

The Public Diplomacy of Federated Entities
Excavating the Quebec Model

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Abstract

Like a tide, calls for reducing the barriers to entry into public diplomacy are coming thick and fast. Waiting in the wings are federated entities, hoping to further their international influence and quests for distinctiveness and self-affirmation. Despite the increasing interest, however, the public diplomacy of most federated entities is becoming bogged down in the embryonic stages: a borderline activity of 'image-building' or 'nation-branding', and traditional 'sub-state' or so-called 'paradiplomacy'. This is true not only in practice, but also in the current research, which this paper aims to amend. The paper intends to broach a topic that has so far seemed to fly under the radar of scholarly attention. In so doing, it is not necessary to begin anew, but to take one's cue from leading examples in the field and strive to expand upon them. Particular interest is taken in the Quebec case: busy creating a distinct profile for public diplomacy, and alluding to a welcoming climate for a more normative-inspired model. This exploratory paper sets out an overview of the public diplomacy of Quebec's ministry of international relations, examines strengths and stumbling blocks, and interprets them for federated entities in the light of new evolutions in the field of public diplomacy. The paper suggests that despite significant discourse on public diplomacy development, major reforms remain in the realm of theory.

Introduction: Getting up to Speed*

Diplomatic Makeovers and Federated Entities' Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy as solely the stomping ground of nation-states is an outmoded model. Scholars in a myriad of fields have developed multiple arguments for the reduction of barriers to entry into public diplomacy, with a wider spectrum of actors, both sub- and non-state, which overreach the old national elites. Somewhat eclectically, these arguments run the gamut of referring to tendencies and new paradigms, to emphasizing profound shifts in the patterns of societies that national diplomatic establishments represent.¹

*) This paper builds further upon research (2008) conducted by the author as a research fellow at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations "Clingendael", Diplomatic Studies Programme.

1) Tendencies such as societization, democratization, localization, and mainstreaming; paradigms such as network relational and noopolitik; and societal changes, such as network society and horizontal world. See, for example, M. Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); G. Cowan and N.J. Cull (eds), 'Public Diplomacy in a Changing World', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, issue 616 (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, March 2008); R. Higgot et al., *Non-State Actors and Authority in the Global System* (London: Routledge, 2000); B. Hocking, *Localizing Foreign policy: Non-central Governments and Multilayered Diplomacy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993); P. Kiehl, 'The Case for Localized Public Diplomacy', in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 212–225; M. Rose, 'The Medium-Term Future of Public Diplomacy', paper presented for the British Council, 2006; J. Wang, 'Localizing Public Diplomacy: The Role of Sub-National Actors in Nation Branding', in *Place Branding*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2006, pp. 32–42; S. Riordan, 'Dialogue-based

A theoretical mantra praising what is called a ‘new’, or ‘twenty-first century’ public diplomacy² essentially argues for the re-emergence of ‘public networking’ over ‘government communication’. It entails not so much a shift in, but rather a reworking of, public diplomacy’s core components in reaction to an evolving environment. The advocated makeovers are morphing into a self-fulfilling prophecy, with public diplomacy’s dominant models and standards questioned, and national governments being hard-pressed to move off the beaten track.

Today’s perception of public diplomacy is thus squeezed between new and old, theory and practice, rhetoric and reality, ideals and actuality. Despite policy-makers’ continued reliance on status quo models, several scholars are forging ahead with the theoretical concept of a multi-actor, advisory, network relation, collaboration and dialogue-oriented model as a refined revision of a widely practised, hierarchical state-centred, policy-driven, advocacy, information model. Even though these more normatively and pragmatically oriented stances coexist in a seemingly hierarchical way, the first envisions a more idealized image, while the empirical pursuit warns against purely theoretical leaps in the former as it predominantly highlights the facts of the day, the hurdles to encounter, and exploits ambiguities.

It is not this paper’s intent to reproduce the theoretical debate on public diplomacy models and related concepts. Yet, to dull the edge of this conceptual discourse, and given the fact that many of the practices fall into grey areas, it is worth noting that public diplomacy—loosely defined as ‘the involvement of public opinion in foreign policy’—can be made operational from both stances.³ Moreover, and given the risk of oversimplification, these

Public Diplomacy: A New Foreign Policy Paradigm?’, in J. Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations* (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 180–195; and D. Ronfeldt and J. Arquilla, ‘Noopolitik: A New Paradigm for Public Diplomacy’, in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor, *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 352–367.

- 2) See, for instance, J. Melissen, ‘The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice’, pp. 3–27, and B. Hocking, ‘Rethinking the “New” Public Diplomacy’, pp. 28–46, both in J. Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations* (New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); J. Melissen, ‘Public Diplomacy between Theory and Practice’, in J. Noya (ed.), *The Present and Future of Public Diplomacy: A European Perspective* (Madrid: Real Instituto Elcano, 4 December 2006), pp. 11–15.
- 3) On the one hand, public diplomacy, more often than not, boils down to government representatives (mostly of the ministry of foreign affairs fulfilling the role of dominant communicator) informing and sensitizing a clearly defined group of foreign opinion leaders about existing foreign policy documents on a reactive, ad-hoc and short-term basis in order to influence and advocate national identity-based and instrumental interests. On the other hand, a more ambitious vision, as often promoted in theory, stresses the importance of a plethora of actors (including sub- and non-state) engaging, face-to-face as well as virtually, both domestic and foreign civil society in foreign policy networking and coalition-building on a proactive, medium and reciprocal long-term basis.

stands can be useful for putting the public diplomacy of federated entities into perspective. Several authors have already done so, albeit more indirectly.⁴

Bluntly put, there is a view that in the long term, the predominant models of public diplomacy could use federated entities' insights to adapt to change in diplomatic practice, especially if the latter are not opting out of the alternative path of a future of 'societized' public diplomacy in order to copy prevailing (state- and policy-centred) models. The assumption behind this conjecture is briefly that 'newcomers' on the public diplomacy scene can benefit from national governments' alleged 'law of the braking lead'.⁵ They have not committed themselves to former public diplomacy standards, which were once at the forefront, but have not been modified to the current evolving environment, and hence could be a hindrance to further progress. Newcomers can build further upon the available knowledge base (predecessors' trials and tribulations), initially to avoid similar problems in adapting to diplomatic overhauls.

Among these 'entrants' are federated entities. A mixture of the increased democratization of foreign policy, the ongoing impact of federalism, decentralization, and the expansion of international activity into spheres heretofore reserved for national units, has enhanced their international exposure.⁶ Especially within the context of the so-called 'third wave in sub-state diplomacy', which includes organizational changes, a strategic reorientation of priorities and the integration of foreign policy instruments,⁷ the idea of developing public diplomacy gains credence among federated

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- 4) To mention just a few, Melissen argues that other actors (agile small nations and regions or fast-moving third-party actors) can actually overshadow the 600 pound gorillas of international politics who continue to act solely as message-sending machines playing the ineffective role of guardians of national identity (paraphrased quote from Melissen's keynote speech 'Options for Public Diplomacy' (22 January 2008) at the British Council conference entitled 'Scotland's Place in the World' in Edinburgh). Another quote that is potentially relevant to sub-states such as federated entities is the one by Ronfeldt and Arquilla, who reason that the states that emerge strongest in information-age terms—even if by traditional measures they may appear to be smaller, less powerful states—are likely to be the states that learn to work conjointly with the new generation of non-state actors (see Ronfeldt and Arquilla, 'Noopolitik', p. 356).
 - 5) See J. Romein, '*De Dialektiek van de Vooruitgang*', in *Forum*, no. 4, 1935. The translated title of the essay, 'The Dialectics of Progress' by Dutch historian Jan Romein, describes this process, and is literally translated as 'the law of the braking lead'.
 - 6) See R. Vengroff and J. Rich, 'Foreign Policy by Other Means: Paradiplomacy and the Canadian Provinces', in P. James, N. Michaud and M.J. O'Reilly (eds), *Handbook of Canadian Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), pp. 105–132.
 - 7) D. Crikemans, 'Are the Boundaries between Paradiplomacy and Diplomacy Watering Down?', 2nd Global International Studies Conference entitled 'Paradiplomacy and the Changing Frameworks of Diplomacy', 23–26 July 2008, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

entities, which is partly exhibited through the increasing number of conferences⁸ on this topic.

After all, public diplomacy allows sub-national governments in federal states to adapt the conduct of their foreign policy to contemporary realities. It empowers them to influence and shape the international agenda in ways that go beyond their (very) limited hard-power resources and their vulnerability and remoteness in political-economic terms,⁹ while simultaneously permitting them to add value to their quests for internal and external distinctiveness and to increase positive conceptions of their uniqueness.

Notwithstanding the increased interest, and mushrooming studies on sub-state or paradiplomacy (the diplomacy of non-central governments) and nation-branding, federated entities cannot base their development of a public diplomacy that goes beyond the realm of brands and image-building, traditional diplomacy and prevailing state-centred information models, and studies specific to this field.

This exploratory paper intends to initiate debate on a topic that has so far not received the level of attention from mainstream scholarship that it merits. It seeks to move the public diplomacy of federated entities, and research it, from the periphery to the centre. To this end, it is necessary to rely on leading examples in the field and strive to expand upon them instead of starting anew.

For this reason the paper excavates the Quebec case, because this Canadian province seems to be slightly ahead of others. Among federated entities, the Ministry of International Relations of Quebec (MIRQ) can be seen as exemplary: one of the few to have institutionalized public diplomacy into a separate division, with associated activities. Besides, Quebec's international policy of 'Working in Concert', and associated strategic and action plans, suggest optimal conditions for a more normative-oriented network model of public diplomacy. Developing and securing a place within networks of influence with a view to forming alliances with partners, and reaping benefits in the international arena, is one of the MIRQ's well-established approaches¹⁰.

By virtue of an interpretive analysis of primary empirical data gathered in the field, the paper's first part elucidates MIRQ's conceptualized and

8) For instance, the public diplomacy symposium entitled 'Scotland's Place in the World' (January 2008) of the British Council, in cooperation with the Scottish government's Europe, External Affairs and Culture Directorate; the seminar entitled 'Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of Flanders' (September 2008) organized by the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs; and the seminar entitled 'Foreign and External Relations of Federated Entities' (September 2008), co-organized by the Conference of European Regions with Legislative Power and the Forum of Federations in Brussels.

9) See also A.N. Mohamed, 'The Diplomacy of Micro-States', Discussions Papers in Diplomacy (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael', 2006).

10) MIRQ, DIDP, *Public Diplomacy* (April 2009), p.2.

conducted public diplomacy, and its stumbling blocks. Given that there are no hard-and-fast rules, no one-size-fits-all solutions, and bearing in mind premature judgement and the limitations of generalizing case studies' results, a tentative diagnosis for federated entities in light of new evolutions in the field of public diplomacy is deduced from the observed data in the paper's second part. The conclusions follow.

Quebec's Public Diplomacy

A Three-Track Public Diplomacy

Quebec's public diplomacy follows three tracks: identity-based; institutionalized; and domestic public diplomacy. The first has been present for more than 40 years in the Quebec government's activities aimed at reaching influential networks to promote Quebec's identity-based and functional interests in various fields of its juridical competence. The second track is the recent institutionalization of public diplomacy in a dedicated division of the MIRQ. Although Quebec's public diplomacy division gives priority to its international dimension, the third track is domestic public diplomacy, which means involving domestic citizens in foreign policy.

These tracks work symbiotically. One can see a chronological evolution in their development. Institutionalized public diplomacy is being developed in synch with the existing fragmented identity-based one. The domestic counterpart is developed at a more mature stage as an 'afterthought', or necessary condition, of public diplomacy's international dimension. Each phase of the genesis of Quebec's public diplomacy is ongoing and has its own characteristics.

Identity-based Peripheral Public Diplomacy

An identity-based public diplomacy, as the adjective suggests, is founded on its cultural identity, and is peripheral and fragmented in nature. It equals 'an international public diplomacy of self-confirmation centred on cultural

identity'. Bélanger¹¹ argues that the key to an understanding of Quebec's paradiplomacy is the linkage between international access and recognition, and identity affirmation. Although public diplomacy does not equal government-to-government diplomacy, the same key can be used to unlock the rationale behind Quebec's public diplomacy. An identity-based public diplomacy is a way of promoting the Quebec government's 'wished' identity among both domestic and foreign publics.

This desired identity matches a distinct society of a modern, secularized, open nation, with the French cultural model as a reference point instead of the North American one. Its root is the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine '*du prolongement externe des compétences interne du Québec*',¹² which anchored the rationale, based not just on constitutionality but on identity, for autonomous international action for Quebec within Canada's constitutional dualism in international relations.¹³ Until now, the doctrine reflects the fundamental guidelines of Quebec's international policy and resounds in the current international politic and affiliated public diplomacy initiatives.

The majority of such public diplomacy activities thus have to be understood within Quebec's historical domestic political context, and have long been developed around themes associated with multilateral endeavours such as '*la francophonie*' and cultural diversity. The most obvious and recent are the sensitizing actions in and outside of Quebec around the 12th Francophonie Summit, and on cultural diversity within UNESCO. Regarding the first, in 2008, in cooperation with non-state actors, the MIRQ supported conferences related to the meaning, scope and added value of *la francophonie* (such as '*400 ans de Francophonie*' in April 2008; and '*XII^o Congrès mondial de la Fédération internationale des professeurs français*' in July 2008).¹⁴

As to the latter, since 1998, Quebec's public diplomacy efforts have consisted of rallying key stakeholders and securing their support in educating

11) L. Bélanger, 'The Domestic Politics of Quebec's Quest for External Distinctiveness', in *American Review of Canadian Studies*, vol. 32, summer 2002, pp. 195–214.

12) The Gérin-Lajoie doctrine, a reference point of the ministry of international relations' operation, is named after the famous plea of Canadian education minister Paul Gérin-Lajoie on 12 April 1965. For more information, see N. Michaud, 'La doctrine Gérin-Lajoie: évolution d'un cadre de référence', pp. 79–98; S. Simard, 'L'illusion de la doctrine Gérin-Lajoie', pp. 275–279; and D. Turp, 'La doctrine Gérin-Lajoie et l'émergence d'un droit québécois des relations internationales', pp. 49–79, in S. Paquin (ed.), *Les Relations Internationales du Québec depuis la Doctrine Gérin-Lajoie (1965–2005)* (Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2006).

13) For more information on Canada's constitutional ambivalence in the field of international relations, see K.R. Nossal, S. Roussel and S. Paquin, *Politique Internationale et Défense au Canada et au Québec* (Montreal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2007); and N. Carter and P. James, 'Grab the Signatures and Run: Federal Unity Strategy in Canada from the Referendum to Patriation', in *International Political Sociology*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2009, 194–217.

14) MIRQ, Direction des communications, 'Sommet de la Francophonie: Plan de communication', 2008. <http://www.sommet-francophonie.org/en/>.

other governments. The cultural diversity coalitions' international liaison committee undertook various initiatives aimed at promoting arguments in favour of an international legal instrument. The International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity, with headquarters in Montreal, together with Quebec's permanent representative within the Canadian Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, continues to take concrete steps to implement the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.¹⁵

One cannot exclude the possibility that a similar scenario will unfold on the road to the 2009 United Nations conference in Copenhagen over the ongoing debate on climate change. The concerted efforts within Quebec's government, with the MIRQ fulfilling its role of coordinator, are likely to produce a succession of varied public diplomacy-related activities.

Second, as the aforementioned examples partly illustrate, an identity-based public diplomacy is peripheral and fragmented in nature. 'The involvement of public opinion in foreign policy' is not an aim in itself, but a positive side effect of identity-based and functional interests that are developed on the margins of, and spread over, different activities of different actors: participants such as divisions of the ministry of international relations, other ministries, foreign representatives, cities and municipalities and non-state actors. Initiatives are used as anchors for public diplomacy, such as cooperation agreements, colloquia, conferences, forums, exhibitions, events, apprenticeship programmes and exchange projects.

To illustrate, within the MIRQ, public diplomacy activity can be thought of as being developed in the margins of youth apprenticeship programmes and exchange projects of the *Office franco-québécois pour la jeunesse*, the *Office Québec-Amériques pour la jeunesse*, the *Office Québec-Monde pour la jeunesse*, and the *Agence Québec-Wallonie Bruxelles pour la jeunesse*, and within the context of *Québec sans frontières*.¹⁶

Public diplomacy is also a positive side effect of a variety of diplomatic activities (for example, initiatives taken within the context of bilateral cooperation agreements or the 'Week of the Francophonie' of the representation abroad), guided by MIRQ's geographic desks. It also occurs in conjunction with major image-building events abroad, in cooperation with other ministerial departments, municipalities and a myriad of non-state actors (such as 'Gek op Québec!' in Flanders, 'Voilà Québec... en recherche!' in New

15) MIRQ, DIDP, *Public Diplomacy* (April 2009), p.3.

16) *Québec sans frontières* (1995), guided by the direction of International Development, is directed towards young people interested in international solidarity, with the goal of sensitizing them on the role of Quebec in the world and stimulating a positive and dynamic perception of Quebec on the international scene. See MIRQ, *Guide des stages Québec sans frontières, 2009-2010*, 6 September 2009, and online at www.quebecsansfrontieres.com.

York and Boston, and ‘Quebec: Old World Charm, New World Excitement’ in Washington DC).¹⁷

Activities to ‘put Quebec on the world map’ do contribute to the projection of a particular ‘desired’ brand and can lay the foundations for long-term relations and networks. They do not necessarily encourage dialogue on international policies, but they do not preclude debate either. To illustrate, for more than a decade the MIRQ has subsidized the International Association of Quebec Studies (AIEQ),¹⁸ founded in May 1997 (within the context of the 1997–2000 Strategic Plan), partly as an alternative to the institutionalization of public diplomacy, which promotes and develops international research and debate on Quebec in Canada and abroad.

In this first track, it has been posited that:

Quebec has a long standing commitment to public diplomacy and that since the 1960s both Liberal and Parti Québécois provincial governments have been not only supportive but enthusiastic about public diplomacy and have backed these initiatives with cash.¹⁹

Nevertheless, in order to augment its clout and effectiveness, the MIRQ felt the need to coordinate these pre-existing fragmented activities that contained components of public diplomacy. They needed focus as well.

17) For a calendar of events, see online at <http://www.mri.gouv.qc.ca>. To elaborate a few: ‘*Voilà Québec... en recherche !*’ (2007) is a co-action of the MIRQ, *Ministère du Développement Économique, de l’Innovation et de l’Exportation*, DG in New York and delegation in Boston to promote research on Quebec in New York and Boston, (1) to stimulate collaboration between think tanks and universities in north-eastern US and Quebec, (2) to attract American academics to build a carrier in Quebec, and (3) to project the brand of Quebec as a highly academic and technological innovative. A ministerial mission abroad was accompanied by well-known Quebec academics. It included lectures, debates on the international politic, especially addressed to US scholars.

‘Quebec: Old World Charm, New World Excitement’ in Washington DC (2007): a major image-building event and initiative of the MIRQ, DG New York in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution, *Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine*, *Ministère du Développement Économique, de l’Innovation et de l’Exportation*, *Ministère du Tourisme du Québec*, *Office du tourisme et des Congrès de Québec*, *Société du 400e anniversaire de Québec*, *Hydro-Québec*, *Centre de design de l’Université du Québec à Montréal*, and the Canadian Embassy in Washington DC. It included a myriad of cultural events in Washington, accompanied by a ministerial speech on Quebec–US politics for 200 opinion leaders from the cultural, political and economic sectors and the promotion of festivities for 400 years of Quebec city.

18) See online at <http://www.aieq.qc.ca>.

19) Quotation by Diane Whilhelmy, former deputy minister of the MIRQ and former head of the DG Quebec in New York, at the Canadian Conference of the Arts’ symposium on the role of arts and culture in Canadian public diplomacy, Montreal, 21 November 2007.

*Institutionalized Public Diplomacy*²⁰

Peripheral identity-based activities had to connect better with the objectives of international policy, and they had to be concentrated around clear territorial priorities. In an attempt to move public diplomacy from the periphery to the centre and to remedy fragmentation, the MIRQ institutionalized public diplomacy through structure, strategy, activities and evaluation.

The MIRQ institutionalized public diplomacy through the development of necessary (infra)structure. As a result of a spate of reorganizations,²¹ the MIRQ established an Information and Public Diplomacy Division in May 2006, which is building further upon the existing division that is responsible

20) This part is based on (qualitative and document) analysis of several in-depth interviews with MIRQ's public diplomacy division (in November and December 2007; in May and September 2008; and August 2009) and the following documents: MIRQ, *Plan Stratégique 2005-2007* (2005); MIRQ, *La Force de l'Action Concertée: la Politique Internationale du Québec* (2006); MIRQ, *Plan d'Action 2006-2009* (2006); MIRQ, DIDP, *La Politique Internationale du Québec: Analyse et Revue de Presse et Analyse de Presse Mensuelle* (May 2006); MIRQ, *Rapport Annuel de Gestion 2006-2007* (2007); MIRQ, *Déclaration des Services* (2007); MIRQ, DIDP, *La Diplomatie Publique et ses Outils* (PowerPoint presentation) (9 October 2007); MIRQ, DIDP, *Vers un Plan d'Action en Diplomatie Publique dans le Prolongement des Acquis du Québec sur la Scène Internationales* (PowerPoint presentation) (December 2007); MIRQ, DIDP, *Notes de Référence en Politique Intérieure et Internationale* (11 December 2007); MIRQ, DIDP, *Québec à Grand Traits et Notes de Référence en Politique Intérieure et Internationale* (11 December 2007); MIRQ, DIDP, *Réponses au Questionnaire du Clingendael Etude sur la Diplomatie Publique de Québec* (18 December 2007); MIRQ, *Plan Stratégique 2008-2011* (2008); MIRQ, *Rapport Annuel de Gestion 2007-2008* (October 2008); MIRQ, DIDP, *Document d'Accompagnant au Tableau de Conception d'une Campagne de Diplomatie Publique 2008-2011* (9 June 2008); MIRQ, DIDP, *Tableau de Conception d'une Campagne de Diplomatie Publique 2008-2011* (9 June 2008); MIRQ, DIDP, *Commentaires DIDP sur le Résumé d'Etude de Clingendael* (21 July 2008); DIDP, *Quebec's Public Diplomacy Experience: Speaking Notes*, Conference on Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy of Flanders (Brussels: Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, 18 September 2008); MIRQ, DIDP, *La Pratique de la Diplomatie Publique au Québec*, presentation at the REGLEG Conference, 19 September 2008; MIRQ, *Politique Internationale du Québec. Plan d'Action 2009-2014. Mesures pour l'Année 2009-2010* (2009); MIRQ, DIDP, *Zoom sur la Diplomatie Publique* (17 March 2009); MIRQ, DIDP, *Bilan des Projets Pilotes en Diplomatie Publique au Royaume-Uni et au Japon* (May 2009); MIRQ, DC-IDP, *La Culture dans la Diplomatie Publique* (10 July 2009); MIRQ, DC-IDP, *Projets Pilotes en Diplomatie Publique* (10 July 2009); MIRQ, DC-IDP, *Présentation des Mesures du Plan d'Action 2009-2014* (10 July 2009); MIRQ, DC-IDP, *Programmation d'Initiatives en Diplomatie Publique : Proposition de Projet: Synthèse et Tableau Suivis* (July 2009); MIRQ, DC-IDP, *Programmation d'Initiatives en Diplomatie Publique : Proposition de Projet Evénement Culturel lié à un Objectif de la Politique Internationale et Cas Fictive Culturel* (July 2009).

21) Such as 'La Reforme des Affaires Publiques: Cohérence et Complémentarité' (29 April 2004) and the administrative simplification of April 2006.

for information, but devotes a portion of its activities to developing the MIRQ's public diplomacy. Until recently, this division was not a subdivision of the communication department, which is directly related to the office of Quebec's premier.²² Another reorganization in April 2009, seemingly driven by political rather than strategic motivations, undid this structural relationship. It housed the public diplomacy division in the communication directorate, which in turn placed a buffer between public diplomacy and the public affairs directorate-general.

The words may have changed (from '*direction de l'information et de la diplomatie publique*' (DIDP) to '*direction des communications-information et diplomatie publique*' (CD-IDP)); the tasks, however, have not. From its inception, the division's organizational chart has reflected a distinction between traditional information and public diplomacy functions.

Regarding traditional information functions, the '*édition et documentation*' section is qualified to follow up on, and coordinate, the ministry's translations; create graphic design; and disseminate information and services to citizens. The '*revue de presse et analyse*' section collects and interprets domestic and international newspapers, weekly and monthly magazines and periodicals about Quebec. The third section—'*rédaction pour le réseau*'—is responsible for producing a range of digital information instruments such as electronic newsletters and magazines (such as *La Une*, *Québec Actualités* and *Québec@monde*), and fulfills a steering role for the production and editing of all information, promotional and didactic material for foreign representatives (such as '*Québec à grands traits*' and '*Notes de référence*').

With respect to public diplomacy, the division is responsible for the coordination and guidance of public diplomacy projects, as well as a community of practice and trainings, which will be elaborated upon later. With both working in tandem, the division provides the information tools necessary to actors conducting public diplomacy through the networks. In addition to the standard range of duties, the division is responsible for the creation, implementation and follow-up of a common public diplomacy strategy.

In December 2007, the division in charge systemized public diplomacy through the creation of an integrative strategy. This strategy has to be understood within a broader strategic policy framework: the international politic 'Working in Concert' (2006–2009), which lays emphasis on interdepartmental, local collaboration and structured ties with civil society;

22) For differences in the organizational chart, see MIRQ's *Rapport Annual 2004–2005*, p. 89 (division information as a part of the DG Public Affairs); *Rapport Annual 2006–2007*, p. 95 (division information and public diplomacy as a part of the DG ministerial services instead); and, recently, on 3 August 2009 (division communication, and its subdivision information and public diplomacy, as a part of the DG Administration and Public Affairs). See online at http://www.mri.gouv.qc.ca/fr/pdf/MRI_Organigramme_20090803.pdf.

the strategic plan of 2008–2011 and associated action plan of 2006–2009, with the intensification of influence networks as a strategic policy objective; and especially the action plan of 2009–2014,²³ directly naming public diplomacy and providing for it in financial budgets.

The public diplomacy strategy includes the division's mission, namely putting into practice, and following up on, public diplomacy within the ministry of international relations. It illuminates the goal: to present in the long term, by area, and with emphasis on the measurability of results, a balanced view of Quebec's position and international choices to a specific target audience with multiplication effects via international networks and domestic partnerships.

It embraced a definition of Quebec's public diplomacy as well. Instead of a conceptual clarification, the definition was at first more of a description of the division's mission, and, since September 2008, more of a specification of Quebec's public diplomacy efforts. Specifically, Quebec's public diplomacy embodies:

A program of initiatives supporting one or more of the goals set out in the Government of Quebec's International Policy and involving various networks of influence, in association with Quebec's partners at home and abroad. The results of these initiatives are tracked and measured over the medium and long term.²⁴

The practice of an institutionalized model of public diplomacy represents an approach that works within pre-existing constructs, but adds direction. Concretely, it stimulates a programme mix of complementary and issue-specific activities, wherein the criterion of exactitude plays an important role and is made operational as follows.

Every public diplomacy activity has to buttress Quebec's international policy goals. The MIRQ's headquarters and international network of offices jointly determine which international policy goals can be pursued most effectively in various countries and regions within a two- or three-year timeframe. Public diplomacy activities are built upon that specific political

23) Namely, following two measures of axis 5 (*'Capacité d'action et d'influence de l'État Québécois et solidarité internationale'*) of the 2009–2014 Action Plan mention public diplomacy: *'(1) Recourir à la diplomatie publique pour l'avancement des relations internationales du Québec: (1.1) Appuyer les objectifs de la Politique internationale du Québec par une programmation d'initiatives visant à rejoindre des réseaux d'influence issus notamment de la société civile; (1.2) Collaborer avec des partenaires du Québec et de l'étranger afin de faire avancer des intérêts communs, (2) Profiter de la visibilité culturelle du Québec à l'étranger comme vecteur de diplomatie publique: (2.1) Influencer et informer des interlocuteurs ciblés sur une priorité territoriale liée à la Politique internationale du Québec lors de la tenue d'événements culturels québécois à l'étranger; (2.2) Arrimer l'évènement culturel québécois aux autres initiatives prévues à la programmation en diplomatie publique sur le territoire'*. See MIRQ, *Plan d'Action 2009–2014* (2009), pp. 22–23.

24) DIDP, *Quebec's Public Diplomacy Experience: Speaking Notes*, p. 1

theme and conducted over a longer period than one fiscal year (18–36 months). Furthermore, public diplomacy initiatives are designed to secure a place within networks of influence with common interests,²⁵ and to contribute to Quebec’s development as set out in the 2008–2011 strategic plan (objective 2: to broaden influence networks) and action plan 2009–2014 (axis 5: Quebec’s capacity of international action and influence).

In addition, these activities have to be initiated in partnership with (non-) state actors²⁶ at operational, functional and financial levels. Public diplomacy initiatives are geared towards an international audience, hence carrying them out requires the mobilization of Quebec-based civil society partners. Cooperation initiatives by a network of vested parties abroad and at home are aligned around common operational goals. Finally, as it is difficult to raise awareness of Quebec’s priorities over the short term, or based on a single activity, every public diplomacy activity has to be mapped and evaluated on a regular basis.

Two pilot programmes of complementary issue-related public diplomacy activities (including, for instance, organization of conferences and visitor programmes) based around a three-year theme are currently under way in London and Tokyo.²⁷ The UK project consists of a series of initiatives designed to promote Quebec’s sustainable development expertise, which focus on responsible procurement, while the Japanese project seeks to promote the role of Japan’s regional governments (and the involvement of Japanese prefectures) in fighting climate change, backed by Quebec’s leadership expertise. Different non-state actors have already entered into partnerships.

25) Influence networks (*interlocuteurs ciblés par l’activité*) include: *les acteurs politiques (parlementaires, fonctionnaires), les leaders d’opinion (think tanks, personnalités de prestige), les acteurs économiques (entrepreneurs, investisseurs, syndicats), les acteurs académiques (professeurs, chercheurs, étudiants étrangers) les acteurs culturels (association d’artistes), les médias (journaliste, blogueurs influents sur Internet), les organisations non gouvernementales, la société civile (communautés culturelles, diasporas)*; see MIRQ, DC-IDP, *Programmation d’Initiatives en Diplomatie Publique : Proposition de Projet*, p. 8.

26) Partners (*intermédiaires clés collaborant à l’activité*) include: *‘les milieux politiques (ambassades et consulats du Canada ou d’autres pays, gouvernements locaux, représentants des villes et des régions du Québec et de l’étranger), les milieux économiques (chambres de commerce, ordres et associations professionnelles, syndicats), les milieux académiques (universités et collèges, chaires de recherche), les milieux culturels (artistes et créateurs, musées québécois et étrangers), la société civile (organismes québécois de coopération internationale, organismes jeunesse, autres organismes locaux divers, communautés culturelles présentes au Québec qui demeurent en contact avec leur pays d’origine)’*; see MIRQ, DC-IDP, *Programmation d’Initiatives en Diplomatie Publique : Proposition de Projet*, p. 9.

27) The MIRQ provided a sum of CAD\$ 50,000 within the divisions’ operational budget for 2008–2009, while the action plan of 2009–2014 grants an amount of CAD\$ 75,000 for 2009–2010, and which ought to be renewed on a yearly basis even if projects progress over a longer time period.

Unsurprisingly, the 2009–2014 action plan included a measure that links cultural-related activities (the locus of Quebec’s identity and international policy) to public diplomacy.²⁸ Cultural identity-based activities are considered to be anchors for the establishment and broadening of influence networks, while public diplomacy ought to tie in the former, more strategically and content-wise, to an international policy theme. They follow a similar pattern (criteria and measures) to the pilot projects, but with the difference that they will initially be conducted over the short term.

To improve the manoeuvring of the engaged actors, the DC-IDP coordinates a community of practice and training. The so-called ‘PD COP’, basically a 24/7 intranet database that was launched in October 2008, is an additional instrument for the favouring of ‘concerted action’ in public diplomacy. With roughly 250 consultations per month, it currently brings close to 180 participants together around transversal themes and regions. It provides for information circulation, exchange of know-how and coordination of mutual dossiers. Training foreign representations and local staff abroad modestly encourages investment in behaviour instead of purely symbolic communication.

It is one thing to direct public diplomacy activities. It is another to measure the results. Inspired by River Path,²⁹ evaluation is something the DC-IDP tries to do within its constraints. The standard form and manual of the projects provides guidelines for design and monitoring, but also identifies accountability criteria (short-term outputs),³⁰ post-event follow-up and end-result performance metrics (long-term outcomes).³¹

28) While the long-term public diplomacy projects were approved on an ad-hoc basis (‘first come, first served’), the cultural-related ones will face an internal MIRQ jury exceeding the DC-IDP, which will by late 2009 select approximately ten projects of around CAD\$ 5,000 each, based on fixed criteria.

29) See D. Steven, ‘Evaluation and the New Public Diplomacy’, presentation to the Wilton Park conference entitled ‘Future of Public Diplomacy’, Riverpath Associates, 02 March 2007, pp. 1–18.

30) Short-term assessment of outputs includes, for instance: *‘les personnes présentes à l’activité (qualité et quantité), nombre et nature de la documentation officielle distribuée lors de l’activité ou accompagnant l’invitation à l’activité; portée des interventions et des prises de position du Québec lors d’un événement; entrevues accordées /articles parus/reportages électroniques’*.

31) Long-term follow-up of outcomes incorporates, for example: *‘recontacter les participants après la réalisation de l’activité (rétroaction); sondages de satisfaction ou activités de suivi liées à l’objectif du projet de diplomatie publique; analyse de la presse ayant rapporté l’activité (y compris certains blogues au besoin); rapidité et qualité de la réponse suite à une méprise ou une couverture médiatique négative; l’activité accomplie sert de levier pour une autre activité à l’initiative d’une ou des représentations du réseau; l’activité permet de s’associer à celles de partenaires’*.

Domestic Public Diplomacy

It is not only important to acknowledge the domestic sources and socio-political heritage behind Quebec's international policy and identity-based and institutionalized public diplomacy. It is also crucial to the credibility and efficacy of public diplomacy's international dimension, and the ministry's strategic interest, to generate domestic support for its position and choices and thus to empower its own citizens in the foreign policy-making process. Both at the level of the DC-IDP and the broader MIRQ level, 'domestic public diplomacy' occurs in a circuitous fashion, and is secondary to the international dimension, concentrating on opinion leaders.

The following quotation demonstrates that the DC-IDP does not assign itself a direct role:

De plus, le modèle québécois distingue les affaires publiques (destinées à un auditoire domestique) et la diplomatie publique (destinée à dialoguer avec de nouveaux partenaires influents sur la scène internationale).³²

The division, however, informs domestic non-state actors of its international policy (as noted earlier, see electronic newsletters and magazines such as *La Une*, *Québec Actualités* and *Québec@monde*). Another tendency that has become increasingly obvious since the late 2008 definition change that emphasized the home-front partners, is that it invests in domestic influence networks so that they can be partners in public diplomacy conducted abroad.

At the broader level of the ministry, it is worth mentioning that the international policy was prefaced by a prolonged three-and-a-half-year consultation with more than 400 opinion leaders. For the time being, however, the MIRQ's domestic public diplomacy contours are usually associated with optimizing services for citizens, sensitivity actions, and cozying up to third-party actors' activities. Most common are speeches and lectures from government representatives, preferably the (deputy) minister, at conferences organized by non-governmental actors.

On the basis of the '*Déclaration de services aux citoyens*' (2007), the MIRQ wishes to take up various 'commitments with citizens'.³³ Most of the

32) See DIDP, *Commentaires DIDP sur le Résumé d'Etude de Clingendael*, p. 1

33) The notion 'citizens' covers: (1) enterprises, institutions searching for general information; (2) individuals and institutions wishing to participate in development projects; (3) international development organizations aiming for apprenticeship programmes; (4) students in the second and third cycles interested in apprenticeship programmes in international organizations; (5) individuals, organizations and enterprises wishing to participate in missions abroad. The notion 'commitments' includes: (1) provide general information, give advice and financial support to development projects and international solidarity projects; (2) offering apprenticeship programmes in international organizations;

declarations' operations, however, concern support for activities abroad by Quebec's non-state actors. The DC-IDP (through magazines and website content) and the communication division (through press announcements) were thereby thought to be responsible for some domestic 'engagements'. Autumn 2008 also made clear that the common sensitization efforts concerning the 'XII^e Sommet de la francophonie' stressed specific co-actions with Quebec's opinion leaders, but so far, and despite the exceptionally beneficial circumstances, they have not initiated broad public consultation similar to that of 1985.³⁴

'Working in concert' is thus not so much directed at debate with broad domestic public opinion about pursued international policies, as at fostering partnerships with stakeholders of civil society as non-state actors of functional and identity-based activities abroad. In the words of Louise Beaudoin, former Minister of International Relations, on one of the most cited examples of domestic outreach within the MIRQ:

Les grands absents de ce débat ont été jusqu'à maintenant les citoyens. Comme dans toutes les négociations internationales nous n'avons entendu que des juristes, des experts et des politiciens. Malgré toute la médiatisation à laquelle nous avons eu droit, peu de gens connaissent les enjeux de la diversité culturelle.³⁵

Mountains to Climb

The strengths of each track of Quebec's public diplomacy can easily transform into weaknesses. The process of public diplomacy risks becoming stuck in an embryonic phase of its genesis. In particular, an identity-based, institutionalized and domestic public diplomacy is possibly becoming a substitute for different forms of communication, but the latter are methods and not goals in themselves. It should be borne in mind that in practice, the reservoir of overlaps between them does not appear to be running dry, nor are

and (3) logistical support when participating in foreign missions. See MIRQ, *Déclaration des Services* (2007), pp. 1–9.

34) Domestic outreach peaks occurred with Bernard Landry: first, as Minister of International Relations (1984–1985) with broad public consultation (see '*Sommet du Québec dans le monde*' (May/December 1984) for the creation of the foreign policy document); second, under his auspices as premier (2001–2003), with the minister of international relations' pilot project entitled '*L'Observatoire québécois de la mondialisation*', an 'at arms length' organization ('*réseau des réseaux*') directed at public debate, not just with opinion leaders but largely with the broader public (yet that failed to have a long-term existence).

35) L. Beaudoin, 'Le Québec et le Combat pour la Diversité Culturelle', in S. Paquin (ed.), *Les Relations Internationales du Québec depuis la Doctrine Gérin-Lajoie (1965–2005)* (Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2006), pp. 232–239.

the differences crystal clear. The traits mentioned below are thus not irreconcilable, but rather two sides of the same coin. The following amplifies what is lurking on the edges of Quebec's three-track public diplomacy, which may act as the canary in the coalmine for other federated entities as well.

Identity-based Public Diplomacy or Marketing Communication?

In the competition for public attention within the so-called 'paradox of plenty',³⁶ Quebec's public diplomacy benefits because it appeals to a clearly established identity. Such a distinct identity helps to unleash the arts of negotiation and mediation into the global marketplace of ideas. Regardless of a change in government, this distinctiveness is the result of a common guiding principle (the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine) and of encouraging cultural identity through foreign policy and peripheral activities since the foundation of the ministry.

Nevertheless, the idea of 'competitive identity'³⁷ has recently been called into question as a more collaborative global image of public diplomacy has drawn to the forefront. Wishful thinking, perhaps, but such a conception favours collaboration over competition between nations because of a belief that the era of 'diplomacy' merely as a means of achieving narrow self-interested goals has vanished.³⁸ It is also stated that the appreciation of a distinct identity is time- and space-related. The last decade of post-Cold War suspicions against claims of identity, which were associated with nationalism and separatism, was not favourable for the conduct of an identity-based public diplomacy.³⁹

Besides these general remarks challenging the Zeitgeist in thinking about the relation between identity, distinctiveness and competitiveness, Quebec's identity-based public diplomacy and those of other federated entities risk being a replacement for—what Snow⁴⁰ labelled—the 'persuasion industries' of marketing communication: for instance when these techniques are not deployed as instruments for involving public opinion in foreign policy-making, but become aims in themselves; second, when identity-based activities do not connect to the content of foreign policy (to be regarded as public diplomacy, initiatives should contain a key message about a broadly

36) See J.S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004).

37) See S. Anholt, *Competitive Identity: The New Brand Management for Nations, Cities and Regions* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

38) B. Hocking, 'Reconfiguring Public Diplomacy: From Competition to Collaboration', in Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *Engagement: Public Diplomacy in a Globalized World* (London: FCO, July 2008), pp. 62–76.

39) Bélanger, 'The Domestic Politics of Quebec's Quest for External Distinctiveness', p. 210.

40) N. Snow, 'Rethinking Public Diplomacy', in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 3–11.

defined foreign policy); and third, when public diplomacy activities unduly emphasize visibility, the role of the dominant communicator, one-way communication and info-bullying. Such actions might be interpreted by the targeted publics as propaganda—public diplomacy’s so-called pejorative corollary⁴¹—rather than as a government’s attempt to bring them closer to foreign policy formation.⁴²

When working within the boundaries of a positive perspective of competitive identity, public diplomacy that is developed out of identity-based imperatives benefits ‘nation formation’ and ‘external distinctiveness’, specifically domestic and international affirmation and reinforcement of a ‘desired’ identity.

Despite these advantages, this does not imply that public diplomacy equals ‘nation-branding’, ‘image-building’, or has to become a euphemism for forms of marketing communication (such as advertising, promotion, publicity, sponsorship and public relations). By strengthening relations abroad, public diplomacy attempts to raise public attention and improve reputations, while at home it attempts to stimulate foreign policy dialogue by expanding domestic linkages. Marketing communication, on the other hand, is oriented towards the projection of the ‘desired’ brand or reputation. From a more normative stance, and in a sense adopting Szondi’s alleged ‘public diplomacy approach to nation-branding’,⁴³ we argue that nation-branding and image-building are positive side effects of public diplomacy activity, not vice versa, and are to be conducted as such.

Institutionalized Public Diplomacy or Corporate Communication?

Among federated entities, the MIRQ is a trendsetter in the systemization of public diplomacy. By virtue of an institutionalized model of public diplomacy, Quebec copes with the same problem that most federated entities face when developing it: countering existing fragmentation.

In so doing, the MIRQ runs the risk of becoming mired in the creation and implementation of a ‘sustainable corporate story’ (SCS), in both content

41) Snow and Taylor, *Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, p. ix.

42) For example, while ministerial visits can serve as departure points for public diplomacy activities, if the focus on the minister is too obvious, this might be seen as a personal PR campaign.

43) Szondi distinguishes four approaches to clarifying conceptual similarities and differences between public diplomacy and nation branding: (1) public diplomacy and nation-branding are distinct spheres; (2) public diplomacy is part of nation-branding; (3) nation-branding is part of public diplomacy; (4) both are distinct but overlapping concepts. See G. Szondi, *Public Diplomacy and Nation-Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences*, Discussions Papers in Diplomacy (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, October 2008).

and design.⁴⁴ A sustainable corporate story is a steering mechanism directed at building rapport between an organization and its stakeholders. The practices of the DC-IDP still stress the division's information function to the detriment of its public diplomacy role. The creation of information tools is a necessary step in the development of public diplomacy, as they have been shown to be useful for the stimulation of dialogue and enhancement of a public diplomacy that reinforces concrete engagement; their creation is not public diplomacy's primary purpose or the division's ultimate goal, however.

The division's public diplomacy role can be roughly validated in two ways. From a pragmatic stance the service fulfils: (1) the role of communicator by publishing magazines, websites and newsletters that are open to 'all segments' of the at-home population (see *Québec@monde*) as well as abroad; and (2) the role of coordinator (*une fonction de leadership*), mediator, and facilitator (see *Québec à grands traits, notes d'informations* and pilot and cultural-related projects) of foreign representations' public diplomacy activities. From a normative stance, the division is not a public diplomacy actor, but within the context of its usual information function, it creates and implements an SCS and projects the 'wished' identity. With an SCS, through two-step flow communication (the foreign representation, domestic opinion leaders and international influence networks), the division encourages dialogue and collaboration abroad on the MIRQ's international policy statements (by providing uniform information, for instance, by virtue of the COP PD and training).

Since 2008, efforts—although modest—have been made to prevent becoming embroiled in the SCS, and instead to wield it as an effective tool of network relation initiatives. To cite the DC-IDP:

44) For instance, similar to an SCS, the '*rédaction pour le réseau*' describes the core elements of the MIRQ and its international politic from a long-term perspective, and in a relevant, realistic, sustainable way. The activities (of ministers and foreign representation) with added value for the MIRQ and its functional output, normative and diffused linkages are emphasized in *La Une*, *Québec Actualités* and *Québec@monde*. These one-way channels reproduce a similar key message (with one editor because of overlaps in content) in a sustainable (adjusted to different expectations of domestic and foreign publics) and realistic (based on facts) way. Furthermore, '*Québec à grands traits*' and its manual make it possible that the 'enabling linkages' (governmental representatives and foreign representation) can make variations to the core components of the international policy. This PowerPoint database enables the representatives to place emphasis on specific elements that carry their conviction towards foreign publics. The efficacy of '*Québec à grands traits*' increases when repeated, particularly when different actors tell the same key elements in their personal style and interpretation. Therefore, the DC-IDP wants to put this steering mechanism at the disposal of all the MIRQ personnel and non-state actors (such as students from exchange programmes). The '*édition et documentation*' division of the DC-IDP also guaranteed that the key message looks graphically uniform and plugs into the foreign public's language.

We have even changed the definition and the content of our documents to get rid of all communications or public relations terms to make sure the distinction was as clear as possible.⁴⁵

While the early years were dedicated to the creation of information devices (especially closed-container ICTs, concealing a unidirectional public diplomacy),⁴⁶ they have recently been put at the disposal of stakeholders to broaden influence networks abroad for the purpose of public diplomacy's ultimate goal: co-action on the international policy's objectives.

Domestic Public Diplomacy or Public Affairs?

Domestic public diplomacy is transferred from a track other than foreign affairs to one of public affairs. In dividing public affairs from public diplomacy, Heller and Persson⁴⁷ suggest three parameters: core commitment; purpose; and primary audience. While according to these authors the thrust of public affairs is to inform a domestic population about governments' actions and motives (thus on how the resources that voters make available are used), public diplomacy is about influencing the public and leaders of foreign nations.

Such a view, however, is based on the premise that public diplomacy is strategic in itself, while public affairs ought not to be. This denotes that public diplomacy embodies an effects-based communication, and a mechanical stimulus-response model that does not target domestic publics in order to facilitate a nation's interests. Ideally, public affairs activities must not focus on directing, shaping or manipulating public actions, opinions or perceptions. Realistically speaking, however, it is all too tempting to use public affairs merely as a tool when a recalibration of public opinion is desired. Other scholars⁴⁸ consider public diplomacy to be the international face of a foreign ministry's domestic public affairs role, and acknowledge that both use similar activities and techniques, but towards other audiences.

Underestimation of the unproductiveness of the organized chaos within the MIRQ surrounding the (hierarchical) relations between information

45) DIDP, *Quebec's Public Diplomacy Experience: Speaking Notes*, p. 4.

46) There is still room left to manoeuvre new technology into stimulating 'dialogue' (namely, including digital interactive elements such as policy e-discussions, blogs and YouTube diplomacy)

47) K.S. Heller and L.M. Persson, 'The Distinction between Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy', in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 225–233.

48) See, for example, J. Batora, 'Public Diplomacy between Home and Abroad: Norway and Canada', in *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol.1, no.1, 2006, pp. 53–80; E.H. Potter, *Branding Canada: Projecting Canada's Soft Power through Public Diplomacy* (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009), pp. 54–58.

communication, public affairs and public diplomacy is evidenced through the MIRQ's successive reorganizations. The DC-IDP distances 'domestic public diplomacy' from public diplomacy by equating it to public affairs, as a responsibility of the communication directorate, which according to the current organizational chart is a shield between public diplomacy and public affairs. The communication division in turn differentiates its role from that of domestic public diplomacy as it focuses on media relations, the premier's visibility, event publicity, mass media and audience.

Bouncing domestic public diplomacy from one division to another results from the difficulty in cutting through bureaucratic red tape and the more profound questions that it raises, and to which we will return later. Artificially segregating domestic public diplomacy from the division in charge of public diplomacy can in the long term become counterproductive. Domestic public diplomacy skirts the edge of retreating from the evolving context in which it operates, and from diplomacy.

Regarding the latter, the aforementioned threats within the context of identity and institutionalized public diplomacy (public diplomacy's genesis process grinding to a halt) apply when equating domestic public diplomacy to public affairs. Namely, domestic public diplomacy can get pruned back to the information process of public diplomacy when it is purely for educating a domestic population about governments' actions and motives. Although both are interrelated (information is needed to communicate and both are necessary to network), the DC-IDP is working on a piecemeal upgrading of its public diplomacy from an information model towards a network model. The domestic dimension cannot fall behind.

The MIRQ's three-track public diplomacy must also recognize the current global metamorphosis with no clear boundaries between domestic and international publics and policy spheres.⁴⁹ Sending different messages along separate tracks in a boundary-free information environment with instantaneous and ubiquitous access to identical information will at the very least create doubts about governments' intentions and credibility. Drawing public diplomacy and public affairs under the umbrella of strategic communication may seem a useful endeavour for the unification of words and messages, but it amplifies the likelihood of 'intermestic' (international–

49) See, for instance, among many authors: G.C. Alons, 'Predicting a State's Foreign Policy: State Preferences between Domestic and International Constraints', in *Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol.3, no. 3, 2007, pp. 211–232; Batora, 'Public Diplomacy between Home and Abroad'; P.B. Evans, 'Building an Integrative Approach to International and Domestic Politics: Reflections and Projections', in P.B. Evans, H.K. Jacobson and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 397–431; and Hocking, 'Reconfiguring Public Diplomacy', 'Localizing Foreign Policy'.

domestic) public diplomacy being an exercise in marketing and manipulation, sound bites and slogans.⁵⁰

50) See P.M. Taylor, 'Public Diplomacy and Strategic Communications', in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 12–19.

Tentative Diagnosis for Federated Entities

Quebec is not alone. Other federated entities with different socio-political norms develop public diplomacy as well. Most concern public diplomacy-related activities on the edge of what Keating described as ‘stateless nation-building’,⁵¹ and international cultural, tourism, economic and investment promotion. While space prevents us from going into detail here, public diplomacy is more often than not developed as an accessory to the quest for advantages in competitive identity, largely through (re)branding efforts.⁵²

Still more in the realm of a public relations approach to public diplomacy, although beyond ‘stateless’ nation-building and branding in the traditional sense, are the Catalan government’s foreign affairs activities. Partly thanks to the direct involvement of longstanding former president, Jordi Pujol, Catalonia’s international portrayal is considered to be indispensable for the development of the basic geometries of Catalanian nationalism: the defence (in terms of opening up) of national identity; and on the basis of the

51) M. Keating, ‘Stateless Nation-building: Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland in the Changing System’, in *Nations and Nationalisms*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1997, pp. 689–717.

52) From the ‘Vancouver 2010’ brand, Alberta’s brand ambassador programme, Scotland’s ‘International’ image offensive, Bavarians’ ‘Laptops and Lederhosen’ campaign, to branding Cascadia, the transborder region of Pacific north-west North America, to the Scandinavian Øresund region as a Nordic success story, whereby the techniques used do not differ so much from the brand management and place marketing initiatives of national and local governments (such as the fastest growing city brands like Dubai, Barcelona, Auckland and Shanghai).

imperative of international competitiveness, the promotion of Catalonia's economic interests. The current tripartite government favoured Pujol's idea of international promotion with a greater degree of institutionalization and organization. Unsurprisingly, under the label of 'public diplomacy', the Vice-Ministry of Foreign Affairs' directorate 'International Promotion of Catalan Organizations' (2006) actively promotes the actions of various Catalanian non-governmental organizations abroad.⁵³ In so doing, this directorate's 'opportunities management' ought to spur a network of relationships to facilitate the international action, integration, and involvement of Catalanian organizations, with a focus on sport and tourism as the main soft-power resources, and provide technical and financial assistance to a variety of activities as well.⁵⁴

California, which is ranked among the world's top ten economies, develops public diplomacy somewhat haphazardly within its daily commitment to promoting political, economic, educational and cultural relations. The state does not specifically define public diplomacy, and there is neither an overarching policy nor formalized understanding on project coordination. California's efforts are often disjointed, and implementation is diffuse. It is the Senate Office of International Relations that likely offers the most institutionalized structure for public diplomacy. It defines public diplomacy as relationship-building while using a variety of non-binding policy tools (such as resolutions, sister-state relationships, and legislative exchange programmes).⁵⁵

Meanwhile, the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of the Flemish Community, with far-reaching legislative competences in international relations, does not stick to regular image-building or international promotional activities largely based on outsourcing policies (such as the publication of an independent English journal *Flanders Today* and structural cooperation agreements on public diplomacy between the department and the not-for-profit expatriate organization Flanders in the World). It has delivered on efforts to broaden domestic public support for the foreign policy conducted, such as the integration of a strategic advisory council of experts into the department, a fixed budget for yearly sensitizing actions on the EU and digital discussions held within the context of the

53) To mention a few: *Institut des études Catalans*; *Institut Català de les Indústries Culturals*; *Baças*; Union of Sports Federations of Catalonia; Platform for National Catalan Sports Teams; Casals (Catalan Communities Abroad), which projected Catalan national identity long before foreign offices were established.

54) J. Xifra, 'Catalan Public Diplomacy, Soft Power and Noopolitik: A Public Relations Approach to Catalonia's Governance', in *Catalan Journal of Communication and Cultural Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, September 2009, pp. 67–85; www.gencat.cat, and www.focir.cat.

55) E. Samoville, speaking notes of the Director, California State Senate Office of International Relations on California's public diplomacy, at the seminar on 'Foreign and External Relations of Federated Entities', organized by REGLEG and the Forum of Federations, 19 September 2009.

Flanders In Action Initiative.⁵⁶ The Foreign Affairs department recently included the concept of public diplomacy in the coalition agreement that followed the June 2009 elections. Its communication division, partially inspired by Quebec, has laid the foundations of a public diplomacy strategy that will continue to solidify in the coming year.

These aforementioned examples show that advancing federated entities' public diplomacy does not imply restarting completely. They are already involved in public diplomacy, mostly through existing peripheral and identity-based activities. Nevertheless, most—but not all—of their public diplomacy activity, if already referred to as such, is generally developed ad hoc and on short notice as an array of activities from multitudinous actors. The crux in the development of public diplomacy for—likely—most federated entities is the lack of an overall strategy for connecting multiple praiseworthy but disconnected initiatives.

The findings on Quebec's public diplomacy suggest that in order to achieve maximum efficiency with minimum costs, federated entities should work with what they already have, but focus. If public diplomacy ought to be productive, the following years' attention should be turned to setting priorities, decision-making and streamlining. A great deal of time and energy has to be invested, not in creating new initiatives that raise media attention, but in directing the course, complementarity and cohesion of present ongoing activities, in partnership with non-state actors as well as other departments.

In so doing, and considering a fundamentally different political culture, organizational climate and society, the Quebec model of institutionalized public diplomacy can serve as a source of inspiration for other federated entities whose attempts lean in that direction. For sub-national governments of federal states that may still be near the bottom of the learning curve (of leveraging what you already have and aligning; and not to be confused with cost-saving synergy that delivers quick results), the systematization—not homogenization—of public diplomacy can be a worthwhile, although not unconditional, effort for several reasons.

56) Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, Flemish Minister of Administrative Affairs, Foreign Policy, Media and Tourism Geert Bourgeois, policy paper entitled 'Foreign Policy and International Cooperation 2004–2009' (2004); press release, new international logo and communication strategy for Flanders (26 September 2006); policy paper entitled 'Foreign Policy 2008' (October 2007); speech of Minister Geert Bourgeois on the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs' strategic council (30 January 2008). Documents only in Dutch at <http://iv.vlaanderen.be>. See also online at www.flandersinaction.be and www.viiv.be.

Pros

First, an institutionalized model of public diplomacy fosters a further structural and strategic establishment of public diplomacy. However, no budget means no public diplomacy. Quebec shows that adding the words 'public diplomacy' to an existing ministerial department should go hand in hand with an increased range of duties, accompanying staff and additional financing. In the case of limited departmental financing and time, persons in charge of public diplomacy can farm out the role of key sender to other actors and concentrate on the 'boundary-spanning' role.

The name of the game is the formulation of a strategy that leaves enough elbow room to adapt to change, and for the process to take shape gradually. Although seemingly simple, in so doing it can be a useful exercise to answer four elementary questions related to significant variables of public diplomacy: the Who (the division's and partners' role), the What (notion), the Whys and Hows (functions); while avoiding terms such as 'influencing', 'promotion' or 'selling', 'advocating' and 'campaigning', which might conjure up unnecessary associations with propaganda and 'old-style' public diplomacy that rely on having passive target audiences.

Second, systematization offers a partial cure for current aggravation (fragmentation regarding its interpretation, and reflected in its conduct) about public diplomacy. Peripheral public diplomacy can be a merit of interdepartmental, local and non-state fine-tuning of international policy objectives, but such a tune-up does not necessarily imply that the actors involved are on the same wavelength regarding public diplomacy. To outgrow the developmental and legitimating stages, proactive consultation is vital for reaching a certain degree of assent about public diplomacy's meaning, place in the respective ministry's organizational chart, role division and differentiation with other departments' seemingly similar functions. Still, changes in minister, and the affiliated flux of incessant reorganization, do little to benefit the process.

A logical consequence of the conceptual confusion and bewilderment of the alignment of tasks is fragmented conduct. The DC-IDP therefore strived to implement a complementary programme of issue-specific public diplomacy initiatives with graduated differences in levels of participation, degrees of coordination, scope, duration and policy objective over a longer period. This offers numerous advantages, including cost-sharing and creating networking opportunities within key sectors. From a planning perspective, it is more appealing to develop short-term initiatives (such as the cultural-related ones). Nevertheless, long-term initiatives represent a staple of public diplomacy strategies.⁵⁷

57) Short-term actions allow easier accounting for available resources, full concentration on situations at hand, and immediate returns from performance assessment. Long-term

Third, it endorses targeted image-building as it stimulates familiarity with the content of foreign and geographic policy priorities. Public diplomacy should transcend the mere verbiage of a wished identity that is unilaterally projected by a government. Multi-modal buzzwords that ought to reflect specificity have been rendered meaningless through overuse. Desired images can have a very short shelf-life. More often than not, they are stereotypes with no correlation to a more intrinsic awareness of societies' identity pluralism.

In addition, public diplomacy that is based on crisis-driven and self-preservation communication strategies has long faced criticism. It can also blur the prospects of obtaining the desired outcomes of 'joint planning for joint benefit'⁵⁸ instead of 'projecting ready-made images or peddling "the right messages", and sending better ones when the old no longer work'.⁵⁹ There should be no misunderstanding: information and communication are necessary for the conduct of public diplomacy. However, ideally, the practice of public diplomacy aims to wield these techniques as tools for networking. In sum, they add value to a more accurate and unforced imaging.

Fourth, it has the potential to speed the implementation of a network model of public diplomacy as an alteration—not a substitution—of the information model. The term 'institutionalization' may conjure up pejorative associations with hierarchical state-centric or unidirectional patterns hamstringing the cultivation of relationships. Even so, networking and institutionalizing are not mutually exclusive, and are complementary as the latter seeks connections between different pre-existing network patterns. As highlighted by Kelly,⁶⁰ there seems to be a fluid relationship between primary interpretations of public diplomacy. Several scholars agree that the dominance of the information network model has obscured the panorama of relational initiatives,⁶¹ yet a meta-theoretical polemic about academic discourse on this matter may come to opposite conclusions.

initiatives, alternatively, bring forth greater complexity, as available human and financial resources are harder to maintain, concentration wanders to other pressing matters, and successes, if any, take longer to materialize and take pride with measurable indicators.

58) R.S. Zaharna, 'Mapping Out a Spectrum of Public Diplomacy Initiatives: Information and Relational Communication Frameworks', in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 92.

59) J. Melissen's keynote speech, 'Options for Public Diplomacy', at the British Council conference entitled 'Scotland's Place in the World' in Edinburgh, 22 January 2008.

60) J.R. Kelly, 'Between "Take-offs" and "Crash Landings": Situational Aspects of Public Diplomacy', in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 75.

61) See Hocking, 'Rethinking the "New" Public Diplomacy'; Riordan, 'Dialogue-based Public Diplomacy'; and R.S. Zaharna, 'The Soft Power Differential: Network Communication and

Quebec's public diplomacy is travelling—in Melissen's words⁶²—with an emphasis on receiving, as much as sending, relationships rather than messages. Simultaneously, the DC-IDP serves as a hub for consolidating information on the international policy's key objectives (see the COP PD) and encourages efforts (see the projects) to think outside of the communication-equals-information box, to the advantage of catalytic relational thinking. Ministries of foreign affairs tend to have a knee-jerk reaction to subsuming public diplomacy's service to a pre-existing communication direction. Until recently, the MIRQ proved to be an exception to the rule, and partly because of such a structure, its public diplomacy was able to outgrow its 'infocom' stage and move into its nucleus more rapidly.

The designs of public diplomacy projects, after all, reveal third-tier relationship-building aspirations (policy networking strategy and coalition-building with non-state actors to achieve policy objectives),⁶³ and ought to overcome pre-existing public affairs activities. Execution at the present time, however, relies heavily upon piggybacking on safe, successful formulae in the area of second- and first-tier relationship-building (such as exchange programmes, visits and twinning arrangements). Deeds indeed speak louder than words, and the projects in germinal and nascent stages need to ripen to bring to light the true direction of Quebec's public diplomacy, specifically the one to which other federated entities aspire.

Fifth, institutionalization encourages a workable model of multi-actor public diplomacy over theoretical archetypes. As the popularity of the concept of public diplomacy increases, so does the confusion. Broadening actor-craft and radii of action in public diplomacy have watered down its concept to all-embracing descriptions. In a public diplomacy 'by' and 'for' civil society,⁶⁴ all potential co-action scenarios are believed to be possible. It is thereby assumed that the amount of visible government intervention inversely affects the efficiency of public diplomacy. The resulting effect of a tender-minded people-to-people approach is that public diplomacy becomes synonymous with citizens' diplomacy.

To link this to federated entities, 'less can be more', as it turns out that those seeming cons can end up being pros. To illustrate by analogy, thanks to a lack of necessary (human) resources such as labour, the need to outsource to the citizenry may increase. However, the understanding of such multi-actor

Mass Communication in Public Diplomacy', *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 2, no. 3, 2007, pp. 213–222.

62) Melissen (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy*, p. 21.

63) Zaharna, 'Mapping Out a Spectrum of Public Diplomacy Initiatives', pp. 93–97.

64) See M. Castells, 'The New Public Sphere: Global Civil Society, Communication Networks, and Global Governance', in G. Cowan and N.J. Cull (eds), 'Public Diplomacy in a Changing World', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, issue 616 (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, March 2008), pp. 78–94.

beacons, where public and citizen diplomacy are alike, appears much easier than putting it into practice.

No doubt that Quebec's public diplomacy has expanded the breadth of public involvement, but the process remains elite, not mass-driven. The principal case studies in this area point to the impact of well-organized, well-connected civil society groups, not the involvement of the general populace. In Stéphane Paquin's words:

Le grand public n'a jamais été—sauf dans de rares cas—un public visé; ce sont plutôt les élites de divers domaines et des réseaux d'influence qui ont traditionnellement constitué les clientèles de la diplomatie publique québécoise.⁶⁵

Pressure Points

The Quebec model offers in all probability an easy-to-adopt solution to some of the most common problems that federated entities nowadays face when developing public diplomacy, bearing in mind that its execution is subject to specific public policy principles (such as single-party or coalition governments) and underpinning societal settings. More importantly, Quebec can be a twofold source of inspiration that educates its contemporaries, not only through its strengths but through its shortcomings as well. After all, with its institutionalization of public diplomacy, Quebec has not taken the road less travelled, and such a model not only comes with advantages, but also has its limitations, especially in light of multi-actor retrofits.

If public diplomacy is conceived of as diplomacy of the public, not of the government, the expectation is that for now, federated entities have more in common with national governments than the terminological dichotomy of 'diplomacy' and 'parallel diplomacy' suggests. Generally speaking, overlaps can be found in the configuration and conduct of public diplomacy despite the differences in competences.⁶⁶ Reproducing the techniques of national governments, however, implies needing to deal with similar bugaboos.

65) <Author's translation: *The general public has never been—except in rare cases—a target public; it is rather the elites of various domains and networks of influence who have traditionally constituted the subjects of Quebec's public diplomacy.*>

S. Paquin, 'Mais où est le peuple?', in S. Paquin (ed.), *Les relations internationales du Québec depuis la Doctrine Gérin-Lajoie (1965–2005)* (Sainte-Foy: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2006), p. 325.

66) In handling public diplomacy, federate entities and regions cannot backslide onto instruments beyond their competence (security or defence diplomacy). Nevertheless, they are frequently entrusted with the fields of actions (such as culture and education) that are important to laying the foundations (long-term relations) of public diplomacy. Their expertise in internal competences (such as health and technology) will be an issue of international positioning and consolidation of cultural identity at home and abroad.

That is to say, the plea to reduce the barriers to entry to public diplomacy is equally pertinent for ‘newcomers’ to the scene such as federated entities. Notwithstanding its limitations, and from a more pluralistic perspective, a sophisticated and versatile approach to diplomatic activity with a domestic consciousness has been moving increasingly to the forefront when confronted with a broadened scope of actors. In short, if Quebec aims to maintain its role as an early adapter, it needs to cross its Rubicon and counter-intuitively reach out to the broader community at home. To quote Evan Potter, ‘public diplomacy is “Janus-faced”—facing inwards and outwards at the same time’,⁶⁷ whereby the success of the latter correlates with the level of investment in the former, which brings us to the issue of ‘domestic public diplomacy’.

‘Domestic public diplomacy’ is not an oxymoron. This seeming contradiction in terms is vital for putting a ‘new public diplomacy’ further into practice and pulling it out of its rhetorical realm. It is a first step to overcoming existing mindsets, especially if applying a predominantly Western-centric (Anglo-Saxon) image of public diplomacy rather than alternate views. After all, it appears that the potential of the domestic constituency in public diplomacy gains a faster foothold in societies that fall out of the traditional diplomatic model, indicating that the conception of ‘homogeneity of nations’ is erroneous.

Domestic public diplomacy ought to be the embodiment of horizontal thinking, proactively engaging diffuse populations that fundamentally change the raw material from which a nation’s collective identities, ideas and interests are derived. It should challenge the Westphalian idea of an easily imagined autochthonous nation,⁶⁸ an assumption upon which the public diplomacy of (sub)national governments has so far been too reliant. In an intricately interlinked world, and no matter the moral issues that it might raise, the public diplomacy of national emotional catharsis—a transcendence of national identity⁶⁹—could be doomed to failure.

As a result of the folly of conventional thinking, federated entities have several public diplomacy burdens to bear, wherein the more elementary ones mirror quandaries in their civil societies. Somewhat paradoxically, the example of ethno-territorial concurrence in pluralistic societies can solidify this thought. For instance, and relevant in other ways to other federated entities, is that while Quebec’s public diplomacy is rooted on its ethno-

Especially when complementarity with the federal level is scarce, federate entities with legislative power seek to build profiles in the niches of international relations, partly to validate their legitimacy as international actors, which has not always been acknowledged as self-evident, either in science (towards adherents of the centralistic school) or in policy-making circles (such as in multilateral organizations).

67) Potter, *Branding Canada*, p. xiii.

68) See Rose, ‘The Medium-Term Future of Public Diplomacy’.

69) See M. Vlahos, ‘Public Diplomacy as Loss of World Authority’, in N. Snow and P.M. Taylor (eds), *Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 34.

territorial (regional) identity of distinctiveness within Canada, in turn Aboriginals and Anglophones are largely left out of the public diplomacy narrative of a French-speaking secularized nation that is open to other cultures brought in by immigrants.

In the context of a third wave in sub-state diplomacy, similar public diplomacy techniques and associated hurdles may indicate that boundaries between government levels have become more porous. Yet at the same time, they have not. Developing national and sub-national public diplomacy can become counterproductive when both serve different international agendas and simultaneously strive for different kinds of social cohesion or national unity. Public diplomacy ought to be a shared responsibility pursued at multiple levels, with sub-national participation being most effective in building mutual understanding and relationships.⁷⁰

Given the growing level of symbiotic relationships, internally competing voices are to be expected, and these will become more tangible in federal structures. For example, even if they do not exclude one another, fluctuations in the acmes of Canada's and Quebec's domestic outreach are to be understood on the basis of their interrelatedness.⁷¹ It goes without saying that the parallel development of Quebec's public diplomacy will at times create tensions in international affairs along the Ottawa–Quebec City axis, and simultaneously highlights the fragility of Canada's attempts to present a unified national position through its public diplomacy.⁷²

First and foremost, 'mutual' or 'cooperative' public diplomacy starts 'at home'. Although this might stand in opposition to common sense on this matter, the need to work together to project oneself to each other or a third party is likely to grow stronger at the domestic level than internationally. Identity conflicts become the predominant source not only of conflict abroad but at home as well. In the end, today's public diplomacy, which is not about governments but about governance⁷³, requires a sixth sense to deal with the more basic issues of identity pluralism and diversity in foreign policy.

Present in every society, this issue cannot simply be wilfully ignored and swept under the rug as inapplicable to non-federal states or their entities. After all, governments and foreign affairs ministries, no matter the level, are neither omnipotent, nor omnipresent and omniscient; they do not dictate the contradictory messages of their disparate communities. As pointed out by Cowen and Arsenault,⁷⁴ merging 'diversity' into value messages and relations

70) Wang, 'Localizing Public Diplomacy', p. 41.

71) The MIRQ's domestic outreach reached a climax around the so-called periods of proto-nationalism, while investments by the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT) were concentrated around Quebec's 1980 and 1995 referenda.

72) See Potter, *Branding Canada*, pp. 20–23 and 267.

73) See A.F. Cooper, B. Hocking, and W. Maley (ed.), *Global Governance and Diplomacy: Worlds Apart ?* (London: Palgrave, 2008).

74) G. Cowan and A. Arsenault, 'Moving from Monologue to Dialogue to Collaboration: The Three Layers of Public Diplomacy', in G. Cowan and N.J. Cull (eds), 'Public Diplomacy in

is essential, and thus stressing this apparent weakness instead of trying to speak with 'one voice' can at times be one of the most potent instruments in the public diplomacy arsenal.

a Changing World', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, issue 616 (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage, March 2008), p. 15.

Conclusion: Between Rhetoric and Reality

For more than 40 years now, partly as a result of the Quiet Revolution, Quebec governments, whether *Parti Québécois* or Liberal, have expressed the province's ambitions to launch and further develop international relationships. By virtue of the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine, Quebec has sought to extend its jurisdiction over its domestic affairs, as enshrined in the British North America Act, into international affairs.⁷⁵ This did not occur overnight. It should be conceived of from within an amalgam of societal tendencies that expanded international activity into spheres heretofore reserved for national units, to other governmental levels that were previously considered to have only a domestic mandate.

The rhetorical plea—nowadays almost the norm—to open up the barriers to entry to public diplomacy for a wide array of actors that overreach the old national elites, is also a response to this evolving environment. The message was heard over the policy table of sub-national governments in federal states, since effective public diplomacy behaves as an amplifier for federated entities that have little in the way of traditional 'power'.

We acknowledged that individual case studies do not make a solution. Yet with the Quebec case as a prime exemplar, we made an effort to piece our way through some of the issues circling the public diplomacy of federated entities, and to stimulate debate on a subject that has so far drawn little

75) See Carter and James, 'Grab the Signatures and Run', pp. 194–217; and Potter, *Branding Canada*, p. 20.

interest from academia. We thereby inferred to the chronological development of Quebec's public diplomacy genesis process by a tripartite conception of its dimensions. Three public diplomacy tracks work symbiotically and are ongoing. Institutionalized public diplomacy is being developed to remedy the fragmentation of pre-existing identity-based and peripheral activities, while later on, a domestic counterpart follows in a more mature stage, as a requisite to public diplomacy's international dimension.

Regarding an identity-based public diplomacy, which is heavily based on the projection of cultural identity, we argued that the art—unlike the term—of public diplomacy is not new to the scene. Advancing federated entities' public diplomacy does not imply starting from scratch. Federated entities are already active in public diplomacy, mostly through related nation-building and branding, cooperation agreements, and various promotional activities, although most but not all of such activities are scattered across numerous labours of a wide array of players. Some have simply outlived their usefulness as well. Simply put, public diplomacy's development in most federated entities has suffered from a misalignment of the structures and contents of unconnected initiatives.

Having encountered similar experiences in the past, Quebec's niche among federated entities is that it connects the dots and identifies the overlaps of pre-existing activities through giving its public diplomacy greater direction, by dint of institutionalizing it via structure, strategy, activities and evaluation. One can reiterate the conceptualization and conduct of Quebec's public diplomacy in four catchwords: policy-driven; influence networks; partnerships; and results. Despite the fact that Quebec has not yet generated a critical mass of public diplomacy programmes, an institutionalized model can score well on a cost-benefit analysis, as it entails a rather new approach in that it works within pre-existing constructs, although it adds focus.

Even supposing that the term 'institutionalization' conjures up pejorative associations with hierarchical state-centric or unidirectional patterns, hobbling the cultivation of relationships, this paper has highlighted a few pros for more systematization of federated entities' public diplomacy: structural and strategic establishment without penny-pinching; reduction of splintering of conduct through a complementary programme of issue-specific public diplomacy initiatives; backing off from targeted image-building; and speeding up a network and encouraging a workable model of multi-actor public diplomacy.

At least as important as its strengths are the shortcomings of the Quebec model. It was argued that public diplomacy is apt to becoming mired in a germinal phase of its genesis when it becomes a surrogate for its methods. In short, in practice it is burdensome to draw an identity-based, institutionalized and domestic public diplomacy out of the marketing, corporate communication and public affairs ghettos respectively.

More cardinally, however, the Quebec model is insufficient in light of multi-actor diplomatic facelifts, especially as advocated by adherents of the ‘new’ public diplomacy. To quote the DC-IDP:

Par ailleurs, nous croyons utile de signaler que l’aspect (plus près d’un idéal à atteindre) de la ‘new public diplomacy’ qui vise les grands publics étrangers n’est pas adopté par le Québec, faute de moyens financiers et d’utilité ‘pratique’.⁷⁶

The fact of the matter is that the Quebec model hangs between rhetoric and reality. Despite the division’s efforts to think outside of the communication-equals-information box in favour of relational thinking, the model of institutionalized public diplomacy, although neither state- nor policy-centric, is driven by both.

Entrants to the public diplomacy scene, such as federated entities, must also fathom the worth of propagating paths of entry to public diplomacy. In this context, a lack of necessary human resources, and an absence of fidelity to older standards of public diplomacy may be less of a problem (as quoted above) than a reality that now needs to be turned to federated entities’ advantage. However, this largely remains in the realm of fancy.

The established networks extend well beyond governmental actors, but do not create pools of citizen ambassadors. Unexploited human resources remain unused, especially domestically. Domestic public diplomacy is put on the back-burner. ‘Working in concert’ is not so much directed at integrating a domestic feedback loop through broad public consultation. If Quebec wants to bolster its lead, and others wish to as well, then they need to make overtures to the larger domestic community, as this is a resource when dealing with a broadened scope of actors since it offers an opening for a certain distancing by governments from a customary association between nations and homogeneous membership principles.

Old habits die hard. Bluntly put, governments think like governments. National or sub-national, they are not waiting for another paradigmatic shift. To take the road less travelled is a more difficult exercise than systematically adjusting the prevailing models and run-of-the-mill state- and policy-driven methods and practices. In the long run one can strive towards an idealized model of public diplomacy, but conditions are not yet ripe for tacking towards a noösphere (knowledge sphere),⁷⁷ unfolding the momentousness of non-state actors and blurring domestic and international public policy realms.

76) <Author’s translation: Moreover, we believe it useful to signal that the aspect (closer to an ideal to be attained) of the ‘new public diplomacy’ that aims at reaching broad foreign publics has not been adopted by Quebec, due to a lack of financial means and ‘practical’ applications.>

DIDP, *Quebec’s Public Diplomacy Experience: Speaking Notes*, p. 4.

77) See Ronfeldt and Arquilla, ‘Noopolitik’, p. 361.

Rhetoric usually is not consistent with reality. Despite significant discourse on public diplomacy development, major reforms promoting the reduction of barriers to entry to public diplomacy remain elusive. Anticipatory edifices frequently lose grip on reality. Policy circles, in their turn, often fail to catch up with anticipatory models. At best, public diplomacy ideals are put into practice at a snail's pace. One of the most advanced cases among federated entities proves, despite its potency, to be no exception to this rule. Proponents are right to acknowledge the potential of federated entities, but it is overreaching to imply that the tectonic plates of public diplomacy will shift dramatically beneath the surface.

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