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Public Diplomacy of Rising and Regional Powers

Guest-edited by Senem B. Çevik



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Hüseyin Emrah Karaoğuz

Article

Introduction to the Special Issue on Public Diplomacy of Rising and Regional Powers

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Introduction

Certain concepts gain popularity during their respective time periods and are integrated into the political lexicon. The Cold War era gave way to a concept that was coined as public diplomacy, which describes the communication process used by states to engage with foreign audiences. Edmund Gullion, a former diplomat who was the dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy coined this term in 1965. The school catalogue describes public diplomacy as 'the role of the press and other media in international affairs, cultivation by governments of public opinion, the non-governmental interaction of private groups and interests of one country with those of another, and the impact of these transnational processes on the formulation of policy and the conduct of foreign affairs.' (Cull 2009, 19) Since its inception by Edward Guillon, public diplomacy has gained traction in both the United States and in Europe. The practice of public diplomacy has become a vital component of the US's efforts in countering Soviet communication efforts. During the Cold War, public diplomacy was an invaluable tool in sustaining the Transatlantic alliance and in spreading liberal democracy. For that reason, public diplomacy is interconnected to liberal democratic order and has been an integral part of the strategic communication of liberal democracies. The United States has been a leading actor in public diplomacy, utilizing sports, arts, international broadcasting, popular culture and music as a means to engage with foreign audiences. Ping-pong diplomacy between the US and China, space diplomacy between the US and the Soviet Union, and global Voice of America (VOA) channels are a few iconic cases of Cold War-era public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is not a static practice, in fact, it has evolved and expanded throughout the decades. As a result of the increasing role of civil society, public diplomacy has become more inclusive of non-state actors. Today, citizens and non-state actors are integral to public diplomacy. This new public diplomacy is defined as 'complex communication initiatives aimed at foreign publics and governments by other governments or non-governmental organizations in pursuit of policy goals and mutual learning' (Leonard, Stead & Sweming 2002, p. 8). According to Nicholas J. Cull, public diplomacy 'is a well-organized set of communication activities with an end goal of changing external behavior while also altering one's own behavior through mutual learning and listening' (Cull, 2008). Communications scholar Efe Sevin also offers a working definition of public diplomacy as the informational exchange process, taking place between states and non-state actors in foreign countries (Sevin, 2015). The public diplomacy of the 21st century is not only more accessible to many people due to the developments in communication technology but is also equally practiced by emerging powers.

Although public diplomacy has been long established as a credible practice in countries such as the United Kingdom, the US, and Sweden, non-Western states are relatively new to applying both the systematic and strategic approaches to the nations' global communication. The emergence of new actors in the practice of public diplomacy is one of two developments that have shaped this new public diplomacy. The new actors in public diplomacy are predominantly comprised of non-Western nations such as India, Peru, Mexico, Turkey, China, Russia and Korea. These non-Western states introduced their own interpretation and application to public diplomacy, which makes their cases non-traditional. China and Russia particularly, are unique examples of non-Western public diplomacy. While Western public diplomacy emphasizes fostering democracy and Western liberal values, the public diplomacy of the non-Western states emphasizes the shaping of public opinion in their favor and showcasing their nation brand. The nation brands of emerging and regional actors are at the forefront of their public diplomacy and cultural institutes and international broadcasting are vital to the public diplomacy of emerging and regional powers.

The second development that has shaped the new public diplomacy is the advancement in communication and digital technologies. The speed of communication has accelerated which is drastically changing the foundation for the way people communicate. Today, digital communication technologies are mainstream, outdating traditional communication tools. Together with the eradication of traditional communication methods such as surface mail, landline telephones, and fax machines, the speed of sending and receiving information has transformed. As a result of these rapid developments, the practice of diplomacy has seen significant changes. In today's day and age a simple message on social media platforms, such as Twitter, has the capacity to disrupt global politics and even assist in revolutions on digital platforms. New technologies allow state and non-state actors to assert themselves in the public sphere in a way that has never been before. Their ability to reach audiences across the globe, and more importantly instantaneously, is a critical moment in history where diplomacy is becoming more egalitarian.

Today, the growing importance of non-state actors and the emergence of rising powers in the public diplomacy world are reshaping the definition and practice of public diplomacy. Public diplomacy as a field has emerged in liberal democracies spearheaded by the United States but its practice has been around for centuries and has been practiced across various political systems. Due to its conceptual development public diplomacy theory and practice are well grounded in liberal political thought encapsulating the foreign affairs of liberal democracies. Emerging powers from the global south have recognized the potential role that public diplomacy can play in managing their global image and in wielding soft power. Many of the emerging actors in public diplomacy are not liberal democracies and, therefore, contrary to Western and American public diplomacy, these powers have little to no interest in promoting global democratic values. Nevertheless, they do replicate many of the practices that are mastered by Western liberal democracies. The growing trend of digital technologies is put to work by numerous emerging actors in public diplomacy in their efforts to engage with foreign publics, allowing these new actors to shape global public opinion. Aside from the increasing popularity of digital technologies in international relations, emerging powers such as India, Turkey and Russia recognized the important role religion and identity could play in their foreign affairs. As illiberal democracies, non-Western states and regional powers discovered the merits of public diplomacy they are posing critical questions about the origins of the field and the power dynamics that are in play. The ascendance of new actors into public diplomacy has opened up new discussions on the theoretical and practical approaches of the field. Today, the presence of hybrid regimes and populist governments in many countries across the globe, including those of emerging powers, pose significant challenges to the fundamental principles of public diplomacy. In summation, these numerous transformations have created opportunities for us to understand the future directions of public diplomacy. These seismic shifts taking place are projections of various global trends in world politics that replicate themselves in public diplomacy, therefore cannot be examined independent of global political trends.

This special issue of Rising Powers Quarterly is stimulated by the growing presence of emerging powers in various facets of public diplomacy. This volume aims to fill the gap in existing literature by offering a variety of non-Western and regional case studies that draw from multiple disciplines. Papers from various regions cover alternative, mostly non-Western, approaches to public diplomacy. This volume also analyzes changing practices in public diplomacy introduced by emerging powers and presents case studies from eight different countries. These case studies underline the ways in which emerging and regional powers utilize various forms of public diplomacy practice. Each chapter will help the readers ponder on critical questions regarding existing power dynamics in the field of public diplomacy and the possible shifts in these dynamics in the near future. Will PD replicate and empower populist and authoritarian governments? Will it help shape the new post-globalization era? Can engaging with foreign audiences of liberal democracies have a multiplier effect on the ways which some states are governed? How will the non-traditional public diplomacy actors redefine the field and the practice? Can the Western practitioners of public diplomacy learn from non-Western practices? These are some of the questions the case studies will help the readership critically engage with the topic in aims to further the debate.

New actors in public diplomacy are new in the sense that they have incorporated public diplomacy in their foreign policy apparatus more recently. However, the avenues they seek to communicate with foreign publics are not new and rather traditional in the sense that they utilize universally appealing avenues. Sports is known to be a universal language across nations and people. Therefore, nations have historically used sports as a way to promote their culture, brand their nation and shape global perceptions. As a result, nations compete to host the Olympics, the World Cup, the Paralympics and other international sporting events. For example, the Munich Olympics in 1932, hosted by the Nazi regime in Germany, was one of the most recognizable examples of the way that global sporting events can be used in propagating nation brands and ideology. While the 1932 Olympics were used as Nazi propaganda material, the more recent sporting events have been utilized by nations to gain global recognition and presence. Rising powers such as South Korea (2002), South Africa (2010), Brazil (2014) and Russia (2018) hosted the World Cup, and Qatar, a regional powerhouse in the Gulf, is scheduled to host it in 2022. Andreia Soares in her paper discusses Russia's strategy to successfully host sporting mega-events, such as the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

Russia, the host of the Winter Olympics in Sochi (2014) and the World Cup (2018), is exerting its influence across Eastern Europe and the former Soviet states beyond international sporting games. Russia entered into the spotlight after it made a comeback in global affairs with the ascendance of Vladimir Putin to the Russian leadership. Having been in power for eighteen years, Putin has reasserted Russia into the global competition for power. Russia's ordeal with Crimea, given NATO's expansionist policies, emphasized Russia's hard power as well as its soft power. The former Soviet republics are still under a strong Russian influence and within the Russian orbit. Rebuilding its economy and global presence, under Putin, Russia has invested heavily into public diplomacy in order to rebrand Russia and exert itself in global affairs. International broadcasting, with Russia's television network RT, formerly known as Russia Today, is one of the strengths of Russia's public diplomacy toolkit. Sputnik News is also widely recognized as a news outlet across the globe. Furthermore, Russia engages with foreign publics by way of cultural diplomacy. The Russian Federation, the successor of the Russian Empire, carries on the cultural tradition of its predecessor by emphasizing Russian high culture, which is represented by household names such as Tchaikovsky, Tolstoy and the Bolshoy Ballet. One of the least known practices of Russian public diplomacy is its humanitarian diplomacy. Anna Velikaya discusses Russia's humanitarian cooperation and the significant role it plays in advancing Russia's interests, as well as promoting the message of global stability that comes with sustaining nation states.

One of the venues that public diplomacy can be utilized in is religion. Although religion and diplomacy do not often blend well together; religious diplomacy is an integral part of public diplomacy. Religion is a very important factor in international relations and often gives rise to ethnic and sectarian conflict. More importantly, religion is a vital part of the societal fabric and even defines some nations. Despite the troublesome relations between religion and politics, religious diplomacy, or in other words faith-based diplomacy, is frequently utilized as a means to engage with foreign publics. Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran are two countries that export their interpretation of religious doctrine for the purposes of expanding their regional influence. Power can also be attained by engaging and building lasting relationships with foreign publics by means of religious affiliation. Turkey, another regional actor, has incorporated faith-based diplomacy when engaging with the Balkans as part of its public diplomacy toolkit. Jahja Muhasilovic provides an overview of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in the Western Balkans region after the 1990s, with a special focus on the period after the AKP party came to power.

Brazil has also established itself as a rising power amongst the BRICS countries. Especially prior to its economic predicaments, Brazil exerted itself in global politics by engaging more actively in international platforms and utilizing various aspects of public diplomacy. One of the most notable efforts led by Brazil, along with Turkey, was the brokering of a nuclear deal with Iran in 2010. Four years later Brazil hosted the World Cup in 2014 building on its reputation of a vacation spot and home of world-class football. Known as the regional powerhouse of South America, Brazil is famous for its beaches, the Rio Carnaval and culturally diverse society. In recent years, Brazil has established itself as a hub for renewable energy. Brazil invests heavily in wind, solar and hydropower energy, and generates nearly seventy-five percent of its electricity from renewable energy. Aside from being a leading actor in renewable energy, Brazil has also invested in building relationships on the sub-national level. Renato Balbim discusses the Brazilian case of city diplomacy, locating the essential role of the leftwing Workers' Party "PT" and its ideology in the recent cities' internationalization process.

Once having been the hub for cheap labor for Western goods, China emerged from the ashes in a mere forty years. Today, China is the second leading economy in the world, and estimated to surpass the United States in 2020. At the same time, China is offering a new alternative where economic prosperity does not have to accompany social and political change. China's economic model parallels its public diplomacy framework in which it is often accused of investing heavily in information campaigns. China Central Television (CCTV), which has a network of fifty channels in twelve languages, is China's international broadcasting network. Confucius Institutes, China's education and cultural institute affiliated with the Ministry of Education Hanban, promotes Chinese language and culture across the globe. With seven hundred and fifty-three Confucius Institute affiliations globally, the Confucius Institute is China's leading public diplomacy agency. Given China's track record on censorship and surveillance, CI's have come under scrutiny in recent years. Aside from efforts to promote China, the Chinese government is seeking ways to build bridges with foreign publics and give them access to a rising China. With the impending trade wars between the US and China, the role of sub-state actors is gaining more presence in building long lasting relationships. Sister city relations initiated on the sub-state level provide a degree of hope in improving relations between the US and China. Benjamin Leffel and Sohaela Amiri discuss the humanitarian and global development impacts of international sister city relationships in a bilateral, Sino-U.S. context.

Qatar is one of the most prominent actors in the public diplomacy from the Gulf region. The small Gulf state first drew attention with the establishment of the Al Jazeera Media Network. Qatar's state-funded broadcaster, the Al Jazeera Media Network became the CNN of the Arab world and became a unique voice from the Middle East during the second Gulf War. Qatar is also an educational hub, being home to a number of overseas campuses of US institutions, including Northwestern University, Carnegie Mellon, Georgetown and the University of Aberdeen. Moreover, the State of Qatar promotes sports for both development and peace and gives importance to sports through its hosting of numerous international sporting events. Although it failed to obtain the Olympics bid to host the 2016 and 2020 games, Qatar is preparing to host the World Cup in 2022. The state of Qatar has been entangled in a regional conflict with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain since the summer of 2017. The conflict which erupted over a streak of fake news played out as a regional power struggle between these Gulf states with Al Jazeera at the forefront of this regional quagmire. Tarek Cherkaoui examines the international broadcasting aspect of the Gulf Crisis, including Al Jazeera's (AJ's) reporting during the same period. Through the Gulf Crisis case study, he unpacks the contours and limitations of public diplomacy in the context of inter-state political dynamics.

India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and is a prominent country in the global south. India has also been well positioned across the world through its cultural assets. Contributing to India's brand recognition is Hinduism and the Taj Mahal, which is one of The Seven Wonders of the World and also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Indian cuisine has spread and is available in many countries due to a vibrant Indian diaspora. For the last two decades, Bollywood has been gaining more traction across the globe representing India's emerging film industry. Yoga and meditation have both been staples of India's nation brand and the Narenda Modi government utilized yoga in its public diplomacy apparatus. India is an established technological powerhouse and a leader in information communication technologies. The number of start-ups and increasing investment in technology continues to help improve India's nation brand. Digital diplomacy is a relatively newer area for India and Parama Sinha Palit discusses the key characteristics of India's digital communication and examines its effectiveness while exploring the contribution of digital communication to India's international stature.

Mexico, both the 11th largest nation in the world and a power regionally, is predominately known as a tourism hub. In fact, tourism is an essential part of Mexico's economy as it functions by drawing in visitors from all over the globe. Although Mexico is a relevant country in the international system, its image in the world is as a stalemate. The largest Mexican diaspora is in the United States making the US a neighbor which Mexico can engage in with great potential. However, the Trump administration policies have been and continue to be antagonistic towards this neighbor and Mexico has been used as a scapegoat in US domestic debates revolving around immigration. Mexico has one of the largest diplomatic networks in the world with most of its consular offices in the United States. Therefore, despite the ongoing debate about Mexico, its diaspora, grassroots organizations and diplomatic network carry the potential to engage with the broader American public. Vanessa Bravo and Maria DeMoya Taveras discuss Mexico's engagement with the United States through its diaspora since the 1990s until today. They analyze recent messaging strategies that the embassy of Mexico in the United States employs to reach its diaspora community via websites, Facebook pages and Twitter accounts.

Israel, a regional powerhouse, is a leading nation in high tech, energy, bio-medicine, defense and agriculture. Known as The Start-Up Nation, Israel is home to the Silicon Valley of the Middle East with more than five thousand startups. Israel's leadership in global innovation has translated itself into a leading role in digital diplomacy. Israel's diplomatic corps explains its position and its policies across the world by way of its digital engagement. It does this with the aim to shed light on Israel beyond the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moreover, the numerous NGOs working for Israel advocacy create a vast platform for Israel to communicate with many audiences at the same time. Currently a leading actor in digital diplomacy, Israel is also home to many innovative practices turning conflict into potential. Arik Segal and Yotam Keduri provide an overview of the opportunities online dialogue platforms hold in maintaining channels of communications between parties in conflict. Their paper is based on observation and research of an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue project that took place during the Gaza war in 2014.

Emerging and regional powers not only pose a challenge to established public diplomacy actors, but they also challenge one another. China and Russia are two countries that offer similar versions of public diplomacy practices. At the same time, they are in competition with Eurasia, introducing clashing grand narratives. Moritz Pieper discusses the contrasts in the public diplomacies behind China and Russia's approaches to Eurasian Order and process-traces the gradual interaction between the two. His paper builds on China and Russia's public diplomacy on Eurasian Order conceptions, and the ways in which the grand narratives of both countries play out in their Eurasia conceptualization.

I would like to thank the contributors of this special issue on Public Diplomacy of Rising and Regional Powers for bringing together an elaborate volume of case studies of non-traditional public diplomacy actors. I would also like to thank Dr. Emel Parlar Dal and Ali Murat Kurşun for enabling this platform to engage and continue discussions on the future of public diplomacy. On behalf of the Rising Powers Quarterly, I would like to invite all scholars and practitioners of public diplomacy to unpack the questions raised in this issue and further the conversation on the role of non-Western, emerging actors in public diplomacy.

Bio

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Article

The 2018 FIFA World Cup: The Gains and Constraints of Russia's Soft Power of Attraction Through Football and Sports

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Abstract

This article looks at Russia's strategy to successfully host sporting mega-events, especially the 2018 FIFA World Cup, arguing that through sports and football Russia hopes to increase its soft power and to showcase a favorable image to both its foreign and domestic audiences, different than the one the West is used to. Amid heightened tension with the West, accused of a confrontational behavior and of using harder-edged tools, this article suggests that sports diplomacy is an important element of a long-term strategy to boost Russia's great power status. However, it is argued that Russia's ability to project its influence on a global scale is constrained, either by serious domestic problems and challenges, as by Russia's hard power image. The article points out that Russia still has a long way to go in terms of effectively implementing its soft power, suggesting that the successful staging of big sporting events must be complemented with other soft-power tools in a long-term strategy if it wants to succeed.

Keywords

Russia, Soft Power, Sports Diplomacy, 2018 FIFA World Cup, Foreign Policy

Introduction

Upon his 2012 re-election to the presidency, after a four-year term as prime minister, Vladimir Putin launched a broad Russian-style charm offensive, using both hard and soft power, to expand Russia's global influence and presence. Stronski and Sokolsky (2017) argue that, for the first time since the breakup of the Soviet Union, the United States is facing a Russia that is not a mere "regional power" (in then President Barack Obama's statement), but rather one that is actively trying to project its influence and establish a global presence.

This article looks at Russia's vision and strategy articulated around and beyond the successful hosting of sporting mega-events, especially the 2018 FIFA World Cup, arguing that through sports and football Russia hopes to increase its soft power and to showcase a favorable image to both its foreign and domestic audiences, different than the one the West is used to. Amid heightened tension with the West and talk of a new Cold War, accused of a confrontational behavior and of using harder-edged tools, this article suggests that "sports diplomacy" is an important source of Russia's foreign policy toolbox and an integral part of a longterm strategy to advance its great power status. However, the article argues that Russia's ability to project its influence and "win hearts and minds" on a global scale is constrained, either by serious domestic problems and challenges, as by Russia's hard power image. The article points out that Russia still has a long way to go in terms of effectively implementing its soft power, suggesting that the successful hosting of big sporting events must be complemented with other softpower tools in a long-term strategy if it wants to succeed. And, most importantly, that the positive image arguably generated by Russia's successful hosting of the World Cup needs to match its actions, not only its rhetoric.

Structurally, the article begins by recognizing Russia's struggle for soft power in order to promote a favorable and an "accurate image of Russia abroad" (Putin 2012a). It then turns to the concept of "sports diplomacy", explaining why it is in Russia's interest to host big sporting events, suggesting that sports are an increasingly key element of its public diplomacy toolbox. The third and final section of the article looks at Russia's hosting of the 2018 FIFA World Cup, assessing its gains and constraints.

Russia's Struggle for Soft Power

In a globalizing world, it is not enough to have or to be an economic or military power. As Joseph S. Nye (2013) puts it: "if you can add the soft power of attraction to your toolkit, you can economize on carrots and sticks", explaining why Russia seeks to leverage soft power. Coined by Nye in the late 1980's, soft power is "the ability of a country to persuade others to do what it wants without force or coercion" (2004 p. 5), adding that:

"the soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)". (Nye 2013).

Furthermore, Nye (2013) argues that "combining these resources is not always easy".

The concept of soft power entered in Russia's official 2013 Foreign Policy Concept. In its pre-election article on foreign policy, "Russia and the Changing World", Vladimir Putin (2012a) observed that soft power "implies a matrix of tools and methods to reach foreign policy goals without the use of arms but by exerting information and other levers of influence", adding a rather negative idea of soft power:

"Regrettably, these methods are being used all too frequently to develop and provoke extremist, separatist and nationalistic attitudes, to manipulate the public and to conduct direct interference in the domestic policy of sovereign countries" (2012a).

According to Dolinski (2012), there is a difference between the definitions offered by Nye and Putin, "which is far from being stylistic". While Nye points out attractiveness as the key element of the notion, Putin views soft power as part of several "levers of influence" Russia can use.

After his presidential inauguration in 2012, Vladimir Putin addressed Russian ambassadors and permanent representatives in international organizations and argued that:

"soft power' is all about promoting one's interests and policies through persuasion and creating a positive perception of one's country, based not just on its material achievements but also its spiritual and intellectual heritage. Russia's image abroad is formed not by us and as a result it is often distorted and does not reflect the real situation in our country or Russia's contribution to global civilization, science and culture". (Putin 2012b).

Hence, Russian leaders looked to soft power as a tool to regain their former influence and to promote a favorable and an "accurate image of Russia abroad" (Putin 2012a).

Russia's initial aim for exploiting its soft power was economic – to attract international investment in order to modernize the country – and was framed as a need to improve its negative image abroad and establish stronger ties with Russian compatriots in other countries. Sergunin and Karabeshkin argue that "the Kremlin's turn to the soft power concept over the past decade was not accidental" (2015, p. 359), suggesting that a number of powerful factors, like the need to redesign its foreign policy doctrine in line with present-day challenges, to enhance its international image and Russia's global status, "encouraged Moscow to familiarize itself with this concept" (2015, p. 359).

More recently, the 2016 new Foreign Policy Concept establishes that:

"soft power' has become an integral part of efforts to achieve foreign policy objectives. This primarily includes the tools offered by civil society, as well as various *methods and technologies – from information and communication to humanitarian and other types*". (Russian Federation 2016).

One of Russia's foreign policy objectives is "to consolidate the Russian Federation's position as a center of influence in today's world" (Russian Federation 2016). Others objectives are:

"promote and consolidate the position of the Russian language in the world; raise global awareness of Russia's cultural achievements and national historical legacy, cultural identity of the peoples of Russia, and Russian education and research; consolidate the Russian-speaking diaspora; to bolster the standing of Russian mass media and communication tools in the global information space and convey Russia's perspective on international process to a wider international community". (Russian Federation 2016).

It is also important to point out other objectives, like "enhancing Putin's domestic legitimacy by demonstrating Russia's status as a global superpower; promoting specific Russian commercial, military, and energy interests" (Stronski & Sokolsky 2017).

To advance these objectives, Moscow counts on a wide collection of tools, including soft power ones, such as "diplomatic, military, intelligence, cyber, trade, energy, and financial tools to influence political systems, public attitudes, and elite decision-makers in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America" (Stronski & Sokolsky 2017). Indeed, it is armed with a diverse and effective toolkit and an experienced leader committed to building on the Soviet legacy of global activism (Rumer 2018). President Vladimir Putin's aim is to make Russia great again and to make the West respect Russia (Zygar 2018). He declared recently: "As head of state I will do everything to build up Russia's might, prosperity, and glory, and to live up to the expectations and hopes of the country's citizens" (Putin 2018g).

While Russia is not an economic superpower, the emphasis on nuclear power is one of Russia's claims to great power status. Recently, according to Vladimir Putin, Russia has developed a new array of nuclear weapons that are invincible and could "reach anywhere in the world" (BBC News 2018a). Also, it is important to note Russia's veto power as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Finally, as Polyakova (2018) observes, Putin's intervention in Syria, "like most of his foreign-policy decisions, was a risky gamble", which could have pitted Russian and Americans against each other, but it has placed Russia back in the game of great-power competition.

Stronski and Sokolsky (2018) argue that "Russia's global activism is deeply rooted in Putin's vision of what he wants the world to look like and Russia's global role and position in this world". Indeed, Russia sees itself as a major power with global reach. That is why it is looking to develop a presence in all corners of the globe to solidify its image as a world power (Gurganus 2018). Underneath is Moscow's desire for a multipolar international system in which it plays a more prominent role (Stronski & Sokolsky 2017). Most importantly, "Russia aims to increase its clout, refurbish its image, and assert itself on key international issues where retreating Western power has created vacuums" (Stronski & Sokolsky 2017).

With a proud cultural legacy, Moscow has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in various soft power resources (Rutland & Kazantsev 2016), like the statecontrolled media outlets – RT, the former Russia Today International TV, a 24/7 news channel that provides the Kremlin's worldview, established in 2005, and Sputnik News, which in 2014 replaced RIA Novosti, the Russia's international news agency with content in over thirty languages –, and internet social media. These tools promote a positive view of Russia and a negative image of the West, being one of its main tasks to change Russia's negative image in the world and counteract biased assessment:

"Russia seeks to ensure that the world has an objective image of the country, develops its own effective ways to influence foreign audiences, promotes Russian and Russian-language media in the global information space, providing them with necessary government support, is proactive in international information cooperation, and takes necessary steps to counter threats to its information security". (Russian Federation 2016).

In today's interconnected and globalized world the dissemination of national narratives is very important. "As the American analyst John Arquilla has pointed out, in today's global information age, victory often depends not on whose army wins, but on whose story wins" (Nye 2018b). Underneath is the power of soft power in promoting its national interests abroad and of effectively communicating a winning global narrative. Moscow has been using new opportunities in the digital domain to promote narratives conducive to Russian interests and to undermine liberal Western governments, be it through traditional and social media, educational, cultural, and entertainment programs or cyber-enabled information operations. Moreover, in countries with Russian-speaking populations, state-controlled Russian-language media, including pop culture and entertainment programming, are powerful tools (Carnegie 2018). To sum up, new technologies and information are key elements of Russia's foreign policy toolbox, exploiting the vulnerability of open societies to foreign manipulation (Carnegie 2018).

In this respect, Walker and Ludwig (2017) argue that China's and Russia's attempts at influence are not examples of soft power – they represent 'sharp power'. 'Sharp power' has been categorized as the diverging use of soft power-like tactics by authoritarian states to wield influence, not by a "charm offensive" nor an effort to "win hearts and minds"; "it is not principally about attraction or even persuasion; instead, it centers on distraction and manipulation" (Walker & Ludwig 2017). Thus, sharp power, "the deceptive use of information for hostile purposes, is a type of hard power" and "threatens soft power" (Nye 2018a). In November 2017, British Prime Minister Theresa May publicly accused Russia of interfering in various Western election campaigns and of "weaponizing information", by "deploying its state-run media organizations to plant fake stories and photo-shopped images in an attempt to sow discord in the West and undermine our institutions" (May 2017).

Rutland and Kazantsev (2016) argue that while Russia came late to the soft power game, made it an integral feature of the drive to restore Russia's great power status, investing heavily to promote a positive image of the country abroad. However, Russia's authoritarian turn since 2004, its use of force in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria, have reinforced negative stereotypes of Russia as a hard power, explaining why Russian leaders have largely failed to develop soft power as an effective policy tool (Rutland & Kazantsev 2016). As Kolesnikov observes, "it is impossible for a country to suddenly switch to soft power after years of using force", adding that "the issues that divide Russia and most Western governments – Crimea, Donbass, MH-17, the Skripal case – are not going away" (2018b).

Other examples that reinforce Russia's hard power image and undercut its soft power are the Kremlin's attempts to influence the 2016 Brexit vote, elections interference, namely in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the support of populist and far-right movements in Europe, or fueling ethnic instability and divisions in the Balkans (Stronski & Sokolsky 2018). Moreover, it is worth noting that the poisoning of former Russian spy Sergei Skripal in the United Kingdom led to the furthering of sanctions and political isolation, namely to the expulsion of more than 100 Russian diplomats by the United Kingdom and allied countries (BBC News 2018b). Before, the Western governments had already reacted to the military incursion in Ukraine and annexation of Crimea with diplomatic and economic sanctions, and the suspension of Russia indefinitely from the Group of Eight (G8) (Wilson & Morello 2014).

Moscow's tactics and global activism illustrate that "Russian understanding of soft power strongly deviates from either the 'classical', Nye-based one or those suggested by other Western academics and practitioners" (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015, p. 359), in which attraction to a country is the key to a country getting what it wants. Instead, "the Russian interpretation of soft power is instrumentalist, pragmatic and interest-centric" (Sergunin & Karabeshkin 2015, p. 359). Moreover, following Nye, these authors say that Russia is often unable to use soft power in a coherent way, that is, the "need to match words and deeds in their policies, be self-critical, and unleash the full talents of their civil societies [China and Russia]" (Nye 2013).

Russia recognizes that it needs both hard and soft power, or 'smart power', a term developed by Nye in 2003 (Nye 2009). Despite the frequent use of military force and 'hybrid warfare' in the last decade, the Kremlin has been active using other forms of influence. As was highlighted above, it considers the promotion of its positive image abroad an important priority in its soft power strategy. The following section examines how sports are being used to achieve that aim, that is, to project a positive, innovative and modern image both to the world and to Russia's own citizens.

Russia's Sports Diplomacy Strategy

As was highlighted above, the Kremlin's toolkit is diverse and wide, including soft power resources. This article argues that sports and football are an important source of Russia's foreign policy toolbox, meaning that they are used as significant public and cultural diplomacy's tools to achieve specific targeted goals, namely to enhance international prestige and attraction.

There are four main roles for sports as a component of cultural diplomacy:

"Sports as a tool for development; sports as a tool for soft power; sports as an instrument to promote closer dialogue and integration in multicultural societies; sports as a tool to promote peaceful relations at the international level". (Institute for Cultural Diplomacy 2011b, p. 5).

This analysis favors the dimension of "sports as a tool for soft power" and argues that sports and football are used as diplomatic tools to enhance Russia's soft power.

Sports diplomacy, a term that is gaining more and more relevance (Murray 2012), is identified in this article as the use of sports as an instrument to further foreign policy goals, causes or interests and as a significant and rising source of soft power. Stuart Murray (2013) argues that "practical and theoretical interest in sports diplomacy has been growing", citing some publications that have dedicated a special issue or chapter to this topic, like Public Diplomacy Magazine (Winter 2013), the Hague Journal of Diplomacy (Spring 2013) or the Oxford Handbook on Modern Diplomacy (2013). Also Sport in Society, vol. 17, 2014, devotes its number 9 to Sport and Diplomacy.

This article follows the perspective that associates sports diplomacy to "international sport consciously employed by governments as an instrument of diplomacy" (Murray & Pigman 2014). In fact, sports and football are being used by a number of countries to achieve specific targeted goals, proving that governments increasingly recognize the power of sports (and mega-events) as a diplomatic tool to raise their profile, and create influence, among other goals. Murray points out that "arguably, sports multiply the channels through which a government can disseminate a diplomatic message to a much wider audience" (2013, p. 14). Thus, sports diplomacy can reinforce and complement a state's traditional diplomacy (Murray 2013, pp. 12-13).

The recognition of sports diplomacy or the use of sports for political ends is confirmed by the major emerging economies' attempts to use sporting events as an investment in their global positions, as it is the case of South Africa (Castro 2013b) or China. The Asian nation is also expected to host a FIFA World Cup in the near future, with President Xi Jinping stating his dream of hosting the tournament. This is also true for states who already have a good global status, such as Canada, Japan or France, all of which have won bidding processes to host megasporting events in the coming years (Castro 2018). Thus, sporting mega-events are increasingly attractive to governments that invest in them as a diplomatic tool to either enhance international visibility or to change negative perceptions, despite the situation on the ground.

Russia is not an exception in this and has invested, in the recent years, in the hosting of mega-sporting events, as an integral part of its soft power strategy to project a positive image, different than the one the West is used to, more associated with disruption and force, and show of a modern and competent country. In Putin's words: "we must discuss how we can derive the maximum benefit for Russia's image from hosting large international events" (2012a). Russia's successful hosting of the Universiade in Kazan in 2013¹, the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games², the 2016 Ice Hockey World Championship³, and the 2018 FIFA World Cup⁴ are examples which confirm that strategy.

In the case of Russia, as noted by Kolesnikov (2018a), "sport is a matter of state importance. It's one of the tenets of patriotism". "Given the unparalleled visibility, popularity, and mobilizing potential of modern sport, accompanied by intense manifestations of identity" (Black & Peacock 2013, p. 535), Russia hopes to attract others also through sports and football. Hence, President Vladimir Putin has consciously invested in sports and football to enhance internationally his country's image, prestige, legitimacy, credibility, trust and visibility, a process that is also known as nation-branding – the practice of applying corporate branding techniques to promote countries (by trade, tourism and foreign direct investment

¹ The official website: http://www.kazan2013.com/en

² The official website: https://www.olympic.org/sochi-2014

³ The official website: http://www.iihfworlds2016.com/

⁴ The official website: https://www.fifa.com/worldcup/

opportunities), to improve their image abroad, to build and manage their reputation, and to counter stereotypes that are associated with certain countries (Institute for Cultural Diplomacy 2011a, p. 4). Indeed, "international sport and sport mega-events have become coveted prizes in the quest for global visibility and 'marketing power" (Black & Peacock 2013, p. 541).

The role of the then Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was widely acclaimed in securing the 2014 Winter Games for Sochi. It was Vladimir Putin's personal project to showcase Russia to the world and the first time that Russia hosted the Winter Olympics (the then Soviet Union hosted the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow). Sochi was selected as the host city in July 2007, defeating bids from Salzburg (Austria) and Pyeongchang (South Korea). It is important to note that the official decision was taken before the military incursion into Georgia (2008).

Black and Peacock (2013, p. 537) note that "sports diplomacy is often a 'two-level game', targeting international and domestic audiences simultaneously". Indeed, the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics were used by Vladimir Putin to impress through sports, with the objective of presenting a gentler, competent and modern Russia to the world, targeting both international and domestic audiences, and especially showing that the country was back on its role of a global power. While originally budgeted at US\$12 billion, severe cost overruns, alleged to have been the result of corruption, made the Sochi Olympics cost more than \$51 billion – the most expensive sports event ever organized (Grohmann 2014a). The President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, said that the Russian government support and President Vladimir Putin's personal involvement were crucial to push preparations forward and to the Games' success (Grohmann 2014b).

It is important to add that big sporting events are never without protest, controversy and criticism (as they imply huge costs at the expense of its inhabitants), bringing with them a dark side - an opportunity to increase international status at the expense of its citizens, and consequently damaging the image of the country (Castro 2018). Before the Games, Russia was criticized over the country's human rights record and an anti-gay propaganda law passed by Putin's government. Moreover, despite Russia's record medal, the Games were associated negatively with indications of a state-sponsored doping program. Also, the Olympics happened in the same period of the annexation of Crimea and the subsequent sanctions and Ukraine crisis. As Walker puts it: "Russia was indeed back, but not in the way Putin had intended" (Walker 2017). Indeed, Russia's Olympic Committee was banned from the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang and ordered to pay \$15m in costs after state-sponsored doping. It was the first time the International Olympic Committee has imposed a ban on a country competing under its own flag for doping (Ingle 2017). Later on, on February 28, 2018, the ban was lifted after no further negative drugs test in Pyeongchang (Kelner 2018). Nevertheless,

"despite months of bad press in the run-up to the Games over Russia's human rights record and anti-gay propaganda law, when the competitions started the Olympics were a sporting success" (Grohmann 2014a) and Russia hoped to have advanced its prestige and attraction to other countries.

Finally, it is worth noting that Russia also hosted for the first time the Confederations Cup 2017 (June 17 – July 2), considered as a prelude to the 2018 FIFA World Cup. It was seized again as an opportunity to push back against the international perception of the country associated with hooliganism, racism, violation of labor rights and human rights, and corruption, hoping to present instead of that a gentler face to fans and tourists (Walker 2017).

Russia's 2018 FIFA World Cup

Vladimir Putin's personal involvement in the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics bid and strategy to host the 2018 World Cup prove that the "promotion of mass sports is a key goal and priority for Russia" (Putin 2018d). As referred above, because the Olympics in Sochi did not work as envisioned, the 2018 World Cup, arguably the biggest sporting event in the world, was viewed as another opportunity either to show off Russia's great power status and to foster national pride. Indeed, bringing back the idea of "sport diplomacy as a 'two-level game', targeting international and domestic audiences simultaneously (Black & Peacock 2013, p. 537), the World Cup was designed to reinforce Putin's domestic legitimacy and to create economic opportunities for its own domestic electorates, as well as to enhance Russia's international image and to show a different side of the country.

On the one hand, as MacFarquhar (2018) puts it, Vladimir Putin "has tried to forge a national sense of unity and purpose atop nostalgia for Soviet achievements", adding that "the Soviet sports machine also comes into play, sports being a noncontroversial arena where everyone in an ethnically mixed population can celebrate together" (MacFarquhar 2018). Indeed, the good team's performance and progression at the World Cup gave the nation a reason to celebrate, and above all instilled a sense of national pride, even though the Russian team lost in the quarterfinals to Croatia. On the other hand, as Putin observes:

"Such large international forums as the World Cup are not only about a spectacle and thrill, but are also a good opportunity for millions of people to learn about other countries and their traditions as well as to make new friends (...) Our country is ready to host the 2018 FIFA World Cup and to provide everyone visiting Russia with a comfortable environment and positive emotions. Our goal is to make all guests (...) make them want to come back again". (Putin 2018f).

At the same time, Russia wanted to defuse the idea that the West had isolated the country through international sanctions and diplomatic expulsions, demonstrat-

ing that it is still a member of the club of big powers (MacFarquhar 2018).

In order to guarantee that the hosting country is able to support all the requirements, huge investments are made. These investments begin long before the official decision to give the rights to host the event is made. Indeed, states compete to win bids for the events and candidates fight for every vote to be elected, built on strategies of pure soft power and hard work (Castro 2013a, p. 31). As with the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics bid process, Russia's soft power was already being demonstrated simply by winning the World Cup bidding process against other candidates, like Belgium and the Netherlands, England, and Spain and Portugal, confirming a successful strategy. In contrast to the Olympics where Vladimir Putin was personally involved in the bid process and was present at the official decision, he did not engage in shuttle diplomacy before the World Cup vote and did not attend FIFA's decision because of corruption allegations within FIFA (BBC News 2010). Black and Peacock argue that "although the lobbying of a country's highest-ranking politician may now be a virtual 'necessity' for winning the right to stage mega-events, it is no longer 'sufficient'", attesting this with the example of FIFA's choice of Russia over England despite the vigorous advocacy of the then Prime Minister David Cameron and Prince William (Black & Peacock 2013, p. 541).

Since Russia won the right to host the 2018 World Cup on December 2, 2010, another phase of the process begun: preparation and organization throughout a period of seven years. Putin's government spent more than \$11 billion to host the 2018 World Cup (Tanas & Meyer 2018), including the construction of seven new stadiums and renovations to five other venues (BBC Sport 2018). It was the first time Russia hosted the FIFA World Cup, which took place from 14 June to 15 July 2018.

Although the World Cup is only one month, the benefits are supposed to be felt in the long-term. Ultimately, it is all about the legacy that big sporting events will bring to the host country: legacy for sports; legacy in infrastructure (new stadiums, hotels, roads, rail and bus systems, ports, airports), urban and social opportunities; legacy in creation of jobs and income; promotion of the country's image on a global scale, namely the potential to develop as a destination for business, trade and tourism (Castro 2013a, p. 31). The Russian President acknowledged the long-term strategy of using sports for political ends when he declared:

"Of course, we will continue to organize major international competitions in our country. We will also absolutely need to make good use of the venues that we spend vast amounts of money to build". (Putin 2018b).

To continue the analysis of Russia's World Cup, the article's position is that Vlad-

imir Putin, who began a fourth presidential term in May, put together a "dazzlingly well-organized" (Ronay 2018) and smooth World Cup, amid heightened tension with the West and despite a staggering economy, considering the fall of oil prices, and sanctions introduced since the Ukraine crisis and the annexation of Crimea in March 2014 (Council of the European Union 2018). Moreover, the announced diplomatic boycott related to the Salisbury attack (Harris 2018) and travel warnings did not hamper the success of the event. Also, fears of a politically-motivated counterattack against Western tourists, or possible terrorist attacks due to Russia's involvement in Syria and Ukraine have not materialized.

In sum, the World Cup has happened with no major incidents off the field, no violence or hooliganism and many positive impressions of the country (Walker 2018b). Fans, athletes, and specialists who visited the country especially for the tournament have appreciated an "open, hospitable and friendly Russia" (Putin 2018a). According to the Russian President:

"not only the heads of state and government (...) but also, and most importantly, hundreds of thousands of football fans from all across the world, (...) saw with their own eyes the real Russia: open, friendly and modern. This is an obvious success and a breakthrough in what is known as public diplomacy". (Putin 2018e).

Putin also added that "the myths and prejudices have been laid to rest", and that "we will make sure that the people who have fallen in love with Russia enjoy as relaxed visa controls as possible, that they can continue to explore our country" (Putin 2018c).

It is in Russia's interest to be known by citizens of other nations, to be known for positive things and not have its image distorted by others, often claiming of the West's Russophobia and bad press. According to Walker (2018c), "for years, it has been easier for Russian officials to bray about Russophobia than to open up and show off a different side of the country", adding that the World Cup "may be a temporary phenomenon, and it may not make the darker aspects fade away, but it is definitely to be welcomed" (2018c).

Also, FIFA President Gianni Infantino said that the World Cup changed

"the perception that the world has about Russia (...) the world, over four billion people, have been watching this World Cup, have been watching the beauties of this country, which is a country which is an incredibly, incredibly rich country, in terms of culture, in terms of history. And we have discovered it. The world has discovered it". (cited in Putin 2018c).

In other words, it helped to present a clean and positive image, making Russia look less frightening and hostile, thanks mainly to the Russian people, who presented a welcoming environment for all those in attendance, and to the relaxation of police detention and policing at protests during the World Cup (Walker 2018a).

To sum up, while the choice of Russia as the host has been challenged due to several controversial issues like discrimination, hooliganism, corruption, labor violations, and also Russia's involvement in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, in the end, the World Cup came out as an unquestionable public relations triumph for Vladimir Putin. As Rosenberg (2018) noted, "new stadiums, free train travel to venues and the absence of crowd violence has impressed visiting supporters. Russia has come across as friendly and hospitable: a stark contrast with the country's authoritarian image". Indeed, for one month, Russia got all the attention of the world for the good reasons and seized the opportunity of a very much beneficial international situation ever since 2014, on the eve of the Ukraine crisis and the annexation of Crimea. But as Nye (2013) observes, "attention depends on credibility". In other words, the successful hosting of the World Cup does not change the trend: in recent years democracy, human rights and freedom of speech in Russia have been under attack (Rosenberg 2018). As noted by Kolesnikov (2018b), "as a result of the World Cup, Russians will not become more free, the police will not stay friendly, and the regime will be no less authoritarian".

According to Human Rights Watch (2018), "the FIFA World Cup starting on June 14, 2018, will take place during the worst human rights crisis in Russia since the Soviet era". In a 44-page guide entitled "Russia: FIFA World Cup 2018 – Human Rights Guide for Reporters" summarized its concerns associated with Russia's preparations for and hosting of the World Cup, outlining broader human rights concerns in the country (Human Rights Watch 2018). Thus, sports and politics do mix, where the increased media attention is also used by activists and social movements to protest and raise awareness of political problems inside the hosting nations, such as human rights abuses and restrictions, censorship, labor violations related to the construction of the stadiums and sporting facilities, corruption, violence or repression (Castro 2018).

Finally, it should be noted that some analysts consider that the 2018 World Cup offers a distraction from the country's many social problems, especially for ordinary Russians, who have suffered economically in recent years. Hence, they are not convinced that the tournament "will increase Russia's international investment or trade, boost its tourism industry, or strengthen its people's commitment to physical fitness" (Zimbalist 2018). However, it is important to underline that cultural (and sports diplomacy) is part of a long-term strategy, whose success, benefits and effects are difficult to measure (US Department of State 2005, pp. 14-15). Arguably, the benefits and impact of Russia's strategy still remain to be seen.

Conclusion

One of the main aims of Russian foreign policy is to establish Moscow as one of the most important centers in the international arena. Simultaneously, it will continue to use its foreign policy to create in Russian society the image of the state as a great power. It has been argued in this article that sports and football were used by Russia as means to increase its soft power and to showcase a favorable image to both its foreign and domestic audiences, different than the one the West is used to. The analysis above shows how sports diplomacy is an important element of a long-term strategy to boost Russia's great power status, acknowledging the importance of sports and the hosting of sporting mega-events to soft power, and public and cultural diplomacy.

However, the analysis also underlines that Russia's ability to project its influence and "win hearts and minds" on a global scale is constrained, either by serious domestic problems and challenges, as by Russia's hard power image, which is why Russia still has a long way to go in terms of effectively implementing its soft power. In other words, Russia's soft power campaign is limited by the lack of coherence (and credibility) between the image that Russia aims to project and the country's actions on the ground (domestically and abroad). Thus, it will take more than the successful hosting of the World Cup to overcome the self-imposed limits on Russian soft power, such as lack of human rights (Human Rights Watch 2017), democracy, rule of law, lack of a dynamic civil society, corruption, among other problems, that undercut Russia's soft power in the West.

Hence, Russia's soft power strategy is not sufficient in the long run if the asymmetry between the rebranded image and its restrictive political system and actions endures (Castro 2018). That is to say that Russia's strategy has its limits and can back-fire, undermining its gains, explaining why it needs to be complemented with other soft-power tools in a long-term strategy if it wants to succeed.

In fact, both Russia and China "make the mistake of thinking that government is the main instrument of soft power" (Nye 2013). Actually, Russian soft power instruments are primarily government-based and controlled, disregarding that many soft power resources "are outside the control of governments, and their effects depend heavily on acceptance by the receiving audiences" (Nye 2004, p. 99). As Nye observes, "soft power resources often work indirectly by shaping the environment for policy, and sometimes take years to produce the desired outcomes" (2004, p. 99). Moreover, Russia, as China, lacks the many non-governmental organizations that generate much of America's soft power (Nye 2013). Finally, it is also worth mentioning that "sharp power threatens soft power" (Nye 2018a), entailing major consequences in Russia's ability to attract others.

Although difficult to measure and quantify the importance of soft power must 30

never be underestimated. In other words, despite the constraints, the value of the World Cup in altering many people's perceptions of the country should not be dismissed. Hence, the challenge ahead will be to convert the benefits of hosting the World Cup into long-term diplomatic gains. How that eventually plays out will, in large part, be determined by Russia's behavior and actions, both domestically and abroad. At the time of writing the Russian government is being severely criticized and Vladimir Putin's approval ratings are declining sharply over its recently announced pension reform plan, which will raise the retirement age to 65 for men and 63 for women in 2019 (Kolesnikov 2018c); Britain pressed the European Union to increase sanctions against Russia, saying it should stand "shoulder to shoulder" with the U.S., which hit Moscow with new economic restrictions this August (James 2018), and last, but not least, as investigations continue at Russia's ongoing meddling in the upcoming U.S. elections (Holland & Mason 2018).

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Article

The Russian Approach to Public Diplomacy and Humanitarian Cooperation

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Abstract

In Russia, Public Diplomacy [PD] is viewed as engaging foreign target audiences by fostering cooperation in political, economic, and cultural spheres. This is done with the purpose of promoting the national interests of the home country.¹ A hallmark feature of Russian public diplomacy is not using "countering" component against foreign propaganda/violent extremism, that is seen as the part of the strategic communications, not PD narrative. Unlike public diplomacy of Western countries Russian PD is not focused on exporting democracy but is aimed at promoting international dialogue and strategic stability among various international players. Russian PD is used mainly for attracting allies and building dialogue with the difficult partners. Through its public diplomacy and humanitarian cooperation Russia promotes the message that the nation state is the only reliable guarantor of international peace and stable world order.

This paper will also give an insight into humanitarian cooperation, which is widely used by the Post-Soviet states and although being to some exent synonymous to PD, it has some unique features while being even broader than PD. Besides including such traditional PD components as cooperation in the sphere of education, science, arts, sports, tourism and mass media, humanitarian cooperation also includes humanitarian assistance in crisis situations and development aid. Yet it has nothing in common with the humanitarian interventionism.

Keywords

Russian Public Diplomacy, Humanitarian Cooperation, Development Assistance

¹ Primarily security and economic ones. Also among top national interests are: Russia playing as global power aimed at supporting strategic stability, through promoting multivector world order and jointly beneficial partnership relationships. Although there is no clear definition, Russian national interestsmay be seen as security, strength of country; international positions, individual rights, development; see Kosolapov, N.A., 2016. 'Obshchesistemnye interesy vmesto nacional'nyh. Klassicheskie ponyatiya i rossijskaya specifika'. Russia in Global affairs.6 marta 2016. - http://globalaffairs.ru/number/Obschesistemnye-interesy-vmesto-natcionalnykh-18021

Introduction

In the paper, the author searches for a framework to analyse Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation: what are its goals, actors and instruments. Although Russian public diplomacy is attracting a growing research interest, it is still a much understudied field, even in Russia. Western perspectives usually analyze Russian PD though the lens of strategic communication and hybrid warfare, while in Russia PD is seen as an instrument of dialogue, not containment.

Since the end of the Cold War until early 2000s Russian programmes on involving foreign audience were substantially cut. It was a unilateral disarmament in this sphere. The necessity for using PD and humanitarian cooperation more actively was realized in Russia during the early 2000s (after the failure of messaging its position on NATO airstrikes of Serbia to the international community and after acquiring substantial financial opportunities due to the oil boom that had happened then). That is the reason why all mechanisms of its participation in the engagement with foreign audiences and international development assistance have only been recently re-established. This research will give an analysis of these initiatives and institutions, as well as include an overview of the main regional priorities of Russian PD and its humanitarian cooperation.

Public Diplomacy in the Russian Context

In different countries public diplomacy has various forms, methods, and aspects. In Russia, as well as throughout the majority of Post-Soviet countries, it is viewed as engaging foreign audiences through fostering of cooperation in political, economic, and cultural spheres with the purpose of promoting country's national interests Whereas in Western countries (especially the U.S.) PD combines two components - engaging allies (mainly through educational and cultural activities) and confronting enemies (such as violent extremism and foreign propaganda through the use of strategic communications) [Tsvetkova 2016]² in Russia, PD is perceived as aiming to create an objective and favorable image of country [Borishpoletz 2016]³, without undermining the efforts of other actors [Zonova 2012]⁴. The point of this is that it is seen in Russia that public diplomacy can hardly be combined with strategic communications, seen as having influential channels to work with foreign audiences, the necessity of which was realized in Russia after 1999. This occurred as a result of "CNN effect," in which Russia could not effectively present its position on the NATO airstrikes on Serbia to the international

² Tsvetkova, N.A, 2016, 'New Forms and Elements of US Public Diplomacy'. International Trends, 13(3), pp. 121-133.

³ Borishpoletz, K.P, 2016, 'Public diplomacy in EEU region: understanding the phenomenon and its development'. MGIMO Journal, 5 (44), 2015, 42-55.

⁴ Zonova, T.V., 'Public diplomacy and its actors'. http://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/analytics/public-diplomacy-and-its-actors, 22 August 2012 (accessed 18 July 2018).

public. As a result of a number of failures in shaping global public opinion in respect to its policy agendas Russia developed its own international broadcasting tools such as Russia Today, Sputnik news agency, TASS news agency and Russia Direct. However, an analysis of Russia's international broadcasting tools which are frequently criticized by Western outlets as propaganda is beyond the scope of this paper due to the fact that in Russia, it is seen as more a part of the strategic communications narrative, rather than PD.

It is necessary to note that the term "public diplomacy" is not widely used in official Russian discourse. The most recent foreign policy concept states - "developing, including through **public diplomacy**, international, cultural, and humanitarian cooperation as a means to build up dialogue among civilisations, to achieve consensus, and to ensure understanding among peoples with a particular emphasis on inter-religious dialogue" and "greater participation of Russia's academics and experts in the dialogue with foreign specialists on global politics and international security as one of the areas of **public diplomacy** development"⁵. The Russian original of this text uses the terms "obshchestvennaya," "people to people (P2P)," and "citizen" rather than that of public diplomacy. Due to this, priority is given to the practice adopted by the Soviets, known as "people-to-people" (P2P) and "citizen diplomacy," which is more familiar to the current generation of decision-makers. Nevertheless, the specific foundation established by Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA] is called the "Public diplomacy Foundation."

However, Russian experts and specialists working in the field distinguish all of these terms separately. We can then suggest the following scheme.

Graphic 1: Diplomacy/Public Diplomacy/Citizen Diplomacy Scheme



Source: Anna Velikaya

⁵ Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs(MID), 2016, 1 December, Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, Approved by President of the Russian Federation V.Putin on 30 November 2016,Document no.2232- 01-12-2016. www.mid.ru/en/foreignpolicy/official_documents/-/asset publisher/ CptICkB6BZ29/ content/id/2542248.

According to this scheme, Citizen or P2P diplomacy deals with grassroots initiatives: twin cities, cultural exchanges between neighboring countries (e.g. festival of the young composers of Russia and Kazakhstan), etc.

Public diplomacy, on the other hand, is closer to the goals of official diplomacy often intersecting with Track II diplomacy (e.g. Russian – US expert meetings, such as the most recent Russian-U.S. Conference on Arms Control hosted by the US-Canada Studies Institute, RAS, and the Gorchakov Foundation).

So, the practice and terminology of PD is different in Russia and it is not the same as its Western alternatives, as it includes the elements of engagement, but it does not include the elements of *countering (foreign propaganda/terrorist threats*⁶), which are supposed to be the part of the strategic communications narrative. Besides, the term is interpreted in a much narrow sense in Russia in comparison to other countries [Velikaya 2018]⁷, as far as in Russia there are separate spheres for public and citizen diplomacy. Moreover, a lot of PD initiatiatives are part of the humanitarian cooperation (that will be analysed below). So, if in Western terminology public diplomacy includes citizen diplomacy and humanitarian cooperation (as well as the strategic communication component on confronting enemies), in Russian tradition these terms are separated, although the recent trends demonstrate that maybe in the nearest time there will be some merger of the terms (mainly due to the *digital diplomacy*, which unites public diplomacy and strategic communications and due to the hawkish aspirations of some politicians, willing to show "Kuzka's mother" to foreign rivals through various means, including through PD).

Humanitarian Cooperation

Both Russia and Post-Soviet countries have a unique approach towards humanitarian cooperation: it is seen as being more broader than international development cooperation and international aid or even broader than public diplomacy. Meanwhile it is necessary to empathise that humanitarian cooperation has nothing in common with the Western doctrines of humanitarian interventionism and the responsibility-to-protect (R2P) used as the pretext for the regyme changes, seen by Russia and its allies as one of the practices undermining stable world order. Humanitarian cooperation covers cooperation in the sphere of education, science, arts, sports, tourism, and mass media. These are the areas that are traditionally seen as part of PD in other countries [Simons 2018]⁸.

⁶ The Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM). - https://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/regs/fam/

 ⁷ Velikaya, A.A. 'Public diplomacy and Humanitarian cooperation in the context of modern international trends', in Panov A., Lebedeva O. Public diplomacy of foreign states, Aspekt-Press, 2018.
 [Publichnaya diplomatiya zarubezhnyh stran. Pod red. A. Panova, O.Lebedevoj. Aspekt-press, 2018].
 ⁸ Simons, G., 'Media and Public Diplomacy', in Tsygankov, A. (Ed.) Routledge handbook of Russian Foreign Policy, Routledge, pp. 199 – 217.



Source: Anna Velikaya

So, although humanitarian cooperation is a foreign policy instrument, because of the diversity of its actions it attracts a great variety of activities and actors involved.

As far as it is hardly possible to cover all the Russian humanitarian cooperation activities in frames of one article here we would like to highlight its international humanitarian aid dimension. From 1954 through 1989, the Soviet Union had spent on it \$144.3 billion. This consisted of the constructions of 3575 objects (schools, hospitals, infrastructural objects). To illustrate, the Soviet Union funded the Tehri dam in India, the Aswan dam in Egypt, the Salung tunnel in Afghanistan, and the Gelora Bung Karno Stadium in Indonesia. It was the price they paid in order to have the other countries to choose a socialist orientation. After the collapse of the Soviet Union at the beginning of 1990s and up through 2005, Russia itself was a recipient of humanitarian aid, and only since 2006 has it again become an international donor⁹. This is why all of the mechanisms of its participation in the process of international development aid are currently under construction.

Until 2014, Russian aid was given through the international UN-affiliated structures, World Economic Forum and World Bank. However, after 2014, Moscow had realized that the huge sums of money being spent by Russia on International aid had to be labeled "from Russia with love". Ukrainian events have revealed then that regardless of all Russian efforts, the great part of the civil society of the neighboring country is strictly opposed not only to Russian policy but towards Russia's vision of the world order. The reasons for this trend should be scrupulously analysed. When considering representative Ukrainian example, it should first be mentioned that Russia's approach was based on special relationships with Ukrainian elites while neglecting work with civil society and the academic community. In the last two decades, Russia has invested more than two hundred billion dollars in the Ukrainian economy¹⁰, while the United States has invested five

⁹ Kosachev. K. 'Russia and International development assistance', RIAC, 30 June 2014. http://russiancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/comments/rossiya-i-sodeystvie-mezhdunarodnomu-razvitiyu (accessed 15 July 2018).

¹⁰ Ulyukaev A., Development of the Russian Economy Will Depend on the Extent of Stimulation and Support of the Economic Growth., http://forumspb.com/bfx-cc/system/uploads/docs/SPIEF_Re-

billion dollars "in the development of democratic institutions and skills in promoting civil society and a good form of government"11. Therefore, Russian donation policy towards Ukraine has proved to be inefficient. Besides, Russian NGOs were working only with the so-called "young leaders," neglecting the work with the professional or academic society. Maybe Western experience was also taken in mind: economic aid to different countries that could be seen as a positive story does not guarantee loyalty - for example, Pakistan receives annually \$500 billion of humanitarian aid, while 74% of the population perceive the US as the rival (in 2012, compare to 64 % in 2009)¹². This realization is what led to the adoption of the concept of the Russian State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance. It has moved its priorities from international institutions towards a more regional direction (like it was in Soviet times while constructing infrastructural objects abroad). Russia has started pursusing an active and targeted policy in the field of international development assistance which served "the national interests of the country, contributed to the stabilization of the socio-economic and political situation in partner states and the formation of good-neighbourly relations with neighbouring states, facilitated the elimination of existing, and the potential hotbeds of tension and conflict, especially in the neighbouring regions, as well as helped strengthen the country's positions in the world community and, eventually, create favourable external conditions for the development of the Russian Federation"¹³. In this regard a landmark Partnership Framework Agreement was signed between the Russian Federation and United Nations Development Programme [UNDP]¹⁴ creating a foundation for a long-term strategic partnership with Russia which has marked a transition to its role as a donor to UNDP. Russian humanitarian cooperation has become more region-oriented and targetfocused.

After analysing theoretic framework of Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation it would be necessary to highlight several key points of its realization, namely - *message, actors involved and regional priorities.*

Message

Russia promotes a message of support for multilateralism, the central role of the

view_2014.pdf (accessed 2 June 2018).

¹¹ Nuland, V., Remarks at the U.S. – Ukraine Foundation Conference. Available: http://www.state. gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2013/dec/218804.htm.

¹² Rugh, W. 2014. Front Line Public Diplomacy. How US Embassies Communicate with Foreign Publics.

¹³ Concept of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance. Approved by Decree No.259 of the President of the Russian Federation of April 20, 2014, http:// www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/ id/64542 (accessed 20 June 2018).

¹⁴ Russia-UNDP Partnership, http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/about_us/partners/russia-undp-partnership.html (accessed 2 August 2018).

United Nations in international affairs with the role of safeguarding nation state's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity¹⁵, and the non-interference in internal affairs. With this message, Russia looks for partners to help promote this message – be it EAEU (Eurasian Economic Union), SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation), BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), or other integration formats.

Russia's public diplomacy and humanitarian cooperation are and will countiue to work to counter what G.F Kennan called "the legalistic-moralistic approach" to international problems. Russia insists that coercive democratization can bring nothing but harm to states with a specific way of development and that the nation-state is the only reliable guarantor of world order. This is the difference of Russian PD, unlike American and other Western efforts it is not focused on exporting democracy (liberal democracy). PD events usually attract representatives of official institutions ana academia, not those who can be seen as opposition. Russia has learnt its lessons from the mistakes and miscalculations of Western PD. When its message sent abroad - that values prevail over national interests - on the one hand created loyal followers in different countries, but on the other - caused the growth of anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism worldwide. E.g. the current migration crisis (that according to EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini¹⁶ and the ex-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry¹⁷ encompasses a total of 12 million people) is seen by some Europeans as caused by the U.S. nationbuiliding experiments in the Middle East and Northern Africa, coercive democratization. So, humanitarian interventionism effects badly Western public diplomacy initiatives. As it was said by ex-President Obama, "When we deploy troops, there's always a sense on the part of other countries that, even where necessary, sovereignty is being violated"18.

And therefore Russia's position on Syria, Iraq, and Libya translated through PD and strategic communications mechanisms was warmly welcomed by millions of ordinary people all over the world. However, Russia still has much-untapped potential in offering its own framework on international engagement through PD methods. Besides protecting the "free world" by countering coersive democratization another Russian message is protecting traditional values. According to

¹⁵ 10th BRICS Summit Johannseburg declaration, http://www.brics2018.org.za/sites/default/files/ Documents/JOHANNESBURG%20DECLARATION%20-%2026%20JULY%202018%20as%20 at%2007h11.pdf (accessed 1 Augusut 2018).

¹⁶ The worst is yet to come? http://sputniknews.com/europe/20150915/1027014933. html#ixzz42KuNjEQg

¹⁷ Belfer Center Conversation with Secretary of State John Kerry. Available at: http://belfercenter.ksg. harvard.edu/publication/25886/belfer_center_conversation_with_secretary_of_state_john_kerry.html

¹⁸ Jeffrey Goldberg. The Obama Doctrine. http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/ the-obama-doctrine/471525/

Professor Nicholas J. Cull¹⁹, when analyzing these Russian PD efforts we should admit that they find understanding in many corners of the world. Russian image as protector of traditional values is promoted by Russian authorities: according to President Putin, today, when traditional values are already being eroded in many countries more and more people are looking at Russia as a bearer of immutable traditional values and a healthy human lifestyle²⁰. Russian PD machine raises these questions on various international platforms: from the young leaders forums to the side events of the UN-affiliated meetings.

Actors

In Russia, PD and humanitarian cooperation are closely correlated with national interests, national security, and foreign policy goals – making them instruments of Russian foreign policy that are usually implemented by government-affiliated institutions.

In the last decade, Russia has made serious efforts in the sphere of advancing its public diplomacy practice. Significant status was given to the Rossotrudnichestvo Federal agency²¹. Structures such as the Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation²², the Russian Council, the Russkiy mir Foundation²³, and the Fund to Support and Protect the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad²⁴ were created. New media projects like Russia direct²⁵ and Russia beyond the headlines²⁶ were launched

Still, the key actors within the sphere of PD and humanitarian cooperation are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Rossotrudnichestvo Federal Agency (part of the MFA body), the Gorchakov Foundation, the Russian International Affairs Council and, the Ministry for Emergency Situations. Also, Russian NGOs (e.g. the Russian Humanitarian Mission, Creative Diplomacy and The Institute for Literary Translation) and think tanks (the Valdai Club²⁷, PIR-Center²⁸, the Russian Committee for BRICS research²⁹, and the Council on Foreign and Defence

¹⁹ History of Modern Public Diplomacy. The Origins of the Founding of the United States Information Agency (USIA), 26 February 2018, https://www.csis.org/events/history-modern-public-diplomacy (accessed 1 May 2018).

²⁰ Vladimir Putin. Meeting of Russian Orthodox Church Bishops' Council. December, 1, 2017. http:// en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/56255

²¹ Website found at http://rs.gov.ru

²² Website found at http://gorchakovfund.ru

²³ Website found at http://russiancouncil.ru

²⁴ Website found at http://pravfond.ru

²⁵ Website found at http://www.russia-direct.org

²⁶ Website found at ttp://rbth.com

²⁷ Website found at http://valdaiclub.com/

²⁸ Website found at http://www.pircenter.org/en/

²⁹ Website found at http://www.nkibrics.ru/

Policy³⁰, Network of Eurasian studies³¹, Berlek-Center³²) are active participants of Russian PD. Russian academic, cultural and sports diplomacy are also part of this process. But generally we can assume that Russian public diplomacy is state-centric and consists of the following state-based PD initiatives.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates a substantial part of Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation. Russia spends around \$120 million annually via its mechanisms in order to sustain more than 45 humanitarian operations around the globe. "The annual volume of Russian aid within the WFP exceeds \$30 million. Apart from that, humanitarian assistance is sent through the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO)"33. Through the MFA, Russian humanitarian aid is distributed mainly to international organizations specializing in this sphere. Besides, the MFA coordinates the work of other structures that will be analysed below. Russsian MFA also promotes new PD formats, for example, a network of Eurasian, BRICS, European, and the Young Diplomats Forum. The First Global Forum of Young Diplomats was held in Sochi in 2017 as part of the World Festival of Youth and Students. The event was the culmination of over four years of work by the Russian Foreign Ministry's Council of Young Diplomats, who held similar regional forums in which only young diplomats took part³⁴. In total, the final document of the Global Forum on the establishment of the International Association of Young Diplomats was supported by more than sixty states. Besides, somen women diplomats are said to be working on the concept of the International women diplomacts league. Such projects are rather effective in promoting country's PD among foreign audience.

Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo) operates under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

It is aimed towards the implementation of the state policy of international humanitarian cooperation and the promotion of an "objective" (that's the word preferred by Sergey Lavrov to "positive"³⁵) image of contemporary Russia. It is represented in eighty different states across the world by ninety-five representa-

³⁰ Website found at http://svop.ru/

³¹ Website found at http://sibir-eurasia.ru, http://evrazia-povolzhye.ru,

³² Website found at http://berlek-nkp.com.

³³ Russian humanitarian missions have helped more than 100 countries, UN Security Council hears, 13 October 2017, RT, https://www.rt.com/politics/406564-russian-envoy-to-un-reports (accessed 20 June 2018).

³⁴ Press release on the results of the First Global Forum of Young Diplomats. 24 October 2017 http:// www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2920079 (accessed 1 July 2018).

³⁵ To read this document please go to http://mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b4325699900 5bcbb3/5f469b8e1a039a1b44257d5000585728!OpenDocument.

tive offices: seventy-two Russian centers of science and culture in sixty-two states, twenty-three representatives of the Agency serving in Russian Embassies in twenty-one states. Rossotrudnichestvo Representative Offices abroad provide "technical assistance to recipient states, including the exchange of knowledge, skills, scientific and technical expertise in order to develop institutional and human capacities of the partner states"³⁶.

The agency promotes Russian education services and extends cooperation between educational institutions of partner states. Rossotrudnichestvo launched the RUSSIA.STUDY project, which operates in eleven different languages, with the aim of attracting potential students to its universities. Russia provides annually fifteen thousand places for foreigners to study for free (this number is not so great, as far as only Romania annually gives Moldavia 5000 fully covered scholarships). The agency also pays great attention to working with alumni of Russian (Soviet) higher education institutions, the number of which exceeds five-hundred thousand³⁷.

One of the principal guidelines of action of Rossotrudnichestvo is international development assistance (IDA). To implement this task, it coordinates Russian work with the Russian - UNDP Trust Fund for Development. It promotes Russian assistance towards neighboring states shifting from the non-specified aid under the aegis of different international organizations towards targeted aid.

Unfortunately, Rossotrudnichestvo has offices abroad but some representatives demonstrate disrespect for local culture and languages. This seen with their lack of knowledge of local culture and language after years of staying within the country (especially in Post-Soviet space) or instead of organizing conferences they are annually hosting craft doll exhibitions, calling it the most bright event of the year³⁸.

The Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation (with Executive director Leonid Drachevsky, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1998 – 1999, Minister for CIS affairs, 1999 - 2000) was established by the MFA in 2010 to promote Russian public diplomacy initiatives. Its activities have had two dimensions: giving grants to Russian and foreign NGOs and hosting academic events in Russia and abroad. The head of the board of trustees is the Minister of Foreign Affairs. As it was mentioned by Sergey Lavrov recently, the priority of the foundation's activities is currently the consolidation of ties in the post-Soviet space, the development

³⁶ International Development Assistance. Rossotrudnichestvo, http://rs.gov.ru/en/activities/1 (accessed 10 June 2018).

³⁷ Currently in the neighbouring countries generation of decision-makers and leading experts are alumni of Soviet or Russian universities, since then having strong humanitarian ties with Russia and promoting PD dialogue of their countries with Russia (but the situation is about to change due to the natural causes and Russia's insufficient resources on PD in 1990-s).

³⁸ Personal notices of the author.

of ties between Russia and Euro-Atlantic countries, and the promotion of international cooperation in countering new challenges and threats³⁹. It is worth mentioning the Track II diplomacy initiatives conducted by the Foundation – e.g. the international conference "Russian-American Relations: 210 Years" organized jointly with the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of US and Canadian Studies and the Kennan Institute.

The Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) (with President Igor Ivanov, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1998 to 2004) is a diplomatic think tank that is aimed at "strengthening peace, friendship, and solidarity between peoples, preventing international conflicts, promoting conflict resolution and crisis settlement, and operating as a link between the state, scholarly community, business, and civil society in an effort to find foreign policy solutions to complex conflict issues". Its mission is to facilitate Russia's peaceful integration into the global community, partly by organizing greater cooperation between Russian scientific institutions and foreign analytical centers/scholars on the major issues of international agenda⁴⁰.

The Ministry of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies, and the Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters (the Emergencies Ministry)

Russian humanitarian assistance within the frame of crisis response is conducted by the Emergencies Ministry, within which is established the Agency for Support and Coordination of Russian Participation in International Humanitarian Operations (EMERCOM)⁴¹. Its tasks are to support and coordinate participation in international humanitarian operations, which are carried out under the aegis of the UN and other international organizations. Since 2014, this Agency is a technical partner of the UN World Food Programme. It coordinates the National Russian Corps of emergency humanitarian response that has given help to sixty different countries and participated in the implementation of dozents of International humanitarian rescue operations abroad (in Afghanistan, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda, Transdniestria, Bolivia, Myanmar, and many other countries)⁴². The Emergencies Ministry specialists also train foreign representatives in the educational centers of the Ministry (e.g. the professional development of Kirghiz specialists⁴³).

³⁹ Sergey Lavrov held a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Gorchakov Fund, https://gorchakovfund.ru/en/news/view/sergey-lavrov-held-a-meeting-of-the-board-of-trustees-of-the-gorchakovfund (accessed 10 May 2018).

⁴⁰ RIAC. General Information, http://russiancouncil.ru/en/about/ (accessed 12 May 2018).

⁴¹ Website can be found at http://en.mchs.ru.

⁴² National Russian Corps of Emergency Humanitarian Response, http://en.mchs.ru/mass_media/ news/item/269703 (accessed 1 June 2018).

⁴³ Emergency Ministers of Russia and Kirgizia agree on further cooperation in crisis management. 20

We can outline that within the frame of the Russian Emergencies ministry, Russian humanitarian assistance is given towards conflict-affected societies or towards states facing emergency situations. An example can be seen in the recently established Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center - a joint project of Russian and Serbian government – where rescuers from all Balkan countries are educated on the correct actions to be taken in emergency situations. The center is described as "Being an active participant in the social life of Serbia. It cooperates with the non-governmental, religious and veterans' organizations, schools, and media. In the future, the Center is seen as a fully functional international structure that provides help in the field of emergency humanitarian response to Balkan countries that are interested in it"⁴⁴. This Center is a vivid example of the Russian humanitarian assistance to the Balkan region, which is of huge historical importance to the country.

Non-governmental Organizations [NGOs]

Unfortunately, Russian civil society is not widely involved in public diplomacy. There are various reasons for this - from the administrative barriers to the misunderstanding of businesses on the importance of nation branding. We are also witnessing the lack of actors, especially of independent ones. Russian civil society involved in international cooperation is legally cut from Western finances, while local resources may be received mainly from administrative institutions⁴⁵. In the result, as it is mentioned by Professor Tatiana Zonova, "currently, there are 51 Russian NGOs that enjoy consultative status with the ECOSOC - this amounts to only 1.5% of the total number of NGOs worldwide with such a status"46. Enthusiasts coming into this field can hardly survive in this atmosphere. Unfortunately, Russia does not give broad chances for self-realization for the people involved in its humanitarian and public diplomacy programmes. Russia does not have a lot of international companies or foreign-oriented NGOs where these alumni could be working However, there is growing support and understanding for the necessity of attracting active people into this field. The Minister of Foreign Affairs annually meets with the representatives of the foreign-oriented NGOs⁴⁷.

March 2018, http://en.mchs.ru/mass_media/news/item/33594820 (accessed 25 June 2018).

⁴⁴ Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center. Website can be found at http://en.ihc.rs/about.

⁴⁵ Mnogograntnoe tvorchestvo. 2 June 2018. https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3649014 (accessed 15 July 2018).

⁴⁶ Zonova, T.V., 'Will NGOs survive in the Future?', 16 November 2013, Russia in Global Affairs, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/book/Will-NGOs-Survive-In-the-Future-16202.

⁴⁷ Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's remarks at a meeting with representatives of Russian non-profit organisations, Moscow, 15 June 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/ cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3260122 (accessed 20 June 2018).

Academic Diplomacy

Since around the Cold War, Russian academic society was actively involved in fostering public diplomacy dialogue, not only with the Warsaw Pact but also with NATO member countries. Moscow was hosting various academic conferences; Soviet scholars were goodwill ambassadors of their country. Here, we can remember the example of the physicist Kapitza who was staying in Cambridge – he was one of Lord Rutherford's brightest students. Regardless of the difficult relationships between Britain and the USSR, the cutting-edge Mond laboratory was sold to the USSR in 1935. And Lord Rutherford's favorite student and dearest friend became a Nobel-Prize winner.

Russian scholars and academic diplomacy held a serious role during the détente movement. Expert communities had a positive experience when it came to drafting the Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), negotiating its' permanent extension (1995), minimizing the outcomes of military nuclear programs in Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, India, Iraq, Pakistan, South Africa. The Dartmouth conference, the Aspen security forum, the Russian-US working group on the non-proliferation (NPT) and strategic stability, the Elba group, IMEMO – Carnegie 2012-Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative, and the Fletcher-MGIMO Conference on U.S.-Russia Relations – are important parts of the Russian-US public diplomacy dialogue⁴⁸.

Regardless administrative difficulties, Russian science is rapidly developing: Russia is one of seven leading countries in terms of its number of Nobel Prize winners. In addition, it is thirteenth of two-hundred and thirty-nine in the SCImago Journal & Country Rank global science rating⁴⁹. Russia has and continues to play a leading role in space exploration and has some of the safest nuclear technology. These achievements contribute significantly to promoting Russia as one of the major scientific powers in the world, but these resources are quite underused in the PD sphere (some of its reasons will be covered below). A vivid positive example of academic diplomacy is the Primakov readings⁵⁰ held annually by The Primakov Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO) which are aimed at promoting cooperation between the leading international relations scholars and decision-makers. It is ranked by the Pennsylvania University Global think tank index⁵¹ as among top ten world discussion platforms. Such initiatives contribute greatly towards Rus-

⁴⁸ Velikaya, A.A., 'Russian–U.S. public diplomacy dialogue: a view from Moscow', Place Branding and Public Diplomacy (2018), pp. 1-4. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41254-018-0102-1.

⁴⁹ Scimago Journal & Country Rank. https://www.scimagojr.com/countryrank.php.

⁵⁰ International Think Tank Summit "Primakov Readings". https://www.imemo.ru/en/Primakov_ Readings.

⁵¹ The Global Go To Think Tank Index – 2018, University of Pennsylvania. https://repository.upenn. edu/think_tanks/

sia's public diplomacy.

As for the cultural dimension of Russian public diplomacy, Russian literature, ballet, and art are internationally recognized. Names such as Feodor Dostoevsky, Anton Chekhov, Petr Tchaikovsky, Sergey Rachmaninoff, Dmitry Shostakovich, Georgiy Sviridov, and Sergey Prokofiev are among the best advocates for Russia. When Valeriy Gergiev and Denis Matsuev performed at Carnegie Hall during the current deterioration of the Russian-American relationship, they were warmly welcomed by the New York crème de la crème. In this case, artists acted as goodwill ambassadors of their country. According to Simon Anholt, he first heard of Russia's capital through the phrase "Oh, to go to Moscow, to Moscow!" from Anton Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*⁵². Moscow for him was a place one had to strive to get to, regardless of anti-Soviet propaganda efforts. Russian culture is a powerful resource for PD and humanitarian cooperation, but it also has much-untapped potential⁵³.

If we look at the sports dimension of Russian public diplomacy we can say that Russia is using it rather efficiently⁵⁴: be it Universiade-2013, Olympic games-2014, or FIFA World Cup-2018. As President of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach told in his interview, "We arrived with great respect for the rich and varied history of Russia. We leave as friends of the Russian people"⁵⁵. Unfortunately, regardless of the active work in this sphere, the partial disqualification of the Russian Olympic team and the whole Paralympic team during Rio Olympic games – 2016 had to some extent undermined their positive achievements.

When analysing Russian public diplomacy actors, it is necessary to summarize that the main problem of Russian public diplomacy is a lack of strategic planning. Russian PD needs to undergo a thorough audit. It is necessary to attract well-informed, as well as critical scholars and practitioners, who are capable of making their assessments and suggestions heard by the decision-makers. Although currently Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation is coordinated mainly by government-affiliated institutions and NGOs, it could involve a wide array of external business and cultural agents.

⁵² Simon, A., 'Problema Rossii v tom, chto ee schitayut obuzoj', 29 December 2012, https://snob.ru/selected/entry/56182.

⁵³ Velikaya, A.A., 'Nation-branding: the case of Russia', http://rethinkingrussia.ru/en/2017/08/ nation-branding-the-case-of-russia (accessed 20 July 2018).

⁵⁴ Velikaya, A.A., 'Russian sport diplomacy: nation-branding and peacebuilding', https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/russian-sports-diplomacy-nation-branding-peacebuilding.

⁵⁵ Olympics closing ceremony is trip through Russian culture. 24 February 2014, CNN, https://edition.cnn.com/2014/02/23/sport/olympics-closing-ceremony/index.html (accessed 1 August 2018).

Regional Priorities

Regional priorities of Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation may be divided into two groups: the first one is Russia's top priority which entails a number of countries under former Soviet Union. The second one is other countries that need foreign aid, are considered difficult partners and those that are interested in dialogue. There is a notable ideological alliance with the former while the latter group represents nations that Russia is seeking to build better relations outside of the Soviet sphere of influence.

The Eurasian region is the region of top priority for Russian foreign policy goals⁵⁶ and the vast amount of its efforts abroad are focused in close proximity to it. The foreign policy priorities of the Russian Federation include "developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation with member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]." Russia views "strengthening and expanding integration within the Eurasian Economic Union [EAEU]" as a key objective. Humanitarian cooperation is also important in its relationships with the Eropean Union: Russia's strategic priority is to "establish a common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific by harmonizing and aligning interests of European and Eurasian integration processes, which is expected to prevent the emergence of dividing lines on the European continent"⁵⁷.

A great amount of Russian PD attempts is realized through the **Commonwealth** of independent states (CIS, member states – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan).

The key multilateral mechanism for conducting the humanitarian cooperation of the CIS is the Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCCO) created in 2006. Its mission is to contribute to the further development of humanitarian cooperation and intercultural communication in the Commonwealth of Independent States in the area of education, science, culture, mass communications, information, archives, sports, tourism, and youth matters.

IFESCCO operates in close cooperation with the Council for Humanitarian Cooperation of the Member States of the CIS (the "Council for Humanitarian Cooperation"). Since its establishment, it has supported over one-hundred international projects in the area of humanitarian cooperation, the main of which are:

⁵⁶ Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs(MID), 2016, 1December, Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, Approved by President of the Russian Federation V.Putin on 30 November 2016,Document no.2232- 01-12-2016. www.mid.ru/en/foreignpolicy/official_documents/-/asset publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/ content/id/2542248.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

the annual forum of Creative and Scientific youth, Intellectuals of the CIS Member States, prizes awarded by the Council for Humanitarian Cooperation and IFESCCO, the Youth Symphony Orchestra of the CIS, higher education courses of the CIS for young scientists, international summer school for young historians from the CIS counties, trainings for CIS countries in museum management, theater fairs and film festivals⁵⁸. The humanitarian agenda of the CIS states is quite rich and is one of the key spheres of cooperation in this integration body. Multilateral and bilateral projects are rather diverse, but making them known to the general public is very important. For example, fifty percent of the budget of the Union state of Russia and Belarus is spent on humanitarian projects⁵⁹.

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) member states such as Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan also comprise of the top priority in Russian public diplomacy. The integration process of EAEU has been actively developing since its creation on January 1, 2015. In 2018, Russia assumed the chairmanship of the EAEU bodies and has offered an ambitious humanitarian agenda. It proposes new humanitarian initiatives and projects: the formation of a common digital space for the Union and the increase in links among the five countries in the field of nuclear energy, renewable energy sources, the environment, medicine, space exploration, tourism, and sports. It pursues a more spot-on use of the financial resources of the Eurasian Development Bank and the Eurasian Stabilization and Development Fund in order to finance intergovernmental projects. These were not originally part of the integration agenda, but, in the modern world, it is hard to imagine sustained economic development without cooperation in these areas⁶⁰. While this Moscow initiative of a high integrative effect finds understanding in Minsk, it does not meet such a warm welcome in Astana, which views the EAEU as mainly for economic integration structure. Still, according to Sergei Shukhno, Director of the Department for the Development of Integration, the Eurasian Economic Commission's humanitarian agenda is supported more and more by the scientific and expert community of the member states of the Union. For example, in April 2016, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the leading universities of the member states of the Union for the establishment of the "Eurasian Network University"61. As it is mentioned by Kazakhstan scholar Chokan Laumullin, the key task of EAEU countries is creating joint scientific

⁵⁸ The Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IF-ESCCO). Website can be found at http://www.mfgs-sng.org/eng/

⁵⁹ Rapota, G., 'Sojuznoe stroitel'stvo trebuet simbioza praktiki i nauki', 10 April 2017, https://mgimo. ru/about/news/smi/rapota-soyuznoe-stroitelstvo-trebuet-simbioza-praktiki-i-nauki (accessed 20 April 2017).

⁶⁰ Priorities of Russian EAEU presidency in 2018. http://www.mid.ru/evraziyskaya_economiches-kaya_integraciya/-/asset_publisher/cb4udKPo5lBa/content/id/3064690 (accessed 10 May 2018).

⁶¹ 'In 2018 the Eurasian integration agenda will be rich'. http://greater-europe.org/archives/4535 (accesed 20 May 2018).

centers for advanced studies⁶². Thus, the prospects of including a humanitarian component into the integration process are on the agenda, but are under question in the discussion of the expert communities and the decision-makers of the five member countries. Still, a serious problem for the PD and humanitarian cooperation of Eurasian states is that administrative structures have enough resources for international cooperation, while academic institutions are facing a lack of finances.

Another priority PD area is **The Greater Eurasia** - a flexible integration platform with the involvement of the members of the Eurasian Economic Union [EAEU], the Shanghai Cooperation Organization [SCO], and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN⁶³]. Russian foreign policy doctrine also says about the prospects of the commin humanitarian space with EU: from the Atlantic to the Pacific⁶⁴.

But regardless of the great amount of these integration projects we can assume that given its foreign policy priority, the Eurasian region is crucially important for Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation initiatives. These are realized through various programmes and institutions. Additionally, a substantial part of Russian foreign aid goes to this region through the Russia-UNDP Partnership.

Table 1: Examples of Programmes and Projects Financed by the Russian Federation in the Eurasian Region

Comprehensive development of Naryn Oblast in Kyr- gyzstan	US\$3.5 million	2014-2016
Livelihood Improvement of Rural Population in Nine Districts of Tajikistan	US\$6.7 million	2014-2017
Assisting the Government of the Republic of Belarus in accession to WTO (the fourth phase)	US\$589,680	2014-2017
Socio-economic development of uranium tailing com- munities in Kyrgyzstan	US\$ 1.476 million	2015-2016
Integrated support to rural development: building resil- ient communities in Tavush region, Armenia	US\$5 million	2015-2020
Building national capacities for establishing animal's identification and tracking in Kyrgyzstan	US\$450,000	2016
Technical Support to Improve Sanitary, Phytosanitary, and Veterinary Safety, Including the Work towards Kyrgyzstan's Accession to the Customs Union	\$175,000	2014-2015

⁶² Chokan Laumullin interview, 11 August 2017, http://eurasia.expert/authors/chokan-laumulin (accessed 2 June 2018).

⁶³ Moscow welcomes EU's participation in 'Greater Eurasia' project, says Lavrov. 2 August 2016, http://tass.com/economy/1015826, (accessed 1 june 2018).

⁶⁴ Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs(MID), 2016, 1 December, Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, Approved by President of the Russian Federation V.Putin on 30 November 2016,Document no.2232- 01-12-2016. www.mid.ru/en/foreignpolicy/official_documents/-/asset publisher/ CptICkB6BZ29/ content/id/2542248.

Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary measures of the Republic of Tajikistan	\$50,000	2015
Capacity building of professionals of the Kyrgyz Re- public for the organization of the system of cattle iden- tification and tracing in Kyrgyzstan in the framework of participation in the Eurasian Economic Union	\$449,850	2016

Source: Russia – UNDP Partnership. http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/ home/about_us/partners/russia-undp-partnership.html

Still, we should highlight several problems that Russian PD is dealing in the region. First of all, we are witnessing insufficient strategic advising and capacity building in crucial areas. Russia focuses on the general public or politicians, demonstrating disrespect for the young elites, while it is actively engaged by Western and Chineses public diplomacy institutions. Years later to-be political and business leaders not involved in Russian PD programmes can be not interested in political and economic cooperation of Russia and their states.

Secondly, some Russian initiatives in the region are very disputable. Russia is seen to be fond of establishing monuments rather than going to the universities of its partner states.

Thirdly, Russian strategic asset in the region – Russian language – suffers because of some bureaucratic mistakes. The title of the key foundation promoting Russian language 'Russkiy Mir' (Russian World/Russia Peace) holds a negative connotation in its neighboring countries (we can imagine how the American Englishlanguage promoting structure 'Pax Americana' would be perceived in Mexico). It was created in addition to the world recognized Pushkin State Russian Language Institute (Pushkin Institute) founded by the USSR in 1966 and has 300,000 alumni only in Cuba.

And finally, we are often witnessing an "inside-out" not "outside-in" approach: the actions in this sphere are taken according to the way Russians think foreign "movers and shakers" see them, not the way they really perceive it. Russian economic weakness endangers its attractiveness and PD efforts. Its brands are not as successful as the Western or Chinese ones. An example of this is seen with the Russian brand Sberbank (with the state participation) which costs about nine billion dollars, while the strongest US brand, Google (the private one), is evaluated about \$109 billion⁶⁵. So, the "Kitchen debate" (1950-s Rusisa-US industrial competition during joint cultural exchanges) for hearts and minds of citizens of Eurasian countries possibly would not be in favor of Russia and that endangers

⁶⁵ Brand strength index – 2017. The annual report on the world's most valuable nation brands, October 2017, http://brandfinance.com/images/upload/bf_nation_brands_2017.pdf (accesed 20 October 2017).

seriously PD efforts in the crucial area.

Despite the fact that the priority region for the implementation of PD programs is Eurasia, the Russian activities in this field are **global** and include assistance to the Sub-Saharan countries of Africa, the poorest countries in the framework of the Asia-Pacific integration structures, and the development of cooperation with the Middle East, North Africa, and Latin America. The main recipients of Russian aid are Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Namibia, North Korea, Palestinian Autonomy. Also, there are **nations that are currently affected by armed conflicts**, including Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and parts of Nigeria facing a problem with famine. Over the past four years, Russia has allocated about eight million dollars in aid to these countries and helped to deliver one-hundred and ten tons of humanitarian cargo to Yemen. Besides, Russia is currently actively involved with humanitarian assistance to Syria⁶⁶.

Table 2: Exam	ples of Russian-	UNDP Projects i	n Various Ge	ographic Regions
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UNDP part of Syria SHARP Appeal		2013
UNDP part of the Philippines appeal	\$1 million	2013
Post-hurricane recovery in Cuba		2014
Vanuatu Debris Clearance Initiative		2015
Emergency support to strengthen the resilience of the Syrian people and foster the recovery of disrupted livelihoods		2015

Source: Russia – UNDP Partnership. http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/ home/about_us/partners/russia-undp-partnership.html

PD and humanitarian cooperation are critical in times of growing confrontation as far as it **promotes dialogue**. Even when it seems that it's impossible to make it worser Russian-Western relationships deteriorate from date to date. In the beginning of the 1990s it seemed that history had ended and the world was going to dive into an era of global prosperity. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the end of the Cold War, the Russian-Western relationship took on a new dimension with Russia trying to integrate into Western structures. The deterioration of Russian-Western relations escalated with the 1994 Chechen War, NATO intervention in Serbia following the civil war in the Balkans. It reached a critical level with Russia's relations with Georgia/South Ossetia, expansion of NATO to Eastern European states, relinquishment of Crimea to Russia, So, the new Cold War thinking has prevailed and now it would be too difficult to chart a new roadmap, as it will take decades to erode mistrust on both sides. PD could

⁶⁶ Russian humanitarian missions have helped more than 100 countries, UN Security Council hears, 13 October 2017, https://www.rt.com/politics/406564-russian-envoy-to-un-reports (accessed 20 may 2018).

be one of the main instruments in it. Our countries are dealing with international crises either as participants or peace-makers, and since we are facing the growth of conflicts worldwide it can be an essential tool of the public diplomacy to handle it and deascalate the situation, solve conlicts instead of managing it. As it was told by Doctor Henry Kissinger while his Primakov lection at the Gorchakov Fund "Today threats more frequently arise from the disintegration of state power and the growing number of ungoverned territories. This spreading power vacuum cannot be dealt with by any state, no matter how powerful on an exclusively national basis. It requires sustained cooperation between the United States and Russia, and other major powers"⁶⁷.

So, what could be done to improve our relations? Although there is no remedy, it seems like public diplomacy (and even P2P) initiatives would be very timely to deescalate global disarray. History proves that détente talks had started in the period of most serious confrontation in the 1970s. Similar public diplomacy and humanitarian cooperation tools should be implemented.

Russia positioning itself as the great power is interested in having partners **"Interested in dialogue"** all over the world. To foster its international dialogue, it widely uses PD and humanitarian cooperation instruments. Therefore Rossotrudnichestvo Agency is represented in eighty countries. More focus is shifted towards PD dialogue with the emerging Asian countries, as well as with BRICS and MINT countries. Russia actively participates in interesting formats, has strong allies, namely in frames of BRICS, it is the initiator or member of the Think-Tank Council, the Academic Forum, the Civil BRICS Forum, the Young Diplomats Forum, the Youth Summit and the Young Scientists Forum, the BRICS Women's Forum, and the BRICS Women's Business Alliance⁶⁸. A personalized approach and interaction with all those willing to listen is quite necessary, as is the "twoway" communication with the target audience that is interested in having a conversation, rather than just receiving messages.

So, we can assume that Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation are aimed to support sustained social and economic growth within its partner states and to find a solution for global and regional problems contributing to stability and security in the system of international relations.

Conclusions

Nowadays, a lot of countries are dealing with international crises either as participants or peace-makers, and since we are facing the growth of conflicts world-

⁶⁷ Kissinger's Primakov lection. http://gorchakovfund.ru/en/news/18352/

⁶⁸ 10th BRICS Summit Johannseburg declaration. 25 to 27 July 2018. http://www.brics2018.org.za/ sites/default/files/Documents/JOHANNESBURG%20DECLARATION%20-%2026%20JULY%20 2018%20as%20at%2007h11.pdf (accessed 28 July 2018).

wide, PD is becoming a more and more needed instrument capable of laying the ground for international cooperation and promoting international agenda. Public diplomacy initiatives, interconnected with the Track II diplomacy, can be very timely to prevent global confrontation that we are witnessing nowadays.

Russian public diplomacy and humanitarian cooperation are focused on the Eurasian region, as well as on the countries disillusioned with the West, searching for a new joint international agenda, countering Western hegemony on setting universal values (mainly liberal one). Also it is used as the Track II instrument to prevent escalation of the situation with the strategic partners.

Russian approach towards public diplomacy differs from the Western one appealing to the human rights agenda, democratization, transparency and the rule of law. Undoubdtedly, a set of rights like free speech, the freedom of peaceful assembly, of religion, equality for men and women under the rule of law is universal. But Russia would not agree that values prevail over national interests. Destabilisation of the vast regions through regyme change practice prove this message. It is seen in Russia that while non-Western countries are supposed to be focused on these factors, Western public diplomacy promotes own the national interests and foreign policy goals. Russian PD has found its own approach towards foreign audience disillusioned with Western practices of coercive democratiosation, regyme change and humanitarian interventionism. Russia is seen by this audience as a protector of the free world and traditional family values.

In the digital age, Russia is trying to find the right solution for making Edmund Gullion's "the last three feet" approach towards the foreign audience (seen as people who are or will be close to the decision-making and agenda-setting process) while branding itself as attractive, credible, open-minded, and conducting dialogue rather than monologue. It uses PD and humanitarian cooperation tools for succeeding in it. Still, it should strive to be leader in technology, the economy and knowledge.

The Russian experience is unique to some extent. The country was a PD superpower since the 1917 Revolution (here we can remember the first woman ambassador Alexandra Kollontai), attracting the minds of the rest of the world until the beginning of the 1990s. Nowadays the main treasure of Russia is its people and its geography – that is why using PD while branding various Russian regions, launching new tourism programs and substate diplomacy initiatives could contribute a lot towards Russia being associated not only with "balalaika" and "vodka", but with Tomsk University, Karelian resort or Baikal omul. Nowadays Russian PD and humanitarian cooperation are becoming increasingly important to effectively promote a positive, balanced, and unifying international agenda. This experience, somewhere successful, somewhere hard, undoubtedly deserves to be studied and analysed by Russian as well as foreign scholars and practitioners.

Bio

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Article

Turkey's Faith-based Diplomacy in the Balkans

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Abstract

Turkey's faith-diplomacy incorporates state and non-state actors in projecting Turkey's interests, particularly in the Middle East, Africa, and the Balkans. The Directorate of Religious Affairs (Diyanet), is actively engaged in regions where Turkey has historical ties and its budget, as well as its human resources, are continuously increasing. As a result of the support from the AKP government, Diyanet has become an influential Islamic actor in the Balkans, which counters the Saudi and Iranian influences that introduce marginal interpretations of Islam. Furthermore, faith-based diplomacy allows Turkey to exert its influence in the Balkans and to secure its dominance over local religious institutions, while also being an actor in maintaining regional peace. This paper will provide a critical analysis of Turkey's faith-based diplomacy in the Western Balkans region after the 1990's, with a special focus on the period after the AKP party came to power. This is done by offering a layout of Turkey's work on the ground in the Balkans and by analyzing annual reports and in-depth interviews of both the Turkey and the Balkans.

Keywords

Faith-based Diplomacy, Diyanet, Pious NGOs, Balkans, Secularism, Religious Dialogue

Introduction

Whether it is in the direction of approval or disapproval, the issue of religion lies at the very center of Turkish politics. Throughout its modern history, Turkey has had a unique experience regarding the issue of religion in politics and politics in religion (Gözaydın 2013). Founded as a republic with a strong *laïque* identity, the secular elite were very keen on limiting religion to private realms, and were strongly against instrumentalizing it within diplomacy (Kuru and Stepan 2012). Under the Islamist AKP government, the use of religion in Turkish political life took a new turn by being used as a powerful diplomatic tool. The AKP government increasingly uses Islamist rhetoric in international relations and does not hide its ambition to position Turkey as a leader in the Muslim World. The operational area of Turkish faith-based initiatives stretches from the distant parts of Southeast Asia and Africa to neighboring regions such as the Balkans and the Middle East. In order to achieve this goal, Turkey actively participates in interfaith reconciliation processes through its public diplomacy and NGO sector, provides humanitarian aid, delivers religious education and builds mosques across the globe. The praise Turkey received for representing an interpretation of Islam that is viewed as 'moderate' contrary to the interpretations in the Middle-East paved the way for Turkey to build-up a respectable faith-based infrastructure in regions like the Balkans. Especially in the Western parts of the peninsula which is where the majority of the region's Muslims live.

Since the 1990's, Turkey has been most active in its faith-based diplomacy within in the Western Balkan region. Especially now, after the rise of the Islamist AKP, Turkey's presence in religious life will be felt at a much higher level. Muslim communities in the region are recognized as leverage through which Ankara, and the AKP, use to try to create a stronger presence in this part of the world. Almost six centuries of Ottoman Islam had left a strong religious legacy on the local Muslims, which the Turkish government now tries to reintroduce through faith-based diplomacy.

In this regard, the activities of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet Işleri Başkanlığı) are of central importance. Diyanet is slowly positioning itself as the strongest Muslim institution in the region, by mediating disputes between Islamic institutions in Serbia, building grandiose mosques, educating a growing number of young theologians and sending its own imams to the region. However, Diyanet's expanding presence has raised some concerns and questions about the overall role it might play in the future. Governments in the region are watching any possible interference to matters of religion by an external factor with discontent. In the past, some Balkan states tried to prevent foreign influences on their Muslim population by directly interfering in the election of Islamic religious authorities. The 'Nationalisation of Islam', and thus further detachment from 'Turkish Islam' Islamic authorities in the region that are passing through, represents another challenge which hinders Diyanet's ambition to become a 'big brother' for the Muslims of the region. The Gulen movement's network (FETO) in the region is also seen as another problematic issue for Ankara. Turkish diplomacy actively uses public diplomacy channels, both official and unofficial, to counter the movement's influence. Dominance of the movement, once held in the 'Two track' diplomacy activities in the region, is slowly being taken over by the pious NGOs close to the Turkish government. Also, Turkey's religious-political rift at home is causing damage to the overall efficiency of their religious diplomacy abroad. Emanation of the friction between the AKP government and the Gulen movement to the international arena, deficiencies in the rule of law, detachment from the European perspective and the 'big brother' attitude has Turkey failed to hide in the past are all making Diyanet's ambitions harder to reach.

Religious Diplomacy: Theoretical Debate

The reductionist attitude of modern thinkers regarding the role of religion in politics has created a tendency to interpret political science in the light of materialistic determinism. Positivist sociologist August Comte went far to suggest how religion will eventually disappear from social and political life. Yet, contrary to the prevailing belief of social theorists such as Max Weber, Karl Marx, and Emil Durkheim that cultural lines in international relations will gradually blur with the process of rationalization that comes along as modernization continues, in the last few decades, we have witnessed quite the opposite. The process of the "religionization of politics and the politicization of religion" is gaining ground around the globe (Robertson 1989). In some parts of the world, religion still remains a major inspiring force that shapes politics (Loskota B. and Flory R. 2013). For postmodernists, this fact proves the theory of 'multiple modernities' (Eisenstadt 2002, 1-29). According to Arif Dirlik (2003), the perseverance of the different cultural expressions across the globe does not indicate multiple modernities but a single modernity that he calls 'Global Modernity', which is a reconceptualized and purified form of the traditional Euro-centric interpretation of modernization.

Some political scientists suggest that taking religion into account when it comes to geopolitical analysis is not complementary with the spirit of realpolitik. According to Douglas Johnston, the 'secularizing reductionism' of Western diplomats prevented them from seeing the religious dimension of the Islamic Revolution in Iran. Something similar can also be said for the Yugoslav wars, where religion has provided an important element for the eruption of ethnic conflicts (Ibid). Turkey's secular elite, which shares a similar reductionist narrative, was caught by surprise with the rise of the AKP in the early 2000's (Rubin and Çarkoğlu, 2006). The recent rise of the Islamophobic sentiment in the West reveals that even the most secular and modern countries are not immune to the trend. Even though religion still holds secondary importance in the West, in the Third World, it has preserved much of the vitality. In the 'peripheral' geographies, religion often serves as a shelter against Western-like modernization (Rubin 1994, 20-34). Contrary to the West's secularizing view, the religion of Islam has a different standpoint, where the two are accepted as complementary. Political Islam draws its principles directly from the religion probably represents the most dynamic political movement in the Muslim World. This is true for Turkey as well, where the political scene has been dominated by the Islamist government for sixteen years (Rabasa and Larrabee 2008).

Many critiques argue how the revival of cultural identities as a new dynamic in international relations have created unseen cultural filters and have distorted the message among its receivers. Here, public diplomacy has played a crucial role in preventing distortion and potentially eliminating the harmful outcomes that the 'cultural filters' cause among the foreign public. The successful implementation of public diplomacy holds the potential to reduce the inflammation that religious sentiment could cause within international relations. For R.S. Zaharna, it is the imperative of public diplomacy to work on crossing the cultural barriers and building networks of communication with the foreign public (Zaharna 2005, 2). Thus, the above-mentioned developments have created the necessity for the emergence of a more refined type of public diplomacy, 'faith-based' diplomacy.

Many authors agree that the field of public diplomacy lacks a theoretical frame (Entman 2008, 87-102 and Gilboa 2008, 57). Although there is a consensus on the goals of public diplomacy, arguments about who 'controls' the communication of a country are vague. Initially, it was understood as a communication of the government-to-foreign public (Gilboa 2008, 57). Later, with the emergence of 'New Public Diplomacy', a combination of different models of communication, such as the groups-to-foreign audience and individual people-to-foreign audience, were identified (Cull 2009, 12-14). Similar obscurity has reflected itself in discussions on faith-based diplomacy. For Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, faith-based diplomacy is," a form of Track II (unofficial) diplomacy that integrates the dynamics of religion with the conduct of international peacemaking" (Johnston 2003, 15). Analysis of the Turkish case shows that the prescribed position of the religion in public diplomacy has to be reconsidered. This paper will deviate slightly from the traditional interpretation and will evaluate the case of Turkish faith-based diplomacy as a combination of both 'government-centered' and 'track II' channels. After the detailed analysis of Turkish faith-based diplomacy, both channels of the same were identified as valid. Though in the case of Turkey, the primary channel belongs to 'track-one' diplomacy, in other words 'official public diplomacy' or as called by Guy Golan, 'government-based public diplomacy' which is implemented through Divanet, a state institution in charge religious affairs (Golan, Yang and Kinsey 2015, 417-441). Through Diyanet, Ankara carries out what Phillip Seib defined as 'religion-related public diplomacy' (Seib 2013, 215-221). The second channel is 'track-two diplomacy' or unofficial faith-based diplomacy, which is closer, but still somewhat unique, to the Johnston-Cox interpretation. Turkish 'track-two diplomacy' is mainly run by Islamist NGO's close to the Turkish government and by various other heterodox Sufi groups. Turkish faith-based diplomacy in the Western Balkans will be analyzed through the prism of these two separate channels.

Besides mentioned flows, the focal point of this analysis will be on three different

aspects of Turkish faith-based diplomacy. Besides the accustomed emphasis on the ability to reconcile a conflict, faith-based diplomacy will be evaluated from the aspects of nation-branding, or in the case of the AKP government, 'nationrebranding', and its potential to project influence through religious public diplomacy institutions.

Samuel P. Huntington suggested that humanity will inevitably end up in a 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington 1998). On the other hand, for Douglas Johnston, religion does not imply conflict necessarily, but quite the contrary, it possesses a great potential in reconciling the same (Johnston 2003). Especially with its moral and ethic dimensions, religion can be positively instrumentalized by the diplomacy in peacebuilding efforts. The most referred to example of peace-building through religious dialogue is the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since the eruption of the violence between Arabs and Jews, religion was at the very center of the conflict. As both Menachem Begin and Anwar Sadat were pious, the religious sentiment was one of the common grounds used in helping to reach a dialogue at the Camp David peace negotiations. During the wars in former Yugoslavia, religious authorities, primarily the Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina, played the central role in discouraging any retaliation attempts by the Bosniaks who were passing through the horrors of ethnic cleansing by the hands of Serb forces. Also, Turkey tried through public diplomacy to mediate a religious reconciliation between the two Islamic Communities in Serbia from 2009 to 2013.

Religious sentiment, as one of the most intensive emotions found among human beings, carries a great potential to be turned into a powerful soft power tool through the efficient use of public diplomacy (Seib P. 2013). For example, as the Turkish government is increasingly following Islamist policies in international relations, the religion of Islam is turning into Ankara's most recognizable soft power brand abroad. Under the AKP, Ankara has managed to re-brand itself from NATO's gendarmerie in the Middle East to a defender of Sunni Muslims of the world. In a short period of time, Turkey has managed to improve its standing in the Muslim World by successfully delivering humanitarian aid through its public diplomacy institutions, like Diyanet or TİKA, and its vibrant track-two diplomacy which is carried out by the pious NGOs. (Keyman and Sazak 2014, Cevik 2015, 121-152, Cevik 2016, 35-53) Muslim solidarity and 'Ummah awareness' was the main driving force behind Turkey's quick response to the agony of Rohingya Muslims and their assistance to the Somali government in reinstituting the country shaken by the internal conflict. As an act of appreciation to Turkish humanitarian help, the Somalia government allowed Ankara to open its first military base in the country. The case of Somali is clear evidence of successfully implemented religious diplomacy and soft power, which directly benefited Turkey's hard power in this part of the World. (Al Jazeera English 2017 and Nye 2004)

As the religiosity in the world is on the rise, religion itself is becoming a very powerful political tool. With the effective implementation of religious diplomacy, states are able to exert their influence and shape the preferences of foreign publics. For decades, Diyanet has been providing religious education for young theologians in the Balkans. As a consequence of its long-term educational policies, today some Islamic authorities in the Western Balkans, like Grand Mufti of Montenegro, are alumni of Turkish Islamic faculties, which in turn provide Ankara with a significant advantage in the region.

'Turkish Islam' and the Balkans: in Competition with Other Middle-Eastern Players

The Cold War was an interlude period in ties between Turkish and Balkan Muslims. As a NATO member since 1952, Turkey was perceived with suspicion by the Socialist regimes in the region. For ideological reasons, the Socialist regimes restrained from sending Muslim students to Turkey. Lacking the capacities to educate young theologians, regimes favored sending students to Arab-Socialist countries with whom they enjoyed good bilateral relations.¹ With the return after the graduation, some alumni would bring a distinct interpretation of Islam from the one traditionally practiced among the local Muslims. New practices found fertile ground, primarily among the *ulema*², rather than ordinary believers. As a result of the Socialist era, the official interpretation of the Islamic teaching among the ulema was slightly 'de-Turkified' and partly 'Arabized'. Another reason for mistrust was the inheritance of a strong anti-Ottoman sentiment by the Balkan political milieu. Isolation from Turkey helped the Socialist regimes to partly erase the remaining elements of 'Ottoman culture' among local Muslims. On the other hand, former Yugoslavia was more pragmatic and used its Muslim population to cultivate good relations with the Muslim-majority members of the Non-Aligned Movement. As a result, Yugoslav Muslims enjoyed some benefits from the country's non-aligned policies during the Cold War.

During the wars in former Yugoslavia, a few hundred volunteer fighters, primarily from the Arab World, flocked to fight alongside the Bosniaks and Albanians against the Serb forces. As the majority of the volunteers followed the neo-Salafist-Wahabbi³ interpretation of Islam, they brought this 'alien' creed to the region (al-Rasheed 2002, 16-23). With time, a small number of local Muslims embraced the teachings of the foreign fighters. Many volunteer fighters even stayed in the region after the war, setting-up communes in accordance with the Puritan life-

¹ For this purpose once existing Higher Sharia-Theology Schools was reopened as a Faculty of Theology in 1977 in Sarajevo.

² Scholars of Islamic doctrine and law.

³ A puritanical theaching founded by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792) in central Arabian region of Najd during the 18th centrury.

style. Iran is another Muslim-majority country that played an important role during the war. Tehran is believed to have been the largest arms-supplier of the Bosnian army throughout the war. As the Bosniaks were barehanded against the superior Serb forces, even the US turned a blind eye to the Iranian help. Military camps for training the Bosnian Army by the Iranian military instructors remained active throughout the war (Bardos 2013).

The United States bolstered the shut-down of pro-Wahhabi and pro-Iranian organizations soon after the wars across the region were ended. The fact that the majority of the neo-Salafist-Wahabbi NGO's were financed by the allied Gulf-Arab states did not stop the US from forcing their closure (International Crisis Group 2001) (Domazeti 2017). Probably due to the Turkish factor, the Saudi and Iranian influence is almost non-existent among the Balkan Turks.⁴ However, it is important to remember that even prior to US-backed operations, both neo-Salafist-Wahabbi and Iranian influence remained limited amongst other Balkan Muslims (Bougarel 2000, 32-35).

On the other side, since the 1990's, there was a widespread expectation, especially by the US, for Turkey as a NATO ally to take initiative in the region which would serve as a suppressive factor against the 'negative' influences from the Middle East. As a secular Muslim-majority country, Turkey was perceived by the West as an ideal partner for the role. Possessing many comparative advantages that are lacked by the majority of Middle-Eastern countries has made Ankara a logical partner of the West in the region. Turkey actively participated in NATO's operations aiming to suppress Serb forces across the region (Uzgel 2002, 69-71) (Kut 1998). Unlike other countries, Turkey is not a new player in this region. Thanks to a common Ottoman past, Turkish Islam is more in tune with the cultural interpretation of Islam in the Balkans. The Ottoman era left a mutual Hanafi-Mathuridi creed and a strong Sufi tradition among the locals. Established religious institutions, such as Diyanet, a large Balkan diaspora in Turkey and a Turkish ethnic minority in the Balkans, a century-long experience with secularism and Ankara's membership in NATO and the EU shared with the region are only some among the many competitive advantages that constitute Turkey's attractiveness in the eyes of Balkan Muslims.

Despite the mentioned advantages, Diyanet's activities remained unnoticed throughout the 1990's and will have to wait for the AKP's pro-active policy to establish a recognizable presence in the region. Beside the AKP factor, the suppression of the other influences from the Middle East by the US and the general

⁴ In Bulgaria for instance, an interweaving of various influences from the Middle-East spawned some paradoxical situations. With the fall of the Socialist rule, Pomaks turned to be more receptive to influences from the Arab World, while Bulgarian Turks developed stronger attachment towards fellow Turks from Turkey

perception of Turkey as a 'moderate element' paved the way for Ankara to expand its presence after the short period of "Wahhabi intermezzo" (Öktem 2010). However, the perception of Turkey as a moderate force threatens to slowly diminish. A collapse of the democratization process, increasingly frequent tensions with the West and Ankara's further detachment from the Euro-Atlantic Alliance, except among the small circle of sympathizers, is creating anxiety among the Balkan Muslims. Development became even more alarming when Ankara's post-2016coup and its romance with the Kremlin, a historical fear of the Balkans Muslims, was added to the equation. To cut it short, the image of Turkey as we know is passing through a re-branding process, which does not seem promising given the expectation from its main sympathizers in the region.

Turkey's Faith-based Diplomacy: Diyanet

Religious matters in Turkey are supervised by the state institution known as Diyanet Işleri Başkanlığı (Directorate for Religious Affairs). Diyanet has been in charge of religious affairs since 1924. Directorate today is one of the most established Turkish state institutions and represents Ankara's voice in religious diplomacy (Özkan 2014, 223-237). The first steps in expanding the operations overseas came in the 1970's with the growing needs of the Turkish community in Western Europe. For that purpose, the sub-department of the General Directorate of Foreign Relations was launched in 1971. The end of the Cold War brought new opportunities to Turkish foreign policy (Korkut 2010, 117-139). As a part of the proactive foreign policy launched by the then President Turgut Ozal (1989-1993) during the early 1990's, Ankara sought to restore severed ties with Turkic and Muslim communities across the former Eastern Bloc. The vacuum created by the fall of Socialist regimes provided an opportunity for Diyanet to build-up stronger relations with Islamic authorities in Central Asia and Balkan countries. With the backing of the AKP government, Diyanet's influence will become even more pronounced, thus turning the Directorate into an important international player.

The Religious Services Consultancies and Coordination Offices for Religious Services based in Turkish Embassies, and the Religious Services Attaché Office based in Turkish General Consulates serve as Diyanet's overseas offices. As of 2016, fifty-five Religious Services Consultancies, thirty-nine Attaché Offices for religious service and twelve Coordination Offices for Religious Services were active in more than one hundred countries. Around two-thousand employees serve in the above-mentioned offices (Diyanet 2017, 26) (Anadolu Agency 2017). The duties of the Attachés and Consultancies include, "preparing special programmes for "Turkish citizens" and "kinfolk" in order to preserve their commitment to the religion and the "national culture" (Diyanet 2017, 25).

Diyanet has Religious Services Consultancies in every Balkan country except

Slovenia. Attaché Offices are active in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Romania while Coordination Offices exist in Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia (Diyanet-Dış İlişkiler 2018).

The General Directorate of Foreign Relations is in charge of coordinating the relations with regional Islamic Institutions. It has five sub-departments that are responsible for coordinating Diyanet's foreign affairs. These include the Department for Turks Abroad, the Department for Eurasian Countries, the Foreign Education and Guidance Department, the Department of Muslim Countries and Communities, and the Department for Relations between Religions and Cultures (Diyanet 2017, 11). The Department for Eurasian Countries is the most relevant when considering the relations with the Islamic institutions in the Balkans.

Every few years, the Department for Eurasian Countries organizes the Eurasian Islamic Council Meeting in order to bring together Islamic institutions from Central Asia to the Balkans (Korkut 2010, 124-131). The Council is presided over by the head of Diyanet, who serves as a permanent chairman. The first gathering of the Eurasian Islamic Council was held in 1995. Up until 2018, nine meetings were organized in different cities and the first and only meeting outside of Turkey was held in Sarajevo in 2000.⁵ The Islamic leaders from the Balkans are regular participants at this meeting and the regional religious authority, Mustafa ef. Cerić, the former Bosnian Grand Mufti, has served as an Assistant President of the Eurasian Islamic Council since 2000. He was second in the hierarchy only to Diyanet's president. The Eurasian Islamic Council, in a way, rivals the Islamic Council for Eastern Europe which is supported by Saudi Arabia.

*The Meeting of Religious Leaders of Balkan Countries*⁶, which was organized by the Department for Eurasian Countries, had more of a regional character. Diyanet brought together Muslim leaders from the Balkans to discuss regional issues, cooperation between the religious institutions in the region, problems of the *Vaqf*⁷ foundations, Islamophobia, religious dialogue and terrorism among many other subjects. Since their first meeting, which was held in Bulgaria in 2007, seven meetings have been organized up through 2015.⁸

The 'Sister Cities Programme' was launched in 2006 under the supervision of the General Directorate of Foreign Relations. It is an extension of the previous program, which was called the 'Kardeşlik Hukuku' (Brotherly Law), that was

⁵ Fourth Eurasian Islamic Council meeting was held in Sarajevo in 2000. The next, Fifth Eurasian Islamic Council Meeting, was organized in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. TRNC is recognized only by Ankara. Turkish Language, *"as the common langiage in Eurasian Islamic Council Organization Meetings."* was adopted at the 4th Eurasian Islamic Council Meeting in Sarajevo.

⁶ Balkan Ülkeleri Diyanet İşleri Başkanları Toplantısı in Turkish.

⁷ Islamic pious foundations.

⁸ The last meeting was organized in Edirne.

launched in 1990's together with the Muslim majority countries of the former Soviet Union. The main idea of the 'Sister Cities Programme' was to develop the relations between the Turkish and foreign *muftis⁹* by matching the cities they serve in. The operational logic of the program resembles 'local diplomacy'.¹⁰ Sister city relations between two cities serves as a platform through which muftis cooperate and conduct joint projects. As it is stated on the official website of Turkey's Diyanet Foundation, "... in order to establish Ummah brotherhood, one town from Turkey and one town from another Muslim country become sister cities, and after that, religious, educational, cultural and social needs are met" (TDV). As of 2015, two hundred and fifteen cities in Turkey were responsible for the construction of over one hundred mosques, Qur'an courses, and madrasahs in two hundred and three sister cities in ninety-five different countries. Distribution of the sister cities according to these regions is dominated by the Balkans. Out of a total of two hundred and fifteen sister city relations around the world, sixty-six are from the Balkans, which represents almost a third of all matchings. This illustrates how Balkan cities are much more represented than their Central Asian or Caucasian counterparts, indicating the importance of the region for Divanet (Divanet-Dis ilişkiler).

Every year during the Holy Month of Ramadan, Diyanet sends Turkish imams to the region to perform religious duties. In 2010, a total one hundred and fifty imams were sent, ninety-nine of which went to Eurasian countries (Diyanet-Dış ilişkiler). A religious training program for local the imams, organized in cooperation with $TIKA^{11}$, was held in Albania and Bulgaria in 2015 (Diyanet 2016). Turkish imams were also sent to the Balkans for training programs (Diyanet 2014).

Diyanet actively participates in the restoration of Ottoman-era mosques throughout the region. Some restoration projects are conducted through the cooperation with other Turkish public diplomacy institutions such as TIKA and the *Directorate General of Foundations*¹² (Diyanet 2014). Besides restoration, new mosques have also been built (Özkan 2014, 232). Diyanet is responsible for the construction of numerous 'central mosques' in the capital cities around the world, including the *Namazgah Mosque*¹³ in the Albanian capital, which is expected to be the largest in the region upon its completion (TDV).

Diyanet also finances publishing activities in the region. In 2016, two-thousand copies of the Holy Qur'an were published in the Bosnian language. The twenty-

⁹ Islamic authority in charge of religious affairs in certain geographical area.

¹⁰ Type of diplomacy run by local governments (municipalities, cities, etc.).

¹¹ Turkish Cooperation and Coordianation Agency (Türk İşbirliği ve Koordinasyon İdaresi Başkanlığı).

¹² Vakıflar Genel Müdürlüğü in Turkish.

¹³ Also known as Great Mosque of Tirana.
thousand editions of 'Basic Islamic Knowledge Series' in Bulgarian and the tenthousand copies of 'I am learning about my Prophet' in the Albanian Language are only a few among many publishing projects (Diyanet 2017, Diyanet 2015).

Some overseas activities are also conducted through Diyanet's *Turkey Diyanet Foundation*¹⁴ (TDV). TDV was founded in 1975 by Diyanet's former president Dr. Lütfi Doğan and few other high positioned officials. The initial plan was to create a foundation that would be of assistance to the Directorate. Today, TDV operates with a wide range of activities in Turkey and in one hundred and thirtyfive countries around the world. It is responsible for the construction of more than three thousand mosques in Turkey and over a hundred more in twenty-five foreign countries. Despite building a large number of mosques, TDV's emphasis is on education. The primary goal is to train *hafiz*¹⁵ and provide the necessary support to theology students. For that purpose, the foundation provides scholarships to nationals from one hundred and eight different countries.

Turkey was one of the first Muslim-majority countries to recognize the importance of multilateral interfaith-dialogue initiatives. At the 59th General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) in 2005, the Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero (2004-2011), proposed an initiative called The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC). Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was Prime Minister of Turkey at the time (2003-2014), decided to co-sponsor the initiative. Thus, Spain and Turkey together launched an initiative for inter-cultural, interfaith, and inter-civilizational dialogue. With this initiative, Turkey spearheaded the role of the Muslim World's voice of inter-faith dialogue in the multilateral arena amid a flaming global political climate caused by the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, which were further straining the relations between the West and the Muslim World (Ehteshami 2006, 104-121).

The Presidency of Religious Affairs (Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı), the Turkish state institution in charge of religious affairs, incorporated the department for interfaith dialogue known as the Department for Interreligious and Intercultural Relations (Diyanet). Religious movements and non-governmental organizations from Turkey, such as the Gulen Movement, have run self- initiated faith-based dialogues in the past as well.

Turkish Track-two Diplomacy in the Balkans

Turkey has a vibrant 'Track-two diplomacy' in the Balkans led by a large number of pious NGO organizations. Except the organizations linked to Gulen movement, almost all Islamist NGOs enjoy the strong backing of the Turkish govern-

¹⁴ Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı (TDV) in Turkish.

¹⁵ Hafiz, meaning "guardian" or "memorizer" in Arabic, is a person who memorized the whole Qur'an.

ment. Hence, pious NGOs more or less share the same vision with the AKP, however, this then raises the question of their non-governmental nature (Çevik 2016, 35-53). The first Turkish NGOs that settled in the region were close to the Islamist *National Outlook Movement*.¹⁶ *IHH*¹⁷, the largest pious NGO from Turkey, was founded during the Bosnian War in order to provide humanitarian help to civilians. One of the organizations that are active in the post-war period is *Hasene*.¹⁸ It operates student dormitories, provides humanitarian help for those in need, runs soup kitchens for the poor, and organizes iftar meals during the Holy Month of Ramadan. Naqshbandi Sufi groups like the *Süleymanci*¹⁹ group and the *Menzil Cemaatt*²⁰ are also active in this region (Yavuz 2003, 133-151). Süleymancis run a few dormitories, while the Menzil group has followers among the local Sufi Muslims and is active among the regional Sufi lodges. The Menzil group also publishes the family magazine *Semerkand*. It is important to remind that number of the followers of these two groups remains limited among the local Muslims.

Prior to the rift with the AKP government, the most well-established Turkish non-governmental network was the Gülen Movement. Despite the reduction in capacities after the failed coup attempt, the movement still operates a sizeable network of educational facilities. During the zenith of its power, it was operating with more than forty schools and universities across the region. (Anadolu Agency 2018) For instance, in Albania, six out of seven Islamic seminaries is managed by the movement (The Economist 2016). All in all, the Turkish government's efforts to eliminate the activities of the movement in the region have caused serious damages to their overall capacities.

Turkish NGO's are not as transparent as they ought to be, which makes it difficult to find more information about the cooperation and coordination between the NGO's and Diyanet. Some examples from the past have indicated that Turkish public diplomacy has failed to evolve to the principles of 'New Public Diplomacy', but that the track one and track two public diplomacy channels frequently work as separate entities (Melissen, 2005). In 2014, the conservative NGO Istanbul Educational-Cultural Center based in Sarajevo, working in cooperation with Yunus Emre and the Municipality of Eskişehir, organized a controversial 'mass circumcision' for poor male children. (Klix 2018) This event created public outrage as mass and public circumcision is not practiced among Bosniaks. The event was even visited by Turkey's Minister of Education Nabi Avcı (2013-2016). Despite the criticism, the harmful practices continued in the coming years. This same

¹⁶ *Milli Görüş* in Turkish. Movement established by Necmetin Erbakan (1926-2011). The ruling AKP emerged from the National Outlook Movement.

¹⁷ IHH İnsani Yardım Vakfı (IHH Foundations for Humanitarian Help) was created during the Bosnian War for helping with humanitarian aid the victims of the war.

¹⁸ Hasene is linked to National Outlook's Cologne branch.

¹⁹ Followers of Naqshibandi Shaikh Süleyman Hilmi Tunahan (1888-1959).

²⁰ Naqshibandi group based near Turkish town of Adıyaman.

model was also followed among the Bosniaks in Serbia, where mass circumcisions have been organized every year since 2010.²¹ The two dimensions of Turkish public diplomacy desperately needed to synchronize their activities. The heedlessness that some Turkish NGO's demonstrated regarding the political sensitivities in foreign countries represent the problematic issue from the aspect of efficient public diplomacy and the uncontained actions of unofficial channels threatened to damage the overall image of the country. (Keyman and Sazak 2014, 11,12) In order to improve the quality of the message that public diplomacy was aiming to deliver, R.S. Zaharna suggested applying for surveys and opinion polls. (Zaharna 2005, 3) Applying this method would be of great help to Turkey when working to prevent the repetition of past mistakes.

Another potential problem for Turkish diplomacy in the region is the rising social media activism led by uncontrolled and individual Turkophile trolls that are free of any realpolitik sensitivity. These social media trolls bombard the public in the region with overemotional and often harmful Erdoganist and anti-Western sentiment. Tactics and discourse used by the 'pro-Turkish' social media trolls resemble pro-Russian social media activism. (Muhasilovic, 2018) In order to counter the potential harms of internet and social media propaganda, Ankara has worked to develop a specific type of public diplomacy that the Amelia Arsenault calls public diplomacy 2.0., which actively uses new channels of communication such as social media and other web platforms to deliver the desired message. (Arsenault 2009, 135-155) The question is whether Ankara is willing to fight the trend vis a vis recent undemocratic shifts in Turkey and the rapprochement with Kremlin.

Diyanet as a Mediator Between the Regional Islamic Communities: The Case of Serbia

Reconciliation through faith-based initiatives does not apply to dialogue between the members of different faiths only, but between co-religionists as well. Turkey has worked to affirm its status as a 'big brother' by brokering in the schism that occurred among Muslims in Serbia. In 2009, the Serbian government of Boris Tadić (2004-2012) invited Turkey to help solve the division between the two Islamic Communities in Serbia²² that had been dividing the Muslims since 2007. (E.J.Brill's First Encyclopedia of Islam 1993, 246-248) (Kuburić and Namlidji 2007, 43-51) The Bosniak minority living in the Sandžak region²³ was at the

²¹ Event is organized by Turkish non-state organization Platform of Friends of Sandžak (Sancak Dostları Platformu)

²² Islamic Communities are the highest religious bodies of the Muslim communities in the countries of the Former Yugoslavia., With the exception of Croatia and Slovenia whose Muftiates are linked to Bosnian Grand Mufti, every country has its own national Islamic Community. Unlike Diyanet in Turkey, Islamic Communities in the Balkans have autonomy from the government.

²³ Sandžak is a cross-border region between Serbia and Montenegro where Bosniaks constitute relative majority.

epicenter of the division issue. (International Crisis Group 2005) The mediation process in the region was popularly known as the `Turkish initiative`.

The main development that sparked the schism was the announcement of the Law on Churches and Religious Communities by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Serbia in 2007. With this new law, only a single authority for every religious community was allowed to exist in Serbian territory. The law caused further divisions among the already institutionally divided Muslims. Since the disbandment of the Yugoslav Islamic Community in the early 1990's, the two parallel Muftiates existed in Serbia side by side. The Meshihat of Islamic Community in Serbia with headquarters in Novi Pazar was led by charismatic Mufti of Sandzak, Muamer ef. Zukorlić (1993-2016) who remained loyal to the Bosnian Grand Mufti²⁴, thus preserving the cross-border religious unity of the Bosniaks, while the Mufti of Belgrade²⁵ Hamdija ef. Jusufspahić never accepted Sarajevo's authority but remained loyal to various Serbian governments.²⁶ (Karcic 1997, 114-118.) The announcement of the Law on Churches and Religious Communities encouraged the Mufti of Belgrade to proclaim himself Grand Mufti of all Muslims in Serbia in February of 2007.

In March of the same year, a group of imams from Sandžak, who previously were employees of the Meshihat, decided to pledge their allegiance to Jusufspahic and pointed out their dissatisfaction with the policies of Mufti Zukorlic as the motivation for the decision.²⁷ (Morisson 2008, 8-13) In order to strengthen the position of the newly formed Islamic Community among the Bosniaks in Sandzak, Adem ef. Zilkic (2007-2016), an imam from the region was named Grand Mufti of Serbia by Jusufspahic. After unsuccessful attempts by Zukorlic to reunify the divided Islamic Community at the Unification Congress held on March 2007, street clashes between the supporters of the two Communities and a decade-long struggle over who would control religious infrastructure was unleashed.²⁸

The talks for the unification of the Islamic Community were launched in July

²⁴ Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina was the first Islamic institution in the Balkans to receive the right to lead local Muslims by the Ottoman Sheikh al-Islam.

²⁵ In Bosnian language the institution led by Jusufspahić is known as *Mešihat Islamske Zajednice u Srbiji* (Meshihat of Islamic Community in Serbia).

²⁶ Majority of the Bosniaks in Serbia recognize Islamic Community of Bosnia and Herzegovina as their spiritual center. Meshihat of Sandžak was founded in 1993. Alongside Bosniaks, Albanian and Romani Muslim communities exist in Serbia.

²⁷ It is widely believed that SDA Sandzak, the largest Bosniak party in Serbia, that was on bad terms with Mufti Zukorlic was deeply involved in the coup. Imams that left Meshihat are known to be affiliated with the party.

²⁸ Unification Congress was held on March 27, 2007 in Novi Pazar. Leaders of all the regional Islamic Communities were invited to the meeting. The Unification Congress ordered the creation of a new Islamic Community for the whole Muslim community in Serbia, that would remain loyal to Sarajevo. Even Jusufspahic was invited to the Congress. He rejected to participate.

of 2009 in Novi Pazar during the official two-day visit of the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu to Serbia. Diyanet was authorized to run the negotiation process and to prepare a draft agreement for the unification. After two years of talks, the involved sides came close to finding a solution during the winter of 2011. Diyanet's draft agreement suggested a merging of the two Islamic Communities in which Zilkic and Zukorlic would step down and Novi Pazar was proposed to be the new center for the unified Islamic Community. The Serbian state and its protégé Islamic Community rejected the agreement saying that it favored Zukorlic and Meshihat. The initiative then entered into a second phase that lasted until mid-2013, after which negotiations would be completely suspended.

It was after Diyanet financially decided to support a group of dissident imams who separated their ways with both Novi Pazar and Belgrade, that in 2013, a minor crisis erupted between the Diyanet on one side and the Islamic Community of BiH and the Meshihat on the other. Diyanet was accused by Mufti Zukorlic for trying to create a 'third Islamic Community'29 that would be loyal neither to Sarajevo nor Belgrade, but to Ankara and Divanet's action angered both Sarajevo and Novi Pazar. After the mentioned crisis, Diyanet and rest of the Turkish diplomacy slowly shifted its support towards Belgrade. Despite the financial support for the third group in the schism, Turkish diplomacy today recognizes the Islamic Community based in Belgrade as the official representative of Muslims in Serbia. In his 2017 visit to Serbia, the Turkish president even recited the Holy Qur'an in the Belgrade mosque controlled by the same. Zukorlic believes that the reason for Diyanet's support of the community in Belgrade is the conflict of interests between Ankara-Sarajevo that was smoldering for some time, as both the Diyanet and Bosnian Islamic Community cultivate regional ambitions. (Zukorlic 2018) (Bougarel 2005, 24-28) On the other hand, Turkey financed the reconstruction of an Ottoman-era public bath in Novi Pazar that belonged to the Meshihat of Sandžak, indicating that Ankara is not interested in severing the ties with Novi Pazar. All in all, Divanet failed to unite the two Islamic Communities. Turkey's shifting support during the initiative showed that Turkey was not up to the task, as it ignored the fundamental component of the honest broker, and that is neutrality.

Paradox of Turkish Faith-based Diplomacy: Cases of Albania and Montenegro

Diyanet's relation with the Grand Muftis of Albania and Montenegro represented another example of the tendentiousness of Turkish religious diplomacy. Through its alumni, Diyanet has created a network of close affiliates across the region. Yet

²⁹ Group of imams from both Islamic Communities separated their ways and formed a 'fund for unification' which was financialy supported by the Diyanet. Muamer ef. Zukorlic blamed Diyanet that it is after forming a third Islamic Community that would be loyal to Ankara.

the two alumni, Rifat ef. Fejzic, Grand Mufti of Montenegro, and Skender Bruçaj, Grand Mufti of Albania, stand out from the rest as they represent opposing narratives in Turkey's faith-based diplomacy. The previous is known for having close ties to the AKP government and Diyanet, while the later is closely affiliated with the Gülen movement. The movement was used in the 2000's in order to suppress Arab-Salafist influence over the country's religious institutions (Raxhimi 2010), but, after the political split between the AKP and Gülen, Turkey started pressuring Albania to extradite movement members. (Mejdini F 2017) Even the Grand Mufti's affiliation created minor tensions in the relations with Ankara. He was not included in the protocol during Erdogan's visit to Tirana in May 2015, when foundations for the Diyanet-sponsored Namazgah Mosque were laid. Further disregard towards Bruçaj was Erdogan's call to shut-down the schools run by the movement during the ceremony. Bruçaj publicly criticized the extradition of Turkish citizens from neighboring Kosovo in March 2018 whom Ankara accused of membership with the outlawed 'FETO' network³⁰. After the 2016 failed coup attempt, Diyanet directed its strategy towards fighting the movement in Albania by using Turkey's diplomatic weight. In 2016, Divanet distributed five-thousand free copies of the "Movement of Religious Abuse: FETÖ-PDY" report translated into the Albanian language. It is even reported that Diyanet's imams actively spied on Gülenists and sent reports about movement activities abroad to Ankara. (Hurrivet Daily News 2016)

Rifat Fejzic, the Grand Mufti of Montenegro, represented an opposite example from Bruçaj. He enjoys a very close relationship with the Turkish political and religious leadership and is a frequent participant of Diyanet's events. He is even occasionally invited to ceremonies organized by Erdoğan himself. Fejzic was pretty quick to reveal his support for the AKP after the failed coup attempt in July 2016. In support of his stance, Fejzic warned Montenegrin media about the 'strong presence' of the movement in the Balkans, whose supporters have to be 'under surveillance'. (Fejzic 2016) The cases of the two Grand Muftis demonstrates the division Turkey's internal problems have caused in the region. Some religious figures in the region urged local Muslims to restrain from taking sides in the divisions that are shaking Turkey and the Middle East. The fact that every relevant religious authority in the region has a stance regarding Ankara, whether it is affirmative or reserved, demonstrates the importance Turkey holds among Balkan Muslims.

Conclusion

Turkey's economic boom came amid a historic momentum in which Ankara's strong engagement in the Western Balkans was praised as a counterweight against

³⁰ Few countries in the Balkans, Kosovo and Moldova so far, have responded positively to Turkey's call on the extradiction of Gulen movement members.

the Neo-Salafist and Iranian influences. Deep historical and cultural ties with the region and Turkey's membership in the Western-bloc made Turkey attractive in the eyes of the Balkan Muslims. Yet, internal deficiencies regarding the rule of law and emanation of recent political divisions in Turkey has been damaging Turkey's standing in the region. Ankara's distancing from the European perspective and their rapprochement with Russia signifies another problematic development that threatens to re-brand Turkey as a 'disruptive' country. As the entire region aspires to join the EU, Ankara's further geopolitical reshiftings threaten to distance Turkey from the Balkan Muslims and the region as a whole.

Rightfully, Turkey is concerned about the condition of Muslims in the region, especially in countries such as Bulgaria and Greece. Yet, it is unjustified to expect improvement in the afore-mentioned countries while the status of religious minorities in Turkey is questionable.³¹ Some examples in the past show that Ankara did not pay enough attention to national and religious sensitivities in the region as it allegedly meddled with the 2017 Bulgarian parliamentary elections.³² (Leviev-Sawyer C. 2017) The recently increased use of Divanet's infrastructure by the AKP for spreading propaganda abroad has created a counter-reaction in some countries. In the wider region, countries such as Austria are suspicious of Diyanet's imams for acting as emissaries and spies for the Turkish government and decided to contain Ankara's influence on its Muslim community by ordering the revision of the visa status of some forty imams from Turkey and the closure of a mosque linked to Turkish nationalists. The continued use of these practices could cause similar scenarios in other countries as well. On the other hand, Ankara's meddling in internal issues of the Balkan nation-states threatens to jeopardize the Balkan Muslims. Posing for revisionist policies proved to be an unnecessary luxury for Turkey. The fact that Diyanet was invited by the non-Muslim government of Serbia to mediate in the division among domestic Islamic Communities demonstrates that the presidency is already identified as an important regional 'spiritual player', and thus possesses one of the basic components, that according to Johnston, is necessary for a serious religious conciliator. (Johnston 2003, 16)

³¹ Despite some improvement under the AKP government, modern Turkey had a troubling past with its non-Muslim minorities, particularly Greeks and Armenians. Communities that have represented sizable minority at the eve of the Republic today are reduced to the minimal figures. Turkey faced many challenges regarding the non-Muslim minorities like Istanbul Pogrom of 1955, the status of Heybeliada theological seminary, Zirve Publishing House murders, the assassination of Hrant Dink, and some others. But on the other hand, it would be unfair to claim that there is no any improvement regarding the rights of non-Muslims under the AKP, the improvement is significant. For instance, the Turkish government allowed Christians to broadcast a channel on the Türkstat satellite operator and property rights of non-Muslims have significantly improved.

³² Mustafa Müezzinoğlu, Turkish Minister of Labour at the time, was accused in the report by the Bulgarian news agency BTA for openly supporting the leader of DOST Party Lutfi Mestan who was one of the candidates of the Turkish minority in the elections. In his speech from March 6, 2017 Müezzinoğlu called Bulgarian Turks living in Turkey to massively participate in the elections describing DOST's rival MRF (Movement for Rights and Freedoms) as a 'part of the Bulgarian deep state'.

Because of the wars in Middle-Eastern countries such as Egypt and Syria are no longer favored destinations for theology students from the Western Balkans. Turkey has remained the only significant foreign destination for the students of Islamic theology. The growing alumni network will probably position Diyanet as the region's strongest Islamic institution in the long run. As Divanet's prestige is growing, it might feel the need to bypass other national Islamic institutions in order to expand its influence in order to create a network of 'loyalists' within its alumni network. In the past, Diyanet's 'big brother' attitude has created minor problems, but if it continues to threaten to ruin the relations with other Islamic institutions, it would seriously damage the effectiveness of Turkish faith-based diplomacy in the region. As it is already seen, the various miscalculations during the 'Turkish initiative' are responsible for damaging Diyanet's overall image in Sandzak which in turn closed many doors to Ankara in that region. As Brie Loskota and Richard Flory pointed out, "established religious leadership should always have a priority place in any strategy and it would be unwise to use engagement as a way to undermine traditional religious leadership in any community". (Loskota and Flory 2013, 21)

One of the greatest challenges that remain for Turkish public diplomacy institutions is the lack of coordination between official public diplomacy institutions and the NGO sector. In other words, the evolution toward the principles of 'New Public Diplomacy' remains incomplete in the Turkish case. Sometimes, the dissolute actions of pious NGO's annulled much of the positive work that public diplomacy institutions such as Diyanet have conducted in the region.

Bio

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Article

The Workers' Party Contribution to the City Diplomacy in Brazil. A Local-global Ideology

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Abstract

This study highlights the Brazilian case of city diplomacy, locating the essential role of the leftwing Workers' Party "PT" and its ideology in the recent cities' internationalization process. These political efforts result from a particular governance project directly connected to international democratic values agendas and solidarity efforts shared among global leftwing parties. These city diplomatic efforts reflect tendencies shaped by broader trends of public social participation and the democratic autonomy of local governments-both within Brazil and abroad. How did the national democratic environment created by the PT's administrations (federal and local) influence international diplomatic relations? What were the primary motivations and characteristics of these efforts? What is particular about the PT that motivated its pro international relations position? Through an innovative and in-depth survey of the cities that have administrative International Relations structures and practices established over the past three decades, this study demonstrates how city diplomacy efforts under the PT differ from practices of public diplomacy characteristic of earlier periods of city internationalization in Brazil and suggest broader lessons for other countries.

Keywords

City Diplomacy, International Relations, Workers' Party, Federal Diplomacy, Paradiplomacy

Introduction

In 2003, for the first time in Brazilian history, a leftwing party president was elected (Workers' Party or "PT" – Partido dos Trabalhadores), getting international attention for a new development platform based, among other topics, on hunger eradication. At the end of the PT's third term in 2014, Brazil had been removed from the UN Hunger Map¹ and overtook the UK to become the world's sixth largest economy² and a global power player. The Ministry responsible for

¹ http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/

² https://www.theguardian.com/business/2012/mar/06/brazil-economy-worlds-sixth-largest

the Zero Hunger Program during the first Luiz Inácio **Lula** da Silva term, Jose Graziano, was elected director-general of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)³, becoming the first Latin American ever to hold this position.

The Brazilian foreign policy presented in 2003 by Lula essentially sought a fairer international order with a greater Brazilian pride. The foreign policy project elected in 2002 (PT, 2002) stood for the maintenance of Brazilian sovereignty without specific diplomatic ties, a priority relation with South America, the multilateralism of Brazilian foreign trade, the centrality of South-South cooperation, the review of multilateral organizations, the interest in inter-bloc agreements, the candidacy of Brazilians for leadership positions of international organizations, the search for a permanent chair on the UN Security Council, the World Social Forum valorization, the establishment of an international fund to fight poverty, the eradication of hunger in Brazil and in the world, among many other ideals.

Since the beginning of Lula's administration, the President placed the people and his will within the country's foreign strategies, and in the same way, foreign policy became part of Brazilian democratic development. At the inaugural session of the National Congress in January 2003, Lula stated: the democratization of international relations without hegemonies of any kind is as important for the future of humanity as the consolidation and development of democracy within each state in the world⁴.

After 14 years at the Presidency, the PT had changed Brazilian geopolitical and diplomatic place in the world order; as well, the world order changed with the rise of Brazilian power. The expansion of G7 and constitution of G20, the IBSA bloc (India, Brazil and South Africa), the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) are all geopolitical structures in which Brazil had a prominent voice (Lima, 2016; Amorim, 2010; Burges, 2016; Prado, 2007; Dauvergne & Farias, 2012). This is enhanced by the Brazilian federative diplomacy and by the civil society participation on global debates including the SDGs, the Paris Climate Agreement, the peace-keeping, the New Urban Agenda, and the internet governance (Pereira, 2017; Patriota, 2017; Balbim, 2016; Santoro & Borges, 2017).

The main goal of this article is to analyze this internationalization process, focusing on the particular structure of governance recently created to encourage and facilitate the international cooperation between cities. This innovative strategy of Brazil's insertion in world geopolitics was called Decentralized Cooperation during the PT's term (2003-2016), replacing the Cardoso's government Federative

³ http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/80713/icode/

⁴ http://www.biblioteca.presidencia.gov.br/presidencia/ex-presidentes/luiz-inacio-lula-da-silva/discursos/discursos-de-posse/discurso-de-posse-10-mandato/view

Diplomacy⁵ (1995-2002). This last one could be considered as coordination and control policy, while the PT's policy is recognized as coordination and incentive, being a point of change of relationship between the central government and the phenomenon, as affirmed also by Meireles (2016) based on empirical analyses of the two periods.

Decentralized Cooperation consisted in promoting the international cooperation of subnational entities, particularly cities, guaranteeing both the autonomy of these entities and the reinforcement of the "active and proud" national foreign policy. Decentralized Cooperation corresponds largely to what is commonly called city diplomacy or paradiplomacy.

The strategic actions of local governments on the international scenario have been based on the terms paradiplomacy or city diplomacy more often than not, while local diplomacy and federative diplomacy appear in the scenario with explanatory limitations. Local diplomacy, for example, has a wide scope, referring to all forms of diplomacy exercised from a local scale. The term federal diplomacy, however, brings with it the limitation of making reference exclusively to federative countries. Although there are no intentions here to revise the terms, contributions to this conceptual precision will be addressed later revealing the practical Brazilian positions in this debate, for the instance is enough recognize some authors whom lead with the subject, among others: Pluijim, 2007; Moita, 2017; Abraham, 2015; Acuto, 2017.

The first hypothesis leading to this article is that there is an important correlation between empowerment and internationalization of local governments and leftist ideologies. We envision that the city internationalization degree is directly related to the democratic environment, the social participation and the autonomy of local government. The creation of bureaucratic structures in local governments to deal with International Relations "IR", analyzed by the different political parties in power, is the main empirical indicator of the city diplomacy ideological linkage in Brazil. It is not the intention to analyze the effectiveness of these structures, a topic that deserves specific research, nor is it to evaluate qualitatively the ideology (value judgement) that drives this process⁶.

⁵ The term was first used by Chancellor Lampreia in his speech to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies on April 5, 1995. Under the direct guidance of the President, the Chancellor presented this form of diplomacy as a coordinating mechanism to ensure cohesion and consensus. The main actors of this articulation with the Ministry of Foreign Relations would be the states' governments and the National Congress. "This new and dynamic dimension of our diplomacy requires a permanent effort of dialogue, exchange of information and consultation between the Federal Executive and the Regions, States and Municipalities, so that there is greater coordination and harmony as possible at the various levels of international relations of Brazil." (Lampreia, 1995:115)

⁶ The meaning of the term 'ideology' as used in Brazilian' foreign policies is often negative and associated with the active and broader positions that go beyond the exclusive views of foreign trade and sovereignty. This is not the meaning in this context. For us, it is clear that all the political field is

The second hypothesis debated is related to the specific Brazilian case. In Brazil, the city diplomacy, after overcoming erratic advances of the theme during the 1980s and 1990s, began developing as a direct response to the incentives of the Federal Government based in a foreign policy called "active and proud" by Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Lula government.

The analysis of state capacities in promoting the internationalization of cities is limited here to the national and municipal governments, not being considered the state government level. This analytical option is due to a series of factors, the main being the autonomy of the municipal entity in the Brazilian federation and its capacity to establish direct relations with the national government and, in a relative way, with international entities. Also, since the 1988 Constitution, Brazil has deepened a process of decentralization of responsibilities, not necessarily accompanied by the transfer of the necessary resources to face all of them, which places municipalities in a prominent position in several public policies, besides being one of the plausible explanations for a greater internationalization of cities seeking investments.

Mainly, when analyzing the capacity of the states to promote international relations, it is clear the absence of federative policies towards the local governments from the state level. Of the 27 Brazilian states, at least 22 have some bureaucracy exclusively dedicated to International Relation⁷, while few are the states that count on personnel, budget and long term dedicated projects. The analysis of the state governments web-pages, of some states secretariats programs, of decrees, laws and reports⁸, reveal that none of the states' structures refers to the promotion of international relations in the municipalities. That means, contrary to what happened in the federal government, which supported the decentralized cooperation, the IR structures at the state level are dedicated exclusively to the activities of the states themselves. However, running mathematical regressions, Meireles (2016:93) confirm our hypothesis showing the fact that the governor's party compose the allied base of the federal government during the PT's turns increases by 15.57 times the chance to create a structure of international relations.

Internationalizsation of Cities

The current internationalization of cities process is relatively recent. Although it

ideological. Regarding the end of ideology in Brazil's foreign policy, see: Rodriguez-Dominguez, 2017.

⁷ Meireles (2016) made an exhaustive research and found IR structures in 20 states. We have actualized and reviewed this research in September 2018.

⁸ Between 2013 and 2015, the Presidential Division for Federative Affairs (SAF) promoted six Decentralized International Cooperation Meetings involving at least 15 states and several municipalities. Eight of these states have made formal presentation (reports) of their IR activities. This material can be found at the Portal Federativo webpage (www.portalfederativo.gov.br)

is becoming more intense and fast, involving several cities that do not necessarily have singular importance in the global scale and accrediting authors to design scenarios of a new world order in which cities and corporations would respond for an important dimension of the global organization. For some, this new order could follow the model of what would have happened when the Hanseatic League was formed⁹.

This transformation started in 1913 when the first international network of cities emerged. l'Union Internationale des Villes arose from a search for 'intercommunal cooperation', raising the 'flags of local democracy, solidarity and peaceful relations among peoples' (Balbim 2016, p. 141). For the first time the constitution of a diplomatic space of cities on the international level was verified. However, there was very little progress in this field during the two world wars, pushing the transformations to a later date in history.

With the end of War in 1945 and the need to rebuild cities and establish new bonds of solidarity among people, the international relationship of cities gained importance for the nation states' diplomacy. The creation of new forms of cooperation played an important role in the soft-diplomacy constitution. Such examples include the sister cities, the technical cooperation between cities and more recently the constitution of City Networks (Perpetuo & Cerqueira, 2018), and the recognition of NGOs and social movements as actors in the global scale.

The internationalization of cities is used here as a synonym for city diplomacy, which we define as the intentional action of the local public authority to project the city abroad, to promote its attractiveness through capital, science, innovation and culture in search of investments; to exchange experience and knowledge; and, on a level of greater importance, to assert the city's influence in international networks and in multilateral organizations, thus participating in global governance. City diplomacy is strictly instituted by heads of local government and city representatives, with legal prerogatives more or less established in order to enforce legally or non-binding international agreements of various kinds with other subnational powers.

However, this process can also be initially established between non-governmental corporations and organizations that work as ambassadors. Due to the proximity between the public authorities and the groups that coexist in the production of the urban space, the internationalization of cities involves a wide range of agents, both public and private.

⁹ In reference to what happened in the vast coastal area of the Baltic Sea, since the end of the Middle Ages, on a proto-capitalist experience in which, in the absence of a unifying political power, the management of that zone was assured by an alliance between cities (Lübeck, Bergen, Hamburg, Riga...) and a merchant league, the Hanseatic League (Moita 2017, p. 9) which grew from a few North German towns in the late 1100s and dominated Baltic maritime trade for three centuries.

The internationalization of cities can happen in multiple ways, starting with different agents and far surpassing the individual capacity of the local government. Internationalization can be intrinsic to the city, that is, constituent of its social and spatial foundation. Or the city internationalization strategy can be the result of local, national, regional and global movements and interests combined.

To better understand the dimension that we analyze, let's look at Rio de Janeiro. Rio became international with the arrival of the Portuguese Royal Family in 1808, with an outbreak of urbanization that sought to transform the colonial city and its aesthetics and practices into a new Metropolis. To that end, new inhabitants, visitors, knowledges and practices arrived. Rio quickly modernized (infrastructures) and internationalized (opening of the ports) itself as a result of the arrival of the royal family. Since then, this city has always been internationally oriented, for instance, having hosted the Third International Conference of American States in 1906, the International Exhibition of the Centennial of Independence in 1922, or the Football World Cup in 1950.

However, it was only in 1987 that the city's administration began to establish a clear and continuous strategy creating a public administration area dedicated solely to international relations. In 1993, as a result of global commands (United Nations Conference on Environment and Development - UNCED - ECO92), the Municipal Secretariat of International Relations emerged. That is, even though Rio had been internationalized since the beginning of the nineteenth century, it is only in the last decade of the twentieth century that the city began to strategically project its internationalization.

The strategy of internationalization of a city doesn't respond to transnational reasons only. It is also associated with gains and changes in local, national and/or regional policy. Rather than simply taking part in and influencing processes and decisions on a global scale, local authorities - mayors and others - engage in these processes because they see gains, often symbolic, in the internal scenario of their countries and regions.

For example, regarding the French decentralized cooperation momentum in the 1990s, Trevas (2015) explains that several mayors at that time had national political aspirations and, therefore, motivated by the instruments of the European Union, fostered international relations in their cities to consolidate their names on the national level.

Along these lines it can be seen that internationalization of cities can be established as a response to local, regional, national or international commands, whether combined or not, reflecting multiple interests both at the internal and external political levels.

Brazilian Conceptual Contributions. Paradiplomacy, Federal or City Diplomacy

Influenced since the early 1970s by the studies of Nye & Keohane (1971), many authors of IR argue that cities, as well as corporations, unions, churches, political parties and NGOs, have been breaking the state-centric paradigm of the international relations, creating a sort of paradiplomacy. Successively, paradiplomacy of cities has been playing an effective and prominent role in the international geopolitical scenario since the 1990s, associated with major UN conferences on human rights, environment, urbanism and social issues.

The most frequently used term to refer to city internationalization, paradiplomacy, encompasses myriad of actors, both public and private, engaged in diplomatic negotiations, gathering under the same conceptual umbrella distinct motivations, instruments and actors, generating analytical inaccuracies. This sparks a debate about the most appropriate terminology to embrace what we understood as different phenomenon (Balbim 2016, p. 140).

The growing role of cities in the international arena is one of the elements that accredits the use of a specific term for their own diplomatic activity. This can be evidenced by analyzing the central role of cities in promoting large investments, impacting even the national level. For example, the dispute between US cities to receive the new headquarters of the giant Amazon corporation, or disputes to receive plants of automotive companies in Mercosur cities. We can also cite the international competition to host the Olympic Games, which is strongly associated with the symbolic capital of each chosen city.

In addition, as states Pluijim (2007), the use of paradiplomacy evidences a main system and a parallel system, which according to Santos (2017:33) contradicts the current reality in which cities often exceed the Nation State in different areas of diplomatic activity, such as trade agreements.

The relative autonomy of cities on specific global issues also allows the use of the term City Diplomacy. An example of this are the North American cities that oppose the national government in relation to the Paris Climate Agreement¹⁰. As Abraham (2015, p. 37) points out, when a national government does not reflect local interests, they legitimately place themselves as operative agents alongside transnational bodies, other cities, countries and even corporations. In this sense, Borja and Castells (1997) propose the understanding of the local scale as a territorial manager of the global forces, exercising an effective, active and relatively autonomous diplomacy.

¹⁰ http://icleiusa.org/u-s-mayors-step-up-as-key-advocates-for-climate-change-action-during-unconference-in-paris/, https://www.citylab.com/environment/2018/06/one-year-after-trump-left-theparis-agreement-whos-still-in/561674/

In Brazil, more than to merely coordinate local interests, the national government created new governance structures and agreements with other countries to encourage and stimulate partnership and diplomacy between cities. As a result, the internationalization of cities is placed in a complex federative diplomatic field, which assures the local autonomy by the fact that in the light of their interests, or even their inability or incapacity to intervene, the national state sometimes coordinates, regulates, encourages, or only accepts its autonomy.

However, the term federal diplomacy brings with it the limitation of making reference exclusively to federative countries such as Brazil and Argentina (Junqueira & Mariano, 2017; Riggirozzi & Grugel, 2015; Banzatto, 2015; Prazeres, 2004; Rodrigues, 2008; Vigevani, 2006). In Brazil, this term was officially used in 1995 when then-Chancellor Luiz Felipe Lampreia, in a speech at the National Congress, referred to the international actions of states and municipalities (Rodrigues, 2008). Two years later, in 1997, the Advisory Council for Federal Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) was created. The Council sought to coordinate and harmonize the actions of subnational governments, states and municipalities, with the actions of the MRE; thereby constituting the first specific national policy to subnational international action.

Brazilian City Diplomacy Background

The specific study of city diplomacy in Brazil goes back to the time of sister cities in the 1950s, and from there it is an evolutionary line that is institutionally fragile and scarcely diversified (spatially and thematically). During this first period, there was an intense rapprochement with Europeans cities for one side, and for the other side with local governments of the so-called "Free World", strongly encouraged by the Sister Cities program created by the Eisenhower administration in September 1956 (Santomouro, 2018).

With the process of democratization and decentralization in the late 1980s, followed by the Brazilian insertion into the neoliberal logic and modernizing discourse of globalization in the 1990s, and the relevance of cities to implement international agendas, some cities began to diversify their international actions and outline strategies and public management structures for internationalization. Between 1993 and 1996, the first experiences could be related to global rationalities. In 1993, an international bureaucracy at the municipal level in Porto Alegre was created in response to the World Social Forum. In the same year, another was created in Rio to deal with the developments of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, also known as the Rio Earth Summit or the ECO 92.

In addition, the UN Conference on Human Settlements Habitat II (1996), empowered cities on the global stage, recognizing that local agendas could ensure the implementation of agreements and thereby enhancing local government action in global processes. Moreover, the national and international recognition of PT's programs and projects, facilitated by the participation of PT's Mayors at Habitat II, is an example of how these successful and paradigmatic experiences expressed an alternative way of governing cities (Trevas 2002, p. 51).

The worldwide projection of local Brazilian policies such as participatory budgeting and land regularization, which have been awarded best practices in Habitat II, has internationally projected several of the first cities that have formed international bureaucracies. In addition, the receipt of international technical cooperation, particularly from Europe, as well as programs of investments in multilateral bodies in urban policies, such as the program "Habitar Brasil BID" financed by the Inter-American Development Bank, placed the need to deal with international relations on the local administration agenda.

In 1995 the MRE created its regional representation offices throughout the country to advise the subnational entities in their possible actions in the international scenario. In the same year the Mercocities network was created and strongly contributed to the advancement of IR in Brazilian cities, despite the national government position.

More than just promoting the interest of Brazilian cities in IR, Mercocities and other networks and initiatives are instruments of cities international projection around the world, permitting cities to participate in investments and policies of multilateral agencies. The URB-AL (contraction of Urban and America Latina) programme, a European project created in 1995 to foster decentralized cooperation between Europe and Latin American cities, invested resources to fund thematic city networks and meetings and reached great achievement (Robin & Velut 2008, p. 167). In 2001, the URB-AL financial support was responsible for funding and giving technical support to create the IR Municipal Secretary in São Paulo (Trevas, 2015). Also, we note that the Mercocities initiative, as well as Eurocities, was supported by international political party networks such as the Socialist International¹¹, with strong reliance on PT's leaders¹².

In 1997 the President of the Republic created the Federal Relations Office in the MRE, recognizing the relevance of the theme but being faithful to the prevailing national state vision, political position that lasted until 2002. In contrast, in the period from 1997 to 2001, Santo André, São Carlos, São Paulo and Maringá leftist municipal administrations created their IR areas due to the PT's international-

¹¹ See: Charter for Cities Governed by Socialists (http://www.socialistinternational.org/viewArticle. cfm?ArticlePageID=1188)

¹² See: Socialist International Meetings at the World Social Forum, Porto Alegre (http://www.socialistinternational.org/viewArticle.cfm?ArticleID=1027)

ist history and in particular their association with the European leftist parties and their internationalist ideology (Godoy, 2013; Trevas, 2015).

In 2004 the first world organization of local governments (United Cities and Local Governments, UCLG) was created from the merger of the two major associations of local governments, IULA and FMCU - ideologically opposed during the Cold War (Salomom 2018, p. 25). At that moment, the strong diplomacy of São Paulo city resulted in the appointment of the mayor Marta Suplicy to co-chair the UCLG in its first management.

In 2007 FONARI (National Forum of Secretaries and Municipal Managers of International Relations) was created, revealing the strength dimension that city diplomacy acquired in the country. That same year, after several years of informal decentralized international cooperation, the Basic Agreement for Technical Cooperation between Brazil and Italy was signed, authorizing Brazilian states and municipalities to sign agreements with local Italian governments, overcoming previously existing legal obstacles. The following year, a similar document was signed between Brazil and France.

The strong participation of the country in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Millennium Development Goals has also contributed to city diplomacy. In both cases the PT's policy was to encourage the decentralization of these international agendas. As a result of this, virtually all eight millennium goals were implemented. This strategy has been repeated for the SDG implementation, with Brazil establishing a National SDG Commission with 32 representatives from civil society and the three levels of government.

The increase of organizations dedicated to IR in Brazilian cities is also closely linked to their participation in specific projects that involve financial resources, mainly through international agencies (AFD French Development Agency – CIDA Canadian International Development Agency - AECID Spanish International Development Agency - GTZ German Technical Cooperation Agency - FMDV Global Funds for Cities Development – JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency) and their initial offers of technical cooperation which were encouraged by the decentralized cooperation strategy of the national government.

The City Diplomacy Legal Framework

In Brazil, the Federal Constitution defines foreign policy as a nation exclusivity activity (article 21), signed by the President (article 84) and approved by the national Congress (article 52). In the absence of a formal expedient, the legitimacy of cities to formalize international cooperation seems to be ambiguous. Seeking to resolve the ambiguity, a proposal to amend the Constitution was presented in 2005 (PEC 475). This amendment would allow subnational entities, under the

federal government's authorization, to establish international partnerships. The bill did not pass, and in 2006 the congressmen presented a new bill which also was not approved.

However, according to a federative analysis made by Rodrigues (2011, p. 8) for the National Front of Mayors (FNP), even if foreign relations are the exclusive competence of the Union, international relations – as relations with the world – are not a central government's monopoly. In this vision, there is a large range of IR in which the federated entities can and should act. In addition, in a federation, the principle of internal cooperation converges with that of international cooperation, materializing in the principle of subsidiarity.

It was in this space of legal understanding and federal covenant where the city diplomacy strengthened. City Diplomacy does not deny the diplomatic field of the nation state; on the contrary, together they were involved in the creation of a singular diplomatic framework and field. Cities and the Division for Federative Affairs (SAF), created by Lula, increased the Decentralized International Cooperation¹³, or just Decentralized Cooperation (DC), as a way to achieve mutual goals.

The term was officially used to refer to the cities' diplomatic actions developed with the tacit or strategic support of the federal government. This instrument, widely used by European countries¹⁴, is directly related to the historical internationalism of the left-wing parties, as well as to the structuring of municipalist movements that seek the decentralization of power as a form of democracy. The European vision for decentralized cooperation is passed on through the funding provided by the EU Decentralized Cooperation Programme (Salomon 2018, p. 31).

As results of these efforts, part of the DC activities in Brazil is now derived from bilateral treaties and protocols signed by Brazil and Italy in 2007, and by Brazil and France in 2008. In both cases Brazil recognizes the individuality and autonomy of local governments' international relations, whether established or unestablished, in the terms of internal cooperation, subsidiarity and convergence of efforts.

Also, as part of the local initiatives of cities and social organizations in the framework of Mercosur, the Consultative Forum of Municipalities was created in 2004, which means that local governments began participate actively in the Southern Common Market. Nevertheless, the Brazilian national government played a

¹³ 'In brief, decentralised cooperation is the one that gives to local and regional authorities (elected and in a framework of local democracy) and their communities a full role in development policies and international cooperation' (ALDA 2016, p. 1).

¹⁴ The European Union's interpretation of DC can be first found in Lome's Convention IV - 1995

leading role in the formulation and institution of the Forum via SAF (Salomón, 2008:02), reinforcing the particularities of decentralized cooperation during the PT's governments.

From the Brazilian city diplomacy, the nation's support for these initiatives overcame legal obstacles and proved the legitimacy of local government internationalization. In this way, since 2012, there has been a debate involving decentralized cooperation stakeholders and the Presidency for the publication of a Decree, aiming to establish the Legal Framework for Decentralized Cooperation.

The Worker's Party Contributions

This section aims to answer the following question as a way to clarify the existence of a deliberative political coordination action by the PT to improve the internationalization of cities and social movements. In this sense it is important to know: what is particular about the politics and goals of the PT that motivate its pro IR position?

The PT was created at the beginning of the Brazilian (re)democratization process in the 1980s and among its main cadres were political exiles by the dictatorship who had close relations with party internationalism, such as the Socialist International, represented in Brazil by another political leftist party, the PDT (Democratic Labor Party), responsible for the creation of the first bureaucratic structure of decentralized international relations in Rio de Janeiro during Leonel Brizola's rule in 1983 (Rodrigues, 2004).

The strong international ties of the PT and the ideals of social participation and decentralization of power enabled the party to hold the World Social Forum and globally spread the idea that "another world is possible", where cooperation and direct democracy are some of its flags.

The change in Brazilian diplomacy during the period in which the PT was at the head of the Presidency has been portrayed and analyzed by several authors (Amorim, 2010, Burges, 2016, Doctor, 2017, Lehmann, 2017, Marcondes & Mawdsley, 2017, Milani et al. 2016, Patriot, 2017, Pereira, 2017). During Lula's Government, the significance of the expansion of cooperation "should not be underestimated: ABC's budget for technical cooperation projects with developing countries increased by a factor of 70 between 2001 and 2005" and between 2005 and 2009 this value grew over to \$1.43 billion US (Marcondes & Mawdsley 2017, p. 683). Apart from creating bureaucratic structures, Lula's administration innovated creating the so-called triangular decentralized cooperation¹⁵ which involved

¹⁵ In 2011 Brazilian government launched the first "Convocation Call for Franco-Brazilian Projects of Trilateral Decentralized Cooperation to Benefit Haiti and the African Continent". See: http://www. brasil.gov.br/editoria/cidadania-e-inclusao/2011/04/edital-inedito-vai-permitir-cooperacao-entre-

countries from the north, south and Brazil.

President Lula, at the beginning of his administration in 2003, transformed the administrative structure of the country's foreign policy, reflecting what is commonly called in Brazil the PT's governing model. Analyzing PT's local administrations until 1998, Tarso Genro, who was mayor of Porto Alegre, governor of Rio Grande do Sul and President of the Party, made explicit the PT's internationalist ideology taking the city as a first order political agent.

The process of economic integration under the financial monopolies auspices has not only changed relations between states (reducing legal barriers, establishing universal connections through the domain of capital) but has also opened up new cities' and regions' functions. The city has been obliged to launch itself into the world and to become a new political and economic subject, not only capturing resources, articulating with NGOs, but also dialoguing and contracting with other governments and shaping a new political leadership type (the city diplomacy), credited to make major strategic disputes that only nation state could do (Genro 2002, p. 15).

The PT's governance model that recognizes and fosters IR in local administrations has been adopted by the national government. The government program that elected Lula in 2002 makes clear the party transformative positions in IR and reveals the importance of a democratic diplomacy with federative and decentralized bias. In paragraph 54, the document calls for the recovery of the values of cooperation in international relations, saying that is decisive to use Brazil's international weight to mobilize and articulate parties, governments and political forces that fight for their identity and autonomy. In paragraph 70 it is clear that the Brazil popular changes must be based on the construction of a wide range of international support (PT, 2002).

In general, the analysis of Brazilian foreign politics in its PT way of governing agrees with many transformations that have occurred, without necessarily agreeing with the causes. There are authors who conceive the achievements of the PT era in a larger framework that encompass the country's historic logics, such as migration. In this sense, Lima (2016, p. 1) states: 'the plurality, diversity and heterogeneity of actors and agendas that directly or indirectly take part in foreign affairs are perhaps the most impressive feature of Brazil's new face to the world'. In her opinion, this is due to the expansion of Brazil's investments abroad; the presence of NGOs, including social movements; 'the growing number of Brazilians living abroad; the new sub-national diplomacy; and the numerous public policies it has exported to countries of the Global South, in particular Latin America and Africa' (idem). Sean Burges (2018, p. 972) in his review of Fraundorfer's book *Rethinking Global Democracy*¹⁶ in Brazil, summarizes the book's core argument which portrays the PT's diplomatic strategy. 'The more global governance institutions and forums follow 'people-power' norms, the more intrinsically democratic they will be and the less exploitative the international system will become. The three principles underpinning this argument are the promotion of human rights and transnational solidarity, mechanism of participation and mechanism of accountability'.

One can identify factors of the political change between the government prior to Lula, the Cardoso presidency (PSDB) and Lula's term (PT). In general, with Cardoso the valorization of federative diplomacy began central in the MRE. The objective was to prevent any threat to Brazilian foreign policy by placing federative diplomacy in a subsidiary position of traditional diplomacy.

In the PT's government, the decentralized international cooperation establishment becomes a local government's exclusive activity, which counts on the purposeful action of the Division for Federative Affairs (SAF). For its part, the MRE saw the merger of all the former structures to lead with decentralized cooperation at the Special Office for Federative and Parliamentary Affairs (AFEPA), which had the purpose of articulating the MRE with subnational governments, advising on local external initiatives. The responsibility of establishing international cooperation was not among the duties of this Office (Decree n. 4.759, of June 20, 2003).

In 2003 Lula also created the post of Special Adviser on International Affairs within the President's Cabinet. This post was responsible for the cross-border relations with civil society actors (trade unions, NGOs and social movements) with a focus on south-south cooperation. The post was occupied by Marco Aurelio Garcia during the entire PT governments term. The words of Celso Amorim, Chancellor during Lula's term, about their companion shows the multilateral and diverse way of PT's international diplomacy.

'Marco Aurélio, in addition to his intimacy with the President - who was almost an international relations alter ego of him - was responsible for PT positions in foreign policy and was deeply knowledgeable of political parties (not just the leftwing) in Latin America and Europe' (Amorim, 2017).

Both new structures acted alongside the MRE supporting new foreign policy dynamics which, at least symbolically, helped Brazil to rise in power in the international scenario. Thus, since the beginning of PT's term, the protagonist of social movements and local representatives were reinforced. The federal government administrative innovations were also in accordance with the internationalization practices of PT's local governments (Meireles, 2016; Rodrigues, 2008; Godoy & Santamoro, 2015).

Even analyzing other sectors of foreign policies, such as business, there seems to be a relative agreement with the fact that 'by bringing societal actors into the foreign policy equation, state actors hoped to assure an active engagement with the PT's project for increasing Brazil's influence in international affairs' (Doctor 2017, p. 646).

The analyses of Brazilian local foreign politics during the PT's governments, and particularly the state bureaucratic constitution created to support its ambitions, illustrate the 'adaptation of foreign policy techniques to new realities and the search for leverage based on soft power, norm diffusion, and better integration of domestic and international agendas' (Margherits 2017, p. 584). Godoy (2013) warned that this effort was not merely to seek technical and financial project inputs, but that it was also a strategy to strengthen inclusive development agendas, thus symbolically and materially complementing an anti-hegemonic discourse, giving visibility to the public policies developed at the local level.

This movement reinforces once again the hypotheses raised at the beginning of this article regarding the correlation between strategies of internationalization and local democracy, as well as social participation, one of the banners of the leftist movements and parties in Brazil.

City Diplomacy in Brazil. State of the Art

In Brazil, there is a relative consensus regarding the strong correlation between political party and structuring of management mechanisms and policies internationalization. As revealed by Godoy (2013), Milani & Ribeiro (2011) and the exhaustive study of the CNM (2011), a significant part of this structuring of international relations was created during the PT's cities administration in the early 1990s. In turn, in the 2000s, the multiplication of the number of cities that now have IR management mechanisms (Secretary, Departments, Coordination, Advisors) is linked to the federal government's support of the matter, starting with PT in 2003. For example, only between 2004 and 2008, were municipal structures set up to manage the subject in 16 of the 30 cities that are part of the CNM's pioneer survey (2011).

The effectiveness of the internationalist and decentralized PT's policies must to be precisely verified. To do so, we carry out an in-depth survey of the cities that have administrative IR structures. As for the political party correlation, we pointed out the year of creation of these administrative structures and then relate the political party that was in charge of the city at that moment. This survey is innovative since it relates internationalization actions and strategies with partisan ideology, taking as an indicator the administrative structure of Brazilian cities. The research was exhaustive in both primary and secondary sources. Among the primary sources are the CNM's research (2011) and the Profile of the Brazilian Municipalities (IBGE, 2014), which annually survey the administrative capacity of the 5,562 Brazilian municipalities and, in 2012, dedicated a special chapter to raise the capacity of local governments to establish IR policies.

In addition, since the theme of paradiplomacy, decentralized cooperation and city diplomacy has been gaining relevance in the Brazilian national scenario, recent empirical research on the subject, including academic theses, were related and considered. We highlight here Milani & Ribeiro (2011), Junqueira and Mariano (2017), Junqueira (2015), Banzatto (2015), Rodrigues (2008) and Prado (2007). Along with these sources, administrative records and information from this author's participation in the federal government during PT administrations were used, particularly from the Urban Central Areas Rehabilitation Program of the Ministry of Cities, which established decentralized international cooperation with France, Italy and Spain, among others. Finally, after this exhaustive research and cross-checking data, a thorough check of the information obtained from municipalities' web pages was carried out, and then related to the year of creation of administrative structures with the party in charge of local administration in this time.

The result of this research summarizes up to 78 cities that carry out International Relations activities and have a formal administrative structure (secretariat, department, advisory, board or coordination). This number is lower than the 113 cities which had implemented IR initiatives until 2012 (IBGE, 2014). The difference is due to the number of cities that carry out these activities but do not count on an instance to do so, often the Mayor himself is in charge of these activities.

The dates of creation of these structures were identified in 40 of the 78 cities and consequently the political party that ruled each city at these times. It was thus possible to identify the relevance of the PT's internationalist ideology, responsible for the creation of IR structures in 23 of these 40 cities. Another 7 different political parties were responsible for the similar initiatives in the other 17 cities, revealing that there is no one ideological political position favoring the diplomacy of these cities.

When the creation of these administrative structures is analyzed per year, it is possible to verify that 30 of the 40 cities had administrative structures of IR created during the PT's national government (2003-2016). Just in 2005, IR structures were created in 15 cities. This clear PT's government action was also highlighted in the pioneering study of CNM (2011) and by several authors (Junqueira, 2015;

Godoy, 2013).

In order to make clearer the aptitude of each party to promote city diplomacy, its greater or lesser adherence to an internationalist and decentralizing ideology, we propose an indicator that consists of dividing the number of prefectures that each of these parties occupied in the last three elections¹⁷ (from 2004 to 2016) by the number of prefectures that created administrative structures under the party government in question. Thus, the smaller the number, the greater is the aptitude. Once again, the strength of the PT is confirmed. The leftwing party created one IR administrative structure to each 63 prefectures that it governed. Diversely, in light of the respect fractions, this indicator reveals no adherence among the other political parties: PDT (331), PPS (372), PSDB (380), PFL/DEM (520), PMDB (1083) and PSB (1164).

The history of city diplomacy in Brazil brings elements that allow us to question the view that in the federal states there would be a greater possibility to leverage any kind of paradiplomacy in relation to unitary states (Junqueira, 2015). The analysis of local diplomacy leverage by political periods in Brazil reveals that this action is more related to the ideological context of each government than to the state model itself. On the other hand, examples of unitary countries that authorize and stimulate decentralized international cooperation, such as France, Italy, and particularly Spain and its autonomous regions, also support this view.

The shifting of Brazilian foreign policy under the PT's administration was not only to reinforce the traditional preference for multilateralism, but also to set a more inclusive and participatory approach as we seek to show from the city diplomacy analyses. The participation on foreign policies of social movements, NGOs, universities, councils and especially local governments brought to global governance the idea of 'people-power' norms, the symbolic power of democratic process. And as Lula preconize in his first speech as President, the more imbricated is the countries' democracy with international relations, the less exploitative the international system will become.

Final Considerations

The internationalization of cities is a process that will multiply and deepen rapidly in the coming years due to the existence of the necessary means to do so and the increasing interests (corporate, humanitarian and environmental) in the regulation of the use of territory, of the daily life and of the human scale of processes, particularly aiming market's increase and control.

From a conjunctural perspective, despite having enormous potential of expansion,

¹⁷ http://infograficos.estadao.com.br/politica/eleicoes/2016/graficos/evolucao-partidos/?cargo=prefe ito&docal=brasil

the scenario of the internationalization of cities in Brazil, does not seem to be a promising prospect. The now existing IR were mainly constituted in a political moment with a leftwing party in office and a foreign policy active and proud was installed. Both situations have changed radically in recent years.

According to the aforementioned surveys, most cities that have a formal IR structure do so from a single person who works as a Mayor advisor, or even the Mayor himself. Only in the largest municipalities can one find teams dedicated to this task. None of these studies, however, have carried out a qualitative analysis of the effectiveness of these structures. Moreover, as could be seen, since city diplomacy has a strong correlation with political ideologies in Brazil, a study of the effectiveness and efficiency of these structures could reveal the causes of the logic of stop and go that often mark public policies in the country.

As we saw, the correlation between empowerment and internationalization of local governments and leftist ideologies was clearly demonstrated by an expressive number of cities that created formal structures of IR during PT's governments and as a response for its national incentives, or the incentives related to the PT foreign policy.

While the context and the circumstances examined here are highly specific to Brazil, we suggest that there are also broader lessons for other countries and cities to improve their diplomatic experiences toward a more democratic and multilateral world order. In this sense, at least three assertions can be made: a) nation states can work together with the subnational entities, respecting their autonomies, in search for a greater internationalization; b) as Lula pointed out in his inaugural speech, social participation and the decentralization of power can contribute to the democratization of IR; and c) political and ideological ties that organize city diplomacy could help overcome a relative neoliberal hegemony (Brenner & Theodore, 2002) or business orientation on city international cooperation (Moita, 2017; ALDA, 2016), particularly in city networks, of which many are now dedicated exclusively to pursuing business opportunities.

Finally, the importance of local autonomy and social participation for the strengthening of the Brazilian IR seems to have become clear. The state capacity improvement at the national level with the introduction of participatory processes, the signing of new international agreements where the cooperation between the Brazilian federated entities was made explicit, besides the evident relation of the Workers' Party with the participative democracy and how it was raised including the international level (Internet governance, MDGs, SDGs, New Urban Agenda, e.g.), have placed Brazil and its cities on a new level of international diplomacy. *Ojala* the Brazilian cities in their diplomatic excursions can contribute to the reinforcement of democracy currently so devalued in the country.

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Bio

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Article

Sino-U.S. Sister City Relations: Subnational Networks and Paradiplomacy

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Abstract

This piece examines the humanitarian and global development impacts of international sister city relationships in a bilateral, Sino-U.S. context. These impacts include conflict prevention and resolution, human rights protection, capacity building and climate action. While trade is at the heart of cities' engagement in global affairs, globalization beckons a more comprehensive role for cities. At a time when popular nationalistic sentiment can easily shape hostile foreign policies, sister city relations play a notable role in maintaining and promoting peace. Economic interdependence and a mutual desire to promote understanding drive a supply-and-demand schema of personnel, idea and capital exchanges, which we argue is explicable by complex interdependence theory. Interviews with Chinese and American representatives from a total of 37 Sino-U.S. sister city and state pairs are used to inform the empirical and theoretical analysis.

Keywords

City Diplomacy, China-U.S., Complex Interdependence, Citizen Peacebuilding

Introduction

The people-to-people program conceived by President Eisenhower, which would later birth Sister Cities International, introduced private citizens into the peacebuilding process, such that greater understanding of foreign counterparts might reduce the probability of conflict in the long-run (Axelrod, 2006). Although the Eisenhower administration's China policy in the mid-1950s involved stubborn anti-Communist sentiment and support of Chiang Kai-shek's nationalists (Dulles, 1972), the crisis nonetheless left Eisenhower with the impression that there was a need for a channel of direct contact with the Chinese communists. Hence was Eisenhower's approval of Sino-U.S. bilateral talks at the ambassadorial level in Warsaw beginning in 1955 (Shambaugh, 1994). Through the 1970s, the normalization of U.S.-China relations and China's Open Door Policy laid the groundwork for bilateral ties at the subnational level (Bergsten et al., 2008; Harding, 1992).

Sino-U.S. sister city relationships can be understood as paradiplomatic activity, or subnational governments carrying out diplomatic functions parallel to that of their respective nation-states (LeCours, 2002; Tavares, 2016). Such activities find city governments asserting new authority in world affairs issues, even if not aligned with that of their respective nation-states (Acuto, 2016), and can often indirectly help define inter-state relationships, fostering a certain awareness of a common destiny (Friend, 1992). While Chinese cities are afforded a great deal of leeway in the conduct of international commercial cooperation efforts, their political context differs from U.S. counterparts. That is, while democracies like the U.S. allow locales significant political autonomy (Bursens and Deforche, 2010), city diplomacy in China is understood as an extension of the nation-state's interests and power (Xiong and Wang, 2013; Zhao and Chen, 2013).

One broader theoretical approach to explaining global inter-city linkages is found in sociology. Smith and Timberlake (1995) argue that global inter-city linkages, including trade flows and the cultural exchanges of people-to-people relations, undergirds and reproduces the uneven power structures of world-system. That is, the developed, politically strong regions (including the U.S.) maintaining greater profitability in production processes than-and often at the expense of-developing regions (Wallerstein, 1974, 2007). While a world-systems approach offers merit for the planetary scale of inter-city linkages, the specific bilateral context of Sino-U.S. sister city relationships may more clearly be viewed through the prism of complex interdependence theory. This perspective emphasizes a dense web of economic, technological, and other ties between nations in an era of accelerated globalization, in which a plethora of non-state actors and processes bind societies together in complex and interdependent ways (Shambaugh, 2005). Within this schema, a decline of military force as a foreign policy tool coincides with increased economic cooperation, which in turn should yield more interstate cooperation (Keohane and Nye, 1997, 2001). U.S. and Chinese counterparts across sectors at the subnational level-as at the national-level-share an economic interdependence and a mutual desire to promote peace through understanding, which produce the supply-and-demand schema of relationships observed in this study.

Informing the below analysis is telephone and email interviews from 2009-2010 of representatives from a total of 37 sister city and state pairs—32 Sino-U.S. sister city pairs, 3 Sino-U.S. sister state pairs, and 2 U.S.-Taiwan sister city relationships. Interviews on the American side normally involved non-profit 501(c)(3) sister city associations contracted to by their respective city government to carry

out the bilateral relationship. Interviews on the Chinese side involved officials of the Chinese Municipal Foreign Affairs Offices of the corresponding Chinese sister cities. The representatives of the sister city relationships in China and the U.S. were chosen based on the criteria of being involved the longest in the relationship, having the closest involvement, and occupying highest possible position in the respective organization or office. Respondents were questioned regarding their views on and activities related to bilateral trust building, local politics of sister cities during times of national-level turmoil, capacity building in public administration and other development areas and environmental protection-related cooperation. Every question asked of American representatives were also asked of Chinese representatives and vice-versa as a means of weeding out discrepancies in accounts of personnel exchanges and other sister city-related activities, of which none were ultimately found.

Conflict Prevention and Resolution

The foreign policy of both the U.S. and China are influenced by public opinion, and are subject to the possibility of popular nationalist sentiment pressuring leadership into a hostile foreign policy direction (Gries, 2005). Hence conflict prevention requires a gradual process of attitudinal change, as conflict itself is not merely an interstate phenomenon, but also an intersocietal one (Kelman, 2004). Former Sister Cities International president Patrick Madden alluded to this in an interview with the Beijing Review, suggesting that the mutual learning that occurs between U.S. and Chinese counterparts via sister city exchanges has a positive impact on bilateral public opinion, spreading first locally, and eventually up to the national-level (SCI, 2005). There is no guarantee that a peace dividend may be achieved via the improved public opinion fostered by subnational exchange, but societal desire for peace and fear of conflict has long motivated such efforts.

American propaganda about the Soviet Union, principally spread at the behest of the U.S. federal government, cultivated the illusion in countless Americans that the Soviet people could be thought of in the same cold, machine-like and otherwise evil manner as the Soviet government itself. Countering this phenomenon, U.S.-Soviet people-to-people exchanges were carried out by sister city and other organizations, having the effect of freeing American citizens from this illusion, showing them instead that Soviet society was just as ordinary and human as they were (Schatz, 1986). Mutual suspicions and strategic distrust between the U.S. and China today often translates itself into a Chinese foreign policy position seeking to contain and shape the U.S. so that it becomes a responsible power, and vice versa (Leonard, 2006).¹ These policy sentiments are a perennial source of increasing bilateral aggression at the national-level, and as such, Sino-U.S. sister city

¹ Leonard, Mark, 2008. What does China Think? (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2008), 116.

exchanges frequently aim for building greater bilateral trust from the grassroots, in much the same way as U.S.-Soviet exchanges. Most interviews with respondents on both sides indicated that this trust building may eventually help avert national-level aggression stemming from mistrust, necessitating further inquiry on the issue of trust and bilateral policy outcomes.

Most respondents on both sides with experience in multiple levels of government—at and above municipal—indicated that personal trust can be more easily gained between two parties at the inter-city level as opposed to higher levels. There are several factors at play in this trust dynamic that may help to distinguish from the personal trust cultivated at the municipal level from that cultivated at higher levels of government. For instance, respondents argued that whereas the high-stakes of the national-level relations allows the idea of U.S.-China intersocietal competition to negatively influence cooperation, the perceived low-stakes of negotiations and cooperation at the city-level is free from this influence.²

Observing U.S.-China sister city relationships where they intersect with the perennial conflict flashpoints in U.S.-China relations is where peacebuilding value offered by sister cities may most clearly be seen. The issues of territorial sovereignty surrounding Tibet and Taiwan strike at the heart of the Chinese Communist Party's regime legitimacy, and hence foreign diplomatic contact with leaders in Tibet and Taiwan tends to stir incendiary sentiment at the national level of politics in China (Sutter, 2018)⁴. Yet respondents in Boulder, Colorado argue that the range of technical, educational and other exchanges they've carried out over time with their sister city of Lhasa, Tibet have proceeded with none of the political stir over sovereignty; the type that is commonly seen at the national level.⁵ Despite the Chinese central government's restrictions on Taiwan's diplomatic recognition abroad, both Portland, Oregon and Columbus, Ohio simultaneously maintain sister city relationships with both mainland Chinese cities and Taiwanese cities. Respondents in both cities note that even after decades of facilitating the full gamut of exchanges with both Chinese and Taiwanese sister cities, none of the cross-strait territorial sovereignty issues or related tensions have been raised in any perceptible way, by any participating or external party.6

Detachment of subnational from national-level bilateral politics can also be seen

² Interview with representative of Center for International Studies, University of Missouri St. Louis, November 13, 2009.

³ Interview with representative of Houston-Shenzhen Sister City Association, November 11, 2009.

⁴ Robert Sutter, 2018, US-China Relations: Perilous Past, Uncertain Future, Robert Sutter, 3rd edition.

⁵ Interview with representative of Boulder-Lhasa Sister City Project, telephone interview, October 20, 2009.

⁶ Interview with representative of Columbus Sister Cities International, May 12, 2010; and Tom Crowder, President of the Portland-Kaohsiung Sister City Association, December 2009.

in the example of Birmingham, Alabama and its sister city of Anshan, Liaoning. Birmingham city government representatives were in the midst of a major exchange with Anshan in 2001 when the U.S. EP-3 spy plane collided with Chinese military aircraft near Hainan and the American crewmembers were subsequently held in detention by the Chinese authorities. While a well-reported and salient international crisis unfolded at the national level, Birmingham's itinerary of varied exchange projects with Anshan proceeded without delays or other obstacles.⁷

The peacebuilding strength of these relationships lies in both their detachment from otherwise incendiary national politics and their continuity of communication. There is no question that the U.S. and Chinese national governments and their military branches continue to have the power to make decisions which can instantly plummet both states into war. No amount of inter-city relations and subnational connectivity has (or can) change or erode this institutional fact. Yet in conditions where national institutions and interlocutors may be hamstrung by the sensitivity of national politics—territorial sovereignty or otherwise—subnational actors can be relied upon to continue communications. While these communications may not directly inform the short-term peace-and-war decision making of national policymakers, they do inform the long-term public opinion which informs both U.S. and Chinese national policymakers' calculus in carrying out foreign relations.

Human Rights Protection

The conceptual boundary between nation-states serving as a guardian versus cities serving as commercially-concerned entities (Jacobs, 1984; 1992) blurs when normative matters, such as human rights concerns, are combined with increasingly globalized and activist cities. Peter Spiro (1997),⁸ traditionally an opponent of subnational government involvement in foreign affairs domains claimed by the nation-state, noted how the rise of subnational governments in international affairs complicated yet perhaps begged some room in how we think of international human rights norms:

"Given the rise of subnational governments on the world stage, Human rights has come increasingly to implicate matters within the competence of subnational authorities at the same time as national governments are losing an important measure of control over their constituent units. In the face of these developments, international process should afford some place to subnational governments as both receivers and makers of human rights law" (Spiro, 1997–1998: 595–596).

Globalized cities are as embedded and actant within global commerce as they

⁷ Interview with representative of the city of Birmingham, Alabama, May 15, 2009.

⁸ Spiro, Peter J., 1997-1998. The States and International Human Rights. 66 Fordham L. Rev. 567.

are international normative frameworks (Alger, 1990; Knight, 1989; Meyer et al., 1997), but what happens when commercial interests clash with normative frameworks? The Tiananmen Square crackdown of June 1989 provides an instructive case for U.S.-China sister city relationships. The range of reactions to the crackdown saw a great deal of variation across U.S. cities with sister counterparts in China. Boulder, Colorado sent a letter of concern to Lhasa, Tibet, city halls of several U.S. cities maintaining Chinese sister cities received "nasty" phone calls from angry residents (Swaim and Trubo, 1989), and twelve of the then-existing forty U.S.-China sister city relationships suspended their relationships (Shuman, 1989). The harshest known response was from New York City-sister city of Beijing-in which mayor Ed Koch very vocally and publicly suspended all sister city activities with Beijing (Lampton, 2001), although the exchanges were not suspended indefinitely. New York's response was unsurprising given that its sister city of Beijing was the site of the actual crackdown. Protest also articulated itself in different, more symbolic ways. For instance, San Francisco Chinese community leaders sought and obtained Board of Supervisors approval for a bronze statue replica of the Goddess of Democracy to be put on public display in San Francisco as a commemoration of the Tiananmen crackdown. Not long after, the Chinese Consulate intervened and protested (Der and Rose, 1989).

These, however, were the U.S. city responses already recorded in extant literature. For this study, all American cities within the sample group that established sister cities in China before 1989 that continue to present day were asked about the effect of the crackdown. The majority of U.S. city respondents indicated that exchanges continued business-as-usual without any disturbance, with some cities experiencing a slight drop in the number of volunteers for a few years following the incident. That is, although the Tiananmen Square crackdown was a severe human rights violation, many cities understood that continuing sister city relations with Chinese cities in no way enabled or otherwise contributed to human rights abuses occurring in China.

The trauma of the Tiananmen crackdown ultimately had only a temporary tangible effect, with not a year passing before the forces of economic interdependence between the U.S. and China began actively restoring normal relations. Before President Bush's rapprochement efforts—and long before President Clinton's 1994 decoupling of human rights concerns from U.S. trade policy toward China—was rapprochement at the subnational level. The first visit of any Chinese government official at any level to the U.S. since the Tiananmen crackdown was by then-Shanghai mayor Zhu Rongji in early 1990, who later became Premier. Zhu traveled to Shanghai's U.S. sister city of San Francisco, and met with local officials there and subsequently in other U.S. cities to discuss how to recover and continue normal subnational relations in the post-Tiananmen period (Chandler,

1990; Trubo, 1990). While not all U.S. cities protested and acted upon grievances of China's human rights abuses, those that did were no doubt genuine in their convictions. Understandable, given the severity and scale of the crackdown. Aside from the rationale that inter-city relations were in fact separate from human rights abuses, one wonders, why did we not witness mass permanent suspensions of U.S.-China sister city relationships? A particularly relevant question given that part of the ethos of sister city relationships is the promotion of peace and prosperity. We posit that this can be explained not only because of the powerful draw and benefits of economic interdependence, but also as a matter of diplomatic protocol and function. Hundreds of sister city relationships were forged in the 1980s between U.S. and Central American communities specifically as a response to the Reagan administration's human rights abuses and civil wars in that region (Clarenbach, 1989; Gotthelf, 1987). Sister city ties served to channel financial and material aid as well as moral support for the embattled Central American communities, their function and purpose being to redress human rights abuses. U.S.-China sister city relationships, on the other hand, were forged within an entirely different context-achieving mutual local economic gain through crosssectoral exchange and contributing to collective peace dividend through intersocietal understanding. The Tiananmen Square crackdown introduced a systemic shock to these ties, but it altered neither the original function and purpose of the ties nor the proven benefits from them. Furthermore, we draw from Geoffrey Wiseman's arguments⁹ to suggest that having an engagement approach, as opposed to isolation, when dealing with adversarial states, will have long-term peace-building benefits. Successful conflict prevention and resolution often come through continued and two-way communication, as this approach allows for the parties to have information, leverage, and to improve conditions for cooperation and normalization of relations over time.

Capacity Building

It is well understood that U.S.-China economic interdependence drives sustained trade, which in turn raises the costs and stakes of potential conflict, and thus can decrease probability of conflict (Graham, 2003; Leon, 2017). The majority of sister city respondents reported engaging in at least one exchange aimed at trade and or investment attraction, and maintained such goals as a permanent feature of the relationship. Also falling under the purview of complex interdependence in U.S.-China sister city relations is the supply and demand for advanced management knowledge. The developed versus developing country context takes on a special character in this respect, as partnerships between cities of developed and developing states often find the former disproportionately acting as the source and the

⁹ Wiseman, Geoffrey, ed. Isolate or engage: Adversarial states, US foreign policy, and public diplomacy. Stanford University Press, 2015, 2-4.

latter as the recipient of training and professional learning (Bontenbal, 2009; Ramasamy and Cremer, 2007). This is reflective of the supply and demand structure of management exchanges covered in this study. Interviews with representatives of Sino-U.S. sister city representatives on both sides revealed that roughly half of the cities included in this study (15 out of 32) have engaged in governance best practices training in which Chinese government delegates come to the U.S. for training in a variety of sectors, such as social services, public administration, emergency services and waste management. A non-exhaustive précis of these exchanges between U.S. and Chinese sister cities are as follows: Gilbert, Arizona's exchange of wastewater treatment management practices and related technology with Leshan, Sichuan;¹⁰ Charlotte, North Carolina's training in emergency response services for Baoding, Hebei;¹¹ and Rockford, Illinois' often receives provision of training in law enforcement best practices to counterparts in Changzhou, Jiangsu.¹² Beyond sister city relationships, the demand among Chinese local governments for management knowledge is also being supplied by the International City/County Management Association's China operations in Beijing, established in 2009.13

Lastly, the geography of Chinese cities' establishment of sister city relationships with the U.S. over time reflects the overall coastal-to-inland development pattern seen during the reform era. That is, coastal provinces and cities were the first to internationalize and house a disproportionate share of the population, leaving the central and western regions of China to play catch-up afterwards (Chen, 2005; Lin and Robinson, 1994). This has created a vacuum of demand for international partnerships in central and particularly western regions as they internationalize. Interviews with Chinese officials indicate that the PRC government is more likely to expedite U.S. partnerships with smaller, western region Chinese cities over those of eastern cities.¹⁴ Respondents also indicated that sister city activities helping to develop rural areas, particularly in western provinces, have accelerated over the course of the 2000s.¹⁵ The New Zealand-China Friendship Society uses existing Sino-New Zealand sister city relationships in Guangxi and Gansu provinces to facilitate poverty alleviation and financial management programs, as well as a scholarship program to help residents of poor rural areas to obtain nursing education and training overseas.16

¹⁰ Interview with representative of Leshan Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, July 1, 2009.

¹¹ Interview with representative of Charlotte International Cabinet, May 28, 2009.

¹² Interview with representative of Changzhou Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, December 2, 2009.

¹³ Interview with representative of the city of Annapolis, Maryland, February 2010.

¹⁴ Interview with representative of Changzhou Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, April 21, 2010 and November, 1 2010; and interview with representative of Guangzhou Municipal Foreign Affairs Office and Lanzhou Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, January, 2010.

¹⁵ A special thanks to Yixin Chen of University of North Carolina Wilmington, scholar of rural China, for his advising on this subject.

¹⁶ Interview with representative of New Zealand-China Friendship Society, May 11, 2010; See the

Climate Action

Madame Li Xiaolin herself, the head of CPAFFC, noted that increasing urbanization across China and particularly in western provinces will drive the formation of new sister city relationships with the U.S. and elsewhere, pursuant to hopes that urbanization-related city planning knowledge can be obtained (Zhang, 2014). Beyond the population-centric problems of urbanization, the shared problem of climate change begs equal participation from international actors, including U.S. and Chinese cities. That is, the development and deployment of the technological, managerial and scientific expertise necessary to achieve emissions reduction has become an increasingly cooperation-intensive activity. Hence U.S.-China interdependence in climate action articulates itself across multiple levels, from agreements between California and Chinese National Development and Reform Commission down to individual sister city exchanges. Examples of such climate governance cooperation found in this study are not restricted to larger, wealthier city pairs—as in the case of the environmental collaboration agreement between the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Guangzhou, which aimed at addressing air quality issues (Port of LA, 2005)-but also involved western region Chinese counterparts. Notably, Boulder, Colorado's development of a Climate Action Plan with Lhasa, Tibet aimed at reducing vehicular emissions;¹⁷ and Albuquerque, New Mexico's trade in a range of environmental technologies with its Chinese sister city of Lanzhou, Gansu, as well as several inter-university research exchanges on subject areas including solar energy and wind power technology.18

Conclusion

The forces described by complex interdependence theory have and continue to articulate themselves in the supply-and-demand flows of personnel, ideas, wealth and so forth at the subnational-level between the U.S. and China. These forces offer continuity of intersocietal learning and other dividends that are needed to counterbalance the present national-level turmoil—the needless trade war and nationalist Presidential rhetoric that is as demonizing of China as it is counterfactual. The demonstrated resilience during and detachment from incendiary national politics these subnational ties offer may well contribute a more informed American public opinion of China and vice versa over the near- and long-term. The peacebuilding strength of these relationships lies in both their independence from otherwise incendiary national politics and their continuity of communication. It is through gradual but continuance people-to-people exchanges that bilateral public opinion improves to create the necessary context for cooperation, conflict resolution, and long-term peace, and people-to-people exchanges are best

NZCFS website's pages for detailed information on the Guangxi, Gansu and healthcare projects at http://www.nzchinasociety.org.nz/.

¹⁷ Interview with representative of Boulder-Lhasa Sister City Project, October 20, 2009.

¹⁸ Interview with representative of Lanzhou Municipal Foreign Affairs Office, December 8, 2009.

administered at the city level. Even if economic affairs overseen and regulated by both national governments falls further into chaos, the reliable continuity of relations at the local level has in the past offered a unique diplomatic channel for re-normalizing relations, and may once again. This study provides surfacelevel anecdotal evidence for the stated utility of these relationships, but needed is more targeted inquiry better testing for a relationship between these subnational linkages and national policy outcomes over the long term. Further research on Sino-U.S. or broader international sister city relationships may focus on broader political-economic systems in which such linkages are embedded, including the world-system.

Bio

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Article

Qatar's public diplomacy, international broadcasting, and the Gulf Crisis

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Abstract

The Gulf Crisis, also known as the GCC Crisis, and Qatar Crisis, began when several countries - Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, and Egypt (henceforth 'the quartet') - abruptly severed ties with Qatar during June of 2017. This paper aims to analyse the GCC Crisis from a public diplomacy perspective, and will subsequently focus on four major themes. The first one consists of exploring the projects and initiatives implemented by Qatar, including its reliance on public diplomacy to build a more favourable image. The second theme will discuss the political warfare that unfolded after the start of the Gulf Crisis (24 May 2017). Thirdly, Qatar's response to the subsequent blockade imposed by the quartet will be investigated. Last, and stemming from the previous theme, this paper will also examine the international broadcasting aspect of the crisis, including AI Jazeera's (AJ's) reporting during the same period. Through the Gulf Crisis case study, this paper aspires to uncover the contours and limitations of public diplomacy in the context of inter-state political dynamics.

Keywords

Public Diplomacy, Qatar, Al Jazeera, GCC Crisis, UAE, International Broadcasting

Introduction

When Joseph Nye first coined the concept of soft power in 1990, it gained traction in academia, media, and governmental spheres. The author offered new perspectives on the power of attraction and positive nation branding, which, as he said, "gets others to want what you want" (Nye 1990, p. 167). Nye argues that this charm offensive stems from three key assets that a nation reflects: its culture and the attractiveness of it to others, its political values and their appeal nationally and internationally, and its foreign policy's legitimacy (Nye 2004, p. 11). Nye later added new aspects to his soft power definition, such as "the ability to affect others to obtain preferred outcomes by the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuasion, and positive attraction" (Nye 2011, p. 19). Concerning implementation, Nye highlighted four main channels, through which states can reflect their soft power, namely, "public diplomacy, broadcasting, exchanges, and assistance" (Nye 2011, p. 94).

The concept of soft power has also received its fair share of criticism from both officialdom (e.g. the former U.S. Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld) and academia. Some academics put forward concerns about the bluntness of the term (Lukes 2007), its lack of originality, and its close similarity with earlier propositions (Yukaruç 2017). Other researchers highlighted the vagueness of the concept (Bially Mattern 2007) and the quasi-impossibility to quantify it (Xiangping 2016), whereas political scientist Todd Hall questioned the suitability of the concept as an analytic tool (Hall 2010).

Nye acknowledged the aforementioned critiques and recognised that his concept required further clarity (2007, p. 163). Consequently, he provided many iterations of the term's definition over the past two decades. There is no doubt, however, that Nye's paradigm is a very useful tool in the analysis of international relations, especially when considering that it has brought attention to a wide panoply of non-tangible resources that states can capitalise upon to influence the behaviour of others. It has also highlighted the existence of alternatives beyond the binary approach, involving either military force or economic payoffs, or as academic Todd Hall said, "the notion of soft power captures the idea that assets less tangible than bombs or chequebooks, such as culture and values, also act as power resources" (Hall 2010, p.189).

Academic contributions surrounding the concept of soft power and its implementation tend to focus on large states, such as the U.S., the European nations, Russia, Japan, and China, whereas the body of literature that scrutinises the soft power of smaller nations tends to be more limited. Nevertheless, several studies have examined Qatar's soft power assets in the past decade (e.g. Barakat 2012, Gray 2013, Kamrava 2013, Roberts 2017, Ulrichsen 2014). Some of these publications focused more on the country's modern political history, while others studied the foreign policy of Doha, the capital of Qatar, within particular contexts (e.g. the Arab Spring). However, they all contributed to the cumulative literature examining the rise of Qatar in the realm of international politics within the Middle East and beyond.

Since Nye (2011, p. 94) contended that there are four main conduits for soft power, namely public diplomacy, broadcasting, exchanges, and assistance. This paper aims to focus on Qatar's public diplomacy initiatives and broadcasting aspects and explore the role played by these in shielding the nation during one of its most severe crises in recent history, namely the Gulf Crisis. The paper will also discuss Qatar's response while scrutinising singularities and limitations amidst inter-state dynamics in the Gulf region.

Public diplomacy is a foreign policy tool, which has nonetheless received contributions from a multi-disciplinary perspective and attracted scholarly attention from different fields, such as communication, public relations, marketing, and international relations. Historian Nicholas Cull (2009) traced the origins of the concept to Edmund Gullion, dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Gullion was the first who provided the elaborated meaning of the concept "public diplomacy" in 1965. His definition was the following:

"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 another; the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on policy; communication between those whose job is communication, as diplomats and foreign correspondents; and the process of intercultural communications." (Cited in Cull 2009, p. 19)

This conceptualisation highlights the communication and persuasion aspects of public diplomacy, which are designed to influence the public and media agendas. In parallel, engagement with the public and elites in other countries offers foreign policy advantages outside of the traditional diplomacy tracks.

Small states clearly understand the difficult situation they face in international relations. As historian David Vital puts it: "the smaller the human and material resources of a state, the greater are the difficulties it must remount if it is to maintain any valid political options at all" (Vidal 1967, p. 33). Recognition by small states of their weaknesses leads them to step up their efforts to ensure their survival, seek alliances with larger powers, and consider any instruments that can magnify their importance in the international arena. Since the goals of public diplomacy include forms of communication, persuasion, and engagement with global audiences, small states tend to invest resources in this area to ensure their voices are heard.

Qatar's Hub Strategy

Qatar is one of the smallest states in the Middle East, and its total population totals about 2.6 million people, of which less than 300 thousand people are Qatari nationals. Conversely, it is also one of the wealthiest nations in the world with an annual per-capita income of \$130,000 (Champion 2017). Being an affluent yet small state is a dangerous prospect in the Middle East. This state of affairs obliged the Qatari leadership to adopt effective insurance strategies. Forging an alliance

with the United States and hosting one of the largest U.S. military bases overseas constitute one of these insurance strategies. However, since Western patronage is available to other Gulf neighbours as well, Qatar's leaders sought to create a comparative advantage through public diplomacy and international broadcasting.

The latter elements were considered as they provide Qatar with a distinctive brand and a competitive edge while boosting its image from that of a quasi-anonymous natural gas producer to a major player in the international community. It was against this backdrop that Al Jazeera media network was founded, and this initiative did not spring from a void. It was interwoven with Qatar rising economic output, relative political stability in a turbulent region, a relatively reasonable distribution of wealth, a good education system, and the political will to influence the hearts and minds of millions of people in the MENA region.

It all started with the coming into power of Qatar's previous Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. The latter pursued his nation's interest by leveraging its capabilities and resources. One of his key decisions was to export liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the world via maritime routes instead of relying on conventional pipelines, which would have given Saudi Arabia the upper hand. In fact, the Saudis applied economic pressures when they blocked any Qatari attempts to export its gas by pipeline to other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Roberts 2012). However, thanks to a sophisticated LNG infrastructure, Qatar was able to capitalise on the basin it shares with Iran. The immense revenues that followed turned Qatar into the world's most prosperous nation.

These achievements irritated Saudi Arabia, who hoped to clip Qatar's wings and restore the status quo that existed pre-1990, in which Qatar was considered a mere Saudi vassal state (Hammond 2014). After a series of low-intensity confrontations between Qatari and Saudi border patrols in the early 1990s, the Saudis fomented an attempted coup d'état (jointly with the UAE and Bahrain) against Qatar's new leadership in February 1996 (BBC News 2000). This covert action severely affected Saudi-Qatari relations (Roberts 2012) and pushed the Qatari leadership to engage in diplomacy actively, as well as further widen its network with a multitude of international political players. Doha decided it was it safest bet to play a balancing act with its regional hegemons, Iran and Saudi Arabia. In this spirit, Qatar signed the Defence Cooperation Agreement with the U.S., befriended Iran, restored relations with Saddam's Iraq, and began to normalise ties with Israel.

Qatar's growing wealth within a volatile region led Qatar to put in place an ambitious plan for the future of the country via the enhancement of the nation's soft power assets and public diplomacy initiatives. The vision that emerged viewed the country as a multi-layered international hub, which would, in turn, attract investors, scholars, professionals, activists, artists, and tourists alike. In a 2014-interview with Charlie Rose, Qatar's former Prime Minister, Hamad Bin Jassim Al Thani who is considered one of the key architects of Qatar's drive for regional influence, confirmed that the chief motivation of the Qatari leadership was to position the country as a leading power in the region regardless of its small size (Rose 2014). According to academic Kristian Coates Ulrichsen (2014, p. 35), Qatar's brand consists of promoting the country "as a neutral and progressive leader within the Arab and Islamic world, and to garner the support of the wider Arab region in addition to the broader international community."

The positioning exercise mentioned above delineated the contours of Qatar's national grand strategy, which then paved the way for its pursuit of several sub-strategies. One of the critical steps initiated in this regard consisted in transforming Qatar into a knowledge hub in the Middle East via a multitude of educational, scientific, and cultural projects led by the Qatar Foundation. The latter founded Education City, a fourteen square kilometre state-of-the-art campus that has hosted, and continues to host, eight international universities from the U.S., the U.K., and France, as well as local research centres and facilities.

Another sub-strategy consisted of establishing Doha as a hub within global air transportation networks by launching Qatar Airways in 1997. The latter was intended to become a leader in the airline industry. The Qatari leadership also envisioned the country's international airport as a connector between long-haul and regional flights. Needless to say, the rise of Qatar Airways (and other Gulf airlines) constitutes a direct competition with European airlines and their respective hubs, which were traditionally the recipient of traffic flows between East and West (Delfmann et al. 2005).

With a passenger fleet of 179 airliners serving about 150 destinations (February 2018 data), the end game is to transform Qatar's airport into one of the world's busiest and to attract, by the same token, hundreds of thousands of transit tourists. Such an influx would energise the local economy beyond oil and gas revenue and would have a substantial impact on the hospitality and entertainment industries, as well as the art and cultural scene. In fact, a study that measured the economic rate of return on investment in the aviation industry has revealed the existence of a correlation between air transportation connectivity, labour productivity, and GDP increase (IATA 2007).

Moreover, the plan for Doha was to not only become a vibrant cultural city by establishing a series of world-class museums but to rival Paris and New York (Batty 2012). This endeavour was spearheaded by the Qatar Museums, whose vision is to "be a cultural instigator" (Mirgani 2017, p. 3). With the organisation's Chairperson, Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad Al Thani, intentionally referring to "the soft power that Joseph Nye has spoken about," it seems that Qatar's cultural sector acts as a branding tool for the nation regionally and globally (ibid). Considerable financial means were mobilised to this end, and media reports suggested that the Qatari royal family has spent an estimated £1bn on art in the decade leading to 2012 (Batty 2012).

Allocating resources to sports diplomacy was an additional strategic area of focus. For this purpose, Qatar hosted the fifteenth Asian Games in Doha in 2006. It took seven years and \$2.8 billion to organise this event and build adequate facilities for it (Li 2009, p. 29). The Asian Games signalled the readiness of Doha to undertake mega-events, and the efficient organisation and highly creative visual effects of the inaugural ceremony impressed the sports community. This was merely the beginning of a long journey that aims to turn the country "into an unchallengeable global centre for sports and entertainment, culture and diplomacy. But especially of sports. And especially of football" (Lichfield 2013).

Concerning football, high profile actions that were undertaken ranged from the commercial sponsorship of FC Barcelona by the Qatar Foundation and Qatar Airways (which also sponsored later the Italian football club Roma) to the takeover of the iconic French football Paris Saint-Germain. This strategy reached its climax with the successful bid to host the 2022 World Cup (Reuters 2017). Along with football, Qatar showed increasing interest in other sports by organising recurrent events such as the Tennis ATP tour in Doha, the Qatar Masters golf tournament, the Tour of Qatar cycling competition, and the Formula 1 motor race, in addition to occasional reputable events like The 2015 World Men's Handball Championship which was held in Doha.

Additionally, Qatar used international investments as a key sub-strategy for mirroring its national brand. The state-owned Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) was set up in 2005 to play a leading role in managing Qatar's sovereign wealth fund and has since been involved in handling strategic investments overseas. According to the Sovereign Wealth Fund Rankings, QIA was ranked number ten in the world in 2017, handling 320 billion US Dollars in investments (SWFI 2017). Through the latter, QIA aims not only generate good monetary returns but also to create interdependencies with key international players in order to increase the leverage of Qatari authorities (McSparren, Besada & Savarade 2017, p. 5).

Some of QIA's most sizable investments have targeted some of Britain's renowned firms, with the likes of Barclays, Harrods, and the Canary Wharf Group Investment Holdings (London's largest property owner) to name a few. QIA has also put forward large-scale investments in some of Germany's most prominent companies, including Volkswagen Group, Siemens, Porsche, and Deutsche Bank. France also benefited from these ventures with multinational companies like Total, GDF Suez, and France Telecom on the receiving end of substantial Qatari investments. Moreover, QIA purchased prime real estates in New York and Washington.

Last but not least, the sixth endeavour (and the first one chronologically) that was undertaken aimed at establishing Qatar as a political and media hub. Through this hub, the nation has the means to play a broader role as mediator and initiator of new collaborations and cooperation with the international community while also establishing a mighty media empire. Hence, Qatar has inserted itself into many conflicts, including Yemen (2007-2008), Lebanon (2008), Chad/Sudan (2009), Djibouti/Eritrea (2010), Sudan (2010, 2013), Afghanistan (2010-2011, 2018), and Israel/Palestinians.

Prior to these initiatives, Qatar was not known for being an established peacemaker. Thus, the country's political manoeuvres left at times many observers perplexed, as the balancing act between archenemies was undoubtedly delicate (e.g. between Israel and Palestinians, PLO and Hamas, U.S. and Taliban). The different sides did not always appreciate Doha's connections with their foes. Sometimes, the Qatari efforts backfired, and their brand image suffered, especially when rival forces (e.g. Saudi Arabia, UAE) spread unsubstantiated allegations that Qatar was supporting terrorist organisations or extremist movements. Having said that, as part of its outreach with all state and non-state actors in the region, Doha cultivated ties with some transnational political groups (e.g. Muslim Brotherhood). Such moves, though, were made for purely pragmatic and strategic reasons (Cafiero 2017).

At times, the different protagonists shared some cultural and/or political affinities with Qatar, and subsequently related to these common grounds and either supported or at least tolerated Doha's mediation. This allowed "the Qatari government to burnish its diplomatic credentials and carve out an image as an important regional player" (Barakat 2012, p. 1). In its mediation efforts, Qatar could capitalise on four key advantages.

The first one is the political goodwill of the country's leadership to try to solve some of the burning issues in the region. Secondly, the diplomacy's sway of leading players in the region (e.g. Egypt and Saudi Arabia) steadily declined during the 2000s. Thirdly, the substantial wealth of the country has given more leverage to Qatar's royal family. Concerning the latter, some critics say that Qatar used its financial means to engage primarily in "chequebook diplomacy" (Rabi 2009, p. 451). For example, in its efforts to save Lebanon from the brink of yet another civil war, Qatar promised to put forward \$300 million in favour of reconstruction projects (ibid.). The fourth distinctive advantage stems from the protagonists' interest in gaining good publicity. This gave the Qatari negotiators the leeway "to push the boundaries of impartial mediation, proposing their own solutions or offering financial sweeteners to achieve consensus" (Barakat 2012, p. 26).

Notwithstanding its aspirational character, Qatar's grand hub strategy was not without flaws. Education City has yet to become an obvious global destination for tertiary education and knowledge economy. Furthermore, a higher education hub is presumed to create linkages and interdependencies with government and industries in order to make the concept economically enticing for employment, investment, and innovation. However, these aspects remain a work in progress in Qatar's case. What is more, this type of hub is hugely costly and needs decades at the very least to break even. In the light of the fluctuating oil and gas prices, especially in the past decade, it has been asserted that such high spending commitments present a financial risk for Qatar (Bollag 2016).

The high financial costs combined with falling energy prices have similarly undermined the growth of the cultural sector, which prompted the restructuring within Qatar Museums and the closing of local exhibition centres due to lack of funding (Adam 2014). Additionally, frictions appeared between the local art scene and Western art exhibitions, which tended to be valued by the elites and thus, generally received more support. This led some academics to voice concerns about the tendency to emphasise engagement with Western audiences rather than local ones (Exell 2017, p. 49). Others have lamented that this burgeoning art scene is driven more by the will of the ruling elite than the cultural affinities of their people while also warning against the disappearance of local voices in the face of the commodification of culture and the "homogenising force of globalisation" (Batty 2012).

In the meantime, both Qatar Airways and Hamad International Airport have established good reputations for their superior services. Nevertheless, allegations of unfair competition have marred Qatar's carrier. In fact, three key U.S. competitors (American Airlines, Delta Airlines, and United Airlines) have routinely alleged that Qatar Airways and other Gulf carriers receive letters of credit and subsidies from their governments (to compensate for fuel hedging losses). Subsequently, this led Qatar's government to manage to reach an understanding with the U.S. over this matter in January of 2018. Under this framework, Qatar Airways will disclose financial statements that are sufficiently transparent in conformity with internationally recognised accounting standards (Casey 2018).

Al Jazeera and Qatar's International Broadcasting and Media Footprint

Qatar's media hub project was initiated when 150 former staff members of BBC Arabic were hired by Qatar, which led to the establishment of AJ in 1996. This move allowed the Qatari leadership to venture into international broadcasting, as well as to create a comparative advantage for Qatar over its neighbours by enhancing the nation's brand internationally, promoting its agenda, and seeking to achieve its public diplomacy objectives (Zayani 2008). Following its inception, anchors went on to explore controversial political, social, and religious issues in ways, which were simply unthinkable at that time. The wisdom of the Qatari leadership consisted in minimising any government interference with the network's affairs. Therefore, AJ looked – in its first decade – more like BBC rather than a state-controlled Arab network (Schleifer 2001).

AJ has indeed raised the threshold of the freedom of expression in the Arab World, especially in its formative years (1996-2005). Al Jazeera Arabic (AJA) anchors went on to explore controversial political, social and religious issues in ways, which were simply unthinkable at that time. As journalism professor Philip Seib observed, "On Al-Jazeera, everything from the role of women to the competence of governments is addressed, often loudly. The station's motto is "the opinion, and the other opinion," which might seem commonplace in the West, but is exceptional in the Arab media world" (Seib 2005, p. 601). Prior to that, as political scientist Marc Lynch argued, official Arab television media seldom tackled any sensitive issues. It consisted mainly of boring and repetitive coverage, which sung the praise of the rulers' daily activities (Lynch 2005, p. 40).

Was AJA critical to Qatar's policies as well during the aforementioned period?¹ Occasionally yes. For example, firebrand Syrian anchor Faisal al-Kasim, who had previously worked for the BBC for many years, discussed Qatar's overtures to Israel in an episode titled 'Why is Qatar crawling toward Israel?' as part of AJ's flagship programme "the Opposite Direction" (still airs nowadays). Al-Kasim hosted a professor of political science at Qatar University, heavily and openly criticised his government's policies (Al-Kasim 1999). The same show invited Abdullah Al Nafisi, a Kuwaiti intellectual, on 13 July 1999. The latter launched a salvo of criticisms against the Gulf monarchs, including Qatar.

It was during this phase that AJA became a household name in the Arab World since it offered a platform for opposition personalities and controversial figures from all political persuasions. AJA also exposed the Arab regimes' human rights abuses and corruption. Notwithstanding its provocateur outlook, AJA became, as Lynch contended, "at the forefront of a revolution in Arab political culture... providing an unprecedented forum for debate in the Arab world that is eviscerating the legitimacy of the Arab status quo and helping to build a radically new pluralist political culture" (Lynch 2005, p. 36).

But AJA has also taken intense flak because of its programming, ranging from an-

¹ Similarly, Al Jazeera English (AJE) has aired several programmes critical to Qatar's treatment of migrant workers for example.

ti-Americanism and anti-Israel bias to being a mouthpiece for terrorists (Ricchiardi 2011). Further criticism centred on AJ's ownership issues, and the fact that the network was financed by a non-democratic government (Figenschou 2011, p. 368). Other critics highlighted the difference in the tone of voice between AJA and Al Jazeera English (AJE) (Fahmy & Al-Emad 2011). French journalist Olivier Da Lage (2005) went to the extent of affirming that Qatari leaders use AJ as part of the government's "double game", which consists of enhancing diplomatic and economic ties with the U.S. and Israel, while concurrently condemning these countries on the airwaves via AJ.

It should be noted, however, that AJA has shifted from its early days' editorial positions. At times, especially during the period 2014-2017, the channel looked more like a state-funded international broadcaster, encircled by red lines and no-go areas, chiefly vis-à-vis Saudi Arabia. The regional backlash, which Qatar suffered from its Arab Spring policies (Ulricksen 2014b, p. 4), restricted AJ's room for manoeuvre too. By that time, though, AJA provocative editorial line had already caused some serious damage to Qatar's relations with other governments. Several Arab regimes recalled their ambassadors from Doha on various occasions. Also, in the aftermath of a critical coverage of the Iraq War in 2003, it was suggested that President George W. Bush considered the possibility of bombing AJ's headquarters in 2004 (MacGuire & Parry 2006). In addition, the withdrawal of the Saudi, UAE and Bahraini Ambassadors from Qatar in March 2014 was a major warning sign for the ongoing GCC Crisis.

In contrast to AJA, which caters for Arabic-speaking audiences, AJE (founded in 2006) did not utilise any particular national lens in its editorial line. Rather, it positioned itself as representative of the global south and its peoples. AJE's tone of voice tends to be more neutral in comparison with its Arabic sister channel. Also, AJE gave precedence to alternative news so as not to merely echo other Western mainstream media. This strategic positioning gave AJE even more appeal with international audiences, earning the channel more than 150 prizes, medals and awards (as of May 2017). In the end, as contended by media professor Tine Ustad Figenschou, "the alternativeness of AJE is serving Qatar's public diplomacy" (Figenschou 2011, p. 368).

AJA, AJE, and AJ+ (AJ's premier online publication) merely constitute the perceptible part of Qatar's media empire. Qatar launched in 2014 another media group, which includes a satellite broadcasting television, a newspaper, and a current affairs website entitled "Al-Araby Al-Jadeed" (in Arabic) or "The New Arab," which is based in London. The latter's driving engine behind the new station is Azmi Bishara, the Palestinian director of the Doha-based Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, and a close advisor of Qatar's emir. Furthermore, it is also believed that Doha funds several news outlets internationally, such as Mekameleen TV, which is a Turkey-based satellite television channel, run mostly by exiled Egyptian activists. Likewise, Qatari funding is understood to support a constellation of international electronic media, such as Arabi Post, Arabi 21, and the Middle East Monitor to name just a few.

The Gulf Crisis

Diplomatic quarrels in the Arabian Peninsula have a long history, and some of these disputes have turned into military conflicts in the past (e.g. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait). The leadership change, which took place in Qatar in 1995, brought to power leaders who resented the Saudi hegemony in the region. Consequently, in the past two decades, tensions have simmered between Qatar and neighbouring Gulf monarchies over several issues, including - but not limited to - Doha's support of the Arab Spring. Other tacit reasons include the soft power competition between Qatar and the UAE, as both countries compete pan-regionally in different domains (Rappler 2017; Dorsey 2017).

The official start of the Gulf Crisis occurred when hackers took over the system of the Qatar National Agency (QNA) on the 23 of May at 11:45 p.m. and posted false quotes attributed to Qatar's Emir, which praised Iran while criticising the U.S. (Salisbury 2017). Despite official denials from the Qatari leadership, the quartet's media rejected the hacking story and continued to denounce Qatar.² In the meantime, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahraini authorities warned their citizens from expressing sympathy with Qatar on social media and imposed lengthy jail terms towards contraveners (DeYoung 2017).

This media salvo may have been the prelude for a military invasion by Saudi / UAE forces, which was thwarted by the decisiveness of Turkey's leadership to send troops. There were also frictions at the higher level of the U.S. administration (Trump and Jared Kushner versus Tillerson and Mattis), which were believed to have stopped Saudi and UAE military movements alongside Qatar's borders (Emmons 2018). Nonetheless, tensions took the shape of a blockade imposed by the quartet against Qatar in July of 2017. The only land passage linking Qatar to the Arabian Peninsula was cut while airspace passage over the four countries was denied, forcing flights from Qatar to travel via prolonged routes.

The blockade led to the disruption of existing supply chains and the immediate halt of food supplies during the month of Ramadan (Gorvett 2018). In the meantime, Qatari nationals were expelled from the quartet countries, and nationals from the quartet countries living in Qatar were ordered by their respective governments to quit Qatar or face severe penalties (Falk 2018, p. 3). Shortly af-

² A Washington Post investigation, which referred to information obtained from U.S. intelligence officials, corroborated the Qatari version of events and confirmed that the hacking originated from the UAE (Nakashima & DeYoung, 2017).

terwards, the quartet issued an ultimatum of thirteen demands to be met within ten days. The list included closing AJ and all other news outlets that Qatar funds around the world, including Al-Araby Al-Jadeed and a myriad of electronic media outlets, severing ties with Iran and organisations such as Hamas, shutting down a Turkish military base, paying undetermined sums of reparations, and being subjected to monthly external audits. Several experts believe that these demands were designed to be rejected (Falk 2018; Law 2017; Ulrichsen 2017).

Soft Power Rivalry and the Gulf Crisis

Looking at the dynamics leading to the crisis raise few questions. For example, did the Gulf Crisis result from a heated soft power competition in the region? There is no doubt that the rivalry between Qatar and the UAE has exacerbated tensions between the protagonists to the point where the military option was seriously considered. The tilting point has undoubtedly been the Arab Spring, which started in Tunisia on the 18th of December 2010 and gave the impression that Qatar - thanks to its vast media footprint and strong connections with non-state actors - was able to change the situation on the ground in much larger and stronger Arab countries, such as Egypt. This new reality raised alarm bells in the Gulf region and prompted both the Saudis and the UAE to join forces to restore the status quo.

However, the rivalry is deep-seated and precedes the Arab uprisings. Both Qatar and the UAE competed for international recognition in similar domains such as education, air transportation, media, sports, and culture. For instance, Media City in Dubai is the media hub in the UAE (Subeh, 2017, p. 43). Substantial budgets were allocated to create Sky News Arabia (established in 2012), and before that Al-Arabiya (founded in 2003 by Saudi royals but is headquartered in the UAE) as tools to influence the Arab public opinion and to counter AJ's increasing influence (Worth 2008). The ensuing media competition between both sides represented a clash between two opposed visions about the region's future. In the end, the Arab Spring demonstrated that the Qatar-based broadcaster was the most popular. Suffice to say that the Saudi Prince Al Waleed Bin Talal described AJ as the channel of the masses, whereas Al Arabiya is the channel of the rulers (Assabeel 2017).

Competition in other fields was irritating for the UAE too. Qatar's successful bid to host the 2022 edition of the FIFA World Cup was not wholeheartedly accepted by the neighbours, especially the UAE which has also invested in hosting and organising several national and international sports events on its territory. Some of the major events included the FIFA World Youth Cup (2003) and the FIFA Club World Championship in 2009 and 2010 (Al Haddad, 2017). The fact that a top UAE official, namely Dubai's head of security, lieutenant general Dhahi Khalfan, stated "the blockade of Qatar by its neighbours will cease if the country is stripped of or surrenders the 2022 World Cup" (Rumsby 2017) says a lot about the quartet's motivations and the soft power connection.

Qatar's Post-blockade Public Diplomacy

In the aftermath of the blockade, Doha proved to be much more resilient than the quartet had initially planned. The military agreement with Turkey (in addition to disagreements at the top of the U.S. decision making) prevented a swift Saudi military attack, and Doha moved to reinforce its alliance with Turkey and to a lesser extent Iran. Also, the country's strong financial reserves mitigated the immediate consequences of the siege. More importantly, Qatar's first move was to operate within the international law framework, pursuing a policy of self-restraint and open dialogue, which offered the country even more respectability in the international arena. Claiming the moral high ground also made Doha's primary discursive tactic, i.e. the adoption of the victim frame, quite effective. It was indeed more manageable for large sections of the media to view Qatar's position through the prism of victimhood and injustice. As a small country bullied and blockaded by its larger neighbours, the imagery that was conveyed reflected an "underdog" status (Cafiero 2018).

Equally important, Qatar flexed its soft power muscles to prevail against the quartet. Qatar investments abroad were a good starting point, and it was no coincidence that Doha received diplomatic support from Germany whose Foreign Minister was among the first international diplomats to try to defuse the crisis (Reuters 2017). The Saudis, who resented the German efforts, not only withdrew their ambassador from Berlin but also banned German firms from bidding for government contracts in Saudi Arabia (Koelbl 2018). Similarly, in its quest to regain the initiative with powerful U.S. lobbies, the Qatari leadership initiated plans to invest \$35 billion in the U.S. by 2020, with an additional \$10 billion earmarked for infrastructure projects (Perlberg & Sergie 2018). It is believed that these investments, plus a myriad of other engagement strategies, brought Doha back into the political game in Washington (Harris 2018).

In the meantime, Doha carried on its actions aiming at minimising any negative impact that the blockade could bear on the nation's image, chief among which was the unabated continuation of major projects. In this context, the Qatar Foundation organised a grand ceremony in April of 2018 for the inauguration of the Qatar National Library as the latest addition within Education City. Likewise, Qatar Museums invited Tom Brady, a US National Football League (NFL) star, to visit Doha in his capacity as Best Buddies Global Ambassador. These were all opportunities to invite highly mediatised international personalities, and thus to send a clear message to the world that business in Doha continues as usual. Furthermore, Qatar Museums regularly organise a yearly constellation of events held in the celebration of friendship with a selected nation. The 2018 edition of the Year of Culture featured Russia, and the timing was perfect given that Qatar was courting Russia as part of its post-blockade efforts. This was one of the multiple avenues that Qatar used to upgrade its relations with Russia. Subsequently, Qatar's Emir visited Moscow while the Russian Defence Minister visited Doha in order to sign a military agreement (Gulf Times, 2018b). The synergy between both parties culminated at the end of the World Cup in 2018 when Russian President Putin handed over the mantle of the host to the Emir of Qatar, whose country will organise the next edition.

Qatari leading personalities, such as the Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation HH Sheikha Moza bint Nasser (the Emir's mother), were also involved in public diplomacy at the highest level. For instance, at a high-profile meeting organised in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Paris, Sheikha Moza used this opportunity not only to call on governments to respect children's right to education, but also to take aim at the quartet for "playing political games with education." Sheikha Moza went on to say:

"I think we would all agree that education is a human right. And as a human right, education should be above all and certainly above politics. But sadly, this is often not the case. During the current siege against Qatar, for example, many Qatari students who were enrolled in schools in the blockading countries were expelled including students studying at the Sorbonne Middle East campus. But the blockading states, with their irresponsible acts and reckless, ruthless games, did not stop there" (Qatar Tribune 2018).

Similarly, Qatar's National Human Rights Committee (QNHRC) became very active post-blockade and utilised its wide network, which was established during the previous decades with international NGOs specialised in human rights. These relationships were among the first that were solicited for help and were useful in mobilising the international community against the illegality of the blockade. Only a couple of months into the crisis, QNHRC jointly organised a large conference in Doha with the International Press Institute and the International Federation of Journalists. This conference, which was entitled 'Freedom of expression: Facing up to the threat,' gathered dozens of human rights bodies and media rights organisations, which were appalled by the direct threats that the crisis represented on media freedoms.

In another development, Qatar invited numerous delegations of Western representatives, politicians, journalists, and opinion leaders, compensating their fees, and giving them tours of the country with the possibility to engage with various local officials, journalists, and academics in order to give them the full picture about the country and its policies. This method undoubtedly proved its worth in gaining friendly voices overseas. For instance, after visiting Doha, Harvard Law professor Alan M. Dershowitz became one of the prominent defenders of Qatar, calling for an end to the blockade (Dershowitz 2018).

Al Jazeera's Programming During the Crisis

Since the closure of AJ featured highly in the quartet's demands, this section briefly examines AJA's programming during the crisis as well, especially the fact that the network constitutes a key platform for conveying Qatar's positions to the world. It should be noted that the quartet's demand concerning the closure of AJ (and other media funded by Qatar) backfired, as it attracted the wrath of media NGOs worldwide. Organisations like the Committee to Protect Journalists, Human Rights Watch, and Reporters Without Borders have all noted this attack on media freedoms and condemned it with the strongest terms.

In its quest to discredit AJA via different means (e.g. censorship, flak, cyber-attacks), the quartet probably hoped to push AJA into adopting a clear-cut pro-Qatar propagandistic editorial line. However, AJA refrained for the most part from exaggerating its tone of voice in its coverage of this issue and maintained its journalistic norms. Its news reports broadcasted the statements of the quartet in toto and outlined allegations against Qatar without censorship. AJA producers would seek commentary from Saudi and UAE officials, but the latter decided from the onset to boycott the Qatar based channel, thus relinquishing their right for representation. Even so, AJA invited various commentators from non-quartet countries to debate the issues at stake and put forward the quartet's perspective.

AJA diversified its modus operandi too. For example, the channel delved into the use of satire through the program entitled "Above Power," which deconstructs the quartet's narratives via parody. While this program was initially launched in November of 2016, it gained popularity after the crisis began (The New Arab 2017). Another effective method was the insertion of brief news reports (of a 3-minute duration) at the beginning of AJA's talk shows like "Output of the Day." This method consisted of a short, yet sophisticated, rhetorical take on the event under scrutiny. Seasoned journalists with silky voices and excellent command of Arabic made this method very popular. Salim Azzouz, a columnist at the daily Al Quds, called these reports "Al Jazeera's heavy artillery" (Azzouz 2017).

Meanwhile, AJA (and AJE) became a lot more critical of the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen, providing substantial airtime to highlight the plight of civilians and the bombing of critical infrastructure (The Economist 2017). Also, AJA would frequently invite leading Saudi opponents to comment on episodes like the Saudi purge at the Ritz Carlton, in which princes, businesspeople, and officials were detained in late 2017. AJA also used this episode to expose the Saudi Crown Prince's doublespeak, who imprisoned several personalities on charges of corruption and embezzlement on the one hand, and went on a wild spending spree (buying a 500 million USD luxury yacht) during his vacation in France on the other (Mazzetti & Hubbard 2016).

Conversely, the blockade seems to have moderated AJ firebrand style of journalism. The network's investigative unit spent a couple of years producing an undercover documentary which intended to expose the modus operandi of several pro-Israel advocacy organisations in Washington, D.C. including Stand With Us, The Israel Project, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, the Israel on Campus Coalition, and the Zionist Organization of America. However, this broadcast was delayed indefinitely (Swisher 2018). In early February 2018, it was reported that Qatari leaders had hired lobbyist Nicolas Muzin to assuage the concerns of Jewish American organisations that AJ would not be airing the documentary (Tibon 2018).

Conclusion

This paper aimed to examine Qatar's public diplomacy initiatives during the blockade. Prior to the current crisis, Qatar's media apparatus and proactive diplomacy created a particular image of the country as a "pygmy with the punch of a giant" (the Economist, 2011). During that time, Doha widened its network and continued to engage with state and non-state actors, whether Shiite representatives like the Houthis in Yemen and Hezbollah in Lebanon or Sunni political forces like the Arab Spring activists. For two decades, this prevented any unwanted interference by regional forces and Qatar managed to preserve its sovereignty by playing a delicate balancing act between the different protagonists (e.g. Saudi Arabia and Iran).

In the post-blockade period, it would seem that soft power assets and public diplomacy initiatives created vast windows of opportunity for Qatar's diplomacy. The large diplomatic network that Doha built across the business, media, academic, and cultural spheres demonstrated its usefulness in times of need. Organisations such as QNHRC, the Qatar Foundation, and Qatar Museums to name just a few, mobilised their connections to spread awareness about the blockade faced by the country. Likewise, AJ displayed once more its public diplomacy usefulness. The Doha-based broadcaster maintained generally its journalistic norms even if some shortcomings were noted. Their reporting deconstructed the quartet's narratives at every turn and proved once more its effectiveness. Such coverage also made clear why the network was at the top of the quartet's list of demands. Ultimately, though, the quartet was not successful in forcing Qatar into submission.

Quite the contrary, Doha further strengthened its positions internationally, and its narrative had more reach, especially given the quartet's communication suffering from inconsistencies and imbalances (Harris 2018; Hassan 2018).

It must be said, however, that public diplomacy – in Qatar's case - was not the ultimate deterrent that stopped military aggression against the country. The military option was only discarded after the decisive move by the Turkish leadership to send military units, combined with frictions at the highest level of U.S. decision-making, in which both American secretaries of defence and state warned the quartet against any reckless action (Emmons 2018). In fact, Qatar beefed up its military arsenal and proceeded with the procurement of very advanced weaponry systems from the U.S. including a \$12bn deal to purchase F-15 fighter jets. Similar deals were also concluded with Britain and France for the purchase of Typhoon and Rafale fighter jets (Salacanin 2018, p. 6), whereas Italy agreed to supply seven navy vessels to Qatar (Defense News 2017). Beyond their real military deterrence and political value, such military contracts could also be interpreted as economic payoffs to powerful nations.

A final point is about the costs associated with the use of soft power assets to prevail geopolitically. Pre-blockade, Qatar's invested heavily in soft power assets to the point that its neighbours became deeply irritated. Consequently, smear campaigns targeted Doha well before the Gulf Crisis. These negative campaigns utilised various controversial topics (e.g. allegations of collusion with terrorist entities, migrant workers' welfare, and allegations of corruption during the bidding process for the 2022 FIFA World Cup bid). As a result, Qatar's reputation was dented internationally. Professor Simon Chadwick described this situation as "soft dis-empowerment," in the sense that the country incurred a loss of prestige, which contrasts with the desired effect (Sergie 2018).

Hence, beyond the often-praiseworthy commentary about the advantages gained through soft power assets and public diplomacy in international relations, there are also important considerations about the downsides of such policies, especially when intense inter-state competition takes place, and even more so when this competition is about soft power per se. Some authors have touched on the notion of "soft power games" (Rengma 2012; Van Herpen 2016). Nevertheless, more indepth research is warranted about this subject, as it will provide additional tools to analyse the behaviour of small states.

Bio

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Article

India's Use of Social Media in Public Diplomacy

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Abstract

Public Diplomacy has assumed great significance in foreign policy and strategic communication for Rising Powers like India and China. These Rising nation-states, with expanding economies and global ambitions, are taking to purposeful communication with global audiences for building positive image and enhancing goodwill. In such efforts, the use of social media has become extensive and widespread. India is a major example of a Rising Power's employment of social media in fostering communication. Mainstream social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook have become forums for direct engagement between Indian policy establishment and its foreign and national constituencies. This paper identifies the key characteristics of India's digital communication and examines its effectiveness while exploring the contribution of digital communication to India's international stature.

Keywords

Rising Power, India, Social Media, Public Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, Narendra Modi, Digital Communication, Twitter, Facebook, Nation-branding, Brand Modi, Brand India, New Media

Introduction

Modern states are consciously reaching out to the public — both domestic and foreign — for shaping public opinions on one hand and exerting influence on the other in a world rife with conflicts. Public Diplomacy (PD), defined as 'efforts by the government of one nation to influence public or elite opinion in a second nation for the purpose of turning the foreign policy of the target nation to advan-tage' (Manheim 1994) has assumed a new context with social media platforms facilitating two-way communication, allowing for dialogue, and direct engagement (Dahlberg 2011; Henderson & Bowley 2010). National leaderships, as a result, are showing the urgency to connect to people for explaining government postures and decisions and communicating the desired 'images'. In the context of the pro-

liferation of social media, images are critical when the public evaluate politicians (Lalancette & Raynaud 2017). Global leaders, including those of Rising Powers, have therefore taken to connecting to people and creating images through active online presence in social media platforms like Facebook (FB) and Twitter.

The rapid rise of India, Indonesia and China and their enthusiastic deployment of social media in diplomatic communication requires an alternative perspective for studying PD — less reliant on visions and approaches employed for studying the same in the Western and the Anglo-Saxon world. Social media in several respects is also a force equaliser in the world order with both major and Rising Powers harnessing it in diplomatic communication. PD therefore must be examined from a Rising Power perspective to understand its nuances, development and challenges, such as those for India. The paper identifies the evolution and characteristics of India's digital diplomacy and the challenges it encounters in creating images and enhancing effective communication.

The Discourse

A careful analysis of the literature on PD reveals a predominantly Western perspective and the traction it has had in the Western foreign policy and diplomacy narrative. Since its coining by Edmund Gullion in 1965, PD has been noted an important practice in the diplomatic praxis of several Western countries, such as the US (Melissen 2005; Cull 2009), UK (Fisher 2006), Canada (Batora 2005; Brown 2011), Australia (Brown 2011), Norway (Batora 2005; Melissen 2005) and Turkey (Cevik & Seib 2015). Indeed, African countries like South Africa and Ghana (Brown 2011) have also, like the Western nations mentioned, have aimed to build 'longer-lasting networks of individuals and institutions that may influence the wider relationship between states and peoples' (Hall 2012a). Nevertheless, PD is still less in vogue in European countries like Germany (Auer & Srugies 2013) and has not been enthusiastically seen by many European scholars who are engaged in exploring if Europe's PD efforts have yielded a coherent overall image or worked at cross-purposes (Cross 2013). A debate on the effectiveness is noticeable in the US too, particularly after the tragic incidents of 9/11 (Beehner 2005; Comor & Bean 2012). Effectiveness of PD is being closely scrutinized elsewhere too, like in India, where, despite increasing emphasis on its exercise, many are skeptical about the influence of India's 'nation brand' (Hall 2012a).

India symbolizes the increasing embrace of PD by non-Western nations largely for 'nation-branding' and influencing the 'global information environment' in order to increase their brand images as attractive destinations for tourism, trade and investment (Javier 2006). PD of several Asian countries has begun focusing towards the West (Hall & Smith 2013) through a decisive alternative narrative on development and progress. China has been an aggressive employer of PD in this regard (Melissen 2005; d'Hooghe 2007; Zhao 2015) aiming to brand itself as a 'benign' power — antithetical to the majority of the international perception for cultivating international respect (Zhao 2015) — critical for its ascent to the great power league.

Practice of PD by Asian countries — in its early phases — is in contrast to such practice by the US, which primarily aimed at countering the former Soviet Union's influence during the Cold War years. Asian countries with colonial histories like India and Indonesia — that developed 'post-imperial ideology'1 —adopted PD for different reasons. After achieving independence, PD provided these former colonies a medium for pursuing anti-colonial agendas, aimed at undermining European influence in Asia and throughout the 'Third World' (Hall & Smith 2013). Since then, Asian PD, despite being noted by some scholars as 'still in its infancy' (Anholt 2008), has been growing at a fast pace, on the back of the benefits that can flow from positive engagement (Nincic 2011). Indian foreign policy strategists recognize the multiplication of benefits that can arise from far greater engagement enabled by new technologies that can transform diplomacy and politics in general (Seib 2010; Hall 2012a; Ritambhara 2013). Consequently, PD has been fast gaining significance in India's foreign policy (Suri 2011) with the literature on the subject growing (Seib 2010; Dutta 2011; Hall 2012a; Natarajan 2014).

Practice of PD is fundamental to the goal of promoting soft power (Batora 2005; Melissen 2005; Nye 2008) with the latter becoming a key aspect of external engagement of countries, including the Rising Powers, which have been active in building soft power in their foreign policies (Wang 2008; Zhang 2011; Hall 2012a; Hall & Smith 2013; Cross 2013). India exemplifies the approach. India's economic liberalisation from the 1990s, aimed at greater integration with the world economy, was accompanied by a conscious decision to engage with its immediate neighbourhoods of South and Southeast Asia more through soft power, thereby 'trying to become a 'benign' hegemon of the 1990s from being a 'malign' one in the 1980s (Wagner 2005). In a world that was yet to allow space for growth to new players in the international order (Holsti 1991), making their presence felt was important, as was gaining acceptance in the international hierarchy. Rebranding through PD became important (Cooper 2009) as the new actors wished to be 'recognised and understood globally' (Brown 2011). With the Western media projecting India as a 'recalcitrant state' for decades - thereby damaging it's image abroad (Dasgupta 2011) - pursuing these objectives were significant for India for upgrading its global stature. Continued emphasis on these goals have led to the deployment of social media by India in communicating its stories with PD

¹ A term coined by Manjari Chatterjee Miller, the concept clearly indicates a sense of grievance about the past, an insistence on entitlement in the present as restitution for the humiliation and exploitation of the past and a search for respect and status. For details see Bajpai, Pant: 14

acquiring a conspicuous digital character.

It is noticeable that PD has also had to proceed among blurring of borders with domestic issues being debated by the international audience and vice-versa (Batora 2005; Huijgh 2011; Yang 2011). The transition has been pronounced in the digital era with the explosive growth of social media. Tharoor, an Indian diplomat turned politician, points out: '[I]n today's world, you cannot meaningfully confine your public diplomacy to foreign publics alone. In the current media environment, whatever message any government puts out is also instantly available to its domestic audience on the internet' (Hall 2012, p. 1098). While diplomacy has historically transformed by adapting to advent of new technologies - beginning from telegraph in the 1860s to radio and television in the later century —internet has reshaped diplomacy in a way difficult to fathom. It has made people equal participants in the diplomatic process (Castells 2008; Cowan & Arsenault 2008) with governments compelled to 'look both inward and outward' (Yang 2011) at the same time. It is therefore hardly surprising to note the stellar importance PD is assuming in diplomacy and communication in the world of social media with its attempt to become 'a central activity which is played out across many dimensions and with many partners' (Leonard 2002) as more and more governments use new technology for communication, information gathering, and promoting values at home and abroad (Bradshaw 2015). Indian governments are no exceptions 'believing it is in their national interests to "explain" their growing impact on the rest of the world by "engaging, informing, and influencing key international audiences" (Brown 2011) through social media.

India's expanding PD has drawn inevitable comparisons with that of China (Dutta 2011; Hall 2012b). It is interesting to note that notwithstanding being an active and robust democracy unlike China, there are instances where government action in India too has been criticized for restricting access to social media.² However, latest studies on freedom of access of citizens to the internet define India 'partly free' with no change in score for India with respect to *Freedom of the Net 2017 Improvements and Declines* with a majority of countries recording a decline. The administrative challenge of managing democratic credibility with assurance of unrestricted access to internet and information is bound to remain with India, like several other Rising Powers, for the foreseeable future.

Public Diplomacy and Social Media: Evolution and Progress

The External Publicity Division was created within the Foreign Ministry of India as early as in 1948 for conveying messages and communicating India's vibrant

² For example, Indian authorities's suspension of pay-as-you-go mobile data plans in restive states like Jammu & Kashmir ('Manipulating social media to undermine democracy' 2017) are measures for thwarting democracy in the Indian state.

culture and heritage to the international community: upholding virtues of a pluralistic society and democracy and spreading the same to the rest of the world – objectives considered essential for the new-born sovereign state to address for countering the prevailing negative global perceptions for India as a servile British colony (Dasgupta 2011). While there was international appreciation about India's long struggle and success in winning independence through non-violent means, such goodwill did not reflect corresponding faith in the leadership and institutions in the aftermath of a turbulent territorial Partition in 1947 and administrative complications and challenges it created for the new state. Moving on, compulsions of the Cold War politics and India's own struggles for achieving economic progress and domestic harmony, saw Indian foreign policy and diplomacy aiming to stay non-aligned from the major power blocks. Following the end of the Cold War and a decisive outward shift in its economic strategy, India's foreign policy also changed with the objective of enlarging its presence in world affairs. This is best articulated by the former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh:

This was not merely an external economic policy, it was also a strategic shift in India's vision of the world and India's place in the evolving global economy. Most of all it was about reaching out to our civilisational Asian neighbours in the region (Gupta 2011: 11–16).

India's modern PD began shaping from the 1990s with the country 'reaching out' to neighbours, evidenced prominently through the Look East Policy (LEP)³ aimed at Southeast Asia. However, it wasn't until 2006, when the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) set up the Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) primarily 'to address the challenges posed by this rapidly changing global environment' as outbreak of terrorism, climate change and international trade negotiations begun influencing domestic politics (Suri 2011, p. 297). Modelled on the Public Diplomacy Office of the US State Department, and partly geared towards enabling 'Indian missions to project the diverse facets of India', India's PD initiative was much in tandem with its soft power efforts: 'the projection of India's soft power is very much a part of the processes of public diplomacy' ('Inaugural Session of Conference on Public Diplomacy in the Information Age' 2010; Suri 2011; Heng 2016). Soon after, as social media platforms became extensively available for communication, India — seen by many for long as 'exotic', 'chaotic' and geopolitically undefined with an ineffective PD (Seib 2011) - begun moving towards 'network' model of diplomacy, underpinning efforts by diplomats to create and maintain relationships with actors outside of the core diplomatic community. The transition marked a decisive departure from a 'club' model of diplomacy, whereby diplomats primarily interacted with peers alone (Heine 2008).

³ India's Look East Policy (LEP) was an effort to cultivate extensive economic and strategic relations with the nations of Southeast Asia.

Careless diplomatic communication can be damaging. While such communication is important for 'correcting and adapting to inadvertent or private one-way communication flows, if left unanswered, could undermine transnational relationships and national reputations' (Cowan, Arsenault 2008). India's PD was marked by enhanced communication aiming to create greater traction with efforts like 'more high-level visits, telephonic conversations and informal contacts, using pegs like private visits, religious pilgrimages and [travel stopovers] in order to make personal assessments, exchange views, [and] resolve problems' (Sikri 2009, p. 17). The PDD's tagline, Advancing India's *Conversation with the World* was aimed for two-way interaction with audiences while marking efforts to make such communication as non-*sarkari* (devoid of government interference) as possible (Natarajan 2014).

Beginning from an early focus on the neighbourhood and the greater developing world (Hall 2012a) over the last decade and more, India's expanding world vision and great power ambitions, emanating from rapid economic growth, instilled a new-found confidence visible in its communication with the global community. The expanded confident outreach has been facilitated by the new media. India's Ministry of external affairs (MEA) begun to disseminate information through its website launched in 2003 (See Table 1). A few years later in 2009, Shashi Tharoor, the then Minister of State for External Affairs engaged in social networking for communicating directly with the people. This was remarkable given that computers in government offices were still not allowed to access social media (Desai 2017). Soon enough, the @IndianDiplomacy Twitter handle was established, followed by a Facebook Page, a YouTube channel, and a blogspot page under the same moniker. On 20 October 2010, India's PD website went live utilising the full range of Web 2.0 tools thereby formally launching India's digital diplomacy. The Twitter handle @IndianDiplomacy and its use of the hashtag '#digitaldiplomacy' for official engagement not only disseminates information on Indian culture for the global audience but is also a global hashtag being used by other foreign governments and international agencies (Sachdeva 2017). Two other Twitter handles of the MEA - @MEAIndia and @SushmaSwaraj - apart from assisting distressed Indian citizens abroad⁴ — provides an opportunity to the Indian 'citizens to voice how they believe India should present itself to the world' ('Citizen engagement with Indian ministries through Twitter' 2017).

While Indian political leaders have been actively embracing social media, as we will see in the following section, the discourse on digital diplomacy in the country was shaped by India's diplomatic community during its early days. The then Indian Ambassador to the US, Nirupama Rao used Twitter to communicate support

⁴ An interesting example of effective digital diplomacy in its early days is the use of Twitter in organising 'Operation Homecoming' for evacuating stranded Indians in Libya. See Thakur 2012

for India's proposal for a 500 MW cross border transmission facility to Pakistan (Rajghatta 2012). While the communication attracted criticism from unhappy netizens over India's 'generous' overture towards its estranged neighbour despite the country's inability to overcome domestic electricity supply deficits, Rao tweeted fast to quell such fears (Rajghatta 2012). The incident is an example of senior Indian diplomats utilizing the reach of social media in purposeful foreign policy communication. The Pakistani media responded positively by extensively covering Rao's tweets (Rajghatta 2012). The episode personifies the ability of social media to blur borders as mentioned earlier. Despite not being targeted specifically towards a foreign audience, the communication extended its influence to both domestic and external audiences and drew in involved actors while demonstrating diplomatic willingness to 'listen' - fundamental for dialogues 'deserving special status as the starting point for public diplomacy' (Cowan & Cull 2008, p 295). The 'listening' character, however, is not integral to all diplomatic communication by India. For instance, Modi's tweets publicising his bold economic initiatives like demonetisation of the Indian currency⁵ in 2016 was essentially criticised for being one-way public address with little effort to 'listen' to the difficulties encountered by the Indian people during this state action (Vishnu 2017).

Blurring of borders and close intertwining of global issues with domestic political agenda (Suri 2011) has prompted an active PD posture by the Indian state for seeking new audiences like the politically engaged educated youth, the diaspora in the West and key opinion-makers in India's immediate neighbourhood (Hall 2012b). Employment of both social and traditional media platforms with a more intensive role of the former, has been noteworthy, more so given that India's PD seeks to communicate with its own domestic population (a strategy recognised more commonly as Public Affairs elsewhere (Hall 2012b, p. 1097)). Table 1 traces the various milestones in India's PD in this regard with respect to the evolving role of social media in communication.

Year	Initiatives	Details
2003	Launch of a new, comprehensive and secure website of the Ministry, http://meaindia.nic.in	A vital tool in dissemination of information by the Office of the Spokesperson and source of information related to India and the Ministry
2009-10	"Distinguished Lecture Series on India's Foreign Policy" launched at Banaras Hindu University	A new initiative aimed at taking the discourse on key foreign policy issues to university campuses around the country
	Launch of 'India Africa Connect' website (http://www.indiaafricaconnect.in)	Reaching out to African countries

Table 1: Social Media and Indian PD

⁵ In order to curtail shadow economy and to come down on black money, the Government of India, in November 2016, had demonetised all ₹500 and ₹1000 banknotes.

2010-11	India.Inclusive@Davos' initiated during the World Economic Forum's Annual Sum- mit in Davos in January 2011	To promote Brand India overseas
	A closed Google mail group created	To facilitate interactions between scholars and PDD officials
	A Conference organised in New Delhi: 'Public Diplomacy in the Information Age'	To create greater awareness about PD and its increasingly important role in foreign policy
2012-13	Over 50 Indian Missions open social media accounts	To engage the young and influential in cyber- space
2013	Launch of an integrated Smartphone app 'MEA India'	To provide a single digital platform for citizens to access information on-the-go
2014	MEA India mobile App updated to include 'Push Notification'	To provide regular alert notifications on uploading of new information at the MEA's website
	External Publicity (XP) and Public Di- plomacy (PD) Divisions were merged to become a single division- (XPD) in MEA	Mandated to effectively articulate the position of the Government on various foreign policy issues to the national and international media, as well as engaging with domestic and global audiences to explain India's foreign policy and various aspects of its global engagement
2014-15	 Introduced: A New ASEAN-India website: http:// www.mea.gov.in/aseanindia/index. htm MEA Online India Global on Radio Interactive World Map MEA website (http://www.mea.gov.in/indian-mis- sions-abroad.htm) 	 In keeping with the new government's 'Act East' foreign policy A discussion forum facilitating interactions, sharing and discussions by officers on a wide range of issues & common concern to all All the episodes of the popular programme 'India Global', prepared in consultation with Indian Missions abroad, are made available for broadcast on AIR FM channel as well as Podcasts on MEA's dedicated channel (http://mea.gov.in/mea-campaigns.htm) & MEA's Sound-Cloud page (https://soundcloud.com/meaindia);YouTubeChannel https://www.youtube.com/user/meaindia. A user can visit all the integrated web pages of Indian Missions abroad through a single interface, Indian Treaties Database (http://www.mea.gov.in/treaty.htm). This Database, strives to provide an accessible and searchable link or series of links to the Treaties/Agreements/MoUs between India and others
2015-16	e-books created	To highlight the achievements and key events during the visits of the Indian Prime Minister to other countries
2016-17	India Perspectives goes digital	Flagship magazine of the MEA
2017-18	MADAD (help) launched	Consulate Servises Management System avail- able in Mobile Apps & through social media for redressal of grievances for diaspora
	Ask the Spokesperson' Moniker	A bi-monthly Twitter that enables the public to interact with the Official Spokesperson

MEA debuted on LinkedIn	Attempts to publish a periodic blog on various aspects of the Ministry's work
SAMEEP-'Students and MEA Engagement Programme'	An attempt to connect with students and create awareness about MEA and India's success stories on the foreign policy front

Source: Compiled from various MEA Annual reports 2003–18, retrieved 10.10.18, https://www.mea.gov.in/annual-reports.htm?57/Annual_Reports

Since the launch of its website in 2003, the MEA's online presence has grown phenomenally with its FB followers crossing more than 2.0 million and its combined twitter handles (@IndianDiplomacy and @MEAIndia) registering followers of around 3.0 million (MEA Annual Report 2017-18). More than 800,000 subscribers have added MEA India G+ page to their inner circles and subscription is picking up on the MEA and the Indian Diplomacy YouTube channels. Indian Missions have gone online and are actively communicating with locals in host countries and the diaspora. As of 2017-18, there are 172 Indian Missions & Posts where FB has been permitted by the host government, and are having FB presence under titles like 'India in USA', 'India in Ireland' and so on, with regular information being disseminated on Embassy activities, investment opportunities and India's flagship initiatives such as 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' (MEA Annual Report 2017-18). The Indian Missions & Posts are equally active on Twitter as well. Documentaries aimed for specific target audiences are being regularly commissioned by the PDD for uploading on the Indian Diplomacy Channel on YouTube and being included in the PD tweets and MEA FB page. These products cut across themes and aim to reach out to diverse audiences. For example, 'India: A Science and technology Superpower' focuses on India's scientific temper and achievements; 'Ramayana: A shared culture in India and Southeast Asia' targets Southeast Asian audiences through the common underlying theme of mythology; whereas 'India-Bangladesh: Beyond Borders' narrates the bilateral Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and short films like 'India-Afghanistan: An enduring friendship' underscore role of soccer in boosting Indo-Afghan friendship. The key point to note is the vast scope that social media offers in connecting to audiences cutting across borders and on multiple themes - and the active utilization of such scope and depth by India's PDD. Indeed, the opportunities for taking communication to new heights have been noted by other ministries in India as well, such as shipping, for promoting online cruise tourism⁶ through targeted hashtags on Twitter: 'Potential of cruise tourism in India #IncredibleIndia #cruisetourism #sagarmala' (January 2018) and 'Boost to #cruise tourism in India #Sagarmala' (July 2018).

⁶ Author interviews with Indian government officials.

Social Media, Political Leaders and Narendra Modi

Rapid growth of social media has encouraged Indian political leaders to create personal brands 'with an amazing mix of personal feelings, nationalist pride and smart positioning' (Ramalingegowda 2014). Cutting across parties and ideologies, the online presence of Indian leaders' has accelerated fast. The phenomenon is perhaps best exemplified by the online presence of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Twitter handle @NarendraModi of the Indian Prime Minister has the third largest following among world leaders with a followership size of 30 million. Modi has another 18 million followers on his institutional account (@PMOIndia), which is in fourth place globally, right after his personal account (Twiplomacy Study 2017). Rahul Gandhi, leader of the Congress – the main Opposition Party in the Indian Parliament – while way behind Modi, is working on ramping up his social media presence ('Narendra Modi's popularity as PM dips to 34%, Rahul's rises to 24%' 2018) to re-brand himself. Shashi Tharoor - Congress leader and former Minister - and Omar Abdullah - leader of the National Conference Party and former Chief Minister of the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir - are also avid social media users. Among incumbent leaders, Sushma Swaraj, is not just active on social media but is also a leading female politician with a strong online presence. Modi and the BJP's active social media presence is also accompanied by robust digital communication with constituencies by a young political party like the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP to the Common Man). While Indian political leaders continue to strengthen their online presence, the Modi government has raised outreach through social media to a high pitch by mandating all Ministries 'to integrate Twitter into their communication strategies' ('Citizen engagement with Indian ministries through Twitter' 2017) outlining the priority it attaches to communication through social media. Both Ministers and Ministries have distinct identities on the social media with each Ministry having a dual presence in the virtual world (Mahajan 2017) to communicate 'non-political, developmentoriented, policy and awareness creation' as well as for making political statements' (Mahajan 2017).

Modi's observation that 'the world of social media has played a key role in democratising our discourse and giving a platform to millions of people around the world to express their views and showcase their creativity' ('Social media has democratised discourse, says PM Narendra Modi' 2018) underscore not just the importance of engaging global and local audiences through social media, but also the need for strategizing such engagement. In a country that has the world's largest young population and where the number of internet users is expected to rise to 720 million by 2020 ('Citizen engagement with Indian ministries through Twitter' 2017), engagement of people through multiple social media platforms (e.g. YouTube (http://www.youtube.com/MEAIndia); YouTube Public Diplomacy (https://www.youtube.com/user/Indiandiplomacy); Facebook (http://www. facebook.com/MEAIndia); Facebook Public Diplomacy (https://www.facebook.com/IndianDiplomacy); Flickr (http://www.flickr.com/photos/meaindia); Google+ (https://plus.google.com/u/0/ 103329416703761384109/posts); and Twitter@IndianDiplomacy, (@MEAIndia Posts) (MEA Annual Report 2017-18) is an obvious strategy. Indeed, it is hardly surprising that the current aggressive use of social media, for conveying the content and scope of government initiatives to the public, have been without precedence. Such use has been led by Prime Minister Modi himself through tweets reflecting the urge to communicate deep, strong and wide with constituencies:

28th April 2018 will be remembered as a historic day in the development journey of India. Yesterday, we fulfilled a commitment due to which the lives of several Indians will be transformed forever! I am delighted that every single village of India now has access to electricity. 12:58 PM - Apr 29, 2018

While primarily aimed for the domestic audience, these posts are intended to 'appeal' to foreign audiences too, particularly the diaspora, for projecting a 'changing India' and a government committed to development.

For India, and other Rising Powers who have been erstwhile colonies, social media is an enabling tool for reversing negative impressions and establishing positive credentials with the developed world. This is due to the scope social media offers for engaging with diverse audiences and the ease with which leaders can 'directly' communicate. For a country like India, social media enables positive communication about its coming of age, in terms of modern ideas, scientific achievements and technological progress, captured through state initiatives like Digital India. Modi's digital diplomacy displays strong faith in this postulate. His attempts to project India as a pioneer in the field of science and technology and continuous highlighting of the endeavours of the Indian scientific community needs to be noted from this perspective. Tweets like 'Absolutely. Our space programme is our pride' in February 2017 and 'The launch of the 100th satellite by @isro signifies both its glorious achievements, and also the bright future of India's space programme' in January 2018 substantiate the point in the light of Modi and his government's efforts to position a new Brand India that draws strength from cutting-edge advances in scientific and technological applications nurtured by home-grown resources and institutions.

Modi's proclivity to engage through social media is not accidental; nor is it a result of his becoming Prime Minister and thereby being bestowed with the onus of engaging with the rest of the world. He has been an avid user of social media from the time he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat. He is among those modern Indian leaders who realized early on the power of social media for generating broadbased public support. His intelligent use of social media catapulted him to the stature of a national leader, as well as one with the image of a nation-builder from an identity confined to the narrow domain of provincial Hindu fundamentalism. The makeover targeted both local constituencies and the international community, most of which had chastised him for inaction during the Godhra riots in 2002⁷ and termed him an 'international political pariah' (Doherty 2014). His new image was directed towards the Indian diaspora as well, whom he sought to engage in flagship initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Swachch Bharat' (Clean India).

Building Brand Modi and manipulating the social media was fundamental to the campaign that saw him winning elections to the Indian Parliament in 2014 with an overwhelming majority. Established and entrenched through digital communication, the brand made him a viable political alternative for large chunks of both liberals and conservatives alike in India, as well as a global leader. The transformation was a result of a well-thought out strategy comprising relentless and rapid communication of messages from, and pictures of Modi on social media. Modi's following on Twitter, already on the rise during his campaign trail, reflected quantum jumps of 400 per cent along with the FB page of the MEA ('India's foreign policy a big draw on new and social media' 2014) following his entry into office mid-2014. The evidence leaves little doubt about the role of social media in the making of Modi and the concomitant importance has attached to digital diplomacy. Right after being declared victorious in the election, Modi enthusiastically engaged with the global community, acknowledging greetings from heads of states on Twitter, setting the stage for a new phase of external engagement by shifting the ground rules of India's PD.

Modi's unorthodox engagement tactics through social media platforms has also made international headlines. His use of the Weibo platform before visiting China in 2015, drew widespread attention, evident from his first post on Weibo - 'Hello China! Looking forward to interacting with Chinese friends through Weibo'being heavily forwarded and commented upon by Weibo users. His tweet on the eve of his arrival in Japan also elicited similar enthusiastic response. These messages could have been part of the push for his Act East policy⁸ targeting the region. But they also exposed the other side of social media-enabled direct communication where people are hardly restricted in voicing opinions of leaders, countries and societies. Chinese microbloggers took the opportunity to draw Modi's attention

⁷ The 2002 Godhra riots was a three-day period of inter- communal violence when Narendra Modi, the current Indian Prime Minister of India, was the Chief Minister of this Western Indian state of Gujarat.

⁸ Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi the government of India has made its relations with East Asian neighbours a foreign policy priority — an extension of the Look East Policy (LEP) launched in 1993 by the then Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao.

to the plight of Indian women with one Chinese netizen posting: 'I suggest improving the social status of Indian women and protecting the safety of females! Or we foreign women will not dare travel to India'; the post, while attracting considerable attention ('Narendra Modi "scores big hit" with Weibo account: Chinese state media' 2015) underlined challenges that social-media active leaders like Modi can hardly avoid in their attempt to influence perceptions through digital diplomacy. The example underscores an interesting aspect of interaction through social media on image-building: *the risk of pushing particular agendas for specific purposes turning counterproductive*. In this regard, it is not clear to what extent Modi's FB and Twitter posts on his foreign visits and other achievements have actually achieved in terms of better 'perception' of India.

While scholars argue 'Prime Minister Modi's charismatic interaction with world leaders' now represent 'a strategic advantage in the soft power for India in the region' (Heng 2016), India's absence from The Soft Power 30, an index ranking 30 countries in terms of soft power resources, underlines 'India evidently does not yet benefit as much from international awareness, positive associations, or investments in cultural diplomacy as many other countries' (Jaishankar 2018). Unorthodox engagement tactics by Modi also include 'selfie' diplomacy that has become an integral part of his overseas travels. Again, much like his FB and Twitter posts, while breaking perception stereotypes and casting the Prime Minister in a charming and engaging light, it is not clear how selfie diplomacy has changed perceptions about India as a nation. It's interesting to note the contrasts between perceptions of Modi and India in this regard: The Soft Power 30 report marks India's best performing area in the Digital sub-index⁹ and highlights the 'Indian Prime Minister Modi's unrivalled skills in digital diplomacy' (The Soft Power 30 2018). The recognition of Modi as a champion of digital diplomacy and India's capacities as a digital nation, is in sharp contrast to its absence from the list of most successful soft power nations in the world.

Communication aimed at building of *Brand Modi* and *Brand India* is aimed at the diaspora as one of its major target groups. Modi's Tweets like: 'Our diaspora are our "Rashtradoots". We are immensely proud of their accomplishments and their passion towards India & India's progress' in 2017 underscore the priority. Engaging the diaspora has been a sustained part of Modi's foreign policy communication on the firm belief that 'well-structured diaspora bonds would directly finance key development priorities. And that would give everyone in the diaspora, not just its entrepreneurs and its financiers, the opportunity to translate their long-distance patriotism into tangible economic gain and share in India's growth story,

 $^{^9}$ The measure of soft power has been included with a new component — the Digital sub-index. Its inclusion aims to capture the extent to which countries have embraced technology, their connectivity to the digital world, and their use of digital diplomacy through social media platforms. For details see The Soft Power 30

as Modi often encourages them to do' (Subramanya 2015). Initiatives like e-visas (Jain 2015) and MADAD meaning 'help' (Table 1) for addressing grievances of the overseas Indians online are specific to the diaspora. In this regard, however, styles of engagement between leaders have shown contrasts. Sushma Swaraj, the foreign Minister, has been visibly dialogue-oriented in engagement: her immediate response to a tweet plea by a Yemeni woman with an 8-month old son married to an Indian in April 2015 is perhaps the best example of digital diplomacy shifting from monologue to dialogue. The *Foreign Policy* magazine acclaimed the Minister 'for fashioning a novel brand of Twitter diplomacy' and included her in the list of 100 Global Thinkers. Swaraj's social media engagement certainly appears more interactive and distinct from Modi's. This could, however, be due to the nature of her portfolio given that the foreign ministry has to focus on addressing grievances as part of its responsibilities, which several other Ministries and Ministers, including the Prime Minister need not.¹⁰

Notwithstanding the robust engagement on social media by Modi and several other contemporary political leaders of India, they need to note the much greater role that social media offers to people for influencing and conditioning foreign policy-making due to enlargement of the public sphere. Examples like the online activism by Indians in 2016 with respect to Pakistan could corroborate Castells' definition of PD as the 'diplomacy of the people' and can be studied for assessing if social media has indeed enlarged scope in contemporary communication. The reaction pertained to the Indian government's decision to strike terror launch pads across the Line of Control (LoC) in Pakistan in response to an earlier terror attack that killed several Indian soldiers and upload it on a video on social media. Needless to say, the content whipped up frenzied emotions with Twitter and FB being inundated with messages of support for the government. Whether the government precipitated such support by announcing strikes, and used the same to demonstrate popular support for its actions to global and national audiences, are questions that would continue to be debated. Interestingly, online activism by Indians was much less during the Doklam crisis with China in 2017 when it was their Chinese counterparts 'shaping the public discourse on Doklam standoff' (Ranjan 2017). Was the government and other institutional actors shaping foreign policy perceptions through social media careful in not raising the pitch against China, as opposed to Pakistan? Does this, as an extension, reflect the 'middle-power syndrome' for India?

While enabling governments and people to connect and communicate, social media platforms have also permitted unhindered criticism. The Modi government's digital diplomacy and image-building efforts have been affected by the disapprov-

¹⁰ A view emanating from author's interview with Ministry officials. The latter pointed to Mr Suresh Prabhu, who as the Railway Minister in Modi government was also noted to be highly interactive given the nature of his portfolio.

al and denunciation — facilitated in equal measure by social media — on Modi's conspicuous silence on socio-economic matters assuming ominous proportions, such as mob-lynching and agrarian distress. Modi's digital diplomacy to rebuild India's global image by capitalising its intrinsic soft power runs the risk of being damaged by negative aspects of his governance, which, ironically, are common knowledge due to social media only. This is evident from findings of preliminary research on Modi's communication through Twitter and FB posts. While he is seen as a leader prompt in making birthday wishes, sending congratulatory messages and even expressing condolences following calamities and other setbacks in foreign countries, his stoic silence on serious domestic matters is disturbing: 'Our loquacious prime minister has gone quiet. Unlike his predecessor, Modi hasn't addressed even a single press conference and prefers to only give tame interviews' (Kohli 2018).

Conclusion

Rising Powers like India are employing PD to bolster global status and communicate to the world their distinct stories. India has become a robust user of social media in external diplomatic communication in pursuit of these objectives. Its proclivity is to an extent the result of Modi being an avid user of such engagement tactics in his political career. His remarkable political success in rising from a state Chief Minister to not just the Prime Minister of world's largest democracy, but also a leader of considerable global standing, is a result of brand Modi being fashioned by the social media. There is therefore every reason for Modi and his government to repose faith in the aggressive use of digital diplomacy in all forms of communication. However, the desired outcomes might not always be forthcoming as 'in the brave new world of the internet, where authority is evenly distributed to everyone with a voice or a podcast, no one believes anybody, or (it is the same thing) everyone believes anybody' (Stanley 2018). The use of social media as a statecraft, notwithstanding the great momentum it has gathered in India, is still evolving. As a tool of PD, the Indian experience reflects the dichotomy of digital diplomacy: the ease with which it can connect to hearts and minds within and across territories is accompanied by the ease with which leaders and countries are held responsible for lack of meaningful action and poor governance. Social media, while revolutionising PD, has undoubtedly created new formidable challenges for Rising Powers like India.

Bio

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Article

Mexico's public diplomacy efforts to engage its diaspora across the border: Case study of the programs, messages and strategies employed by the Mexican Embassy in the United States

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Abstract

This research offers a case study of how Mexico has engaged its diaspora community in the United States, since the 1990s until today. It provides an analysis of the recent messaging strategies that the embassy of Mexico in the United States employs to reach its diaspora community via websites, Facebook pages and Twitter accounts. This study demonstrates how active and intentional Mexico's leadership is when it engages its co-nationals who live in the United States, adapting to changes in political context and national priorities. In particular, after the change in the U.S. administration, the messaging by the Mexican government through its Embassy expanded from messaging centered on building a positive image of its migrants and defending their rights, to responding to U.S. President Donald Trump's messages about restrictive immigration policies and the flow of drugs and undocumented migrants from Mexico. The study shows how Mexican government used its diaspora communication and other strategic messaging efforts to remind the United States that immigration is a shared responsibility.

Keywords

Public Diplomacy, Diaspora, Framing, Mexico, United States, Immigration

Introduction

Public diplomacy has been defined as the collection of strategies and tactics that

state and non-state actors use to build relationships and engage key stakeholders located abroad (Zaharna 2009; Gilboa 2008; Gregory 2011; Leonard 2002) with the purpose of advancing specific interests and values (Gregory 2011). While most of the literature on public diplomacy has focused on how governments or non-state actors from a given country build positive relationships with foreign publics, a growing body of literature has studied how home governments inter-act strategically with a *home* public located abroad: the home country's diaspora community (Bravo & De Moya 2015; Bravo 2014a; Gamlen 2014; Kunz 2010; Zaharna 2011). Diaspora communities can be defined as "communities of people who left their ancestral homes and settled in foreign countries, but who preserve the memory of and links with the land of their fathers and forefathers" (Horbo-ken 2004, p. 201).

Latin America is typically an under-researched geographical area in most fields of study, which is true also in the case of public diplomacy research, but some authors have described how state-diaspora relations are built and nurtured in this region (Délano 2014; Délano & Gamlen 2014; Gamlen 2014). Case studies of state-diaspora relations have been developed as well for particular countries in Latin America, such as Ecuador (Margheritis 2011), El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Colombia (Bravo & De Moya 2015; Bravo 2014b), and, more than any other country, Mexico, which is considered the exemplary case in the region (Gonzalez Gutierrez 2006, 1999; Hernandez Joseph 2012; Iskander 2010; Martinez-Saldaña 2003; Smith 2005).

Mexico, one of the most active countries regarding relationship-building efforts with the diaspora, in particular with those who live in the United States. Therefore, Mexico's efforts have attracted scholarly attention as a positive example of a highly active nation with multiple public diplomacy initiatives (Gonzalez Gutierrez 2006, 1999; Hernandez Joseph 2012; Iskander 2010; Martinez-Saldaña 2003; Smith 2005).

Building on previous research, this study describes some of those best practices implemented by Mexico since the 1990s to engage and build positive relationships with their co-nationals living in the United States. Additionally, it includes a content analysis of the messages that the Mexican embassy in the United States has communicated through its website, Twitter and Facebook during the last six months of U.S. President Barack Obama's second term and the first six months of U.S. President Donald Trump's administration. The purpose of analyzing the messaging in this timeframe is to describe the salient themes in the messaging and identify shifts in that messaging as a result of the change in U.S. administration, demonstrating how the Mexican communication strategies adapts in response to policy changes. This case study shows that in the case of the relationship-building strategies used by Mexico to engage its diaspora community in the United States, the Mexican government makes conscious choices regarding how they are addresses, i.e. the terminology it uses to refer to them; the issues Mexico emphasizes in this government-diaspora communications; and the type of relationship it tries to build with its diaspora community (a mix of altruistic/communal and transactional/ exchange-based) (Bravo & De Moya 2015; Hon & Grunig 1999). This study also highlights the potential impact of changes in a host country's Administration, in this case the United States, can have in the public diplomacy efforts of a home government, in this case Mexico, that has a strong diaspora community living in the host country's territory.

Literature Review

Mexico is currently the strongest immigrant-sending country for the United States (Fitzgerald 2008), with about 11.4 million Mexican immigrants living in U.S. territory (Gonzalez-Barrera & Lopez 2013; Pew Research Center 2015). Mexico and the United States are neighboring countries and long-term commercial partners, especially as members, along with Canada, of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (USTR 2008; Verea 2014).

Migration flows from Mexico to the United States have been a constant in U.S.-Mexico history (Garcia Zamora 2009). With such an interdependent relationship regarding labor, trade and migration flows, both countries have conducted many public diplomacy efforts to maintain a mutually beneficial relationships (Chavez & Hoewe 2010; Lee 2006; Rivas 2014).

With so many Mexican citizens living in the United States, and with the migration flows happening for so long, it is understandable why Mexico became a Latin American pioneer in the development of public policy and specific strategic communications and actions to connect and build relationships with its co-nationals in the diaspora (Gonzalez Gutierrez 2006, 1999; Hernandez Joseph 2012; Iskander 2010). Mexico has also been an exemplary case in the defense of the human rights of Mexicans abroad, regardless of immigration status in the host country.

Mexico has used a wide variety of strategies to keep contact with the diaspora and maintain the connection of the diaspora members to the homeland. Mexico employs traditional public diplomacy and public diplomacy 2.0 (or digital diplomacy) tools, which is the use of technology and interactive media to achieve public diplomacy goals (Cull 2013; Dodd & Collins 2017; Storie 2015; Zhong & Lu 2013). In public diplomacy 2.0, the emphasis is placed on building relationships using social media platforms and online communities, allowing the creation of user-generated content, and establishing horizontal networks of information exchange facilitated by technology (Cull 2013).

One of the ways in which Mexico is using public diplomacy 2.0 is through the social networks and messaging strategies it has developed using online platforms such as the Facebook page, the Twitter handle and the website of its Embassy in Washington D.C. A few similar efforts have been studied previously, such as Dodd and Collins (2017)' study of Twitter use by 41 embassies, in which the authors concluded that Twitter is being used by embassies to promote specific policies and ideas, and to do cultural promotion. The fact that the audience can interact with, and respond to, the embassies' online content means that diplomacy has the potential to become more open, diverse and democratic, as regular people can reach diplomatic actors more easily (Comor & Bean 2012), although that is not always the result in practice.

Through its website, its Twitter handle and its Facebook page, Mexico's embassy in the United States is providing information to its diaspora community that has been traditionally shared by this embassy through other means such as brochures, phone lines and face-to-face customer service. This information includes descriptions of policies and details about consular services, among others. But this study argues that Mexico's embassy is also using online platforms to deliver messaging that includes intentional strategic frames targeted at the diaspora.

Strategic Framing

Framing, as understood in the field of strategic communication, is a theory that explains that, when communicating about an issue, person or event, sources of information –in general—and political actors –in particular—make salient certain frames over others, assigning to certain aspects of the issue, person or event more relevance than to other aspects about the same issue, person or event (Chong & Druckman 2007; Entman 2003, 2004; Lecheler & de Vreese 2012).

In doing so, the particular framing of the issue, person or event that is selected and disseminated by the source of information communicates specific attributes. This framing can impact how the audience interprets the issue, person or event and what opinion the audience forms about the issue, person or event. As Entman (2003, p. 416) explains, "Successful political communication requires the framing of events, issues, and actors in ways that promote perceptions and interpretations that benefit one side while hindering the other."

To frame, thus, is to select and make salient some aspects of reality over others (Entman 2004). Sometimes, the selection of frames has no particular intentions, such as when the source of information simply selects certain aspects of the issue over others to make communication more efficient and/or more personal (Mc-Carthy, & Dolfsma 2014; Van Dalen 2012). Other times, framing is strategic and

the process of selection of certain frames over others is done with the purpose of promoting a certain view or interpretation about the issue, person or event (Druckman 2001; Hanggli 2012; Hanggli & Kriesi 2012).

Frames are used to accomplish four objectives: provide a certain definition of the problem or issue, indicate what is causing the issue (who is responsible for it), suggest whether the issue is positive or negative (by communicating moral judgments) and offer courses of action (or solutions to the issue) (Entman 2004). Combined, these objectives can achieve the goal of communicating an overall strategic message that the source of information is interested in transmitting (Sheafer, Shenhav, Takens, & van Atteveldt 2014).

In the particular field of public diplomacy, only a few authors have studied strategic framing processes. Fitzpatrick (2010) offered a typology of public diplomacy strategies that has been used by other scholars to analyze political messages (for instance, Dodd & Collins 2017; White & Radic 2014). In her typology, Fitzpatrick (2010) identifies the following public diplomacy strategies: advocacy, communication/information provision, relationship-building, promotional, warfare/ foreign policy propaganda, and political. White and Radic (2014) indicated that these strategies can be used in combination by nations, but that it is possible to identify the primary function of a message, which in turn allows to identify what were the messaging strategies used by those nations to advance public diplomacy objectives with different audiences.

State-diaspora Relations

This study adds to the body of literature about state-diaspora relations, which is a field that has explored how governments build and maintain relationships with their diaspora communities (Delano 2014; Delano & Gamlen 2014; Iskander 2010); try to "govern" the relationship with these extra-territorial stakeholders by developing public policies and institutions that serve but also "manage" the diaspora (Mikuszies 2014; Ragazzi 2009, 2014); seek support from the diaspora for home-country initiatives and programs (Kunz 2010; Lyons & Mandaville 2013; Zaharna 2011); and promote a specific image of their diaspora communities to improve their image in the host countries where those diaspora communities reside (Bravo & De Moya 2015). Much of the literature in this field is from disciplines such as political science and sociology, but it has increasingly been studied in strategic communication.

As indicated before, through public diplomacy efforts, home governments interact, build relationships and manage reputations through strategic communications and actions that connect with and engage publics located abroad, including a *domestic* public located in different host countries: the home country's diaspora community (Bravo & De Moya 2015; Bravo 2014a; Gamlen 2014; Kunz 2010; Zaharna 2011). Diaspora groups can help home countries achieve their public diplomacy objectives and can build bridges between home and host countries, with the diaspora members becoming, informally, symbolic ambassadors of the home country (Gamlen 2014; Koser Ackapar & Bayraktar Aksel, 2017; Smith 2005). At the same time, diaspora groups organize themselves in many cases and demand access to rights and opportunities (Koser Ackapar & Bayraktar Aksel 2017; Smith 2005), or even oppose the home government (Bravo 2014a).

This study offers a unique contribution in the field of diaspora diplomacy, in particular in the exemplary case of Latin America, which is Mexico, by exploring how a change in a host government's Administration impacts the strategic frames present in the messaging of the home government to and about its diaspora community in that host country. It does so by answering the following research questions:

- 1. What strategies has Mexico developed and employed to build and maintain a positive relationship with its diaspora community?
- 2. What have been the main messages that Mexico has communicated to its diaspora through its U.S.-based Embassy website and its U.S.-based Embassy's Facebook page and Twitter handle?
- 3. How has Mexico's messaging strategy shifted after the change of Administration in the United States (from president Obama to president Trump) in their communication to and about its diaspora in the United States?

Methods

This study first presents the results of a qualitative content analysis of strategic messaging disseminated by the Mexican Embassy in the United States through its website, Facebook page and Twitter handle, during six months of president Barack Obama's second term in office (from August 25, 2015, to February 24, 2016) and six months of president Donald Trump's first term (from April 1, 2017 to September 30, 2017), as detailed below.

Then, it provides a detailed description of the long-term policies and initiatives developed by the Mexican government, since the 1990s, to build relationships and to communicate with its diaspora communities around the world. Special focus is given to its largest diaspora community, which resides across its northern border in the United States.

Case study methodology is used because it is considered appropriate when research needs to be conducted to empirically examine "a real-world phenomenon within its naturally occurring context, without directly manipulating either the phenomenon or the context" (Kaarbo & Beasley 1999, p.372). The case study includes a qualitative content analysis to analyze the messaging, because it is a well-regarded methodology for strategic framing analysis, given that this approach allows for analyzing the ideologies that lead to the construction of meaning in messages (Durham 2001).

The case study about Mexico's long-term state-diaspora relationship-building strategies and tactics, from the 1990s to today, is based on information collected through the review of secondary sources (i.e., news stories and scholarly journal articles), and also through the aforementioned analysis of the U.S.-based Mexican Embassy' website (at <https://embamex.sre.gob.mx/eua/index.php/es/>), and its Sección Consular (Consular Section website, at <https://consulmex.sre.gob.mx/ washington/>). Information was collected as well from the Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior (Institute for Mexicans Abroad) website and the Voto de los Mexicanos Residentes en el Extranjero (Vote of Mexicans Who Reside Abroad) website. Through this process, the main initiatives, policies and structural reforms Mexico undertook in the last 30 years to serve its diaspora were identified.

For the qualitative content analysis, each information subsidy was collected manually from the Mexican Embassy's website, Facebook page and the Twitter handle, and all of them were read carefully, twice, at the time of data collection (last week of February 2016 and last week of September 2017).

Only information subsidies that mentioned the Mexican diaspora in the United States or that were targeted at the Mexican diaspora in the United States were selected, both in English and Spanish, given that the authors of this study are fully bilingual. In other words, only social media posts connected to Mexico's state-diaspora diplomacy were analyzed, given that all these posts were targeted specifically at the diaspora, or were disseminated to build the image or reputation of the Mexican diaspora in the United States. All these messages were crafted by communication experts at the Mexican Embassy, at the Mexican consulate in Washington D.C. or at the Mexican "Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores" (Foreign Relations Secretariat).

Given that some of the subsidies in the website were just a few sentences long, while others had dozens of pages, a word count was conducted instead to estimate the volume of information analyzed. In total, 85,120 words were analyzed from the Mexican Embassy's website. Regarding social media, 93 Facebook posts were identified as mentioning or targeting the diaspora (13 during Obama's six-month timeframe and 80 during Trump's six-month timeframe), and 657 tweets were also collected (273 tweets during Obama's six-month timeframe and 384 tweets during Trump's six-month timeframe).

All the information subsidies and social media posts were read twice and analyzed using the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), where you assign labels to themes in the content, and then you cluster those labels into categories of analysis (See summary of categories of analysis in Table 1).

Findings

Mexico's Communication Strategy for and about its U.S.-Based Diaspora Community

As most countries do in the content they provide through their embassies' and consulates' websites in a foreign country, Mexico's Embassy in the United States offers, in its website, information about consular services, lists of consulates in the host country, frequently asked questions, security and travel information, and the like. But, different to other countries' outreach initiatives targeting diaspora communities in host countries, which sometimes are scarce or almost non-existent (Bravo 2014b), Mexico has developed abundant content that targets its diaspora communities in host countries, in general, and those in the United States, in particular.

The Mexican Embassy's website in the United States includes, for example, a dedicated section focused on services for the diaspora community, with useful information for Mexicans who live in the United States, in particular. These services include information on how to vote in the Mexican elections while abroad; legal and health counseling available to diaspora members; a database of Mexican organizations formed in the United States; a database of "highly qualified Mexicans" working abroad; and a form to register organizations and associations formed by the migrants. It also includes a list of programs created by the Mexican government to support its migrant community (for instance, regarding labor rights and family matters such as international adoptions); information on how to qualify for favorable loans and matching funds offered by the government to its migrants; resources for diaspora members who want to invest in Mexico; and information on how to send remittances back home with discounted transaction fees.

The website posts announcements for Mexicans who live in the United States, and even phone hotlines for migrants to call if they think they are in danger while in the United States or while in transit, in the process of moving from the home country to the host country. It also informs about the procedure in place to repatriate bodies of Mexicans who died abroad, and it includes links to other types of useful information, such as health services available to migrants in the United States, a schedule with dates and places for mobile consulates, trainings available for migrants, and several other topics.
Social Media and Information Subsidies

In the six months' worth of content analyzed on the Mexican Embassy's website, Facebook page and Twitter handle during the Obama presidency, the authors of this study collected 70 information subsidies (mainly news releases) from the Embassy's website that included content of interest for or about the diaspora community. Regarding social media platforms, for Facebook (at www.facebook. com/EmbamexEUA), 13 posts for or about the Mexican diaspora were found. On Twitter (at @EmbamexEUA), 273 tweets for or about the diaspora were disseminated. This level of activity strongly contrasted with the second six-month period after the administration change, when 80 posts for or about the Mexican diaspora were published on Facebook, and 384 tweets for about the Mexican diaspora community were disseminated by the Mexican Embassy in the United States. Just by the number of posts and tweets, it was evident that the Mexican Embassy became much more active in communicating with or about its diaspora community in the United States after the U.S. Administration change.

Before Donald Trump took office on January 20, 2017, both the Mexican Embassy's website and Mexico's social media platforms in the United States (Facebook and Twitter) highlighted the aforementioned services to the migrant community. The social media posts tended to emphasize on practical information of interest for Mexicans who live in the United States. For instance, there were information subsidies and frequent social media posts that focused on services available to the diaspora, celebrations and other social events, and messages emphasizing that diaspora members are important for the Mexican government, among others. There were also Facebook posts and tweets that disseminated messages framed around issues of identity and belonging, support for the migration process that the diaspora members go through when they leave Mexico to live in the United States, protection of the migrants' human rights, support for transnational business partnerships, and pride about the positive contributions of Mexicans to the United States at many levels (economic, social, cultural, political, etc.).

Identity and belonging. This frame emphasized, both in the static content of the Mexican Embassy's website and its information subsidies, as well as in its social media posts on Facebook and Twitter, that the Mexican identity should be central to Mexican citizens, regardless of the country where they live. The Mexican government highlighted in its messaging that it cares about the diaspora community and that the diaspora community members should care back by staying in touch, by being proud of their culture and roots, by attending cultural events, by being strategic partners for the Mexican government, by investing in Mexico, and by helping their families back home. In return, the Mexican government is ready to defend their rights in the host country and to offer favorable conditions for that "staying-in-touch" process. **Support in the migration process.** This frame, utilized frequently by the Mexican government, emphasized that while it would prefer to have all Mexicans living in Mexican territory, the Mexican government supports the migration process of Mexican citizens to the United States, if that is the decision they make for the benefit of their families. As part of this support, the Mexican government indicated, in the Embassy's website and in its social media posts, that it supports both the DACA and DAPA programs (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Deferred Action for Parents of U.S. Citizens and Legal Residents, respectively). The Mexican government also offers trainings on topics such as labor and legal rights in the United States to facilitate the "empowerment" (e.g., Embajada de Mexico 2016) of the Mexican diaspora community, and it promotes the acquisition of dual citizenship, indicating that if Mexican citizens become U.S. citizens as well, they can exercise political rights in both countries.

Protection and Advocacy. This frame emphasizes that Mexican migrants have human rights, no matter where they live or what their migratory status is. As such, they deserve protection, safety and well-being, and this is a shared responsibility between the home and host countries. The Mexican government says it tries to guarantee Mexicans' safety and protection in the United States through diplomatic negotiations with the host country. For instance, the Mexican government tries to advocate against the use of disproportionate force, including deadly force, by U.S. immigration agents and by police officers; it offers trainings and workshops for migrants; it has hotlines to denounce abuses; it constantly maintains dialogue with the host country's authorities; and it tries to improve its customer service and the provision of services in its consulates and Embassy in the United States (e.g., Embajada de Mexico 2015a, 2015b).

Business partnerships. The Mexican government highlights, using this frame, that diaspora members are business partners: needed investors in their communities of origin, highly appreciated remittance-senders, and skilled workers who contribute to knowledge- and technology-transfers. To encourage these business partnerships, the Mexican government offers matching funds, discounted fees to send remittances back home, favorable loans to start businesses and build houses in Mexico, scholarships to students, trainings for teachers, and workshops for entrepreneurs, hoping they will bring back their resources and reinvest back their knowledge in Mexico.

Image/reputation management. The Mexican government uses this frame to "construct" the diaspora members' image as one of hard-working individuals, contributing members to the host country, important strategic partners of the home country, cultural brokers abroad, and informal ambassadors to Mexico in the host country. In the information subsidies, as well as in the social media posts, it is common to find key words such as "strategic partners," "agents of development,"

"agents of change," and "co-nationals."

Changes in Strategic Frames

As indicated before, the Mexican communications analyzed in the last six months of the Obama presidency (in 2017) showed that some frames in the strategic messaging of the Mexican government remained the same, but some others changed significantly, both in salience and in tone. Similarly, the frequency of the communication (i.e. posts or news subsidies) increased exponentially (from 13 Facebook posts in the Obama-period analyzed to 80 in the Trump-period analyzed, and from 272 tweets in the Obama-period analyzed to 384 in the Trump-period included in the study).

The main changes in the strategic messaging by the Mexican government to and about its diaspora community in the United States after the administration change can be summarized in the following ways: Besides communicating using the "traditional" frames described above, the Mexican government changed gears and started communicating, frequently, its disappointment with Trump's decision to end the DACA program, its support of the "Dreamers," its willingness to fight U.S. Bill SB4 (which could impact Mexicans living in Texas), and its perspective that border issues, migration issues and drug issues along the Mexican-U.S. border are "a shared responsibility" between the two countries. The new frames identified were the following:

Aid in times of crisis. Mexico was impacted by strong earthquakes in September of 2017. This particular situation resulted in the Mexican Embassy increasing its communications, both in the Embassy website and on social media, about this natural disaster, encouraging diaspora members in the United States to help in the recovery process at home by donating money and volunteering in the reconstruction process. For example, the embassy website includes a step-by-step guideline for Mexicans abroad on how to donate money for the victims of the September 17 earthquake (Embajada de Mexico 2017).

Cross-border relationships deteriorating. This frame was increasingly used by the Mexican government to indicate that the U.S.-Mexican relationship was suffering as a result of Donald Trump's messages and actions. For example, Mexico's Ambassador said, at an ordinary session of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, that the United States' decision to terminate DACA was a mistake; that the management of migration processes require collaboration between home, in-transit, and host countries; that the migration phenomenon is a shared responsibility, and that Mexico categorically rejects laws and policies against migrants. In the Mexican government's view, anti-immigration laws and policies that criminalize, harass or stigmatize migrants do not stop migration and, on the contrary, they force migrants to use illegal channels of migration that expose them

to human rights violations and abuse (see, for example, Secretaría 2017b).

Other examples of the deterioration in the U.S.-Mexico relationship can be seen in high-level diplomatic meetings where Mexico protests DACA's termination, an announcement where Mexico withdraws the aid offered to support Texans affected by Hurricane Harvey (see Secretaría 2017a); a last-minute visit by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs to California to support the Dreamers (DACA recipients); a video posted on the Mexican Embassy's Facebook page instructing Mexicans in the United States about what to do if they get detained while abroad; the concern of the Mexican government about U.S. Bill SB4, which could impact Mexicans living in Texas; and strongly worded official statements by the Mexican government stating that Mexico will not pay for the border wall; that Trump's tweets about the violence in Mexico, drugs and migration flows are inexact; and that the causes of the cross-border tensions and the steps to solve these problems are a "shared responsibility."

 Table 1: Presented next, summarizes the frames identified in the Mexican

 Embassy and in the D.C. Mexican consulate regarding messaging to and about

 the Mexican diaspora community living in the United States

Frame	2016	2017
Aid in times of crisis		x
Excercising rights	x	x
Identity and belonging	x	x
Immigrant's contributions to the host nation	x	x
Protection and advocacy	x	x
Strained cross-border relationship		x
Support for adjustment	x	x
Supporting business partnerships/Cross border collaborations	x	x

Structural Changes and Long-Term Initiatives in Mexico Since the 1990s

Mexico is considered a pioneer in Latin America when it comes to establishing long-term state-diaspora relationship-building strategies and tactics with its diaspora community in the United States. It is also the country that others in the region look up to for best practices in this area of public diplomacy (Bravo 2014a; González Gutiérrez 1999, 2006). Mexico has been making structural, political and strategic communication changes in their public diplomacy efforts since the 1970s but mostly since the early 1990s, to better serve and engage its diaspora community around the world, in general, and in the United States, in particular (Délano 2014; Goldring 2002; González Gutiérrez 1999, 2006; Hernández Joseph 2012; Martínez-Saldaña 2003; Massey, Durand & Malone 2002; Smith 2005).

Institutional Reforms and Provision of Consular Services

For almost three decades, Mexico has been creating a solid institutional network to support Mexicans who live abroad with many of their information and logistical needs. In 1990, Mexico established its General Directorate for Mexican Communities Abroad, as a division of its Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, to specifically serve its diaspora communities. In 2001, the Presidential Office for Mexicans Abroad was opened, placing the priority of serving this key audience under the direct supervision of the Mexican President, and, in 2002, to avoid duplicities, this office and the General Directorate for Mexican Communities Abroad merged under the National Council for Mexican Communities Abroad, once again under the purview of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (Bravo 2014a, González Gutiérrez 1999, 2006; Levitt & de la Dehesa 2003).

The Mexican Embassy in D.C. and the Mexican consulates in the United States have been expanding and improving their services as well, from the traditional ones (i.e., emission of passports and ID Cards) to the most innovative (matching funds to invest back home, help with the repatriation of bodies to the homeland, etc.). This has been supported by increases in consular budgets, personnel, services and efficiency in their customer service (Bravo 2014a, Embajada 2015c). As of 2018, out of its 69 consulates worldwide, 47 of them (68 percent) were located in the United States (https://directorio.sre.gob.mx/index.php/consulados-de-mexico-en-el-exterior). The majority of Mexico's foreign-service personnel works in consular activities. This responds to the strong presence of people of Mexican origin in the United States: In 2013, there was an estimated 34.6 million people of Mexican origin living across the border, with one-third of them (close to 12 million) being immigrants born in Mexico (Lopez 2015).

Remittances

The money that migrants send back home to support their families (in other words, remittances) are an important part of the income of family members left in the homeland. According to 2017 data and 2018 data projections, about 95% of remittances sent to Mexico come from migrants in the United States, they account for about U.S. \$33 billion, and they represent about 3 percent of Mexico's GDP (Gross Domestic Product), surpassing oil exports for the first time in 2015 (Sonneland 2017). This explains why Mexico has been trying to increase the attraction of remittances and has been offering productive options for Mexican migrants to invest their money back home (Hernandez Joseph 2010).

In the 1990s, Mexico established a 3x1 matching fund, in which every dollar invested by Mexican migrants in productive public work projects that serve their communities of origin are matched by one dollar invested by the Mexican federal government and one dollar invested by the state government in the same project

(Levitt & de la Dehesa 2003). The Mexican government also offers favorablecondition bank loans to Mexicans who want to invest in private projects or buy houses back home, and it negotiated favorable money-transfer fees for Mexicans with remittance-sending agencies such as Western Union (Levitt & de la Dehesa 2003).

Dual citizenship, voting and other state protections and rights

As early as 1996, and becoming a pioneer in Latin America, Mexico started offering dual citizenship to Mexicans living abroad. One decade later, it started offering Mexicans abroad the possibility of voting in the Mexican presidential elections through absentee vote. Mexican migrants can also run for office in Mexico (Levitt & de la Dehesa 2003), all of which has increased the political participation of Mexican migrants in domestic politics. Furthermore, as part of the consular services provided to Mexican migrants, they can receive legal counseling in the consulates, there is program of mobile consulates that go to communities where consulates are not available, and, in its strategic communication and actions, the Mexican government constantly emphasizes that one of its priorities is to protect the human rights of Mexicans abroad, no matter their immigration status (Bravo 2014a; González Gutiérrez 1999, 2006; Hernández Joseph 2012; Levitt & de la Dehesa 2003).

Diasporic identity construction

The Mexican government disseminates information in the form of press releases, speeches, photo galleries, announcements, databases of diaspora organizations and other static content on its network of websites. For instance, the websites of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, the Mexican Embassy in the United States, the Consular Network, the Institute of Mexicans Abroad – Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior--, and the Voto de los Mexicanos Residentes en el Exterior website -Vote of Mexicans Abroad. Furthermore, besides the strategic messages also communicated through the social media platforms associated with these government divisions and offices, Mexico uses other communication and relationship-building strategies and tactics to keep the Mexican migrants close. These communications remind the diaspora community members that they are Mexicans no matter where they are; encourage them to reinvest their financial and social capital back home; shape their image in their host countries portraying them as hard-working, contributing individuals; and construct the diasporic image at home by describing them with terms such as "co-nationals," "strategic partners," "people deserving of having their human and labor rights protected anywhere," and "agents of development," among other strategic goals (Bravo 2014a).

Additionally, Mexico encourages and organizes visits of Mexican-American delegations to Mexico, transnational sports tournaments, leadership trainings, youth encounters, cultural exhibits, holiday celebrations, pilgrimages and other symbolic activities to keep the diasporic identity alive (González Gutiérrez, 1999, 2006).

The Academic and Highly Skilled Diaspora

With its academic diaspora, and with highly educated Mexicans who work abroad, the Mexican government keeps a digital atlas to understand where they are located around the world, their institutional affiliations, areas of research and contact information. For example, they have a Mexican Researchers Abroad Catalogue (Catálogo de Investigadores Mexicanos en el Exterior, 2012). This database is associated with Mexico's Internationalization, Academic & Scientific Mobilities Network (RIMAC, in Spanish) and with Mexico's National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT, in Spanish). There is also the Global Network of Skilled Mexicans, which connects local chapters of highly skilled Mexicans who live abroad, all around the world.

These networks and their respective websites offer avenues of communication, doors to start collaborative projects, and some incentives to attract back the "brains" that left Mexico in search of better academic opportunities in about 30 countries around the world, including the United States.

Discussion

This qualitative study about how Mexico has built and developed its state-diaspora relations through time, offline and online, is an applied, prime example of Zaharna's (2011) statement that "countries are making an effort to incorporate the positive role of the domestic and diaspora publics to reinforce public diplomacy goals" (p.27).

Structurally, and over almost 30 years now, Mexico has built its institutional structure, has increased its resources, and has created the mechanisms necessary to serve its diaspora population around the world, in general, and in the United States, in particular. Offline, the Mexican government has been involved in developing and implementing long-term strategic communication and actions that have helped it build lasting relationships with the diaspora community. Online, the Mexican government has also portrayed itself as a defender of Mexican citizens' human rights, regardless of their geographic location, immigration status or level of connection to the homeland. It has also included the Mexican diaspora as one of its priority publics in its public diplomacy initiatives.

More recently, using the technological and strategic communication opportunities that social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter provide, and using public relations materials (in other words, information subsidies) offered through a network of websites, the Mexican government has been pro-active in most cases -and reactive in some others- constant, and intentional about communicating specific messages to and about its diaspora communities around the world, in particular in the United States.

Through almost 30 years and through different U.S. governments, Mexico has been consistent in communicating practical and useful logistical information to Mexicans who live abroad. To do so, it has used a wide variety of information subsidies, social media posts and static content on websites to highlight important issues, policies and programs designed to engage the diaspora, build its image, and protect its rights.

More recently, the U.S. change in Presidential Administration has generated adjustments in the Mexican government's messaging strategy that were not salient before Trump took office. Among others, since January of 2017, the Mexican government has begun posting on Facebook and using its Twitter handle to react to Trump's negative tweets about Mexicans in general, and about Mexican migrants in particular, about the process of migration from Mexico to the United States, about the potential construction of a border wall, and about the potential termination of the DACA and DAPA programs. The Mexican government has also reacted to Trump's tweets by expressing support for the Dreamers, by opposing Texas intention to pass bill SB4 into law, and by reminding Mexican migrants that they have human rights in the United States.

Along with recent social media posts, the Mexican government has kept communicating other frames that were present as well in its official communications when Barack Obama was president: the frames of identity, citizenship and belonging; the positive framing of the migrant's image; the frame of consular services available to the diaspora community; the frame of Mexicans having human rights no matter where they live; and the frame of the close relationship that should exist between the homeland and the diaspora.

The fact that close to 12 million Mexican migrants are undocumented (Pew Research Center 2015) places them in a vulnerable situation in the host country. The Mexican government's strategic messaging reflects this context, while at the same time it highlights the relevance of the financial and social capital that Mexican migrants have and how impactful these types of capital are for the homeland, through remittances, political participation, investment in productive projects at home, and the transnational membership in the home country. Mexico has been intentional in developing a long-term strategy that tells the Mexican diaspora that it matters, that it is valued, and that it is still considered an essential part of Mexico, at home and abroad.

Bio

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Vanessa Bravo, is an Associate Professor of Strategic Communications in the School of Communications of Elon University. She holds a Ph.D. in Mass Communication from the University of Florida; an M.A. in Mass Communication from the University of Florida, where she was a Fulbright Scholar, and a B.A. in Mass Communication from the University of Costa Rica. Her research focuses on the communication efforts and international public relations strategies that home governments in Mexico and Central America establish with their diaspora communities in the United States. She is interested in how public relations contribute to build national identities and to keep transnational connections between home and host countries. In 2015, she was an Educator Fellow for the Plank Center for Excellence in Public Relations.

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Article

The Impact of Facebook Communities on International Conflict Resolution

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Abstract

International conflicts in the 21st century pose a dire challenge for peace and conflict professionals due to the influx of non-state actors, globalization and development of communication technology. Within this context, people-to-people dialogue has been the main tool used by grassroots organizations that aims to build peace using a bottom-up approach to conflict resolution. The development and widespread use of social media platforms have created new opportunities for improving the effective-ness, monitoring and evaluation of people-to-people dialogue programs. Combined with face to face encounters, the use of social media platforms offers some solutions to the shortcomings of contact-based interventions. Digital engagement creates opportunities for long-term and consistent interaction, reduces power asymmetries, has applicable impact in real-time, and allows for wider-scale participation and new evaluation methodology. This paper aims to give an overview of the opportunities online dialogue platforms hold in maintaining channels of communications. It is based on observation and research of an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue project that took place during the Gaza war in 2014, mostly on *Facebook*.

Keywords

Social Media, Conflict Transformation, People-People Dialogue, Intergroup Conflict, Facebook Community, Structured Online Community Interfaces

Introduction

The role and hegemony of sovereign nation states have shifted in the aftermath of the Cold War making conflict resolution extremely difficult. Globalization and advances in technology have increased the number of actors with conflicting or similar interests. At the same time, the international system is going through structural changes in which non-state and sub-state actors gained more presence in political processes. As a result, achieving conflict resolution solely through official means is inadequate. Signing a peace treaty or making peace between political elites is hardly sufficient to put an end to conflicts, not to mention the social and psychological damage they have caused (Handelman & Chowdhury 2017). It is crucial to include civil society and community level relationship building in managing conflicts, given the importance of grassroots activism in events, such as the Arab Spring uprisings. Therefore, while official diplomacy is necessary in maintaining diplomatic channels, integrating citizens is a vital component of resolving conflicts in the long-run.

People to People (P2P) dialogue has been the main tool used by grassroots organizations as part of Track 3 Diplomacy that aims to build peace using a 'bottomup' approach to conflict resolution. Unlike theoretical models of negotiation and conflict resolution which are used as the basis for Track 1 and 2 Diplomacy, the Track 3 avenue has yet to find a theory that will sufficiently deal with the complexities of a bottom-up approach. Many practitioners of conflict resolution base their approaches on Gordon Allport's contact theory, which posits that, "the best way to reduce tensions between groups in conflict is to bring them together since the basis of evil is the unknown" (*The Nature of Prejudice*, 1954). Many public diplomacy initiatives too, are rooted in the notion that engagement helps overcome fears and psychological barriers. Despite its wide use, contact theory suffers from numerous shortcomings and has received substantial criticism. Primarily, the lack of clear indicators for success has led many to doubt the validity and usefulness as an approach to conflict engagement. However, dialogue programs continue to be common practice in many conflict zones, since no alternative has been found yet.

The ascendance of technology, and social media platforms have created new opportunities for improving the effectiveness, monitoring and evaluation of People to People dialogue programs. Moreover, it offers a new model to which both practitioners and academics could contribute and mutually benefit from. Combined with Face to Face encounters, the use of social media platforms offers notable solutions to the shortcomings of contact-based interventions. Amongst the solutions are the opportunity for long-term and consistent interaction, reducing power asymmetry, visible effective impact in real-time, wider-scale participation and new evaluation methodologies.

This research paper will aim to give an overview of the opportunities Structured Online Community Interfaces (SOCI's) entail and will describe in detail how technological innovations can contribute to the conduct of peacebuilding projects and to the discipline of peace and conflict. This paper provides a case study of an Israeli-Palestinian digital engagement that employed Facebook as a main communication platform to facilitate continuous dialogue. The case study presented in this paper is exemplar of digital technologies assisting peacebuilding processes which combine face to face and online dialogues. For that reason, this paper is relevant to both scholars and practitioners in laying out a new methodology of digital peacebuilding. In doing so, this paper also examines the ways in which digital technologies can enhance public diplomacy. The first section discusses people to people dialogues and the contribution of digital technologies to peacebuilding. The next section gives an overview of the MENA Leaders for Change Facebook Community Project that was established as part of the *Yala Young Leaders 'movement*. The third section examines the opportunities and prospects for digital engagement and will finally end in concluding remarks. Introducing this unique case study from the field, and from Israel, a nation that has a well-established digital diplomacy network, will offer important tips for future directions of digitalized peacebuilding.

People to People Dialogue

Track-one diplomacy is a term used to define activities that take place within the official realm of diplomacy between government officials. Growing need to engage opinion leaders particularly in respect to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the 1970s and 1980s initiated processes outside the realm of official diplomacy. Joseph Montville, an American diplomat, coined the term track-two diplomacy arguing that unofficial, informal interaction between members of adversary groups or nations might help resolve their conflict. (Montville 1991; Davidson & Montville 1981) Hence, track-two diplomacy became a widespread method complimenting track-one diplomacy at the grassroots level (Montville 1991; Azar 2002). Saunders (2001) argues that the human dimension is central to peacebuilding processes and that citizens are able to transform conflicts by building relationships beyond the official state structures. This argument situates people to people interaction at the heart of citizen diplomacy, which is also used interchangeably as track three diplomacy. Similarly, the relational paradigm of public diplomacy aims to heal, protect, and preserve relationships between peoples (Zaharna 2010). Therefore, public diplomacy emphasizes mutual engagement, mutual learning, collaboration and relationship building resulting in meaningful exchanges (Arsenault & Cowan 2008). In order to achieve meaningful exchanges, public diplomacy is grounded in people-to-people dialogue. In this respect, track three dialogues can be analyzed as public diplomacy with the aim to build relationships.

Track two and track three dialogues became extensively popular and widely applied in finding a solution to the Middle East conflict. Although these initiatives have at times proved to be successful, overall they have not achieved groundbreaking resulting from a diverse set of problems including the unwillingness of political actors to commit to peace. People to people dialogue projects in the Middle

East have suffered many drawbacks and have been subjected to criticism. There are two main concerns in respect to people to people dialogue. The most common and basis for criticism has been the asymmetry of the projects which reflect the power imbalance of the parties in conflict. The power imbalance lends itself to the strength and weakness of parties. For example, in respect to the Middle East conflict existing literature indicates that a higher number of meetings take place in the Israeli territory, and most of the moderators and participants are Israeli (Maoz 2004). As a result, Israeli dominance in the dialogue process, hampers the effectiveness of the conflict transformation process, since participants who belong to the weaker party feel less comfortable to express their grievances. Hence, an imbalanced conflict transformation process will not achieve the desired change in attitudes and perceptions. The second challenge is the number of participants attending dialogue projects. Due to technical and political barriers such as entry permits (when necessary) it effective dialogue of this sort should take place could be available for rather small number of people (Albeck, Adwan & Bar-On 2002) . The drawback is that very small amounts of people could be transformed. Given these technical and logistical barriers, new communication technologies led by digital media offer prospects for improved conflict transformation processes.

The use of digital technologies in peacebuilding is a relatively new venue, which has its roots in online mediation. The origins of Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) date back to the 1990s when the World Wide Web first started to gain popular use. As human interactions began to take place in the virtual space, it became clear that online engagement would include debates and conflicts. Therefore, there was an opportunity to utilize online platforms to manage and resolve conflicts. The first article about ODR was published in 1996 when the National Center for Automated Information Research organized the first conference on ODR marking the field's infrastructure establishment (Wahab, Katsh & Rainey 2012). Since then, ODR has developed mainly in the context of business disputes between providers and consumers. While there is research on the ways online platforms help resolve family disputes (Augar & Zeleznikow 2014) and in its application to law and litigation (Katsh 2007), there has been limited research on international political conflict resolution and online technologies.

Previous research that touches upon similar principles and advantages of online platforms for dialogue. For example Peyser's examination of the use of massive online dialogue among citizens of New York and argues that online dialogue can be used to promote trust and collaboration (Pyser 2004). In addition, the use of ICT (Information Communication Technologies) in peacebuilding platforms promotes a wide range of grassroots actors and groups in post-conflict zones (Tellidis & Kappler 2016). Paul Reilly discusses the uses of social media in facilitating inter-group conflict in Northern Ireland and argues that online interaction

alone does not suffice to promote understanding and trust (Reilly 2012). A recent research by Cao and Lin focuses on the different types of CMC (Computer Mediated Communication) and argues that video communication yields better results on attitudes of the outgroup than text-based communication (Cao & Lin 2017). One of the most relevant research to this paper is the study by Ifat Maoz and Donald Ellis who examined the differences in online and face-face communication between groups of Israelis and Palestinians and emphasized the lack of constructive arguments in the dialogue process (Ellis & Maoz 2007).

Mor, Ron and Maoz's research based on the Facebook page called *Tweeting Ar-abs*, analyzes posts that present the Palestinian narrative in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and other posts by Palestinians that call for peace and reconciliation (Mor, Ron & Maoz 2016). Perhaps the most relevant study that has been published is the work of Hamburger, Hasler and Shani-Sherman in which they examine –intergroup conflict in the digital age. There are a number of factors that offer advantage to intergroup dialogue on social media. Social media platforms are more engaging, they're anonymous, universal and they offer constant availability and equality (Amichai-Hamburger, Hasler & Shani-Sherman 2015) in practical projects.

MENA Young Leaders Facebook Community Project

The events of the Arab Spring have served as an example of the power of civic activism in the age of social media (Howard, el at 2011) The speed and manner in which activists were able to mobilize, and national aspirations for democracy to spread across borders, gave hope that social media could play a critical role in reinvigorating civil society, democracy and peace across the region (Ibid; Anderson 2011).

The project which forms the subject of the present evaluation represents a unique offshoot of this persuasion, with its belief that these same principles might be applied successfully to the Israel Palestinian conflict.¹ It is predicated, in part, on the belief that while linking Israeli and Palestinian young leaders with a wider network of activists from across the MENA region might serve to liberate them from the various blind-spots imposed by the conflict's strict borders, an enduring and shared social media platform could lend their work geographic breadth and a sustainability rare in most current peacebuilding efforts. In such a way, the project might in potential provide the spark for the upsurge in regional social change and democratization to make its own inroads into the Israeli Palestinian conflict.

The Yala Young Leaders' MENA Leaders for Change Program was an Israeli-Arab

¹ Yala "Mena Leaders for Change 2013-14" Program: Empowering Emerging Leaders to Advance Peace and Positive Change in the Mena Region. Submitted By The Peres Center For Peace [Original project proposal]

people-people online and in person dialogue project that took place from June-November 2014. The project was funded by the US. Department of State and was managed by the Peres Center for Peace and Yala Palestine, two regional NGOs. It was designed as a multi-stage intervention, structured around a preliminary skills training workshop, ongoing guided interaction and discussion in the *Facebook*[™] closed and secret group , and, for a select group of participants, participation in a three-day summative conference in Jordan. The project's participants came from Israel, The Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

Reports on use of the *FacebookTM* platform indicate that actual use was well in excess of program minima: while 22.8% of participants visited the MLC *FacebookTM* group on a weekly basis (per program requirements), the majority of participants (74.2%) visited the platform much more frequently, 49.5% visiting daily, and 16.8% more than twice a day (see Chart 9). Only 3.0% said they did not visit the group regularly. In terms of self-assessed future use, 52.5% said they foresaw visiting the group on a weekly basis, 34.7% daily, and 8.9% more than this. 4.0% did not see themselves visiting the group in the future.

Of participants, the vast majority (80%) saw themselves using the *Facebook™* platform to keep in touch with other respondents. 67% thought they would use it to share their thoughts with others, 62% foresaw using it as a forum to discuss ideas, while 59% envisioned using the group as a platform for actually working together (See breakdown below). Few (18%) thought they would use the platform to request emergency assistance. A small minority felt they would not use it at all (5%).

Overall, participants felt the *Facebook™* group was a somewhat effective way (4.92 out of 7) to engage participants around peacebuilding, and a somewhat effective way (4.87 out of 7) to mobilize people across the MENA region in peacebuilding. Controlled for demography, Israeli Jews were the most skeptical with regards to the former (3.9), MENA participants the most optimistic (5.84). For the latter, MENA citizens were the most enthusiastic (5.6) about the platform's potential regionally. Gender differences also mattered, with women more skeptical (4.6) than men (5.2) regarding the platform's effectiveness.

In the period following completion of the online course, affiliation with the project was largely synonymous with participation in the *Facebook*TM platform. From their responses to the questionnaire, the majority of participants visited the platform more frequently than was required (daily use outflanking the required weekly use by a factor of more than 3:1), and the vast majority (95%) felt that they would continue to visit the group on at least a weekly basis.

SOCI's as an Opportunity for Conflictual Speech Analysis: The Online Discourse Analysis Matrix (ODM) as a Potential Tool

The availability of reams of written exchanges undertaken in real time on conflictual subjects afforded the evaluators of the MENA Young Leaders Facebook Community Project a unique opportunity that is rarely afforded in conflict research: the opportunity to undertake close narrative analysis of conflict dynamics in online speech.

The abundant research on conflict theory has been mostly concerned with issues of identity, attitudes and the dynamics of conflict escalation: as a result, they have been well-served by a wide variety of survey and case-study designs (Darby 1986; Varshney 2003; Torstrick 2000). Analysis of conflicts in conversation (as would befit an analysis of postings on *Facebook*TM) has rarely been a focus. However, such analyses are a staple of gender studies and couples research (e.g. Tannen, 1990, 1994, 1996). One of the most highly-regarded of these is Gottman et al's *Rapid Couples Interaction Scoring System*, developed out of the *Center for the Study of Marital Roles* in 1993, and used regularly ever since (Gottman 1993). Designed to predict the likelihood for divorce among married couples by codifying statements made over the course of discussions on issues of contention between the couple, the scale lends itself readily to conflict analysis for its focus on conflicts, and the dynamics that lead up to confrontation, resolution or stalemate (Bui-Wrzosinska, Gelfand, Nowak, & Severance 2013)

For the purposes of evaluating the program, Gottman et al's (1993) scale was adapted into a code whose categories would account for the full variety of responses that could be seen in a *Facebook*TM feed spanning several months. The code was developed over several iterations, in which the categories were honed and rehoned until they fully and accurately accounted for every statement-type that was identified in the feed (Glaser & Strauss 1967). The code features a general matrix of responses by type (including 'neutral,' 'positive' 'reinforcement' 'repair/mitigation' and 'conflict'), along which specific types of responses (representing the full variety of responses seen) were allocated. (An alphabetical system was used, in which each letter represented a response-type: a 'k', for instance indicated an expression of personal concern for another participant, sympathy or commiseration; an 's' indicated an attempt at mollifying a conflict via exhortation to peace, flexibility, neutrality or openness. Of the three 'conflict' categories, 'x' represented a controversial or potentially incendiary statement, a 'y' a direct challenge to another participant, and a 'z' an antagonistic comment that did not invite any response, including condemnation, insult, stonewalling, or the expression of an intractable position ..) For the purposes of the study, the goal was to see how ideological differences between participants were expressed and negotiated. To this end, a feed representing four months of discussion was selected, and scoured for any and all

potential conflicts (i.e. strings of conversation in which an x, y or z formed the basis for a subsequent comment or series of comments). The full string was then analyzed to its conclusion ('v'), with each post assigned a code-letter (or, as often the case, series of letters). The final analyzed string could would thus be able to provide a schema delineating the length of the conflict, the way it was resolved, and the types of responses offered by participants in it to mitigate (or exacerbate) conflictual situations.

Over 3 months' worth of posts (June 15 to September 15) were reviewed employing the coding system developed for the evaluation. Within that time-frame, 22 'controversies' (separate events surrounding a post or response coded either as an x, a y, or a z according to the scheme) comprising a total of 481 distinct 'posts' were identified. (A small number by any standard, these isolated controversies represented a fraction of the discussion even during the height of the escalation in Gaza.) Each of these events was then analyzed as a string of posts and responses, with each response assigned a code. It is important to note that much of these discussions were undertaken between a relatively small group of participants (in some strings as few as 3, though even the longest having no more than 11).

Of the controversies, three (3) were left unresolved (ending in an unanswered string, often an 'x') and four (4) were put to rest by the moderator. The remaining 15 conflicts (roughly two-thirds of all controversies) were resolved by the participants themselves. (All controversies revolved around the Gaza war, in virtually every case as the result of a statement or post made in justification of one side of the conflict.) In all, the moderator intervened 29 times within a total 481 posts, or an average of once for every sixteen posts; in reality, however, discussions did not require even this amount of intervention: of the 29 occasions, 10 occurred over the course of one string from late July. The average number of interventions was closer to less than once per string (0.904).²



Fig.17: The Strings

² It is important to note that this number cannot take into account the moderation and facilitation which staff conducted with participants outside the context of the platform, such as the direct 1:1 correspondences which were conducted with participants an ongoing basis– especially in cases where a participant might begin to show signs of increased antagonism.

Over the course of these strings, there were 77 x's, 75 y's and 27 z's. That is to say: 30% of all interaction was made up of potentially controversial or polarizing content, the remainder dedicated to mitigation, clarification and repair. (It is important to note that these strings were the exception rather than the rule in virtually *all* contact through the Facebook platform. On the whole, interactions were highly amicable, generous and optimistic; in fact, an overall review of the entirety of the Facebook content would see a predominance of e, b, g and k comments – the inverse of their predominance in the analyzed strings.)

If x's comprised potentially controversial posts or statements not necessarily actively linked to an agenda or argument and y's a direct challenge to the views of another participant, it is heartening to note that roughly 1/5 of all these statements (22% in the case of x's, 20% in the case of y's) were mitigated– that is, couched in language or conventions designed to soften the impact of the statement. (Thus for example: "i trully [sic] emphesize with your cry and pain it is trully [sic] unfair the situation you are stuck in. What upsets me is[...]") 'Z' statements were rarely mitigated for obvious reasons (z's representing intractable views, stonewalling, denigration or refusal to communicate). At the same time, it is encouraging that, in a period of time marred by violent conflict in which the governments of some 1/3 of all participants were directly involved, only 27 such statements were recorded. In all but two occasions, each z was preceded either by a 'y' or another 'z' occuring 1-3 statements earlier. That is to say: virtually all z's were reactive, and thus easily negotiated down.

The most common strategy for defusing conflicts which program participants employed in their conversations with one another was the clarification of their views on a previous ideological position or statement. This reparative strategy was used in 116 of all 481 posts (24.1% of all postings), in 55 cases (47.4% of the time) in conjunction with other strategies. The next most-used defusing device was a more positive strategy: reverting the conversation back to a personal or general philosophical stance. Thus, for example, in response to a heated and polarized debate in which both Jewish and Palestinian historical claims to the land were challenged (string 14), one participant writes:

Hi everyone, after reading your dialogue it made me think alot. It is important for both sides to reflect and share their narrative and it is important for us to understand each other history, but focusing only in the past won't bring us anywhere.

While there is some use of this strategy in the early strings (notably string 12, from July 14th, where there were 8 such reversions), on average this was rarely done until a series of interventions by the moderator in string 16 (an exchange from July 24th), culminating in the following suggestion to the correspondents:

would like to make an experiment: let's try to discuss things without using the tool of comparison. State your opinion, views, questions and wills but don't say "but X did that! " or " We can do this cause Y does that". Comparisons usually provide us with an easy way out of deep thinking.

After this, use of the strategy more than doubled, from 1.3 times per string to 3. By the final string, one month later (August 24th), it is used more than 12 times. (In fact, the final conflict is dedicated more to an exchange of views than actual confrontational or intractable content.)

Fig.18: Strategies Employed by Participants in Controversial Exchanges, by	
Frequency	

Matrix Category	Strategy	CODE LETTER	Total	Used on its own
Repair	Clarifications	С	116	61
Positive	Presentation of personal philosophy	F	52	30
Repair	Inquiries for explanation	J	38	23
Repair	Appeals to the importance of peace	S	31	19
Repair	Miscellaneous	U	29	26
Repair	Appeals to the common cause of the group	Т	22	12
Neutral	Opening the floor	D	21	10
Reinforcement	Agreement of concession	Q	21	7
Repair	Calls to view "both sides" of an issue	Н	17	4
Reinforcement	Like	0	12	11
Positive	Commiseration	К	9	3
Repair	Apologies	I	6	2
Positive	Best wishes	Е	4	3
Repair	Humor	R	3	3

Though a highly innovative approach to the problem of analyzing conversational data, the ODM is limited precisely because of its novelty. Unlike the scale on which it is based which has had several decades of iterations to hone its categories, decades in which findings could be compared to actual outcomes (in this case, divorces), the ODM can only give a window onto conversation dynamics in real time; until it has undergone numerous iterations it can offer little predictive value. Further, dominated as many of these online exchanges are by a relatively small group of more vocal participants, the matrix cannot give a precise window onto how all participants learned to negotiate differences in and outside of the auspices of the project; all it can do is to show how a certain number of select conflicts evolved and the dynamics by which they were mediated by those involved (including the degree to which program moderators were needed). The design is thus still at an exploratory stage. If continued to be developed and tested on further groups, however, it poses a great deal of potential to serve as a predictive tool

in contending with online and discursive conflicts in real time.

The MENA Young Leaders Facebook Community Project: An Impact Assessment

High levels of use aside, the real question here is what the value of using the FacebookTM page really is as far as peacebuilding is concerned. A preliminary answer to this can be found in the responses to the question of current engagements solicited in the conference questionnaire. There, of the 28 projects cited, the top three (accounting for 12 of the 28 citations, not including those of MLC sponsored platforms), are all online-based platforms. For a good number of participants, participation in peace programs, for the time being, seems to mean affiliation with additional online networks. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Firstly, many of the participants being newcomers to the world of peacebuilding, online communities may be the best and easiest way to proceed: a way of being networked (even if as passive participants) in wider platforms based primarily on more networking and contact. A second reason can be distilled from the difference in views vis-à-vis the online nature of the program among different demographic groups. Both participants from Gaza and from other MENA countries accorded the most importance to the online/social media character of the program in terms of their decision to enroll (5.86 and 4.90 out of 7 respectively), and for good reason: for them, closed borders and geographic distances respectively represent significant hindrances to face-to-face encounters with their counterparts. In the absence of a real space in which to work together, it is no surprise that many participants embraced the online platform as a productive way to mobilize and promote peace. Israelis, by contrast, tended to be less enthused about the online platform than their counterparts from Gaza or other MENA countries.

The *Facebook*TM platform was seen, overall, as a viable medium through which much of the preliminary work of peacebuilding could be accomplished, from networking (80% of respondents saying they would use it to stay in touch, 67% to share thoughts and 62% to discuss events) to planning collaborative projects (59%). While the long-term value of online participation (or, as certain civil society researchers would have it, passive involvement) in promoting a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains to be seen, as far as consensus-building was concerned, the proceedings on the *Facebook*TM platform (30%) proved to be just as decisive as face-to-face contact between participants (30%).

The second and much more notable difference between this program and its counterparts in the traditional approach to bridging Israelis and Palestinians is its emphasis on dealing directly with conflictual issues. As noted above, the central criticism of the majority of Israeli-Palestinian encounter programs of the past has been their emphasis on the finding of common ground, to the point that they have traditionally shied away completely from contentious issues (Maoz 2011). The MLC program encouraged the opposite, making the negotiation of highly politicized and contentious differences between participants a central focus of the program. Further, it seems to have taken the proper steps to ensure that the ensuing interactions did not thoroughly undermine the program: participants were screened carefully before being accepted, underwent online training segments from which they claim to have above all developed their listening skills and motivation to understand, and finally, were given an online forum in which to interact and in which they were carefully monitored and guided. Without these, even the most well-intentioned interactions could easily have devolved into factionalism, as is illustrated by a close analysis of the Facebook™ feeds. Given the proportionally very small number of criticisms and dropouts from the program as a result of this, this approach should be seen as a resounding success. While, on the one hand, it is unrealistic to assume that several months of mediated online correspondence can compete with the views and attitudes which participants hear continuously around them, both socially and through their respective national media, the ability of program participants to continue their interaction despite a highly divisive war in Gaza seems in itself a strong endorsement of both the program's curriculum and the work of its staff. And while, participants still have a ways to go before they truly see eye to eye on these issues (even if this means leaving their ideological differences aside in pursuit of a common goal) it seems that the program has done its part in setting the stage for truly resilient 'bridging.' The optimism of expressed by the majority of participants at the close of the program, the numbers and extent of participants friendships and the degree to which participants seemed invested in continuing to work together all attest to the program's accomplishments in negotiating a very complex terrain.

The Advantages of Structured Online Community Interfaces as Conflict Resolution Dialogue Programs: Reflections from the Field

The results of the project demonstrate how using social media platforms, particularly Facebook, assist in managing common challenges in people-people dialogue. In what follows, we will elaborate on the challenges of people to people dialogue and the opportunities presented by online platforms.

1. Effective Participation

The pillar of peacebuilding efforts based on grassroots initiatives resonates in the participants it targets. Unlike official state-state negotiations in which there is little room to be cognizant of the identity of the participants, people-people dialogue is able to select the type of participants according to the project's goal set forth by the organizing institution. By definition, people to people dialogue projects represent a bottom-up strategy for conflict resolution, targeting the wide public or segments of it and not decision makers. Instead of signing peace agreements, the goals of the grassroots work are defined as changing attitudes and negative perceptions and have a wide, scalable impact among the masses. This approach has encountered difficulties in achieving its goals due to common challenges of effective participation.

Dialogue projects that involve intergroup conflict usually attract those who have the willingness and motivation to meet with the other side. The attitudes and perceptions of those participants do not need to be changed, therefore the entire projects losses its relevance when there is no need to perform change. Similarly, it is difficult to find a positive target group for intergroup dialogue projects such as hardliners, minorities or influential people in communities who are the actual agents of change. Those usually lack the interest to meet the so called enemy or the time and effort to attend the joint meetings. In today's mega busy world, making the effort and commitment for a project that lasts a few months has to offer an incentive for the participants. Finally, in areas of harsh intractable conflicts, it is unpleasant and even dangerous for members of the community to be seen talking and being in the same room with members of a conflicting community. People try to avoid being criticized or risk for their lives in favor of intergroup dialogue.

Social media platforms offer a partial solution for the challenge of participation. Social media platforms are characterized as popular, attractive and user friendly which make them easier to achieve effective recruitment. Hardliners and even extremists have less objections to engage in a dialogue that is based on a virtual platform, where they can first simply be bystanders and then decide if they wish to actively participate. The online platform serves as an easy jumping board to dive into more difficult discussions. Those who fear hearing accusations and difficult stories are able to log off on the online platform. Moreover, busy participants who are usually active in the social-political-business scenes, are easily able to spend a few minutes every day or at the end of the day, check the latest updates in the online group. Participation in an online dialogue requires less physical and emotional effort. For those who fear to be seen in a physical gathering, the online platform holds a unique advantage in the form of a creating a fake and/or secret profile. Using it, participants can overcome identity challenges.

2. Confronting "Re-entry"

Another limitation for the effectiveness of people-people dialogue projects is the re-entry problem- the situation in which participants leave the dialogue setting and return to their societies and natural environments - between each meeting session or at the end of the program. The attitude-perception changing process, which the participants are going through, is only effective when the process continues for a long period of time. Generally, dialogue projects are limited in time

due to budget and other technical or political obstacles. The resources included in a project such as funds, availability of staff and participants, and political stability allow the interaction to be held in for a relatively short time and in little recurrence. Moreover, the re-entry problem is even more evident once the project ends and participants go back to their own societies.

Social media can contribute to coping with the problem of reentry, by offering limitless and continuous interaction. The participants who become Facebook friends, or communicate via Twitter, Linkedin, Whattsapp or similar platforms are exposed to the opinions, thoughts and daily happenings of each another. The continuous interaction contributes to the effectiveness of the conflict transformation process since it is promotes a smoother flow and progress, without the need to frequently restart it, as participants avoid re-entry.

3. Balance of Power and Asymmetrical Power

In most conflicts there is an imbalance of power between parties which is due to differences in military, economic and diplomatic power. When trying to facilitate a dialogue between conflicting parties, it is crucial to ensure that the environment balance the power asymmetry allowing the groups a safe place when they can feel comfortable to express and discuss. In addition, a balanced dialogue environment helps to create trust between the parties and the facilitators-organizing institution, therefore supports the effectiveness and success of the process. Finding a physical neutral ground to hold meetings could be costly and difficult bureaucratically, especially when there is a need for entry permits, long distance travelling and similar unfavorable circumstances.

The virtual world and social media platforms in particular could serve as a neutral meeting place where power asymmetry is not as visible. Under such conditions, the facilitation of the process is under full control of the organizing institution which can use the technological software to ensure power balance throughout the process.

4. Cost Effective and Easy Infrastructure for Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding dialogue encounters require infrastructure and resources such as funds, acceptable venues for meetings amongst others based on the type of project. Unlike official track one negotiations which many states compete to host and get the prestige and credit for hosting, track three workshops and dialogue meetings require substantial amounts of funds. Most of the funding goes towards meeting facilities such as hotels, conference rooms and transportation such as buses and flights. The problem is exacerbated when there is a need to find a neutral ground to hold the meetings which often narrows down possibilities to distant and pricy locations, especially in violent conflict zones. Holding the dialogue on a social media platform saves those costs and as it represents a virtual, safe, easy to access and free of charge venue. Additionally, it saves energy and contributes to a clean and sustainable environment.

5. Measurability and Evaluation

One of the most notable points of criticisms of dialogue programs is their ineffectiveness and limited –if any- impact on the conflict. When there is no agreement to sign, the question that remains is 'what have been achieved through the joint dialogue and meeting? Furthermore, goals such as - "changing attitudes", "bridge building", "create understanding" are difficult to quantify and measure. The most common tools that are used to measure and evaluate peacebuilding dialogue programs are surveys that are handed out in different time spans throughout the program. The validity of surveys is questionable especially since they represent an opinion in a certain moment and depend on the understanding of a certain question.

Conducting Structured Online Community Interfaces enables the development of a new evaluation system. Since the entire communication between the parties is transcribed in real-time, it is possible to follow the dynamics of the dialogue, analyze it and draw conclusions regarding the program's goals. Using tools like the Online Narrative Matrix, rigorous analyses of conflict dynamics can be further developed, to the point of predictive validity.

Conclusion

International conflicts continue to evolve as new actors, new dimensions and new technologies influence the complexity of political and social systems and processes. In this disruptive era, which some refer to as The Fourth Industrial Revolution, it is essential to find new, creative and innovative ideas to mitigate, transform and resolve conflicts. The application of online social media platforms such as Facebook in conflict resolution processes is not only helpful, but imperative since human communication nowadays takes place on the virtual space as it does on the physical one. The case study presented in this paper offers conflict resolution researchers and practitioners not just a new methodology, but a new path to think, analyze and address international conflicts through technology.

The use of Facebook communities does hold several challenges. First and foremost, the project must take place in a place where potential participants have free and easy access to internet and where social media platforms are popular. In addition, the ongoing, almost non-stop online facilitation requires special preparation as online training for facilitators and more funds allocated for it. The methods for assessing the efficacy of this programming (the ODM) also needs to be developed into a rigorous, predictive tool-- a process that will require ongoing iterations and testing. Finally, the long-term scalable impact on the conflict remains ambiguous. While violent, intractable conflicts take place at the same time as track 3 peacebuilding initiatives do, it is very difficult to change perceptions and reach understandings among peoples who fight each other outside the "Facebook group".

It is therefore the obligation of researchers and practitioners to keep finding for new, innovative ways to address international conflicts through peacebuilding ,as is the obligation of politicians and negotiators to find ways to resolve international conflicts through diplomacy.

Bio

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Arik Segal is an international mediator and educator who specializes in the application of technologies in innovative dialogue structures. He established "Conntix" – a consultancy that aims to connect people through innovation and technology. He is a member of the Center for Applied Negotiations at the Institute for National Security Studies and serves as the technology and innovation adviser for Mitvim.

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Article

Mapping Eurasia: Contrasting the Public Diplomacies of Russia's 'Greater Eurasia' and China's 'Belt and Road' Initiative

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Abstract

This paper contrasts the public diplomacies behind China and Russia's approaches to Eurasian Order and process-traces the gradual interaction between the two. It argues that Russia's 'Greater Eurasia' vision seeks to create a common space in Eurasia in a concert with other influential powers like China, but with Russia remaining as an indispensable pole. China's 'Belt and Road' rhetoric of Eurasian connectivity suggests that China formulates an ambition to co-shape global order, for which its regional activism serves as leverage. Drawing on available documents and selected interviews, this paper argues that Russia and China's grand narratives ('Greater Eurasia' and BRI, respectively) indicate a principled, albeit still restrained willingness to collaborate in the future mapping of Eurasia's political space. Despite a possible economic competition between the operating modes of the economic land corridors envisioned under the BRI and the Russian-dominated Eurasian Economic Union, a joint interest between Russia and China in countering Western governments in global institutions tempers the effects of regional rivalry.

Keywords

Eurasian Order, Greater Eurasia, Belt and Road Initiative, China, Russia, Public Diplomacy

Introduction

China's 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) initiative, launched in 2013, aims to expand infrastructure and trade links between Asia, Africa, and Europe. Besides the rhetoric about the promotion of inter-regional connectivity and economic prosperity, China's 'Belt and Road' initiative (BRI), as OBOR has been rebranded three years later, has been analysed as being motivated by the pacification of China's Xinjiang province (Pantucci & Oresman 2018), the internationalisation of the Chinese renminbi and the de-dollarisation of international commerce

(Cooley 2015: 2), and the expansion to new markets for Chinese excess industrial and consumer goods (Ferdinand 2016: 951). The BRI has become China's signature foreign policy vision of this century, on which enormous financial, diplomatic, and economic resources are being spent. But with China's new activism in Eurasia, Beijing becomes more active in a part of the world where Russia has played a more dominant role in previous decades. With the establishment of the Russian-dominated Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in 2015, in addition, Russian regional integration models might bring along tariff, institutional, and normative incompatibilities with the Chinese-promoted economic corridors of the 'Silk Road Economic Belt' (SREB). This creates the potential for clashes in Eurasian Order conceptions between Russia and China. Against this background, this paper answers the question to what extent Russia and China's public diplomacies on Eurasian integration are indicative of a willingness to coordinate their foreign policies in the wake of China's growing activism in Eurasia. The scope of the article excludes an in-depth analysis of the role of Western governments in influencing these processes. The EU has developed a 'connectivity platform' to enter into a dialogue about regional infrastructure with China, but still lacks a comprehensive response to shifting power dynamics in Eurasia. And the US 'new Silk Road' plans of 2011 silently fizzled out, two years before China's OBOR was launched. Developments in Western-Russian relations, however, have become a factor influencing the Russian public diplomacy on China's role in Eurasia, as the article will discuss.

For the argument developed in this article, the following paragraphs focus on the effects of China and Russia's public diplomacy on Eurasian Order conceptions. As such, the emphasis rests on a discursive level which we need to understand in order to make sense of the politics of space. Regional integration is a complex process in which not only regulatory standards, but also norms and ideas diffuse and potentially clash with others. That is why states use 'strategic narratives' to tell a story about their foreign policy objectives (Miskimmon, O'Loughlin & Roselle 2013). In a Eurasian context, Russian and Chinese continental 'geo-visions' become 'crucial sites of spatial construction,' as Mayer and Balázs put it (2018: 209). China's ambitious 'Belt and Road' initiative is an example of a 'Going out'strategy in which not only money and goods, but also ideas start to travel on a transnational level, and, in the process, engage with and confront normative frameworks favored by Russian elites. It is not only an economic initiative, but becomes a discursive strategy that assembles 'elements of perceived reality [...] to promote a particular interpretation', as Entman (2007: 164) defines the process of *framing*.

Without employing such 'strategic narratives', economic connectivity projects across multiple countries would not be able to succeed (Gilboa 2008: 67; Cull 2008). Roselle, Miskimmon and O'Loughlin note that a '[s]trategic narrative [...]

directly addresses the formation, projection and diffusion, and reception of ideas in the international system.' (2014: 74), and it is part and parcel of public diplomacy to channel, amplify and strengthen state resources used to positively influence the international identity of a given country. Against this conceptual background, China's public diplomacy on questions of Eurasian integration will be presented first, before the article proceeds to contrast this with Russia's public diplomacy on Eurasian integration. Doing so, it combines a comparative analysis of public diplomacies (Collier 1993) with a process-tracing of governmental decisions (Beach & Pedersen 2013) - an approach which lends itself to the paper's aim to shed light on Russian-Chinese interaction on questions of Eurasian integration. A third part analyses prospects for the convergence of Chinese and Russian grand narratives for the future of Eurasia (BRI and 'Greater Eurasia', respectively). Such a convergence will depend, the paper argues, on questions of local ownership of the in-between-countries, converging threat perceptions in world politics, and the potential for co-leadership in the mapping of political space. The analysis draws on policy documents, the scholarly literature, and semi-structured interviews with Chinese and Russian current and former officials as well as experts.

China's Public Diplomacy on Eurasian Integration

More than half a millennium after the rise of the seafaring era had put an end to the ancient Silk Roads, China conjures a historic revival. The 'One Belt, One Road' (*yi dai yi lu*) initiative was officially unveiled by the Chinese government during an address at Nazarbayev University in Astana by President Xi Jinping in September 2013.¹ The proposal to build an economic 'belt', stretching from China across Central Asia to Europe, evokes connotations of ancient transcontinental trade connections. A month later, in an address to the Indonesian Parliament, Xi proposed the development of a '21st Century Maritime Silk Road'. Together, these are the 'Belt' and 'Road' of China's 'Belt and Road' initiative. A joint action plan in March 2015 by China's National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Commerce provided the road map for the development of this 'new Silk Road', which revolves around the key ideas of connectivity, policy coordination, investment facilitation, financial integration, and people-to-people bonds (also known as the *Wu Tong*, the five openings).²

In the same year, President Xi set up a 'Leading Small Group for Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative'. Four years later, at the Belt and Road Forum in Beijing

¹ 'Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road,' NDRC, 28 March 2015, retrieved 21 September 2018, http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/newsre-lease/201503/t20150330_669367.html. The NDRC is the main body that oversees the BRI, and receives its instructions from the State Council.

² 'Full Video: President Xi Jinping delivers speech at Nazarbayev University', CCTV, 7 September 2013, retrieved 15 July 2017, http://english.cntv.cn/program/newsupdate/20130907/102105.shtml.

in May 2017, Xi welcomed twenty-nine national leaders and delegates from 130 countries and expanded on his vision of new global opportunities. 'What we hope to create is a big family of harmonious co-existence,' Xi said, as he announced the release of an additional 100 billion yuan for the Silk Road Fund and an additional 380 billion yuan channeled through the China Development Bank and the Export-Import Bank in support of Belt and Road projects, raising the total funding available for the Belt and Road initiative to an astonishing US\$ 900 billion.³ These two policy banks already lend more money in Asia than the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) combined (Miller 2017: 12).

China's public diplomacy hurries to stress the co-managed nature of the BRI and seeks to rebut the criticism that the initiative is a unilateral Chinese strategy. But attempts to quantify 'Country Cooperation' (as the NDRC has begun to do in September 2016) and the socio-economic implications for local agency may constitute a contradiction with China's traditional insistence on 'non-interference' (Bai 2016). In particular, the often-repeated assumption that Chinese aid is devoid of political conditionality has to be contrasted with more nuanced financing requirements of Chinese 'investments'. Chinese 'concessional loans' stipulate that Chinese state banks generally do not finance projects without a Chinese component to it, meaning that Chinese banks give out loans to Central Asian governments, which in turn reinvest the money in a Chinese company that carries out a project with Chinese labor. Some experts have estimated that no less than half of the materials, equipment, and services procured under such contracts come from China (Tian 2018: 27). This circular flow of loans makes Chinese aid vulnerable to the criticism that it constitutes 'predatory aid' from which local industries hardly benefit (Jaborov 2018). Some Chinese experts have recognised that this can become an obstacle for the success of the BRI, and that Chinese businesses need to engage more with local communities and adopt more of a corporate social responsibility.4

On a governmental level, the BRI narrative taps into a discourse familiar to the ears of Western development aid agencies. Xi announced the construction of railways, energy pipelines, and highways westwards through Central Asia, as well as southwards through Pakistan, India, and Southeast Asia. Xi spoke of the need to 'improve road connectivity' and 'cross-border transportation infrastructure' that would also be linked to 'unimpeded trade' (Xi 2013). Long-distance freight trains link Suzhou to Warsaw, Chongqing to Hamburg, Lianyungang and Chongqing to Duisburg, Yiwu to Madrid and London, and Wuhan to Lyon. The 'Iron Silk Road' has become the metaphor to denote such new railway networks crisscross-ing the Eurasian landmass (Duarte 2018: 13). In a next step, new trade opportu-

³ 'Full text of President Xi's speech at opening of Belt and Road forum', Xinhuanet, 14 May 2017, retrieved 9 August 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-05/14/c_136282982.htm.

⁴ Author's interview with Wang Xinsong, Bejing Normal University, Beijing, 20 June 2018.

nities would then lead to an increased use of the renminbi, China's currency, for transactions throughout the region in what Xi called 'monetary circulation' (Xi 2013).

Yet, for all the publicity surrounding the cross-border 'connectivity', it should be noted that none of the ideas behind this initiative are entirely new. Tim Summers (2016) has convincingly analysed how the new Silk Road narrative effectively manages to rebrand previous policy ideas that already date back to the 1980s - like China's 'opening to the west' (*xiangxi kaifang*) or the idea of turning China into a 'bridgehead' (*qiaotoubao*). The 1996 'new security concept' (*xin anquanguan*) had also aimed at achieving regional stability through closer economic development, as had Jiang Zemin's 1999 Great Western Development Campaign (*xibu da kaifa*) (Clarke 2017: 73).⁵ Such policies had partially been promoted already by Chinese provinces like Yunnan and Guangxi (Li 2014).

Giving Chinese trade and infrastructure objectives a new 'spatial fix' by introducing the new Silk Road vocabulary, the Chinese government aims at the 'extension, consolidation and political elevation of pre-existing policy ideas and practice at the sub-national level in China' (Summers 2016: 1634). It is a prime example of the 'mapping' of political territory: The Chinese government creates spatiality by way of a carefully chosen government discourse (Toal 1996) - and it is an exercise in 'framing' China's international identity (Entman 2007: 164). As an act of norm diffusion, the Chinese contribution to a new Eurasian Order has clear international implications. Marlene Laruelle (2018) notes that the BRI offers 'a metadiscourse on the Silk Road and a new manifestation of China's soft power, of its 'peaceful' and 'multilateral' rise (Laruelle 2018: x). Kohlenberg and Godehardt (2018) have therefore written on a new proactive 'connectivity power' that China's foreign policy discourse has embraced. The Chinese government is actively accompanying its financial investments abroad with systematic efforts to occupy new discursive spaces. China's discursive power (huayuquan), they find, seeks to provide an ideational framework for China's connectivity initiatives.

Changing the course of world history always starts with powerful ideas. Trade relations will follow, and China has understood how the connectivity vocabulary can become its distinctive contribution to shape globalisation on Chinese terms. China coins new discourses that might compete with and eventually replace the talking points, ideas, and norms about 'globalisation' of Western governments. It is noteworthy that China complements its language on financial investments that taps into a Western infrastructure development discourse and the well-known Chinese emphasis on 'win-win' cooperation with new concepts such as a 'commu-

⁵ And even the NSC has been called a 'warmed-over and repackaged version of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence', first articulated at the Bandung Conference in 1955 (Shambaugh 2013: 97).

nity of human destiny' (*renlei mingyun gongtongti linian*).⁶ The term itself appears paradoxical in a Chinese context, as Chinese policy-makers have tended to categorise their engagement with external powers according to the relative importance of foreign governments: Major powers are attributed more importance than states in China's periphery and 'developing states' (Eisenman & Heginbotham 2018: 7; Reeves 2016). This might also explain a reluctance to openly challenge Russia, the other dominant 'power pole' in Eurasia, to which the following section turns its attention.

Russia's Public Diplomacy on Eurasian Integration

Economically, the Eurasian Economic Union has become the landmark project of the Putin administration to promote regional integration on Russian terms. The EAEU has been established as an international economic organisation that comprises a Eurasian Economic Commission, a Council, and a Court. A Customs Union between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan had already been launched in 2010 within the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), establishing a uniform customs tariff for all three members. A Common Economic Space (CES) came into force on 1 January 2012, further unifying tax, monetary, and customs policies. The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) then brought all three predecessors (EurAsEC, CU, CES) together under one umbrella and inherited their legal and contractual edifice. Its founding treaty was signed in May 2014 by Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia, and came into force on 1 January 2015. Armenia and Kyrgyzstan acceded in January and August 2015, respectively. The EAEU represents a combined population of 183 million, a combined GDP of US\$ 2.2 trillion, and a goods turnover of US\$ 900 billion.⁷

Russia is by far the strongest member economically. Whilst being a *de jure* multinational economic union, the EAEU's external agenda and economic development is largely dominated by Russia (Dodonov 2017: 115). Due to the weight of the member states' economies, the staff quota for Russian citizens within the organisation is the highest, as is Russia's financial contribution (Kassenova 2012: 25). This gives Russia much more leverage to shape the EAEU's agenda. Observers have therefore noted the increased role of political factors in the decision-making process of the EAEU at the expense of member states' sovereignty (Dodonov 2017: 119), as well as an uneven economic potential and poor infrastructural preconditions (Inosemtzev 2016). The acceleration of regional integration on Russia's initiative, in addition, is often read in the context of the EU's

⁶ At the Boao Forum in April 2018, China made reference to 'a community with a shared future for mankind'. 'Transcript: President Xi Addresses The 2018 Boao Forum For Asia In Hainan', retrieved 21 September 2018, <https://www.uscnpm.org/blog/2018/04/11/transcript-president-xi-addresses-2018-boao-forum-asia-hainan/>.

⁷ See EAEU website: <http://www.eaeunion.org/?lang=en#info>.

Eastern Partnership programme, designed to enhance the EU's relations with Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. Robert Legvold calls the EAEU 'Russia's bid [...] to keep up in a world of increasingly powerful regional economic blocs' (Legvold 2016: 113), and Roy Allison likewise writes that Russia understands regionalisation as 'protective integration' that is interested in retaining Russian supremacy in its post-Soviet space (Allison 2008: 190; cf. also Kaczmarski 2017: 1370). Mikhail Molchanov, however, contests such readings of the EAEU as a 'sneaky empire-building ploy' (Molchanov 2018: 411) and argues that the EAEU is best described as 'steering a third way between import substitution strategies and non-discriminatory trade liberalization' (Molchanov 2018: 412).

On a policy level, the talk in some circles in the West of a creeping 're-Sovietization' of the post-Soviet space (pronounced most prominently by then-US State Secretary Hillary Clinton in response to Russia's vision of a Eurasian Union)⁸ has conflated economic integration initiatives with Russia's public diplomacy on 'Eurasianism'. The latter is a complex phenomenon, and different actors advance different theories, visions, and policy agendas. The discursive 'reactivation' of the Eurasian space following the disintegration of the Soviet Union was an iterative development, in which nationalists competed with the Kremlin for public attention (Laruelle 2015: 90; Tsygankov 2016; Clover 2017). The circumstantial instrumentality of Eurasian thought as a legitimizing foreign policy tool complicates the perception of a neo-imperial re-constitution of the 'post-Soviet' space under the cover of the Eurasian Economic Union or transnational compatriot policies (Pieper 2018).

Russia's official positions on Eurasianism are reflected in its updated Foreign Policy Concept of 30 November 2016, which stresses Russia's aim to 'create a common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean on the basis of the harmonization of the processes of European and Eurasian integration'.⁹ In 2016, President Putin linked the EAEU to the vision of 'Greater Eurasia' (*Bolshaya Evrazia*) and proposed that the Eurasian Economic Union should become its center – tellingly, however, without prior consultation of the other EAEU members. As Dmitri Trenin, director of the Carnegie Moscow Center, has analysed succinctly, the development of the 'Greater Eurasia' vision has predated the Ukraine crisis from late 2013 onwards, but has been accelerated by the quickly downward-spiraling Russian-Western relations. 'In lieu of a

⁸ "Clinton Calls Eurasian Integration An Effort to 'Re-Sovietize'", Radio Free Europe, 7 December 2012, retrieved 24 January 2018, https://www.rferl.org/a/clinton-calls-eurasian-integration-effort-to-resovietize/24791921.html>.

⁹ 'Kontspetsiya vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii' (2016 Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, re-trieved 24 November 2017, <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/security/international/document25/>.

Greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok, a Greater Asia from Shanghai to St. Petersburg is in the making', Trenin (2015: 11) writes, and concludes: 'This does not presage a new Sino-Russian bloc, but the epoch of post-communist Russia's integration with the West is over' (1). Glenn Diesen (2017) concurs and writes that 'Russia's geoeconomic strategy for a "Greater Eurasia" aims to utilise economic connectivity to remove Russia from the periphery of Europe and Asia, and reposition it at the heart of an integrated Eurasia' (1).

Russia's multiple overlapping identities are a natural consequence of its vast geography as well. While the majority of its territorial landmass is in Asia, only 20 percent of its population lives east of the Ural Mountains, yet its main cultural and political reference points (even if to challenge norms of global governance) lie in the West (Neumann 2017). Asia remains Russia's 'Other', an observation which remained unaffected by the official discourse on the strategic partnership with China in the first decade of the 2000s (Tsygankov 2009). It is this conundrum that Victor Larin has called Russia's 'East-West dilemma' (Larin 2006), and which explains why most observers have been skeptical about the sustainability of Russia's alleged 'turn to the East' in 2014. In the context of the Ukraine crisis, the sudden pace with which energy deals were sealed with Chinese companies was indicative of Russia's signaling to the US and the EU that Russia had other business partners and is strategically independent in the face of Western sanctions (Kaczmarski 2015; Makocki 2016: 7; Zhao 2016).

The public smokescreen, however, did not cover over the inadequacy of Russian diversification strategies (economically or otherwise). Its 'Greater Eurasia' vision, in this context, has become a strategic narrative for Russia to reconcile multiple identity narratives while positioning itself as the 'civilisational bridge' between Europe and an assertive China that is 'going out' (Trenin 2016). To understand the direction of causality, however, we need to understand the timing of how and when the 'Greater Eurasia' vision came into being. Russia's 'turn to the East' (Povorot na Vostok) was supposed to be a hedging strategy towards different Asian countries. In its China-centred implementation, however, it has sent erratic messages not only about the nature of Sino-Russian cooperation, but about Russia's engagement with multilateralism in Asia at large (Makocki & Popescu 2016; Korolev 2016: 1). Scholars and observers have analysed the broader strategic significance behind Russia's alleged pivot to Asia and have contextualised it both as a part of Russian efforts to balance deteriorating relations with the West, and as a new neighbourhood policy to respond to China's growing economic weight in the region (Rozman 2014a; Hill & Lo 2013; Keck 2014; Makocki & Popescu 2016: 25). The 'pivot' was therefore also intended to embrace other Asian countries, not just China. It is also important to note that Russia announced its 'pivot to Asia' at the APEC summit in 2012, which was hosted that year in Vladivostok. China's

Belt and Road rhetoric as analysed above only took off a year later.

Rather than seeing the 'pivot to Asia' as Russia's answer to China's rise, it would therefore appear more accurate to read the concept of a 'Greater Eurasia' as Russia's response to China's Belt and Road initiative because it dilutes China's economic domination in a pan-continental, and more vague, vision of a 'Greater Eurasian partnership' (Lukin 2018: 394). It serves to occupy a discursive space alongside China's public diplomacy on Eurasian Order. There were thus at least two complementary external driving factors that sped up Russia's 'turn' towards Eurasia in 2014, two years after its turn to 'Asia' had been announced in Vladivostok. One was the pressure from the West that propelled Russia to look for economic alternatives (if only as a signalling effect). The other was the economic activism of China itself, which required an appropriate response because it could no longer be ignored. Institutions like the Eurasian Economic Union may be instrumental in creating a Russian-led economic space as a reaction to the EU's gravitational pull in the post-Soviet space. The EAEU also serves as an alternative to and institutional buffer against Beijing's connectivity initiatives to shape Eurasia on Chinese terms, as the next section will argue. Economic and institutional aspects will be explored first, before a final section brings the analysis back to a conceptual argument about Chinese and Russian public diplomacies.

A Clashing or Joint Mapping of Eurasia?

While the Chinese government has (deliberately) not produced official maps illustrating the envisaged economic corridors of the Silk Road Economic Belt, analysts have had to refer to maps published by Chinese news agencies that were seen to resemble a semi-official representation. One was from May 2014, which seemed to exclude routes through Russian territory, and another from October 2014, which 'featured an elegant but implausible arm swinging from Istanbul back to Moscow and from there continuing to Europe', as Richard Griffiths (2017: 9) notes. The presentation of these branches with different transit countries could be read as a Chinese hedging strategy to plan for two possible scenarios: One in which tensions between Russia and the EU deteriorate to an extent where Chinese trading corridors would have to recur to Russia's Southern neighbors, and one where a thaw in relations allows for the long-term transit through Russian territory (Röhr 2018: 238; Duarte 2018: 13). China recognizes the transit potential of Russia (not least because of the existence of the Trans-Siberian railway), but is wary of the disruptive potential of Russian foreign policy moves (as demonstrated during the Ukraine crisis).

Russia, likewise, had reservations about China's new mega-project, as it signaled the beginning of a potentially dramatic reshuffling of Eurasian power dynamics. It was only at the April 2014 Boao Forum that China began to respond to Russian concerns, followed by soothing remarks during President Putin's visit to China one month later. A more concrete step came one year later, when in May 2015 on the occasion of Xi's visit to Moscow for the annual Russian Victory Day, Russia and China signed agreements taking measures towards greater cooperation between the EAEU and the SREB.¹⁰ Two economic framework declarations granted Russian companies access to Chinese money in the form of the Silk Road Construction Fund, and granted the Chinese access to Russia as an important transport corridor (Gabuev 2016). In an interview, a former Chinese diplomat told this author: 'To be frank, the docking of the two initiatives was due to political rather than economic considerations, [...] to avoid conflict: Russia does not object to the BRI anymore, China acknowledges Russia's role in Eurasia.'¹¹

While the EAEU is a regional integration project with supranational institutions, the SREB remains a relatively abstract Chinese vision for closer Eurasian cooperation, which, on the face of it, is open to any interested participants. Marcin Kaczmarski (2017) has juxtaposed these two diverging non-western visions of regionalism, and notes that 'the Chinese elite seems to understand regionalism in functional rather than spatially bound terms' (1366), while 'Russia's vision of regionalism is exclusionary, closed and defensive' (1372). This begs the question how compatible these two initiatives of 'mapping' Eurasian space can be. Prospects for greater convergence between the SREB and the EAEU were also on the agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's (SCO) summit in July of the same year. Talks to establish an SCO 'free trade zone' - something that then-Chinese prime minister Wen Jiabao had already proposed in 2003 - have been stalling for years. This was a prospect unattractive to Russia, as the abolition of trade barriers would naturally favor the most powerful economy in the region, i.e. China. There have also been long-standing disagreements over the role of the SCO in Asia. Founded as an anti-terror organisation initially, the SCO has become more of an economic dialogue platform, mostly at the initiative of China. However, neither has China been able to completely use the SCO as a vehicle for its Central Asia policies due to Russian efforts to dilute China's influence by welcoming the admission of new members (Gabuev 2017), nor has Russia been able to contain China's economic rise.

These different views on the organisation notwithstanding, the SCO summit in 2015 helped to institutionalise a level of interaction between the Russian-dominated EAEU and China's SREB. According to Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi, China's ministry of commerce and the Russian economic development minis-

¹⁰ Sovmestnoe zaiavlenie Rossiiskoi Federatsii i Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respubliki o sotrudnichestve po sopriazheniiu stroitel'stva Evraziiskogo ekonomicheskogo soiuza i Ekonomicheskogo poiasa Shelkovogo puti, Kremlin, 8 May 2015, retrieved 10 August 2018, <http://kremlin.ru/supplement/4971>.

¹¹ Author's interview with former First Secretary of the Chinese embassy to Russia, China Institute of International Studies, Beijing, 21 June 2018.

try are in the process of examining ways to create a Eurasian trade partnership.¹² This development led some Russian commentators like Sergei Karaganov to even proclaim a 'macro-bloc' in 'Greater Eurasia' between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Iran, with China 'likely to act as a leader, but not as a hegemon' (Karaganov 2015). Chinese analysts like Ruan Zongze, vice president of the China Institute of International Studies, similarly argue that 'Greater Eurasia' arises from efforts to link the EAEU and the SREB.¹³

A group of Chinese experts led by Li Xin has provided a 'road map' for such a goal that includes the unification of infrastructure, the coordination of trade flows, and the creation of an FTA between China and the EAEU as an interim step towards the creation of an eventual Continental Economic Partnership.¹⁴ Russia, however, is not interested in the prospect of an FTA between the EAEU and China. Its vision of a 'Greater Eurasian partnership' might fit with the end goal of a Continental Economic Partnership, but the means of getting there should be different, in Russia's view. The issue was discussed during a meeting between Russian prime minister Dmitry Medvedev and his Chinese counterpart Li Keqiang in St. Petersburg in November 2016, where Russia proposed a broad Eurasian partnership which could embrace EAEU states as well as India, China, Pakistan, and other potentially interested countries (Lukin 2018: 166). As with the enlargement of the SCO, the Russian extension of an invitation to other countries beyond the EAEU serves as a way to dilute China's influence and makes sure that the discussion does not really progress.

Eurasian Political Space in the Context of Global Paradigm Changes

With its narrative of a 'Greater Eurasia', Russia's economic orientation towards Europe becomes discursively linked to a supposed multi-vector policy that includes increased cooperation with China besides a range of other actors and organisations. For Russia, it has also become a discourse to frame its reaction to China's economic prowess. The Chinese government takes up the theme of cooperation in a greater Eurasian concert but prioritises bilateral negotiations with the governments along the Silk Road Economic Belt.

¹² "Meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi," 25 May 2017, retrieved 10 May 2018, <http:// en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/54576>.

¹³ "Xi Jinping yu Eluosi zongtong Pujing juxing huitan dazao Daouya huobanguanxi" [Xi Jinping conducted talks with the Russian President Putin on establishing relations of Greater Eurasian partnership], Ifeng, June 27, 2016, retrieved 2 August 2018, <http://news.ifeng.com/a/20160627/49247845_0. shtml>. Other Chinese Russia scholars like Xing Guangcheng, director of the Research Centre for Chinese Borderland History at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, are unsure about Russia's definition of 'Greater Eurasia' and find the inclusion of such a diverse set of institutional and geographical sub-categories confusing. Author's interview, Beijing, 15 June 2018.

¹⁴ Li Xin, Liu Zongyi, Qian Zongqi and Wang Yuzhu. 2016. Sichouzhilu jingjidai duijie Ouya jingji lianmeng gongjian Ouya gongtong jingji kongjian (The SREB docking to the EAEU: co-creating a common Eurasian Economic Area), Shanghai Institute for International Studies (SIIS), March 2016.

To concretise areas of cooperation between the EAEU and the SREB, a BRI-EAEU working group exists that brings together Russian and Chinese officials (where Russia speaks on behalf of the Union) before policy discussions are taken to an enlarged format that comprises all five EAEU members. The workings on the coordination between the EAEU and the SREB in these working groups serve to keep the spirit of a Sino-Russian condominium alive. Yet, it also serves to bolster the impression on the part of the other EAEU members that Russian tends to politicise the organisation.¹⁵ A '5+1' format then adds the Chinese counterparts, 'but always on the basis of the initial Russian-Chinese discussions', as Russia's ambassador for the Asia-Pacific explained this author in an interview.¹⁶ The Russian focus on multilateralism becomes a policy to retain an institutional leverage over Chinese investments which would otherwise be considered Chinese outward direct investments as part of China's external trade policy with partner countries on a bilateral level (putting Russia at a disadvantage economically and tying its hands politically). During remarks at the Belt and Road international forum in Beijing in May 2017, President Putin thus emphasised the 'multilateral cooperation' not only between the countries of the EAEU and China, but between the EAEU, the SCO, as well as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in pursuit of a 'greater Eurasian partnership'. This collective Eurasian effort, he noted with an implicit reference to the idea of a common space from Vancouver to Vladivostok proposed during the Medvedev presidency, would 'enable us to create a common economic space from the Atlantic to the Pacific'.¹⁷

For Russia, strengthening Russia's role as a first among regional equals has a positive correlation with its international standing. It is this approach that helps explain Russian behavior in multinational organisations such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the EAEU (Chatterje-Doody 2015). Rather than multilateralising Russian state actions and acting as a constraint on its foreign policy, such organisations are seen as instrumental in consolidating Russian influence. Bobo Lo (2015) writes in this context of Russia's preference for 'managed forms of multilateralism' (159) that serve to bolster its regional influence and international standing, while the Kremlin has shown little interest in genuine multilateral engagement (in APEC, ASEAN, EAS, or other Asian bodies in which it could play a more proactive role).

For China, the necessity to work on its vision of closer Eurasian integration stems from politico-economic reasons explored above and their link to Xi's 'China Dream' (*Zhongguo meng*) which seeks to put China's 'century of national humili-

¹⁵ Author's interview with Kazakh official, London, 28 February 2018.

¹⁶ Author's interview with Russia's plenipotentiary ambassador for the Asia-Pacific, Moscow, 31 August 2017.

¹⁷ Speech by President Putin at the Belt and Road international forum 2017, 14 May, retrieved 25 September 2018, http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/54491.

ation' behind and restore its place as a world power. This is the essence of Xi's reference to 'the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation', for which he has set a target date of 2049 – the centenary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. It was not without irony that Chinese President Xi presented himself as the champion of a globalised international economy at the 2017 Davos Economic Forum at a time when the election of Donald Trump had cast doubts over the continuing US commitment to international economic interdependencies (Elliott & Wearden 2017). A year later, President Xi spoke of 'unhindered trade' and the need to combat economic protectionism at the SCO summit in the Eastern Chinese port city of Qingdao, while US President Trump almost simultaneously withdrew his support for the G7 communiqué after he had left the summit in Canada early to meet North Korea's Kim-Jong Un in Singapore. China's Belt and Road initiative is seen as a Chinese claim to become a 'rule-shaper in the global arena' (Yu 2017: 357), to assume a position to co-formulate the rules of the game instead of having to simply accept them.

Ultimately, the process of a Sino-Russian joint mapping of Eurasia may be facilitated by a convergence of positions on the global level. At the UN level, their partnership often translates into a joint positioning in the Security Council. The nature of the Sino-Russian relationship has been the subject of much scholarly reflection, and continues to inspire analyses especially in light of Russia's closer alignment with China post-2014. Gilbert Rozman writes of 'parallel identities' that tie Chinese and Russian interests in global affairs closer together (Rozman 2014b), Elisabeth Wishnick argues that a joint perception of external pressure from the West draws China and Russia closer together on a normative level (Wishnick 2016), and Alexander Lukin (2018) holds that a shared dissatisfaction with the current World Order explains a convergence of international interests between Russia and China.

China was uncomfortable with Russia's annexation of Crimea (and abstained on a vote in the UN condemning Russia), but agreed with Russian views of the underlying root causes of the crisis engulfing not only Ukraine, but also Russian-Western relations at large. A joint perception of 'humiliation' at the hands of Western powers is what unites Russian and Chinese strategic narratives on a global plane. The Chinese ardently remember the 'century of humiliation' when territorial concessions granted to Western governments (and Japan) during the 19th century ceded Chinese sovereignty, Russia remembers the Western selfcongratulatory praise about the alleged 'end of history' after the Cold War, which translated into a disregard for Russian ideas about security governance. Russia and China share the assessment of the necessity of promoting 'multi-polarity' in hitherto Western-dominated international organisations. Their positioning in the Libyan and Syrian crises and on other issue areas has driven home that message. In questions of Eurasian integration, however, the analysis above has shown how an increased Chinese economic and institutional presence in this part of the world has not been wholeheartedly welcomed by Moscow.

Conclusion

With its Belt and Road initiative (BRI), China employs a vocabulary to embed its external economic policies in a benevolent narrative of reviving the ancient Silk Roads to re-connect Eurasian trade flows. It is also a counter-narrative to alarmist accounts of the dangers of China's 'rise' and its supposedly revisionist agenda on a global level. China's Silk Road Economic Belt has also been interpreted as China's response to Russia's economic initiatives in Central Asia in the form of the Eurasian Economic Union (Peyrouse 2017: 97). It is an attempt, in this reading, to reclaim a political and economic space that had been filled by other powers, including Russia, at the expense of Chinese interests. Russia entertains a vision of 'Greater Eurasia' as a reflection of gradually deteriorating Russian-Western relations, but also as an effort to reclaim the grand narrative over questions of Order in Eurasia in the context of China's BRI diplomacy.

Russia's response to China's BRI was therefore expected with much suspense, as it was seen as a parameter not only for the future of Sino-Russian economic cooperation, but also for Russian notions of co-leadership in the re-definition of regional order. Russia's grudging embrace of China's connectivity initiatives is indicative of its interpretation of what the BRI is: A Chinese strategy to bind Eurasia closer to China. Beneath the 'win-win' rhetoric, Chinese financing practices can serve to tie other Asian nations closer to China's national economy in a way that can make them politically subservient to Beijing. In this process, Russia risks being sidelined as an actor with veto power over integration dynamics in the 'post-Soviet space', despite Russia's predominant role in the security sector.

Russia's response has therefore been to multilateralise, where possible, China's engagement with Central Asia, by stressing Russia's own discourse of a 'Greater Eurasian partnership'. The latter dilutes China's influence into a broader, pancontinental vision of a dialogue between multinational organisations and platforms. Russia's embrace of China after 2014, in addition, has been accelerated by the twin push factors of economic pressure and political isolation on the part of Western governments in the wake of the Ukraine crisis. Despite the economic competition between the operating modes of the EAEU and the SREB, a convergence of interests between Russia and China to 'de-Westernise' international governance institutions might temper the effects of regional rivalry. Russia and China's grand inter-regional narratives ('Greater Eurasia' and BRI, respectively) indicate a principled, albeit still restrained willingness to cooperate in the collaborative mapping of Eurasia's political space. An important subject for future research is whether China's stance on security governance is undergoing changes to accompany its economic influence. Foreign observers have noted that Chinese private security companies are emerging out of a realisation that growing Chinese outbound investments in areas of insecurity might require precautions (Arduino 2018). In December 2015, China even adopted an anti-terrorism law that allows the People's Liberation Army to operate abroad (Duarte 2018: 15). Were China to become more active here, the much-repeated 'division of labor' in Central Asia between Russia and China has an in-built expiration date. Russia, in this scenario, could be strategically displaced by an assertive China and relegated to the periphery of regional decision-making.

In the mid-term, however, the Chinese-Russian cooperation in Eurasia might become an illustration of a compartmentalised cooperation, where tensions over tariffs, customs, and labor dynamics need not rule out arrangements where security governance in Central Asia is recognised to be a Russian prerogative while China is acknowledged as the region's banker – pending leadership changes in Central Asia. The continuing utility of Russia would then lie in regional security governance and the convergence of certain interests in global affairs. Russia is by far the most vocal critic of Western normative dominance in international affairs, and a division of labor is possible whereby China becomes the economic powerhouse of Eurasia while Russia continues to be responsible for international 'megaphone diplomacy' (Makocki & Popescu 2016: 11). In any event, the days of China's stated non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states and policies of strategic restraint are gone.

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Book Review

Status and the Challenge of Rising Powers by Steven Ward

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Throughout history, rising powers have contested their role and place within the world order and sought to recreate that structure. Germany under both Wilhelm II and later Adolf Hitler, and Imperial Japan are prime examples of nations that shook the earth with their ambitions. One century after the conclusion of the Great War and several decades after the end of the Second World War, we still struggle to understand these geopolitical earthquakes (p. 3). More pressing still, new rising powers such as China are once again challenging the very foundations of our world, leading many to make eerie predictions of the future. Yet, what do we really know about rising powers and how can we use this knowledge to understand the world when it is shaking at its core? Much of the confusion stems from the uncertainty that accompanies the rise of great powers. This timely book by Steven Ward offers important contributions to our understanding of rising powers, their (dis)satisfaction with the world and the evolving policies such states pursue.

Steven Ward is Assistant Professor of Government and Associate Director of the Judith Reppy Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. The present title aims to enrich our understanding by broadening the concept of revisionism and by exploring the role of status ambitions of rising powers. Indeed, it is important to understand the level of dissatisfaction that such powers hold towards the historical world orders in which they find themselves. Yet, as is the case with other IR concepts, studies on revisionism suffer from its loosely defined nature. Indeed, mired by ambiguity and fluid time horizons, the revisionist tendencies of rising powers often appear as a conceptual enigma. As a solution, Ward makes a clear distinction between 'distributive' revisionism ("demands for limited changes in the status quo [...] while signalling support for status quo rules, norms, and institutions," p. 33) and 'normative' revisionism ("the

desire to protest, delegitimate, or overthrow the rules, norms, and institutions" of that status quo, p. 2). A combination of the two then forms 'radical' revisionism, which posits a revolutionary challenge to the status quo (p. 22).

This desire for a higher status within the world's social hierarchy and the consequences of the immobility when these demands are not met, is the central focus of this work. Status is defined as an intangible and external commodity for rising powers and as such, it is different from the pursuit of security and wealth, which can be produced unilaterally. Most importantly, status is based on the logic of recognition by other states. It is interesting to note the pursuit of high status markers, such as advanced technologies or victory in war, in order to receive that recognition (p. 3). Where more traditional taxonomies of status-seeking include mobility, creativity and competition, Ward argues that such a classification is incomplete. When the existing world order itself is perceived as an obstacle to the ambitions of a rising power, such a state will seek to remake that very order either through hegemonic war or a gradual undermining of its foundations. As Ward demonstrates, thwarted or obstructed ambitions (p. 3) unleash psychological and political forces within the rising power that make it possible for hard-line rather than moderate policies to be pushed forward. From this perspective, status denial is the casus belli.

Interestingly, Ward observes rising powers as states "in which growing material capabilities produce rising status ambitions and expectations, but, simultaneously, incentives for caution in foreign policy" (pp. 65-66). Consequently, a policy combination that leads to a shift towards radical revisionism is described as both puzzling and dangerous (p. 11). Indeed, Ward argues, concerns for higher status run counter to incentives for preserving the status quo and its stability. However, a state's perception of unjust treatment by the international community combined with domestic legitimation politics give preference to more aggressive policy shifts. As such, the desire for a higher status is disconnected from those "rational calculations of material self-interest" (p. 3) concerning the state's security and wealth. As a result, studying the consequences of status immobility provides interesting insights into the logic of restraint, but also into the reason why rising powers may risk the cost of war. While the present title zooms in on this radical revisionism, Ward offers an equally interesting framework of ideal-type policy combinations (Table 1.1, p. 18). These policies stretch along a continuum between the status quo and revisionism, by acceptance or rejection of the existing order (p. 11).

The author points to several methodological pitfalls that are expected when testing his theoretical framework. Indeed, because of its very nature, the concept of 'status' is difficult to quantify. Furthermore, there is not always a direct link between 'status immobility' and a shift in foreign policy of rising powers. These limitations are combined with the dynamics of domestic politics, where political elites of both moderate and hardliner camps vie for power. Instead, Ward demonstrates that one ought to study the discourse within a rising power's political leadership during a certain period of time to discern the causality between concerns about status immobility and a shift towards rejectionist policies. Here, the author employs insights from social psychology and other related fields, while combining these with the domestic politics of legitimation. Instead of solely treating states as individuals (pp. 6-7), Ward brings into play these dynamics within a rising power. Mapping out several pathways to policy change (Figure 2.1; p. 34), the author shows how a "concrete shift away from moderate, distribute revisionist policies toward radical revisionist policies" can take place (p. 67).

At the same time, Ward draws attention to the fact that these different pathways do in fact rest upon other variables such as the government's "exogenous political vulnerability," that is the pressure felt by the political leadership from other domestic actors or interest groups (pp. 58-61). This emphasis on the international dimension of domestic politics is one of this work's greatest strengths. Ultimately, these internal struggles are reflected on the level of global governance. Here, the norms and rules together with institutions compose both the "normative and distributive elements of order" that is the status quo (pp. 14-17). Institutions such as the League of Nations and later the United Nations are created to limit "conflicting interests and ambitions" that threaten certain members within or the system itself (p. 24). However, these institutions themselves can easily become the main battleground of "delegitimation, protest, or overthrow" (p. 24). From this perspective, the present title is extremely valuable as it shows how to discern the escalation from distributive dissatisfaction to normative dissatisfaction and possibly radical revisionism.

To test his theoretical framework, Ward has selected several cases from modern history, based on their character as "paradigmatic examples of rising power revisionism" and because of their prominence in studies of international relations (p. 66). Indeed, Wilhelmine Germany (pp. 70-99), Imperial Japan (pp. 100-128) and Interbellum Germany (pp. 130-158) all provide rich testing material. At the same time, the book also includes the Anglo-American power shift (pp. 159-181) as a negative example and concludes with the contemporary rise of China (pp. 181-203). Here, Ward questions whether and how new rising powers showcase similar tendencies to those that went before it. As such, the present title offers fresh perspectives on both the First and Second World War, but also the brewing power shift towards Asia. Ward's arguments are compelling, putting status concerns at the centre of interstate conflicts.

Other accounts of these armed conflicts do not seem to give as much importance to status ambitions, instead arguing that rational calculations for material growth guide the behaviour of great powers. Interestingly, Ward argues that the "logic of identity management" relates to status as much as grand strategy relates to the pursuit of material security and welfare (p. 49). However, it is status immobility that posits the gravest, yet often ignored danger to the world. Here, Ward argues that status denial risks drastically changing a rising power's perception of the existing order (pp. 183-187). It is but a small surprise that many comparisons can be drawn between Germany on the eve of the First World War and China today, since both countries are pursuing a "place in the sun" worthy of their name (p. 79). This volume offers a novel look at the debate surrounding accommodation or containment of a rising power, thereby offering insights into the policies pursued on the eve of major conflict and thereafter. To those interested in the events that shaped the 20th century, the present title has much to offer. China watchers and those people concerned with the future relationship between America and China will as well find much of interest in this work.

Steven Ward has written an excellent guide to discern at what point reasonable requests for reform of the world order shift towards an outward rejection of that system. Here, Ward places much emphasis on how to understand the consequences of such a changing dynamic. To do so, Ward offers a framework of revisionism which is based on a spectrum of (dis)satisfaction that ranges between acceptance and rejection. By differentiating between distributive and normative revisionism, the present volume presents a tool to make better judgements about the different phases of escalation between great powers, and what effect a rising power's dissatisfaction has on a given world order. In a world fraught by the gloomy predictions of Thucydides' Trap, the present title is a most welcome contribution. However, the emphasis this work puts on status immobility risks obscuring developments within a rising power that are not directly linked to constraints imposed by the world order. In the context of China's rise, questioning whether it is the rising power itself that has changed is an important element for further study.

Bio

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Book Review

Technologies of International Relations: Continuity and Change

Edited by Carolin Kaltofen, Madeline Carr, and Michele Acuto, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, xi+136 pp., ISBN 978-3-319-97417-0; ISBN 978-3-319-97418-7 (eBook)

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How does technology affect International Relations (IR) both in terms of practice and discipline? Do core IR concepts, such as security, power, sovereignty, and global order need to be reconsidered in the face of fast technological advancements? Are traditional IR theories adequate to problematize and theorize technology in the digital age? Did, and if yes to what extent, authors of IR classics incorporate and elaborate technology in their empirical and theoretical work? Is there anything to be learned from the early IR scholarship, or technology's unique transformative power in the new millennium has made earlier analyses obsolete? *Technologies of International Relations: Continuity and Change*, edited by Carolin Kaltofen, Madeline Carr, and Michele Acuto, focuses on these and alike questions to examine IR-technology nexus –one of the timely and hottest research agenda in contemporary IR.

Technologies of International Relations: Continuity and Change does not offer an analytical examination of technology and its impact on IR. Rather, each chapter except the introduction is a transcription of an interview conducted with a distinguished IR scholar, all of who represent the earlier generation and have shaped the field with path-breaking contributions. Hence, each chapter presents a semi-formal scholarly discussion in an interview format made with Ole Wæver, Susan Sell, Saskia Sassen, Mark B. Salter, J. P. Singh, Christian Reus-Smit, Tony Porter, Joseph Nye, Keith Krause, Yale H. Ferguson, Barry Buzan, and Toni Erskine, respectively. Along with other issues, the authors briefly explain (chapters are about eight to fourteen pages) how they define and make sense of technology, incorporated or considered technology in their earlier works, technology's impact on various IR concepts and concerns, and main challenges and opportunities that technology pose to IR and IR scholarship. In the introductory chapter, the editors provide a basis for the interviews by elaborating "the growing centrality of technological questions to the investigation of international relations and world politics, the presence of a tradition of engagement with technology throughout the 'classics' of IR, and the need for a renewed discussion on this theme at the core of the discipline" (1). The editors make a case against the accounts which readily disregard earlier IR due to negligence of technology, as IR classics did examine technology and its impact although sometimes an explicit attention lacked. Thus, the editors warn, "the general apprehension that studying technology in IR could result in 'straw manning' and dismissing traditional IR undoubtedly warrants closer attention" (9). At the same time, the editors highlight the need to go beyond traditional IR by speaking more with other disciplines, such as Science and Technology Studies, Media and Communication Studies, and Criminology. They note the intergenerational consensus on the need to re-examine traditional IR -both the early/mid-career scholars who conducted the interviews and the earlier generation who are interviewed agree on this need. In fact, the pairing of interviews (new generation with the previous one) is done on purpose to more effectively comprehend technology's role in IR "through the thoughtful mediation between the heights of past achievements and the current generation of creative and critical thought" (10).

One can find many interesting discussions and insights in the book while distinguished IR scholars elaborate their careers, early works, thought processes, and predictions in relation to technology and IR. Each interview touches upon these points with a varying degree of emphasis and the discussions have different contexts depending on the authors' specializations. Thus, for anyone who is especially interested in Ole Wæver, Susan Sell, Saskia Sassen, Mark B. Salter, J. P. Singh, Christian Reus-Smit, Tony Porter, Joseph Nye, Keith Krause, Yale H. Ferguson, Barry Buzan, and Toni Erskine in regard to the mentioned issues, the book is quite appealing. Here, I briefly discuss the content of each chapter.

In Chapter 2, Ole Wæver discusses theorization of technology in IR and questions whether novel technologies necessitate new theories in the discipline. Among many issues, Wæver elaborates how autonomous character of contemporary technology is something new and transformative, and conveys his doubts on the ways that 'new materialism' examines technology as it tends to "[miss] the most important side of technology...the *politics of technology and technology as political acts*" (15). In the following chapter, Susan Sell elaborates intellectual property rights in relation to technology and development and notes how intellectual property rights have become more important in terms of shaping technological development. Sell also comments on technology's influence on core IR issues including security, power, and global governance. She describes technology as a "double-edged sword" since depending on its utilization it can be an asset or vulnerability –enhance or hinder security, power and global governance. Furthermore, Sell highlights how digital technology can strengthen social movements to create a "counter-hegemonic movement". In the worlds of Sell, "I guess I'm oldfashioned in that I believe in the old enlightenment perspective that knowledge is power, and the more that people can be informed about what's going on and how it affects them, it creates opportunities for political agency that with these technologies, just a few people can make a lot of important things happen" (31).

In Chapter 4, Saskia Sassen particularly highlights the importance of "more mundane and less popular technologies...[as] technology comes in many different shapes...and [one] shouldn't be seduced by the cult of the new and remember the truly revolutionary emerges in many shapes and places" (37). Sassen points at the fact that many scholars are more interested in advanced sectors and more exciting domains like the Web as they discuss technology, but they pay far less attention to the mundane-yet-revolutionary. Sassen exemplifies Women of the Polisario, Women who had utilized strove technologies and captured solar power to meet basic needs in the Western Sahara Desert. Not only did strove travel the world as an innovation and a symbol of the Western Sahara struggle, it also represented "the power of finding ingenious solutions to pressing and very localized needs" (37). The key message is, what is commonly seen and overlooked as "mundane" is also significant and needs to be studied. In the subsequent chapter, Mark B. Salter discusses many issues from technology in his own work to the meaning and importance of technology in IR. Salter notes that even though current technologies may be revolutionary and novel, it is not the first time that societies react to revolutionary changes. One can learn a lot by studying how humanity dealt with such changes in the past to be able to better understand how it is reacting now.

In Chapter 6, J. P. Singh investigates IR-technology nexus as he makes references to his own studies on telecommunications technologies and touches upon important discussions including technology's autonomous character and neutrality. Singh especially provides detailed information on the historical development of technology studies in IR by giving striking examples. For instance, he notes, "I got a position at the University of Mississippi, which was funded by BellSouth, and the department chair was offering me the position even without really interviewing me because there were so few people doing technology that they said — 'BellSouth, we found somebody who can do technology and IR''' (58). In the next chapter, Christian Reus-Smit elaborates the place of technology in his own work, notes technology's socially embedded character, and stresses the need to study technology in relation to social and cultural relations. Reus-Smith highlights the importance of questioning technologies' origins, that is reasons behind their emergence, before passing to the debate on their impact.

In Chapter 8, Tony Porter examines technology in relation to many IR and in-

ternational political economy (IPE) issues including international industries, accountability, public-private contrast, constructivist-rationalist dichotomy, governance, and Actor-Network Theory. Among other remarks, Porter points at the power that technology experts yield as they claim to speak on behalf of technology and the consequent accountability problems that arise in democracies. In the following chapter, Joseph Nye deliberates how he had elaborated technology in his work by making references to nuclear weapons and non-state actors' empowerment. In response to a question on IR's limits in engaging with technology, Nye gives an instructive answer: "Well the kinds of debates that we have about realism vs neo-liberalism vs constructivism—I don't think they help very much. No one of those has the answers and the question is how can you take the insights from all three of these broad theoretical approaches and use them to understand things" (95).

In Chapter 10, Keith Krause particularly focuses on technologies of violence. He also touches upon other important issues, such as measurability of knowledge and its implications, and technology's impact on academic careers and the underlying power relations. Regarding the latter, Krause refers to an article on economics profession to note, "co-authored papers by women [are] discounted systematically in tenure decisions, that is to say if there [is] a man and a woman co-authoring, the woman's contribution [is] devalued. And so, the disclaimer is: do not co-publish if you are a woman" (104). Here, Keith emphasizes that even though technology in the form of measurable metrics in citation counts and journal rankings enables a relatively transparent account, power relations are there. In the subsequent chapter, after briefly introducing postinternationalism, Yale H. Ferguson elaborates technology, change, and continuity from the perspective of postinternationalism. In connection with his discussion throughout the text, Ferguson points at five research areas: possible unintended consequences of new technologies, normative and practical examination of the past, present, and likely future technological advancements, negative impacts of technologies and their mitigation through regulatory frameworks (regulations are political and require discussions in their own right), historical development of certain inventions, and well-analysed impact of big data on present and likely future global trade.

In Chapter 12, Barry Buzan deliberates technology from various angles including its role in his work, definition, and impact on IR. Buzan stresses the fact that engagement with technology is unavoidable in IR as "[one] can hardly conceptualize anything in IRs without thinking about the background technological conditions" (117). Buzan also comments on the advantages of discussing IR and technology by making references to science-fiction series. Discussing IR in the context of series such as Star Trek and Battlestar Galactica is not only useful in teaching as elaborations resonate better with students, but also a welcoming opportunity to think outside the box. Regarding the latter, Buzan encourages IR scholars to think more seriously on what may lie in the future, such as artificial intelligence that is at least equally superior to humans or potential outcomes of a nuclear war. In the final chapter, Toni Erskine evaluates her studies in relation to technology and especially discusses new technologies' moral aspects by touching upon issues varying from companies' responsibilities in producing certain technologies that (may) have negative effects to the conditions under which a machine needs to be considered as a moral agent. Erskine provides many illuminating examples and emphasizes technology's importance in IR: "if we think that it is enough to have some scholars working in a separate 'technology and IR' sub-field, then we have a problem. Everybody who is working on international politics needs to be aware of technological developments and...[their] impact" (135).

In the words of the editors of *Technologies of International Relations: Continuity and Change*, the volume is "a promising field report, rich in evidence and detailed insights, curious quotes and inspirational thoughts" (10-11). Indeed, the book has all these qualities and is a must-read for scholars who are interested in technology's effects on IR both in terms of practice and discipline. The book would also be interesting and helpful for PhDs and early-career academicians as it not only touches upon and hints at future research avenues, but also offers crucial insights from distinguished IR scholars.

Bio

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Rising Powers Quarterly is a peer-reviewed non-profit free-access journal dedicated to the study of the growing role of rising powers in global governance. It aims to explore the political, economic and social processes through which the states regarded as "rising powers" in world politics interact with other states as well as international and transnational organizations. This journal also aims to fill the academic lacunae in the literature on rising powers and global governance related themes since there is a growing need for a journal specialized on rising powers in parallel to their increasing importance in world politics.

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