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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 Carnival 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 Narendra 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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