

Changing Tunes for Public Diplomacy: Exploring the Domestic Dimension

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Abstract¹

The era where public diplomacy could turn its back on its domestic public and solely look towards the international stage has ended. Even so, the clash of opinion continues over whether public diplomacy ought to include a domestic dimension. The paper aims to explore this understudied facet of public diplomacy while drawing attention to issues pertinent to further research. It argues that despite the challenges of breaking with conventional mindsets, moving beyond “new” public diplomacy requires a more holistic approach to public engagement in foreign policy.

Keywords

public diplomacy, public affairs, domestic outreach, citizen engagement, foreign policy, holistic approach

Introduction

Former British Foreign Secretary of State, David Miliband, said it eloquently at the launch of the Foreign Commonwealth Office’s blog pages in September 2007: “These blog pages [...] are intended to open up what too often has been a secret garden of diplomacy confined only to diplomats and those on the inside track.”² This is just one of myriad examples of how diplomacy has opened its doors to the public over the years. Nowadays this opening may seem obvious, but a generation ago public diplomacy was still considered to be an oxymoron and a euphemism for propaganda; a view which occasionally rears its head today. Some may have forgotten that the practice of public diplomacy harkens back to before the construction of Rome’s highways.³ This seeming contradiction in terms however has in no time become a field of study itself

¹ The author would like to thank the referees and Jan Melissen, Bruce Gregory, Kathy R. Fitzpatrick and Cameron Warriner for their valuable advice and assistance.

² David Miliband, “Welcome to FCO’s blog pages,” Foreign and Commonwealth Office, last modified September 26, 2007, https://blogs.fco.gov.uk/roller/miliband/entry/welcome_to_the_fcoblog.

³ See Arthur A. Bardos, “Public diplomacy: An Old Art, a New Profession,” *Virginia Quarterly Review* 77 (2001): 424-37; Nicholas J. Cull, “Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories,” *Public Diplomacy in a Changing World*, (*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March 2006, Volume 616), 31-54; Jan Melissen, “The New Public Diplomacy: Between Theory and Practice,” in *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, edited by Jan Melissen (New York & London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005/7), 3–27.

and is characterized by its relative youth, its multidisciplinary nature, and its lack of theoretical substance.⁴ Leading scholars today even argue beyond this and suggest that it no longer makes sense to distinguish between diplomacy and public diplomacy as traditional and new practices are increasingly morphing into one inclusive mode of diplomacy.⁵

Despite that in times of budgetary shortfalls it is one of the first areas to experience cuts, numerous ministries have indeed realized that investing in public diplomacy is a vital though less direct alternative to their mission of influencing their governmental peers. Diplomats and other government representatives abroad (such as international trade and development officers) spent a significant portion of their time explaining the work, positions and choices of their ministries to foreign public opinion leaders. Regardless of these efforts, there appears at the same time to be the unusual presupposition that public diplomacy only involves engaging with foreign publics. With a few exceptions, mostly from the field of communication,⁶ the scholarly community is in the same boat.

Public diplomacy remains a cipher for the domestic public. It is predominantly associated with its international aspect: directed towards foreign publics and conducted abroad. Nevertheless social media and the increasing mobility of global citizens have blurred distinctions between domestic and international audiences. Many governments are pushing for “21st Century ministries of foreign affairs” to adapt to this evolving environment, but they seem to cling to the traditional distinction between domestic and international. What is more, ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) do develop public outreach activities similar to those abroad but directed at a domestic audience, and they do collaborate with domestic citizens in carrying out public diplomacy programs (such as exchanges), but they do not necessarily acknowledge them as part of the concept of public diplomacy. This is where denial hurts.

Practitioners and scholars must not drown themselves in terminological discussions, or in John Brown’s words: “harping on definitions can be intriguing, but it often leads to an intellectual dead-end.”⁷ There is more going on than meets the eye, and one must be willing to look beyond the seeming paradox of coupling “domestic” to “public diplomacy” towards current evolutions in society, behind which public diplomacy development cannot fall. Stressing the domestic spectrum of public diplomacy may seem counterintuitive given the standard research, but it forces one to think about broader “societization” evolutions in diplomacy and of giving “diplomacy” a more symbolic meaning as the involvement of non-traditional diplomatic actors increases. It is well past time to change public diplomacy’s tune, step onto what may seem like alien ground or definitionally impossible⁸ and explore the under-studied domestic facet of public diplomacy while nourishing debate on how to move the field forward and beyond its “new” and “old” categories. As there are currently more questions than answers, this paper’s aim is to introduce the topic and to open debate on this matter.

The Broader Context

Times have changed, and public diplomacy must not fall behind but be developed in today’s circumstances. Arguments in favor of integrating a domestic component into public diplomacy complementary to its international dimension are mainly related to the belief that it is not a stand-alone field. Public diplomacy is part of wider evolutions in the society in which it operates and from which it must not become disconnected. Societal evolutions have an impact on foreign policy-making as well as diplomatic practice, of which public diplomacy is an intrinsic part. Public diplomacy’s domestic dimension must be understood within what Jan Melissen referred to as one of the most salient transformational developments in diplomatic practice: its “societization.”⁹ Namely, over the years (public) diplomacy’s walls have been crumbling and a myriad of actors have pushed their way in while the boundaries between international and domestic publics and policy spheres have simultaneously blurred.¹⁰ This process has been kicked into high gear by ongoing globalization and the changing information ecosystem. When confronted with a broadened scope of actors, diplomatic activity with a domestic consciousness becomes more prominent.

⁴ See Eytan Gilboa, “Searching for a Theory of Public Diplomacy,” *Public Diplomacy in a Changing World*, edited by Geoffrey Cowan and Nicholas J. Cull, 55-77.

⁵ Jan Melissen, “Public Diplomacy,” *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World: Theories and Practices*, edited by Pauline Kerr and Geoff Wiseman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming).

⁶ See for example Jozef Bátora, “Public Diplomacy between Home and Abroad: Norway and Canada,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 1 (2006), 53-80; Katy R. Fitzpatrick, “The US Public Diplomacy’s Neglected Domestic Mandate,” *USC Center on Public Diplomacy Perspectives Paper 3* (October 2010), 1-51; Naren Chitty, “Australian Public Diplomacy” in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, edited by Nancy Snow (New York & London: Routledge, 2008), 314-22; Evan H. Potter, *Branding Canada: Projecting Canada’s Soft Power through Public Diplomacy* (Montreal QC/Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2009), 54-5; György Szondi, “Public Diplomacy and Nation-Branding: Conceptual Similarities and Differences,” *Discussion Papers in Diplomacy* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, October 2008); Rhonda S. Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges: U.S. Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy after 9/11* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

⁷ John Brown. “Public Diplomacy & Propaganda: Their Differences.” American Diplomacy Publishers, accessed June 12, 2011, http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2008/0709/comm/brown_pudiplprop.html.

⁸ Melissen, “Public Diplomacy.”

⁹ Melissen, “Public Diplomacy.”

¹⁰ Ellen Huijgh, “The Public Diplomacy of Federated Entities: Examining the Quebec Model,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 5 (2010), 126.

Public diplomacy's domestic dimension must also be understood within the ongoing democratization of foreign policy. More particularly, public diplomacy's domestic dimension has to be read as an intrinsic part of ongoing direct and internal democratization of foreign policy. It—ideally—moves beyond the notion of electing representatives and their *modus operandi* towards the continuous participation of domestic constituencies in foreign policy formation, debate, cooperation, and the conduct of diplomatic affairs. Foreign policy democratization is unfortunately still frequently based on flawed assumptions about the relationship between consultation and democracy.¹¹ It is not this paper's intent to search for answers to questions of whether foreign policy democratization can be achieved by just increasing the number of citizens involved, whether stakeholders' self-interests will institutionalize access to foreign policy-making instead of making overtures to the demos, or whether intermediaries will preach foreign policy democratization just to ensure themselves a seat at the decision-making table.¹² Rather, raising awareness about the fact that while some countries may start looking to their citizens as public diplomacy resources, citizen participation risks remaining a subject of government lip-service or what Kim Nossal calls "an elusive ideal" without consensus on what constitutes democratization of the foreign policy and diplomacy.

This being said, one does not need to reinvent the wheel to answer the question of why MFAs should care about domestic publics. They, for better or worse, have learned through experience that domestic public support for a government's international policy choices and positions is crucial to the MFAs' legitimacy at home and abroad. Partly due to a gap between rhetoric (words) and reality (deeds), MFAs have been struggling with at-home identity crises (e.g. a distrust of political representatives and a malaise with progress), which are in one way or another reflected on the international stage. Though some MFAs still try to get away with providing conflicting stories abroad and at home, the support of the citizenry, those they ought to be representing abroad, is the bread and butter of their credibility overseas and thus the government's strategic interests. Internal legitimacy remains a precondition for international respect.

In this view, MFAs risk failing to determine the proper formula for efficiently reaching out on foreign policy to foreign publics abroad if they bypass their "own" citizens. These "own" citizens are less of a homogeneous mass than the term suggests. Societies today include diffuse populations, such as transnational ethnic groups and so-called global citizens (e.g. one fifth of Canadians are foreign born,¹³ 2.5 million people in Germany are Turkish immigrants¹⁴). They have ongoing and widespread connections with citizens from other countries and from their countries of origin. They fundamentally change a society's composition and thus the raw material from which its collective identities, ideas, and interests are derived. Governments must learn to work with other than the "usual suspects of targeted audiences" in order to establish networks that have connections with diverse communities at home and abroad and thereby expand public diplomacy's reach.

Investing in the domestic dimension can thus be seen as a logical and necessary step in the chronological process and further development of public diplomacy conducted abroad. This is not just wishful thinking. In a world where the effectiveness of a government's public diplomacy increasingly flourishes in inverse proportion to the degree of visible state interference, domestic audiences can be a public and a partner in public diplomacy at the same time, but officials' legitimate roles may be hollowed-out further. Partly due to their credibility amongst foreign peers, divergent non-state actors at home have become prominent intermediaries of initially state-centred public diplomacy. Although not all citizen communities will be allies to governments' public diplomacy initiatives,¹⁵ investments in these domestic publics is vital for encouraging them as participants and partners in interaction with citizens of other countries around shared foreign policy concerns.

Investing in networks and collaboration with domestic civil society actors is not only relevant from a government's perspective. It can also respond to the increasing desire among key segments of the population for engagement opportunities with foreign publics on international issues of shared concern. Foreign policy is often popularly seen as of little interest to domestic publics,¹⁶ but in a global environment where domestic (security) concerns are increasingly linked to international events domestic politics has become part of the diplomatic process. Domestically-focused actors are increasingly aware of how international issues affect them and that the issues they care about at home have international ramifications; 9/11 and the 2008 global economic crisis may have been wake-up calls. It can further be seen in how widespread public demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt have sparked a wave of similar protests across North Africa and the Near East, and in sister demonstrations

¹¹ Kim R. Nossal, "The Democratization of Canadian Foreign Policy: The Elusive Ideal," in *Canada Among Nations: Democracy and Foreign Policy*, edited by Maxwell A. Cameron, Maureen Appel Molot (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1995), 41.

¹² *Ibid.*, 33-39.

¹³ "Immigration in Canada: A Portrait of the Foreign-born Population, 2006 Census: Immigration: Driver of population growth," Statistics Canada, accessed June 12, 2011, <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-557/p2-eng.cfm>.

¹⁴ "Demographic Trends," *Facts About Germany*, accessed June 12, 2011, <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/en/society/main-content-08/demographic-trends.html>.

¹⁵ Zaharna quite rightly argues that MFAs and their public diplomats often ignore opposing parties in public diplomacy initiatives and that trying to engage them in the project may give legitimacy to a controversial initiative and dissuade others who might sabotage it. Rhonda S. Zaharna, "The Public Diplomacy Challenges of Strategic Stakeholder Engagement," in *Trials of Engagement: The Future of US Public Diplomacy*, (Leiden: Brill/Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2011), 227-29.

¹⁶ See Daryl Copeland, "The Seven Paradoxes of Public Diplomacy," in *Trials of Engagement: The Future of US Public Diplomacy*, (Leiden: Brill/Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2011), 193-4.

Western countries where citizens are demanding that their respective governments intervene internationally in the events.

Scholars¹⁷ have provided a necessary dose of caution to the “double-edged” nature of diplomacy and foreign policy-making. There is no place here for a detailed discussion, but different examples¹⁸ have shown how internal forces play equally as crucial roles as external political pressures in the pursuit and execution of an MFA’s aspirations, goals, and decisions. The domestic politics behind foreign policy, however, can be neither ignored nor allowed to drive it. The crafting and implementation of public diplomacy’s domestic dimension must thus not be injected with partisan vote-seeking and parliamentary seat counts; a bad habit that frequently pops up when diaspora voters are up for grabs. Public diplomacy overseas must also not be employed to serve domestic propaganda goals (convince citizens of a false international image of global admiration for their country), which according to Nicholas Cull was the case within the Brezhnev-era USSR and currently is within contemporary Chinese and the United States’ public diplomacy.¹⁹ Regarding the latter, Ali Fisher notes that public diplomacy with a domestic propaganda narrative of “getting power over the other” comes at the detriment of genuine dialogue with and empowerment of populations overseas.²⁰

Investment in domestic citizens driven by short-sighted electoral advantage is one of opponents’ most fundamental critiques against the inclusion of a domestic dimension into public diplomacy. Within this context it can be useful to differentiate partisan electoral politics and the politics surrounding policy formation. This raises additional queries of whether it is the result rather than the method that makes domestic outreach by political leaders propaganda or the necessary shaping of public opinion and policy position at home. There are also overlapping issues; investments in the domestic dimension of public diplomacy with a focus on a particular issue might, whether by chance or on purpose, provide an electoral advantage to some candidates for political office.²¹ The tantalizing pitfall of investing in public diplomacy’s domestic dimension solely out of electoral advantage motivations, however, must at all costs be dealt with. Politicians must therefore learn to resist the temptation, while administrations should avoid using it as an excuse for shying away from cutting through bureaucratic red tape.

So though public diplomacy’s domestic side brings significant advantages with it (evolving with societal realities, bolstering governments’ internal and external legitimacy, buttressing international public diplomacy), it is put in jeopardy when used as a tool of domestic propaganda or political brinkmanship. Now that the broader context is more clear, one has to take a glimpse at what the domestic dimension of public diplomacy can entail and how it has been developed over the years.

Mirroring the International Dimension

To understand what the domestic dimension of public diplomacy can entail, one has to mirror the well-documented evolutions of the international dimension with its domestic corollary. Without touching too deeply upon areas that others have more thoroughly explored, a brief rundown will be provided to demonstrate how evolutions in public diplomacy are also relevant to and have influenced its domestic facets. To give a bird’s eye view, the literature makes a distinction between traditional post-Cold War and new 21st Century public diplomacy. This does not particularly entail a shift in public diplomacy. The theoretical plea in favour of a “new” or “21st Century” public diplomacy²² has rather highlighted the need to rework more traditional views of public diplomacy’s core components in reaction to an evolving environment. One can note the changing interpretations of public diplomacy’s goals (from static message design and delivery to dynamic network exchange and interaction), actors (from states to multiple actors), public (from passive and international opinion leaders to both active and domestic and international audiences and the public at large), their links (from distinct to connected), culture (from cultural barriers between ‘them’ and ‘us’ to the incorporation of cultural diversity), and means (from information

¹⁷ See Robert D. Putnam, “Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-level Games,” *International Organization* 42 (Summer 1998), 427-60; Peter B. Evans, “Building an Integrative Approach to International and Domestic Politics: Reflections and Projections,” in *Double-Edged Diplomacy: International Bargaining and Domestic Politics*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Harold K. Jacobson, Robert D. Putnam (Berkeley/LA/California University of California Press, 2003), 397-43.

¹⁸ See Gerry C. Alons, “Predicting a State’s Foreign Policy: State Preferences between Domestic and International Constraints,” *Foreign Policy Analysis* 3 (July 2007), 211-32; and literature on the domestic politics of foreign policy.

¹⁹ Nicholas J. Cull, “Karen Hughes and the Brezhnev Syndrome: The Trial of Public Diplomacy as Domestic Performance,” in *Trials of Engagement: The Future of US Public Diplomacy*, (Leiden: Brill/Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2011), 117-32.

²⁰ Ali Fisher, “Looking at the Man in the Mirror: Understanding of Power and Influence in Public Diplomacy,” in *Trials of Engagement*, 276-280.

²¹ I’m indebted to Bruce Gregory for this note.

²² See, for instance, Brian Hocking, “Rethinking the ‘New’ Public Diplomacy” and Shaun Riordan, “Dialogue-Based Public Diplomacy: A New Foreign Policy Paradigm,” in *The New Public Diplomacy*; Nancy Snow, “Rethinking Public Diplomacy,” *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 3-12; Rhonda S. Zaharna, “Mapping Out a Spectrum of Public Diplomacy Initiatives: Information and Relational Communication Frameworks,” *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*.

dissemination to relationship-building-related activity).²³ In essence, supporters of a contemporary image of public diplomacy argue for the re-emergence of “public networking” over “government communication.” They prefer “governance” over “governments” and “networking” over “informing.”²⁴ This is the context in which one must understand the evolutions in and attitude towards public diplomacy’s domestic dimension as well.

Over the years there have generally been two terms that have been associated with the domestic dimension of public diplomacy: public affairs and domestic outreach.

From Information to Network: From Public Affairs to Domestic Outreach

Since the end of the Cold War, public diplomacy has traditionally been associated with informing and one-way communication with foreign publics. One-sided communication with domestic audiences has frequently been defined in terms of public affairs. Public affairs was initially used by corporate entities as a subfield of corporate communication, another term that frequently pops up as the domestic equivalent of public diplomacy.²⁵ Public affairs is a specialized form of corporate communication dedicated to informing targeted domestic publics about foreign policy goals, positions and activities.

To secure a domestic buy-in, and given different government political structures and climates, an MFA (mostly the communication branch but also through high-level officials such as (prime) ministers and presidents on priority issues) typically undertakes the following public affairs activities: (inter)national press releases, briefings, and services; local and national media outreach and interviews; website development and management; responding to the public’s foreign policy questions via multiple media; producing audio-visual resources; providing information to missions and publics at large; and organizing events (e.g. visits to the department such as Open Days). The thousands of websites and even more brochures and flyers speak for themselves, while the literature has stressed that in the age of information overload the effect of governmental info-bullying remains limited. Though government communication remains important, public diplomacy’s domestic dimension is by no means the mere application of communication techniques or of disseminating messages through networks. They are not done for their own sake or as ends in themselves. They are tools used in genitive stages of the logical process in public diplomacy’s genesis to achieve the goal of building relationships and foreign policy cooperation.

In dividing public affairs from public diplomacy, Ken Heller and Liza Persson suggest three parameters: core commitment, purpose, and primary audience. According to these authors, while public affairs must inform a domestic population about government actions and motives (thus on how the resources that voters make available are used), public diplomacy is about influencing the publics and leaders of foreign nations. Their view is based on the idea that public diplomacy is in itself strategic, while public affairs ought not be. They are of the opinion that public affairs activities must not focus on directing, shaping, or manipulating public actions, opinions, or perceptions. Realistically, however, it is all too tempting to use public affairs as a tool when changes in public opinion are desired. Besides, arguably all information, especially information that is disseminated by governance and diplomatic actors, has an influencing effect regardless of the actors’ intention.²⁸ Some scholars instead consider public diplomacy to be the international face of a foreign ministry’s domestic public affairs and stresses that both use similar activities and techniques but are directed towards other audiences.²⁹

Even though scholars’ approaches to the relation between public diplomacy and public affairs differ, when equating public diplomacy’s domestic dimension to public affairs, as defined in terms of informing, it cannot fall behind an

²³ See Kathy R. Fitzpatrick, “U.S. Public Diplomacy in a Post-9/11 World: From Messaging to Mutuality,” paper presented at ISA Conference, Montréal, March 16-19, 2011; Rhonda. S. Zaharna, “The Soft Power Differential: Network Communication and Mass Communication in Public Diplomacy,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, 2 (2007), 213–22.

²⁴ Huijgh, “Public Diplomacy of Federated Entities,” 126.

²⁵ Corporate communication was initially used to describe the communication of business firms but over the years it has increasingly been applied on government organizations. It then refers to an organizations’ management instrument that uses all of the employed forms of internal and external communication as efficiently as possible and tunes them so as to create a positive position with the targeted publics with which the organization has a dependency relationship. Corporate communications is an overarching term for organization, management and marketing communication and their subfields. Applied to public diplomacy, organization communication is especially used to build long-term relationships with foreign and domestic publics. Management communication is applied to prevent fragmentation by coordinating the increasing amount of different state and non-state actors engaged in public diplomacy. One-way marketing communication instruments (i.e. advertising and broad image campaigns) and short-time management evaluations seem to be less effective than presumed in enhancing dialogue through long-term mission statements and customized small-scale messages, lying at the very core of public diplomacy. See Cees McRiel and Charles Fombrun, *Essentials of Corporate Communication* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

²⁶ Ken S. Heller and Liza M. Persson, “The Distinction between Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy,” in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, 225–33.

²⁷ Such a view is very much in line with the traditional, but arguably outdated, distinction made by the late American career diplomat, Philip Habib, between public diplomacy and public affairs: “The word diplomacy means outside and has nothing to do with what you are trying to do with the American people. Gaining the support of the American people for US foreign policy initiatives is entirely different from attempting to pursue the interests of the United States in the foreign arena.” See Philip F. Habib, “Concluding Remarks,” in *Public Diplomacy: USA versus USSR*, edited by Richard F. Staar (Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 283.

²⁸ Huijgh, “Public Diplomacy of Federated Entities,” 139

²⁹ See Potter, *Branding Canada*, 56.

upgrading towards a more network relational approach to public diplomacy. Changing environments and associated mindsets partly explain why the interpretation of public affairs has moved to a more two-way direction involving domestic stakeholder engagement. At best then, public affairs informs foreign policy but more often than not continues to ignore or minimize the domestic-international nexus despite the facts that public affairs professionals at larger embassies are often in charge of public diplomacy and that these projects frequently involve domestic partners (e.g. international exchanges, visitor programs). Though public affairs is increasingly interpreted as the engagement of an MFA's stakeholders, in addition to its policy communication towards the citizenry, domestic outreach is considered to be a better term for reflecting a relational approach. Some may see domestic outreach as part of public affairs, but in this context it is usually not interpreted in terms of creating "mutual understanding" between citizens, but as responding to information requests.³⁰ The evolution from informational towards more multi-actor network relational approaches explains why the term "domestic outreach" is nowadays increasingly used, and it ought to reflect a contemporary approach to public diplomacy. In so doing, domestic outreach surpasses public affairs in stressing the increasingly (inter)active role of domestic citizens in public diplomacy (self-governing participants and potential collaborators rather than passive recipients) and the interplay of public diplomacy's features at home and abroad. The term is therefore sometimes interchangeably used with "domestic public diplomacy," as was the case in Canada.³¹

Domestic outreach as a facet of public diplomacy primarily concerns longer-term goals that are at public diplomacy's heart: supporting civil society initiatives that encourage relationship-building, understanding, and influence. Domestic outreach can also advance mid-term goals by raising the profile of international issues and government priorities. The development of domestic outreach as a branch of the broader public diplomacy project can serve several aims. First, it can buttress international public diplomacy by broadening reach and influence with key foreign publics (e.g. government support for domestic audiences' international activities). Second, it can help ameliorate citizens' capabilities with the objective of encouraging informed dialogue about governmental policy, priorities, and international topics. Third, it can stimulate greater public comprehension of complex international issues and thereby prepare citizens for the fast-paced global environment. Fourth, it can answer the increasing need of certain populations for expanded chances to interact with foreign counterparts on international topics about which the both care.

The majority of globally recurrent domestic outreach activities usually include speaker programs, policy e-discussions, and the well-known paths of organizing and participating in conferences and working groups. Speaker programs mostly include talks across the country from government representatives (ambassadors or heads of missions) around certain topics relevant to the government, and are targeted at both specific and larger audiences. It can also include talks at the ministry itself (such as student group seminars). See for example Canada's speaker and corporate outreach program, the United States' speakers and specialists program, the United Kingdom's 2008 Bringing Foreign Policy Home Initiative,³² the Dutch Rent an Ambassador program, and India's Distinguished Lecture Series.

Regular, institutionalized, and informed public dialogue ought to build greater public understanding of foreign policy and international issues or governmental priorities. It can take the form of policy consultations or organization of conferences and workshops within and across the country. Indonesia's "Foreign Policy Breakfast forum," India's series of conferences on issues of local concern across the country, and sensitizing actions on European Union-related issues by member states or by candidate countries exemplify this.³³ It can also take place virtually through online policy discussions (posting topical questions and responses on MFAs' websites) with citizens (mostly students and scholars but open to all). Canada has become internationally renowned for its decade-old e-discussions³⁴ but now seems to have turned them in for so-called "open" policy development and web 2.0 community working groups, which still await implementation.

Despite their success, speaker programs and policy e-discussions have weaknesses in efficiency and implementation: they are still used as conveniences (facilitating the appearance of dialogue) rather than as real tools of public engagement; they lack evaluation and follow-up and do not systematically inform foreign policy making; and despite greater interdivisional

³⁰ Fitzpatrick, "Neglected Mandate," 35.

³¹ See the Government of Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Domestic Outreach Division, Call for applications for the Foreign Policy Dialogue, Citizen Diplomacy, Model Political Assemblies Program, November 9, 2005.

³² See Steven Curtis, Caroline Clennell-Jaine, "Securing the State through Dialogue at Home: The Bringing Foreign Policy Home Initiative: Pakistan Outreach" (Presented at ISA Conference, Montréal, March 16-19, 2011).

³³ In European countries, a six-month European Union presidency creates additional opportunities to conduct sensitizing actions directed at the domestic public on E.U.-related issues while candidate countries deliver talks at home and abroad to seek public support for E.U. accession and for which specific E.U. funds (see E.U. citizen enlargement projects) are frequently used by. See Andrić Mladen, Suzana Simichen-Sopta, Iva Tarle, "Practices of Public Diplomacy in Communicating NATO and E.U. Values with the Domestic Public in Croatia" (paper presented at ISA Conference, Montréal, March 16-19, 2011). For more information on Indonesia's institutionalized series of discussions between high level officials and leading Indonesians in various fields see: Rizal Sukma, "Soft power and Public Diplomacy: The Case of Indonesia," in *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia*, edited by Sook Jong Lee and Jan Melissen (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

³⁴ Jozef Batora, "Emerging Tenets of Responsive Foreign Policy Making," *International Journal*, 61 (Autumn 2006): 929-42.

cooperation (see for example in New Zealand),³⁵ they remain MFA-centered and lack a whole-of-government approach. The current obsession with social media may also blind MFAs to older proven and effective methods. The choice is not binary: neither solely traditional nor modern; neither solely international nor domestic.

So-called “citizen diplomacy programs” with the MFA and its representatives as boundary-spanners may offer a better venue for connecting domestic citizens to their foreign contemporaries around foreign policy issues. Its added value lays in the bottom-up approach as it contributes financially to projects originating in civil society whereby preference is given to projects that enable knowledge acquisition, increased awareness, promote the understanding of global affairs, and, above all, enable connections with peers abroad around common foreign policy issues. Support to think tanks and semi-detached bodies remains important for expanding policy capacity development and developing global research or communities already deeply entrenched in relevant civil society bodies. Minorities, diasporas, faith-based entities, expatriates, and university alumni could all play more active roles in future outreach to foreign publics, and their potential has recently grabbed governmental and scholarly attention.³⁶

There are thus porous borders between public diplomacy “by” and “for” civil society and the increasingly popular alleged “citizen diplomacy.” Both acknowledge the role of civil society in diplomacy more easily and have a people-to-people approach in common, but more research is needed on what types of civil society communication and relationships compose public diplomacy and what kinds of cross-cultural internationalism do not. Bluntly put, however, public diplomacy’s people-to-people approach shies away from intercultural relations in the sense that the role (e.g. coordinator, facilitator, boundary-spanner instead of messenger) of governmental actors and the connection with foreign policy content is more prominent than in citizen diplomacy.

Though there is no one-size-fits-all template, a government’s public diplomacy strategy needs to be interpreted as a systematic series of policy initiatives focusing on developing and managing relationships around foreign policy and international issues of common relevance between the homeland and other populations. It should be considered an overarching framework for bringing a level of coherence to the range of public outreach programs created and put into reality by various actors at home and abroad.³⁷

The Public and the Interplay

The domestic and international spectra of public diplomacy develop public outreach activities, which while not identical (such as the degree of intensity of consultation and differences in content), the means (conference participation, workshops, institutionalized dialogue, talks of speakers) and actors (state and civil society) by which such engagement occurs are very much alike. They may benefit from being developed in greater relation to one another as part of a broader public engagement project wherein their complementarities must reinforce the outcome and maximize the desired results. The question thus arises of why they should maintain their separation? One of the most common issues pointed out in the literature is the difference in their targeted publics.³⁸ It would indeed be utopist to imagine a world with a single global opinion. One must also not forget that the intensity of the consultation and engagement process with domestic and international audiences differs largely, due to the fact that government engagement abroad does not directly affect the government’s chances of re-election. However, foreign public opinion can also play a role in the re-election of a government however.

Nevertheless in a mobile and virtually connected universe of global communities, advanced communication technology, and international media, the supposed separation between “domestic” and “foreign” publics is relative as well. Naren Chitty for instance, argues that in a world of dispersed populations, alternate views of public diplomacy must

³⁵ New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade established a Domestic Outreach Fund to ensure a more strategic approach by linking outreach to domestic audiences to the ministry’s statement of intent and to divisions’ operational plans. The broad aim is for the fund to be applied within the framework of an overarching domestic outreach strategy to ensure that the ministry’s engagement with domestic audiences is effective and coordinated (at a ministry-wide instead of divisional level). The fund’s objectives include: lifting the quality of the Ministry’s engagement with stakeholders and mainstreaming it as a Ministry activity, building support among constituencies which are central to achieving the government’s policy objectives, and supporting priorities. I am indebted to Simon Mark, former Public Diplomacy Adviser at the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for this information. See New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, “Post-Election Brief – November 2008, also <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Media-and-publications/Publications/Post-Election-Brief/0-brief11.php>.

³⁶ See for example Canada’s Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Global Citizens Workshop, March 30, 2010; Alan Gamlen, “Diaspora Engagement: What, How, Why?” (Presented at the Exploring Diaspora Strategies Conference, NUI Maynooth, January 26-28, 2009); Aine O’Neill, “Advancing Diaspora Knowledge Networks” (Presented at the Exploring Diaspora Strategies Conference, NUI Maynooth, January 26-28, 2009).

³⁷ Though originally referring to diaspora diplomacy Boyle’s and Kitchin’s statement is equally relevant in this context. Mark Boyle and Rob Kitchin., “Diaspora Strategy Wheel and Ten Principles of Good Practice,” accessed June 12, 2011, <http://www.nuim.ie/nirsa/diaspora>.

³⁸ See for example: Ken S. Heller and Liza M. Persson, “The Distinction between Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy,” 225–33.; Potter, *Branding Canada*, 56.

acknowledge that domestic and foreign publics can no longer be separated and that both must be addressed.³⁹ Rhonda Zaharna also points out that today the notion of geographically segmented audiences has become problematic for two major reasons. First, it has become nearly impossible to develop a communication message for one targeted audience that will not be heard by the international community. Second, the idea of speaking to people of one region while virtually ignoring the rest of the world is artificial and has adverse effects on public opinion.⁴⁰

Surprisingly, the precarious addition of the domestic public into the system of diplomatic governance seems to be above all a case of Western—perhaps largely American—distress.” With a few exceptions, and given that in Europe the tide appears to be turning (e.g. the United Kingdom’s Bringing Foreign Policy Home initiative), former standards and trendsetters appear to have the greatest reluctance. For example, the United States’ 1948 Smith–Mundt Act banned dissemination of public diplomacy materials to citizens of the United States. Although this did not preclude public diplomacy efforts to enhance Americans’ understanding of foreign affairs, its interpretation resulted in the chronic ignorance of domestic audiences and according to some authors holds serious consequences for its future success.⁴¹ One of the occidental exceptions was Canada, a frontrunner in integrating a domestic dimension into its public diplomacy strategy. Its efforts to consult civil society are also internationally known as trendsetting (such as the ban on landmines, foreign policy dialogue, and e-discussions). Canada’s innovative approach to public engagement on foreign policy has been nipped in the bud however. A recent rethinking of public diplomacy’s place within the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has led to its decline and a scattering of related domestic activities.

Newcomers to the field of public diplomacy seem to be less suspicious. They have several advantages for coping with changes in diplomatic practice. Building upon their predecessors’ know-how, they may be able to initially avoid similar problems in dealing with public diplomacy makeovers. Moreover, they are not committed to former public diplomacy standards, which may not be suited to the current evolving environment and could become a hindrance to further progress.⁴² Innovation, then, can come from the least expected corners. National state actors are not the sole governmental players. Some sub-national entities with increased international involvement but limited political-economic powers, such as Catalonia (Spain), are well known for their bottom-up citizen initiatives and have from the start included a domestic and international dimension in their public diplomacy strategy.⁴³

Also interesting are Asian countries. India’s Ministry of External Affairs established a public diplomacy division in 2006, which has recently been updated with a new website and a surge of energy. As a result, public diplomacy is nowadays seen as taking place both in external and internal contexts and considers the domestication of foreign policy an important component of India’s public diplomacy.⁴⁴ Indonesia’s Foreign Ministry Directorate of Public Diplomacy has also integrated domestic components into its strategy and runs projects such as the Young Indonesian Ambassadors program for high school students to stimulate exchange with international peers.⁴⁵

Some caution is needed here. After all, everything may seem fine on paper, but the implementation of such a public diplomacy strategy with both a domestic and international dimension still leaves room for developing public engagement projects abroad and at home in a more complementary fashion. The question also arises of how Asian countries, where governments still play a dominant role and conduct a mainly state-centered public diplomacy and civil society does not, can pass beyond the public affairs stage and thus beyond informing citizens reactively. China is a unique example in this regard. While in the Chinese doctrine the phrase “public diplomacy” may have referred exclusively to the task of explaining foreign policy at home,⁴⁶ and while the MFA’s present public diplomacy strategy may target both domestic and foreign publics, citizens’ speech remains restricted.⁴⁷

³⁹ Naren Chitty, “Public Diplomacy: Courting Publics for Short-term Advantage or Partnering Publics for Lasting Peace and Sustainable Prosperity?” in *Trials of Engagement: The Future of US Public Diplomacy*, edited by Ali Fisher, Scott Lucas (Leiden: Brill/Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2011), 255.

⁴⁰ Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges*, 170.

⁴¹ See Fitzpatrick, “The US Public Diplomacy’s Neglected Mandate,” 38.

⁴² Huijgh, “Public Diplomacy Federated Entities,” 127.

⁴³ See Government of Catalonia, *Foreign Affairs Strategy 2011–2015*, June 2010, 71–83.

⁴⁴ See Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao’s speech at the Inaugural Session of the Conference on Public Diplomacy in the Information Age (New Delhi, December 10, 2010), accessed June 12, 2011 <http://publicdiplomacy2010.in>.

⁴⁵ See Rizal Sukma, “Soft power and Public Diplomacy: The Case of Indonesia,” in *Public Diplomacy and Soft Power in East Asia*, edited by Sook Jong Lee, Jan Melissen (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

⁴⁶ See Wang Yiwei, “Public Diplomacy and the Rise of the Chinese Soft Power,” in *Public Diplomacy in A Changing World*, edited by Geoffrey Cowan and Nicholas J. Cull (*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, March 2006, Volume 616), 257–273; and Nicholas J. Cull, “Karen Hughes and the Brezhnev Syndrome,” 120.

⁴⁷ A Good example is the Communist Party Propaganda’s Department and media directives on the 2008 Beijing Olympics stating not to “criticize foreign affairs without prior authorization” in Gary D. Rawnsley, “China Talks Back: Public Diplomacy and Soft Power for the Chinese Century,” in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, edited by Nancy Snow, Philip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 286–287; Ingrid d’Hooghe, “Into High Gear: China’s Public Diplomacy,” *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy* 3 (2008): 40; Yang Jiechi, “Endeavor to Open a New Horizon of Public Diplomacy with Chinese Characteristics,” accessed June 12, 2011, <http://hr.china-embassy.org/eng/zxxx/t801925.htm>.

The Best of Both Worlds

Borders between domestic and international policy-publics-actors in public diplomacy are narrowing, not disappearing, and the development of public diplomacy therefore requires an acknowledgement of societal realities. That's why nowadays, where a public diplomacy "for" and "by" civil society is increasingly moving to the forefront, a purely government-centric approach is insufficient. Expanding the number and scope of actors, publics, and the sophistication of relational initiatives into the public diplomacy strategy will provide no solace either. It will lack strategic effectiveness and could even be counterproductive if the overarching strategy does not sprout from the notion that public diplomacy is not binary. It must break with categorical mindsets and artificial firewalls that are out of sync with prevailing societal dynamics.⁴⁸

Though post-Cold War modes of public diplomacy are now relics of the past, updating public diplomacy should not be understood as meaning a complete divestiture of "outdated" models. It requires the best of both and an awareness of where "old" and "new" intersect. The informational model of public diplomacy should be seen then as a logical precursor to a multi-actor network model lying upon the same continuum, and not as a completely separate and unconnected category. Rethinking public diplomacy must go beyond the distinction of "new" and "old," "domestic" and "international." This unified view is essential for moving the field forward and for pulling the "new" public diplomacy from its enclosure. There must be a stepping back from rigid categorizations and a wariness of absolutes. It is time to re-center the pendulum and search for the intersections between the categories of "international" and "domestic" and move towards more holistic approaches of public engagement.

Conclusion: Towards a Holistic Approach

Successful public diplomacy starts at home. This statement is intended neither as an attention grabber nor as an eyebrow-raising contradiction in terms. A relationship approach of public diplomacy, increasingly fashionable among scholars and practitioners, must transcend the inclusion of more exchange programs, more listening and more dialogue. Implementing the principles of reciprocity and mutuality implies the integration of a domestic component. One of the characteristics of 21st Century public diplomacy is the expansion of target audiences, as the support of the domestic audiences for foreign policy actions has become more crucial, especially with the emergence of "intermestic" affairs when international and domestic affairs merge and encroach on each other.⁴⁹ Investing in the domestic spectrum is vital for putting the "new" public diplomacy and the currently *en vogue* citizen diplomacy further into practice and for pulling them out of their "people-to-people" rhetorical rut.

Two important considerations must be taken into account prior to investing in a public diplomacy with a domestic consciousness: it is neither another method of political brinkmanship nor another tool of domestic propaganda and public administration. Moving ahead with development of public diplomacy's domestic dimension cannot be a means of achieving domestic political gain. Opinion polls and consultation with taxpayers must not just take place in the run-up to elections, and it must be protected from interference from political actors seeking votes.

Evolutions in public diplomacy have affected its domestic facet. This paper has argued that public diplomacy has evolved from an informational to a relational approach and that this has affected the domestic dimension as well. The two terms associated with public diplomacy, public affairs and domestic outreach, must be understood within this framework. At the risk of oversimplification, while the use of public affairs fits well within an informational or so-called "old" approach to public diplomacy, domestic outreach appeals to a network relational or so-called "new" approach to public diplomacy. While public affairs speaks to a more state-centered approach, domestic outreach speaks to a multi-actor environment. While the first mainly perceives domestic citizens as publics to be informed (perceivers), the latter adds a more (inter)active role for domestic citizens in public diplomacy (participants, partners). While the use of public affairs speaks to the separation of publics, domestic outreach enlightens the view of a domestic public that is integral to the implementation and success of the public diplomacy initiatives.⁵⁰ While public affairs stresses the difference with public diplomacy's international dimension, domestic outreach, also interchangeably used with "domestic public diplomacy," stresses the interplay between the domestic and international features of public diplomacy.

Of greater importance is the question of how relevant is it to maintain a strict distinction between domestic and international or between public affairs, domestic outreach and public diplomacy. To borrow from Bruce Gregory, these are "preferences of different tribal cultures, not separate analytical categories."⁵¹ The reciprocal and interdependent relation

⁴⁸ Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges*, 182.

⁴⁹ György Szondi, "Central and Eastern European Public Diplomacy: A Transnational Perspective on National Reputation Management," in *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, edited by Nancy Snow, Philip M. Taylor (New York: Routledge, 2009), 304.

⁵⁰ Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges*, 182.

⁵¹ Bruce Gregory, "Mapping Smart Power in Multi-Stakeholder Public Diplomacy/Strategic Communication," presented at the New Approaches to US Global Outreach Conference, Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication, George Washington University, October 5, 2009.

between public diplomacy's international and domestic features is becoming clearer in today's social media landscape. It takes but a single click of a mouse for both foreigners and domestic citizens to gain access to identical governmental information and discover how easy it is for them to reach one another and join forces on foreign policy issues. Facebook exchanges in Egypt and Tunisia, for example, have been part of a two-year collaboration that has given birth to a pan-Arab democracy youth movement and that mixes the tactics of nonviolent resistance with Silicon Valley marketing tactics.⁵²

Neither identical nor opposed, the domestic and international features of public diplomacy are abundantly more similar than different. Major public outreach characteristics (such as the means used) found in one are equally present in the other. One may cling to the distinction on the basis of differences in publics. These differences are present, of course, but though it can be argued that a unitary global public opinion is still more rhetoric than reality, citizens' debates on internationally controversial issues are not hermetically sealed within a country and can migrate globally (e.g. cyber activity in North Africa and the Near East at the grass-roots level). Public diplomacy must not be alienated from the evolving context in which it operates: the amalgamation of domestic and international publics, actors, and policy spheres. Ministries are losing their grip on reality if they continue working within a culture of artificially established firewalls just because "it has always been this way," which leads to absurd everyday situations (different websites for foreign and domestic publics where individuals have relatively easy access to both types of content).

The permeability between "foreign" and "domestic" and an increasingly active civil society is making a more holistic approach to public engagement a central element of a contemporary diplomacy. In this view, public diplomacy's domestic and international dimensions are not two solitudes but two sides of the same coin, bolstering one another. Both Daryl Copeland and Evan Potter refer to public diplomacy's Janus face: simultaneously looking inwards and outwards, whereby investments in the former correlate with the latter.⁵³ Informing, sensitizing, influencing, and mobilizing are all steps in the public engagement process. A holistic approach must be at the core of public diplomacy's grand strategy and draw attention to its complementarities instead of to its two-tongued Janus face.

The integration of a domestic dimension into foreign policy machinery is nevertheless an arduous task forcing governments to think in terms of transformation instead of adaptation.⁵⁴ Bombarding it with new digital toys (e.g. tweeting, blogging, embassies on Second Life, digital outreach teams) is like bandaging a wooden leg. The current darling of social media cannot be used to legitimize traditional tasks.⁵⁵ Transformation towards a 21st Century ministry needs to reconsider utilizing a bifurcated office for public affairs and public diplomacy and merge them into one "bureau" of public engagement. Further research, illustrated with best practices from the field, is needed on how to make this idea manifest in a workable model. As has been noted, newcomers to the scene seem to be less troubled by the international-domestic nexus than the early standard-setters, which are now stuck dragging their outdated luggage behind them.

The scholarly community's mindset is being challenged as well. A more holistic approach to public engagement raises analytical questions about how to distinguish between (public) diplomacy and other forms of communication, relationship building in and between societies, and the legitimacy of maintaining these distinctions. Approaching public engagement more comprehensively could stimulate public diplomacy scholars to think beyond the old and new, but this requires the sacrifice of some sacred cows. This includes transcending the conviction that diplomacy is solely directed towards the outside and has nothing to do with the inside. Overcoming this single entrenched idea is perhaps the most challenging aspect of moving beyond categorical thinking in diplomacy. The twin bastions of diplomacy and public diplomacy may be metamorphosing into an alternative inclusive mode of diplomacy, yet without a firm domestic foundation it is doomed to collapse.

⁵² See David D. Kirkpatrick, David E. Sangera, "Tunisian-Egyptian Link That Shook Arab History," *New York Times*, February 13, 2011; Clay Shirky, "The Political Power of Social Media," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2011), 28-41.

⁵³ See Daryl Copeland, "James Eayrs on Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, and International Relations. A Twenty-first Century Retrospective," *International Journal*, 62 (Spring 2007): 52; Potter, *Branding Canada*, xiii.

⁵⁴ Bruce Gregory makes this crucial point in his speech. Bruce Gregory, "On Mapping Smart Power in Multi-Stakeholder Public Diplomacy".

⁵⁵ Monroe Price, Susan Haas, Drew Margolin, "New Technologies and International Broadcasting: Reflection on adaptation and Transformation," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 161 (March 2008) quoted in Gregory, October 5, 2009.

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