicts that each connection implies.

*Value conflicts* (A), which are highlighted by the clash of environmental protection priorities and economic development priorities, are the most common kind of conflicts at the international level where environmental treaties being negotiated often get stalled. Often there are fundamental political ideologies on which the conflicts are predicated. Resolving these conflicts requires us to negotiate the monetary and non-monetary values associated with natural systems as well as consider what level of risk or ‘insurance’ value we may place on the occurrence of uncertain environmental harm. Building energy infrastructure, roads, business parks, and so on may be how we consider these conflicts at the local level but these same local-level issues can be operationalized at the international level through treaties that may place constraints on development for the sake of environmental protection. Indeed, a majority of environmental treaties would fall in this category. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), for example, boils down to how much economic development should be qualitatively constrained by the kind of energy usage or land-use policies for development in order to protect long-term natural processes from being eroded. Despite calls for greater democratization of the processes around climate governance (Stevenson and Dryzek, 2014), the overall tone of the debate remains aligned with classic ‘North–South’ divisions – albeit that definitions of who remains in each camp are changing with the rise of middle-powers such as the BRICS countries (Held et al., 2014) (see Chapter 23 in this Handbook). Diplomatic efforts around the UNFCCC also had to negotiate the terms of risk assurance as they pertained to different



**Figure 49.1 Anatomy of environmental conflicts and concomitant opportunities for diplomacy**

Source: adapted from Ali (2004).

scenarios of impact and the ability of various sides to adapt to climatic change.

*Identity conflicts* (B) around environmental issues stem from perceived social biases within human societies that are often manifest in disproportionate environmental harm being borne by minority communities. These conflicts are also presented in terms of indigenous politics and how natural systems constitute an integral part of the identity of particular populations. Conflicts between indigenous people and environmentalists around conservation lands are particularly significant in this arena (Dowie, 2005). However, identity can also be configured on the basis of a history of injustice that is exacerbated by inequality. Such features of identity that are often a legacy of pernicious norms of class and creed also make their way into resource allocation processes. Resource nationalism within nation-states leading to civil war in parts of sub-Saharan Africa are perhaps the most acute examples of such linkages between natural resources, identity, and conflict.

*Distribution conflicts* (C): with scarce natural resources, there is bound to be a 'zero sum' aspect to some environmental conflicts (where one party loses for another to win). How scarce resources get allocated, especially water resources in the context of riparian communities based on some norms of social justice, is the most challenging aspect of environmental diplomacy. The classic case in this regard is one of downstream versus upstream riparian communities, within nation-states or across borders. For example, does Ethiopia deserve to keep its water since most of the rainfall occurs on its land that feeds the Nile or does Egypt deserve a greater share of the water since Egyptian societies first found means of harnessing the water for broader commerce and are most dependent on it? Colonial agreements and voluntary standards such as the 2004 Berlin Rules from the International Law Association offer a backdrop for such diplomacy but are rarely consequential on their own. Such matters usually require linkage with other non-environmental diplomatic efforts as

well in order to augment the bargaining spectrum (Islam and Susskind, 2012).

### **Key Points**

- There is definitional variance in using term 'environmental diplomacy' by disciplinary background of scholarship.
- It is important to note an expansive and inclusive definition given the development of diplomatic discourse to include both Track 1 and Track 2 processes.
- Despite different disciplinary backgrounds there is a shared focus on negotiation in studies on environmental diplomacy.

## **THE EVOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY AND EMERGENT THEMES**

Environmental diplomacy had its origins in conventional views of diplomatic processes whereby nation-states negotiated with each other on bilateral or multilateral agreements. However, since environmental issues have multiple levels of engagement and the connections between local and global are more inextricable, we argue that environmental diplomacy is part of a broader genre of discourse on environmental conflict resolution. As J. Gustave Speth (2005), the former head of the United Nations Development Program, points out, the emergence of environmental concern in the 1960s had several distinguishing features. Initially this concern was local and state-driven in scope; the drivers at first were not global – local air and water pollution, strip-mining, highway construction, noise pollution, dams and streams channelization, clear-cutting, hazardous waste dumps, local nuclear power plants, exposure to toxic chemicals, oil spills, and suburban sprawl. In the US these concerns culminated in the passage of the US National Environmental Policy Act in 1969 and in the first Earth Day a few months later.

At the state level a policy window had emerged and government action, which had once been impossible, became inevitable and part of the electoral process (Speth, 2005). The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) were established, the Clean Air and Water Acts were passed, and federal courts were overwhelmed with lawsuits brought by a new generation of environmental advocacy organizations. This led to Congress establishing far-reaching and tough deadlines for industry.

### ***International Environmental Issues and Global Negotiations***

The establishment of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was a landmark achievement of the first International Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. The mandate of UNEP originally was 'to be the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimensions of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment'.<sup>1</sup> Thus the role it was meant to play was largely one of a coordinating agency for the UN system.

The 1970s was also a time when global-scale environmental issues attracted popular attention, prompted by several reports and publications on the topic, particularly the seminal Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth* report (Meadows et al., 1972) and, most consequentially, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden in June 1972. Some authors (Linnér and Selin, 2013) argue that the Stockholm Conference had a real impact on the environmental policies of the European Community; for example, it laid out a foundation for how environmental advocacy, or 'environmentalism', was operationalized

within international organizations. This also led to further comprehension of global climate change, and eventually paved the way to European consensus on agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol.

Key outcomes of the Stockholm Conference were: a major declaration (known as the Stockholm Declaration), containing 26 principles related to the environment and development; an Action Plan; and a Resolution. Among the principles, the Stockholm Principle 21 has become an important part of the following international treaties: the 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer; the 1979 Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution; the 1972 London Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping Wastes and other Matter; the 1982 UNCLOS Article 193; the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Lynch, 2014).

However, the output from the conference was constrained by the dominant paradigm of national sovereignty trumping transboundary concerns. This was most definitely manifest in Principle 21 of the resolution, which brings together two ideas of different historical and geo-political origins, and reflects divergent perspectives held respectively by the 'developing' and 'industrialized' states:

[The] States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies ...<sup>2</sup>

This principle was initiated to transform what the South perceived as an unfair international economic and legal order created by former colonial regimes. Schachter (1977) describes this first part of Principle 21 as follows:

In recent years no normative principle has been more vigorously asserted by the less-developed countries than that of 'permanent sovereignty over natural resources', a concept generally defined by its

proponents as the 'inalienable right of each state to the full exercise of authority over its natural wealth and the correlative right to dispose of its resources fully and freely'. For many developing countries this right is regarded as an essential condition of their national independence and of their ability to decide on basic political and economic arrangements.

The enshrining of sovereignty over natural resources was clearly noted as a voice against postcolonial influence by the colonizers. However, the challenge facing any global environmental agreement is that at some level sovereignty has to be eroded to allow for trans-boundary ecological concerns to be realized. This essential tension between social justice and self-determination of countries versus the common good of global environmental decision-making would remain a defining feature of future environmental diplomacy.

The second part of Principle 21 defines a two-fold responsibility for states. One is to prevent transboundary environmental impacts which might lead to substantial harm. Another is to prevent activities which entail significant risk of transboundary harm (Pallemmaerts, 1992). Thus, in the context of state activities which have transboundary impacts, the precautionary principle appears to flow naturally from the admonition in Stockholm Principle 21 that states are responsible for ensuring that '... activities within their jurisdiction and control do not cause harm to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction'. Some 20 years later the 'precautionary principle' appeared as the 'precautionary approach' in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration (United Nations, 1992):

In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.

The precautionary principle, along with the Stockholm Principle 21, is another

significant normative component used in international negotiations to balance economic preferences with the carrying capacity of natural systems. Only ten years after the Stockholm conference, in the 1980s, a series of reports began to pull the various tradeoffs between economic development and environmental conservation into a coherent agenda for international action. The term 'sustainable development', which had previously been given currency by *The Club of Rome*, began to be used by the United Nations as the paradigm to gain global consensus on the tradeoffs between economic development and environmental action. The UN General Assembly established the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1983 and asked the former Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland, to chair the body with a mission to craft a major report on sustainable development. The 'Brundtland Commission', as it was subsequently known, prepared a comprehensive report within four years and published it as *Our Common Future* (United Nations, 1987). This book became widely used as an educational tool worldwide and paved the way for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) – otherwise known as the Rio Summit – which was held in Brazil in 1992.

Unlike the Stockholm Conference, the Rio Summit agenda included the deliberations on four specific treaties pertaining to climate change, desertification, biodiversity, and forests. The first three were formally adopted at the summit while no agreement was reached on having an international agreement on forests. Environmental groups and governments alike were concerned in general that an international treaty on forests would dilute the efficacy of stronger local programs in this arena. The aphorism 'think global – act local' is emblematic of this tension on when to focus on international macro-cooperation and when to operate at a local level for community-driven solutions. Approaching environmental diplomacy from the conflict resolution

lens that we present in this chapter allows the paradigm to be considered at multiple scales.

### ***International Consensus, Epistemic Communities, and Network Governance***

According to Speth (2005) there are some ten factors that led to international consensus around environmental issues as part of the broader range of international diplomatic efforts: depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer; climate change due to greenhouse gases; loss of crop and grazing land due to desertification, erosion, and conversion of land to non-farm uses; depletion of the world's tropical forests, leading to loss of forest resources and serious watershed damage; mass extinction of species from global loss of wildlife habitat and the associated loss of genetic resources; rapid population growth, burgeoning third world cities, and ecological refugees; mismanagement and shortages of freshwater resources; overfishing, habitat destruction, and pollution in marine environment; threats to human health from organic chemicals, particularly endocrine disruptors; and acid rain and the effects of a complex mix of air pollutants on fisheries, forests, and crops.

This menu of thematic areas, listed by Speth, was moved forward by a relatively small international community of leaders in science, government, the United Nations, and civil society, which 20 years later was given the name 'epistemic community' by Peter Haas in his landmark study of the Mediterranean Action Plan (Haas, 1992). The term implies that knowledge has a central role in improving the quality and sustainability of the consensus-building process. These epistemic communities had to contend with ideological rifts on environmental governance which were largely aligned around state versus market forces of economic development. Between the 1930s and 1970s, there was a dominance of the state-centric coordination

mechanism for resource management that was determined by both the world wars and then the Cold War period. Security was determined by the state apparatus and trumped all other forms of international relations or community-level interactions. In the 1980s, the emergence of market forces began to take shape, particularly hybrid models of economic markets and state-centric governance in China. The turn of the millennium has seen the emergence of a new paradigm for diplomacy, which brings in public and private sector forces through more integrative network mechanisms. The United Nations allowance for participation at treaty forums of 'major groups', which are often non-governmental advocacy organizations such as labor unions, human rights groups, environmental organizations, and universities, is a manifestation of this network-centered governance process (Khagram and Ali, 2008).

The pernicious impact of the Cold War and some state-centered policies on the environment were widely documented as communist countries opened up to greater research inquiry (Shapiro, 2001). Because of the apparent failure on the part of the state-centric coordination to govern complex environmental problems (Darst, 2001), new modes of governance have been proposed in recent years (Newig et al., 2010). In one such mode, known as 'the network model', multilevel political networks composed of stakeholders interested in the same issues can take shape. The networks are organized with the purpose of negotiating and agreeing on solutions. An example of how such networks can develop and facilitate environmental diplomacy is exemplified by the 'Salzburg Initiative', undertaken by the Dana Greeley Foundation for Peace and Justice in 1989, whereby 25 diplomats and scholars were convened to suggest reforms in environmental governance which were subsequently endorsed by stakeholders from more than 50 countries (Susskind, 1994). By integrating stakeholders from different sectors, governance networks can provide an innovative, learning-oriented

environment and pave the way for adaptive and effective governance. Epistemic communities, which are able to dissociate themselves from political bickering and catalyze cooperation, are a type of network that is particularly important for addressing environmental governance problems (Haas, 1992).

Similar to the contending pathways of environmental security discourse, the same feature can be viewed as a strength or a weakness, depending on which pathway (process) will be chosen to reach the goal. The network approach to 'environmental governance', which in essence is the overarching means through which environmental diplomacy can be operationalized (government and civil organizations), also has strengths and weaknesses. The main argument favoring network governance over traditional, command-and-control regulation or market regulation is that network governance can better deal with intrinsic uncertainty and with decision making under conditions of bounded rationality (limited information) (Haas, 2004). Such conditions specifically apply to the cases with fundamental conflict between spatial scales, global versus local, where network institutions can both create synergy between different competencies and sources of knowledge and encourage individual and collective learning, thereby making it easier to address complex and interrelated problems (Haas, 2004; Dedeurwaerdere, 2013). Environmental policy makers often operate under conditions of uncertainty: they may not understand the technical aspects of the issues they are regulating. Their limited understanding affects their ability to define the interests of the state and to develop suitable solutions for scales larger than the local (e.g. cross-boundary or cross-regional environmental regulation). Environmental crises also exacerbate uncertainty for decision makers (Haas, 1992). To reduce uncertainty, decision makers seek expert knowledge and advice on issues such as: the scale of environmental problems; cause-and-effect relationships between ecological processes; and how (science-based) policy options will play out.



Environmental governance in general and network-centered coordination in particular face challenges characterized by complexity and uncertainty, which are inherent in issues associated with the environment and sustainability (Newig et al., 2007). Furthermore, decision making and conflict resolution that assume the supremacy of science are likely to alienate developing countries at the global scale and the public at the local scale, where stakeholders all too often complain about disparities in scientific and technical expertise. For example, a small community organization standing for the rights of indigenous forest conservation does not have the capacity to digest voluminous environmental impact statements of industrial forestry projects (see Chapter 51 in this Handbook).

Like other phenomena and circumstances, even natural disasters and crises can be viewed from different perspectives. On the one hand, environmental crises exacerbate uncertainty and could potentially result in community panic and lead to a reluctance for internal community consensus or national diplomatic efforts. On the other hand, crises have the potential to lead to cooperation and the search for new solutions, as there is greater need to address a particular need that may require collaborative processes. Positive exchanges and trust-building gestures can be a consequence of realizing common environmental threats. Often, a focus on common environmental harms (or aversions) is psychologically more successful in leading to cooperative outcomes than focusing on common interests, which in turn may lead to competitive behavior (Ali, 2003).

### Key Points

Among the important points to note in the evolution of environmental diplomacy are the following:

- The legislative origins of environmental diplomacy in the United States and Europe;
- The key thematic areas for ecological concern that historically led to the current range of global environmental diplomatic efforts.

- The development of UNEP and the role of international commissions and conferences, such as the Stockholm Conference, in the emergence of environmental diplomacy.
- The tension between whether to act globally for environmental agreements or focus on local action, which arguably can be resolved by considering multiple scales of conflict resolution processes.
- The development of 'epistemic' communities and their respective contributions to more effective environmental diplomacy.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICTS AND SCIENCE

As noted earlier, our view of environmental diplomacy encompasses a broader vision of conflict resolution processes involving environmental factors and how various tools can be employed to benefit diplomacy in this context. Environmental Conflict Resolution (ECR) has emerged as a specialized field within the broader realm of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and many of the tools and analytical frames used in this context are also applicable to environmental diplomacy. While ECR focuses on finding pathways to avoid litigation in specific environmental regulatory disputes, environmental diplomacy encompasses the full frame of analytical and behavioral processes that lead various parties towards a sustained cooperative outcome. The convergent element in these two fields that are situated at different scales is the role environmental science can play in negotiation and moving parties closer to consensus.

Since the term *environmental conflict* first appeared in the 1960s, our understanding of the role of science in consensus building has been gradually changing. Starting as a purely neutral source of authority, a venue for discovery, and an independent mechanism of accountability, the role of science has slowly been co-opted into society whereby it can be socially constructed as a 'shield' rather than an agent of some indelible truth. The entire field

of Science and Technology Studies, which has its own Handbook of record (Jasanoff et al., 2001; Hackett et al., 2007) developed as a result of this realization. Creating an illusion of arbitrating between alternative policy viewpoints or choices, science is often employed instead as a tool for political persuasion. Furthermore, it can be more and more frequently observed that in difficult or intractable cases, scientific uncertainty, complexity, and disagreement can prolong conflict, exacerbate poor relationships, and actually provide a rationale for avoiding resolution (Martin and Richards, 1995; Ozawa, 2006).

In her notable article, 'Science in environmental conflicts', Ozawa (1996) asks whether science can play a role in resolving environmental conflict – and answers affirmatively. Ozawa observes that, during the 1980s, as a byproduct of innovations in decision making (which included direct negotiations between individuals and representatives of groups engaged in environmental disputes), an alternative role for science emerged. In some environmental mediation cases, parties now explicitly agree that the technical information and analysis necessary to understand current conditions and to identify possible options for action is one of the first topics on the agenda (Susskind and Cruikshank, 1987; Ali, 2003; Voinov Vladich, 2012). Thus, scientific analysis has become a tool in the negotiation process. Almost from the start, stakeholders discuss what kinds of technical knowledge are pertinent; moreover, the results of the scientific analysis are openly discussed and subject to agreement (Ozawa and Susskind, 1985). They note that for science to play a facilitative role in conflict resolution, the decision-making process must be deliberately structured to ensure the following: all stakeholders must have access to scientific expertise and analysis; a period of time should be explicitly set aside to address political concerns to prevent participants from clinging to technical positions with the aim of obtaining political gains; and experts invited to participate in the decision-making process must

commit to sharing scientific information as a means of educating, rather than intimidating, stakeholders. If these conditions are met, scientific analysis may sustain dialogue, enabling stakeholders to develop a constructive understanding of the various perspectives on an environmental conflict.

There are also some specific structured tools which can supplement the role of science in environmental diplomacy. Participatory Modeling (PM) is one approach that is gaining a lot of attention. PM is a general approach to involving stakeholders in the modeling process and is designed to assist in decision making, conflict resolution, and general management of the process (Voinov and Gaddis, 2008; Voinov Vladich, 2012). It has been a particularly valuable tool in furthering environmental diplomatic efforts. PM is driven by the goals of the stakeholder group and is not limited to the use of any specific modeling tools or requirements to ask particular types of management questions. The goal of the PM approach is to make the modeling development process transparent and share the excitement of modeling with the stakeholders. This, in turn, makes it possible to: educate stakeholders about the processes and functions of the environmental system; solicit input and data about the system; define scenarios, types of output, and the uses of the model; and create a constructive environment for negotiation and consensus building.

PM is a powerful tool for decision making. Under the PM approach, a series of models are built, with citizens' participation at various stages of the project. As part of the model-development process, information is collected, the information is tested against information obtained from residents, and assumptions and data sets are translated into the formal language of models (Argent and Grayson, 2003; Voinov et al., 2004; Brown Gaddis et al., 2007; Bowden et al., 2008; Voinov Vladich, 2012).

Another tool that can supplement the role of science in environmental diplomacy is Mediated Modeling (MM). It is a non-spatial

form of participatory modeling that focuses on building a conceptual model together with stakeholders (Van den Belt, 2004). It assumes an extended deep involvement on the part of a relatively small number of stakeholders who are committed to long-term participation. The process creates common ground for discussion, develops trust between participants, and helps discipline deliberation and decision making. The focus on building the model yields a shared understanding of the system and its dynamics, and makes it possible to analyze temporal trends and trade-off scenarios. The use of geographic information systems (GIS) to provide a spatial dimension to diplomatic processes and change perceptions of conflicts among negotiators is also gaining traction (Lovett and Appleton, 2007; Jasani et al., 2009).

Ultimately, the instrumental use of science in these processes must also link with the broader perceptions among negotiators that ecological factors have the potential for fostering cooperative behavior and hence peace-building.

### **Key Points**

- Environmental diplomacy requires an understanding of broader underpinnings of environmental conflicts.
- Science has an important role to play as an arbitrator in environmental diplomacy but has its limitations based on how stakeholders will always try to socially construct the relevance of scientific data.
- Participatory Modeling and Mediated Modeling, coupled with spatial analysis techniques, are new tools that can be employed to facilitate environmental diplomacy.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PEACE-BUILDING**

There is yet another way of invoking the environment in conflict resolution that would address the concerns of the skeptics who don't recognise the connections between the

environment, conflict resolution, and diplomacy. Instead of trying to tease out environmental causality in political conflicts, such as civil war, and thereby accentuate the importance of conservation, one can also try and see how environmental issues can play a role in cooperation – regardless of whether they are part of the original conflict. For example, the causes of the Darfour crisis in Sudan were hotly debated in the literature, with environmental determinists arguing that desertification and climate change were to blame, while other scholars of African governance were arguing that ethnic and political issues were causal factors. Even if the cause for conflict was about identity rather than environment, the issue of desertification is a common threat to both sides and could thus be a diplomatic means of bringing parties to the negotiating table.

Such an approach has been termed environmental peace-making (Conca and Dabelko, 2003). The main premise of environmental peace-making is that there are certain key attributes of environmental concerns that would lead acrimonious parties to consider them as a means of cooperation. Thus environmental issues could play an instrumental role even in cases where the conflict does not involve environmental issues. The theoretical basis for this approach has been presented in the literature on environmental planning (Ali, 2003, 2007), and can also find its roots within the international relations literature, albeit it has rarely been explicitly noted in ecological terms (Stein, 1993). Indeed, an active role by environmental planners is important to galvanize action and to help in the realization of environmental issues in peace-building. Table 49.1 shows ways in which environmental planners can approach this task.

Social scientists trying to study causal relationships of any kind must contend with the problem of 'endogeneity' – the direction of causality. Hence environmental cooperation and the resolution of larger conflicts must be considered in this light as well. Is environmental cooperation a result of conflict

**Table 49.1 Consensus catalysis by environmental planners**

<i>Concept</i>	<i>Approach</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Initiative</i>	<i>Function</i>
Framing conflict as a dilemma of common aversion	Provide information on joint harms of noncooperation	Institute long-term engagement between parties to monitor environmental harms	Joint audits of environmental criteria and data collection for ecosystem based planning efforts	Establishes neutral cognitive base for discussion of derivative issues
Linking environmental concerns to other issues	Provide a bargaining opportunity for sides where none was perceived to exist	Negotiate comprehensive agreements rather than individual contracts on specific issues	Interdisciplinary commissions for problem solving that are facilitated by a mutually agreeable mediator	Enlarges 'the pie' for positive solutions and adds flexibility for integrative bargaining
Using environmental concerns as a trust-building tool	Provide forums for joint participation in conservation initiatives	Develop conservation plans that would be inclusive of adversaries	Peace parks, good neighbor compacts on riparian conservation, and sister city lesson drawing arrangements	Provides a mutually satisfying experience for parties to exemplify rewards of cooperation

*Source:* (Ali, 2003)

mitigation or is it leading to conflict reduction itself? The temporal analysis can often be so closely intertwined that the causality confounds researchers. However, it may be argued that the process is much more dialectical in nature. Environmental issues can be an important entry point for conversation between adversaries and can also provide a valuable exit strategy from intractable deadlocks because of their global appeal. However, they cannot be taken in strategic isolation and are usually not a sufficient condition for conflict resolution. Thus technical cooperation over environmental issues may help to develop a level of trust in sharing knowledge and open avenues for Track 2 diplomacy that in turn may lead to peace dividends.

The key to a constructive approach in environmental peace-building is to dispense with linear causality and instead consider the conflict de-escalation process as a non-linear and complex series of feedback loops. Positive exchanges and trust-building gestures are a consequence of realizing common environmental threats. Often a focus on common environmental harms (or aversions) is psychologically more successful in leading to cooperative outcomes than focusing on common interests (which may lead to competitive behavior). This is because

common interests can also lead to competition whereas common aversions have a greater propensity for prompting group cooperation (Ridley, 1998).

A skeptical take on environmental peace-building would highlight the view that cooperation on environmental issues between adversaries would be relegated to low politics and might not translate into a larger resolution of the conflict. In this view, environmental conservation would at best be a means of diplomatic maneuvering between mid-level bureaucrats and at worse be a tool of co-optation by the influential members of a polity. Such critics give examples of cooperation on water resources between adversarial states like India and Pakistan or Jordan and Israel without translating into broader reconciliation (Lowi, 1995). Thus it could be argued that water and environmental issues are not important enough to play an instrumental role. However, a more positive framing of the case might reveal that water resources in this context are so important that even adversaries must show some semblance of cooperation over them.

Furthermore, the instrumental impact of environmental issues in building peace must be considered over longer time horizons. The process by which environmental issues

can play a positive role in peace-building is premised on a series of steps: a unified information base on a mutual environmental threat; recognition of the importance of cooperation to alleviate that threat; a cognitive connection and trust development due to environmental cooperation; continued interactions due to environmental necessity; clarification of misunderstandings as a result of continued interactions; and, finally, de-escalation of conflict and resultant peace-building.

Given the necessity for certain environmental resources and a growing realization that environmental issues require integrated solutions across borders, the likelihood for their instrumental use in peace-building has gone up in recent years. There is a growing commitment to 'bioregionalism', or the realization that ecological management must be defined by natural delineations such as watersheds and biomes (ecological systems which support life), rather than through arbitrary national borders. Numerous joint environmental commissions between countries and jurisdictions have taken root all over the world in this regard. We have seen this played out in various ways at international forums where bioregionalism and common environmental sensitivities have transcended traditional notions of state sovereignty. Regional environmental action plans such as those in the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the Caribbean, and the Red Sea are examples in this regard. While we are a long way from having global governance of environmental issues, the momentum is clearly in the direction of giving environmental protection that directly impacts human lives and livelihoods the same moral ascendancy as 'human rights'.

### Key Points

- Even where environmental factors are not part of the conflict they can be used instrumentally for peace-making.

- Cooperation is more likely when environmental degradation is presented as a common aversion, rather than trying to force environmental cooperation as a common interest which may lead to competitive behavior.

### CONCLUSION

Environmental diplomacy has evolved considerably as a concept and ambit of diplomatic practice from the time when the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was struggling to be considered on par with other UN bodies in the 1970s (Tolba and Rummel-Bulska, 2003). Yet, many more challenges both at the local and global scales remain for environmental diplomacy to realize its full potential. Despite the fact that since the 1972 Stockholm Convention the global nature of environmental degradation has initiated the global, UN-based treaty making approach as a main pillar to sustainability, some authors argue that the quest for global solutions for the degradation of transnational ecosystems is unworkable and theoretically ill-grounded (Corti, 2002). They challenge the belief that there is a positive relationship between the geographical scope of international action and the utility of environmental regimes. Critics argue that except for treaties focused on very specific chemical eradication like the Montreal Protocol, the actual impact of environmental agreements has been minimal.

Moreover, the value of global treaties has been challenged by a growing realization (starting from the Founex Report of 1972<sup>3</sup> (de Almeida, 1972)) of the link between Third World poverty, environmental degradation, and Northern consumption. The tendency of the 'North' to maintain industrialized countries' lifestyles – through resource control and monetary mal-distribution – is seen by 'South' countries as a cause of their environmental degradation, widespread poverty, and underdevelopment (Lynch, 2014). As Anil Agarwal points out, there are many factors

which are linked to the South's plight: 'Which questions should [the world] try to solve first. Why ozone layer depletion or climate change or biodiversity conservation? Why not the international financial system, terms of trade or poverty, all of which have deep ecological linkages with the environmental problems of the South?' (Agarwal, 1992).

Another factor challenging global treaties are natural disasters. The Japanese Fukushima catastrophe violates the Stockholm Principle 21, the Rio Declaration Principle 15 (the precautionary approach), and the Brundtland Report *Our Common Future* (which characterizes 'sustainable development' in terms of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs). Equally importantly, the Fukushima disaster is a health threat for current and future generations (Caldicott, 2013).

On December 21, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly passed a momentous resolution to reform the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – an organization that had been established with much hope 40 years earlier to improve governance of the global ecological commons. The resolution 'upgraded' the organization to 'universal membership' and provides for 'stable and increased financial resources from the regular budget of the UN'. Before this change, UNEP had only 58 countries represented on its governing council; this change allows for full participation from all UN member states in the workings of UNEP. As the administrator of several multilateral environmental agreements, UNEP has a crucial role to play in any reform efforts to allow for environmental diplomacy to function more constructively. The UNEP reform effort so far has been modest and not revolutionary by any means. Suggestions to establish a specialized UN agency similar to the World Health Organization were not adopted. However, there was a clear recognition that there are serious problems with the current system, and that a more adaptive process of correction is needed.

Ultimately, we might want to consider a more inclusive Track 2 international environmental diplomacy through the lens of negotiating global public goods – a view that scholars from different disciplines would agree upon. Scott Barrett presciently alerted us to this prospect through the lens of game theory in 2003 with his notable work *Environment and State Craft: The Strategy of Environmental Treaty-making*. To be 'self-enforcing', Barrett cautioned that any environmental agreement must be both *individually rational* in the context of sovereignty, as well as *collectively rational* in the context of governing common resources. Although many of the generic lessons on environmental consensus-building provided at the conclusion of our narrative can be applied across diplomatic efforts and treaties, we must not forget that there are key differences in terms of the underlying incentive mechanisms for each agreement. For example, riparian disputes where the upstream nation has more power will require bargaining extant to the water conflict itself to resolve, whereas cooperation over water quality in a lake may be easier to achieve given the common aversion of resource degradation.

What is true at the macro-level of international relations is also true at the micro-level of environmental conflict resolution processes. In this chapter we have attempted to provide a broader context for environmental diplomacy which is appropriate for a handbook. Environmental diplomacy will always have scientific underpinnings and there is clearly a level of analytical rigor which research can bring to refining this field of international relations. Many more doctoral dissertations need to be written to further inform and refresh the debate on mechanisms for reforming the environmental diplomatic system. While global governance systems remain elusive, environmental diplomacy can at least provide a prototype for how human institutions can transcend tribalism, catalyze peace-building and sustainable development, and gain further acceptance within the annals of diplomacy.



## NOTES

- 1 Noted on the UNEP website: <http://www.unep.org>, accessed March 22, 2015.
- 2 Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, 1972, accessed online from the UNEP archives: <http://www.unep.org/Documents.multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=97&ArticleID=1503>
- 3 A conference held in Founex, Switzerland in 1971 in preparation for the Stockholm Summit that particularly focused on concerns from developing countries regarding asymmetries in environmental impacts and the need to focus on major consumers of resources and polluters.

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# Sports Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

The interplay between sport, international relations and diplomacy is a long, complex and fascinating one. Like music or art, sport is a universal language that can transcend acrimonious diplomatic relationships, offer high profile pathways for dialogue beyond the negotiating table and, idealistically, unite disparate nations and their publics through a mutual affection for physical exercise, competition and games. As Nelson Mandela (2000) noted:

sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. Sport can awaken hope where there was previously only despair. Sport speaks to people in a language they can understand.

For such individuals, and institutions such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) or the British civil society organisation (CSO) Beyond Sport, sport can be used as a

vehicle to promote development, social awareness and human rights. Sporting events can also significantly boost a state's public diplomacy profile (see Chapter 35 in this Handbook). If, for instance, a government wins the rights to host a megaevent such as the World Cup, billions of foreign perceptions about the host country can be enhanced over a period of weeks. In the pluralistic, modern diplomatic environment sport can positively attract 'others' to the attributes of the host country and in this sense it is a potent soft power tool. However, for cynics and sceptics, sports diplomacy is amorphous, idealised, often exploited by politicians or rogue actors and nothing more than a parody of international relations; 'war minus the shooting', to use Orwell's popular observation about international sport. Sporting events are regularly hijacked by states to demonstrate various types of superiority, from their athletic prowess to a particular ideology. In its Hobbesian guise, sport is also plagued by corruption, graft, violence, cheating, racism

or blatant displays of jingoistic pageantry. As such, sport is hardly diplomatic. Moreover, sport is insignificant in an anarchic, zero sum international relations system dominated by hard power concerns, the use of armed force or economic policy aimed at influencing the behaviour of other states.

This debate about the role of sports diplomacy alludes to a common error when conceptualising sports diplomacy: oversimplification. This chapter contends that to understand sports diplomacy it is first necessary to review, re-conceptualise and critique the role that sport, sportspeople and sporting events play in international relations and diplomacy. To this end, two new categories of sports diplomacy are introduced: the traditional and version 2.0. Limitations, controversies and certain dark realities of sports diplomacy are then discussed. The chapter concludes with some observations about the possible future of sport diplomacy.

### **Key Points**

- The relationship between sport and diplomacy often generates debate.
- Many prominent figures argue that sport is a remedy for some of the major problems of this era. For others, sport is a false promise.
- To move beyond these positions is to re-conceptualise sports diplomacy.

### **TRADITIONAL SPORTS DIPLOMACY**

When thinking of traditions in sports diplomacy, its most obvious form is as a tool that governments consciously and sporadically employ to achieve foreign policy goals. Sport, in other words, is a diplomatic means to foreign policy ends (see Chapter 5 in this Handbook). Jackson and Haigh (2008: 354) argue that when this happens, sport is 'co-opted by politics.' Well aware of the power of sport to mediate, sublimate or, in more egregious cases, increase separation, states of all

kinds have long been drawn to sport and sporting competitions. As Allison (1993: 17) notes, many types of governments:

have endorsed international sporting competition as a testing ground for the nation or for a political 'system.' German Nazis, Italian Fascists, Soviet and Cuban Communists, Chinese Maoists, western capitalist democrats, Latin American juntas – all have played the game and believed in it.

Such occurrences are most evident in the megaevent theatres, quadrennial global tournaments such as the Olympic Games. On the surface and for the few weeks that they occur, these are great festivals of sport; however, they also afford states tremendous diplomatic opportunities. Obviously they provide a shop window for host nations to show off, be it their athletic prowess, organisational capacities, culture, values or ideology. The right to host such an event can also be seen as a reward for good international citizenship and one that creates significant avenues for public diplomacy. As Grix and Lee (2013) suggest, the politically savvy governments of China (2008 Olympic Games), South Africa (2010 World Cup) and Brazil (2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics) coveted megaevents as 'relatively cheap means of improving' their 'image, credibility, stature, economic competitiveness and (they hope) ability to exercise agency on the international stage.' Over the course of the tournament, billions of people tune in, and if the diplomatic posture, brand and message are thoughtfully crafted, foreign publics can be engaged and influenced, not to mention the trade opportunities that arise or the financial gains that host nations can enjoy. Megaevents can also be used to reduce tensions, consolidate political relationships or bring old enemies together, as was the intent behind the 2002 World Cup, co-hosted by Japan and South Korea.

However, disdain for a host nation can also be expressed via megaevents or if so inclined a nation can boycott and say, simply, we're not playing. During the Euro

2012 football tournament, for example, the British, Germans, Swedes and the European Union (EU) boycotted any matches played in Ukraine because of the host nation's selective justice in the case of the jailed Ukrainian opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko. Viviane Reading, the EU Justice Commissioner, pointed out that 'you cannot close your eyes on human rights, even during a great sporting celebration' (BBC News, 2012). In more extreme cases, a nation can withdraw altogether, as was the case when the US boycotted the 1980 Moscow Olympics in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, a gesture reciprocated by the Soviet Union and thirteen satellite states four years later at the 1984 Los Angeles Games. In the build-up to megaevents, there is usually an equal focus on the politics of the host nation as there is on the sport.

Traditional sports diplomacy is also a versatile tool within bilateral relationships. For one, international sporting competition can allow states to test possible policy shifts and bring leaders together. The best known example of this is Ping-Pong diplomacy, which occurred after a warm, chance and well-publicised meeting between American player Glenn Cowan and the then Chinese World Champion Zhuang Zedong at the World Table Tennis Championship in Nagoya, Japan, in March 1971. Shortly after, the US not-for-profit National Committee on USA–China Relations suggested that the American team should tour China. The proposal was then embraced by the Chinese and US governments, initially to test if the publics of both countries would accept the normalisation of diplomatic relations (a good, early example of sport as a vehicle for public diplomacy). The US team's subsequent visit in April of the same year was a tremendous success and paved the way for National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger's visit to China in July 1971 and later President Nixon's visit in 1972. At the conclusion of Nixon's trip, the Shanghai Communiqué was issued and the Sino-US diplomatic relationship rebooted.

More often than not sporting contests generate ad-hoc summits for high profile politicians or leaders to meet informally. Various leaders of bitter rivals India and Pakistan, for instance, have repeatedly met on the sidelines of cricket matches between their national teams. These cricket diplomacy meetings have occurred since the early 1980s as a way of decreasing tensions over nuclear ambitions, Kashmir, terrorism or any number of other disputes. Similarly, the presidents of long-time adversaries Turkey and Armenia met during two historic World Cup qualifying matches between their national teams in 2008 and 2009, a gesture that helped the eventual diplomatic reconciliation between the two countries. Likewise Dilma Rousseff, Angela Merkel, Vladimir Putin and Jacob Zuma all enjoyed a chat in the VVIP room before, during and after the half-time break of the 2014 World Cup Final. On such occasions, international sport generates productive and informal opportunities for leaders of states to come together.

Another form of traditional sports diplomacy is the occasional use of sportspeople to complement or amplify a state's diplomatic message. The Americans perhaps best embody this practice, first employing the famed sprinter Jesse Owens as a goodwill ambassador to nations with questionable attitudes toward racial integration in the 1960s. More recently, the State Department has employed dozens of sports envoys. Two openly gay athletes – Billie Jean King (a retired tennis player) and Caitlin Cahow (a hockey player) – figured prominently in the US delegation for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics. Their inclusion was both a response and challenge to Russia's draconian anti-Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) policies. China has also used specialist sports emissaries. Before the 2008 Olympic Games, the giant basketball player Yao Ming was able to attract millions of Chinese fans to the National Basketball Association (NBA) and, vice-versa, expose millions of Americans to the 'new' China.



During his time with the Houston Rockets (2002–2011), reporters from China followed his every move, American fans wore Chinese national team jerseys and many arenas welcomed the humorous, genial giant with dragon dances. As James Sasser, the former US Ambassador to China, noted, ‘Yao Ming gave the Chinese people and China a human face in the United States’ (in Zhang, 2013: 229). Ambassadors for sport can serve a valuable role in dramatically amplifying a state’s diplomatic message.

It can be argued, however, that traditional sports diplomacy is somewhat limited. For one, and compared with the number of people that play professional sport, the number of celebrity sports diplomats that states employ is relatively small. This is because sport, sportspeople and sporting events are co-opted by governments only if they serve a state’s national interests or help realise a foreign policy goal. In this traditional context, sports diplomacy is but a *means* to a foreign policy *end*. Sport, in other words, is viewed ‘through the embassy window’ (Wilson, 1962: 122). The practice of traditional sports diplomacy is also arguably inconsistent and elitist, with high profile leaders exploiting high profile tournaments, matches or sports people in choreographed pieces of theatre. Certain aspects of traditional sports diplomacy will endure; however, these are increasingly being complemented and in some cases supplanted by a new form of sports diplomacy, a version 2.0 if you like. This is a more inclusive, amateur form that reflects and embodies state, non-state and public partnerships colluding via the horizontal and vertical networks characteristic of twenty-first-century diplomacy.

### Key Points

- Traditional sports diplomacy is a tool that governments occasionally use to achieve foreign policy goals.
- If sport serves a diplomatic function beyond the game it is often exploited by governments.

- Megaevents are prized by states as they offer multiple public diplomacy opportunities.
- In a traditional, bilateral sense sporting matches can create leadership summit opportunities for engagement beyond entrenched foreign policy positions.

### SPORTS DIPLOMACY VERSION 2.0

To effectively describe sports diplomacy version 2.0 is to first contextualise it in the modern diplomatic environment. Since the end of the Cold War, international relations have ‘flattened’ and pluralism has gradually brushed aside the Westphalian notion of a state monopoly on diplomacy (Friedman, 2007: 51). These days, diplomacy is no longer a ‘stiff waltz’ among states alone but a ‘jazzy dance of colourful coalitions’ with ambassadors and diplomats acting as managers of such plural networks (Khanna, 2011: 22). In the modern diplomatic environment, large CSOs, multinational corporations, inter-governmental organisations (IGOs), and even influential celebrities, can be thought of as distinct and significant diplomatic actors. Therefore, Hocking’s ‘multi-stakeholder’ paradigm, where ‘diplomacy is an activity concerned with the creation of networks, embracing a range of state and non-state actors’, aptly describes the character of modern diplomacy (2006: 13). In this context, sports diplomacy 2.0 is facilitated by traditional diplomats working alongside CSOs, IGOs, sportspeople and corporations. These networks use sport to ‘engage, inform and create a favourable image among foreign publics, governments and organizations, to shape their perceptions in a way that is (more) conducive to the sending government’s foreign policy goals’ (Murray and Pigman, 2013: 4).

Perhaps because most Americans love innovation and sports, as well as their pioneering spirit, the American State Department was the first player to experiment with a

more sustainable, amateur and inclusive form of sports diplomacy. A proactive 2.0 form emerged at the turn of the last century when America sought to boost its public diplomacy profile abroad and complement other soft power tools (such as Voice of America or the Fulbright scholar program) with exchanges built around sport. The State Department's flagship initiative is *SportsUnited*, which aims 'to build ever-strengthening relations between the United States and other nations [and] which uses the universal passion for sports as a way to transcend linguistic and sociocultural differences' (Sports Diplomacy, n.d.). Remarketing on the initiative, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (2011) noted that:

... our sports exchanges are the most popular exchanges we do. When I go to other countries and we talk about what kind of exchanges that people are looking for, very often a leader will say, how about a sports exchange?

On the other side of the Atlantic, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides a second, richer example of sports diplomacy 2.0. States, CSOs, foreign publics, players, coaches, etc., have formed a network bound and driven by a common interest in sport and the right to play. Seeking to capitalise on the London 2012 Olympic Games, the FCO coordinated a network – the British Council, UNICEF, UK Sport, Comic Relief, Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, the Youth Sport Trust, and individual donors – which designed and implemented a sports legacy programme called International Inspiration (II). At heart, the programme sought to 'enrich the lives of children and young people of all abilities, in schools and communities across the world, particularly in developing countries, through the power of high quality and inclusive physical education (PE), sport and play' (International Inspiration, 2014). In other words, II hoped to get more children playing sport by educating, funding and helping schools and governments develop sustainable programmes built

around games and exercise. According to Ecorys (2014), an external consultancy firm hired to evaluate the success of the initiative, the programme exceeded all initial key performance indicators. The programme ran for seven years (2007–2014) and during this time 'over 25 million children and young people were enriched; 55 national policies, strategies and legislative changes were influenced and over 250,000 practitioners (teachers, coaches and leaders) trained in over 21 countries' (Ecorys, 2014: 2).

By sheer volume II was a success and, in the sports diplomacy 2.0 context, the FCO successfully managed and coordinated a network of actors, created a favourable impression amongst millions of people overseas and learned 'important lessons for the future of other sport and development programmes' (Ecorys, 2014: 11). Moreover, the programme shied away from using high profile politicians and professional sports people preferring amateurs such as teachers, coaches and children.

It is not only Western nations that are engaging in sports diplomacy version 2.0. Zhang (2013) reminds us that China has a long history of old and new sports diplomacy. Likewise, Japan invests heavily in domestic and international football in order to overcome imperial stereotypes and better reflect 'a level worthy of its economic power and overall achievements after 40 years of post-war peace and prosperity' (Manzenreiter, 2008: 417). And, finally, Cuba's public diplomacy continues to focus on sports as a 'vitaly important mechanism for furthering the causes of the Cuban revolution and garnering international admiration and respect' (Bunck, 2013: 236).

From the above examples, certain characteristics of this new type of sports diplomacy are evident. Version 2.0 retains some elements of the old (the continued use of sports envoys, for example); however, the practice is no longer sporadic, inconsistent, elite and reactive. Rather, it is proactive, regular and inclusive. Sport is used by governments as

a vehicle to proselytise the values that certain nations often champion. For example, Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's new sports diplomacy programme focusses on participation, gender equality, discipline and teamwork.<sup>1</sup> Instead of being geared around elite-to-elite theatre, version 2.0 targets and embraces the amateur levels of sport, not just the megaevents and superstars. The attraction for governments is partly practical. Sports diplomacy 2.0 is relatively 'low-risk, low-cost and high profile' (Keech and Houlihan, 1999: 112). Moreover, by engaging with new methods, the culture of a state's diplomacy can be less aloof, hermetic and 'dead' and more innovative, effective, public and even fun (Ramsay, 2006: 273). Perhaps the most significant lesson to be drawn from the above examples is that traditional diplomatic institutions are but one actor among a cast of others. In the British case, the FCO participated, coordinated and facilitated; but it did not direct.

To further understand the concept of sports diplomacy, regimes, clubs and individuals can be thought of as diplomatic actors. A postpositivist theory – one that 'encompasses a broader range of actors and processes' than a state-centric, rationalist understanding of diplomacy – facilitates such an exercise (Pigman, 2013: 78). Seen through this lens, powerful non-state actors such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), multinational corporations, security, television and media outlets, teams and prominent sporting heroes, national sports associations and CSOs all continuously and diplomatically interact to make international sport possible in the first place (Pigman, 2013: 78).

The actors that constitute these vast sporting networks have been briefly studied. Murray and Pigman (2013), for example, argue that powerful administrative institutions such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) can be thought of as para-diplomatic actors. They practise core diplomatic functions such as negotiation,

communication and representation; they have interests and agendas to pursue; they have charters, constitutions, presidents and mission statements which define their objectives and guide their interactions; and they have institutional structures, rules, norms and flags, which they use in 'a highly self-conscious effort to brand themselves and their sport' (Murray and Pigman, 2013: 14). Considering the benefits a megaevent can generate for host nations – anything from new infrastructure to public diplomacy opportunities – these international sporting regimes are immensely powerful, and states will go to great lengths to secure certain tournaments. Paying exorbitant amounts of money just to bid for the tournament, states covet the Olympics or World Cup just as athletes and national teams would a medal or trophy. Little wonder that senior representatives from the IOC or FIFA presidents are given the red carpet treatment wherever they go.

The same can be said of the role certain superstar athletes play in international relations, off the pitch, court or running track. Borrowing from Cooper's work on celebrity diplomacy, Roger Federer, Usain Bolt or Leo Messi can be considered as celebrity sporting diplomats, people who '[use] the attention they receive to focus the cameras on international issues' (Cooper, 2008: 7). Messi, for instance, acts as a Goodwill Sports Ambassador at Team UNICEF, using his profile to raise awareness of children's rights, health, education and sport all over the world. In a postpositivist view, even clubs such as Messi's F.C. Barcelona, the New York Yankees or Manchester United (with its 650 million fans) can also be considered as 'significant diplomatic actors in contemporary international affairs' according to Rofo (2014: 1136).

The list of actors in international sport is a long one – non-profit CSOs such as the Beyond Sport Foundation, the MNCs that sponsor sport on a global scale and the television companies that screen events are also notable diplomatic players. This acceptance

illustrates several vital points for those interested in sports diplomacy 2.0: the international sporting system is extremely complex, much more than simply megaevent tournaments or a superstar basketballer touring Africa under the auspices of the UN in the off-season. Sports diplomacy can be thought of a series of domestic and international networks that continuously interact and often overlap in order to make sport possible in the first place. To boost public diplomacy efforts, governments are increasingly tapping into these networks.

### Key Points

- Sports diplomacy 2.0 programmes emphasise government partnerships with non-state actors such as CSOs, IGOs, sportspeople and corporations.
- In the past, states co-opted sport in a sporadic, inconsistent fashion centred around securing or participating in megaevents. By contrast, sports diplomacy 2.0 is regular, inclusive and embraces the amateur levels of sport.
- In the twenty-first century, sporting regimes, clubs and individual celebrities can be thought of as powerful, non-state diplomatic actors.

## THE LIMITATIONS OF SPORTS DIPLOMACY

Compared to some of the major issues in twenty-first-century international relations – terrorism, poverty and climate change, to name but a few – sports diplomacy is a generally positive phenomenon. Granted, many states will continue to use sport to further self-serving national interests and foreign policy goals. However, it is important to remember the core, *diplomatic* components of sports diplomacy: to overcome separation between disparate peoples, nations and states and to reduce misunderstandings between ‘them’ and ‘us’ by demonstrating that strangers speak a shared, universal language of

sport. For the most part, sports diplomacy aims to foster peace and unity, not conflict and (more) separation.

For sports diplomacy to realise its potential, however, a frank appraisal of its limitations is important. This is not to support its detractors but to encourage thinking, collaboration and scholarship on ways to overcome or at least negate certain received truisms about sport, international relations and diplomacy. Below, six limitations are presented (although the list is by no means exhaustive).

First, the rhetoric this chapter began with – that ‘sport has the power to change the world’ – could suggest that sport is some magical remedy that has hitherto been neglected or ignored by theorists and practitioners. This is quite incorrect. It is self-evident that sport alone cannot eliminate poverty in Africa, encourage gender equality, women’s rights or the right to play in traditional, fundamentalist societies. These types of sport-development or sport-for-peace projects have been going on for decades with limited or mixed results.<sup>2</sup> Such projects will continue but they are increasingly being subsumed under broader sports diplomacy strategies orchestrated by diplomats. As a result, the capacity for sport to contribute, in part, to alleviating some of the major problems of our time will improve.

Second, sport and politics *do* mix, like it or loathe it. For idealists, sport has a ‘spiritual power’ (Redeker, 2008: 499) and exists in a hallowed realm ‘above’ (Allison, 1993: 5) government, untainted by the divisiveness of politics. The reality of the relationship between sport, diplomacy and politics suggests otherwise. In the lead up to the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, for example, Russia was accused by many states of graft,<sup>3</sup> illegal dumping of construction waste, forced evictions, bizarre anti-LGBT policies and disputes with Circassian nationalists demanding Russia apologise for its genocidal policies of the nineteenth century. All the while, however, Russia insisted that sport and politics *should* not mix (just as the Chinese government claimed during the lead up to the 2008

Beijing Olympics) and that concerned leaders, states and members of the global public *should* focus on the sport. Such rhetoric is problematic. Sport and politics have always mixed and always will. In the pluralistic, twenty-first century the ‘mixing’ of sport should be considered as a given.

Russia’s typical behaviour also alludes to a third limitation of sports diplomacy: the temporal reality of megaevents. These huge tournaments are a unique feature of international relations. No other event has the ability to unify and rally states, CSOs, global publics and media, who often use the tournament as a vehicle to express dissatisfaction with the host nation. However, any political and diplomatic opportunities occur *before* the event. When the actual games begin, sport takes over and concerns over shoddy human rights records, corruption, the plight of the oppressed and so on are immediately forgotten. For example, the pressure on Russia before the Sochi Winter Olympics evaporated as soon as the first starter’s pistol was fired. Positive, diplomatic messages and pressure were lost to sport *during* and *after* the tournament. Just weeks after the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics closing ceremony, Russia began meddling in Ukrainian politics (just as they did in Georgia after the 2008 Olympics) and it played a vital role in the annexation of Crimea and the war waged by so-called separatist rebels in Eastern Ukraine. In a matter of weeks, the megaevent is over, concerns are forgotten, the global public begins salivating over the next glamorous festival of sport and the host nation is left to behave as it did before the event. The challenge for those interested in further developing sports diplomacy is to overcome the temporal nature of megaevents and build real, lasting *diplomatic* legacies during and after significant tournaments.

A fourth limitation of sports diplomacy is that just as sport can bring people and nations together it can also drive them apart. It can increase estrangement, in other words. In international sport, the anthems, flags and sense of tribe all heighten feelings of

nationalism, sometimes in a manner unbecomingly of diplomacy. During the 2004 Asian Cup hosted by China, for example, the Japanese team was hounded everywhere they played. Chinese spectators heckled the players, sang ‘anti-Japanese songs from the war of liberation and displayed banners reading “Look into history and apologize to the Asian People”, or “Return the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands!”’ (Manzenreiter, 2008: 423). In this case, sport contradicted a core diplomatic function: the minimisation of friction in international affairs.

In addition, sport and violence are sometimes inextricably linked. In the past, terrorists have used sport as a way of spreading anti-diplomatic messages to vast, global audiences. Jackson and Haigh (2008: 351) note that, between 1972 and 2005, ‘171 sport-related terrorist attacks have been logged’. The most egregious example was the 1972 Munich Games tragedy when eleven Israeli athletes were kidnapped and eventually murdered by Black September, a radical Palestinian organization. A week after the incident the group issued the following statement:

A bomb in the White House, a mine in the Vatican, the death of Mao-Tse-tung, an earthquake in Paris could not have echoed through the consciousness of every man in the world like the operation at Munich ... the choice of the Olympics, from a purely propagandistic viewpoint was 100 percent successful. It was like painting the name of Palestine on a mountain that can be seen from the four corners of the earth. (In Toohey, 2008: 434)

Just as sports can disseminate and represent positive values about unity, fair play and harmony, there has sometimes been an undeniable association between sport and terrorism, war, violence and separation.

Fifth, this occasional disconnect between sporting idealism and reality is given further credence by briefly discussing the diplomatic qualities of sporting administrators and their behemoth organisations. In the formal world of diplomacy, Satow (2009:



617–22) attaches great importance to dignity, self-control, empathy ('to listen and not to talk'), calmness, fairness, humility, virtue and so on. Professional diplomats are also accountable to both the sending and receiving state and are legally bound to the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. Conversely, international sporting organisations and their staff are not bound by any such rules or norms. As such, large, influential sporting organisations such as FIFA, the IOC or the International Cricket Council (ICC) often make headlines for behaviour, customs and practices that are hardly diplomatic (at least in terms of how Satow and others have *imagined* it). The Salt Lake City 'bribery scandal', where six IOC officials who accepted gifts and 'hundreds of thousands of dollars' from local officials were sacked, serves a historic case in point (The Guardian, 1999). More recently, FIFA's behaviour has come under intense scrutiny from the BBC, the Sunday Times newspaper and the Swiss Government (FIFA's HQ is in Zurich). As one, they have accused FIFA of ticket scandals, vote-rigging during presidential elections (incumbent President, Joseph 'Sepp' Blatter, was the only candidate in the last election) and bribery and negligence, particularly over the award of the 2022 World Cup to Qatar, a tiny desert nation of two million people with a dreadful human rights record and summer temperatures that exceed 50°C. The FIFA President and his all-powerful Executive Committee engage in one-way communication with the public, any negotiation with states that bid for the World Cup is rather one-sided and who or what does FIFA actually represent? Indeed, can FIFA, the IOC or the ICC be considered diplomatic at all? As noted earlier, further research is required to answer such questions.

Such questions relate to the sixth and final limitation: the diplomatic calibre of the sports diplomats themselves. As Murray and Pigman (2013: 8) note, there seems to be:

[a] disconnect between competitors used as national representatives and the bulk of their fellow sportsmen and women. Those chosen to become sports envoys embody the aspirational version of sport that governments imagine and are thus unrepresentative of real sport.

Success in sport does not equate to success in diplomacy. Compared with the number of senior sportspeople that play and have played, only a few are considered fit for envoy or ambassadorial work. Many will never be considered at all. Moreover, perhaps many sportspeople wouldn't want the job. The case of the boxer Mohammed Ali, who had 'no quarrel with them Viet Cong', comes to mind. Sports envoys such as David Beckham – handsome, charming and instantly recognisable – seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Former NBA superstar player Dennis Rodman's odd, alcohol fuelled 2014 outburst at a CNN reporter who questioned his motives during his third visit to the basketball loving North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un revealed a stark truth: not every sportsperson can be a sports diplomat.

The six limitations mentioned above help to confirm that there can be a dark side to sport. However, the same can be said of diplomacy. Like diplomacy, the failures of international sport seem to attract more interest than its successes. Egregious examples such as the Fascist Games (the 1936 Olympics and 1938 World Cup, which Mussolini's 'black shirts' won, incidentally) are well known, and perhaps account for the trepidation many governments recently showed about consciously 'mixing' sport and politics. Consequently, and as noted, the traditional co-option of sport by states has often been rather clumsy, opportunistic, short-lived and centred at the elite level. Relatively speaking, however, it should be remembered that examples of bad sports diplomacy are the exception rather than the norm. If an objective perspective is adopted, the observer will realise that sport often celebrates the best of humanity and generally brings people together.



## CONCLUSION

As this chapter demonstrates, there have been many innovations in the theory and practice of modern diplomacy. Sport, music, culture and art, for example, are no longer niche or backwater institutions but attractive, untapped and potent soft power tools. All are universal languages, where no words are spoken. Their power to unite is only just being discovered. As such there is much work to be done on sports diplomacy. This chapter, for instance, focused mainly on the last century. Scholarship tracing the interplay between sport and diplomacy in the Ancient Olympiad or the games of chivalry during the medieval period remains to be written. The same can be said of figuring out the diplomacy of powerful and prominent non-state sports actors and, for ministries, one glaring challenge remains: how can qualitative exchanges built around sport be accurately measured? In short, esoteric research into sports diplomacy is relatively new. Further collaboration between theorists and practitioners from both the realms of sport and diplomacy is required.

This impending body of work should not deter those interested in sports diplomacy. From the baseball diamonds of Havana to the basketball courts of Beijing, sport has demonstrated significant potential to bring separated nations, leaders and people together. More and more states are implementing sports diplomacy 2.0 programmes. As such, its short-term future looks assured. In an age sullied by global terrorism, financial crises, overpopulation and resource scarcity, sporting exchanges between nations, states and people should be fostered and encouraged. Sports diplomacy is one of the genuine success stories of the era of globalisation.

## NOTES

- 1 See Stuart Murray (2013) 'Sports diplomacy in the Australian context: a case study of the

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade', *Sports Law eJournal*, ISSN1836-1129.

- 2 See R. Levermore and A. Beacom (2012) 'Re-assessing sport-for-development: moving beyond mapping the territory', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 4 (2): 125, 137.
- 3 The Sochi winter games cost US\$50 billion. By comparison, the London summer Olympics came in at US\$12 billion.

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# Science Diplomacy

Daryl Copeland

## INTRODUCTION

The soft power of science has the potential to reshape global diplomacy. (Ahmed Zewail)

In recent years the role and place of international science and technology (S&T) – and of science diplomacy (SD) in particular – have attracted only limited interest on the part of international affairs analysts and diplomatic practitioners alike. In part as a result, progress in addressing ‘wicked’<sup>1</sup> global issues such as climate change, diminishing biodiversity, species extinction, resource scarcity, environmental crises, and a daunting array of other epidemic threats and challenges which now imperil life on the planet, has been disappointing. The capacity to apprehend and manage S&T-driven global issues has not grown sufficiently, and without a greater effort by governments, international organizations and other SD actors, insecurity and underdevelopment will flourish. SD has been treated as a marginal practice, and the damaging consequences

of doing so can be reversed only through the provision of adequate resources and the elevation of SD to the status of an international policy, institutional and diplomatic priority.<sup>2</sup>

## UNDERSTANDING SCIENCE DIPLOMACY

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is to not stop questioning. (Albert Einstein)

Science, diplomacy and international policy are often regarded as uneasy bedfellows. Science is widely perceived as complex and impenetrable. Diplomacy is often viewed as elitist and ineffective.<sup>3</sup> International policy is an ambiguous, esoteric term of which the general public is barely aware. It is little wonder, therefore, that SD remains relatively obscure and is widely ignored. Nevertheless, SD is important and is becoming more so in an increasingly *heteropolar*<sup>4</sup> world order where

the vectors of power and influence are characterized more by difference than by similarity and S&T based challenges are multiplying.

At the highest level of analysis, SD can best be understood as a diplomatic technique by which S&T knowledge is freed from its rigid national and institutional enclosures, thereby releasing its potential to address directly the drivers of underdevelopment and insecurity.<sup>5</sup>

Unlike its constituent elements of science and diplomacy, the expression ‘science diplomacy’ is a relatively new and unfamiliar term, and a consensus on its definition has yet to be forged. Nina Fedoroff, the Science Advisor to former US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, describes SD as: ‘the use of scientific collaborations among nations to address the common problems facing 21st century humanity and to build constructive international partnerships’.<sup>6</sup> While the phrase *science diplomacy* implies some sort of unified whole, the term is most commonly presented as consisting of three distinct areas: informing foreign policy objectives with scientific advice (science in diplomacy); facilitating international science cooperation (diplomacy for science); and, using science cooperation to improve international relations between countries, regions or organizations (science for diplomacy).<sup>7</sup>

These three categories, while widely accepted and used, tend to overlap and have some weaknesses as heuristic tools. Many international S&T issues cannot easily be pigeon-holed: attempts to manage climate change have involved science advice (both to governments and the UN Secretary-General), science for diplomacy (the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)) and diplomacy for science (the meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP)). Other science-based issues, however, such as weapons inspections or fisheries monitoring and surveillance, fall more convincingly under a single heading (science for diplomacy). For these reasons, as an umbrella term SD must be used with some care.

That said, SD usefully combines international political agency with the scientific

method of knowledge production, and is an effective emissary of essential values such as evidence-based learning, merit, openness and sharing. As a specialized sub-set of public diplomacy (PD),<sup>8</sup> science diplomacy is also a significant generator of *soft power*.<sup>9</sup> It is this potent, and – through the increasing use of social and digital media – often technologically-enabled form of attraction which can intimately connect SD to national image, reputation and brand.

In addition to addressing many of the planet’s most urgent challenges, SD can also contribute, through its use of neutral, non-ideological language, to the mitigation of international political differences when regular diplomatic channels are strained, blocked or non-existent.<sup>10</sup> Even at the height of the Cold War, for instance during the Cuban Missile Crisis, Soviet and American scientists maintained programmes of collaboration in areas such as polar, atmospheric, health and deep sea research, plus radioactive waste disposal. Similarly, Western scientists have sustained or established contact with their Cuban, North Korean and Iranian counterparts despite the existence of formidable political and economic barriers. Most recently, during the conflict over Crimea and eastern Ukraine, US and Russian scientists have continued to work closely on Arctic issues, in crewing and managing the International Space Station, and on negotiating the multilateral nuclear pact with Iran (2015) and Syrian chemical weapons disarmament (2013).

Science diplomacy can also help maintain relations at times of tensions between friends. For example, in 1985 the government of New Zealand formally banned visits by potentially nuclear-armed warships.<sup>11</sup> In response, the US government, while leaving the ANZUS treaty in place, withdrew security guarantees from its traditional ally, downgraded its diplomatic relations, and excluded New Zealand from the ‘Five Eyes’ intelligence sharing arrangement, which also included the UK, Australia and Canada. It was a surprisingly nasty row, and bilateral relations were not

fully normalized until 2014. Still, through it all, the US base in Christchurch, which provides forward supply and logistical support for American scientific research activities in Antarctica, remained fully operational, and cooperation between US and NZ scientists continued without interruption.

Science diplomacy is sometimes conflated with international scientific cooperation, a mistake which has given rise to some confusion. The distinction, however, is clear. While the latter is sometimes commercially oriented and often occurs without direct state participation, the former is animated by its direct relationship to government interests and objectives. In the case of international scientific cooperation, private sector or civil society partners work together to produce, for example, better medications, cleaner water, improved hygiene or more disease-resistant crops.

In contrast to international science cooperation, SD involves state interests. When these interests diverge, the outcomes may be asymmetrical, particularly if broader negotiations are involved. In other cases, interests and objectives converge. As regards outcomes beneficial to all parties, many examples can be drawn from a swathe of international scientific programmes and exchanges undertaken during the second half of the last century. These have included not only the extensive array of Cold War programmes, but also the highly successful US/G-8/ NATO-led efforts<sup>12</sup> to employ members of shrinking defense science establishments and to decommission facilities used for the construction of weapons of mass destruction after the collapse of the USSR. Contemporary negotiations on issues such as the terms and conditions of resource access or environmental protection in a North–South context provide another example of success. There, however, the results have sometimes been more one-sided.

Not all countries possess the same level of SD capacity. Large, rich, developed states, such as the US, UK and France, can engage in a wide spectrum of activity, but smaller states, such as Switzerland (commercial

technological innovation) or New Zealand<sup>13</sup> (agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, biosecurity and phytosanitation) have wisely chosen to specialize. In general, less developed countries are at a disadvantage due to limitations on S&T capacity.<sup>14</sup> Developing countries tend to be consumers of ‘technical cooperation’ programmes, but when it comes to genuine technology transfer, successful examples are harder to come by. Also, the prospects for SD are often contextual, and thus can vary with time and place. For example, it is difficult to imagine initiating SD activity at this time with the Islamic State, or with the Taliban government of Afghanistan when it was hosting al-Qaeda.

Not all science diplomacy is devoted to the achievement of pacific ends, as was illustrated by the programmes of covert collaboration involving, variously, Pakistan, Iran, North Korea, China and Libya on nuclear-explosive and missile-propulsion technologies orchestrated by Pakistani physicist Abdul Qadeer (A.Q.), Khan. Science and technology offer keys to security and development, but are also capable of generating insecurity, environmental devastation and war. Nevertheless, the key assumption underlying scientific thought – that all events are caused, that misery is not fated, that the answers are out there and that all problems can eventually be solved – underscore its positive and transformative potential.

### **Key Points**

- The world's most pressing threats and challenges to peace and prosperity are rooted in science, driven by technology and immune to military solution.
- Science diplomacy is well-suited to address these issues, and was prominent during the Cold War, but today has become marginal, with armed force entrenched as the international policy instrument of choice.
- While science diplomacy offers a preferable way forward towards a more sustainable and resilient future, science and technology may also give rise to heightened insecurity and underdevelopment.

## HOW HAS SCIENCE DIPLOMACY DEVELOPED HISTORICALLY?

If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants. (Isaac Newton)

The term ‘science diplomacy’ emerged during the 1990s. Science and diplomacy, however, may be seen to have played a critical role together in shaping perceptions and dominant world views, and to have contributed to the strength and durability of nations and empires throughout recorded history. Long before the Greco-Roman period initiated the rise of the ‘West’, great strides in medicine, astronomy, engineering and mathematics were made in the ancient Near East, China and in India. Further scientific progress continued in the Mediterranean, where mainly Greek thinkers like Pythagoras, Hippocrates, Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, Archimedes and Ptolemy made the links between science, power and politics more explicit. From the end of the Western Roman Empire, as the Dark Age enveloped Europe, and even more so after the long decline and eventual fall of Byzantium, the centre of scientific enquiry and experimentation shifted to the Arab/Islamic world, and remained there through the medieval period until the late Middle Ages.<sup>15</sup> At about that time, the pendulum swung back to Europe. With the Renaissance era’s Scientific Revolution (Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler), Age of Enlightenment (Newton, Pascal, Franklin, Descartes), and the great voyages of exploration (Cook, Bougainville) science and technology took off and innovation soared to unprecedented heights.

Science and diplomacy became more explicitly intertwined when Britain’s Royal Society, founded in 1660, appointed Henry Oldenburg as its first foreign secretary in 1723.<sup>16</sup> This preceded by 78 years the appointment of Britain’s first foreign minister. Benjamin Franklin, who in addition to being a founding father of the American Revolution was also a scientist and inventor,

served as the first US Ambassador to France, 1776–85. Science and technology played central roles in the European imperial and colonial enterprises of the nineteenth century, and in the two World Wars and the Cold War of the twentieth. During and since those centuries, Europe, the USA, and for a half century the USSR, have dominated the world of international S&T.<sup>17</sup> That locus of geographic leadership, as reflected in publications and the pathfinding work of, among many others, Darwin, Pasteur, Mendel, and, later of Einstein, Bohr, Heisenberg and Oppenheimer,<sup>18</sup> is gradually being eroded by discoveries originating in other parts of the world. Although by most measures still far behind, countries such as Japan and Korea have made great strides, while India, China and the ASEAN members, as well as Brazil and South Africa, are all beginning develop their capacities for leadership and innovation in S&T.<sup>19</sup>

Even if not referred to as such until relatively recently, SD *per se* and as practised by international organizations, foreign ministries and science-based agencies can be traced to the middle reaches of of the twentieth century. In 1931, for example, a number of countries decided to launch an umbrella organization for scientific organizations world-wide, the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), known now as the International Council of Science.<sup>20</sup> A second early example is the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)<sup>21</sup>, which was founded in 1954 and whose work continues today with recent discoveries such as the Higgs Boson ‘God Particle’. Although managed by 20 European member states, scientists from over 600 universities and research institutes around the world are regularly offered access to CERN’s facilities. Another signature success is the 1959 Antarctic Treaty,<sup>22</sup> with 52 signatories and a long record of achievement.

In a few instances, SD has also been facilitated by well-resourced individuals, such as the American philanthropist Cyrus Eaton, who in 1957 hosted a meeting of



22 scientists<sup>23</sup> in the village of his birth – Pugwash, Nova Scotia, Canada. The impetus for the first Pugwash Conference was the publication in 1955 of a manifesto prepared by Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein, and signed by many of the leading scientists of the day. That document invited scientists of all ideological persuasions to address the threat to civilization posed by thermonuclear weapons. Over time the remit of the Pugwash meetings has broadened to include other weapons of mass destruction, and the conferences now attract the attention of a variety of politicians and senior government officials.<sup>24</sup>

Today, many inter- and non-governmental institutions and agencies engage in SD. The African Scientific Institute<sup>25</sup> was created in 1967 to facilitate pan-African scientific cooperation. In 1996, all countries with territory and/or interests in the Arctic agreed to establish the Arctic Council,<sup>26</sup> a body dedicated to advancing the goals of environmental protection and sustainable development. Other important – even if not always well-known – examples include: the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA);<sup>27</sup> the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);<sup>28</sup> the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR);<sup>29</sup> CRDF Global;<sup>30</sup> UNESCO;<sup>31</sup> the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP);<sup>32</sup> The World Academy of Science (TWAS);<sup>33</sup> the Inter Academy Council (IAC);<sup>34</sup> SciDev.Net;<sup>35</sup> Scientists Without Borders;<sup>36</sup> the International Network for Government Science Advice;<sup>37</sup> and the OECD Global Science Forum.<sup>38</sup>

Nevertheless, the creation of multilateral scientific organizations does not necessarily correlate with solving global problems. Indeed, there have been significant setbacks, and during the past few decades the overall frequency and intensity of science diplomacy has declined markedly. After the Cold War, many of the well-established international programmes that had promoted science (and education and culture) as part of a broader public diplomacy strategy to positively influence

foreign publics were wound down or drastically reduced by Western countries. Post-9/11, there has since been some recovery, but there remains a long way to go to compensate for lost capacity at a time of growing demand.

Ironically, compared to present levels of activity, both PD and SD, at least in the senses of science in diplomacy and science for diplomacy outlined above, enjoyed their heyday during Cold War. During that period, PD and SD were more than anything else about winning hearts and minds in a competitive ideological and territorial context, yet there was an important distinction. While much of the mainstream PD content was highly propagandized, SD offered an alternative form of engagement for advancing the vital arms control and non-proliferation agendas. Science was seen as a neutral, non-political milieu which could be used to mitigate ideological differences. In the early 1970s, SD played an early and central part in the restoration of US–China bilateral relations and continues to be used as a reliable way of producing concrete results from broader negotiations.

During the Cold War, SD played an important role in achieving arms control and disarmament agreements, for example, the Non-Proliferations Treaty, the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreements, plus conventions on biological and chemical weapons. It also produced important environmental agreements, including the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Canada–US acid rain treaty. The Law of the Sea Convention defined the rights and responsibilities of states with respect to their use of the world's oceans, and established guidelines governing the environment, the management and use of marine resources, and economic exploitation. And just after the Cold War, in 1992 at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), delegates agreed on Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Statement of Forestry Principles.<sup>39</sup> As the

difficulties with the Kyoto Protocol illustrate, the subsequent record has been far less impressive<sup>40</sup> (see Chapter 49 in this Handbook).

Disappointing and uneven progress in SD since the Cold War notwithstanding, the efforts of some countries do stand apart. US international science policy, for example, has in recent years included the Presidential appointment of Science Envoys; the expansion of the State Department's American Association for the Advancement of Science<sup>41</sup> and Jefferson Fellows programmes; enlargement of the network of Science Counsellors and attaches at missions abroad; the establishment of a high level of internal science advice; and the receipt of strong support from specialized, science-based NGOs.<sup>42</sup> The UK,<sup>43</sup> with its extensive Science and Innovation Network; Switzerland,<sup>44</sup> with Swissnex, its public-private partnership; the EU;<sup>45</sup> France;<sup>46</sup> China;<sup>47</sup> Japan;<sup>48</sup> and; Korea,<sup>49</sup> as well as several other countries, have also moved forward with ambitious SD programmes. Among less developed countries, more could be done by making better use of existing diplomatic infrastructure, for instance by establishing mission-based networks of international S&T representatives. Many of the principal achievements of SD continue to be in the policy domain of arms control, disarmament and monitoring. And several major states, including Germany, Russia and Canada, have demonstrated surprisingly little interest in SD.

### Key Points

- Beginning in the ancient Near East, China, India, through the Greco-Roman period, and later in the Islamic world, Europe and the Americas, the combination of science and diplomacy has been present in global affairs for millennia.
- Science diplomacy, and the establishment of international S&T institutions and NGOs, reached its apogee during the Cold War, but activities have diminished in the interim.
- Following a striking record of achievement in areas such as arms control, disarmament and

environmental conservation and protection, the pace of international progress has slowed, resources have been cut and underperformance has become the dominant theme.

### WHY ARE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION IMPORTANT TO CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS?

Science knows no country, because knowledge belongs to humanity and is the torch which illuminates the world. (Louis Pasteur)

The need to strengthen and build SD is now greater than ever and will require a fundamental re-ordering of international policy priorities and resources. Science, technology and innovation are now central to all aspects of our lives and are at the heart of the processes associated with globalization. The abundance of information generated through connectivity and networks is widely believed to be changing everything.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, at the level of social and political discourse, the profound consequences associated with S&T together with their implications for SD are accorded relatively little attention. The focus of the great powers remains on their armed forces and 'military diplomacy' even though there are no military solutions to the 'wicked' issues presented by climate change, genomics, biotechnology and the rise of cyberspace.

Today, long-term, equitable and sustainable development, rather than defence, is becoming the basis of security. Anger, resentment and recourse to violence and extremism often arise from exploitation, disenfranchisement, poverty and exclusion. Achieving security is bound up with solving these problems, and the solutions depend on SD harnessing S&T to the attainment of development objectives. In fields such as urbanization, public health, environmental protection and remediation, agriculture, food and water, population and demographics, hygiene and energy, the impact of science and technology, combined

with good governance, greater economic equality and social justice, are key. And good governance results, in part, from adopting values and procedures which enable progress in science – for example, openness, merit and evidence-based decision making. These qualities underpin the advance of democracy and human rights and enjoy a high degree of universal applicability. Through SD and the sense of cooperation, collaboration and solidarity which its practice almost inevitably engenders, this sense of universal applicability can be communicated to others, thereby strengthening the prospects for tackling the ‘wicked issues’ identified above.<sup>51</sup>

S&T and indeed SD, as noted above, are not always on the side of the angels. They can provide tools for those who threaten peace and obstruct justice. Troubling though groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS, as well as some increasingly authoritarian states, may be, however, the threats they pose remain small compared to those which SD aspires to address. Indeed, it is mainly the militarized response presently adopted by the great powers which affords religious extremism and political violence the opening to become major problems. SD, in contrast, offers the prospect of removing the sources of the legitimate discontent which terrorists and authoritarian regimes attempt to exploit.

As a global enterprise, it is clear that science, technology and innovation are directly relevant to finding solutions to some of the world’s most pressing problems. There exists, however, a fundamental difficulty: within most international policy institutions, S&T issues are almost invisible. With few exceptions, foreign ministries, development agencies and indeed most multilateral organizations lack sufficient scientific and technological expertise, the cultural predisposition, and the R&D network access and links required to understand and manage S&T issues effectively. And although scientists increasingly work together and share information among themselves, the scientific community seems to cherish their

independence from politics and government. On the many occasions when diplomats or politicians gather to discuss international policy, the substance of their discussions rarely includes S&T. When scientists get together to exchange views on topics of shared interest, their discussions rarely touch upon matters of diplomacy or international policy. The skill sets, activities, time frames and cultural orientations of the two groups differ markedly. Few people have managed to straddle the worlds of diplomacy and science effectively. These worlds exist almost as two solitudes.

Major hurdles would remain even if scientists, politicians, diplomats, foreign ministries and multilateral institutions were more favourably disposed towards one another. When it comes to S&T, R&D and innovation, the perspectives and interests of the public sector, private sector, NGOs and the academic community are not always aligned or complementary. More often they are competitive or contradictory. For the private sector, the over-arching goal is to maintain exclusive ownership and control over essential S&T intellectual property (patents, trademarks and copyrights limit transfer of technology and spread of innovation). For the constituent elements of what President Eisenhower famously described as the Military Industrial Complex,<sup>52</sup> the issues are budget protection, public policy advocacy and the influence over the research agenda (many governments are still spending more on defence research than on health research).<sup>53</sup> Add to that the militarization of international policy more generally,<sup>54</sup> and the size of the problem becomes clear.

Absent a shift away from defence research towards public and civic applications (for instance health, transportation, alternative energy, environmental protection, conservation) and a shift in emphasis in international relations from defence to diplomacy and development, progress will remain impossible.<sup>55</sup> The relationship between S&T, on the one hand, and diplomacy and international policy, on the other, needs to be reconstructed to produce greater areas of shared space and

functional overlap. Anxiety over the unknown on the part of the diplomats, and discomfort with politics and diplomacy on the part of the scientific community, must be overcome and give way to a pattern of closer association, cross-fertilization and the habits of regular exchange and interaction. In part through the creation of connections, networks and collaborative commons, the two solitudes must be brought together. As is happening elsewhere in the worlds of commerce and public administration, the lateral and the supple must replace rigid hierarchy and authoritarian interpersonal relations. By way of an instructive model, Silicon Valley style skunkworks<sup>56</sup> merit closer examination. As we have seen, science was once more deeply embedded in diplomacy than is the case today. That intimacy should be re-instated, but on a much larger and more comprehensive scale.

S&T capacity in diplomatic and multilateral institutions must be broadened, deepened and, where it does not exist, built up from scratch. This can in part be achieved through the injection of more and better expert scientific advice directly into the policy development and decision-making throughout the apparatus of government and the international governance process. Accessible, more easily intelligible science communications should be developed. Such synergistic outcomes could be further encouraged through career specialization and more purposeful use of the promotion and recruitment processes. Perhaps the fastest way to build capacity would involve the provision of incentives, programmes of training and professional development, plus expanded secondments and exchanges. Unnecessary obstacles and constraints would have to be removed, and replaced by a commitment to information sharing and critical thinking, tolerance for dissent and an openness to the management of risk (as opposed to its aversion). After all, the goal is not the creation of failsafe systems, but to engineer a system of bureaucratic process that is safe – and can be learned from – when it fails.

High dividends would accrue to the application of unorthodox thinking about how best to engineer more productive S&T teamwork through SD. Creative use could be made of open source problem solving, collaborative intelligence,<sup>57</sup> web-based policy development and global value chains. In order to leverage international S&T cooperation, institutional linkages and public–private partnerships – between governments, corporations, think tanks, universities and NGOs – need to be better resourced and encouraged. With enhanced planning and closer coordination, international research institutions, science academies and intergovernmental science networks could play a larger role in pursuing these objectives. To that end, it would be useful to embrace dynamic new actors and forces which would go well beyond the tapping of usual suspects. This could include involving private philanthropists and foundations, venture capital firms and small and medium sized enterprises. And, as a final element, all measures intended to improve performance in science diplomacy and international S&T would require rigorous benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation.

Psychologist Hans Eysenck once remarked that: ‘Tact and diplomacy are fine in international relations, in politics, perhaps even in business; in science only one thing matters, and that is the facts’. While that may be so, it would nonetheless benefit both the scientific and diplomatic communities to recognize that they share at least some fundamental objectives: each strives to use reason and rational argument to establish norms and to bring order, structure and systemic function to their otherwise disparate and disorderly realms. That is a significant, if in large part unrecognized, commonality and represents a point of departure for strengthening SD and thus the prospects for more peaceful and prosperous international relations.

What the world needs now is development and security. These two sides of the same coin are best achieved through more science, better technology and accelerated innovation internationally. Towards that end,

and as a response to the negative attributes of globalization – including the tendency to socialize costs while privatizing benefits, and the abetting of polarization at all levels – SD can make an indispensable contribution.

## Key Points

- A 'wicked' issue CUTS all ways; unlike terrorism, political violence or religious extremism, these threats and challenges are imperilling the planet.
- In an increasingly heteropolar world order, the capacity to generate, absorb and use S&T will play a critical role in solving problems, reducing inequality, resolving differences and advancing security and development prospects.
- Science and technology, on the one hand, and diplomacy and international policy, on the other, exist in floating worlds which rarely intersect.
- Performance could be improved by injecting expert scientific advice into the international policy development process, by making greater use of scientific collaboration in pursuit of diplomatic objectives, and by better harnessing the activities of foreign ministries and multilateral institutions in support of advancing the scientific agenda.

## NOTES

- 1 A 'wicked' issue is by my reckoning one which CUTS all ways (C for cross-sectoral; U for unresolved; T for transnational; S for science-based). These attributes render the management of such issues notoriously difficult.
- 2 For a general overview of science diplomacy, see Davis and Patman (2014).
- 3 Although these preconceptions remain entrenched, the 2010–11 WikiLeaks 'Cablegate' episode, which revealed US diplomats hard at work, 24/7, as well as the tragic attack in 2012 on the American Consulate in Benghazi have in recent years helped to dispel some of the myths. See [http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdin\\_monitor\\_article/taking-stock-wikileaks-and-cablegate-%E2%80%9Cnapster-moment%E2%80%9D-government](http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/pdin_monitor_article/taking-stock-wikileaks-and-cablegate-%E2%80%9Cnapster-moment%E2%80%9D-government)
- 4 On heteropolarity, see [http://www.policyschool.ualgary.ca/?q=content/diplomacy-globalization-](http://www.policyschool.ualgary.ca/?q=content/diplomacy-globalization-and-heteropolarity-challenge-adaptation)

and-heteropolarity-challenge-adaptation. For alternative models of world order beyond the received wisdom concerning a return to 'multipolarity', see also Kupchan (2012), Bremmer (2012) and Haas (2008).

- 5 For an excellent summary of the relationship between science and diplomacy, see Nichols (2015).
- 6 See Fedoroff (2009).
- 7 A useful synopsis is offered in *New Frontiers in Science Diplomacy*. London: The Royal Society, 2010. Available at [http://royalsociety.org/uploadedFiles/Royal\\_Society\\_Content/policy/publications/2010/4294969468.pdf](http://royalsociety.org/uploadedFiles/Royal_Society_Content/policy/publications/2010/4294969468.pdf)
- 8 See <http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/>
- 9 See Nye (2004).
- 10 This characteristic helps to explain the current focus within US foreign policy on expanding science diplomacy with the Arab and Islamic worlds, and aptly illustrates the use of *science for diplomacy*. See, for example, Lord and Turekian (2007). An extraordinary, but all too rare, multilateral example is the SESAME Synchrotron project in Jordan, where Palestinians, Israelis, Iranians, Turks and Cypriots all cooperate in co-management. See Llewellyn Smith (2012). Another interesting project of the type is the Square Kilometer Array, which is at present advancing construction of the world's largest, most powerful radio telescope. See <https://www.skatelescope.org/>
- 11 See <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/politics/nuclear-free-nz>
- 12 On the little-known Global Partnerships Program, see [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global\\_Partnership\\_Against\\_the\\_Spread\\_of\\_Weapons\\_and\\_Materials\\_of\\_Mass\\_Destruction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_Partnership_Against_the_Spread_of_Weapons_and_Materials_of_Mass_Destruction)
- 13 See Gluckman (2012). New Zealand has also convened a network of science advisors (see <http://www.globalscienceadvice.org/>) and recently launched a new SD initiative featuring small developed economies. See <http://twas.org/article/small-countries-strong-voices>
- 14 There have, however, been some notable strides forward involving the BRICS and South-South cooperation, with South Africa playing a key role. See Republic of South Africa (2014).
- 15 Were it not for the dedication of Muslim scholars in transcribing and translating much of the Greco-Roman scientific legacy, large tracts of that would have been lost, and Western science would today be a very different enterprise.
- 16 See <http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/letter-field/2015/royal-society-foreign-secretary-and-international-relations>
- 17 In the immediate aftermath of World War II, the competitive position of the USA was greatly strengthened by the selective



- immigration of some 1500 German scientists, many of whom had been engaged in weapons development.
- 18 This is obviously an incomplete and highly gender imbalanced list. Many women scientists, for example, have won the Nobel Prize (including Marie Curie and her daughter Irene Juliot-Curie); Indira Gandhi recognized the importance of S&T in sustainable development and the 'Green Revolution', and she supported the development of nuclear science and technology in her quest to enlarge India's international power and influence; and Secretary Madeline Albright brought science advice into the State Department. The role of women in the history of science and diplomacy deserves separate – and full – treatment.
  - 19 See Steinbock (2007).
  - 20 Through partnerships with national scientific bodies and international science unions, the ICSU functions as a research and information clearing house dedicated to addressing some of the world's most difficult challenges, including climate change, sustainable development, management of the global commons, and so forth (see <http://www.icsu.org/>). National, regional and global science academies perform a vital function within the scientific community, and represent an under-utilized resource for governments and international organizations. See <http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/perspective/2015/academies-science-key-instruments-science-diplomacy>
  - 21 See <http://home.web.cern.ch/>
  - 22 See <http://www.ats.aq/e/ats.htm>
  - 23 Seven of the scientists were from the United States, three each from the Soviet Union and Japan, two each from the United Kingdom and Canada, and one each from Australia, Austria, China, France, and Poland. See [http://thinkerslodge.org/history/pugwash-conferences-on-science-and-world-affairs/?doing\\_wp\\_cron=1351644558.6959650516510009765625](http://thinkerslodge.org/history/pugwash-conferences-on-science-and-world-affairs/?doing_wp_cron=1351644558.6959650516510009765625)
  - 24 See <http://pugwash.org/>
  - 25 See <http://asi-org.net/>
  - 26 See <http://www.arctic-council.org/index.php/en/>
  - 27 See <http://www.iiasa.ac.at/>
  - 28 See <https://www.iaea.org/>
  - 29 See <http://www.cgiar.org/>
  - 30 See <http://www.crdglobal.org/program-areas/science-engagement/science-diplomacy/about-science-diplomacy>
  - 31 See <http://en.unesco.org/>; [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/science-technology/single-view-sc-policy/news/the\\_interparliamentary\\_forum\\_on\\_science\\_technology\\_and\\_innovation\\_policy\\_for\\_the\\_mediterranean\\_region/#.Vbuv\\_7U4fm4](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/science-technology/single-view-sc-policy/news/the_interparliamentary_forum_on_science_technology_and_innovation_policy_for_the_mediterranean_region/#.Vbuv_7U4fm4)
  - 32 See <https://www.ictp.it/>
  - 33 See <http://twas.org/>
  - 34 See <http://www.interacademycouncil.net/>
  - 35 See <http://www.scidev.net/global/>
  - 36 See <https://scientistswithoutborders.org/>
  - 37 See <http://www.globalscienceadvice.org/>
  - 38 See <http://www.oecd.org/sti/sci-tech/oecdglobal-scienceforum.htm>
  - 39 See <http://www.un.org/geninfo/bp/enviro.html>
  - 40 See: [http://unfccc.int/kyoto\\_protocol/items/2830.php](http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php); <http://www.rtcc.org/2015/02/16/kyoto-protocol-10-years-of-the-worlds-first-climate-change-treaty/>
  - 41 See <http://www.aaas.org/>
  - 42 See <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/sponsored/diplomacy-21st-century>; <http://www.science-diplomacy.org/article/2014/science-and-technology-adviser-us-secretary-state>; <http://www.state.gov/e/stas/2013/213741.htm>; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/sciencediplomacy>
  - 43 See <https://www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations/uk-science-and-innovation-network>
  - 44 See Schlegel, Flavia (2014). 'Swiss Science Diplomacy'. *Science and Diplomacy*. 24 March. <http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/perspective/2014/swiss-science-diplomacy>; Willard, Jed (2011). 'Diplomacy meets Science in Boston'. *boston.com*. 08 November. [http://www.boston.com/business/blogs/global-business-hub/2011/11/when\\_diplomacy.html](http://www.boston.com/business/blogs/global-business-hub/2011/11/when_diplomacy.html)
  - 45 See Moedas, Carlos (2015). 'The EU Approach to Science Diplomacy'. European Commission. 01 June. [http://eeas.europa.eu/science\\_diplomacy/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/science_diplomacy/index_en.htm); [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/moedas/announcements/eu-approach-science-diplomacy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/moedas/announcements/eu-approach-science-diplomacy_en)
  - 46 See Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of France (2013). 08 April. *Report: Science Diplomacy for France*. <http://www.france-science.org/Report-Science-Diplomacy-for.html>
  - 47 See Wilsdon, James, et al. (2013). 'Beijing's innovation Diplomacy'. *The Guardian*. 09 October. <http://www.theguardian.com/science/political-science/2013/oct/09/science-policy>
  - 48 See Sunami, Atushi, et al. (2013). 'The Rise of Science and Technology Diplomacy in Japan'. 14 March. <http://www.sciencediplomacy.org/article/2013/rise-science-and-technology-diplomacy-in-japan>
  - 49 See Arkin, Fatima (2015). 'South Korea pushes the envelope in science diplomacy'. *SciDev.Net*. 21 June. <http://www.scidev.net/asia-pacific/science-diplomacy/feature/south-korea-pushes-the-envelope-in-science-diplomacy.html>
  - 50 See Mason, Paul, 2015. 'The end of capitalism has begun'. *The Guardian*. 17 July. <http://www.the>



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- 51 This axiom appears to have been unknown to the former Conservative Government of Canada, who muzzled their diplomats and scientists, imposed deep cuts on science-based departments and slashed spending on research and development (R&D). See: Linnitt, Carol (2013). 'Harper's attack on science'. *Academic Matters*. May. <http://www.academicmatters.ca/2013/05/harpers-attack-on-science-no-science-no-evidence-no-truth-no-democracy/>; <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/ideas/science-under-siege-part-1-1.3091552>
- 52 Eisenhower's 1961 farewell address is essential viewing. Today 'The complex' consists of the three original components – the uniformed armed services, Congress and the defence industries – plus special interest groups, right-wing think tanks, and elements of the media/entertainment industry. Together they exercise a stranglehold on US international policy. See [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWiiYW\\_fBfY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWiiYW_fBfY)
- 53 The US government spends more on defence research than all other types of research combined. See Congressional Research Service (2013). 'Federal Research and Development Funding: FY 2013. *CRS Reports for Congress*. 05 December. <http://www.phibetaiota.net/2013/07/congression-research-service-catalog/>
- 54 See Freeman, Chas. (2015). 'Too Quick on the Draw'. 13 June. <http://chasfreeman.net/too-quick-on-the-draw-militarism-and-the-malpractice-of-diplomacy-in-america/>
- 55 Defence research does, from time to time, produce innovations of great civil consequence, such as the Internet and GPS. Unfortunately, however, much of the investment disappoints or otherwise ends badly – Ballistic Missile Defence, the F-35 strike fighter, and a many, many more expensive failures. See Thompson, Loren (2011). 'How To Waste \$100 Billion: Weapons That Didn't Work Out'. *Forbes*. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2011/12/19/how-to-waste-100-billion-weapons-that-didnt-work-out/>
- 56 See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skunkworks\\_project](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skunkworks_project)
- 57 For a sampling of some striking visual representations, see <https://www.google.hr/search?q=collaborative+intelligence&tbm=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ei=fvKIVfW4A4es7AbJjaXoDQ&ved=0CDIQsAQ&biw=1440&bih=751>

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# Indigenous Diplomacy

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## INTRODUCTION

‘Diplomacy’ is a term readily recognized and already imbued with content. Although, as the various contributions to this Handbook show, there is considerable nuance and complexity behind it, some of which might even be surprising to some readers, there is nevertheless a core of practices that come to mind when the term is invoked and which go a long way toward defining it in public imaginaries. In the main, ‘diplomacy’ is most commonly associated with interactions between states. It is typically understood to involve negotiation and perhaps machination between sovereign entities. It is often set in opposition to war in the ‘toolkit’ of statecraft, both being instruments of states’ global political interactions, but with diplomacy cast more in the realm of routine affairs and war the extreme end, it is hoped, exceptional recourse only after diplomacy has ‘failed’. The stakes of diplomatic practices may thus be felt quite acutely and, at

times, overwhelmingly so. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the majority of the ink spilled on the subject – and it is considerable – has approached it in terms more or less consistent with this dominant understanding of what diplomacy is, what it is for, and who its practitioners may be.

Set in this context, inquiry into Indigenous people’s diplomacies could seem like an add-on, a curiosity. In point of fact, however, the opposite is true. What many may be accustomed to thinking of as ‘diplomacy’ is actually a very narrow slice of human possibility in the interaction between political communities. Inseparable from sovereign authority vested in the territorial state, its seeming ubiquity belies both its own historical specificity and the fact of multiple and overlapping forms of political community that coexist with and exceed it. More than just historical counterpoints, the many and varied diplomacies of Indigenous peoples the world over defy aggregation under a single rubric. Drawing instead from unique historical and

ideational traditions, they are not reducible to one another as some set of alternative grammatics or practices. Reversing the gaze, then, we might more rightly say that the dominant understanding of diplomacy is just one among a much wider and richer multiplicity of traditions, among which are the many Indigenous diplomacies of our world.

The use of the plural here matters a great deal. In its singular form, 'diplomacy' collapses a vast field of historical and contemporary human experience into a single signifier that has come to be associated with state-centered diplomatic practice. The result is that 'other diplomacies' (Beier and Wylie 2010; Young and Henders 2012) are marginalized, even rendered invisible. That said, some 'other diplomacies' may more readily be assimilated to dominant discourses than others for their proximity to or congruence with key aspects of hegemonic practices and renditions. For instance, public diplomacy, which has drawn increasing interest in recent years, populates diplomatic practice with different sorts of agents and eschews some of the usual circuits of state diplomacy, but retains much in the way of its core logics, organizing principles, and validity claims. Indigenous diplomacies, on the other hand, frequently operate in entirely *sui generis* ways and challenge us to break with many of the fundamental assumptions and conceptual commitments by which we are accustomed to rendering diplomatic practices intelligible as such. Accordingly, though they may seem quite remote from the main preoccupations of scholarly inquiry into diplomatic theory and practice, they are revealing of the imposed limits of those dominant approaches and what they leave unexamined. Put another way, besides presenting a more fulsome terrain of political possibilities than those encoded in dominant approaches, Indigenous diplomacies also expose something of the deep-rooted political commitments of the mainstream that function to naturalize what turns out to be quite parochial in important senses.

Important critical contributions of the last two decades have produced openings through which the field of Diplomatic Studies might have been expected to redress the relative neglect of Indigenous diplomacies. Though there has been little such redress to date, what follows nevertheless relies on these openings in speaking back to students and scholars of diplomacy. Despite the persistence of state-centric narratives and conceptual commitments – which, as noted above, continue to dominate quotidian notions of diplomacy as well as of its location, content, and agents/practitioners – critical interventions reveal a more complicated picture. Much of this has turned on the very visible rise of civil society, norm entrepreneurship and other forms of transnational activism and interaction which have forged new kinds of relationships (Cooper and Hocking 2000; Hocking 2004) and, short circuiting established diplomatic institutions, have proved able to manifest substantive political outcomes such as, for example, prohibitions on antipersonnel landmines and, more recently, cluster munitions. More fundamentally, the indeterminacy of statist conceptions of diplomacy (Constantinou 2006; 2013) has been explored in ways that reverse the onus when it comes to assessing the authenticity of Indigenous diplomacies *as* diplomacies. What follows should be read with this ethos of indeterminacy in mind lest Indigenous diplomacies be held to standards and validity claims of hegemonic rendering and which may be anathema to the terms on which they are otherwise founded.

## LOCATING INDIGENOUS DIPLOMACIES

It is tempting, and perhaps unavoidable, to begin discussion of Indigenous diplomacies with the historic establishment of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and other watershed developments in global governance involving Indigenous



peoples in recent years. Brought to fruition in the first of two consecutive UN International Decades of the World's Indigenous Peoples – 1995–2004 and 2005–2014, respectively – the Permanent Forum was formally established under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council in 2000 and convened for the first time in May 2002. Half a decade later, in September 2007, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, more than a quarter century in the making, though against the conspicuous dissenting votes of four settler states with large Indigenous populations: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States.<sup>1</sup> Remarkable for its equal Indigenous and state representation, the Permanent Forum reflects the increasing effectuality of Indigenous diplomacies in hegemonic circuits and fora of global governance since at least the early-1990s, expressed in, among other things, recognition and meaningful engagement by the Organization of American States and the International Labour Organization, as well as more focused campaigns and initiatives such as the high-profile efforts of the Labrador Innu to curtail NATO low-level flight training over their lands or the consolidation of Sami rights in Nordic Europe in the same period.

These and other relatively recent developments should not be taken to mean, however, that Indigenous diplomacies are somehow new or that Indigenous peoples' presence and practices in inter-national politics have only lately been established and proffered. Much to the contrary, Indigenous peoples have practiced diplomatic interaction with and through the European-imposed international system since the earliest days of contact and along circuits distinctively and exogenously constituted both before and since. Long before the arrival of Europeans, Indigenous Australians, for example, maintained complex systems of contact and exchange with other peoples in accordance with an ethos of mobility that gave rise to transnational

networks concerned with both trade and resolution of disputes (see de Costa 2009). Two hemispheres away, on Turtle Island (North America), The Great Law of Peace of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy regulated and sustained two centuries of peaceful interaction among previously warring peoples, unraveling only under shocks and pressures associated with having been drawn into conflict between European colonial powers following contact.

In these examples, as elsewhere, vibrant systems of exchange and attendant mechanisms for managing conflict operated through diplomacies founded on Indigenous peoples' own cosmological commitments and the particular lifeways enabled by them. As with all diplomacies, these embedded their own systems of ethics, protocols, and observances. And like any other diplomacies, they had their problematic aspects as well – something which it is equally important to acknowledge lest we slip into performing the sorts of erasures that may just as easily arise from romanticizing others into unreality as from less benevolent essentialisms. Like all human political practices, Indigenous diplomacies entail their own drawbacks and limitations. The point, then, is not to claim them as necessarily 'better' – though in some instances and respects they may well be – but, rather, as equally valid. It is to reveal them as bona fide resolutions to the problem of political order between peoples and, as such, constitutive of a multiplicity of missing stories, elided by the singular hegemonic story of state-centric diplomacy.

Equally important, the relevance of Indigenous diplomacies does not end with the colonial encounter. In their post-contact eras, Indigenous peoples, though confronted with the violences, deprivations, and dispossession of colonialism, neither abandoned traditional diplomacies nor eschewed those of European derivation. In contexts such as that of the Haudenosaunee, Indigenous cosmologies were often amenable to imagining coexistence without assimilation or conversion. Not

having been steeped in a commitment to the European conception of sovereignty as inseparable from the territorial state, and therefore unfettered by an ontologically located conception of exclusive sovereign authority, for many Indigenous peoples there was no inherent contradiction in the idea that two different forms of political life could coexist in the same environs. This perspective, together with its own form of manifest diplomatic practice, was expressed most famously in the *Gusweñta*, or Two Row Wampum treaty. The Two Row Wampum is marked by a beaded belt, fashioned as the physical record of the 1613 treaty between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch newcomers, which had two rows of purple beads interspersed with three rows of white beads, representing the joint accord that there was room enough on the river for both peoples.

As suggested by the case of the Two Row Wampum treaty, Indigenous peoples have adapted and engaged in the diplomatic conventions of the colonizers as well. Indeed, treaty making was (United States) and has continued to be (Canada) central to the codification of relations between Indigenous peoples and newcomers in North America. This is not insignificant since treaties are international legal instruments between sovereign entities and given that sovereignty is not an inherent property but an inscription performed through reciprocal recognitive gestures such as, among other things, mutual entry into treaties. To be sure, these have frequently been fraught processes even in the moments of their founding (see, for example, Hannah 1993; Price 1994; St Germain 2009). Even so, they continue to condition relations between Indigenous peoples and settler states, their enduring legal effect confirmed by courts domestic and international notwithstanding that they may have been abrogated by contracting states in some cases. The Two Row Wampum, for instance, is cited as the basis for recognition of the Haudenosaunee passport as a valid international travel document and, indeed, it has

achieved some acknowledgement as such by the Netherlands, the US, and others despite official objections from Canadian authorities (see Smith 2010). Perhaps most important in this connection, then, is the role treaties have had in setting the terms of expectations held in the relationships between peoples.

A striking example of this is found in the case of the mission of the Haudenosaunee to the League of Nations. Part of a broader history of Indigenous peoples' diplomatic engagements with states, including delegations to the royal courts of Europe (see, for example, Carlson 2009), Six Nations (Haudenosaunee) of the Grand River representative Levi General Deskaheh made an unsuccessful 1921 appeal to the British crown to intervene in defense of Haudenosaunee sovereignty against Canadian incursions (see Belanger 2007; Woons 2014). The Six Nations position was explicitly founded on the prior recognition of its sovereignty by both the British and the Dutch. Deskaheh subsequently made diplomatic overtures to the latter, seeking the Netherlands' support as an ally, by virtue of the Two Row Wampum treaty, for Haudenosaunee admittance to the League of Nations. In deference to opposition by state members, however, the Haudenosaunee bid for admission was rejected (Niezen 2003: 31–6). Attaining objectives has, of course, never been the *sine qua non* of authenticity in diplomatic practice, and thus speaks more to the persistence of advanced colonial ideologies and power circulations than to the legitimacy of an Indigenous subject position in global politics. Though ultimately unsuccessful, Deskaheh's mission, like so many others undertaken by Indigenous peoples before and since, plied the interstices between Indigenous and European diplomacies and was explicitly founded upon established practices and precedents of Indigenous–European diplomatic interaction.

It was in this same spirit that two Lakota representatives of the Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council, Tony Black Feather and

Garfield Grass Rope, arrived at the United Nations in Geneva in August 1982. The Treaty Council was established in 1895 by the Oglala Lakota Chief He Dog, institutionalizing a body for advancing international diplomacies on behalf of the *Tetuwán Oyate*, or Lakota Nation, of the Northern Great Plains of North America. Its emissaries thus carried forward nearly a century of formalization of a much longer-held and practiced Lakota diplomatic tradition when they attended the Palais des Nations in Geneva for the first meeting of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations. Lacking the material supports of state representatives, they travelled the city on foot, relied on a homeless shelter for accommodation, and ate at a soup kitchen.<sup>2</sup> But, together with representatives of other Indigenous peoples around the world, they also entrenched an Indigenous presence at the UN which endures to this day in the UN Permanent Forum.

Not limited to international institutions and fora of global governance, Indigenous peoples are diplomatically engaged in direct relationships with states and other significant global actors. In the US, for example, the Yankton have united with Lakotas from the Cheyenne River, Rosebud, and Standing Rock reservations in opposition to the controversial Keystone XL pipeline's planned route through South Dakota, centering claims to sovereignty and treaty rights in the legal and ethical bases of their campaign. Though operating largely within the confines of a single state, the importance of the Yankton and Lakota intercession on an issue that has very publicly pitted Congress against the Obama Administration cannot be gainsaid. Elsewhere, and decidedly crossing state boundaries, British Columbia First Nations have developed institutional mechanisms and a strategy of interlocution with Chinese business interests that unsettle sovereign claims of the Canadian state whilst invigorating those of First Nations (see Montsion 2015). Similarly, drawing on their own unique traditions, Indigenous peoples living in the

border areas of the Brazilian Amazon have established relationships with international NGOs and some foreign governments (see Vecchione-Gonçalves 2009). In these and myriad other ways, Indigenous peoples adapt both *sui generis* and hegemonic diplomacies to contemporary exigencies of their coexistence with states and the states system (see also Chapters 1, 3, and 8 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- Though less attention has been paid to them than to state forms, Indigenous peoples the world over have established *sui generis* traditions of diplomacies that long predate colonialism and which function to sustain political order and relations between discrete political communities.
- Indigenous diplomacies are as varied as Indigenous peoples, each embedding their own systems of ethics, protocols, and observances, and cannot be reduced to a singular set of practices or traditions.
- In many cases, Indigenous diplomacies have been historically amenable to relations of coexistence with colonial newcomers and these traditions have endured in Indigenous peoples' relations with states and through institutions and processes of global governance.

### DISCERNING INDIGENOUS DIPLOMACIES

While it is important to acknowledge the ongoing history of Indigenous diplomacies' various articulations with and through the state-centric international system, too heavy an emphasis on this is both a limited and potentially limiting perspective on what marks their significance. The problem here is that the inherent power relations of the encounter may not be brought fully into relief. Certainly, the privileged place of states and of the hegemonic institutions and practices of international diplomacy are conspicuous enough. Less evident, though, are the ways in

which dominant and conventional understandings of diplomacy rely on under-interrogated conceptual commitments, common senses, and habits of thought. Among these is a particular understanding of sovereignty and of its expression in the territorial state as the only viable or, at least, the highest form of political community. The danger, then, is that the perceived validity of Indigenous peoples' global political subjecthood may be assessed with reference to particular characteristics of social or political organization presumed as analogous or nascent expressions of the dominant state form. Such a move is to allow Eurocentricity to define the terrain of engagement between societies, including between Indigenous ones themselves. Simultaneously, it is to disparage and to effect erasure of forms of political community constituted outside of such arrangements. In short, it is to implicitly privilege hegemonic expressions of social and political organization by way of making appeal to them as the arbiters of a meaningful diplomatic practice.

At the same time, the fact is that state sovereignty has claimed a veritable monopoly over political authority on a global scale. Indigenous forms of political community may sustain accommodation of this circumstance with varying degrees of ease, or bereft of it entirely, but none may escape the imposed ubiquity of the state and state logics mapped over their own environs. Still, we risk an impoverished understanding of the substance and characteristics of Indigenous diplomacies where we concede too much to the state, centering it as their main referent instead of treating it as one among many. The outlook sketched in the Two Row Wampum treaty is instructive in this regard. Besides the obvious implication that the river could spatially accommodate two peoples, the treaty expressed the mutual commitment to coexistence of distinct lifeways. This also typifies the orientation of Indigenous diplomacies writ large inasmuch as they are not determined by the fact of the state's presence but, again, have sources and origins that both predate and exceed it.

Recognizing this, Kevin Bruyneel (2007) argues that Indigenous peoples reside in a 'third space of sovereignty', neither fully within nor fully without the state. Although it is problematic to generalize in a way that risks collapsing many rich and varied traditions into a single category as 'Indigenous diplomacies', this 'third space' positionality is nevertheless something that differentiates them from state forms and practices, as well as which begins to give some glimpses into the possibilities, foreclosed by hegemonic ideas and commitments, enabled by them. As Manuela Picq (2013: 121) observes, 'Indigenous politics offer radically different insights into the international because they engage forms of governance constituted outside, and to a large extent before, the modern state'. Moreover, '[i]t is because indigenous forms of governance transcend state-centrism they are able to abstract sovereignty from its Westphalian limitations' (Picq 2013: 124). Indigenous sovereignty derives its validity claims and political legitimacy from commitments rooted not in modernity but in cosmologies that do not lend easily to the parceling off of either the material or the ideational worlds. It therefore resists confining an understanding of diplomacy to interactions between or with states alone. The result is a more complicated understanding of the political and a more full-some range of practical political possibilities.

An apt illustration is found, once again, in the Haudenosaunee Great Law of Peace, which prescribes means to sustain relations between people, not just peoples. The Great Law is perhaps most recognizable to dominant sensibilities – and, no less, to scholars of disciplinary International Relations – as an inter-national treaty and, indeed, it has even been read quite persuasively as an example of a well-functioning security regime (see Crawford 1994). At the same time, however, it is much more than this. Woven together intrinsically, not merely in omnibus fashion, are provisions for the conduct of relations between peoples but also for more seemingly 'domestic' concerns dealing with in-group

rights and responsibilities, the role of clans in social life, the proper conduct of funerary observances, and more, including much that might appear quite mundane. As David Bedford and Thom Workman (1997) argue, the Great Law is fundamentally a document about 'living well' in which the 'spheres' of life are inseparably related. It articulates a formulation of diplomacy antithetical to enclosure of the 'international' as 'high politics', separated, per Realist-inspired ideational commitments, from the politics of 'the good life' (Wight 1966). Importantly, it is also firmly established as lived experience both before and since colonial contact and therefore confirms not only the viability but the vibrancy of diplomacies and attendant forms of political community other than and predating the modern state.

Able to operate outside the confines of an imagined state monopoly on sovereign subjecthood but still amenable to engaging it, Indigenous diplomacies speak to and sustain a much broader terrain of political projects. Seen from this perspective, the dominant, singular understanding of 'diplomacy' is revealed as, among other things, a technology of erasure, hiding from view what turn out to be significant political projects and actors at the interstices between the local and the global. Importantly, their influence and effect is not limited to their own immediate contexts, but is felt in the accustomed realms of state diplomacies as well. Kichwa women in Ecuador, for example, have both adapted and shaped international legal norms in ways that affirm Indigenous people as accountable subjects under international law, directly rather than through the state (Picq 2013: 132). In the context of an ongoing land claims struggle in Canada, Laura Parisi and Jeff Corntassel (2009) show how Indigenous women's diplomacies are inseparable from spiritual, familial, and community relationships. This gives rise to practices with deep social embeddedness and which are therefore highly resilient. They also respond to an intersectionality of subject positions that is

more complex than what is at work in state diplomacies: simultaneously advancing individual rights as women and collective rights as Indigenous people they work to resist the generalization of the Indigenous male experience and a purely collective rights rendering of Indigenous diplomacies.

What these and myriad other examples highlight, is that Indigenous diplomacies do not rely for their validity on conformity with hegemonic conceptions of diplomacy, how and where it is practiced, or by whom. Nor are they reducible to an instrumental response to the (advanced) colonial state and the states system. Rather, their validity derives from long established traditions consonant with endogenous cosmologies and lifeways. Indeed, those that might appear to have enjoyed the greatest success vis-à-vis hegemonic circuits of power may, in fact, be among the most limited on autonomously defined terms if what is taken to be the arbiter of 'success' is expressed on the basis of fidelity to dominant understandings of the location of politics and political authority. As Rauna Kuokkanen (2009) argues, for example, the remarkable degree of influence and juridical autonomy achieved by the Sami has, in important senses, worked to obfuscate power relations in ways that turn out to be quite conservative and status quo oriented. That said, Kuokkanen also points out a certain fidelity in this to Sami tradition, a notable feature of which is expressed in a strategy of adaptation and withdrawal that moderates militancy. Beyond its specific details, it thus serves also as a salutary reminder of the imperative that we sustain affirmation of Indigenous diplomacies in the plural, taking care always to foreground their heterogeneity (see also Chapters 7 and 42 in this Handbook).

### **Key Points**

- Indigenous diplomacies arise from distinct cosmologies that frequently eschew modernity's



sharp delineation of different spheres of social life and, accordingly, resist understandings of diplomacy that center interactions between or with states.

- Able to access a fuller range of political interaction, Indigenous diplomacies help to highlight projects and practices undertaken between the local and global, thereby populating the world of diplomacies with a much broader array of acting political subjects.

## THE RISE OF GLOBAL INDIGENISM

As noted above, Indigenous diplomacies have been increasingly effectual in major institutions and fora of global governance since the early 1990s, a trend concretely exemplified in watershed developments such as the establishment of the UN Permanent Forum. As also pointed out, however, Indigenous diplomacies are not new but, rather, newly noticed. What, then, accounts for the sudden apparent traction of these diplomacies and mainstream recognition of Indigenous peoples as possessed of at least qualified (by status quo standards of assessment) global political subjecthood? How do we make sense of the very different (if still not fully compeer) reception of Tony Black Feather and Garfield Grass Rope in Geneva some six decades after, and still within living memory of, Deskaheh's abortive mission to the League of Nations, let alone of today's Indigenous delegates to the Permanent Forum? Here too, we must take care to approach the issues at hand mindful of the subject standpoint from which we perceive them if the aim is to understand Indigenous diplomacies on their own terms and not merely to recast them as what dominant discourses need them to be.

In an important early scholarly contribution that speaks directly to the questions posed above, Franke Wilmer (1993) argues that changes in the operant norms of the international system are a key part of the

story here. According to Wilmer, the ascendance of an essentially rights-based norm of self-determination over *realpolitik* as a core ordering principle of the international system has made it more amenable to the normative claims of Indigenous peoples pertaining to, among other things, autonomy and redress of historical and ongoing colonial injustices. But while the changes Wilmer identifies are undoubtedly relevant to the questions above, they may be more so in the manner of enabling factors or perhaps necessary, but not sufficient, conditions. Karena Shaw (2002) cautions against centering them in accounts of the achievements of contemporary Indigenous diplomacies, since to do so is once again diminutive of Indigenous peoples' own global political subjecthood, essentially attributing the belated audibility of their voices to the largess of states. Besides once again effecting erasure, this also risks missing other important changes central to the context of Indigenous diplomacies themselves – in particular, the rise of global indigenism.

If normative changes in the international system of the sort Wilmer describes removed some impediments to the audibility of Indigenous diplomacies, the developments of recent decades have been moved by important realignments of Indigenous global political subjecthood of which Deskaheh's diplomatic efforts were a harbinger. Despite their long traditions, through the first centuries of the post-contact era, Indigenous diplomacies were effectively contained by states and the states system as bilateral relationships wherein Indigenous peoples' various claims to state power were, for the most part, held in relative isolation from one another. This is not to say that long-established systems of diplomatic interaction between Indigenous peoples somehow ceased to function (though the arrival of colonial powers was certainly disruptive of them in many cases). But their various points of interface with a hegemonic states system that achieved global reach through the colonial project were, for centuries, and largely



of necessity, typically idiosyncratic and discrete. Even in cases where alliances were formed between Indigenous peoples, these tended to be referred toward a specific locus of state power rather than to the states system as a whole. Thus, the colonial state was able to adopt a strategy of the smothering of Indigenous sovereign political subjecthood, enclosed in bilateral relationships whence it could not be more broadly performed in the same manner as state sovereignty is performed into existence.

Deskaheh's mission signaled a qualitative change. While the Haudenosaunee sought to press their case directly with the British and later looked to the Dutch for support, the mission to the League of Nations constituted an approach at the system level – one intended to be addressed to all states that were part of the League. Though ultimately rebuffed, Deskaheh's mission evinced resistance against reduction of Haudenosaunee claims to a domestic political issue, whilst the opposition met from state members of the League is consistent with the stakes attending any recognitive gesture that might lend legal validity to a claim to sovereignty. It also marked a shift from predominant bilateralism toward a more multilateral outlook by Indigenous peoples in their diplomatic relations with states.

Much more difficult to imagine (let alone build and sustain) in Deskaheh's time are the complex networks of horizontal connections established since between Indigenous peoples worldwide. These operate alongside and complement the multilateralism practiced in myriad vertical relations with states both directly and through the hegemonic institutions of global governance. This second system of multilateral diplomacies connecting Indigenous peoples has become increasingly important since the last decades of the twentieth century and a new global indigenism has emerged from the network of networks that has taken shape in the sum of these interactions, drawing on diplomatic practices and histories of mutual contact and exchange between and amongst peoples that long predate colonialism.

Institutionalized in transnational organizations including, among others, the International Indian Treaty Council, the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee, and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, it militates against enclosure and containment of Indigenous diplomacies and their relegation to the intra-state level of domestic politics. This has opened new circuits of influence and effected points of entry to hegemonic sites and access to hegemonic actors of global governance through which more locally based organizations like the Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council can enact diplomacies.

These developments and the rise of global indigenism more generally bespeak robust global political subjecthood which, in turn, derives from the functioning non-state forms of political community in which it is rooted. They also reveal a sophisticated and dynamic world of inter-national diplomatic interaction almost entirely overlooked by scholars of foreign policy and diplomacy. Importantly, however, it has not been overlooked by states. No longer able simply to evade acknowledgment of Indigenous global political subjecthood increasingly conspicuous in emergent and dynamic networks of inter-national diplomatic interaction and exchange, states have become increasingly attentive to Indigenous diplomacies at the UN and elsewhere. Some states (settler states, in particular) may evince greater sensitivity to the implications of this than others. But when status quo sovereign power begins to engage where it has previously been at pains to avoid engagement, something important has changed. And the real significance of this inheres once again in the norms by which sovereignty is performed into being through mutual recognition: taking notice of Indigenous diplomacies is in some measure to implicitly acknowledge forms of political community other than the state as authentic and viable and as the basis of bona fide global political subjecthood (Beier 2007). It is, at the same time, to unsettle the normative/ideational basis upon which their exclusion has historically depended.

While it would seem a change of historic significance might very well be underway, it is also possible to overstate its material implications in a world in which sovereign right is jealously guarded. The struggle over the very name of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues – not Peoples, which could more readily be taken to signify sovereign political communities and which was steadfastly resisted by states on that basis – reflected something of this even at the time of its founding. More recently, controversy erupted in late 2014 over the refusal by UN member states to adopt the position of the Permanent Forum denouncing the ‘Doctrine of Discovery’, on the strength of which myriad violences, dispossessions, and depredations of colonialism were predicated. There have been and continue to be many such struggles and that is unlikely to change.

It is also important to recognize how sovereign power may reassert itself, at times organically and at others quite deftly, even in the midst of what might appear a watershed or transformative moment in Indigenous-state relations. The recognitive gestures so foundational to sovereignty may be accorded somewhat more significance than is warranted once we take account again of enduring unequal power circulations. Indeed, Glen Coulthard (2007; 2014) reveals how the settler states of North America abide recognition of Indigenous peoples inasmuch as the centering of the colonial state is asserted anew as the site of authority whence recognition is conferred – and with this the colonial relations of domination are also reconfirmed and sustained (see also Simpson 2014). ‘Recognition’ in this sense relies upon the innate authority of sovereign power expressed through the state form of political community. Something of this is inherent also in the strong and imperious influence of the state along hegemonic circuits of global governance. Such is its imprint that, as noted earlier, Indigenous diplomacies, though they exceed it, also cannot avoid addressing state power and must frequently do so in fora

and on terms of states’ making. And to the extent that the terms of intelligibility in these encounters are founded on ideas, assumptions, practices, and conventions that do not do well to accommodate and may even be inhospitable to diplomacies rooted in Indigenous cosmologies, something of their distinctiveness may again be compromised or rendered inaudible. It is noteworthy in this regard that Indigenous peoples’ delegations to the UN have their seats in the Permanent Forum, not the General Assembly.

Nevertheless, in acknowledging Indigenous diplomacies and, by extension, the authenticity of Indigenous global political subjecthood, states have already conceded something. For students, scholars, and practitioners of diplomacy, its rendering in the singular and along hegemonic lines is no longer sustainable. Among other things, a much wider terrain of possibilities is revealed in terms of sites, practices, and active political subjects. The effect is to make our understanding of diplomacies much more complex and complicated, but also much richer and suggestive of a broader range of political possibilities. The inter-national, from this perspective, is populated by many more actors along multivalent circuits of intersection and interaction and drawing on diverse histories and *sui generis* traditions producing unique resolutions to the problem of political order. It also tells us a great deal about the political commitments encoded in dominant understandings of diplomacy – commitments that are themselves worthy of sustained critical introspection (see also Chapters 11 and 49 in this Handbook).

### Key Points

- The increasing effect of Indigenous diplomacies in recent years, though perhaps better enabled by concomitant normative and structural changes in the states system, have their primary determinants in the rise of global indigenism.

- It is important, however, not to lose sight of the enduring ability of sovereign power to reassert itself even in gestures of recognition and, no less, in how we may inadvertently cast Indigenous diplomacies in ways influenced by dominant common senses and conceptual commitments.

## NOTES

- 1 All four countries have since endorsed the principles of the Declaration without formally endorsing the instrument itself, thus effecting a legal firebreak against its invocation in domestic courts.
- 2 Charmaine White Face, Teton Sioux Nation Treaty Council, interviewed at Rapid City, South Dakota, 16 August 2005.

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# Pariah Diplomacy

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Pariahs are actors whose behavior constitutes a source of disorder in international society. Pariahhood is an inter-subjective designation, signifying the relationship between certain modes of conduct and prevailing international orders, which are in turn reflective of the (im)balances of power. Such practice is routine by both the great powers and states at the periphery of world politics. Pariah diplomacy testifies to the methods by which extra-legal and disorderly conduct – whether by members of international society or those standing outside of it – are justified or impressed upon other sovereign entities in international politics.

The term ‘pariah’ is as inexact as it is menacing. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, it refers to ‘a member of a despised class of any kind; someone or something shunned or avoided; a social outcast’ (OED Online). As a signifier, ‘pariah’ is always dependent on contextual evidence and background explanations for its meaning; the object of its signification(s) – i.e. what it

seeks to signify – is thus premised on a set of normative standards for what being a pariah negates. In other words, the designation of an individual, a group, or a state as a ‘pariah’ typically signifies the qualities and modes of behavior at odds with the rules and/or expectations of membership in a given setting (be it a class, an organization, or a society). The status and fate of those pariahs acting in violation of laws and statutes is clear enough. Here, the synonym ‘outlaw’ is perhaps more illuminating in describing the range of behaviors in question and the kinds of legal remedies necessary for punishing and deterring them. The matter becomes decidedly murkier, however, if the term is used to signify behavior at odds with prevailing norms and values (Sharp, 2009: 207). In this case, the synonym ‘rogue’ – defined as ‘a person or thing that behaves in an aberrant, faulty, or unpredictable way’ (OED Online) – best captures the legal but nonetheless disruptive mode of behavior.

In this chapter, I use the term ‘pariah’ as a spectrum encompassing both of these meanings: behavior in contravention of binding legal commitments as well as shared, but non-binding, norms and values. Broadly defined, pariahs are actors whose behavior constitutes a source of disorder in international society. But this definition still poses more vexing questions and concerns: given the anarchical nature of international society, on whose authority does the designation ultimately rest and why? Must there be a consensus on and about such designations among members of society? Indeed, since the dawn of human civilization, and through various iterations of regional and international societies, disorderly actions (variously identified as ‘barbaric’, ‘uncivilized’, or ‘rogue’) have been carried out not only by outsiders seeking to challenge the status quo (Watson, 1992: 47–76), but also by dominant powers seeking to shape the values and customs of international society from within (Buzan and Little, 2000: 243–343; Keene, 2002: 120–44). Pariahhood is an inter-subjective designation, signifying the relationship between certain modes of conduct and prevailing international orders, which are in turn reflective of the (im)balances of power. As such, it speaks to both a disorderly *mode of conduct* as well as the *condition of isolation* (however limitedly) in international society.<sup>1</sup>

What is the implication of pariahhood for the institution and practice of diplomacy, then? At first glance, it would appear that diplomacy – understood as either the management of relations between sovereign states (Nicolson, 1939), the facilitation of dialogue among sovereign entities (Watson, 1983), the ‘mediation of estrangement’ (Der Derian, 1987), or the administration of ‘relations of separateness’ (Sharp, 2009) – would be anathema to pariahs. For if the object of disorderly behavior is precisely to challenge and undermine the prevailing rules, norms, and values of membership in international society, then why honor the legitimacy of a key ‘primary institution’ (Bull, 1977: 156–77)

of that arrangement in the first place? But if we conceive of diplomacy more broadly as ‘a method of building and managing relationships of enmity and friendship in world politics’ (Bjola, 2013: 8), then the answer to this question is simple enough: even the most isolated of pariahs must find a way to communicate their justification for their disorderly behavior, to seek out empathy and even sympathizers, and to present an alternative narrative for their actions. Indeed, such practice is routine by both the great powers and those ‘quasi-states’ at the periphery of world politics (Jackson, 1990). Pariah diplomacy, therefore, testifies to the methods by which extra-legal and disorderly conduct – whether by members of international society or those standing outside of it – are justified or impressed upon other sovereign entities in international politics. It is no more the exclusive purview of pariahs than ‘public diplomacy’ or ‘shuttle diplomacy’ are of the public or shuttles, respectively.

This chapter considers the nature and functions of pariah diplomacy using the international society framework of the English School. The latter approach is particularly insightful in terms of its focus on the historical evolution and social functions of various institutions, norms, rules, and identities in the constitution of international relations. The following, then, is organized around the English School’s concerns as regards the legitimacy and maintenance of order in international society (due to space considerations I do not take up the implications for world society in this chapter). The first section offers a set of explanations for why pariah diplomacy is an especially unique challenge to the maintenance of international order, and what can be done to attenuate some of its more dangerous effects. The second section considers the nature of pariah diplomacy with respect to the ever-changing standards of legitimacy in world politics. The aim here is to reflect on pariah diplomacy not merely as a form of diplomacy practiced by pariahs, but rather as a uniquely subversive mode



of exerting interests, values, and identities employed by sovereign states of different standings in international society. The third and last section then seeks to describe and differentiate the functions of pariah diplomacy between status quo and revisionist, sovereign entities in international society. Although the framework employed and discussed here can easily be applied to non-state entities as well, out of deference to clarity and concision it will mostly be discussed in reference to sovereign states.

### **Key Points**

- Pariahs are actors whose behavior constitutes a source of disorder in international society.
- Pariahhood is an inter-subjective mode of conduct and not an objective state of being.
- Pariah diplomacy testifies to the methods by which extra-legal and disorderly conduct are justified or impressed upon other sovereign entities in international politics.

### **PARIAH DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER**

Pariah diplomacy presents a distinctive set of problems for the maintenance of international order. To better understand the range of challenges presented by pariah behavior in international society, it is perhaps best to revisit Bull's (1977) three sources of order: common interests; rules of proper behavior; and effective institutions. It is clear from the preceding discussions that pariah behavior is to a significant extent born out of competing, irreconcilable interests. Certainly, competing interests are part and parcel of international politics, and in and of themselves they do not account for enmity among states or pariah behavior. But what Bull has in mind is 'a sense of common interests in the elementary goals of social life' such as 'independence and sovereignty', 'stability [sic] of agreements', or 'the willingness of states to accept

restrictions on their freedom of action [that] is reciprocal' (Bull, 1977: 64). Pariah diplomacy does not necessarily challenge these interests and values in principle, but merely seeks to compel or persuade members of international society of an alternative basis for coexistence. This is why, as it was argued earlier, it would be a mistake to regard pariah diplomacy as standing outside of international society altogether. It often suits the specific agendas and interests of some states and statesmen to portray countries like Iran or outfits such as Hamas as fundamentally offensive to the nature of international society – but that ignores the fact that such states or groups hardly ever object to the 'elementary goals of social life'. What they in fact do object to are the unfair terms (to their aims and values) under which they are made to coexist with others. But that is an altogether different matter.

As regards the rules of proper behavior, however, pariah diplomacy does indeed constitute a sufficient challenge to international order. States and non-state groups that seek to challenge the legitimacy of prevailing norms and values often do so by refusing to conduct their relations in the manner that, from their perspective, is advantageous to others, and hence reinforces the unjust terms of relations. Pariah diplomacy achieves this by exploiting various bilateral, regional, and international forums as occasions for subverting and deliberately undermining established diplomatic protocols, especially as regards institutional decorum and interpersonal communication (e.g. heads of states and senior diplomats have been known to hammer their shoes on podiums, engage in ad hominem attacks, even to physically threaten the safety of fellow diplomats). In extreme cases, such as during the hostage crisis in Iran, the norm of diplomatic immunity may itself be discarded in order to dramatize a regime's utter displeasure with the formal rules of diplomatic conduct. But such occasions remain rare among states (non-state terrorist networks, of course, truly stand outside the bounds of

international society in this regard), for states must in the end stay in contact with the outside world in some way, shape, or form. Even a state as reclusive as North Korea has to find ways to communicate its wishes to its neighbors and the world community, if for nothing else than to simply confirm, from time to time, the good health and maintenance of power of the ruling elite.

Lastly, pariah diplomacy undermines international order by challenging the efficacy of international institutions, of which diplomacy itself is a particularly significant one. The primary institutions of international society – the balance of power, international law, diplomacy, war, and the great powers – by no means constitute a just or even an egalitarian order among states, as Bull famously argued (1977: 83–9). Questions of justice and equality are in fact secondary concerns to the much more intractable and elementary problem of coexistence in international society. Order is rightly regarded by Bull and the adherents of the English School as a foundational value precisely because it speaks to the fact of pluralism of interests, values, and actions in the society of states. This intrinsic pluralism, in turn, is exemplified in and engaged with the primary institutions of international society. Pariah diplomacy, whether exercised by status quo or revisionist sovereign entities, argues for an alternative distribution of power, reforms in international law, a diplomatic set up commensurate with the aspirations of its wielders, justificatory narratives for war, and the reconsideration of the relationships between the great powers.

Much of this dynamic is of course dependent on the nature of issues in dispute. Andrew Hurrell (2007) has identified five broad categories of ‘issues’ affecting global order today: nationalism and identity politics, human rights and democracy, war and collective security, economic globalization and inequality, and ecological challenges. Pariah-like behavior by states and non-state groups relating to each of these issue areas is at once a symptom and a cause of disorder

in international society. Pariah diplomacy, in this sense, provides as much an opportunity for pariah states to assert their sovereign prerogatives, as it allows the other members of international society to communicate to pariahs the likely consequences of their actions for others and themselves.

### Key Points

- Pariah diplomacy does not necessarily challenge interests and values in principle, but merely seeks to compel or persuade members of international society of an alternative basis for coexistence.
- States and non-state groups that seek to challenge the legitimacy of prevailing norms and values often do so by refusing to conduct their relations in the manner that, from their perspective, is advantageous to others, and hence reinforces the unjust terms of relations.
- Pariah diplomacy undermines international order by challenging the efficacy of international institutions, of which diplomacy itself is a particularly significant one.

## PARIAHOOD AND INTERNATIONAL LEGITIMACY

The constitutive and regulative impact of norms on international behavior has long been a central preoccupation in the study of international relations (Kratochwil, 1989; Finnemore, 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Checkel, 1999). In particular, scholars have been interested in how the evolution or devolution of norms in international society might affect the legitimacy of certain international orders across time and space (Bull and Watson, 1984; Franck, 1988; Hall, 1999; Foot et al., 2003; Gelpi, 2003). Curiously, although the implications of such shifts and linkages for the conduct of diplomacy are obviously significant, they remain relatively underexplored in diplomatic studies. Pariah diplomacy is a mode of behavior that poses a

challenge to prevailing international orders and their bases of legitimacy. Before exploring in greater depth the nature and functions of pariah diplomacy, therefore, it is important to understand its genesis in relation to the predominant norms of legitimacy in international society.

Legitimacy is integral to the constitution of international society. According to Ian Clark, 'The core principles of legitimacy express rudimentary social agreement about who is entitled to participate in international relations, and also about appropriate forms in their conduct' (2005: 2). But who decides on the participants and the terms of engagement between them? How is legitimacy derived, and on whose authority does it rest? Answers to these questions vary according to the theoretical orientation of respondents. Broadly speaking, there are those for whom the distribution of power has a direct impact on the norms of legitimacy (i.e. the norms of legitimacy are influenced by the most powerful states) (Dunne, 2001; Bukovansky, 2002), while others believe that necessity, common interests, and shared values variously combine to form the bases of legitimacy in international society (Bull, 1977; Clark, 2005). Wide consensus exists, however, on the contingent nature of the normative contexts in which international legitimacy is constructed. The criteria for legitimacy change according to the shifting considerations of power and the normative imperatives of international society. This is attested to by, for example, the varying degrees of respect accorded to the principle of non-intervention during and after the Cold War, and in the aftermath of terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001, respectively. In each case, 'as internationally held norms and values change[d], they create[d] coordinated shifts in state interests and behavior across the system' (Finnemore, 1996: 2–3).

Most significantly, these changes have a direct bearing on the terms of responsible membership in the society of states. The so-called pariah states are excluded from

the benefits of full membership accorded to other states due to their conduct toward their own citizens and/or the threats posed to the prevailing norms of international legitimacy (Litwak, 2000; Bain, 2003; Simpson, 2004). This is where the disproportionate influence of the great powers on the norms of legitimacy becomes apparent, however, for there is no shortage of states meeting such criteria, but who are nonetheless exempt from consequences of their conduct because of their strategic ties to powerful states. Consider the cases of Iran and Saudi Arabia, for instance. Since the advent of the Islamic Republic in Iran, the United States and its Western European allies have labeled Iran a pariah state based on its record of human rights abuses at home, its support for militant and terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and its clandestine pursuit of nuclear energy. But just as in the case of other countries it has usually shared such a classification with Iraq (under Saddam Hussein's regime), North Korea, Libya (under Muammar Qaddafi's regime), Syria (under the Assad family regime), and Cuba. Iran's behavior has not been that different from that of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a staunch ally of the United States in the Middle East. Not only does the Kingdom score more poorly than Iran on human rights and governance issues, and according to American officials is the foremost state-sponsor of jihadist terrorism in the world (Walsh, 2010), but it also has openly boasted of having easy access to Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, which they have helped finance over the years (Urban, 2013). Yet, Saudi Arabia has thus far been exempt from the 'pariah', 'rogue', or 'outlaw' designation by the United States and its European partners.

It follows, then, that the designation of states as pariahs or rogues is less a matter of adherence to standards of legitimacy than it is about the utility of a given state to the overall stability of certain international orders. This is especially so given that, as Clark perceptively argues, 'these formulations can be

regarded as a self-conscious attempt to create a tiered or hierarchical international society, constituted by a core and a periphery, or more loosely by insiders and outsiders' (Clark, 2005: 177). This does not mean that behavioral norms and expectations of rightful conduct are mere guises for the naked pursuit of material or ideological interests. To the contrary, it is a testament to the inherent difficulty in attaching singular identities and essentialist characteristics to any state in international society. More importantly, in terms of the status of states, it points to the existence of 'two parameters of legitimacy' based on 'rightful membership and rightful conduct', which do not coexist easily in a world of ever-shifting interests and alliances (Clark, 2005: 189). This duality also obscures our view of rogue conduct by middle and great powers, which are typically regarded as members-in-good-standing in international society. The domestic legitimacy of such regimes – due largely to their democratic political institutions and robust regime of constitutional rights – does not necessarily correspond to their external behavior. In fact, the recent history of international society is littered with instances of Western states overthrowing democratic regimes, waging wars under false pretenses, plundering natural resources, committing war crimes and acts of terror, and undermining international law, to name only the most obvious infractions (Chomsky, 2000). In each case, the label 'pariah' is an accurate description of behavior if not obviously of status.

### Key Points

- Pariah diplomacy is a mode of behavior that poses a challenge to prevailing international orders and their bases of legitimacy.
- The criteria for legitimacy change according to the shifting considerations of power and the normative imperatives of international society.
- The designation of states as pariahs or rogues is less a matter of adherence to standards of legitimacy than it is about the utility of a given state to the overall stability of certain international orders.

## REPRESENTATIONS OF PARIAH DIPLOMACY

What is the significance of all this to the practice of pariah diplomacy? As mentioned earlier, pariah diplomacy is not merely a reference to the uses of the diplomatic method by pariahs; rather, it is a particular mode of diplomacy utilized by pariahs and non-pariahs alike in order to justify extra-legal and disorderly conduct in international society. Behavior contrary to the expectations or standards of international conduct and cooperation, however, is nearly always explained by the offending parties as commensurate with the principles of international legitimacy. It is through the diplomatic exchange of ideas, positions, grievances, and aspirations that the merits behind claims to legitimacy are debated, suppressed, or acceded to. In international diplomacy, status quo states, revisionist states, and non-state groups challenging the legitimacy of prevailing orders construct the dominant frameworks through which pariah behavior is channeled. For this reason, understanding the constellation of normative arguments in which struggles for establishing international legitimacy take place is central to the concerns of pariah diplomacy.

### *Status Quo Pariah Diplomacy*

Status quo powers are both limited and empowered in their actions by the prevailing rules and norms of international society. As Bull aptly observed, 'Great powers contribute to international order in two main ways: by managing their relations with one another; and by exploiting their preponderance in such a way as to impart a degree of central direction to the affairs of international society as a whole' (Bull, 1977: 200). On the one hand, they must act as advocates and enforcers of certain dominant norms (such as non-intervention or nuclear non-proliferation) that are not only important to

the maintenance of order, but which also undergird the legitimacy of status quo authority in international society. This places a special burden on the autonomy of status quo powers since they must act as 'model states', embodying the best practices of membership in the society of states. On the other hand, status quo powers can twist and bend the established rules and norms of conduct in pursuit of naked interests, or simply to ensure a favorable balance of power. Pariah diplomacy, as a representative mode of disorderly conduct, is a natural complement to the latter.

The exercise of pariah diplomacy by status quo powers is indeed as old as the lifespan of modern international society itself. From royal decrees handed down by the newly established resident embassies in early Renaissance Europe (Mattingly, 1955) to European imperial mandates covering roughly 85 percent of the globe at their height (Said, 1993: 8; Hobson, 2012) to Cold War and post-9/11 great power practices of 'regime change' and 'preemptive strikes' (Bacevich, 2002; Guzzini, 2002) – through it all, pariah diplomacy has been a central feature of status quo states' desire to dominate and dictate the terms of engagement with other states. The chief utility of diplomacy in this sense is to communicate to others (a) why the status quo in question is exempt from the norms of orderly conduct expected of other states, and (b) what the consequences of resistance by other states toward the unlawful or rogue action of the status quo power's aims would be. The former imposes on diplomats the burden of proving to the international society at large how disorderly conduct (usually, but not limited to, the outbreak of war) is in this instance 'a necessarily evil' meant to defend the fundamental primary values and norms of international life such as self-determination, open exchange of goods and people, and peaceful coexistence. The latter task more closely approximates the functions of 'coercive diplomacy' in that it compels other states to either accept the status quo

rationale for rogue behavior or risk suffering the consequences (George, 1991; Art and Cronin, 2003).

The American invasion of Iraq in 2003 is a particularly instructive example of pariah diplomacy by a status quo power. The sequence of diplomatic maneuvers employed by the George W. Bush administration to rally international support for regime change in Iraq have been subject to numerous critical studies from both academic and policy-oriented perspectives, and therefore require little more than an overview here. What made the Bush administration's diplomatic approach particularly controversial was its formulation on the basis of the so-called 'Bush Doctrine'; namely, the notion that in the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the United States reserved the right to carry out 'preemptive strikes' against those 'nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism' (Bush, 2001). The war against Iraq, however, quickly disabused international society of any misapprehensions about the real strategic objectives behind the Bush Doctrine. The so-called 'global war on terror' provided the United States with the opportunity to realign international security concerns with those of American national security priorities, and to do so free of any international legal restraints or regard for multilateral ties and institutions.

The implications of America's pariah diplomacy for regional instability were immediate and continue in all their sound and fury to this day. They were and remain even more consequential, however, in terms of their longstanding damage to the legitimacy of international institutions and to the currency of international humanitarian regimes governing the conduct of states and non-state actors in times of war and during post-conflict transitions. For although the United Nations Security Council's rejection of the American rationale for the invasion of Iraq – presented, on account of fabricated evidence, by America's top diplomat at the time, Secretary of State Colin Powell – was clearly



a demonstration of its proper functioning, it nevertheless also exposed how easily its judgment in matters of war and peace could be sidestepped. What is more, America's resort to pariah diplomacy not only forged ahead with an ad-hoc, albeit meager, 'coalition of the willing' (fashioned out of, in former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's eternal words, a 'new Europe' less complacent than the much vaunted but now-decadent 'old Europe'), but in fact introduced a set of rogue practices – e.g. rendition, torture, indefinite detention, extrajudicial assassinations, invasive surveillance of domestic and foreign citizens and world leaders, etc. – which have since become adopted and routinized by other powers. Status quo pariah diplomacy is especially damaging to international order because it combines the capacity to undercut established norms and practices in international society with the determination to realize a new order based on the strategic priorities of the status quo power.

### Revisionist Pariah Diplomacy

Revisionism, premised as it is on the need for change to established ways of engaging in and managing relationships, is a disruptive force in international politics. Revisionary states and groups are by historical circumstance and function pariahs in international society. Their *raison d'être* is to challenge the authority of status quo states, and hence the underlying structure of norms and regimes that reinforce their status. Revisionist diplomacy, then, is pariah diplomacy *par excellence*. Throughout international history, revisionist diplomacy has mainly been the preserve of revolutionary states like the United States, France, Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, Cuba, Libya, Venezuela, and so on. Each revolutionary regime, however, has to immediately come to terms with a nettlesome conundrum upon its ascent to power: to endorse or not to endorse the institution and practice of interstate diplomacy. As the late

Fred Halliday perceptively observed of revolutionary states:

Revolutions proclaim a new form of diplomacy, in part in the expectation of a near-simultaneous set of insurrections in other countries. In practice, revolutionaries doubt the need at all for diplomacy, in the sense of regular inter-state relations. This theme, the denial of the relevance of diplomacy, recurs in many revolutions and has at least three different components: the belief in the near simultaneity of the imminent world revolution and hence the opportunity to avoid contact with non-revolutionary states; disdain for what is seen as a quintessential *ancient régime* and elitist practice; and a belief in the benefits and practicability of open, people-to-people relations as distinct from the 'secret' and anti-popular world of diplomacy. (Halliday, 1999: 95)

Of course, not all revolutionary states are created equal. The Soviet Union as a revolutionary regime had far more global ambitions than its analogues in Venezuela, North Korea, China, Iran, or Libya ever did. Even still, that revolutions bring about a 'new form of diplomacy', and do so with a mixture of disdain and envy for the established practices of interstate diplomacy, is a running theme in international society.

An excellent case in point of revolutionary pariah diplomacy would be the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the immediate aftermath of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, a group of Islamic revolutionaries calling themselves 'Students Following Imam's [i.e. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini] Line' scaled the walls of the American Embassy in Tehran and took 52 American diplomats and personnel hostage for 444 days. The so-called 'Iran hostage crisis' transformed Iran's image and standing in world affairs from 'an island of stability', in President Jimmy Carter's unsuspecting words, to a rogue theocracy openly challenging the legitimacy of Western-led international order. Yet, while the Islamic Republic of Iran violated a bedrock norm of international diplomacy – that of diplomatic immunity – it did not, and could not, dispense with the practice of diplomacy altogether; nor could the United States and the rest of the



international community completely ostracize Iran or wholly ignore its new demands and diplomatic posture. Indeed, in the years following the advent of the Islamic Republic, not only has Iran forged political, economic, and cultural ties with both industrialized and developing nations around the world, its strategic profile as a resource-rich regional power capable of projecting its interests and values in the Middle East and beyond has left most states with no option but to recognize its brand of diplomacy.

It is important to recognize, then, that regimes and actors like those of the Islamic Republic and Ayatollah Khomeini (and his successor) pose a challenge to the prevailing norms of international legitimacy not because they wish to be regarded as pariahs, but because they seek new regional and international orders that complement their strategic interests and values. Diplomacy is the tool used by such states to justify their interests, and, correspondingly, to undermine the rationale behind those of status quo powers. Indeed, this is a well-rehearsed dynamic in the relationship between Iran and the United States since at least the period of the hostage crisis. The recalcitrant posture of Iranian diplomacy is meant to draw attention to both Iranian and regional injustices suffered at the hands of American and European interests. Indeed, when put in historical perspective such grievances are not wholly without merit: the CIA-engineered overthrow of Iran's democratically elected premier, Mohammad Mossadeq, and subsequent American backing of the autocratic Pahlavi monarchy; American backing of Saddam Hussein's Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war; rejecting Iran's offers of goodwill vis-à-vis the release of American hostages in Hezbollah custody; placement of Iran in an 'axis of evil' alongside Iraq and North Korea, in spite of Iran's tangible cooperation against the Taliban in Afghanistan; and sanctioning Iran for its nuclear activities. But these historical grievances, more detrimental to the Iranian people than the Islamic regime,

believe the utility of Iran's pariah diplomacy to the preservation of the arbitrary powers of the clerical establishment and their respective networks of patronage ruling over Iran. Indeed, the chief objective of pariah diplomacy in the case of revolutionary states is the survival of the ruling elite acting as the guardians of 'The Revolution'. According to Halliday, 'Both the advance of revolution and that of counter-revolution are governed by change in ... the internal constitution of states' (Halliday, 1999: 139). The durability of pariah diplomacy, therefore, is largely dependent on the complex interplay between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary objectives.

Other key revisionist cohorts with a proclivity for pariah diplomacy are aggrieved non-state actors with the capacity to sufficiently harm and hence affect interstate relations. A variety of paramilitary groups, liberation movements, religious extremists, or transnational political networks are at any given time challenging the authority of states and international institutions across the globe. Although largely confined to the periphery of international society, non-state pariah actors do at times engage in covert and public talks with states around issues of mutual concern. From the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka to the Taliban in Afghanistan to Lebanese Hezbollah to the Irish Republican Army in Ireland to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (or FARC), pariah diplomacy has proved to be an indispensable tool of managing relations between states and non-state groups seeking either recognition and/or new terms of engagement.

The methods by which non-state actors conduct pariah diplomacy differ significantly from those employed by states. Given the fact that such groups are nearly always regarded by states as threats to national or even international security (especially in the case of transnational terrorist organizations), most of their diplomatic activities are carried out in secret and through third party intermediaries. They face similar challenges to revisionist

state actors in that they must constantly balance survival with their professed ideological aims; but in contrast to state actors they carry the additional burden of doing so without a national or coherent constituency. This means that they must also wage a public diplomatic campaign to air their grievances and justify their actions, all in the hopes of securing some measure of sympathy from the public. Since the advent of the Internet, these efforts have taken the form of digital audio-visual messages targeted at specific audiences. Groups that employ violence as a means of achieving their objectives – even if they are clearly associated with a national or ethnic liberation cause – tend to see diminishing results in their public outreach efforts, however, as states are particularly adept at securitizing non-state groups.

In the final analysis, it is important to note that revisionist pariah diplomacy – in both state and non-state forms – is regarded as an unsavory practice, particularly because its purveyors are entities with outsider status in international society. Challenging an established order of international relationships, if it is not backed up by a clearly justified set of moral and empirical claims or superior power, is unlikely to overcome the range of legal and extralegal privileges at the disposal of members-in-good-standing in international society.

### Key Points

- In international diplomacy, status quo states, revisionist states, and non-state groups challenging the legitimacy of prevailing orders construct the dominant frameworks through which pariah behavior is channeled.
- Status quo pariah diplomacy is especially damaging to international order because it combines the capacity to undercut established norms and practices in international society with the determination to realize a new order based on the strategic priorities of the status quo power.
- Revisionist diplomacy is pariah diplomacy *par excellence*.

### CONCLUSION

As a moniker for disorderly behavior, there is, in the final analysis, very little that is inexact about the term ‘pariah’. States and non-state actors whose actions disrupt and challenge the routine practices and established institutions of international society respectively, do so out of a desire to alter the prevailing order of relations among different constituencies. To be a pariah, therefore, is to engage in extralegal and disorderly behavior toward the established norms, rules, and institutions of international society. Such actions, as the preceding hopefully has made clear, need not necessarily place any state or group outside of the bounds of international society.

One of the central arguments of this chapter has been that pariah-like behavior is in fact a routine fact of life in international society. This is attested to by the frequency and intensity with which so-called pariah actors use diplomacy – a primary institution of international society – to register their grievances and justify their actions. As the different examples of status quo great powers such as the United States and revisionist weak states such as the Islamic Republic of Iran demonstrate, pariah diplomacy is itself a feature (albeit an irregular one) of international life. For this very reason, however, its propensity for inflicting harm and engendering enmity should never be discounted. Pariah diplomacy is a very dangerous and often destructive mode of diplomacy, nearly always a way station on the way to war (see also Chapters 4, 8, 10, 15, 21, and 39 in this Handbook).

### NOTE

- 1 I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for helping me clarify the two distinct, yet overlapping, ways in which the designation can be understood. My hope is that the third section of the

chapter provides sufficient evidence of the intricate linkages between the two uses, and hence provides a vindication of my plea for treating 'pariahhood' as a spectrum encompassing both.

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