Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of International Relations

TRANSITION OF TRADITIONAL AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN THE AGE OF DIGITALIZATION

Behiye ŞİMŞEKÇİ

Master's Thesis

Ankara, 2024

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ACCEPTANCE AND APPROVAL

The jury finds that Behiye ŞİMŞEKÇİ has on the date of September 04, 2024 successfully passed the defense examination and approves her Master's Thesis titled "Transition of Traditional and Public Diplomacy in the Age of Digitalization".

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Behiye ŞİMŞEKÇİ

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ABSTRACT

ŞİMŞEKÇİ, Behiye. *Transition of Traditional and Public Diplomacy in the Age of Digitalization*, Master's Thesis, Ankara, 2024.

The landscape of international relations has continuously been transformed and influenced by abundant factors, paving the way for shifts in diplomatic practices. However, recently, the pace of change in conduct of diplomacy has notably accelerated with the rapid advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs). Therefore, a new term "digital diplomacy" has emerged in describing the complex and multilayered impact of digital technologies on the theory and practice of diplomacy.

This thesis aims to provide an insight into the role and effectiveness of digital diplomacy in the conduct of states' foreign policies. Furthermore, it seeks to provide a portrayal of the development of digital diplomacy in transition of modern day diplomacy, including public diplomacy. In doing so, it first explores a diverse array of definitions and relevant concepts accompanying digital diplomacy and sheds light on the goals and methods of digital diplomacy.

Considering that a sort of double change has been occurring in the field of traditional diplomacy since the beginning of this Millennium; one in the direction of increase in the volume of public diplomacy and second in the direction of digitalization of newly emerged diplomatic forms, the emphasis is put on the comparison of traditional diplomacy and digital diplomacy through the shifting roles of diplomacy practitioners from traditional to digital diplomat. Here, the thesis also explores the advantages and challenges of digital diplomacy, leading to evaluation of its efficiency.

Building upon the argument that "although digital diplomacy enhances diplomatic efforts in contemporary era, traditional diplomacy which heavily rests on centuries-old statecraft through human-to-human interactions is still valuable", the thesis concludes that diplomacy in the future will likely involve an integration of both traditional and digital approaches; not a total transformation of diplomacy but a smart utilization of new technology and tools to enhance traditional and public diplomacy methods.

Keywords

Digital Diplomacy, Public Diplomacy, Traditional Diplomacy, Soft Power

ÖZET

ŞİMŞEKÇİ, Behiye. *Dijitalleşme Çağında Geleneksel Diplomasinin ve Kamu Diplomasisinin Dönüşümü,* Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2024.

Uluslararası İlişkilerin bağlamı sürekli olarak dönüşmüş ve çok sayıda faktörden etkilenerek diplomatik uygulamalarda değişimlerin önünü açmıştır. Ancak son yıllarda, Bilgi ve İletişim Teknolojilerindeki (ICTs) hızlı ilerlemelerle birlikte diplomasinin yürütülmesindeki değişimin hızı belirgin bir şekilde artmıştır. Bunun sonucunda; dijital teknolojilerin, diplomasi teorisi ve pratiği üzerindeki karmaşık ve çok katmanlı etkisini tanımlarken yeni bir terim olan "dijital diplomasi" kavramı ortaya çıkmıştır.

Bu tez, dijital diplomasinin devletlerin dış politikalarının yürütülmesindeki rolü ve etkinliği üzerine fikir vermeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, kamu diplomasisi de dâhil olmak üzere, günümüz diplomasisine geçişte dijital diplomasinin gelişiminin bir tasvirini sunmayı hedeflemektedir. Tezde, bu yöndeki çalışmalar yürütülürken öncelikle dijital diplomasiye eşlik eden çeşitli tanımlar ve ilgili kavramlar araştırılmakta ve ardından dijital diplomasinin amaçlarına ve yöntemlerine ışık tutulmaktadır.

Yeni Bin Yılın başından bu yana geleneksel diplomasi alanında, ilki kamu diplomasisi hacminin artması, ikincisi ise yeni ortaya çıkan diplomatik formların dijitalleşmesi yönünde olmak üzere bir tür çifte değişim yaşandığı göz önünde bulundurularak, diplomasi uygulayıcılarının geleneksel diplomattan dijital diplomata değişen rolleri üzerinden geleneksel diplomasi ile dijital diplomasinin karşılaştırılmasına vurgu yapılmaktadır. Burada, tezin gayelerinden biri de dijital diplomasinin avantajlarını ve zorluklarını değerlendirerek etkinliğine değinmektir.

"Dijital diplomasinin modern çağda diplomatik çabalara sunmuş olduğu katkıya rağmen, ağırlıklı olarak insanlar arasındaki karşılıklı etkileşim aracılığıyla yüzyıllardır süregelen devlet yönetimini esas alan geleneksel diplomasinin hala önemli olduğu" savına dayanan bu tez, diplomasinin geleceğinde muhtemelen hem geleneksel hem de dijital yaklaşımların bir arada yer alacağı sonucuna varmaktadır; burada kastedilen diplomasinin tamamen dönüşmesi değil, hem geleneksel diplomasi hem de kamu diplomasisi yöntemlerini zenginleştirmek üzere yeni teknoloji ve araçların akıllıca kullanılmasıdır.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Dijital Diplomasi, Kamu Diplomasisi, Geleneksel Diplomasi, Yumuşak Güç.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CTR	Cyber and Tech Retreat
DD	Digital Diplomacy
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
ITU	The International Telecommunications Union
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
SMS	Short Message Service
SNS	Social Networking Sites
US	United States
UN	United Nations
VR	Virtual Reality

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy is fundamentally a political endeavor and forms a crucial element of power which is equipped with supporting resources, tools and skillful actors for implementation. Primarily, it is employed by states in order to achieve the goals of their foreign policies without resorting to force or physical coercion. In this respect, diplomacy involves effective communication among actors who aim at advancing their policy objectives through tacit or explicit adjustments.

The conception of diplomacy is under constant evolution along with changing approaches, methods, arguments and tools in the structure of international relations. In this regard, classical diplomacy has evolved into modern diplomacy and along with it new concepts have emerged in the realm of international relations, such as soft power, public diplomacy, globalization, etc. Advancing technologies, digital environments and enhanced communication techniques have further contributed to diplomacy's evolution.

Contemporarily, rapid developments in information and communications technologies (ICTs) have led to digitalization wordwide, which have resulted in unprecedented accessibility for both states, institutions and individuals. Currently, actors in international relations utilize the internet and digital platforms for broader engagement, deeper interactions, effective communication, opinion sharing and many more similar purposes. The Covid-19 pandemic has also given rise to the transition of diplomatic activities by states, international organizations, and foreign policy figures into the digital realm, leading to further prevalence of digital diplomacy. Therefore, this study aims to provide a portrayal of the development and role of digital diplomacy in transition of modern day diplomacy, probably leading to a hybrid form.

As a considerably new phenomenon, digital diplomacy offers a great potential for all actors in international relations domain. With the aims to make contributions to the efforts for grasping digital diplomacy as well as providing an insight into the role and effectiveness of digital diplomacy in the conduct of states' foreign

policies, this study tries to explore the literature on digital diplomacy and its impact on traditional and public diplomacy practices of states.

In view of the fact that digital diplomacy is quite a recent and still evolving concept, the literature in this field is yet to expand. There are ongoing discussions on digital diplomacy in conceptual aspects while it is also discussed among foreign policy actors on different platforms in practical aspects, i.e.implementaion on daily practices. In this landscape, discussions on digital diplomacy depict a diverse array of standpoints, such as concerning the scope of digital diplomacy as a comparatively young notion, the definitions of digital diplomacy with similar and intersecting meanings, practices of digital diplomacy by diverse actors on different platforms, etc.

Overall, it has been observed that the concept of digital diplomacy is quite complex and multilayered due to multitude of approaches in defining it. There is a diverse array of definitions for digital diplomacy. While some scholars tend to define it through the angle of social media usage by states in order to promote and maximize their interests, some others see digital diplomacy through the lenses of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and therefore focus on the impact of these technologies on the conduct of diplomacy.

Moreover, terms related to digital diplomacy are often used interchangeably, reflecting both common points and differences, which gives rise to a significant challenge in establishing a cohesive academic framework. This ambiguity is largely attributed to the fact that digital diplomacy is still evolving alongside advancements in information and communication technologies, as well as political, financial, and societal developments.

In awareness of such a fractured terminology and a slippery context for digital diplomacy, the melting pot of descriptions could be summarized basically as their acknowledgement that diplomacy domain is impacted by digital technologies to a considerable extent. Trends and advancements in digital technologies clearly suggest that states will increasingly rely on digital diplomacy in the years ahead.

No matter whether definitions are developed from standpoints focusing on different aspects such as methods, practitioners, topics for diplomatic activities, etc. digital developments are set to revolutionize our daily routines, work flows and processes in decades ahead. The final impact and accordingly the concepts accompanying digital diplomacy will be shaped by how they are put into practice.

Actors in international relations aspire to achieve national and international goals with the support of available tools in their foreign policy conducts. In essence, the goals of digital diplomacy are similar to those of traditional diplomacy. Digital diplomacy could be employed for various goals such as aiding public diplomacy efforts, supporting knowledge and information management, for consular affairs, communications, disaster response, etc. It also aims to promote and maintain a positive image, protect the interests of states as well as fulfill their foreign policy tasks.

While foreign policy practitioners strive to employ latest developments in communication and information technologies to advance their objectives in foreign policy arena, they have been utilizing various methods. Such methods appear mainly in the form of social media platforms, web sites, broadcasts and webcasts, electronic mails and short messages, messaging applications and virtual meetings. Although they appear to be effective mechanisms for addressing digital communities currently, both the quality and quantity of these mechanisms have a great potential to increase in the future.

On the other hand, states vary considerably in their capabilities, expertise, approaches, strategies, and willingness to adopt digital diplomacy. In awareness of the significance and growing potential of digitalization, some states with advanced capabilities, like Sweden and Denmark, are better positioned and swifter to integrate digital diplomacy and develop corresponding policies. As digital landscape grows, new forms of engagement with digital communities are adopted such as technology ambassadors as well as cyber and tech initiatives.

As mentioned above, diplomacy has undergone significant changes over time, adapting to evolving circumstances and needs. As both the volume and boundaries of the digital world is expanding, perceptions of the role of diplomacy has underwent transformation as well. Since the adoption of the “Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations” in 1961 and the “Vienna Convention on Consular Relations” in 1963, the role and nature of diplomats have transformed considerably. Despite fulfilling similar tasks with their counterparts formerly, today's diplomats are quite different from their predecessors, and it is anticipated that they will continue to adapt to new challenges and developments. While traditional diplomatic practices remain in place, they are now supplemented by modern methods, and current diplomats are equipped with digital tools to enhance their effectiveness in their crucial roles. Through the lenses of digital diplomacy, this thesis also seeks to compare the roles played by both traditional and modern diplomats while navigating public diplomacy to attain their aspirations in a landscape marked by changing hierarchy and actors.

With the global rise of digital diplomacy practices, it is clear that digitalization offers numerous benefits to policy-making actors in accomplishing their tasks. As technology continues to advance, the advantages of digital diplomacy are likely to grow. However, the progress in global internet technologies also brings challenges. Like the benefits, these challenges also have the potential to increase and evolve as technology develops.

It is essential to keep aware of the dual nature of digital technologies. The same tools used by malicious actors can also be employed by states and their allies for good purposes. While digital platforms could serve as a bridge for communities worldwide, they could also be used to eliminate the social and political fabric in a target country. Like in many fields, there are positive and negative aspects of digital diplomacy.

Digital diplomacy provides significant advantages such as speedy communication and deeper engagement, time and cost efficiency, increased transparency, accessibility, possibility to follow developments and their

repercussions almost instantly, etc. On the other hand, there are also disadvantages that are encountered in digital diplomacy practices: bareness is one of the greatest difficulties, as politicians do not have any shelter in this domain. Moreover, it is almost impossible to delete or modify something that was posted in error. At this point, especially the social media could become merciless for politicians. Another disadvantage is anonymity. While diplomats have to be easily accessible and visible, they may face harsh comments from anonymous profiles, fake accounts, etc. Misinformation/ disinformation, time pressure, potential for rapid brand damage, etc. are several other challenges.

In this context, artificial intelligence (AI) emerges as a brand new issue. If used effectively, it could facilitate the task of diplomats by supporting summaries, reports, drafts, etc., therefore leaving more room for deeper engagement in diplomatic activities in person, contributing to data driven decision making processes, etc. On the other hand, the swift development of AI comes with various concerns and considerable debate on ethical, accuracy, privacy, etc. aspects of this new technology, especially concerning the data analysis abilities and its application in various fields.

Above all, it is increasingly becoming necessary for actors to acquire digital competencies, equip themselves with the knowledge of how and where to use digital diplomacy tools for international endevaours.

The rapid transformation in the methods of traditional diplomacy conduct also gives rise to discussions about the relevance of traditional diplomacy. In other words, it is questioned whether traditional diplomacy still brings value or not. It is recognized that digital diplomacy has significantly advanced the long-standing practices of international relations by complementing established methods and enriching existing viewpoints. It has facilitated improved mutual information exchange and interaction. Recognizing its potential benefits and risks, digital diplomacy can be utilized alongside traditional diplomatic methods to achieve better outcomes.

In order to comprehend digital diplomacy, the following questions will be asked in this thesis:

- How has diplomacy evolved?
- How is digital diplomacy defined?
- What are the differences between traditional diplomats and digital diplomats?
- How are states adapting to digital diplomacy?
- What advantages does digital diplomacy offer to actors?
- What challenges does digital diplomacy bring for actors?
- Could artificial intelligence help actors in the conduct of foreign policies?
- Considering the rapidly developing technology and increasing digitalisation in our daily routines, is the domain of digital diplomacy is yet to expand?

In light of the questions above, a review of scholarly research will be conducted in order to provide a general framework for digital diplomacy. The search will be enhanced through electronic and printed resources including books, articles, journals, internet resources, etc. Following the literature review, varying descriptions of digital diplomacy as well as the concepts accompanying digital diplomacy will be explored. In this context, a general outlook on the objects and methods of digital diplomacy will be provided. Subsequently, the shifting roles of diplomacy practitioners through the prism of traditional and digital diplomacy conducts will be elaborated on. A portrayal of the interconnected and mutually complementary nature of both will be presented. Following that, several examples of digital diplomacy initiatives will be explored. At this juncture, advantages and challenges of using digital diplomacy will be tackled.

Finally, the findings obtained from research will be analyzed with the aim of describing the effect and role of digital diplomacy in the realm of international relations. The domain of digital diplomacy is still developing and has the potential to substantially impact traditional diplomatic practices.

This thesis argues that although digital diplomacy enhances diplomatic efforts in contemporary era, traditional diplomacy which heavily rests on centuries-old statecraft through human-to-human contacts is still valuable. Therefore, the future of diplomacy will likely involve an integration of both traditional and digital approaches. In other words, the increasing digitalization coupled with still ongoing traditional diplomatic practices appears to be leading towards a blend of both approaches. In this way, the conduct of diplomacy would benefit from an enhanced hybrid form, feeding on the synthesis of traditional and digital patterns of diplomacy that result from the interactions in between.

Except for the introduction and conclusion parts, this thesis consists of three chapters:

Chapter 1 aims to explain the evolution of diplomacy and the path leading up to digital diplomacy. Through this transition, it strives to elaborate on the interaction between soft power, public diplomacy and digital diplomacy while also putting an emphasis on the growing number of actors and changing agendas diplomatic endeavours.

Chapter 2 aims to explore the varying definitions of digital diplomacy among scholars. In doing so, this chapter also strives to tackle the diverse array of descriptions and relevant concepts accompanying digital diplomacy. Subsequently, it handles the goals and methods for digital diplomacy and aims to compare traditional diplomacy and digital diplomacy through the shifting roles of diplomacy practitioners. While providing insight into the changing patterns of diplomats from traditional to digital, it also strives to mirror the interconnectedness of traditional and digital diplomacy. This part of the study also explores examples for digital diplomacy initiatives of states, such as appointment of technology ambassadors, technology initiatives, etc.

Chapter 3 aims to explain advantages and challenges of digital diplomacy. The first section explores advantages including speed and time efficiency, cost efficiency, transparency, accessibility, proper archiving, direct engagement and possibility to monitor threats and tendencies. The second section aims to depict

challenges of digital diplomacy, such as lack of possibility to modify or delete posts, changing hierarchy and actors, bareness of politicians and bureaucrats on digital platforms, anonymity and fake accounts, misinformation/ disinformation, time pressure, potential for rapid brand damage, cyber crime and hacking. The third section of this chapter aims to explore implications of artificial intelligence for digital diplomacy.

Finally, the concluding chapter provides a general overview of various aspects of digital diplomacy and argues that the future of international relations is expected to integrate both traditional and digital diplomacy.

CHAPTER 1

THE EVOLUTION OF DIPLOMACY

1.1. THE PATH FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy is essentially a political activity and a key component of power, supported by a wealth of resources, tools, and skilled practitioners for its execution. Its main purpose is for states to pursue their foreign policy objectives without using force or physical pressure. In this sense, diplomacy encompasses the interaction between actors who seek to advance their policy goals through either subtle or direct negotiations and adjustments.

In today's world of international affairs, diplomacy is not only confined with the practices of official figures but it also involves the efforts of private parties that could be guided by officials or simply individual actors which operate through various channels beyond traditional missions. After all, diplomacy still has a paramount importance for today's global community of nations.

As a longstanding approach to international collaboration, diplomacy has frequently faced questions about the "magic and mystery" of its functioning, its successes, and failures (Sharp, 2009). One of the prevailing definitions among scholars of diplomacy is Bull's perspective on diplomacy as the conduct of interactions between other entities and states in global politics through official representatives and peaceful methods (Bull, 1997).

Citing Cohen (1998, p.1), Adesina (2017, p.2) notes that diplomacy is the "engine room" of international relations and states that it is the recognized approach through which states express their foreign policy goals and coordinate their endeavors to influence the decisions and actions of foreign governments and populations via dialogue, negotiations, and similar means, short of warfare and violence.

In a general sense, it is widely regarded that diplomacy includes patterns of polite persuasion in carrying out international relations. Singh (2015, p.182) states that in a broad sense, diplomacy is regarded as a “civilized polite alternative” to battles so that specific interests are achieved.

Studies exploring the emergence of diplomacy suggest that it goes back as far as two thousand years ago. In various ancient texts, such as those attributed to Kautilya, “adviser to the Indian King Chandragupta around 300 BC”, advisers and ministers are understood to recommend establishing diplomatic missions in neighboring countries, so that timely gathering of necessary information is achieved for defending the monarchs and the states they governed (Vacarelu, 2021, p.7).

Singh (2015, p.182) notes that although the examples of diplomatic practices could be traced back to ancient Greek times and even back to ancient Sumerian tablets, diplomacy has aroused in Western Europe as a modern age institution.

According to Berridge (2010, p.1), modern diplomacy originated primarily on the Italian peninsula in the late 15th century AD. However, referring to Cohen and Westbrook and Liverani, he notes that early roots of diplomacy could be traced back to the interactions among the “Great Kings” in the Near East as early as the second and potentially even as far back as the late fourth millennium BCE. Accordingly, during these centuries, diplomacy mainly relied on messengers and merchant caravans for communication. Diplomatic immunity had been granted on the basis of customary hospitality codes, and treaty adherence through terror of the gods.

Berridge (2010, p.2) also states that during the 4th and 5th centuries BC in the Greek city-state system, circumstances not only required but also promoted a more advanced form of diplomacy. Diplomatic immunity, including for heralds during times of war, became a further established norm, and permanent embassies started to appear, although being staffed by local residents. During medieval Europe, the advancement of diplomacy was driven by Byzantium and

then particularly by Venice, which established new benchmarks of technical expertise and honesty. Nonetheless, diplomacy continued to be mainly managed by special envoys with limited timeframes and tasks.

In the late 15th century Italian city-state system, particularly under conditions highly conducive to the advancement of diplomacy, the recognizable modern system emerged at the first time. The heightened vulnerability of wealthy yet inadequately defended Italian states incited by repetitive invasions of their lands after 1494 demanded a diplomacy which was continuous and less extravagant. The absence of religion or language barriers as well as close proximities between city states - though relying on messengers on horseback for communicating - were advantages in those times. This era also witnessed the emergence of the real resident embassy, a permanent mission led by a citizen representing the interests of their prince or republic. This so-called Italian system soon evolved into what was called as “French system” by Harold Nicolson, a British scholar and a diplomat. This marked the inception of the first fully developed diplomatic system, forming the foundation of the modern, primarily bilateral approach. Berridge (2010, p.2) notes that although formal resident embassies are the standard methods for bilateral diplomacy between states, Nicolson calls it as “French system of diplomacy” because of France's significant influence in its development and the shift from Latin to French as the working language over time. In the early 20th century, the French system underwent modifications but did not undergo a complete transformation. The concept of “open diplomacy” through permanent and ad hoc conferences was basicly integrated into the established network (Berridge, 2010).

Over the course of time, developments in digital technologies gave a huge momentum to interactions between states and communities. In this regard, according to Buzan and Little (2000), the interactional capacity in the international environment as well as the transformation possibilities are hugely enriched by communication technologies.

While the correspondence carried out via horseback would require weeks to deliver messages to their recipients formerly, the telegraph greatly impacted

diplomacy by enabling information to travel across the globe within minutes. A vivid example of the repercussions upon arrival of speedy communication amenities in diplomatic circles is the former British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston's exclamation. Upon receiving the "inaugural telegraph message" in the 1860s, he is said to have exclaimed "My God, this is the end of diplomacy" (Adesina, 2017).

Then, the agency of ambassadors gradually declined as central offices gained the ability to manage negotiations due to the new rapid communications (Dizard, 2001) The fax machine further compressed time and space by transmitting complete documents across continents (Adesina, 2017).

Traditionally, messages including diplomatic ones were transported manually. Even in the early twenty-first century, diplomatic couriers continue to be utilized for delivering certain highly classified packages. Gaining momentum with the emergence of electric telegraph around the midst of the 19th century, delivery times of messages were significanty reduced over routes despite lacking adequate security and expensiveness. The advent of radio telegraphy in the 1890s enhanced this method, although it still lacked security. By the early twentieth century, it became feasible to transmit spoken communication across great distances via telephone and short wave radio (Berridge, 2010,p.192-193).

Since the World War II years, additional notable advancements have occurred including fax machines and then emails. While the primary mode of communication between diplomats and the capitals was the "telegram" for a period, this changed rapidly with the introduction of "email". The first email between government heads occurred on February 4, 1994, initiated by Carl Bildt, Swedish Prime Minister and addressed to Bill Clinton, US President (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024).

While congratulating Clinton on the decision regarding the decision on lifting of Vietnam embargo, Bildt also described Sweden as one of the leading countries

in telecommunications field and stated that “it is only appropriate that we should be among the first to use the Internet also for political contacts and communications around the globe.” In response, Clinton expressed his appreciation regarding the support for his decision, adding that “this demonstration of electronic communications is an important step toward building a global information superhighway” (Clinton, 1994)

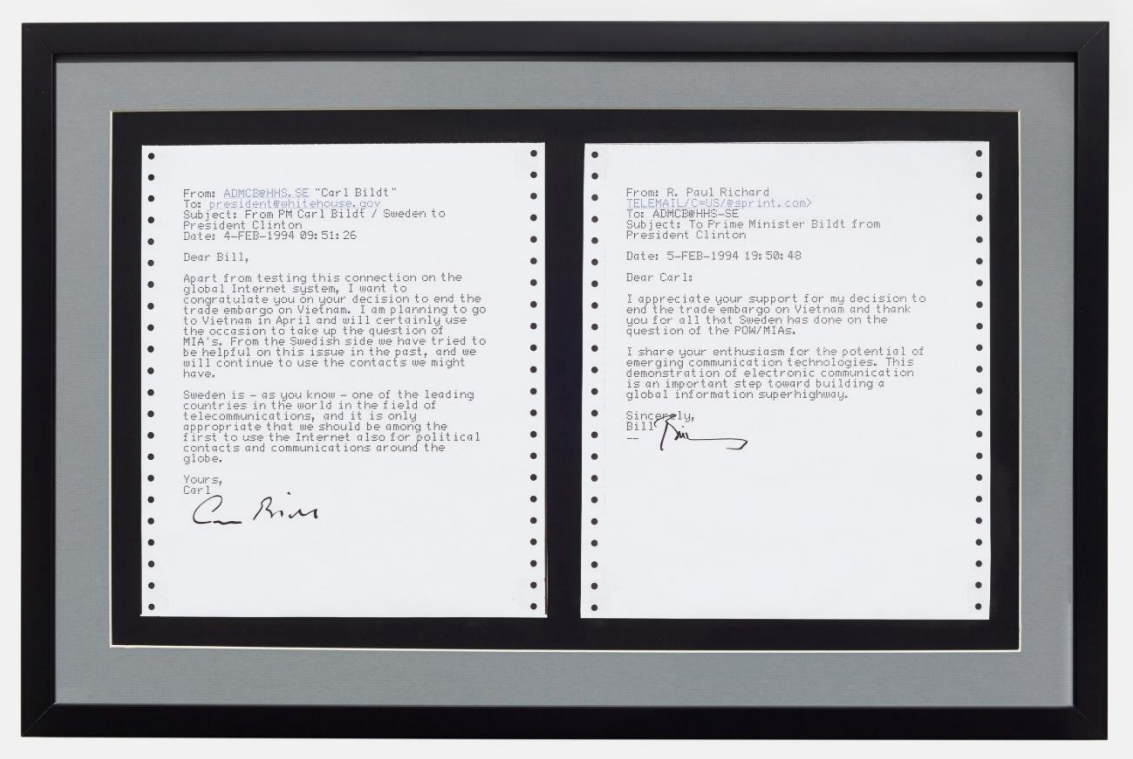

Figure 1. First E-mails between Heads of State (1994). (National Museum of American Diplomacy)

In his blog, Bildt is reported to have mentioned that he achieved a milestone in IT history when, serving as the Swedish Prime Minister in 1994, he sent an email to President Bill Clinton. He marked in 2007 that it was the inaugural email at such a level and attracted considerable attention at the time (NBC News, 2011).

The advent of the “Internet” ushered a fresh chapter in diplomacy, empowering diplomats to utilize “websites and blogs” to offer the public perspectives on world affairs. Furthermore, emails and subsequently “smartphones” allowed state

leaders to communicate directly with each other, reducing the role of embassies to serve as “intermediaries” between capitals (Manor, 2019).

The remarkable advancements in ICTs including mobile phones and messaging applications have paved the way for masses to access rather cheaper but more widespread communication tools compared to the past. Radio and television broadcasters which can equip themselves with 24/7 news channels can also access broader span of audiences via the Internet streaming. These platforms have been facilitating direct communication between foreign policy actors and their target populations.

Furthermore, social media has had a great impact in this domain. The rise of platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Zoom and LinkedIn has introduced a new conduct of diplomacy called as “real-time diplomacy”, where diplomats provide narration and commentary on global events almost instantaneously (Seib, 2012). Over the course of time, instant messages as well as multimedia video conferences have boosted the amenities for effective communication. It seems that further exciting developments in domain of information and communication technologies (ICTs) are on the horizon yet.

In line with such technological advancements, communication, whether existing with internal nature, across the goverment, or between epistemic communities, or else with the public in general, has evolved from a standalone “product” managed by expert information officers to a fundamental aspect of shaping, pursuing and assessing diplomatic aims (Pamment, 2016, p.231).

As technologies evolve and become more widely used in various sectors, they not only influence the tasks they are employed for but also bring about changes in political systems, social institutions as well as governance structures. This phenomenon extends to the realm of diplomacy and geopolitics, where digital technologies have consistently affected both the diplomacy institutions and those practising in it (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024).

Vacarelu (2021) likens the Internet to a global library, adding that it offers access to a vast collection of resources on governance, public administration, finance, etc. all at a very low cost. Accordingly, the Internet has the effect of raising expectations in countries where it is accessible, particularly regarding government and the economy. This is because politicians can no longer claim lack of knowledge or access to sufficient literature with numerous examples of best practices.

Recent developments and researches indicate that digital connectivity worldwide has been growing steadily. For instance, according to the International Telecommunications Union's (ITU) Facts and Figures 2023[1], which takes the pulse of digital connectivity wordwide, almost 67% of the world population which corresponds to 5.4 billion people is online now. It marks an increase of 4.7% since 2022. The report notes a decrease in the number of offline people in 2023, which is estimated as 2.6 billion people, which represents 33% of the global population (ITU, 2023).

Such a fast growth in digital connectivity would pave the way for a greater size of information accumulating in international relations and would therefore impact the quality and quantity of interaction between foreign policy actors and individuals in conducts of diplomacy.

1.2. THE INTERACTION BETWEEN SOFT POWER, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Constituting inevitable components of the foreign policy conducts of actors, the interactions between soft power, public diplomacy and digital diplomacy has gained further prominence in a technologically surrounded network of international relations. Therefore, exploring these concepts with interpretations

[1] The report also provides graphics, for example about individuals using the Internet from 2005 to 2023, and about the percentage of individuals that use the Internet by region.

varying among scholars would contribute to the endeavour for capturing the interaction between soft power, public diplomacy and digital diplomacy.

1.2.1. Soft Power

Joseph S. Nye coined the term "soft power" to characterize a country's capability to allure and convince others. According to Nye (2004), soft power refers to achieving objectives through “attraction” rather than through “coercion or payments”, stemming from the appeal of a nation's culture, political principles and foreign policies. Accordingly, when others perceive our policies as legitimate, it enhances our soft power. So, when you can inspire others to admire your ideals and desire the same outcomes as you, you reduce the need for “sticks and carrots” to align their actions with yours. Underlining that everybody has acquittance with “hard power”, Nye marks that using military force and economic strength to often persuades others to alter their stance. Hard power can be exercised through inducements (“carrots”) or deterrents (“sticks”).

On the other hand, Bilgin and Eliş (2008, p.12) in their article that builds on critical perspectives on the study of power and seeks to reveal the shortcomings of power analysis, argue that “Nye’s (soft) power analysis is problematic insofar as his own agenda of ‘success in world politics’ is concerned”. According to them, it arises not only because Nye’s analysis favors “the false impression that ‘soft power’ is a nice and cuddly surrogate to ‘hard power’, but also because he underestimates the extent to which U.S. soft power is produced and expressed through compulsion”. They note that compulsory power isn't restricted to using material resources alone. Non-material power forms, like 'symbolic power,' can also be employed to coerce others.

Embracing a comprehensive definition of “soft power” as “the power of attraction” Rawnsley (2024) prefers to focus on how it is generated and conveyed, rather than assuming that it can be “wielded, exercised, or strategized”. He also argues that it is particularly appealing when it originates within civil society, as it gains such a level of credibility through being detached from government agendas and actions.

Taking soft power from the opposite angle of hard power, Fraser (2003) notes that “hard power threatens; soft power seduces. Hard power dissuades; soft power persuades” (cited in Rawnsley, 2024). However, “defining soft power by the fact that it is not hard power is not only tautological, but it also does not get us very far in understanding the value of the concept.” (Rawnsley, 2024, p.66)

Rawnsley (2024) notes that creating soft power takes a long time as it rests on cultivating and strengthening relations, while also establishing credibility to enhance and justify appeal. In this regard, he marks that soft power necessitates acknowledging the truth that actions carry more weight than words. The actions that someone takes will definitely have a much stronger narrative than his/her words, therefore he views soft power as the “power of example”.

Rawnsley (2024) adds that the following items determine soft power: The legitimacy and trustworthiness that actors, institutions and procedures have; the conduct of individuals domestically and internationally, and the company they keep; the degrees of openness and accountability as well as correction capability; freely flowing opinions, actual dialogue and discussion; the ability to establish networks for cooperation, particularly within civil society.

It should also be noted that soft power is challenging to harness because its key resources are often beyond government control, relying heavily on acceptance from audiences. These resources influence indirectly by shaping policy environments and can take considerable time to achieve desired results. In brief, Nye (2004) notes that “resources” of soft power are “slower, more diffuse, and more cumbersome to wield than hard-power resources”.

Nye also draws attention to the point that “soft power does not belong to the government in the same degree that hard power does” and that hard power and soft power can reinforce or interfere with each other at times.

Contemporarily, we have been observing many occasions where desired results can be achieved without relying on explicit threats or incentives, which leads us to soft power. According to Nye (2004, p.30), if the ongoing economic and social

tendencies of the information revolution persist, soft power will increasingly gain significance.

The rapid advancement and widespread adoption of digital ICTs, namely “Information and Communication Technologies”, have transformed the landscape of soft power as well.

From this standpoint, Gelb (2009) says that “soft power now seems to mean almost everything”, adding that it encompasses military prowess, every kind of economic dealings that involve providing or withholding money for the aim of coercion, also traditional elements such as leadership, persuasion, values, and adherence to international institutions and laws.

Similarly, Flew (2016) argues that the notion of soft power has significantly influenced perspectives on the cultural and communication aspects of international relations, and the term has been stretched too far and runs the risk of being a synonym for all state-driven activities on the global stage that do not rely on military force.

Discussions on “soft” and “hard” power are also accompanied by other aspects of power such as “smart power” which was defined as “the capacity of an actor to combine elements of hard power and soft power in ways that are mutually reinforcing such that the actor’s purposes are advanced effectively and efficiently” (Wilson, 2008, p.115) and “sharp power” which “seeks to covertly and subtly decrease the attraction of other states by delegitimizing the institutions of other states, manipulating public opinion through propaganda, and implicitly pressuring economic and political actors within another state” (Richter, 2022, p.658)

After all, it could be concluded that the label may ultimately be less significant. Tom Fletcher, Former British Ambassador, underlines that “it matters less whether you call it soft, smart, new, or whatever the next catchy moniker is. What matters is that you call it power. And that you get out there and use it” (Fletcher, 2016, p.148).

1.2.2. Public Diplomacy

Standing at the nexus of soft power and digital diplomacy, public diplomacy comprises a large portion of diplomatic efforts.

In 1965, serving as US Foreign Service officer and Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at the time, Edmund Gullion opted to employ the term “public diplomacy”. Until then, this term had primarily been an interchangeable phrase for “open diplomacy”, which was believed to be the indicated by the League of Nations before the war. Drawing on the old implications of this idealistic endeavor, public diplomacy definitely conveyed more positive connotations compared to propaganda while simultaneously suggesting it. Furthermore, public diplomacy does not imply espionage (Berridge, 2010, p.181).

On the other hand, in a blog posted on the USC Center of Public Diplomacy (CPD), Nicholas J. Cull (2006) traces back the evolution of public diplomacy before Gullion. Acknowledging that the term was coined by Gullion in 1965 in the modern meaning, he endeavours to uncover “the forgotten pre-history of this phrase in reportage and diplomatic discourse” through insights into newspapers, such as the Washington Post and the New York Times. He indicates that the earliest use of public diplomacy as a phrase dates back to 1856, in a leader piece from London Times where it was employed as a synonym for civility in a piece that criticised President Franklin Pierce's posturing. Cull also indicates several other appearances of the term[2] such as on the New York Times in 1871, the Washington Post in 1917, etc.

Arndt in his work (2005, p.480) quotes Edmond Gullion in 1967, which indicates that Gullion actually desired to name it “propaganda” as it seemed to best describe what they were actually doing. However, propaganda always carried a negative connotation in the country. Therefore, Gullion notes that “to describe the

[2] The blog also offers quotes from newspapers and more instances about the use of the term.

whole range of communications, information and propaganda, we hit upon public diplomacy”

During the 1990s, an increasing number of states started to use the term “public diplomacy” as a euphemism for their propaganda activities. Today, this term is prevalent more or less, although “information” remains in use as well. However, according to Berridge (2010), “the term had been hijacked to give propaganda cosmetic surgery” as well as to enable campaigns with success in American politics. Noting that it was not launched to describe a novel endeavour, Berridge notes that its author Gullion was aware of this and would have preferred to use propaganda.

The research on the reasons why propaganda gained negative implications indicates that it goes back to the early twentieth century due to its use during the 1st World War, particularly under the totalitarian regimes that occurred afterwards, characterized by its slippery, aggressive, and dishonest nature. In view of such characteristics, most governments, while compelled to employ methods that were essentially the same, baulked at the notion of openly acknowledging their use of propaganda. Instead of it, they asserted that their activities were centered around '”information work” (Berridge, 2010, p.179-180). Over the course of time, “information work” lost popularity, necessitating the adoption of a new euphemism (Berridge, 2010, p.181)

According to Berridge (2010), propaganda involves shaping public opinion using mass media for political purposes. It can vary in its honesty and subtlety, and at times aiming at influencing long-term rather than immediate shifts in sentiment. It could aim at influencing public opinion abroad, at home, or both. Accordingly, propaganda makers typically categorize it into white propaganda, which acknowledges its source, and black propaganda, which does not acknowledge it. "Public diplomacy" is the contemporary term for white propaganda primarily aimed at foreign audiences. However, Berridge notes that his term has been linked for a significant time with the organized dissemination of falsehoods, consequently, it requires a more delicate expression, in other words a

“euphemism”. Public diplomacy wasn't the initial substitute term for propaganda used by governments. Actually, there is a significant viewpoint asserting that public diplomacy differs from propaganda and represents a novel and more enlightened concept altogether[3].

On the other hand, referring to the observation of British expert on public diplomacy Mark Leonard as well, Joseph Nye - formerly serving as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs - argues that those who dismiss "public diplomacy" as merely a euphemism for propaganda overlook its true significance. In his viewpoint, simple propaganda often does not have sufficient credibility and therefore counterproductive as public diplomacy. In this context, public diplomacy is not only about public relations. While it includes delivering information and promoting a positive image, it also includes establishing enduring relationships that facilitate the implementation of government policies (Nye, 2004).

Comparing public diplomacy and traditional diplomacy, Bârgăoanu and Cheregi (2021) argue that there is a distinction between the two. Accordingly, public diplomacy involves openly communicating with international audiences to advance national interests and accomplish foreign policy goals. However, traditional diplomacy depends on communication between nation-states, targeting only diplomats as the audience. Public diplomacy engages with a broader audience that includes non-state actors, NGOs, corporations and supranational organizations. The emphasis is on building mutually beneficial relationships, with many state actors adjusting to a dynamic, globalized environment.

Making a straightforward distinction between traditional and public diplomacy, Melissen argues that “traditional diplomacy” focuses on relations between state

[3] Referring to Arndt (2005), Berridge (2010) also notes that the primary reason why such “ill-defined portemanteau phrase” took off ultimately in the United States was that its ambiguity suited the agenda of those in Washington who sought to gather America's propaganda efforts overseas under a single roof, being the Information Agency of US.

representatives or international actors, while “public diplomacy” focuses on the general public in foreign countries, as well as more specific groups, organizations, and individuals with a non-official nature (2005, p.4).

Oktay (2012) marks that traditionally, a country's diplomats communicate with the leaders of the host country and diplomats from other nations but do not engage with the general public. In this sense, traditional diplomacy can be seen as more oriented towards elites. This approach leads to communication primarily based on political and economic power. During this process, the long-standing rules of traditional diplomacy often bring certain limitations. In summary, traditional diplomacy aims at the top of the pyramid, seeking to build relationships with political, military, and economic elites. However, public diplomacy targets the lower part of the pyramid, women and youth, in other words, the general public itself is the primary target audience.

While traditional diplomacy aims to directly influence foreign governments, propaganda, or public diplomacy, typically aims to achieve this indirectly, in other words, by appealing beyond the leaders of governmets to the figures who can influence those governments. These figures could become only a small group of influential individuals in a strictly controlled authoritarian structure; however, it could encompass a large number of voters in a liberal democratic structure on a broad basis (Berridge, 2010).

Berridge (2010) also draws attention that public diplomacy in current times is not only a trendy term, but also a trendy practice, over which to struggle, and in an aim to improve such “epic rediscovery of the wheel”, usually it is foreign ministries who have been tasked with the leading role.

From another perspective, Sanders (2018, p.5) argues that “the definition of public diplomacy is easy enough: the art and science of communicating with foreign publics on behalf of your nation. But so many disparate activities fit that definition!” Giving examples varying from wartime propaganda to scholarships, broadcasts, etc., which he denotes as falling under the umbrella of public

diplomacy, Sanders draws attention to the difficulty of connecting different elements in this scope.

Regarding the interplay between soft power and public diplomacy, Melissen (2005, p.4) takes public diplomacy as one of the fundamental instruments of soft power, and notes that it was acknowledged in diplomatic practice well before the current discussions on public diplomacy. He observes that while traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy were generally carried out on parallel paths, it became further difficult to see how conventional diplomacy could become effective without paying adequate attention to public diplomacy.

While a clear distinction between the two cannot be firmly established, some scholars highlight differences between the concept of “soft power” and “public diplomacy” in terms of their objectives, application fields, institutions and organizations involved, target audiences, and duration of implementation (Karadağ, 2012).

In another study, Karadağ notes that public diplomacy is often confused with the concept of soft power and he marks that it differs from soft power considering that it involves states and their national interests behind the activities performed. Karadağ states that public diplomacy is a foreign policy technique and it employs following instruments in practice: “cultural instruments, educational instruments, economic and social instruments, technological instruments, military instruments and religious instruments”. Public diplomacy utilizes all or several of these tools in practice. (Karadağ, 2023, p.69)

1.2.3. Towards New Public Diplomacy

In an environment surrounded by technological developments that occur at an unprecedented pace day by day, public diplomacy has also evolved into a further complex dimension intertwined with digitalization and its inevitable implications for international relations. In contemporary era, we have been both witnessing and experiencing in person the diversification of communication techniques and

therefore transformation of diplomatic endeavours in line with the advancements in digital environments.

Kirova (2009, p.1) states that in the last months of 2008, there were vibrant discussions over how new technology could be applied in public diplomacy. Government in particular ventured into online social networking, having at least two objectives in mind: to encourage collaboration and to manage messaging campaigns. This new tendency was highlighted by the “U.S. Department of State's Public Diplomacy 2.0 strategy”, which Kirova denotes as an umbrella term for novel endeavours. Accordingly, the 2.0 initiative signifies the transformation of the basic concept of public diplomacy into a two-way process involving engagement and idea exchange within an interactive environment.

According to Dr. Velichka Milina (2012, p.54), at the start of the twenty-first century, advancements in the Internet witnessed the emergence of various new technologies that integrated to create Web 2.0. This phase in the evolution of the Internet is marked by “social networks, social media, and user generated content”. She observes that the extensive spread of these "new media" has effectively made them “the media” for many people. In this context, the "traditional" media is considered to include printed materials (such as newspapers and magazines), radio, television, video programs, cinema, digital versions (so-called Web 1.0) of newspapers, etc. Acknowledging that there exists no official definition at the time of her work, Milina argues that the concept of "new media" refers to “Internet-based (Web 2.0 format) digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies, such as blogs, wikis, social networks, file sharing sites, etc.”. Milina underlines that within a timeframe of just a few years, social media have transformed our world and consequently new terms have gained pupular usage, such as “electronic state 2.0”, “public diplomacy 2.0", "policy 2.0", etc.

In 2013, Nicholas J. Cull in an article on International Studies Review notes that by 2008, the concept of new public diplomacy had been connected by a term for the use of new online media in public diplomacy: Public Diplomacy 2.0. In his

opinion, though like Web 2.0, the term “Public Diplomacy 2.0” has never been utilised with exact precision and three main characteristics are evident: The first one these characteristics pertains to the technology's capacity to enable the formation of relationships through online communities and social networks. The second characteristic is Public Diplomacy 2.0's reliance on user-generated content ranging from feedback and blog comments to more elaborate items like videos or mash-ups. The third characteristic is the technology’s sense on “horizontally” structured networks of exchange rather than the “vertically” structured distribution networks like the 1.0 era. To put it more clearly, even though the technology itself is entirely new, the foundational pattern of relationships that underlie Public Diplomacy 2.0 operations is not Cull (2013, p.125).

Cull (2013, p.125) also acknowledges that the development of the web and the progress in public diplomacy are interconnected. The communications revolution amplified the role of public opinion in shaping foreign policy and a notion of a new public diplomacy emerged. While definitions of the new public diplomacy can differ, mostly it is agreed that it involves a focus on “greater exchange, dialogue, and mutuality in public diplomacy” (Melissen, 2006 cited in Cull 2013, p.125).

According to Gürdal (2020, p.102), public diplomacy is an international interaction technique that involves states and foreign publics as target audience. In this context, digital public diplomacy refers to all communication techniques conducted on digital platforms, corresponding to the interaction process between states and the public. Therefore, it must contain all international actors, primarily states and the publics.

Gürdal (2020, p.129-130) also draws attention that digital diplomacy has emerged not upon the introduction of the internet into our lives, but at a later stage. In her opinion, this situation indicates the impact of social media. She argues that the utilization of digital diplomacy and digital public diplomacy coincided with the emergence of social media applications.

Elaborating on how digital diplomacy has evolved, Bjola and Manor (2022, p.475) describe it as a two-stage process, dividing into “digital adaptation” and “digital adoption”. According to them, digital adaptation is an externally driven process where offline events compel diplomats to adopt new digital technologies. This adaptation happens quickly and results in significant immediate changes. However, digital adoption is a process internally reflective where diplomats and diplomatic institutions evaluate and experiment with digital technologies and determine which ones to embrace in supporting their foreign policy objectives.

In 2021, Marco Ricceri, “Secretary General of the Institute for Political, Economic and Social Studies” (EURISPES) in Italy, on the preface of a publication about artificial intelligence and digital diplomacy writes that diplomacy world is “adapting cultural references, operational methods, practices, structures, and initiatives” to meet the opportunities and difficulties of this revoluton in a greater manner.

Moreover, Ricceri (2021) notes that public diplomacy, the predominant communication method employed in international relations, has sparked the emergence of a new tool termed "digital diplomacy," as identified by experts and governments in the field. In his viewpoint, at its core, public diplomacy is a process and it involves achieving influence over international communities. Digital diplomacy has broadened its reach by enabling direct dialogue that advocates for specific interests and relevant actions between government officials and the citizens of targeted communities, states, and geographic areas.

Therefore, a sort of double change has been occuring in the field of traditional diplomacy since the beginning of this millenium; one in the direction of increase in the volume of public diplomacy and the second in the direction of digitalization of these newly emerged diplomatic forms. Therefore here the key is to formulate how the revolution in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) affected the all the present forms of diplomatic activities.

Currently, diplomats are quite far from remaining confined to the discussions held at the diplomatic tables. They have a diverse set of agendas and instruments to

directly engage with their counterparts with support of digital communication facilities over various platforms.

1.2.4. More Actors and Agendas in Diplomacy

Rapid developments in information and communication techologies (ICTs) resulted in great changes in the manner that individuals communicate and interact with each other as well as exchange information and experience effectively. Actually, the Internet has dramatically increased access to information at minimal cost, benefiting schools, universities, individuals and curious individuals alike. In this regard, Vacarelu (2021, p.14) observes that middle-income people now have unprecedented opportunities to develop their intellectual potential affordably.

This revolutionized fashion spurred changes in political and economic landcape globally. As remarked by Faye (2000), less developed countries get opportunities to bounce the stage of industrialization and evolve their economics into information economies with high value-added aspect which can keep up with developed economics globally (Faye, 2000 as cited in Adesina, 2017). Especially the internet which offers the ability to publicate, exchange and store information as a tool of communication (Adesina, 2017), has turned into vital components of communication worldwide.

Considering that there is a constant transformation in international relations, the identities, definitions and roles of actors and topics have also changed. Contrary to the past, there are multiple actors and redefined issues in today's interactive environment, which brings a slippery context and hampers appropriate comprehension of the broader picture.

Digital communications involve transactions between states, policy-makers, institutions, NGOs, companies, societies, individuals, etc. through the utilisation of digital communication tools and techniques. From this standpoint, digital diplomacy concerns all diplomacy actors on a global scale, extending the

traditional borders and evolving into a crucial pillar that impacts international relations.

Inevitably, the cross boundary nature of these concepts has had ramifications in international relations and expanded the scope of the boundaries of foreign policy agendas and practices amidst newly emerging concepts.

The ICTs introduced new forms for conducting diplomacy globally. According to Adesina (2017) traditional methods of carrying out diplomacy which includes interactions between officials representing states is still crucial, however, considering the interconnectedness in today's world, it is not only countries but also organizations and individuals who play larger roles in international matters. All these changes have given rise to emergence of digital diplomacy as an important phenomenon.

Currently, we have been experiencing both the growing and accelerating dimension of communications through multiple digital platforms and media, leading up to stronger interactions and faster flow of information between actors, individuals, institutions, etc. no matter where they are headquartered in or no matter how powerful they are. In an environment surrounded by digitalisation that even extends to our daily routines, emerging actors find optimum conditions to make their voices heard.

According to Rawnsley (2024), political power has been shaken by the "de-territorialization" and "re-territorialization" that emerges in digital environment, having civil society groups operating across borders, mobilizing and dispersing around issues, in rivalry with states and nations to gain influence and allegiance in a less hierarchical power distribution. Moreover, the rise of ICTs has occurred alongside significant changes in global geopolitics, leading to the emergence of new issues, challenges as well as crises, which demand further cooperative and embracing approaches in governmental and non-governmental dimensions across the borders. Rawnsley also notes that the multitude of voices circulating through networks in an environment filled with excessive information can limit the

state's ability to control and restrict narratives. In this context, he says that the digital environment mirrors the soft power that is cultivated offline.

Moreover, the Internet is playing a crucial role particularly among dispersed national or ethnic groups worldwide known as diasporas.At this juncture, Bollier (2003, p.32) makes an observation. The Internet has been incredibly beneficial, what Bollier calls is “a godsend” for these populations, allowing many geographically separated individuals with a common history to unite and form extensive virtual communities. They employ the Internet as an instrument to maintain community and identity.

In a similar pattern, Meldgaard and Fletcher (2024) elaborate on the impacts of technology on diplomatic representation and mark that smaller size of countries facilitated the adoption of a more agile, start-up inspired manner. They take Kosovo’s recognition as supplementary to this viewpoint.

Overall, Kosovo’s digital diplomacy efforts for achieving recognition could indicate the interaction between public and digital diplomacy conducts. Its recognition strategy concerns many aspects such as organizing visits to the target states, working closely with key partners and utilizing the special relations with these states, working with countries that have accepted its independence in an indirect manner or de facto to gradually shift their stance towards formal recognition, engaging with multilateral platforms and regional organizations in a proactive manner, etc. (Newman and Visoka, 2018, p.377-382).

Newman and Visoka (2018, p.368-369) suggest that Kosovo's diplomatic efforts have been crucial in garnering international support for recognition by leveraging the conditions surrounding its state creation, by engaging strong states as “co-owners and custodians of independence”, and by directly reaching out to countries that were hesitant to recognize it.

Following the declaration of independence in 2008, Kosovo had gained recognition from just half of the world, however, it achieved a status update[4] on Facebook (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024), which implies that the social network recognized it as a distinct region, following a campaign led by thousands of volunteer "digital diplomats" (Hirst, 2013). Although the process and dynamics leading up to state creation and diplomatic recognition are complex challenges where established patterns and norms are questioned, a great potential for conflict of interests as well as changing balances and expectations appear on the arena, the self-portrayal and identity of states play a crucial role. In this regard, the Facebook endeavor implies that Kosovo's presence was to a greater extent recognized in the digital realm than offline.

Similar to how communication is driving transformations within organizations and their interactions with civil society, public diplomacy, which strives to enhance a nation's influence and effectiveness overseas, is undergoing significant changes. Various subcategories have surfaced within the domain of public diplomacy, introducing new terminology and symbols to facilitate adjustment and efficient outreach. Among these is the notion of digital diplomacy. Beyond merely incorporating digital technology into foreign policy endeavors, this concept also addresses the transition of power and influence from hierarchical systems to citizens and grassroots (Pelling, 2015).

[4] Facebook allowed users to designate their location in Kosovo, not in Serbia.

CHAPTER 2
THE CONCEPT OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

2.1. DEFINITIONS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

As a considerably recent phenomenon, there are abundance of definitions for digital diplomacy. While some scholars tend to define it through the angle of social media usage by states in order to promote and maximize their interests, some others see digital diplomacy through the lenses of information and communication technologies, and therefore focus on the impact of these technologies on the conduct of diplomacy.

Digital diplomacy represents a new version of public diplomacy, also referred as e-diplomacy, which leverages the internet as well as modern information and communication technologies (ICT) as a tool to enhance diplomatic ties with foreign publics. Differently from conventional public diplomacy, it features increased accessibility to information, heightened interaction between various actors, and enhanced transparency (Chakraborty, 2013).

Bjola and Manor (2024, pp.3-4, emphasis in original) note that digital diplomacy in simple terms refers to utilizing digital technologies, like "*social media and other online platforms, including virtual communication channels and the metaverse, by ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) and international organizations (IOs) to communicate with each other and the general public, conduct diplomacy, and advance their foreign policy goals."*

Manor and Segev in their study (2015) attribute digital diplomacy mostly to the increasing usage of social media by countries to attain their goals as well as managing their reputation and image. They take digital diplomacy's existence on two levels: being the ministry of foreign affairs and embassies situated worldwide.

According to Cassidy (2024, pp.160-161) "digital diplomacy, as both a practice and strategy, therefore represents a pertinent arena in which to investigate how states seek to acquire soft power within the digital age".

Potter (2002) takes digital diplomacy through the angle of diplomatic practices conducted via digital technologies which are also networked, and these include social media, mobile devices and the Internet.

Crilley (2024, p.142) marks that “the effects of the new information ecology on global politics are wide ranging, and have given rise to digital diplomacy, where digital technology is now an integral part of diplomacy itself.”

In a simple manner, Hanson (2012) refers the use of new ICTs and the internet in order to facilitate diplomatic goals.

Although there is quite a fractured terminology for digital diplomacy, the melting pot of definitions could be assessed as their acknowledgement that diplomacy domain is dynamic and impacted by digital technologies.

Singh (2015, p.189, emphasis in original) attributes digital diplomacy as a kind of diplomacy which is carried out through environments that are rich in terms of information and highly interactive by nature, and underlines that “literally in a *fast changing world* of digital diplomacy and communication networks, taking the underlying context to be unchanged is myopic, to say the least” .

According to Manor (2018), thus far, both scholars and practitioners have introduced various terms to describe the growing impact of digital technologies on diplomacy. These terms have ranged from “net diplomacy” and “cyber diplomacy” to “diplomacy 2.0”, “networked diplomacy” and “real-time diplomacy”, etc. The diversity of terms concerning technology's influence on diplomacy arises from the ongoing emergence of new platforms, practices and tools. Many scholars and diplomats use the term "digital diplomacy" to refer to the intersection of diplomacy and digital technologies. Arguing that none of the terms used so far in the realm of diplomacy and digital technologies are satisfactory, he proposes the adoption of the term “the digitalization of diplomacy”.

Ilan Manor in a working paper in 2018 elaborates on the digitalization of diplomacy through the lenses of a fractured terminology, and utilizes this term to

describe how digital technologies have influenced the following four dimensions of diplomacy[5]: audiences, institutions, practititoners and finally the practice of diplomacy. Moreover, he uses the term in attribution to the following four fields: The initial field concerns norms, values as well as beliefs. The second one concerns behavior, as the acceptance of norms and beliefs leads to changes in behavior. The third one focuses on procedures, encompassing usage patterns and standard procedures. The fourth one pertains to concepts, including the metaphors and mental frameworks that individuals use to envision their world. In this context, he provides a matrix of "the digitalization of diplomacy", in an effort to bring structure to the somewhat disorganized studies in this field (Manor, 2018, p.8).

Offering a fresh perspective in their research article, Manor and Kampf (2022, p.442-457) investigate whether generational disparities affect the digitalization processes of ministries of foreign affairs. Their study utilizes the notions of "digital nativity" and "digital immigrancy", involving participants from six Ministries of Foreign Affairs, which are "Australia, Canada, India, Israel, New Zealand and Switzerland". Categorizing participants according to their birth year (prior to and after 1980) to explore whether there has been a reduction in practical disparities between digital natives and immigrants, and whether conceptual gaps still persist, their study also provides insight into definitions of digital diplomacy. Indicating example quotes with prevalence from the six countries in thematic categories such as "engagement and relationship building, more open and more targeted diplomacy, leveraging full range of ICT," etc. their table indicates how "digital natives" and "digital immigrants" define the term "digital diplomacy".

Diplo, an international non-profit organization founded in 2002, tackles the ambiguities around the terminology concerning digital and diplomacy on its web

[5] In the same paper, Manor also provides a detailed matrix about the digital research corpus. Observing that scholars depict different standpoints while tackling the topic, such as focusing on the audiences of diplomacy, institutions of diplomacy, practitioners of diplomacy as well as the practice of diplomacy in digital environments, Manor provides a detailed table in an effort to map the existing research corpus in the field.

page. Acknowledging that employment of various adjectives and prefixes to depict the digitalization of diplomacy often leads to confusion in policies and discussions within this domain, Diplo reads that such confusion could be mitigated by providing clearer definitions about the coverage of specific terms, such as “cyber”, “digital”, and “tech” diplomacy.

Diplo provides a methodological framework that encompasses the effects of digitalization on the geopolitical landscape for diplomacy, as well as the novel digital subjects that diplomats address and the tools they employ. In this context, it outlines the primary ways for defining diplomatic transformations resulting from technological progress in a table[6].

2.2. THE PHRASES ACCOMPANYING DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Digital diplomacy is used as a widely accepted concept with abundance of descriptions from diverse angles. Its scope is not limited to only social media and cyber issues, but extends to many topics at the intersection between diplomacy and digitalization, such as virtual environments where diplomacy can be conducted (e.g. web platforms, videoconferences, etc.) or fundamental issues such as human rights, disinformation, privacy, cross-border data flows, etc.

As Wright and Guerrina (2020, p.538) observe it, “the emerging literature on digital diplomacy, and specifically its practice as a public diplomacy tool, is in its infancy”

Comprehending the essence and potential capabilities of digital diplomacy is obscured by diverse phrases that currently surround the term. While there is no absolute good or bad perspective, it is crucial to understand the meanings and

[6] The abovementioned table outlines the primary methods for defining diplomatic shifts brought about by technological progress, offering a categorisation with four dimensions: nature of impact of techology, diplomacy and geopolitics, diplomatic topics, diplomatic methods and tools.

implications conveyed by each standpoint. In this context, a broader range of forms of diplomacy grow to address the increasing variety of global, regional, and local issues.

Through research into the descriptions and categorizations of concepts related to digital diplomacy in academic studies, it has been observed that there is quite a complex, intersecting and multilayered context resulting from different approaches in efforts to develop definitions. Consequently, the phrases around digital diplomacy are used interchangeably or depict similarities yet named differently, and likewise. All these ambiguities pose a great academic challenge to present an overall framework for digital diplomacy.

However, it is believed that the reason for such a slippery context results from the fact that digital diplomacy is still subject to ongoing developments resulting from the advancement of ICTs amidst political, financial, societal, etc. factors. Therefore, digital diplomacy is yet to effectively establish into the international relations literatüre. Bearing such ambiguity in mind, this section aims to elaborate on several of these intertwined and frequently used phrases in order to provide a deeper insight into the agenda and perspectives that surround digital diplomacy:

2.2.1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Diplomacy

In a study requested by the European Parliament's Special Committee on AI in a Digital Age, Ulrike Franke notes that the meaning of Artificial Intelligence has evolved over time and it is an “ill-defined term”. According to her, AI refers to endeavours to develop machines and computers that can perform tasks typically requiring human intelligence. However, whenever scientists developed systems capable of performing tasks previously considered uniquely human, the definition of AI expanded to encompass even more complex tasks (Franke, 2021, p.9).

Dr. Jérôme Duberry, the managing director of the Geneva Graduate Institute’s Tech Hub, in an article published in 2023 marks that AI is “an umbrella term” which alludes to various technologies. Acknowledging that there are numerous

definitions, for the purpose of simplification, he refers to it as “a system’s ability to correctly interpret external data, to learn from such data, and to use those learnings to achieve specific goals and tasks through flexible adaptation”. He notes that the incorporation of AI into diplomacy offers exciting prospects but also presents substantial risks that could compromise the core principles of diplomatic practice. According to him, “the integration of AI into diplomacy is a double-edged sword”, and although it holds the potential for greater efficiency and effectiveness, AI also presents considerable risks that could compromise the core aspects of diplomatic practice. The reliance on AI may force diplomats “to sacrifice the sanctity of diplomac secrecy for the sake of data analytics”. Also, Duberry brings into question to which extent it is desired to integrate AI into diplomatic endeavours, and argues that if diplomats increasingly rely on opaque AI systems for decision-making, diplomacy could turn into a kind of “algocratic system” where computer-coded algorithms influence human behavior.

Highlighting that “AI diplomacy is about the impact of AI on geopolitics”, Diplo (2024) elaborates on “AI as a topic on the diplomatic agenda, and AI as a tool for diplomacy”.

Overall, during the search for a precise definition of AI Diplomacy in the framework of this thesis, it has been observed that most sources refer to the term through the prism of AI itself as a technological development and its potential use in diplomatic activities as well as the interplay between AI and sociological, ethical, cultural, military, etc. aspects. Despite the lack of wealthy descriptions, it seems that a broader literature on “AI Diplomacy” by scholars are yet to emerge over the course of time.

Artificial Intelligence for digital diplomacy is further explained in detail later at Chapter 3, Section 3.3 of this study.

2.2.2. Cyber Diplomacy

According to Radanliev (2024) cyber diplomacy is a term that denotes the use of diplomatic methods and negotiations in the realm of international relations which

address and regulate issues related to cyberspace. He notes that cyber diplomacy and digital diplomacy are closely related to each other, but they have very different functions. Radanliev (2024, p.3) states that digital diplomacy, also known as Diplomacy 2.0 or e-Diplomacy, involves “governments’ and diplomats’ social media, online platforms, and digital technology to interact with international audiences, promote communication, and carry out diplomatic outreach”.

Comparing digital diplomacy and cyber diplomacy, Radanliev (2024) highlights that digital diplomacy contains technology for diplomatic purposes and it is a broader notion. However, the focus of cyber diplomacy is on security and cyberspace issues.

Lancelot (2020, p.251) indicates that “cyber diplomacy is not subsystem of policy strategy or policy formulation; it is at the center of it.” and according to him (p.250), in the realm of cyberspace, cyber-diplomacy stands as a strategic function with a service to manage risk by figuring out the matter of “attribution or disclosure of a cyberattack”.

According to Kello (2024, p.133) “the landscape of cyber defence diplomacy constantly shifts because the underlying technology and its uses in society and government continuously evolve”.

2.2.3. Data Diplomacy

Barbara Rosen Jacobson, Katharina E Höne and Jovan Kurbalija in their 2018 report titled “Data Diplomacy: Updating Diplomacy to the Big Data Era”, which was commissioned by the Policy Planning and Research Unit at the Finnish Foreign Affairs Ministry, take the data diplomacy concept from three perspectives: as a tool, topic and environment. In this approach, first, big data can be employed as a tool to enhance diplomacy by making it more effective, efficient, and inclusive. Second, it introduces a new topic to the agenda of diplomacy and aspects in international negotiations, in fields like e-commerce, and international cybersecurity, etc. Third, it becomes a factor which alters the environment in

which diplomacy functions, potentially repositioning geo-economic and geopolitical dynamics (Jacobson et al, 2018, p.4.)

Andy Boyd et al. (2019) put forward the following definition of data diplomacy: “the harnessing of diplomatic actions and skills by a diverse range of stakeholders to broker and drive forward access to data, as well as widespread use and understanding of data”. They argue that such description highlights the field’s boundaries and its diverse stakeholders. It also underscores the significance of data diplomacy and the need for it to extend across “the data life cycle”, from creation to usage to its societal impact.

2.2.4. Facebook Diplomacy

Facebook is mostly perceived as a tool utilized to support public diplomacy efforts by providing functions such as engaging with domestic and foreign audiences, facilitating cultural exchanges and dialogue, contributing to portrayal of the images of countries, serving like a consular tool to contact citizens abroad, etc.

According to Spry (2018), Facebook diplomacy is influenced by geopolitical factors (like the population size and wealth of audiences in target) and relational dynamics (such as proximity and relevance/dependency between nations in target and the publisher), which seem to correlate with the extent of engagement.

As far as it has been observed during the research for definition of this term, there seems to be not an established definition for Facebook Diplomacy although this the term is broadly discussed and utilized.

2.2.5. Twitter (now X) Diplomacy

At the time research for this thesis study was conducted, Twitter has officially moved its website address from Twitter.com to X.com, marking the end of an era (Duboust, 2024). However, many people still continue to refer to the platform as Twitter and call posts tweets (Mueller, 2024).

Cornut et al. (2021, p.370) note that “created in 2006, Twitter has cemented itself as a channel of communication for politicians” and argue that its feature “as a new public squere” has enabled new types of exchanges to occur.

Similar to many concepts appearing around digital diplomacy, there seems to be not an established description for Twitter Diplomacy although this term has been frequently referred to in discussions.

Taking it as a subcategory of digital diplomacy, Ovalı (2020, p.28) proposes that Twitter diplomacy can be defined as a tool for conducting foreign policy where individuals representing a state, institution, or organization use personal and/or institutional Twitter accounts to communicate their forecasts, attitudes, and expectations about foreign policy not only to their counterparts but also to all Twitter users. By this definition, Ovalı takes Twitter Diplomacy as a new instrument for conducting diplomacy, not as a new type of diplomacy.

2.2.6. E-diplomacy

Like many concepts surrounding digital diplomacy, e-diplomacy lacks a clear definition despite being commonly employed.

Fergus Hanson in a comprehensive research on e-diplomacy describes it as being “the use of the internet and new Information Communications Technologies to help carry out diplomatic objectives” (Hanson, 2012a, p.2). However, it should be noted that in another analysis paper that tackles the use and spread of e-diplomacy, Hanson acknowledges that a confusion exists about what e-diplomacy is and what it could be employed for (Hanson, 2012b, p.3).

In 2012, Nick Bryant marks on the BBC News that “e-diplomacy is the talk of foreign ministries the world over, as foreign affairs is increasingly conducted in 140 characters or less.” While tackling e-diplomacy, he refers to the 140

characters[7] limitation on Twitter, which indicates the intertwined nature of concepts in the realm of digital diplomacy.

2.2.7. Tech Diplomacy

Regarding Technology Diplomacy, Garcia (2022) proposes the following definition: It is “the conduct and practice of international relations, dialogue, and negotiations on global digital policy and emerging technological issues among states, the private sector, civil society, and other groups”.

He argues that the term of technology diplomacy, or shortly tech diplomacy, gained prominence following Denmark's appointment of the first Tech Ambassador in 2017. Further information about Denmark’s initiative is available at section 2.7.1. of this study.

2.2.8. Cypto Diplomacy

According to Diplo (2024), crypto diplomacy surfaced with the growing importance of cryptocurrency and blockchain technology. It is primarily about dealing with cryptocurrencies as a fresh topic within diplomatic discussions.

Accordingly, it encompasses “the regulation of cryptocurrencies among international banks and financial institutions”, with a particular emphasis on money laundering and tracking illegal financial transactions, and stopping the usage of cryptocurrencies for criminal and terrorist activities.

2.3. THE GOALS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Hocking and Melissen (2015, p.26) offer perspectives on digital diplomacy by elaborating on implications for diplomacy as well as the focus and forms. They tackle the topic through the fields of evolving foreign policy landscape, the

[7] In November 2017, Twitter expanded its character limit from 140 to 280 characters.

management of knowledge and resources, agendas on cyber policy, as well as e-governance plus e-participation, evolving diplomatic frameworks, requirements and functions.

In his analysis titled “Revolution@State: The Spread of Ediplomacy”, Fergus Hanson (2012b) offers insights into the spheres of ediplomacy. Considering that there is not a sharp distinction between e-diplomacy and digital diplomacy, and that both terms are frequently used interchangeably, the eight spheres explained in Hanson’s analysis would make contributions to the research about the goals of digital diplomacy.

Stating that the US State Department has emerged as the top global user of e-diplomacy, Hanson (2012b) writes that e-diplomacy at the time was employed across eight distinct program fields at the State. He puts “Knowledge Management, Public Diplomacy, and Internet Freedom” as the primary areas with regard to staffing and resources. According to him, it was also utilized in “Information Management, Consular Affairs, Disaster Response, leveraging External Resources, and Policy Planning in addition”.

Tackling the goals of e-diplomacy, Hanson (2012b, p.4) marks that several concepts have been proposed to capture the emerging new diplomatic working landscape, including the advent of e-diplomacy. However, in his opinion, these notions have not included specific work programs or objectives for ediplomacy. He proposes that an analysis of the various ediplomacy initiatives at the State indicates that they generally fall into these eight categories:

- **Knowledge Management**: Hanson underlines that foreign ministries have historically relied on the expertise of their officers as their main asset and a persistent challenge has been managing the storage, sharing, retention, and pooling of this knowledge. In this context, he elaborates on several e-diplomacy initiatives introduced at the State to address this longstanding issue. He takes knowledge management with a view to leverage departmental and whole-of-government knowledge, with the aim of

retaining, sharing, and using it effectively to advance national interests internationally.

- **Public diplomacy**: Underlining that social media has fundamentally changed the landscape of public diplomacy, Hanson notes that a skilled diplomat could connect with hundreds or even thousands of people through external engagement previously. Occasionally, a few of them could reach hundreds of thousands or even millions of individuals through radio, television and newspapers, but it demanded going through gatekeepers. However, social media has altered this traditional dynamic. He takes public diplomacy through the prism of staying connected with audiences as they move online, and leveraging new communications tools to engage with and target significant audiences with key messages, as well as influencing prominent online figures (Hanson, 2012b, p.17)

- **Information management**: Contemporarily, we are surrounded by an overwhelming volume of information in a great variety of digital forms. Hanson (2012b) argues that such a vast repository of information offers a potential valuable new resource for MFAs aiming to grasp global dynamics, and that in many cases, relying on manual labor to collect and analyze such an enormous volume of data is cost prohibitive. In this context, he takes information management with a view to "help aggregate the overwhelming flow of information" and to utilize it for enhancing policy-making, as well as supporting the anticipation and address to emerging social and political moves.

- **Consular Communications and Response**: Considering the huge number of mobile phone subscriptions and the growing proportion of which are internet-enabled smart phones, Hanson draws attention to the fact that foreign ministries can now effectively reach a growingly large proportion of their citizens travelling or living abroad during crises, with Consular Affairs sitting at the core of these endeavours. Therefore, he takes the sphere of

consular communications and response with a view to set up direct as well as personal communications channels with citizens travelling abroad, with manageble communications at the times of crisis (Hanson 2012b, p.22).

- **Disaster Response**: Hanson takes disaster response through the prism of leveraging “the power of connective technologies in disaster response situations” (Hanson 2012b, p.23).

- **Internet Freedom**: Hanson takes internet freedom with a view to “creation of technologies to keep the internet free and open” and marks that “this has the related objective of promoting freedom of speech and democracy as well as undermining authoritarian governments” (Hanson 2012b, p.23).

- **External Resources**: In recognition that the affordability of digital communications has greatly enhanced foreign ministries' capacity to leverage and harness the expertise of individuals beyond the foreign ministries, Hanson makes an assessment through the angle of developing digital mechanisms to access and utilize external expertise in support of national objectives (Hanson, 2012b, p.25).

- **Policy Planning**: Underlining that globalization has transformed government, Hanson indicates that internationalization of bureaucracy, combined with the reduced cost of global communications, has diminished the exclusive role, in other words “former monopoly” of foreign ministries in inter-governmental communications. Nevertheless, foreign ministries still hold the responsibility for coordinating international policy across the government. In this evolving landscape, e-diplomacy offers a promising role (Hanson 2012b, p.29).

During the research for the objectives of digital diplomacy, it has been observed that the goals of digital diplomacy offered by scholars resemble the categorization

of Hanson. For instance, Adesina (2017, p.3) refers to Hanson's eight sphered outline regarding the goals of digital diplomacy as it is.

Andreia-Mariana Pop (2021, p.252) proposes that the main goals of digital diplomacy are basically "knowledge management, information, consular communications and response, disaster response, external resources and policy planning".

After all, regarding the components of foreign policy, Adesina (2017) quotes Crabb (1972) stating that "Reduced to its fundamental ingredients, foreign policy consists of two elements: national objectives to be achieved and the means for achieving them. The interaction between national goals and the resources for attaining them is the perennial subject of statecraft." The components of foreign policy are essentially the same for all nations, whether large or small.

In this regard, it could be concluded that the goals of digital diplomacy, in its essence, resemble the objectives of traditional diplomacy. Overall, digital diplomacy aims to promote and maintain a positive image, protect the interests of states and foreign policy actors as well as fulfill their foreign policy tasks.

2.4. METHODS FOR DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Referring to the famous remark "the medium is the message" by Marshall McLuhan (2012), a Canadian communication theorist, Bjola and Manor (2024, p.6) underline that this phrase has become "emblematic for describing the social role and political influence of media technologies" in modern societies.

Moreover, "the method of transmission of messages controls how many people are reached, where they are, who they are and whether they get to respond or participate. The medium also determines the cost of communication and therefore the quantity of communication." (Sanders, 2018, p.13)

Highlighting that McLuhan's observation appeared "in a particular historical context", in the 1960s, a time when television overtook print newspapers and radio as the primary sources of public information, Bjola and Manor (2024, pp.6-7) note it can be argued that it is still relevant in today's digital age. According to them, "the distinctiveness of the digital medium" is formed by four key mechanisms that control how messages are designed and communicated, which are "visual simplicity, emotional framing, computational personalization, and engagement hybridization". Putting it more promptly, they explain that "visual simplicity affects the format and texture of the information to be transmitted, emotional framing informs the style and form of messaging, computational personalization shifts the focus of communication from macro- to micro-level alignment", and that the fourth mechanism "engagement hybridization allows for physical and virtual environments to integrate, complement, and empower each other".

Foreign policy actors use communication and information technologies to achieve their goals in the international arena. In view of the fact that such tools facilitate coordination efforts at multilateral environments by providing instant communication with superiors as well as with their peers, diplomatic practices are increasingly conducted through digital technologies.

Digital communication tools are especially useful in times of emergencies, crises or similar extraordinary situations. For instance, they can provide the ability to swiftly disseminate instant messages, such as "no change in policy" ones (Berridge, 2010).

As Holmes (2024, p.39) puts it, states and international organizations engage in a "complicated dramaturgical production of various stages, scripts, audiences, and feedback loops" while endeavouring to navigate changes in the international system with digital tools. Similar to actors on a stage, states and international organizations have substantial power "to project", while audiences hold the power "to accept, reject, or counter".

In this context, the methods for conducting digital diplomacy including social media platforms, websites, broadcasts and webcasts, electronic mails and text messages, messaging applications and virtual meetings could prove effective for engaging with digital communities currently, however, both their quality and quantity have a great potential to significantly improve in the future.

- **Social Media**

Tackling on various aspects that social media enables diplomats with, Holmes notes that diplomats could provide commentary on major news events, offer perspectives on national and global crises, celebrate holidays, and even engage in online customs such as “#ThrowBackThursday” and through such online activities, a foreign state becomes more visible, presenting an identity that may be accepted or not by others, but which will receive a response in a way. In this context, Holmes takes “engagement with the audience” as a key asset. (Holmes, 2024, pp.36-37).

From another standpoint, Manor and Pamment mark that digital technologies like social media can also enable the use of “nostalgic tropes”, as diplomats leverage these platforms to renegotiate their nation's history. They acknowledge that the past always exists in diplomacy, however, “through social media the meaning of the past is renegotiated given that diplomats comment on daily occurrences and use these occurrences to tie the past to the present.” (Manor & Pamment, 2024, p.56)

According to Singh (2015), there are two choices provided by social media in terms of cultural listening for the search of patterns. He states that one form is surreptitious listening, in other words mass surveillance. According to his impressions, the US is skilled with it by obtaining big data from firms. Another form is public diplomacy and he states that the US listens in a careful manner so that it could analyze how to comprehend and engage global communities. After all, Holmes refers to the remarks of former Special Advisor for Digital Diplomacy, Graham Lampa, putting that “diplomats that do social media well are *listening* and *responding* to what they hear” (Holmes, 2024, p.37)

At this point, it must be noted that while social media platforms serve as a stage for nations to manage their impressions, the behind-the-scenes area is where content is “planned and developed” (Holmes, 2015, p.37).

Currently, we have been observing that bureaucrats acknowledge and adopt the flow of communication through digital instruments, even starting to discuss which social media platform should be used for communication purposes. A vivid example is the friendly debate between William Hague, the UK's Foreign Secretary at the time, and the acting Foreign Minister of Singapore. Hague and his counterpart discussed which digital tool is better for communication, whether Facebook or Twitter is more effective. In this discussion, Hague argued that Twitter was better, while the Singaporean counterpart preferred Facebook. The debate flourished across both Twitter and Facebook, generating thousands of tweets, replies, retweets, likes as well as and Facebook posts. (Sandre, 2013, p.31).

Figure 2. Former UK Foreign Secretary William Hague’s Tweet on 8 May 2012 (Screenshot from Sandre, 2013, p.31)

Digitalization has prompted diplomats to embrace transparency, particularly in sharing aspects of their daily routines with the public. Social media, as “go-between nodes” in the public area and media landscape, have turned into standard tools that diplomats are encouraged to use to maintain a visible presence and fulfill their public engagement objectives (Broustau & Neihouser, 2021, p.57).

- **Websites**

The evolution of digital information and communication technologies has provided foreign policy actors with new amenities for outreach and engagement with communities.

Since the 1990s, the ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) have started to launch their own websites and shared information about their activities besides travel rules for to a particular country. Subsequently, they also embraced platforms like Facebook and Twitter. (Lahrenn-Ilgun, 2023, p.53).

These websites facilitated the efforts for offering comprehensive and updated information to targeted countries and communities, also providing multilingual accessibility (English, French, etc.) with enhanced usability over the course of time.

- **Broadcasts and webcasts**

According to Sanders (2018, p.14) various broadcasting methods can be utilized to engage a wide audience and “newspapers, magazines, books, posters, billboards, flyers and direct mail are some of the approaches of conventional written public diplomacy”. He notes that through the usage of “graphics and photographic imagery”, the audience is not restricted to just those who can read.

Acknowledging that radio and television elevated broadcasting to a new level, Sanders takes broadcasting as “a potent channel” to deliver messages “on one-way trips” to the masses. In this regard, he marks that some broadcasters focus solely on delivering messages, in other words “all-message, all-the-time”, while others integrate their content with an appealing blend of sports, music, and entertainment to engage their audience, in other words “bury their messages in an attractive mix”. The approach depends on the target communities.

The internet transforms and amplifies the effects of communication. It reduces costs for the sender while expanding the reach. Additionally, it enhances the vibrancy and persuasiveness of messages by emphasizing still and video images rather than text. In this respect, “it naturally accommodates two-way communication. It offers dialogue, improving the audience-centered approach that is key to success in public diplomacy.” (Sanders, 2018, p. 14)

Broadcasts through radio and television as well as webcasts are valuable because they can visually depict political leaders, spokespersons, and ambassadors. Similar to video conferencing, they convey both verbal and non-verbal messages effectively, minimizing the chance of these messages being overlooked (Berridge, 2010, p.202).

These tools could also be employed by internationational organizations. In this regard, the third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-3) could be a recent example. The “UN Environment Programme” (2024) web page featuring webcasts (2024) reads that “Live webcast of the Plenary was available on UN Web TV in the six official UN languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.”

- **Electronic mails and text messages**

Electronic mails - in other words emails - and text messaging have gained significant importance in line with the growing prevalence of mobile communication devices and internet spots worldwide. Heavily replacing formerly utilized tools for communicating with interlocutors, these new opportunities foster interaction between diplomats, contributing to the effectiveness of their messages via direct communication.

Emails and text messages could also contribute to achieving a kind of privacy. Exploring the impact of digital environments in the negotiations and procedural changes in conduct of negotiations, Eggeling and Adler-Nissen (2024, p. 105)

argue that “whereas social media enables a more public display of diplomacy, video conferencing and real- time text messaging enable more private and discrete communication between closed circles during negotiations.”

- **Messaging Applications**

Messaging applications impact daily routines of diplomats and also fundamentally alter their practice of diplomacy, posing a potential to even effect the patterns of international politics.

As a vivid example, Cornut et al. (2022) examine how the WhatsApp messaging application influences diplomats' communications with their colleagues in their analytical essay. They state that WhatsApp provides diplomats with a novel channel that alters the way they have communication (for instance, informal messaging), facilitate coordination with others (such as endorsing shared resolutions), and advance the values and interests of their nation. This innovation not only revolutionizes diplomats' daily routines but also fundamentally reshapes the method of conducting diplomacy itself and, consequently, international politics. According to them (p.3), “WhatsApp makes diplomatic communication more frequent, more informal, and quicker, with broader consequences on international politics”, adding that scholars are yet to examine it.

- **Virtual Meetings**

It has been possible to enjoy the facilities provided by virtual meetings well-before, however, virtual settings gained popularity in foreign policy conducts of diplomatic circles mostly upon the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Surrounded by isolations, quarantines, lockdowns aligned with pressing needs to maintain healthcare services, business and trade transactions, training activities while also keeping the pulse of political dynamics in an atmosphere of panic in societies, policy actors had to go through a sudden transition in their workflows. In this landscape, virtual meetings increasingly gained prevalence.

The reduction of social interactions and in the next phase the imposition of restrictions even expanding to wide scale lockdowns also pushed communities besides foreign policy actors to employ digital tools swiftly. In this way, individuals had the opportunity to access information about latest developments from official sources, maintain education via the Internet, etc. Besides social media applications and other digital communication tools, virtual meetings have been extensively used by foreign policy practitioners in their endeavours.

For instance, Zoom has been widely employed to hold high level meetings on a global scale. Over the course of time, the term “Zoom diplomacy” has flourished as what Bjola and Manor (2022, p.471) call “a routinized extension of face-to-face diplomacy”. Currently, in-person diplomacy is possible again however, virtual meetings still offer facilities in conduct of diplomatic practice.

Bjola and Coplen (2022, p.1) mark that the pandemic has transformed international diplomacy, leading to many negotiations being held in virtual settings through videoconferencing platforms like “Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex, and Interprefy”. Through a survey of diplomats experienced in virtual negotiations, they strive to analyze the views of respondents on “efficacy, tactics, and legitimacy” in these settings. Their findings indicate that virtual platforms influence not only “the format” but also “the substance” of negotiations.

When describing virtual venues, Bjola and Coplen refer to “computer-simulated places that allow for synchronous negotiation through online portals” in an effort to provide a definition. They mark that such venues are “facilitated by videoconferencing platforms” at present, however, there is a possibility that they could be “also offered by institution-specific proprietary applications”, adding the expectation that “virtual reality” (VR) platforms could also offer “the next generation of virtual venues” shortly. (Bjola and Coplen, 2022, p.2-3.)

2.5. SHIFTING ROLES OF DIPLOMACY PRACTITIONERS: FROM TRADITIONAL DIPLOMAT TO DIGITAL DIPLOMAT

Singh (2015) describes diplomacy as an art of persuasion and argues that it must mirror the existing prerogatives of its era. These prerogatives change as the era changes itself. Referring to François de Callières, he states that there were certain practices which were emerging fastly as norms in order to understand relationships between emerging nation states in Europe. Addressing national interests and the abilities of diplomats to temper out the clashes, Callières recommends that diplomats should gain good graces of everyone.

In ancient times diplomats were famously referred to as "the eyes and ears of the king," responsible for conveying both favorable and unfavorable news. The primary objective of diplomats was to gather intelligence on military mobilizations, the directions of army attacks, and to relay this crucial information back to their homeland (Vacarelu, 2021, p.7).

In the face of rapid technological developments and interactive relations between actors, this “art” of persuasion, in other words diplomacy, must tackle emerging topics, viewpoints and figures in issues of global scale. Apparently, “diplomacy is no longer limited to exchanges among elites, closed- door coordination of stakeholders, or administrative communication. Public diplomacy gives rise to open diplomatic communication between governments and their domestic and foreign publics” (Huang and Arceneaux, 2024, p.234).

Huang and Arceneaux (2024, p.238) underline that “the emergence of digital diplomacy represents the rise of an open diplomacy model, extending diplomacy beyond the secret and exclusive interaction of elites to include the public sphere”.

Remarking on the perception of diplomacy through traditionalist and contemporary viewpoints, Melissen (2005, p.5) states that in a traditionalist perspective, diplomacy is portrayed as a game with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the actors involved in international relations. However, this landscape does not resemble “the much more fuzzy world of postmodern

transnational relations". He also comments that current foreign service officers engage with a diverse range of interlocutors, not just their counterparts, but diverse individuals involved in diplomatic activities or affected by international politics. Therefore, he concludes that the requirements of diplomacy have evolved.

Tackling with the roles of Foreign Affairs Ministries view a view to public diplomacy or propaganda, Berridge (2010) notes that several of their tasks are routine, widely recognized and non-controversial and several of them are not novel at all. For example; supplying embassies with printed and other promotional materials for the purposes of distribution- a practice that could still be demanded despite growing Internet accessibility- as well as trainings suitable for their officers in charge of public affairs and the press, engaging with foreign correspondents located in the capital, putting out their propaganda in a direct manner, particularly through their multilingual websites in recent years, possibly funding related institutions whose audiences are mainly the future generation of leaders and influencers.

Berridge (2010, p.186) refers to Sir John Kerr, who was the British Ambassador in Washington and then served as the permanent undersecretary in the Foreign Office, commenting on opinions advocating for increased public diplomacy. Accordingly, Sir John Kerr believes that "it is a very elegant re-invention of the wheel". In other words, embassies always had this function; while they aimed to have private communication with governments, they also served to engage with broader populations and communities.

In a similar point of view, in 2012, Yakovenko noted that in those times, it frequently seemed like diplomacy shifted from the "smoke filled rooms" of international meetings to the screens of electronic devices and there was a significant discussion about the new form of public diplomacy, referred to as e-diplomacy or twiplomacy, etc.

Diplomacy has evolved significantly over time, adapting to changing circumstances and needs. In recent decades, particularly since the introduction of “Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations” in 1961, which was supplemented by the “Vienna Convention on Consular Relations” in 1963, the role and nature of diplomats have transformed. In this context, today's diplomats are markedly different from those of the past, and it is expected that future diplomats will continue to evolve in response to new challenges and developments. Actually, it is obvious that the old fashioned patterns of diplomacy has not vanished, but they are complemented by new forms and currently diplomats are equipped with digital tools to perform their crucial roles more effectively.

Manor and Pamment (2024, p.51) note that “nowadays diplomacy’s public profile is more apparent” and provide concrete examples, such as sessions of the UN Security Council aired live on Youtube, global summits that are accompanied by a wealth of offstage images featuring world leaders, etc.

Describing the tasks of a new ediplomat, Singh (2015) states that he/she must immerse into the existing cultural practices and it should not be in the form of studying exotic others but rather as emerging phenomena the codes of which are not known yet. In this way, new ediplomats could gain deeper insight into the cultural aspects. In this context, digital diplomacy tools could help understand potential but yet unknown trends.

In an online session of Q&A in 2012, William Hague, UK Foreign Secretary at the time, was asked about his opinion about digital diplomacy with a view to changing the roles of foreign ministers for better or not. Hague shared his response on the same platform, suggesting that it is a valuable way of identifying which issues attract public interest in foreign policy and it also provides the ability for direct responses (Sandre, 2013, p.31-32).

Figure 3. Former UK Foreign Secretary William Hague's Tweet on 15 May 2012 (Screenshot from Sandre, 2013, p.32)

Figure 4. Former UK Foreign Secretary William Hague's Tweet on 15 May 2012 (Screenshot from Sandre, 2013, p.32)

Sian MacLeod, then UK Ambassador to Serbia, remarks in 2020 about what she desires to make "as an online diplomat" Noting that they are still exploring the optimal ways for offline and online work in a world affected by the coronavirus, she outlines her ambitions in essence: "As an online diplomat, I want to make decision makers understand UK policies and views, promote things that are important to us, like environmental protection and media freedom, tell a wider audience about my country, and create a positive impression".

Offering perspectives through the prism of digital disruption, Manor and Pamment (2024, p.50) argue that by domestic digital diplomacy practices, diplomats are evolved into significant societal figures capable of moulding public opinion. Similar to journalists and politicians, digital disruption has turned diplomats into influential "discursive agents who can shape public perceptions and, even more importantly, rally support in favour of or against government policies." Manor and Pamment also mark that the new societal role of diplomats is amplified by

ministries of foreign affairs' (MFAs) utilization of digital technologies to engage with citizens.

According to Manor and Pamment (2024, p.47), the "disruption" in digital diplomacy goes beyond just controversial tweets or shifts in ambassadors' social media habits; it stems from "complex interplay between systemic, cultural, and professional practices".

Referring to Watson (1984, p.33), Pelling (2015, p.171) notes that the practitioners of conventional state-to-state diplomacy have expertise in power liaison, they are familiar with a competitive process that has "negotiation between political entities which acknowledge each other's independence".

However, when engaging with the public in a networked environment characterized by sharing, open-source initiatives, and collaboration, such methods might prove counterproductive. The structured formalities of official management can quell innovative and forward-thinking approaches. While the complexities of diplomatic procedures equip officials to analyze information and operate within abstract frameworks, unconventional problem-solving approaches outside formal environment sometimes confront with hesitation (Pelling, 2015, p.171).

Moreover, there are challenges arising from the conduct of diplomacy on virtual venues as well. For instance, it has been observed that "relationships built virtually are perceived to be mostly superficial, as creating new ties, and building trust opposite new peers, is much harder in virtual settings." (Bjola and Manor 2022, p.483). In other words, modern diplomats utilizing digital platforms could feel the lack of non-verbal signs from interlocutors which are possible to receive through face-to-face interactions during communications in traditional patterns of diplomacy.

While upholding traditional diplomatic practices, the ambassador has evolved into a senior public diplomat. In fact, in many instances, public diplomacy has become their major job. This shift demands communication abilities and techniques that were not essential for ambassadors just a couple of decades before (Roberts, 2007, p.50).

However, Berridge (2010, p.123) underlines that the resident embassy is still living. It has endured the advancements in communications and transportation areas, primarily because it continues to serve as a valuable tool for supporting, if not taking the lead in, the execution of crucial diplomatic tasks. It also demonstrates versatility and adaptability, supported by robust legal regime under “the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations”. Moreover, the revolution in communications has enhanced its responsiveness and ability to contribute to policy-making domestically.

Offering a fresh perspective to discussions on digital diplomacy, Manor and Kampf (2022) explore conceptual differences between “digital natives” and “digital immigrants”. They argue that scholars have yet to analyze the potential impact of generational gaps on diplomats' proficiency in utilizing digital technologies. In this context, they question whether younger diplomats, who grew up in the digital era, tend to engage more with followers and stakeholders on the social networking sites (SNS) compared to senior diplomats who grew up from an analogue age. They also raise the question whether senior diplomats exhibit a greater tendency to leverage digital tools for mapping opposition to specific foreign policies in comparison with their younger counterparts.

2.6. THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Referring to Cohen (1998, p.1) Adesina (2017, p.2) describes diplomacy as the “engine room” for maintaining international relations. It is a deep-rooted tool

employed by states in seeking interests and implementing their foreign policy goals and strategies, which also includes avoiding conflicts.

Singh (2015) refers to Buzan and Little (2000) and states that while interactional capacity that paves the way for transformation in the contemporary era has increased, there may be still limited transformational possibility. Although the volume and speed of global communications have increased, it should not be interpreted that the international system is different from the past in qualitative terms. In this context, he argues that considering the dominance of states in the system of interactions, there are not certain fundamental transformations.

According to Berridge (2010, p.253), in general, the “rejuvenation” several important aspects of traditional diplomacy has not received much attention. This is partly because new labels have been applied to old methods, and partly because people find novelty more captivating than established practices. In this regard, resident embassies still remain paramount as a nation's primary defense overseas, crucial for regular negotiations, indispensable support for special envoys, and akin to having a mind-reader towards a host government. The growing movement of people across borders has underscored the importance of consular services. In this context, Berridge (p.253) notes that propaganda, a concept that diplomats usually viewed with discomfort but eventually came to terms in the mid-20th century, has undergone a revival, reaching levels reminiscent of wartime. Rebranding it as “public diplomacy” and suggesting it is a novel concept is merely making free with transparent marketing tactics.

When it comes to the “new actors in diplomacy”, such as NGOs, Berridge argues that they are not genuinely new to the field nor are they diplomats. Instead, they are either para-diplomats or independent amateurs, possessing valuable yet restricted utility and lacking special immunities.

Adesina (2017) notes that digital diplomacy doesn't replace the conventional in-person diplomacy; instead, the two exist alongside each other, enhancing rather than competing each other. Digital diplomacy, along with internet activities in

general, can significantly aid in conveying a state's foreign policy stances to both domestic and international audiences.

Pelling (2015) notes that digital diplomacy serves as a bridge between traditional frameworks and emerging ones, facilitating diverse stakeholders to pragmatically connect in generating innovative solutions for change. He marks that those who fail to adapt to the interconnected world face the danger of lagging behind, losing trust, and consequently influence and legitimacy. However, while this managed change overlaps with conventional diplomacy, it doesn't replace it. Tradition still retains its significance, yet new approaches to exerting influence and interaction are rapidly overtaking. The hazards of maintaining the current state of affairs are probably outweighed by the potential benefits of learning by trial and error.

Cornut et al. (2022) argue that digital tools are not serving to replace physical meetings but rather to enhance them. Moreover, digital practices should be viewed as a transformation of traditional diplomacy rather than a replacement.

Similarly, Nye (2004, p.111) is also of the opinion that direct interpersonal communications stand as the most effective approach, yet their impact can be enhanced through complementary use of the Internet.

Berridge (2010) notes that recently, despite the significant expansion of multilateral diplomacy, what we have observed is not a total transformation of diplomacy but a smarter utilization of new technology and new tools to enhance traditional methods. This approach has additionally facilitated the improved integration of many economically disadvantaged and weak states into the global diplomatic framework. Overall, Berridge highlights that what exists today is not solely old or new diplomacy, but rather a synthesis of both, resulting in a mature form of diplomacy.

Bjola and Manor (2022, p.472) argue that diplomacy is on the brink of embarking upon a fresh era of digital transformation, which they describe as “hybrid diplomacy”, where both physical and virtual interactions are anticipated to merge, complement and reinforce each other. They note that for some circles, the idea of hybridity might continue to be a desirable goal, impeded by technical difficulties

and institutional barriers. It could become a custom for others, enabling them to achieve their foreign policy objectives quickly, effectively, and confidently. They argue that the shift from merely adapting to digital tools to fully embracing them, as what they call “from digital adaptation to digital adoption” is hardly linear and many diplomats are likely to position themselves somewhere in between these two scenarios.

Eugenio V. Garcia, Tech Diplomat to Silicon Valley and Deputy Consul General in San Francisco marks in a 2022 post on Beyond the Horizon that while paper communications, such as the long-standing Note Verbale sent via postal mail or courier, remain in use, the pandemic has hastened the shift towards digital alternatives. Going forward, hybrid diplomacy will blend traditional offline methods with new virtual interactions among stakeholders.

Currently, it seems that “hybrid diplomacy” has remained an essential part of diplomatic practices even though the Covid-19 pandemic subsided, and “hybridity is often used to complement face-to-face diplomacy” (Bjola & Manor, 2024, p.13)

The advent of Artificial Inteligence (AI) brings another dimension to discussions about the relevance of traditional diplomacy as AI is frequently viewed as a technology that offers a huge potential for disruption, necessitating adaptation in diplomacy. Acknowledging the aforementioned perception, DiploFoundation (2019, p.8) underlines “it is safe to say that diplomacy is here to stay”. Accordingly, diplomacy is necessary more than ever, particularly given the core questions and dilemmas raised by AI and its applications. Diplomats are essential for promoting understanding between nations with varying approaches to AI and for establishing and sustaining cross-border relationships. This includes, for instance, addressing shared perspectives, ensuring that technology is used peacefully, scientific collaboration, and ethical considerations.

2.7. SOME EXAMPLES OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY INITIATIVES

2.7.1. Technology Ambassadors: Danish Example

In the field of technology, giant companies like Google, Meta, Amazon, etc. have accumulated a size and impact which exceeds that of numerous countries. They have unparalleled influence over societal development and the daily routines of individuals. Through corporate choices determining the accessibility and timing of digital resources for nations and citizens, they frequently assume the role of de facto actors in foreign policy (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024).

Elaborating on the diplomatic role of Big Tech companies, Meldgaard and Fletcher (2024) remark on the likelihood that in forthcoming wars diplomats will be responsible for handling relationships with major technology corporations to prevent digital sanctions, while achieving victory in wars will depend on winning the minds and hearts of tech top executives.

In the face of rapidly growing role of technology companies as foreign political figures, states introduce several initiatives to address the issue. For example, they provide their diplomats with the aptitudes required to navigate the altered geopolitical landscape (Bjola & Manor, 2022).

Certainly, over the past few years, foreign ministries worldwide have institutionalized the employment of digital technologies by producing guidebooks, introducing new working procedures, and providing digital training to their diplomats (Manor & Kampf, 2022). Such initiatives even extended to the assignment of tech ambassadors.

In 2017, Denmark appointed a Tech Ambassador which made it the first country in the world to make such a designation. The station of the Ambassador was in Silicon Valley. The Danish government recognized that digital technology had turned into a “hype-object”, with its numerous and diverse effects of simultaneous nature challenging to fully grasp, with multifaceted impacts that reshape both Danish people and the international arena that Denmark has a role within. The new ambassador was tasked with a worldwide responsibility to represent the

Danish government concerning technology, engaging directly with the industry and participating in pertinent bilateral and international discussions regarding the growing impact and significance of technology. (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024).

Currently, Denmark's Tech Ambassador is tasked with representing the Danish Government to the global technology sector and in international governance forums on emerging technologies (Office of Denmark's Tech Ambassador, 2024a).

The web page of the Office of Danish Tech Ambassador (2024b) explains techplomacy approach. Accordingly, in the middle of 2017, Denmark was "the first country in the world to elevate technology and digitalization to a crosscutting foreign and security policy priority." And, this initiative was called technological diplomacy, or TechPlomacy to put it simply.

Issued in May 2024, Denmark's Foreign Affairs Ministry's Strategy for Tech Diplomacy underlines that engaging in foreign policy dialogues with the worldwide technology sector is vital for practicing tech diplomacy. By participating in diplomatic discussions, the tech diplomacy of Foreign Affairs Ministry assists to represent Denmark's interests and values as well as have an impact on global technology development. Acknowledging that technology companies are at the forefront of the growth of advanced new technologies and a significant portion of the global digital infrastructure, the strategy paper reads that the stance of Danish Government is obvious: The tech sector needs to embrace further social responsibility to align with its unparalleled impact on society. Through this strategy, the Foreign Affairs Ministry outlines the direction for the forthcoming phase of Denmark's tech diplomacy.

The strategy paper (2024) touches on following strategic priorities: "geopolitical engagement with tech industy", "responsible governance for new and critical technologies", "technology and security policy cooperation", "global norms and partnerships."

Since 2017, over twenty-five countries have reached similar conclusions as Denmark and have followed the suit to introduce formal diplomatic structures in

order to address the digital technologies and advancements that are transforming the global order. While their titles and responsibilities show differences, and they are mostly based in their respective capitals rather than in California, the overarching tendency remains obvious (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024).

In advancement of digital diplomacy efforts transnationally, Denmark and Australia collaboratively established and currently lead the international network of technology and cyber ambassadors. This network makes contribution to shaping the course of tech diplomacy and encouraging efforts from additional countries. Denmark and Australia are committed to facilitating an "Cyber and Tech Retreat" annually in Silicon Valley in this context (Strategy for Denmark's Tech Diplomacy, 2024, p.10).

In this initiative, Denmark and Australia bring together cyber and tech ambassadors from over twenty five similar minded nations annually for a series of top-tier, closed doors gatherings focusing on the effects of growing technologies on various aspects. With the goal of positioning technology up to high-level politics as well as a strategic priority, the CTR (Cyber and Tech Retreat) gathers governments, technology firms, and sectoral pioneers to deliberate on tomorrow's technologies among similar-minded figures. At the start of 2022, the group embarked on a new journey. At the annual meeting in March 2022, Australia and Denmark collectively launched a formalization of the group as the new "Global Network of Cyber and Tech Ambassadors". With the official launch of this fresh group, the community of similar minded cyber and tech ambassadors demonstrated an obvious and enduring dedication to get engagement with other governmental bodies and tech firms (Meldgaard and Fletcher, 2024).

2.7.2. The Initiatives of Swedish Foreign Affairs Ministry

Acting as arenas for both meetings and opinions with content creation through collaborative efforts, "Diplohack" and the "Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy" serve as innovative tools employed by the Swedish Ministry to engage foreign audiences and stakeholders in new manners. Simultaneously,

these initiatives equip the organization for new modes of interaction and communication (Pelling, 2015).

One year following the instructions outlined in Foreign Policy Declaration to intensify endeavors in digital diplomacy, Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) convened the inaugural "Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy (SIDD)" in 2014. Its aim was to explore the implications for diplomacy's future within an expanding landscape of digital engagement. Although the initiative was conceived as a pilot project, it generated significant interest within diplomatic circles focused on the future of digital diplomacy. It led to the formation of new connections and subsequent partnerships in the realm of communication (Pelling, 2015).

Diplohack represents another contemporary addition to the realm of digital innovation and serves as a valuable asset for institutional evolution. According to Pelling (p.177), the concept for this event emerged as a discussion between the teams of communications at the Swedish and Dutch Embassies in London. Participants provided largely positive feedback, emphasizing the necessity for innovative approaches in policymaking and outreach. The event also relevaled the availability of new methods for civil servants seeking to engage and connect in more agile manners. The hashtag #diplohack had 118,000 hits within the first week following the event.

The first Diplohack's triumph motivated Dutch embassies in Tallinn ("#DiploHack Tallinn, 2013") and Tbilisi ("DiploHack Tbilisi//UNDP Innovation Challenge, 2014"), as well as the Swedish Foreign Affairs Ministry ("Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy, 2014") and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of UK to hold similar events about various issues (Hocking & Melissen, 2015).

"Visit Sweden" is another initiative that could be viewed within the realm of digital diplomacy efforts. In 2011, Visit Sweden, Sweden's national tourism organization, in collaboration with the Swedish Institute, initiated a campaign known as "Curators of Sweden (CoS)" on Twitter, which concluded in 2018. As part of this initiative, every week, a Swedish individual was selected as a curator in order to

tweet whatever they desired through the “@Sweden” account. These curators were selected for representing the “values, skills, and ideas” that collectively represent Sweden, to put it promptly in accordance with the campaign, “all combined, makes up Sweden.” (Törngren and Ooi, 2022).

Considering that this project has supported the showcase of the diverse range of opinions and standpoints existing in Sweden through combined efforts of a variety of individuals, this initiative clearly indicates the potential as well as the deliverables when technology meets international relations.

CHAPTER 3

ADVANTAGES AND CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Considering the widespread global expansion of digital diplomacy practices, it is evident that there are abundance of benefits that digitalization offers to policy-making actors in fulfilling their tasks. In line with rapid development of technology, the advantages of digital diplomacy seem yet to increase both in terms of quality and quantity over the time.

However, at the same time, there are challenges caused by the advancement of global internet related technologies. Similar to advantages, such disadvantages also have a potential to increase and evolve in the course time, subject to technological developments.

Therefore, it is crucial to recognize the dual nature of digital technologies, given that the same tools employed by criminal entities can also be utilized by states and their allies (Meldgaard and Fletcher, 2024).

Currently, states and actors conduct international relations and fulfill their foreign policy aspirations in a domain where time is not strictly constrained and space means almost everywhere accessible via a network system. In this context, the unprecedented advancements in ICTs offer a huge potential for states and policymakers to harness digital diplomacy in their conducts.

In order to effectively handle the challenges and opportunities of this revolution in information and communication technologies, diplomacy is continually adapting. At this point, the skills and expertise of those involved are crucial in determining how fully they can leverage the potential of digital diplomacy.

On the other hand, concerns about security have historically led governments to adopt new forms of telecommunication cautiously and with significant hesitation. However, the allure of these diverse communication methods has typically prevailed in the end (Berridge, 2010, p.192-193). A recent and vivid demonstrator of such attraction is the COVID-19 pandemic during which digital communication

has become an integral part of diplomatic efforts. In a similar standpoint, Sharma and Sisodia (2021, p.62) underline that the role of digital diplomacy received very little consideration prior to the global pandemic and that today it plays a vital role in advancing a diplomatic agenda.

3.1. ADVANTAGES OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

3.1.1. Efficiency of Speed and Time

We find ourselves in an environment marked by rapid transformation that results from almost constant competition among technologies that strive to speed up processes, spanning into various fields including diplomacy that impacts individuals in myriad ways. Diplomats and politicians also benefit the advantages and of this competition.

One no longer has to rely on printed magazines, newspapers or television coverage of last minute developments to access information. News from around the globe can propagate at the speed of light. Events occurring worldwide can disseminate in fractions of a second. Moreover, international policy actors as well as individuals have the ability to follow repercussions of the events almost at the real time with their occurence.

Regarding the real time diplomacy, Hanson (2012) refers to Philip Seib from University of Southern California and notes that decision timeframes of foreign ministries and governments are constricted, following the communications revolution. Hanson also provides concrete instances that Seib tracks. For example, regarding the closure of border between East and West in Berlin on Sunday 13 August 1961 which CBS filmed, there was a significant delay before the story was finally prepared for televised broadcast, which was not until Tuesday in the US.

Currently, social media provides a kind of efficient communication tool thanks to quick and official lines between actors, which also makes contribution to public

diplomacy. Upon the State Department's announcement of the launch of Twitter account in Turkish language, Victoria Esser, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs on Digital Strategy at the US Department of State notes in a blog in 2012 that Ambassador to Turkey Mr. Ricciardone explained the rationale - the relationship between U.S. and Turkey has a high priority and that they are constantly looking for more ways where they can inform and connect with the Turkish people, adding that social media offered them "a way to do that in real time with much broader reach than we could ever hope for with traditional shoe leather public diplomacy".

At this juncture, it should not escape the attention that matter is not just about receiving the news; it's also important to recognize that those who react to the news will remain at the forefront of both diplomacy and the public eye. Diplomats and politicians have almost instantaneous access to the news. It is not just an issue of capability - "that they can make proper reaction"- but a necessity for them to react appropriately –"they must make their proper reaction"- knowing that their responses are also viewed and disseminated instantaneously and such ever-lasting cycle carries on (Lahrenn-Ilgun, 2023).

3.1.2. Cost Efficiency

In traditional conduct of diplomacy, state representatives such as embassy officials received updates and had to rely on conventional methods to pass on this information to relevant authorities. Every piece of news had to navigate through various internal channels, including different organizational tiers and structures, which could result in delays and result in expenses of infrastructure, personnel, and other resources. Thanks to digital diplomacy tools, this procedure could be achieved in a much more cost efficiently manner.

Another cost efficiency benefit is about the dissemination of information. Actors do not necessarily need an abundance of channels and extensive devices to make heard their statements, announcements, speeches, etc. They have an ability to employ social media platforms almost at no cost instead of traditional communication methods.

Through digital diplomacy tools, states can also reach people from a broad span of locations, for example in consular affairs. They can use these platforms in order to inform foreign communities about visa requirements, inform their own citizens intending to travel abroad about potential risks as well as coordinating people in emergency situations like natural disasters, conflicts, etc.

As another example, instead of opinion polling, states can directly engage with communities though social media tools in a cost effective manner, thereby paying attention to their concerns, desires, tendencies, etc.

The cost-effectiveness and time efficiency of employing social media for diplomatic purposes have presented significant advantages especially for smaller nations. As Lahrenn-Ilgun (2023) notes it has turned into “a great gift” for smaller countries, empowering them to become more active players in addressing challenges at international scale.

3.1.3. Transparency

Before the advent of social media accessibility, there was a considerable journey from the moment a diplomat or politician made a statement till its publicly release. Along this journey, despite the time and expenses involved, there were filtrations imposed to set up that statement. The same process also existed in the path from the society to the authorities. However, in recent times, there is an absence of intermediates between diplomats, politicians and their audiences both domestically and internationally, which is one of the factors contributing to the increased recognition of politicians and diplomats by the public (Lahrenn-Ilgun, 2023).

As Manor and Pamment (2024, p.51) put it, “the veil of secrecy that accompanied diplomatic activity has been partially lifted.”

Hanson (2012) underlines that in addition to travelling rapidly from nearly anywhere in the world, the information is democratized as well. He states that information is “unfiltered”, in other words, flowing freely without the traditional oversight of gatekeepers such as television editors, newspaper, radio, etc.

Such transparency and direct communication brings credibility for political actors and increases their potential for influence.

3.1.4. Accessibility

Typically, for a connection to occur between two individuals, such as diplomats or politicians, it is essential for both parties to be available at the same timeframe. However, thanks to digitalization which provided social media platforms, the notion of absence is eliminated, particularly in interactions between counterparts situated in different locations geographically. In this regard, time-zone disparities have become irrelevant (Lahrenn-Ilgun, 2023).

A vivid example with respect to accessibility is Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt's message on Twitter. In a situation where Carl Bildt faced difficulty reaching his counterpart in Bahrain through traditional communication channels, he resorted to Twitter. "Trying to get in touch with you on an issue," he tweeted to Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa. His endeavour to contact succeeded as Al Khalifa answered to Carl Bildt on the same platform without details of the topic "@carlbildt nice to hear from you to catch up on matters .. Your tweet caught the world's interest." On this matter, Bildt is reported have told the Associated Press that "It shows that in the modern world you can seek contact in modern ways." (NBC News, 2011)

As a recent experience, digital diplomacy has facilitated accesibility during the Covid-19 pandemic. Diplomats held virtual meetings via platforms like Zoom due to widespread lockdowns and quarantines. Through social media, they had the opportunity to overcome geographical barriers and reach out to their own communities, providing official information in an atmosphere filled with panic and information overload.

Remarking on the emergence of Twitter as a medium for instant feedback, constructive critique and amplification of messages from government, Sharma and Sisodia (2022) note that "as the pandemic forced the people indoors, Twitter came to the rescue of diplomats and world leaders", equipping with a platform for immediate, interactive and unmediated communication.

Similarly, global leaders and NATO officials have routinely convened virtually to rapidly address the war in Ukraine (Meldgaard & Fletcher, 2024)

3.1.5. Proper Archiving

Conventionally, a fundamental department within both public and private sectors has been the archive department, with its scale in terms of personnel and resources depending on the organization's size. Evidently, such a unit requires an adequate workforce to gather, archive, process and classify data, as well as retrieve specific information from previous records. Moreover, in addition to the need for time and budget, achieving perfect accuracy has always been challenging due to the potential for human errors or both intentional and unintentional damage that hard copies may have. With the advent of contemporary technological tools, data collection requires fewer personnel, incurs lower costs, and provides better accuracy (Lahrenn-Ilgun, 2023).

3.1.6. Direct Engagement

The rise of platforms like “Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn” has ushered in a fresh practice known as “real-time diplomacy”' where diplomats narrate and remark on global occurrences almost real time (Seib, 2012).

Maintaining extensive connections with society at large or with other diplomats and politicians is essential for the conduct of international relations. In this realm, tools of digital diplomacy have provided politicians and diplomats with the advantage of directly developing networks with counterparts and the society in general.

This advantage has contributed to their increased visibility, credibility, and accessibility compared to a time when they were primarily portrayed and broadcast through traditional media such as radio, television or other mediums.

3.1.7. Possibility to Monitor Threats and Tendencies

As politicians gained further proximity with communities, geographical differences between authorities and different segments of society evolved to become less

important compared to past practices. In this context, digital platforms such as social media applications, websites and blogs have increasingly drawn the attention of politicians and diplomats worldwide, facilitating interaction with citizens from diverse locations.

Besides providing support for politicians in fulfilling their tasks for collecting information and following events, today's digitalized media landscape also allows diplomats to monitor events at a broad scale, pinpoint influential figures and therefore anticipate potential risks and tendencies. Social media also offers avenues to extend their influence beyond traditional audiences, aiding in exchange of opinions, consultation processes and ultimately policy-making practices.

By monitoring social media platforms, states can observe and analyze various movements, which could facilitate preparation of an understandable portrayal of threats. Additionally, efforts for monitoring and tracking of radical movements and extremist groups can assist authorities in safeguarding the state against both domestic and international threats (Lahrenn-Ilgun, 2023).

3.2. CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

3.2.1. Lack of Possibility to Modify or Delete Posts

While it seems almost out of possibility to completely remove an online message, it is quite easy to make errors. A single tweet or blunder can have repercussions and detrimental effects for an extended period.

A vivid example from among blunders on social media platforms is the tweet of Swedens's former foreign minister Carl Bildt. Tweeting that "Leaving Stockholm and heading for Davos. Looking forward to World Food Program dinner tonight. Global hunger is an urgent issue!", Bildt tarnished his reputation as the notion of global hunger would not suit well to the dinner (Koebrugge, 2018).

Referring to Clase (2014), Pelling (2015) mentions that there's a sentiment that as a diplomat, one can afford to make mistakes, but “not the wrong kind of mistakes”. At this juncture, both the likelihood and magnitude of mistakes could rapidly increase in a digital landscape of international relations.

3.2.2. Changing Hierarchy

According to Hanson (2012a), technologies that provide connection spearheaded big changes in certain areas, one of which is about the changing hierarchies and emerging new actors. Hanson refers to the remarks of Alec Ross, Senior Advisor of Secretary Clinton for Innovation, stating that:

> So I think that part of what connection technologies do, is they take power away from the nation state and large institutions and give it to individuals and small institutions. And so very big companies and very big governments are often times those which are most roiled, which are most disrupted, by connection technologies. Because what it does is it puts power in the hands of individuals that was previously unimaginable. (p.7)

From another perspective, Rawnsley underlines that digital platforms make “source”, “content provider”, “mediator”, as well as “consumer” unclear as we are encouraged by smart phones to make re-editing, re-framing, commenting, etc. before passing information and news stories along the networks. He adds that “the plurality of voices flowing through networks in an overcrowded information space can constrain the state’s power to manage and restrict narratives… though it can be difficult to secure the free movement of information and prevent government interference” (Rawnsley, 2024, p.71)

Referring to Swedish diplomat Jon Åström Gröndahl (2014), Pelling (p.173) highlights that diplomats, frequently originating from competitive backgrounds, are high achievers, that is they are accustomed to teamwork as well as to negotiations and formally representing their governments. However, to effectively engage with networks, a more informal and cooperative manner may be necessary.

Depicting a similar approach, former British Ambassador to Lebanon, Fletcher remarks in 2012 that definitely “in the past we could meet people, do traditional media, map influence, engage civil society. But social media changes the context completely – we no longer have to focus solely on the elites to make our case, or to influence policy.”, which he describes as “exciting, challenging and subversive”.

Meldgaard and Fletcher (2024) argue that in today's diplomatic landscape, power is undergoing a resurgence of shifting and diffusing once more. In the event that diplomats fail to position themselves where power resides, they become “simply slow journalists with smaller audiences”.

Nye also draws attention to changing hierarchy in international relations. According to him, rapid technological developments, in other words information revolution, form virtual communities and networks that transcend national boundaries. Transnational institutions and non-governmental entities, including terrorist groups, will exert greater influence in this context. Many of these figures will possess their own soft power, attracting citizens into coalitions that span across national borders. Thus, politics becomes partly a contest for appeal, legitimacy, and credibility (Nye, 2004, p.31).

3.2.3. Lack of Shelter/ Bareness of Politicians

While any piece of information could spread within minutes or even seconds of its occurrence on digital platforms, such swift communication could turn into a disadvantage for politicians and diplomats in the event that they make mistakes.

Lahrenn-Ilgun (2023) marks that social media becomes “brutally merciless as it doesn’t give any chance to delete, censor, hide or modify anything that was published even a second before.” Therefore, in a way, politicians and diplomats could find themselves exposed to public observation and even that from their peers without any protective shield or cover.

Although this aspect of social media applies to every user, it could become a challenge for politicians and diplomats as they are under the constant watch of

global audience. A false statement or single mistake has the potential to permanently harm their careers.

3.2.4. Anonymity and Fake Accounts

Until very recently, conventional media like radios, televisions, printed magazines and newspapers were employed by foreign policy actors in order to make statements and share opinions on current developments. Identifiable individuals were involved in dissemination process of information through such channels. However, in today's steadily digitalizing media landscape, anonymous individuals could easily share information, whether fake or real, as well as make comments on a wide array of topics. On such a slippery ground, posts of official authorities on social media platforms face the risk of many types of reactions from anonymous or fake accounts, operators of which are quite difficult to trace.

In this context, Yakovenko (2012) takes “the culture of anonymity” as another hurdle for e-diplomacy as individuals can assume various identities, addresses, and even launch attacks against others. Such interlocutors should not be ignored and they adhere to a distinct set of rules. However, this approach is not a good option for those engaged in public diplomacy. Clarity of messages is essential.

Moreover, the anonymity culture can result in complex crises due to the dissemination of conflicting or even false information. This widespread disinformation online can impede leaders' efforts to effectively address ensuing crises (Rashica, 2018).

3.2.5. Misinformation/Disinformation

Regarding the negative aspect of digital diplomacy, Bjola and Pamment (2019) remark on the “dark side” of it, referring to the employment of digital technologies as devices for disinformation and propaganda by actors in order to advance strategic interests, and they note that it has grown to a degree where it has started bring significant effects on the global order.

The abundance of information, viewpoints, coupled with round-the-clock accessibility enabled by digital tools make it indispensable for individuals to verify information through credited sources. As it becomes increasingly difficult to assess the sources and decide whether they offer accurate or fake news, credibility – which is of paramount importance for soft power- emerges as a key pillar to boost. According to Rawnsley (2024), trust as well as discourses concerning it are the “currencies of modern power”.

According to Sanders, considering the vast amount of information now available, capturing the audience's attention has become harder and the audience resides “within its subdivided information niches.” At this juncture, a paradox concerning the web emerges “being able to reach everyone with everything has made it more difficult to reach anyone who does not already agree” and in this context utilizing the web “for information of doubtful accuracy has raised the entire audience’s skepticism toward anything it sees in that medium” (Sanders, 2018, p.15).

In a similar approach, Lahrenn-Ilgun (2023) notes that the ease of generating and disseminating information on social media has dual implications, in other words “two sharp edges”, and this feature has the potential to become as much harmful as beneficial.

3.2.6. Time Pressure

Time management is a crucial component in fulfilling diplomatic tasks. In a digital foreign policy landscape surrounded by shrinking boundaries of space and time, diplomats could become challenged by growing time pressure.

According to Hanson (2012), every progress that has decreased the duration of information flow between points has added pressure on decision time frames of diplomats. He also notes that in such a “super-saturated” information landscape, there will be some situations where foreign ministries find it exceedingly difficult to stay abreast of events.

Eggeling and Adler-Nissen (2024, p.106) argue that “unlike before, the digital context does not reward the patient diplomat, the one who can resist the urge to

respond immediately” and according to them such an argument takes “successful negotiations as depending on pragmatism and a sense of timing, knowing when views have matured enough for agreements to be made.”

Moreover, in situations that require decision-making, foreign policy actors could also have difficulties to satifsy their needs for a “space to think”, far from the eyes of the public and effects of virtual environments (Hillebrandt and Novak, 2016).

3.2.7. Potential for Rapid Brand Damage

Hanson (2012) draws attention to another challenge stemming from connection technologies for those involved in foreign policy, which is the potential for rapidly occurring incidents that could damage a nation's reputation. In his viewpoint, this trend is fueled by the fact that journalists across various nations prefer to use social media as a basis for instant news updates and as a tool for gauging public responses to events. In this context, he states that occurrences which previously might have escaped notice beyond a small group of people now possess the capacity to escalate on a global scale, resulting in significant economic setbacks and even loss of life. He notes that “single event that might previously have been reported in only limited circles can now explode into a media firestorm that can have real costs in lives, standing and money”

In this context, elaborating on resilience capability of the U.S., Hanson mentions three components which are “real-time monitoring”, identification and cultivation of key online influencers” and “capability to speak (and engage) directly with a mass audience.”

He notes that these three elements together represent an early-stage resilience capacity that could enable the State to swiftly detect social media discussions with the potential to influence national interests, to directly present their case to a broad online audience, and to engage with and explain their viewpoint to significant online influencers.

3.2.8. Cyber Crime and Hacking

Cybercrime is a type of criminal activity targeting computer systems and networks globally. It encompasses crimes conducted in electronic environments, including attacks on computer data and intellectual property. Cybercrime encompasses various activities such as computer fraud, unauthorized access to other people's computer systems, information theft and misuse of computer services, software piracy, sabotage, terrorism involving computers, and internet-related crimes like online payment scams (Simic, 2021).

These intentional breaches have a potential to target governments, politicians, high-ranking diplomats, etc. or their organizations in order to harm their objectives, plans or disclose their sensitive agendas.

From another perspective, Eggeling and Adler-Nissen (2024, p.106) note that it could also be challenging for negotiations, stating that "disinformation/ misinformation propagation on social media might also lead to negotiation difficulties if the greater public believes a particular narrative about reality on the ground."

Malevolent individuals or entities adept in information technologies can easily attack the basic infrastructures, software, etc. of their targets. In this regard, diplomats and politicians must be wary of cyber attacks.

3.3. ARTIFICAL INTELLIGENCE FOR DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

The initial efforts to implement artificial intelligence began in the 1950s at Dartmouth College, where researchers aimed to show that machines could handle complex logical tasks (Hamidouche, 2021). John McCarthy, a Professor of Computer Science at Stanford University, had been exploring the development of systems with human-level intelligence since 1948 and introduced the term "Artificial Intelligence" in 1955 (Professor John McCarthy website, Stanford Computer Science).

In the early 1980s, the Fifth Generation Computer System Project by Japan was launched, which spurred the widespread prevalence of expert systems as novel tools for decision-making with AI assistance (Hamidouche, 2021). Following many “seasons of hope and despair”, the advent of deep learning and neural networks in the late 1990s sparked a new wave of enthusiasm for AI and increased optimism about its potential applications across various fields, including diplomacy (Bjola, 2019).

According to John McCarthy (2007), Artificial Inteligence is “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programs”. It involves a comparable effort to use computers to comprehend human intelligence, however, AI is not restricted to techniques that are biologically observable.

There are numerous definions for the Artificial Intelligence. In this regard, description of AI at the European Parliament website could provide a fresh insight into the perceptions in a more recent context. The website with a last update in June 2023 illustrates every day and potential use of Artificial Intelligence and underlines that AI is poised to become a “defining future technology”. The web page reads that artificial intelligence is “the ability of a machine to display human-like capabilities such as reasoning, learning, planning and creativity.”

Artificial intelligence has a great potential to influence societies and individuals in both beneficial and detrimental ways. It can offer significant advantages and

opportunities, yet also carry substantial risks and potential destructive impacts. Therefore, it has a huge capacity to profoundly alter traditional approaches and values, even extending to impact the boundaries of space and time.

In recent decades, societies have experienced unprecedented change, driven by rapid advancements in digitalization, artificial intelligence, machine learning, etc. These technologies are revolutionizing everyday communication and significantly impacting international relations and the practice of diplomacy in many ways.

The diplomatic services of nations have recognized the value of this increasing volume of information. Thanks to the growing volume of information gathered by support of the ICTs, the documentation available for various foreign policy analyses enhanced, providing significantly broader horizons to comprehend geopolitical issues as well as making predictions.Storing vast amounts of information within the algorithms of electronic machines marked the transition to the next phase of mechanical cognition: the development of Artificial Intelligence (Vacarelu, 2021).

Commissioned by the “Policy Planning and Research Unit” at the Finnish MFA, a DiploFoundation report in 2019 offers an overview of how diplomacy has evolved within the realm of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and makes a distinction that Artificial Intelligence 1) as a diplomatic topic, 2) as a diplomatic tool and 3) as a factor that affects the context in which diplomacy occurs. The report elaborates on the abovementioned aspects as follows (DiploFoundation, 2019, p.6):

- As a diplomatic topic, AI is relevant to numerous discussions. It is pertinent to areas such as the economy, business, security, democracy, human rights, and ethics.
- AI as a diplomatic tool examines how AI can assist in the diplomacy functions and daily tasks of diplomats. It's crucial to recognize that AI is not a goal in itself but is beneficial only as it can effectively aid diplomats in their work.

- As a factor that affects the context in which diplomacy occurs, AI could emerge as a defining technology of our era, influencing economic, social, and political outcomes. Depending on the ability of countries to effectively utilize the technology, shifts in military and economic balances could emerge.

Moreover, the report also notes that the connection between AI and diplomacy can be outlined similarly to the science diplomacy case as well. In this case, a three part framework appears: the First of them is “diplomacy for AI” which highlights that diplomacy can support AI research by encouraging international cooperation and bolstering existing institutions. The second one “AI for diplomacy” suggests the possibility that scientific collaboration internationally in AI field can enhance relations between countries, with diplomatic cooperation helping to build connections when official relations are strained. And the final one, “AI in diplomacy” aligns with the notion of AI functioning as a tool for diplomacy. In this regard, further insights gained from AI applications can enhance foreign policy decision-making (DiploFoundation, 2019, p.6).

AI can be an effective tool for helping diplomats handle, analyze, or investigate large volumes of text. It could help diplomats better adapt to the changing conditions of the geopolitical landscape where they navigate, leaving more space to communicate effectively with international audiences and analyze their sentiment, design a potential route for multilateral negotiations, and develop engagement strategies to address latest developments amidst emerging dynamics.

Moreover, consular services could be an accessible opportunity for AI integration in diplomacy. The decisions involved could be suited for digitization, the analytical input is fairly relevant, and the technology enhances cooperation between the machine and users. Actually, consular services depend on well-structured decisions, as they to a great extent involve repetitive tasks governed by consistent and established procedures, which do not require consideration as novel at each time for a decision, except for the times of crises. In this regard, AI-

enhanced consular services could incorporate both “declarative knowledge (know-what) and procedural knowledge (know-how)” to automate routine tasks and scaffold human cognition by decreasing cognitive endeavours (Manor, 2019).

Definitely, as witnesses of the global agenda, events and their ramifications along with growing tendencies of communities at first hand as part of their tasks, diplomats can utilize newly emerging digital tools to enhance their diplomatic efforts while reporting on developments from their perspectives, contributing to national interests.

By analyzing and categorizing the messages collected by Artificial Intelligence—whether they are friendly, negative, neutral, etc.—more targeted and impactful diplomatic actions can be implemented. This approach can effectively reach a broad voting population, potentially influencing their behavior and even affecting the outcomes of various elections (Vacarelu, 2021).

Modern technology aids diplomats in fulfilling their essential duties, contributing to understanding and maneuvering endeavours within a complex and dynamic environment. However, they must make necessary fundamental choices between rational and irrational aspects while assessing, interpreting and operating in support of such technological assistance. Therefore it is inevitable that diplomats will be resting on various factors such as cultural and ethical characteristics as well as their personal background while deciding on the volume of such support.

In this context, employing Artificial Intelligence in diplomatic endeavours also comes with challenges. Heavily resting on ethical considerations such as transparency, privacy and credibility, there is a pressing need to introduce norms, guidelines, regulations and similar mechanisms to address the complications relevant to the usage of AI in many spheres, including diplomacy initiatives as well.

Therefore, diplomats now have the responsibility of establishing “offline normative frameworks” for the utilization of advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) (Meldgaard and Fletcher, 2024).

Artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and the advent of 6G are evolving beyond simple hardware and software; they are becoming significant markers and platforms in the realm of great power politics. In the meantime, cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns call for states to demonstrate determination in the digital sphere (Bjola, 2018; Bjola and Pamment, 2019).

Overall, the AI emerges as an increasingly important topic on agendas of governments and actors. It involves navigating a complex interplay of economic, social, political, and technological spheres. Apparently, advancement in AI will come both with its advantages and challenges for digital diplomacy endavaours.

CONCLUSION

Diplomacy has been continuously evolving with new approaches, methods, and tools reshaping the patterns in international relations. Classical diplomacy has given way to modern practices, and along with it has emerged new concepts like soft power and public diplomacy. Advancing technologies and improved communication methods have further driven this evolution.

Contemporarily, rapid advancements in information and communications technologies (ICTs) have facilitated unprecedented accessibility for states, institutions, and individuals alike. In this context, international relations actors use the internet and digital platforms for a wider engagement, deeper interactions, effective communication, and opinion sharing with targeted communities. The Covid-19 pandemic has also accelerated the shift of diplomatic activities by states, international organizations, and foreign policy figures into the digital realm, increasing the prominence of digital diplomacy.

In view of the growing significance and prevalence of digital diplomacy in international relations and foreign policy conducts of states, this thesis aimed to make contributions to the efforts for comprehending digital diplomacy and provide insights into its role and effectiveness in the conduct of diplomacy.

Exploring the evolution of diplomacy and the progress towards digital diplomacy, this study also strived to portray the interaction between soft power, public diplomacy and digital diplomacy amidst the increasing number of actors and agendas in a digitally surrounded diplomatic landscape.

Throughout the research on varying definitions and relevant concepts accompanying digital diplomacy as part of this study, it has been concluded that digital diplomacy is a complex and multifaceted concept, with varying descriptions reflecting different perspectives. Moreover, related terms are often used interchangeably, highlighting both similarities and differences, which complicates the portrayal of a coherent framework.

Regardless of whether definitions of digital diplomacy focus on tools, practitioners, or diplomatic topics, digital advancements are poised to transform our daily routines and processes in the coming decades. Therefore, the ultimate impact and concepts surrounding digital diplomacy would be shaped by its practical application and technological advancements.

Foreign policy practitioners use the latest communication and information technologies to achieve their objectives by via digital diplomacy tools. Currently, such tools are effective for engaging digital communities, however, both their quality and quantity would improve in light of developments in ICTs. Supporting actors in achieving diplomatic objectives via available tools, essentially, digital diplomacy shares similar goals with traditional diplomacy. It can be used for various purposes, including supporting public diplomacy, managing knowledge and information, handling consular affairs, facilitating communications, and responding to disasters. Additionally, it could be leveraged to enhance and maintain a positive image, protect state interests, and advance foreign policy goals.

Above all, there is an apparent need for the states to move away from traditional understandings of diplomacy patterns and embrace transformative attitudes. Otherwise, taking diplomacy and its instruments merely in an old fashioned manner could prevent adeqaute apprehension of the changing and interacting nature of actors and their route of actions. At this juncture, states differ significantly in their capabilities, expertise, approaches, strategies, and readiness to embrace digital diplomacy. Some states with advanced resources recognize the importance and growing potential of digitalization, therefore more switfly integrate digital diplomacy in their diplomatic endeavours.

Digital diplomacy comes with both advantages and disadvantages. In essence, dual-use of digital platforms could result in both positive and negative developments. While digital tools can be used positively by states and their allies to connect global communities, they can also be exploited by malicious actors to undermine social and political structures. Increasingly integrating into our daily

routines in many forms varying from smart home devices to self-driving vehicles and intelligent structures, artificial intelligence emerges another topic in this realm. AI holds a significant potential to affect societies and individuals in both positive and negative ways. While it could provide considerable benefits and opportunities, it could pose significant risks and possible harmful effects.

Currently, states increasingly benefit digital diplomacy to achieve their ambitions and objectives. In an environment transformed by constant technological developments, the relevance of traditional diplomacy is questioned as well. Conventional diplomatic manners which are typically more structured, predictable and inexplicit still bring value for states in their diplomatic endeavours while actors also resort to digital diplomacy efforts.

Digital diplomacy has provided great contributions to the conduct of international relations. Complementing the long-standing practices and enhancing the existing perspectives, it has supported the efforts for mutual information exchange and interaction. In awareness of potential risks and gains, digital diplomacy could be employed in support of traditional diplomacy methods to achieve the gains.

In this context, it has been concluded that digital diplomacy is yet to evolve and further supplement traditional diplomacy efforts by bringing substantial changes to traditional diplomacy methods, enhancing the long-lasting patterns of diplomacy conduct. Relying on centuries-old statecraft and personal interactions, traditional diplomacy still remains important and that the future of diplomacy is likely to see a blend of traditional diplomacy and digital diplomacy, effectively integrating new technologies and tools into conventional patterns in a hybrid form.

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Tarih:02/10/2024

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