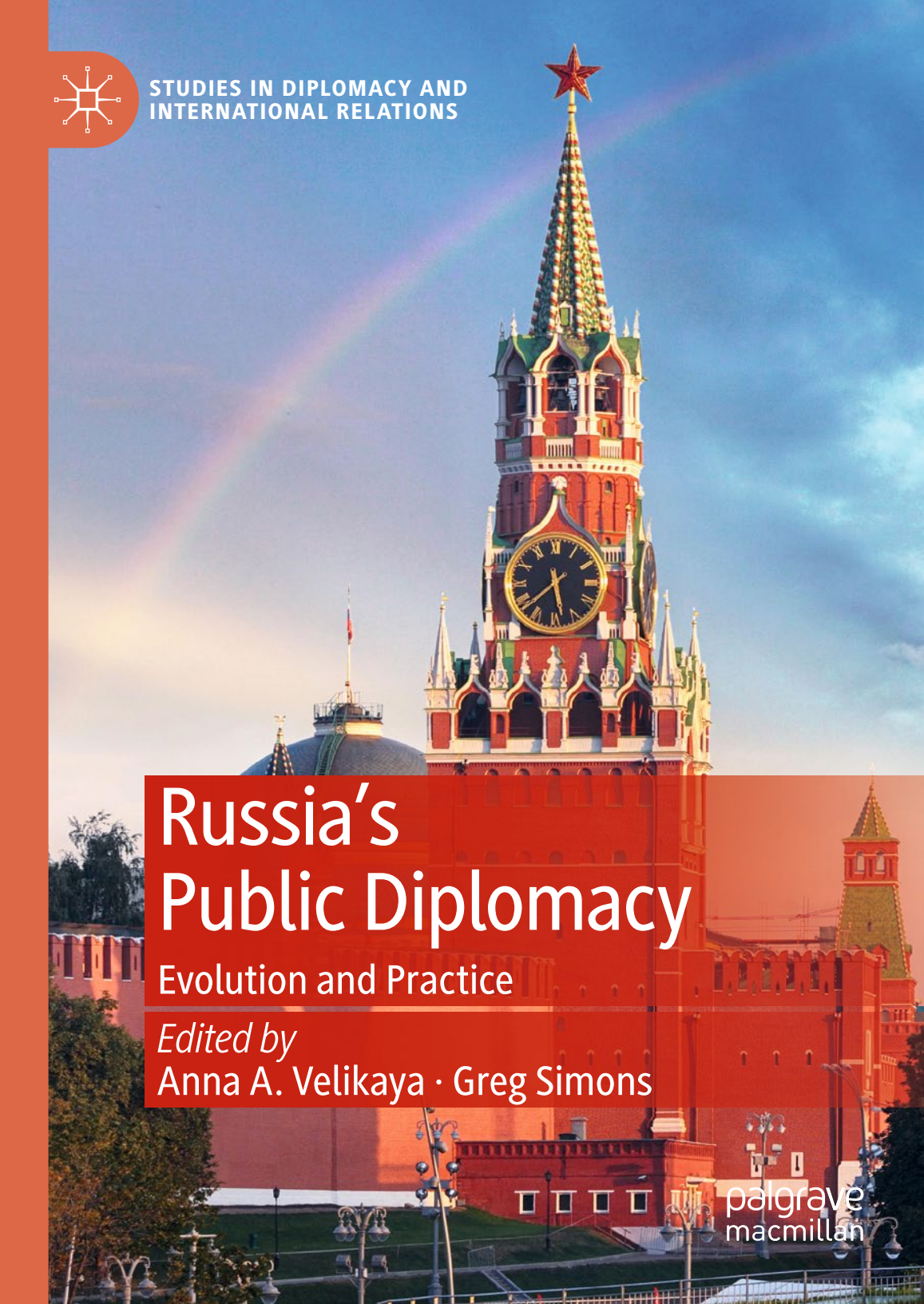
STUDIES IN DIPLOMACY AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Russia's
Public Diplomacy
Evolution and Practice
Edited by
Anna A. Velikaya · Greg Simons
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Editors

Russia's Public Diplomacy

Evolution and Practice

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Foreword

It is refreshing, but amenable, to write the foreword to this book—the chapters of this edited book give hope to a new stream in studying Russian public diplomacy in the twenty-first century. Indeed, new sociological, cultural, economic and religious trends enable us to change diplomatic practice. The very fact of it attracting a new generation of diplomatic practitioners enables us to review the established orthodoxy of ideas and start using parallel fields of the broad foreign policy practice. The very range of topics covered and analysed in the book confirms it.

Public diplomacy pushes the boundaries of a common vision, changes the contrasts of the reflection and the thoughts about the international community. Writing about national interests, we judge about it not only from the Russian position but also from broader European or Asian position. This intrigues me a lot!

Political culture may be a very promising research field. Public diplomacy (PD) somehow reflects the overall situation of current East-West relationships. It stands to reason that PD publications reflect the discourse of Eastern and Western international relations (IR) scholars. As for now, the Russian "turn to Eurasia" is becoming a dominant feature of Russian foreign policy. Not only a few European but also more Asian partners tend to be the newly emerging trend for Russia. This implies the need for more Asian-oriented scholars, visits, topics and engagement. What it means is not that the European agenda is any less important; it rather means that Russia is slowly and purposefully changing its course *differently* from its previous historical practice. It will take decades for Russian PD to gradually succeed in its new course.

There are numerous factors, such as scientific and people exchanges, exact science, history, philosophy and law, which influence a country's relations. Maybe PD would adjust to new world trends? Maybe it would offer diplomats of the East and West new ideas of dealing with crises in such countries as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya? Or would it offer new track II ideas on the strategic arms negotiations?

Public diplomacy is receiving a much greater deal of attention in the spheres of research and teaching owing to its growing importance and significance among students and researchers in Russian universities. This book has been compiled by prominent PD scholars and practitioners, representing a multitude of different disciplines and perspectives. New trends, ideas and problems are covered in it. Public diplomacy is a Russian soft power instrument, and this book offers its own vision of this correlation.

Alexey Bogaturov

Chairman of the International Trends editorial board, President of the Academic Forum on International Relations, Distinguished Scholar of Russia
November 2018

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We would also like to thank the fruitful and enjoyable experience in working with Palgrave throughout the entire process: from the quick and positive initial response to our proposal, the review process and the process of administration, keeping the project on track. Sarah Roughley and Oliver Foster were quick and helpful, being bombarded with numerous questions, but they were always there.

Certainly not least are our family members that have endured a mental absence while the time and energy were going into producing this book. So a big thank-you to our spouses and children for being so patient and supportive.

November 2018

Anna A. Velikaya (Moscow) and
Greg Simons (Uppsala)

Praise for *Russia's Public Diplomacy*

"This book is of paramount importance in the prevailing international situation."
—Igor Khalevinskiy, Chairman, *Association of Russian Diplomats, Russia*

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Anna A. Velikaya and Greg Simons

Motivation and the Idea Behind This Book

Approximately two years ago, the idea behind this book was hatched at a conference held in Moscow at the Diplomatic Academy. This was prompted by observing the increasing popular and academic interest being shown in Russian foreign policy and public diplomacy, which produced a flurry of publications on these issues. There has been, at times, highly heated debates on Russian foreign policy, including public diplomacy, where very wide spectra of opinions and views have been expressed by an equally wide variety of academics, journalists, practitioners, policy makers and others. As such, we perceived the need to produce a systematic study of Russian public diplomacy as a concept and as a practice by a team of experienced authors with the requisite knowledge and experience to address several underlying avenues of inquiry.

There are a series of questions behind the logic of the chapters and the larger picture that the sum of the chapters seeks to address. *What is*

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Russian public diplomacy exactly? There have been many suppositions and projections by a wide variety of sources, from think tanks to government reports, from media reports to academic research. Some of these publications and assumptions seem to have little to do with the reality on the ground. Many foreign and Russian scholars have researched and published on aspects of Russian public diplomacy, mostly in the form of journal articles or reports. But there has been no definitive book-length volume researched and written by Russian scholars and practitioners to date. Therefore, there is a need for a systematic approach to address the issue comprehensively and broadly.

The next logical question concerns the measure of activity question. *What does Russian public diplomacy look like, historically and contemporarily?* As noted with the above-mentioned question, there seems to be a lot of guesswork, conjecture and projection as to how Russian public diplomacy manifests itself; it is far from being a homogenous set of activities and measures. In addition, given the current state of international relations that are at the current low ebb, in what some have come to characterise as being a New Cold War. This gives rise to the temptation to demonise or mischaracterise what is not understood or is "feared." The conflation of Russian public diplomacy as only and simply "propaganda" misses the point of the exercise and purpose of those communications through a system of name calling that is intended to discredit Russian public diplomacy without addressing the questions raised in a systematic and objective manner.

A third and final line of inquiry is the one that is leading to the question on the measure of influence. *Just how effective are Russia's numerous public diplomacy programmes and efforts?* This is the hardest question to conclusively and convincingly answer. The task is made more difficult by the presumed "mighty" powers of Russian communications, which have been associated deliberately at times with the communications of the Islamic State (Simons & Sillanpaa, 2016). This has the effect of creating a myth, but one that is based on shaky intellectual and academic grounds. One of the mistakes often made is to equate the measure of activity as being the measure of effect of an information and communication campaign. Because an information operation or an influence activity is conducted, it does not automatically translate into influence and persuasive effect.

The Current State of International Relations

Currently, there is a global crisis in terms of diverging interests in international relations and geopolitical issues, which has witnessed an increase in political tensions around the world as a result of increased competition and conflict between countries and blocks of countries. The reasons given for the development of the current situation vary considerably. The use of a specific story narrative seems to take place, which makes use of very specific norms and values, as well as a dialectic struggle between two extremely opposed political and ideological forces. A result of the situational context is that communications can be used to shut down dialogue and interaction, rather than to promote or encourage it, where emotion-laden values and norms are used in place of "cold" and logical "facts." The result seems to be these messages are communicated to influence and not to inform global audiences. In addition, the present situation is often juxtaposed against the familiar past. A point of view is that the United States treated the end of the Cold War more as a victory rather than an opportunity.

> But the Cold War as an ideological struggle disappeared only in part, despite Communism's implosion. On the American side, not so much had changed on that day (dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991). The Cold War was over, and the United States had won it. But most Americans still believed that they could only be safe if the world looked more like their own country and of the world's governments abided by the will of the United States.[1]

According to the author of the *New York Times* opinion piece, the United States sought to capitalise on its advantage offered by the Soviet collapse and impose its will upon other countries in a manner that stressed power projection, territorial control and regime change. However, a number of challenges have begun to emerge in the twenty-first century, not least of which is the gradual rise of military and economic power in the East and its decline in Europe. Various challengers to the United States' role as the global hegemonic power have emerged, such as radical Islam, China, Russia, Iran and North Korea. Then Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director, Mike Pompeo, publicly stated that the main threats to US

[1] Westad, O. A., The Cold War and America's Delusion of Victory, Opinion, *The New York Times*, 28 August 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/28/opinion/cold-war-american-soviet-victory.html?ref=opinion&_r=0 (accessed 29 August 2017).

national security and national interests were international terrorism (namely al-Qaeda and Islamic State of Iraq and Syria—ISIS); North Korea; a resurgent Iran; Russia; and other state and non-state actors that use information to subvert democracies (naming Wikileaks and hostile non-state actor intelligence services).[2] However, opinion does diverge on the issue of the assumed and perceived risks, such as the Russian threat, for example, which is matched on the opposing geopolitical side.

There is also the issue of threat perception and opinion from countries other than those found in the European Union (EU) and the United States. A Pew Poll conducted across nearly 42,000 respondents from 38 different countries around the globe on perceived threats to their country during February–May 2017 presents a different picture. The most widely perceived threats were from the Islamic State (62%) and global climate change (61%). Threats emanating from countries saw a global average ranked US power and influence (35%), Russian power and influence (31%) and Chinese power and influence (31%) as the three lowest ranked threats.[3] Similar polls are conducted in Russia as to perceived threats and enemies of Russia and Russians. A poll conducted by the Levada Centre established these perceptions for 2017:

> Identifying the top enemies of Russia, the poll picks on the US, specifically President Donald Trump for the top spot, with Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania and Germany occupying the big 'foes' spaces. […]. Interestingly, the average Russian identified radical Islamism and Islamic extremism as an important threat/enemy. They consider Trump, Ukraine, Europe, Islamic State terror group and corruption to be the greatest threats to Russia.[4]

The global information environment is becoming less free and more constrained in the resulting struggle for legitimacy versus demonisation, giving wind to such contemporary fads as "fake" news and supposed

[2] Director Pompeo Delivers Remarks at INSA, *News & Information*, Central Intelligence Agency, 11 July 2017, https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/2017-speeches-testimony/director-pompeo-delivers-remarks-at-insa.html (accessed 12 July 2017).

[3] Globally, People Point to ISIS and Climate Change as Leading Security Threats, *Pew Research Centre*, 1 August 2017, http://www.pewglobal.org/2017/08/01/globally-people-point-to-isis-and-climate-change-as-leading-security-threats/ (accessed 8 August 2017).

[4] Bagchi, I., Russia Pollster Finds India among Top Friends but Perception About China Better, *The Economic Times*, https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/russia-pollster-finds-india-among-top-friends-but-perception-about-china-better/articleshow/64774385.cms, 28 June 2018 (accessed 7 November 2018).

actions to fight this projected menace. In this increasing tense geopolitical environment, a number of initiatives have been launched by actors to try and discredit the negative reportage on them from foreign sources. For example, the European Union's East StratCom and Disinformation Review (https://euvsdisinfo.eu/) and the corresponding initiatives in countries such as China and Russia.[5] This has come at a time when public trust and confidence in the mainstream media have been falling.[6] In such an increasingly toxic environment, it is difficult to source reliable and accurate news at a point in time when it is needed the most.

A similar trend is observed in Russia and other countries that seek to create a narrative of an official national enemy in order to prime and mobilise their publics. There is a rapidly spiralling decline in relations between Russia and the West in terms of official state-to-state level relations too. Observers on the different geopolitical sides are increasingly warning of the unpredictable direction of the current global crisis. The tit-for-tat sanctions between the United States and EU versus Russia have caused both sides to become increasingly fatigued with each other at a time when the channels of communication between them are becoming increasingly restricted, and political calls for a tougher stance on the other are gaining pace.

> If there is one thing that the overwhelming majority of policymakers and experts in Moscow and Washington now agree on is that the current crisis is that the current crisis in US-Russia relations is spiralling in its character, systemic in its nature and lingering in its resolution prospects. The rest of the discourse is ripped between narratives of who's to blame for what and interpretations on just how reasonable the US sanctions are or asymmetric Russia's response is.[7]

There are an increasing number of stories appearing in the media that are documenting the gradually increasing tensions in Europe, which

[5] For example, see the Russian Foreign Ministry's Website on the Topic of Fake News—http://www.mid.ru/en/nedostovernie-publikacii.

[6] Harrison, A., Can You Trust the Mainstream Media?, *The Guardian*, 6 August 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/aug/06/can-you-trust-mainstream-media (accessed 8 August 2017).

[7] Suchkov, M. A., What the Sanctions Really Mean for Russia, *National Interest*, 6 August 2017, http://nationalinterest.org/feature/what-the-sanctions-really-mean-russia-21804 (accessed 8 August 2017).

emphasise a narrative of the Cold War. The *New York Times* ran a headline in August 2017—*US Troops Train in Eastern Europe to Echoes of the Cold War*[8] or in *Reuters* a headline *Russia: Pence Balkans Comments Expose Washington's Cold War Ideology*.[9] Warnings have begun to appear in mainstream media headlines, such as the *Washington Post*'s *We're on the Road to a New Cold War*.[10] Others have resisted referring to the situation of the confrontation (in particular, originating in the wake of Euromaidan and Crimea) between the West and Russia as a 'new' Cold War, yet still categorising Russia and the West as adversaries (Legvold, 2014). There are other voices that say there is no doubt that a "new" Cold War is under way.

Henry Kissinger one of the most prominent geopolitical thinkers from the United States for the last decades states that there is a 'new' Cold War and that part of the blame rests with the West and its lack of willingness to take non-Western actors' security and national interests into account. The result he claims has been an imbalance in international relations, which is exacerbated by the West not being "honest" with itself.[11] Zbigniew Brzezinski, another prominent geopolitical thinker, also assessed that a 'new' Cold War had begun, referencing the point in time in line with the events in Ukraine and Crimea in particular. Although he did not see the situation as a threat as Kissinger does, but rather a positive sign that the world was "standing up to" Russia.[12] However, what has been described here is only one relatively small part of a much larger and more complex series of events and processes in the global crisis.

[8] Schmitt, E., US Troops Train in Eastern Europe to Echoes of the Cold War, *The New York Times*, 6 August 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/06/world/europe/russia-america-military-exercise-trump-putin.html?mcubz=1 (accessed 8 August 2017).

[9] Vasiljevic, S., Russia: Pence Balkans Comments Expose Washington's Cold War Ideology, *Reuters*, 3 August 2017, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-usa-pence-idUSKBN1AJ2L1 (accessed 8 August 2017).

[10] Editorial Board, We're on the Road to a New Cold War, *The Washington Post*, 31 July 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/were-on-the-road-to-a-new-cold-war/2017/07/31/213af6be-7617-11e7-8839-ec48ec4cae25_story.html?utm_term=.8574e2962235 (accessed 8 August 2017).

[11] von Mittelstaedt, J., and Follath, E., Do We Achieve World Order Through Chaos or Insight?, *Spiegel Online*, 13 November 2014, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/interview-with-henry-kissinger-on-state-of-global-politics-a-1002073.html (accessed 30 August 2017).

[12] Fischer, S., and Stark, H., We are Already in a Cold War, *Spiegel Online*, 2 July 2015, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/interview-with-zbigniew-brzezinski-on-russia-and-ukraine-a-1041795.html (accessed 30 August 2017).

There are a number of critical and inherent problems concerning researching the question as to whether a 'new' Cold War exists or not. One of these is that this is a relatively new and recent phenomenon. Therefore, there has been insufficient time, in some regards, for a thorough and thoughtful analysis of the current situation. The seemingly obvious point where the crisis broke through to popular public attention came with events occurring on the Crimean Peninsula in the spring of 2014.

However, the greater problem is the very highly politicised nature of the current global crisis, where narratives and knowledge production are used by the competing sides to bestow legitimacy upon their causes and to erode the perceived legitimacy of their opponents. A result of this situation is that there are parallel subjective discussions on the issue, where the participants rarely, if ever, meet face to face. These become echo chambers and forums of confirmation of a pre-determined perspective or point of view rather than a critical investigation and analysis of genuine critical questions on matters that have a great impact upon global society currently, with prospects of a worsening situation in the near future.

In 2008, Richard Sakwa published a paper on the debate concerning the dynamics of Russian foreign policy and the "regime question" (concerning Vladimir Putin's rule). Sakwa contends that Cold War patterns of thinking began to emerge in connection to the discussion of Russia and its role in the world. For example, Richard Shirreff and Maciej Olex-Szczytowski's report *Arming for Deterrence: How Poland and NATO Should Counter a Resurgent Russia* from 2015 that assumes Russia's hostile military intent against the West is based upon notions of opposing sets of norms and values. The report goes as far as to categorically state that "Russia has thus become the most serious geopolitical and military threat to NATO" (page 1). This characterisation very much fits with Buzan's (2006) characterisation of a possible "new" Cold War based on the premises of the "old" Cold War. The end of the "old" Cold War saw the US military as being put in an awkward position in terms of its assumed opponent, which was understood as a mass army based on the Warsaw Pact. However, it soon found itself on unfamiliar grounds in getting caught in various insurgencies, which it has not proved particularly well suited for in either doctrine or tactics. The possible emergence of a "new" Cold War would place it on much more familiar grounds with a conventional state-based opponent.

> Russia's annexation of Crimea, invasion of Donbas, and continued threats to Ukraine and other European countries not only menace the stability of the post-Cold War order in Europe, but also pose a fundamental challenge to the assumptions about the strategic environment that have undergirded the NATO alliance for the past quarter of a century. (Kroenig, 2015, p. 49)

The logic used to reach such conclusions, by many concerned, is a path of understanding one's own security and interest objectives. However, this is often done without understanding the other actor's sets of security and interest objectives, the information and knowledge available to them in reaching the policy and strategy decisions that are made. Therefore, it is critical to understand not only what drives the "us" side but also the equivalent factors that influence the "other." The main case study used in the "new" Cold War research involves the scenario of Russia against the West (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—NATO and the European Union in particular). However, other Cold War scenarios do exist, such as in the Middle East (Gause, 2014), as a result of Obama's "Asia Pivot" (Ross, 2012), Latin America and other geopolitical hot spots. Hence, it is hoped that this book may serve as some modest and small step towards an understanding through providing the opportunity for those that seek to understand more completely and comprehensively the complex state of international relations from the perspective of the workings of Russian foreign policy through its public diplomacy.

Public Diplomacy and Soft Power

This section intends to introduce public diplomacy as a concept and a practice in the most generic sense; the intention is to provide the reader with a general introduction in order that they can then contextualise Russia's definition and practice. These concepts and practices, such as public diplomacy, soft power and branding, will be brought up in the chapters of this book. Public diplomacy is an activity that governments and individuals engaged in long before the actual term was first officially coined. The term came about in the United States during the period of the Cold War in 1965, when the Dean of Diplomacy at Tufts University, Edmund Gullion, launched the Edward R. Murrow Centre for Public Diplomacy. This was at least, in part, an attempt to distance the practice of international information and exchange from the tainting effects of the then dominant term "propaganda" (Cowan & Cull, 2008, p. 6). Cull

(2008) argues that there are five components to public diplomacy—listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange and international broadcasting. These are all instruments in the creation and facilitation of networks and relationships.

Public diplomacy has been viewed by some scholars as a communicative instrument in a broad understanding of governance in order to manage international relationships, reputations and events within the context of the pursuit of foreign policy objectives. "Public diplomacy operates through actions, relationships, images and words in three time frames: 24/7 news streams, medium-range campaigns on high-value policies, and long-term engagement" (Gregory, 2008, p. 276). As to a precisely defined term, there is no universal consensus among the academic community, and it is highly contested. Each academic discipline tends to view public diplomacy from its own perspective, together with the inherent strengths and weaknesses (Sevin, 2017, pp. 20–29). Traditionally, public diplomacy has been about government's effort to communicate to global publics in an effort to inform, influence and engage them in support of national objectives and foreign policy. However, it has evolved to include "the way in which both government and private individuals and groups influence directly and indirectly those public attitudes and opinions that bear directly on another government's foreign policy decisions" (Snow, 2009, p. 6). Therefore, there is an element of international competition between states for influence and power in a competitive environment via acts of communication that involve both word and deed.

Although public diplomacy and soft power are not the same thing (Hayden, 2012, p. 286), they are key tools used in the process. There are clear connections and links between branding and soft power with public diplomacy. For example, Nye (2008, p. 97) states that the "soft power of a country rests primarily on three resources: its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority)." These aspects are open to interpretation, given that global audiences are not homogenous in their held sets of beliefs, values and norms. Hayden notes and acknowledges soft power as being an extremely vague concept, and whether it is a resource or behaviour that is being referred to. However, he provides a means of analysing soft power and public diplomacy. "First, scope represents the idealised audiences to soft power efforts—who matters as important to an agent's attempts to cultivate some kind of influence, whether through agenda-setting,

persuasion, or some other form of attraction" (2012, p. 278). It is also noted by Hayden (ibid.) that scope also refers to the manner in which audiences are engaged as subjects to be influenced, persuaded and convinced.

Branding a nation is a relatively recent concept, which has gained attention and attraction. How countries represent themselves on the global stage is where brand management (as practised in the commercial world) and public diplomacy meet. "It is public diplomacy, twined with brand management, that underpins the idea of Competitive Identity" (Anholt, 2007, p. 12). One of the questions posed by Peter van Ham (2008, p. 128) is whether a branding campaign launched by a state can induce people to "buy" the "product" offered, which for intents and purposes relates to the goals (real and perceived) of its foreign policy. Further, van Ham argues that "image and reputation may have said to become essential parts of the state's strategic equity. Similar to commercial brands, image and reputation are built on factors such as trust and customer satisfaction." Therefore, a brand is a bridge within the practice of public diplomacy as a means of accumulating a reserve of soft power through creating value in the relationship between the communicator and the audience. As noted by van Ham, "place branding, as part of soft power, centres around concepts like values, norms, and rules in international politics" (2008, p. 145). There do, however, exist two conceptual differences between nation-branding and public diplomacy. Firstly, the level of effort required for a nation-(re)branding project far exceeds the scale of that required for most public diplomacy campaigns (by necessity a much more holistic approach). "Second, nation-branding accentuates a country's identity and reflects its aspirations, but it cannot move much beyond existing social realities" (Melissen, 2005, p. 20). In other words, it is a form of reshaping of a country's self-image and shaping an identity that is intended to make the rebranded country more unique and noticeable in the global competition for attention and influence.

Russian Communications as a Threat

This section is far from being exhaustive owing to the constraints of space, the topic is worthy of no less than a large article through to a book-length work in order to do the topic justice and it is also not the primary concern of this introduction. But the topic of perceptions and projections of Russian communications needs to be addressed, at least briefly. This

follows from, and is influenced by, the strained current state of international relations that in turn influences how politics, mass media and academia react and reflect on the issue. As noted above, Russian communications, including public diplomacy, have associations of deceptive and harmful intent on the target audience. Therefore, not at all involving mutually beneficial exchanges, but more concerns the deliberate subversion of the fabric of 'democratic' society.

The term "hybrid warfare" has been used to describe the general intent and framework of Russian communications, although it is a very poorly defined term that has a multitude of meanings. "Evidence" of the existence of Russian hybrid warfare came with the so-called Gerasimov doctrine, an article by the Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov. However, anyone who read the original text (in Russian) understood that this was a call to develop a scientific approach to counteracting Western hybrid warfare against Russia.[13] As such, the projections and assumptions are more in line with the practice and intent of information operations. Writings that create a link between information operations and public diplomacy have been published, such as Lord's (2007) chapter on the need to reorganise US public diplomacy to meet the new needs of the Global War On Terrorism. As the specific term "information operations" (IO) has been mentioned, it is necessary to give a precise definition of the term and practice. The US Department of Defence offers a good definition of IO.

> The integrated employment of the core capabilities of electronic warfare, computer network operations, psychological operations, military deception and operations security, in concert with specified supporting and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt or usurp adversarial human and automated decision-making while protecting our own. (Paul, 2008, p. 2)

This definition reveals the offensive and defensive nature of the operations and intent from the perspective of the US military; it reveals the very broad nature of those operations and certainly many of these have been associated with Russia's international communications. Paul (2008, p. 10) also notes that IO is subordinate to and supportive of strategic

[13] Gerasimov, V., *Ценность науки в предвидении: Новые вызовы требуют переосмыслить формы и способы ведения боевых действий* (The Value of Science in Anticipation: New Challenges Need to Rethink the Forms and Methods of Warfare), *Военно-промышленный курьер* (*Military-Industrial Courier*), 27 February 2013, http://www.vpk-news.ru/articles/14632 (accessed 19 October 2015).

communications and public diplomacy. How does this apply to Russia? A lot of blame has been attributed to Russia as a country and to Vladimir Putin as the President, which includes "meddling" in various elections, threatening various neighbouring countries, "undermining" the West and its institutions and poisoning political opponents abroad. As such, it created anxiety and worry. This situation has also led to increased political, economic and military tensions, hence the gradual invocation of the concept of a "New Cold War."

While these accusations are worrying, there has also been noted a tendency to make use of association or assertions, which is noted in such critical media as Consortium News or Media Lens. The use of less than transparent organisations as Prop Or Not[14] or the more recent Institute of Statecraft's Integrity Initiative,[15] have revealed the role of these organisations in shaping the information and knowledge environment. There are an increasing number of accounts beginning to doubt the depth and scale of Russian "operations," such as the level of involvement in the US 2016 presidential elections,[16] even while the Mueller Investigation continues. This makes the information environment highly contradictory and confusing in an atmosphere of competing subjective and politicised interpretations of "reality."

This is not to say that Russia does not pursue its interests and opportunities, which may or may not coincide with the West. It is the characterisation of the communications that can be misleading, such as contacts between diplomats and political candidates before or during an elections, which is common practice by most countries and including Western democracies. As seen in the US 2016 election, this was projected as being evidence of Russian interference with Trump, while at the same time

[14] For their website, see http://www.propornot.com/p/home.html, for critique, see https://consortiumnews.com/2018/01/28/unpacking-the-shadowy-outfit-behind-2017s-biggest-fake-news-story/.

[15] For their website, see https://www.integrityinitiative.net/about, for critique, see https://grayzoneproject.com/2018/12/17/inside-the-temple-of-covert-propaganda-the-integrity-initiative-and-the-uks-scandalous-information-war/. For an example of their information activities approach, see https://undercoverinfo.files.wordpress.com/2018/11/fco-application-form-2018-v21.pdf.

[16] Maté, A., New Studies Show Pundits Are Wrong About Russian Social-Media Involvement in US Politics, *The Nation*, 28 December 2018, https://www.thenation.com/article/russiagate-elections-interference/?fbclid=IwAR0_YEkSC-k0bMpVqxxo6%2D%2DkBoa5QBezqd21uuKWnw-YvXW5mWhZljhILzc (accessed 5 January 2019).

ignoring the links and connections Hillary Clinton had with Russia.[17] Rather than strictly being a reality, it is concerning a subjective interpretation of the reality for the appearance of political credibility and legitimacy, which is what happens in Russia too.

External Perceptions and Interpretations of Russian Public Diplomacy

Given the above-mentioned context of the poor state of international relations in the contemporary times, the issue of Russia's international communications is a high-profile topic, where foreign audiences often have a strong opinion. There are divergent views on the quality and quantity of those communications by non-Russian observers, some of the views expressed are deeply negative and suspicious, and others can be more objective, and there are those that take a more positive view. Given that this book is almost entirely the work of Russian academics and practitioners, it is necessary to provide the viewpoints of other observers on Russia's foreign policy and public diplomacy.

In this informational conflict that is a result of the current New Cold War, there are two primary camps—those that project Russia as a security threat and those that dismiss the threat. Both of these arguments have the potential to influence policy and decision makers for better or worse. Naturally, real enemies pose a challenge and threat in terms of their management. However, the process can be clear and logical. An imagined enemy, on the other hand, can prove to be more dangerous. The reason is that potential real threats can be overlooked or ignored, and resources are wasted on countering something that does not exist.[18] A variety of views of Russia's role in foreign policy and the related implied security dimensions, where the evaluation and interpretation of international communications form a crucial aspect of the narratives.

[17] Rogers, E., The Media Is Ignoring Ties Between the Clinton Campaign and Russians, Opinion, *The Washington Post*, 13 February 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-partisan/wp/2018/02/13/the-media-is-ignoring-ties-between-the-clinton-campaign-and-russians/?utm_term=.d7eea0d7d0b6 (accessed 6 January 2019).

[18] Kinzer, S., Russia is Not the Enemy, *Boston Globe*, 20 September 2015, http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/09/19/russia-not-enemy/O0nCDUXrXAYLliutmqUtlN/story.html?p1=Article_Trending_Most_Viewed (accessed 22 September 2015).

One of the narratives[19] of the information war is that Russia is a threat, not only to its immediate neighbours (Lucas, June 2015; Darczewska, May 2014; Berzins, April 2014) but also to the wider West.[20] There are a number of aspects in common to this particular line—Russia is winning an insidious propaganda war against, democracy, freedom and the West. In addition, Russia is dividing the West and shall gradually take (by open military action or subversion) country after country. For the purposes of this book, propaganda is defined as being, in the most neutral sense, "to disseminate or promote particular ideas" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p. 2). However, the term and practice of propaganda is rarely perceived in a neutral sense. "Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p. 7). Therefore, to counter this given threat, various logic is offered to remedy the situation, such as all countries need to unite under NATO,[21] increase military spending, increase a sense of political unity and purpose and to increase funding for counter-propaganda.

The counter-message, which is derived from various sources in Western and Russian media outlets, state that the narrative of the Russian threat is a myth,[22] Russia is not an enemy[23] and that the threat is in fact Western

[19] A narrative is a spoken or written account of connected events, whether this is true or false is immaterial. Whether it is believed or not is of importance. If accepted a narrative, in addition to helping to explain events, also has the effect of restricting how those events can be described (narrowing the ability to credibly provide alternative accounts).

[20] Panichi, J., EU Splits in Russian Media War, *Politico*, 17 September 2015, http://www.politico.eu/article/eu-russia-propaganda-kremlin-media/ (accessed 18 September 2015); Ennis, S., Russia in 'Information War' With the West to Win Hearts and Minds, *BBC News*, 16 September 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34248178 (accessed 16 September 2015).

[21] Williams, Carol J., Sweden Rethinking Neutrality Amid Fear of Russian Aggression, *LA Times*, 2 September 2015, http://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-sweden-russia-nato-neutrality-20150902-story.html (accessed 4 September 2015).

[22] Escobar, P., The Myth of a Russian 'Threat', *Sputnik*, 25 August 2015, http://sputniknews.com/columnists/20150825/1026161727/myth-of-russian-threat.html (accessed 28 August 2015).

[23] Kinzer, S., Russia is Not the Enemy, *Boston Globe*, 20 September 2015, http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/09/19/russia-not-enemy/O0nCDUXrXAYLliutmqUtlN/story.html?p1=Article_Trending_Most_Viewed (accessed 22 September 2015).

propaganda against Russia.[24] The main argument used by this side is that there is an information war in progress, which is being waged in the global information space. They claim that many of the assertions made by the other side are not supported by clear and objective references. For example, it is cited in Sputnik that Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey states that Russia is a threat, yet also simultaneously concludes that he does not know what Russia intends. The weakness of the Russian threat narrative is used to undermine the credibility of those claims.

The above-mentioned dimensions of the information war seem to have created a number of different and not necessarily related conclusions. One of those conclusions, which is related to the side of Russia and those arguing against Russia as a threat is that when Russia plays by the West's rules, it tends to lose the "game" to those that have established it. Therefore, Russia needs to establish its own rules of the "game" if it hopes to be able to be triumphant.[25] By "rules of the game," it is implied that the actor that establishes the geopolitical rules in engaging in international politics and affairs possesses an advantage over their competitors and rivals. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been holding this position—the actor who determines the rules of the game (i.e. managing and influencing international affairs). A second conclusion, which seems to be increasingly projected by more neutral or non-aligned sides is that there is an increasing risk of inadvertent war as a result of the increasingly dangerous geopolitical games that are being waged through informational and proxy wars.

[24] Adam Johnson, US Leads World in Credulous Reports of 'Lagging Behind' Russia, *FAIR*, 1 September 2015, http://fair.org/home/us-leads-world-in-credulous-reports-of-lagging-behind-russia/ (accessed 4 September 2015); Hahn, G. M., *Putin is Crazy and Sick: The Lows of American Rusology*, Russian and Eurasian Politics, Islamism, Jihadism, 19 September 2015, http://gordonhahn.com/2015/09/19/putin-is-crazy-and-sick-the-lows-of-american-rusology/ (accessed 22 September 2015); O'Phobe R., A Media Primer on the Art of Writing Russian Scare Stories, *The Blogmire*, http://www.theblogmire.com/a-media-primer-on-the-art-of-writing-russian-scare-stories/ (accessed 16 September 2015).

[25] When Russia Plays by the West's Rules, It Loses, *Sputnik*, http://sputniknews.com/analysis/20150827/1026262657/russia-europe-us-geopolitics-imperialism.html, 27 August 2015 (accessed 31 August 2015); Gerasimov, V., *Ценность науки в предвидении: Новые вызовы требуют переосмыслить формы и способы ведения боевых действий* (*The Value of Science in Anticipation: New Challenges Need to Rethink the Forms and Methods of Warfare*), Военно-промышленный курьер (Military-Industrial Courier), http://www.vpk-news.ru/articles/14632, 27 February 2013 (accessed 19 October 2015).

The standing of the information war between Russia and the West at this point in time, according to the Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevicius, Russian messages and narratives fill the information void from the lack of communication by Western counterparts in post-Soviet space.[26] A lot of misunderstanding of the Russian effort is generated by blurring distinctions and through the use of popular catch phrases and slogans. An example of the blurring of distinctions can be found in the work of Eellend and Frank (2015) in FOI's *Strategic Outlook 6*, where they discuss Russia's aims on page 17, but then concentrate on tactics rather than any grand strategic objectives that may be behind those tactics. A weakness of this report was the absence of any references, which has the effect of rendering the information to the level of opinion as it is not possible to verify the sources used to generate the information. Without understanding the desired end state, the value of the individual parts is of little knowledge value. There is also the issue of reference to popular catchphrases and slogans, such as "lying 24/7" or that everything is just "propaganda" or to "litter the news with half-truths and quarter truths" (Aron, 2015). This has the effect of obscuring the task and ability of objectively looking at the problem in order to derive an appropriate solution.

Coming more strictly and directly to the subject of academic assessment and interpretation of public diplomacy reveals a diverse understanding and evaluation. Although the framing of Russia's public diplomacy is not vastly different in terms of the earlier-mentioned categories. Saari (2014) notes the rising importance and use of public diplomacy in Russian foreign policy; she also notes that global publics tend to be segmented between countries associated with the Near Abroad (former Soviet republics of the USSR) and those countries that are beyond. In her analysis, Saari notes the use of key narratives of public diplomacy that are intended as the basis of a mutual relationship, such as the presence of mutual interest and the respect for national sovereignty. Post-Soviet Russian public diplomacy is evaluated as being more akin to the Soviet-era "active measures" rather than with the association of soft power.

Russia's interests and goals with its public diplomacy programmes are acknowledged by Rawnsley (2015), who focuses upon the aspect of international broadcasting. He compares China and Russia, together with their

[26] Taylor, G., Lithuanian Foreign Minister Says Russian Propaganda Fills Void from West, *Washington Times*, 8 December 2015, http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/dec/8/linas-linkevicius-lithuanian-foreign-minister-says/ (accessed 10 December 2015).

ambition "to correct" what are perceived as being distorted information about these countries in the mainstream global information space and to convey the intentions of foreign policy, concluding that this approach runs the "risk" of blurring the line between public diplomacy and propaganda. Propaganda and public diplomacy have been linked together in previous research beyond the strictly Russian context, such as the communications surrounding the war on terrorism and the mediatisation of international politics (Brown, 2003). Other scholars seek to equate Russian public diplomacy with "propaganda" and "active measures," such as Kragh and Åsberg (2017). However, they fail to even define public diplomacy as either a concept or a practice, thereby rendering the exercise as one where the content is massaged to fit a pre-determined conclusion (i.e. that all Russian communications and foreign policy are harmful and deceitful). However, they fail to provide clear and hard evidence to support the claims. Van Herpen (2016) also builds the logic and argument based on dismissing Russian notions of soft power and public diplomacy as being "propaganda" and of a harmful nature.

A blog on the University of Southern California's Centre on Public Diplomacy seeks to answer the questions, what is Russian public diplomacy and how does it function. It begins with a warning as to how the issue should not be approached. "'Russian public diplomacy' may sound like an oxymoron to many in the West these days. But dismissing the entire effort of an increasingly well-oiled state and media machinery as 'futile propaganda' does not do Russia justice and, perhaps more importantly, increases the risk that Western governments (and allies) will continue making the same mistakes that have contributed to the rapid escalation of the current international crisis."[27] Osipova goes on to say that initially Russian public diplomacy sought to imitate Western models of the practice, but in the wake of various conflicts and crises most notably 2008 Georgian-Russian War and the current Ukraine crisis have prompted a re-evaluation of the model of communication that serves them best and have begun "de-Westernising" their approach and tailor it to suit Russia's specific needs and approach. The Russian approach to creating its unique conceptualisation and application of public diplomacy and even soft power

[27] Osipova, E., Russia's Public Diplomacy: In Search of Recognition (Part One), *USC Centre on Public Diplomacy*, 3 November 2014, https://www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/russia%E2%80%99s-public-diplomacy-search-recognition-part-1 (accessed 7 November 2018).

has been noted by Just (2016), who also notes the contradictions in words and deed, such as the current Ukrainian conflict, have a tendency to create limitations on the effectiveness of the communications owing to the contradictions that are seen.

Others take a more pragmatic and goal-oriented approach to understanding Russian public diplomacy. For example, there is the assertion that the primary goal being to project a more positive and attractive image of Russia among the international community, through such mechanisms as issue management. The end goals being diverse, from gaining greater leeway in foreign policy, counter negative stereotypes and images of Russia, attract foreign direct investment to Russian business and industry and much more.[28] Russia's ability to communicate with international audiences has improved considerably in recent years. Russian international communications and especially their public diplomacy are pragmatically based, on specific interests and concrete goals.

Russian public diplomacy attempts to influence foreign publics through relational marketing techniques. The means is related to persuasion, rather than propaganda, owing to the approach and outcomes. Persuasion "is interactive and attempts to satisfy the needs of both persuader and persuade" (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2012, p. 1). This may include politically indirect means, such as discussing or promoting cultural or economic relationships, advantages and opportunities. It can also take the form of a direct political appeal through the use of values and norms, such as Russia being a challenger to US global hegemony (Simons, 2013, 2014, 2015). The message type and format have the potential to appeal to different publics, quite often as a result of resonance to dissatisfied or marginalised individuals and groups present in Western societies (the exact nature of those publics shall be discussed further on in this chapter). There is some aspect of soft power present, but this can also be mixed with hard power and forms of coercion at times (Simons, 2015). These demonstrate a relative sense of flexibility in practice and approach to different publics, different situational contexts and different goals. The flip side is that such flexibility can also lead to perceived contradictions in the message in an increasingly interconnected global network of people and ideas.

[28] Public Diplomacy: Russia, no date given, http://publicdiplomacy.wikia.com/wiki/Russia (accessed 7 November 2018).

Brief Chapter Descriptions

This edited book contains some 13 chapters (in addition to the Introduction and the Conclusion) by different authors on the nature and the role of Russian public diplomacy. These chapters are mostly written by Russian authors who possess a significant amount of academic and practical experience and knowledge on a very broad range of aspects, both historically and contemporarily, of Russian public diplomacy practice and thinking. They manage to not only bring their views, knowledge and experience but also make available Russian language knowledge and thinking on these topics and thereby make them more accessible to a wider audience. The chapters authors take the more neutral approach (i.e. less symbolically loaded) by emphasising Russia's public diplomacy efforts are about realising the goals of Russian foreign policy through creating functional and mutually beneficial political and economic relationships through creating a more positive image and reputation of Russia on the international stage.

Olga Lebedeva in Chap. 2, "Russian Public Diplomacy: Historical Aspects" considers public diplomacy actors in Russia, including not only states and diplomats but also individuals, groups and institutions involved in intercultural and inter-communal exchange, which influence international relations within the framework of relations between two or more states. This reflects the broad understanding and approach that has been played by public diplomacy, from a Russian point of view, over time. Public diplomacy evolves with time, space and circumstance, but there are also some continuities as well as differences by Russian actors in the foreign policy arena when observing from a longer-term perspective. This chapter begins with the history of the emergence of public diplomacy from the beginning of the formation of the Soviet Union and the creation of Union Society for Cultural Relations up to the present time, even though the practice of Russian public diplomacy stretches far further back in time than this point.

In Chap. 3, Semed A. Semedov and Anastasiya G. Kurbatova on "Russian Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding" deal with discovering the connection between the country's public diplomacy and nation-branding efforts. The issues of defining target audience, key regions and main instruments of these efforts are identified and analysed. In terms of generating a national brand, the stereotypes, images and reputation not only stem from the efforts of Russia to project a positive brand. There are also the efforts of other countries in projecting a negative brand image of

Russia in a zero-sum global game of competitive reputation and brand, where a good brand can offer advantages over one's rivals in international relations and affairs.

Chapter 4, "Development Diplomacy of the Russian Federation" by Stanislav L. Tkachenko reveals that development assistance recently became a major asset for Russia's public diplomacy. The aim of development diplomacy (DD) is to accelerate the other state's social and economic development and to create mutually beneficial international relationships in international affairs, and increase Russia's influence and reputation. A newly observed trend for Russian diplomacy is the drift towards 3D (Diplomacy, Defense, Development), which is a side-effect of the growing conflict between Russia and Western powers. In the case of Russian Federation, contemporary development diplomacy and public diplomacy (PD) are closely interrelated since key targets of DD is the same as of PD—political elites and public opinion of targeted states. The relationship between DD and PD, especially since beginning of current conflict in spring 2014, is the focus of this chapter.

Natalia Bubnova tackles the topic of "Russia's Policy and International Cooperation: The Challenges and Opportunities of Soft Power" in Chap. 5. The role of soft power in international relations is steadily increasing from a non-Western centric point of view. A common Russian understanding, of what soft power is exactly and how it should be approached operationally, still is currently lacking. The potential and expectations of what international cooperation and the pursuit of the accumulation of soft power make these topics popular in Russia after a relatively slow start in recognising them. This is very much an aspect under rapid theoretical and operational development and consideration.

In Chap. 6, Natalia Tsvetkova discusses "Russian Digital Diplomacy: A Rising Cyber Soft Power?" The chapter engages in Russia's digital diplomacy with its political goals, examples and its contribution to Russia's development of public diplomacy. Russia's digital diplomacy has evolved through two stages of development so far, with its origins in the early 2000s. Russia redefined its foreign policy aims and goals significantly in 2013, and consequently Russia's digital diplomacy efforts reflected this change. As noted, initially, the digital diplomacy efforts were influenced by the thinking and efforts of the experience of the United States in this field. However, Russia has moved on from this starting point and has been developing a "native" approach. In spite of the alarm sounded by some

Western commentators, the efforts of Russia's digital diplomacy seem to have some signs of success.

The topic of Alexey Fominykh's Chap. 7 is "Russian Public Diplomacy Through Higher Education." Russian governmental initiatives to attract foreign nationals to study in Russian colleges and universities, and the outreach practices of Russian universities abroad as a part of the public diplomacy effort, are the focus of this chapter. Significance is attached to the role of higher education in Russia's public diplomacy efforts, which is evidenced by the increase in the number of government scholarships for international students, for example. This is a measure of the increasing competition for foreign students in the race to influence young hearts and minds by those countries seeking influence in the current geopolitical environment. There is a clear interdependence between educational and diplomatic entities that constructs a distinct style of international education practices in Russian universities and Russia's public diplomacy.

Elena Kharitonova and Irina Prokhorenko cover the topic of "Russian Science Diplomacy" in Chap. 8. The international community is facing many common global challenges that require collaborative decisions and responses based on scientific evidence. However, relations between Russia and the West have seriously deteriorated in the past several years, with some observers referring to the emergence of a "New Cold war." Science diplomacy has become an increasingly popular form of communication and interaction in the last decade. Russia's approach to science diplomacy, in terms of conceptual development, organisational structure and operational approach, is very much a work in progress. As such, this creates a sense of uncertainty and limits the full potential that can be realised in Russia's science diplomacy efforts.

"The Role of Civil Society in Russian Public Diplomacy" by Elena Stetsko is the issue of Chap. 9. Civil society as a concept and its institutions required ideological and practical adaptation to Russian realities rather than an imitation of leading Western countries such as the United States. Currently, the place and role of NGOs have been determined by the structure of society and public administration with some NGOs acquiring the status of institutes and/or instruments of public diplomacy. These organisations have been somewhat successful in terms of their public diplomacy role in pursuing Russian foreign policy goals. However, this has been not a problem-free experience as the notion of civil society's role in public diplomacy is very much a concept and practice under development. Not to mention the daunting role they have before them in trying to develop

a positive international image of Russia. A number of differences can also be noted in the practice and approach of Western NGOs' role in public diplomacy.

Chapter 10, "Multiple Facets of Russian Public Diplomacy in International Organizations: A Case Study," by Maria Chepurina and Evgeny Kuznetsov covers the role of international organisations, and especially the United Nations system. Russia has since the Soviet times attempted to maintain a strong presence within key bodies of the United Nations system, by nominating its top diplomats and experts to serve in various leading roles in the organisation. This is seen as a possible investment in influence and a means of increasing Russia's say in key global issues and events. Yet there are a number of problems in Russia's renewed interest in gaining influence via certain international organisations. One of the responses is the creation of other international organisations with international partners and other countries to compete with US-led international organisations in order to pursue Russian foreign policy goals through this branch of public diplomacy.

"Russian Business Diplomacy in Southeast Asia" by Andrey Bykov and Kirill Solntsev is the subject of Chap. 11. An analysis of the trade and economic relations between Russia and South and Southeast Asia is the focus of this chapter, and the "Turn to the East" policy trend. Business diplomacy has been playing an increasingly important and significant role within Russian foreign policy and the goals it pursues. This is seen within the context of both interstate relations and major international integration associations. The chapter notes crucial differences in the practice of business diplomacy from the Western countries' approach.

The topic for Chap. 12 by Daria Akhutina is "The Baltic Sea Region: Cooperation in Human Dimension." The Baltic Sea Region (BSR) has been an area of significance and importance to Russia for centuries owing to different political, economic, trade, military and geopolitical reasons. Recently, the BSR-Russia cooperation moved into the plane of relations on a people-to-people level, which is influenced, in part, due to the poor level of state-state relations. The role of cooperation at the civil society level includes a wide range of different actors. There is a great deal of potential for people-to-people diplomacy as an integral part of soft power and its positive impact, but it remains underestimated and not adequately applied. There is a distinct lack of holistic and systematic approach, which is often consisting of poorly planned activities with no tangible long-lasting results.

Evgeny N. Pashentsev tackles the increased global conflict and competition in Chap. 13 titled "Strategic Communication of Russia in Latin America." Aspects of the Strategic Communication of Russia in Latin America are analysed. Attention is paid to the key messages of the leadership of Russia to the countries of the region, the current practice of public diplomacy and the perception of Russia in Latin America. With the apparent winding down of the Global War On Terrorism, which diverted US attention away from Latin America, the situation permitted a number of foreign countries including Russia to gain influence in the region. Russia sought to develop relations in the region for political and economic reasons, which, in the case of economic motivation, has increased with Western economic sanctions on Russia. However, in spite of intentions, Russia's efforts have faced a number of problems and obstacles.

The final Chap. 14 by Vladimir Morozov and Greg Simons moves to another region of the globe of increased geopolitical competition in "Russia's Public Diplomacy in the Middle East". Russia has been steadily regaining a presence and influence in the Middle East and North Africa after a long absence precipitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Political, economic, transport and trade, energy, geopolitical and military/security interests and goals are pursued by Russia in the region. This chapter delves into the broad nature and types of programmes and goals pursued by Russia in the region with an equally diverse host of different countries and audiences. Russia has been able to capitalise on various mistakes made by the United States in the region. Russia is far from being the largest external actor in the region, but is making progress with its varied public diplomacy approaches.

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CHAPTER 2

Russian Public Diplomacy: Historical Aspects

Olga Lebedeva

The modern world regards public diplomacy as a process of communication with the public pursued by a foreign state, using both state and non-state actors with a view to indirectly shaping public opinion and foreign policy decision-making in that state. Public diplomacy methods and techniques have been used in foreign policy for centuries, but it wasn't until the twentieth century that they started acquiring a serious role in the national strategy underpinned by a solid research, legislative and resource base. Throughout centuries, the term "diplomacy" mainly implied negotiations, official state-to-state relations and formal communications (notes, letters and other instruments), and these elements haven't ceased to constitute the backbone of traditional diplomacy, which can be defined as "the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist" (Nicolson, 1941, p. 1).

With the advent of the information age, traditional diplomacy started to increasingly go hand in hand with public diplomacy, also known as people's diplomacy. The term was introduced by Edmund

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Gullion,[1] Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, in 1965. Public diplomacy deals with the influence that public opinion exerts on the development and implementation of foreign policy of a state.[2] The emergence of public diplomacy was caused by several interconnected factors: globalisation, the development of communication technology, as well as an increased role and participation of societies in the international affairs of states. Today, besides states and diplomats, public diplomacy is conducted by individual people, groups, institutions that participate in intercultural exchange and international communication, which enriches bilateral and multilateral international relations. Individual citizens, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and multinationals are getting increasingly involved in the debate on international relations issues.

Public diplomacy is by no means to replace the traditional one; it is an effective supplement to it, helpful in creating a political environment conducive to promoting the foreign policy agenda (Lukin, 2013). Public diplomacy is regarded as an instrument of soft power; its underlying mechanism is persuasion aimed at shaping a positive image of a country based on its ideological, cultural and institutional appeal.

In recent years, the field of public diplomacy has been burgeoning in Russia due to open borders and emerging civil society. Moreover, international politics has seen an increasing role of the so-called soft power,[3] which emphasises an international leverage a state and society are provided by their cultural, historical and political values rather than the military and economic power of national and administrative units of the world. At the same time, Russian social and political life has seen a rise of public diplomacy with main actors being Russian citizens interested in the country's development, that is, an active part of society, as well as non-governmental

[1] Cull, N. J., 'Public Diplomacy' Before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase/N. J. Cull—USC Center on Public Diplomacy—University of Southern California, 18 April 2006. http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/index.php/newsroom/pdblog_detail/060418_public_diplomacy_before_gullion_the_evolution_of_a_phrase

[2] What is Public Diplomacy? [Electronic resource]/The Edward R. Murrow Center of Public Diplomacy, The Fletcher School—Tufts University, USA. //http://fletcher.tufts.edu/murrow/public-diplomacy.html

[3] The term "soft power" was coined by Joseph Nye—http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/FFP0502S.pdf. At different times, it has been variously translated into Russian as "soft might", "flexible power" and so on. Today, the most common translation used means "soft force"; however, the word "potency" implying an ability to get others to do what one wants, seems to be a better equivalent to the original than the word "force".

organisations (NGOs) that significantly contribute to promoting Russia's foreign policy goals (Dolinsky, 2008).

It is worth noting that in this context, new institutions of public diplomacy have emerged in Russia, for instance, the Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund[4] and the Russian International Affairs Council,[5] both being established in 2010 by the then President Dmitry Medvedev. Along with this, organisations that developed from similar USSR institutions in the early 1990s continue to work as instruments of public diplomacy. The experience of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries can be rather relative in the conditions of growing international confrontation and tension. Although not applied to the full scale, it should be scrupulously studied and analysed, in order to avoid the mistakes made by the Soviet Union and to implement its best practices.

Public Diplomacy in the USSR

In its early stages, the USSR, which was established in 1922, found itself in international isolation as the Western governments disapproved of the country's new foreign policy and ideology. As a result, in the early 1920s, the USSR's cultural contacts with other countries still lacked an institutional framework and were discrete. It was mainly the domain of civic organisations; individual representatives of the Russian cultural community, however, played the most significant role, acting mostly on their own initiative.[6]

Meanwhile, in the mid-1920s, the USSR established diplomatic relations with some European states, China, Mexico and Japan; in 1933 with the United States; and in 1934 the country joined the League of Nations. Thus, having become a full-fledged actor of international relations, the USSR started fostering cultural engagement with the rest of the world. That period of nascent Soviet public diplomacy saw the foundation of the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS) in 1925 (Rossotrudnichestvo: 90 Years of Public Diplomacy, 2019), renamed the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship (SSOD) and Cultural Contacts in

[4] For more details, see http://gorchakovfund.ru/

[5] For more details, see http://russiancouncil.ru/

[6] Lebedeva, O., The History of Public Diplomacy in Russia. *International Affairs: Summary*, No. 2. Retrieved from https://interaffairs.ru/virtualread/eng/contents62_2.pdf

1958, aimed at "raising the awareness of the Soviet public about foreign cultures and that of the foreign publics about the national cultures in the Soviet Union",[7] which "promoted and strengthened friendship and understanding between the USSR and other countries".[8] With social and political upheavals having largely severed cultural ties with the world, a legitimate item on the agenda was to enhance and foster cultural engagement.

The goal, as stated in the VOKS Charter, being "to cooperate in the establishment and development of scientific and cultural relations between institutions, public organisations and individual cultural workers in the USSR and those of other countries",[9] the organisation pursued active interaction with its foreign partners, sought greater information exchange on cultural events, encouraged publications, as well as their dissemination, about cultural development of the country, Soviet science and life of the Soviet people. Besides, the organisation laid great emphasis on promoting the Russian language abroad, encouraging scientific exchange, sponsoring exhibitions, tours and trips of prominent figures of foreign science and culture to the USSR. Through the active efforts of this organisation, outstanding scholars and public figures of the time visited the Soviet Union, among them were Paul Langevin, Romain Rolland, Rabindranath Tagore and many others.

Thus, VOKS became the first organisation to deal with expanding and fostering international cultural ties of the Soviet state. VOKS pursued a most important goal, that is, cultivating a positive perception of the Soviet Union in capitalist countries, which can arguably be regarded as an essential component of soft power. The so-called societies for cultural relations with the USSR were established for "fieldwork" in foreign countries. Their efforts were coordinated by VOKS and focused on shaping positive attitudes towards the Soviet foreign policy strategy abroad. VOKS did not suspend its activities even during the harsh wartime years. The emphasis was shifted to expanding the international humanitarian mission, which involved raising funds for the army, purchasing equipment and supplies for medical institutions, as well as enlisting the support of world cultural luminaries for fighting fascism. For instance, thanks to the organisation's active

[7] The All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS). Retrieved from https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki

[8] For more details, see http://rams.org.ru/istoriya

[9] Brief historical note: VOKS—SSOD—RAMSiR—Roszarubezhcenter—Rossotrudnichestvo (2010). Retrieved from http://reading-hall.ru/publication.php?id=2525M

involvement, Dmitri Shostakovich's famous *Leningrad Symphony* was performed in Great Britain.[10] With the end of the Second World War, a new era was ushered in.

With the Second World War over, a new Yalta-Potsdam system emerged, and in the context of the transformed world order, the Soviet Union had to adjust its foreign policy, including cultural ties, to the new frame of reference. The old cultural ties were destroyed in the wartime years. However, VOKS's active efforts abroad helped to retain the established contacts, and struggle against fascism led to the emergence of new societies of friends of the USSR. Eventually, in 1958, they were reorganised into the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship (SSOD), a single entity that became VOKS's successor. In effect, the Union brought together different communities whose structures and activities were largely contingent on the countries of operation. The SSOD enjoyed a status of a civic organisation and operated in partnership with overseas entities. It was established as a move away from the overwhelming reliance on propaganda methods typically employed by VOKS.

During the period from 1954 through 1989, Soviet Union was very active in its humanitarian aid to foreign countries: it had spent US$144.3 billion. This consisted of the construction of 3575 objects (schools, hospitals, infrastructural objects). For instance, the Soviet Union funded the Tehri Dam in India, the Aswan dam in Egypt, the Salang Tunnel in Afghanistan and the Gelora Bung Karno Stadium in Indonesia. It was the price to pay for other countries to choose socialist orientation.[11] These activities can be classified within the context of international aid diplomacy as a means to win the hearts and minds of publics in the developing world.

A new problem emerged with the disintegration of the USSR and emergence of independent states in its place in 1991, which posed a new challenge to the development of Russia's public diplomacy. The collapse of the old system of international relations and changing geopolitical priorities made the Russian Federation revisit the fundamental principles, agenda and tools of its public diplomacy. The SSOD and Soviet friendship societies had to undergo massive change.

[10] The site of the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Paris. Retrieved from http://www.russiefrance.org/ru/nous/historique.html

[11] Velikaya Anna, A., International Studies Association Paper. San Francisco, April 2018. Retrieved from Isanet.org

The Development of Russian Public Diplomacy in the 1990s

The SSOD's efforts in developing relations with foreign publics were continued by the International Union of Non-Governmental Associations "The Russian Association for International Cooperation" (RAMS),[12] founded in 1992 to coordinate the activities of Russian non-governmental groups in the sphere of public diplomacy. Nowadays, the RAMS membership includes 96 organisations: societies for friendship with foreign countries and other non-governmental entities. RAMS coordinates their work and represents their interests in state bodies and other organisations. Besides, an active role is played by religious associations formed by RAMS friendship societies:

1. the Moscow Union of Friendship Societies (MSOD),[13]
2. the St. Petersburg Association for International Cooperation Saint-Petersburg Association[14] and
3. the Siberian Association of Cultural and Business Cooperation with Foreign Countries.[15]

In addition, against the backdrop of political change, in 1994, the SSOD was transformed into the Russian Centre for International Scientific and Cultural Cooperation under the Government of the Russian Federation, Roszarubezhcenter. It is noteworthy that VOKS and SSOD were non-governmental organisations, whereas their successor Roszarubezhcenter is a state body operating under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The change in status, however, did not affect the nature of the organisation's activities in the sphere of cultural and scientific cooperation with foreign countries.

The structural upheavals in the country and society have seriously affected the Ministry's infrastructure. The economic crisis severely undercut the funding. It triggered the closure of Russian centres for science and culture in a host of countries; Russia's presence abroad was waning. Nevertheless, Roszarubezhcenter continued working on a series of effec-

[12] For more details, see http://rams.org.ru/
[13] http://www.msod.ru/
[14] http://spbaic.ru/
[15] http://sibrams.ru/

tive and rewarding projects, the most successful of which were Russian language centres—they did not close after the collapse of the USSR. Those who witnessed these processes noted that the then Roszarubezhcenter's head—the first woman in space—Valentina Tereshkova and the entire team of the organisation not only succeeded in preserving what little remained but also gave impetus for further development. That difficult period saw a launch of another ten cultural centres, in particular, in the USA, France, Belgium, Vietnam and Kazakhstan.

On February 6, 2002, President Vladimir Putin signed a decree establishing the Russian Centre for International Scientific and Cultural Cooperation under the Government of the Russian Federation.[16] It sought to empower the Foreign Ministry to coordinate the implementation of the single national foreign policy strategy and develop Russia's economic, scientific and cultural cooperation with other countries. Thus, Roszarubezhcenter under the Government was transferred within the remit of the Foreign Ministry. In September 2008, President Dmitry Medvedev's decree dissolved Roszarubezhcenter and transferred its functions to the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation[17]—in short Rossotrudnichestvo. This organisation operates through its representative offices in 73 countries of the world. In March 2012, Konstantin Kosachev was appointed Head of Rossotrudnichestvo, to be succeeded by Eleonora Mitrofanova in 2018.

Rossotrudnichestvo maintains effective cooperation with such NGOs as the Russkiy Mir Foundation,[18] the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation,[19] the Foundation of Saint Andrew the First-Called,[20] the Alexander Solzhenitsyn Centre of Russian Émigré Studies,[21] the Russian Culture Fund,[22] the International Council of Russian Compatriots,[23] the Union of Theatre Workers of the Russian Federation,[24] the International

[16] http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/42377
[17] http://rs.gov.ru/
[18] http://russkiymir.ru/
[19] https://www.oprf.ru/
[20] http://cnsr.ru/
[21] http://www.bfrz.ru/
[22] http://fond.culture.ru/
[23] http://www.msrs.ru/
[24] http://stdrf.ru/

Council of Museums,[25] Twin Cities International Association[26] and many others.

One of the Agency's major partners is the Russian Association for International Cooperation (RAMS). At present, Rossotrudnichestvo is working towards establishing the Russian Union of Friendship Societies (RSOD) and facilitating the resumption of activities by the House of Friendship with Peoples of Foreign Countries in Moscow. In order to fulfil the objective of engaging Russian NGOs in foreign policy, there are plans to increase the number of joint activities to be conducted in partnership with friendship societies and other NGOs, in particular, on the premises of Russian centres for science and culture (RCSCs) in the CIS countries and other states (conferences, round-table discussions, forums, exhibitions, etc.).

Rossotrudnichestvo also actively supports elements of public diplomacy such as interaction between twin cities and territories. International events arranged by twin cities provide an opportunity for openness to the world and contribute to the development of exchange activities and cooperation between the country and the world in economy, culture, education, science and technology, urban development and many other spheres.

Modern Russia does not have a state agency systematically managing public diplomacy efforts: although there are institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Regional Development, the Civic Chamber, Rossotrudnichestvo, RIA Novosti, Russia Today (RT) and others, they lack a strategic body that would coordinate all of their combined activities. Thus, public diplomacy is managed by the highest-ranking officials of the country, with orders given by the heads of the press services of the national leaders. This structure has some advantages; however, there are clearly certain limitations to it. First, it is difficult for the holders of these posts to manage public diplomacy on a regular basis, owing to the sheer number of their responsibilities. Second, the structure has a strictly vertical nature, hindering bottom-up initiatives and horizontal cooperation. This structure does not suit the goals of coordinating public diplomacy on a regular basis. However, some constituents of this structure do have extensive experience in cooperation among each other (e.g. the Foreign Ministry and Rossotrudnichestvo).

[25] http://www.icom.org.ru/
[26] http://goroda-pobratimy.ru/

The Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States—Rossotrudnichestvo—plays a very important role in this field. In a sense, it was founded to respond to the urgent need for a new integrated approach to the key areas of Russia's international activity. As a federal executive body operating within the remit of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, the Agency actively participates in addressing various practical challenges, in particular, improving the relations with the Post-soviet states, primarily the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) partners, implementing programmes for compatriots and enhancing the humanitarian and cultural dimension of our international relations.

Overall, Rossotrudnichestvo is a unique instrument of Russia's soft power, building up the country's capacity to influence partners through public opinion and fostering Russia's appeal in terms of culture and education, humanitarian dimension and foreign policy. Today, it has representative offices in 75 countries (86 offices). Public diplomacy programmes involve numerous NGOs, representatives of business and academic circles, people of culture and art. The motivation for encouraging NGOs to participate in these programmes can be explained by the emphasis placed on public opinion in the modern world (Dolinsky, 2012). A special role individuals and non-state institutions play in Russia's foreign policy is underpinned by the fact that they tend to maintain relations with foreign partners regardless of the official relations between the states. Today, constructing a favourable international image of a country is one of the most urgent and important challenges. Cultivating a positive attitude towards a country's foreign and domestic policies among foreign constituencies makes part of public diplomacy.

Nowadays, Russian higher education is seeking to educate and train the contemporary generation of experts, both academic and practitioner, through the development of knowledge and practice on elements and aspects of international relations, such as soft power and public diplomacy. This is to be found in such institutions as MGIMO, the Diplomatic Academy and many others. At first, this was a rather ad hoc undertaking, but is becoming increasingly more systematic. Russia Today had to develop its own on-the-job training programme from scratch, but even today, several years on, the company constantly experiences a shortage of sufficiently qualified staff. The situation is more difficult for other institutions; unlike the above-mentioned company, they have no training system whatsoever. By contrast, many leading American international relations schools have centres for public diplomacy and specialist training programmes; besides,

British diplomats admit that a successful career requires some work experience in public diplomacy. Russian schools and departments of international journalism and international relations offer academic programmes in diplomacy or journalism complemented by foreign language learning.

One of the major activities in public diplomacy is international broadcasting. Freedom of ideas is a hallmark of today's world. Many states of different political and cultural backgrounds have recently witnessed a renewed interest in international broadcasting. Following Al-Jazeera, a Qatari channel, the CCTV in China, France 24 in France, Press TV in Iran and Russia Today (RT) in Russia came into existence. All these quite expensive projects[27] were designed to shape public opinion in the key states. In recent years, many countries developed similar institutions, so the new Russian broadcaster is now facing competition which is tougher than was initially expected. Many critics argue that in terms of audience numbers, the RT is lagging behind not only well-established giants such as CNN and BBC but also quite new companies, for example, Al-Jazeera English. Accepting this criticism as reasonable and valid, it has to be admitted that the channel was created completely from scratch and over the years has seen some success. Another concern is to enlarge the audience, reaching the public both through satellite packages and cable networks and an extensive use of the Internet, namely blogs, wikis and social networks.

Russian politics and culture attract the foreign audience's interest, which largely explains why until recently Russian public diplomacy has laid special emphasis on cultural exchange. Exhibitions, cultural presentations, artists' tours, bilateral years and Russian language conferences have been the main activities conducted by Rossotrudnichestvo. With all due respect to these efforts, it should be noted, however, that they only indirectly contribute to raising awareness about Russia as a political entity since these efforts are undertaken without coordination with the whole system of public diplomacy. Changing this will involve an in-depth analysis of the role of cultural exchange: besides promoting Russian culture and values, which are important pillars of soft power, it can be instrumental in draw-

[27] The annual budget of Russia Today (RT) amounts to around $30 million. For more details, see: «Another Voice in the Choir». An interview with Margarita Simonyan, editor-in-chief of Russia Today. Retrieved from: http://www.mediaatlas.ru/items/?id=3063&cat=interview&field=r_tv

In initial stages the annual investment in Al-Jazeera was worth approximately $150 million, in France 24 around €80 million. For more details, see: Dolinsky, A.V., International Broadcasting at the Service of the State. *Kosmopolis* №1(20), Spring 2008, pp. 68–69.

ing attention to other areas. Educational programmes, international broadcasting, tourism to Russia or business cooperation with Russian companies are only some of the most obvious topics that should be covered by Rossotrudnichestvo in its activities.

For a long time now, the challenge of improving the country's image abroad had not been taken seriously in Russia. It was first addressed in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation approved by the President on June 28, 2000.[28] The Concept prioritised the task of conveying to the broad international community objective and accurate information about Russia's stance on key international problems, its foreign policy initiatives and Russia's actions and achievements in the spheres of culture, science and intellectual creation. President Putin's speech at a plenary session of the meeting of ambassadors and permanent representatives of Russia on July 12, 2004, may be said to have spurred efforts to improve Russia's image. The president stated that the perceptions of Russia in the world were divorced from reality, that there were frequent "planned campaigns to discredit this country", and tasked Russian diplomats with promoting a favourable image of Russia abroad.[29]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is one of the key institutions engaged in shaping, projecting and then subsequently monitoring Russia's international image. This responsibility arises from the Russian legal framework governing the activities of the Ministry. According to the Regulation on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation approved by Presidential Decree No. 865 of July 11, 2004, the main objectives of the Russian Foreign Ministry are: to develop the general strategy for Russian foreign policy, implement the foreign policy and coordinate international activities.[30] This document also sets forth one of the core missions of the Ministry, that is, to coordinate and disseminate abroad information about Russia's foreign and domestic policies, social and economic, cultural and

[28] The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation. Retrieved from the official site of the MFA of Russia, http://www.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/19DCF61BEFED61134325699C003B5FA3 (accessed 7 October 2000).

[29] President Vladimir Putin's Speech at a Plenary Session of the Russian Federation Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives Meeting on July 12, 2004. PIR Center. Retrieved from http://www.pircenter.org/data/npr/putin120704.pdf

[30] The Regulation on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation approved by Presidential Decree No. 865. 11 July 2004.The site of the MFA of Russia. Retrieved from http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/nsite-sv.nsf/6a5a8c8bf57c548743256aaa00420ab4/4325698400445d19c32570a000218473!OpenDocument

spiritual life of the country. At the same time, it is an integral part of the information security of the state and an important prerequisite for improving the country's international image.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has been proactive in encouraging the participation of civil society institutions and expert community in the foreign policy process. The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation approved by Dmitry Medvedev on July 12, 2008[31] highlights an extensive participation of civil society in the foreign policy process as being in line with Russia's domestic development trends, the goal of fostering national agreement on foreign policy and facilitating its successful implementation. So in February 2010, Dmitry Medvedev signed two orders, one creating the Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund[32] and the other establishing a non-profit partnership, the Russian Council for International Affairs.[33] In the modern context, an increasing emphasis is placed on foreign policy advocacy and awareness-raising about all the intricacies of both planned and pursued policies. This involves both foreign and domestic policies, since these fields are closely interconnected.

Developing its information policy both for the domestic and international audiences, Russia generally relies on the assumption that at this stage there is no viable alternative to a multipolar international system that could take into consideration all the facets of the modern world. Multipolarity of the world, however, implies a multitude of information poles. Russia is well positioned to increase its political and information leverage in the world. However, achieving this foreign policy objective requires taking into consideration not only the urgency of the pending task but its very essence as well as a commitment to implement it. At present, a foreign policy initiative cannot be successful without considerable public support. The institution of diplomacy, in its modern conception, has a multitude of forms and features, and a vivid example of this is an ever-increasing role of public diplomacy, which, like traditional diplo-

[31] The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2008. The official site of the President of Russia. Retrieved from http://www.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2008/07/204108.shtml

[32] The Order of the President of the Russian Federation on the Establishment of the Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund. The official site of the President of Russia. Retrieved from http://graph.document.kremlin.ru/page.aspx?1;1050068

[33] The Order of the President of the Russian Federation on the Establishment of the Non-Profit Partnership, Russian International Affairs Council. The official site of the President of Russia. Retrieved from http://graph.document.kremlin.ru/page.aspx?1;1050072

macy, employs its own mechanisms in promoting state interests, foreign policy objectives and a positive image of the country.

Interactions between countries, cultures and societies resulting from such trends as globalisation, introduction and continued development of information technology are bound to enlarge the role of public diplomacy and improve its mechanisms, which can already be seen in the growing extent of information support provided for virtually all foreign policy events. The Information and Press Department of the Foreign Ministry is tasked with responsibility for implementing the key objectives set forth in the new Foreign Policy Concept coupled with the above-mentioned functions of a modern Foreign Ministry press service. The Information and Press Department, an organisational unit of the Ministry's central apparatus, is responsible for activities that are quite important from the public diplomacy perspective:

- organising and providing information support for foreign policy of the Russian Federation, providing updated information about foreign policy activities to the Russian and foreign press, cultivating a positive public image of the Russian authorities by elucidating the main points and objectives of relevant initiatives and particular steps of the Russian leadership;
- analysing international issues affecting information security and ensuring that Russia fully participates in their resolution; and
- accrediting foreign media representatives in the Russian Federation and assisting them in their professional duty.

In pursuit of these functions, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs disseminates official information on a range of foreign policy issues, holds news conferences and press briefings,[34] organises public statements and speeches of high-ranking Russian officials, participates in information support for state visits to Russia, as well as high- and highest-level visits abroad of the Russian statesmen and delegations, holds bi- and multilateral consultations with foreign partners, participates in elaboration of international treaties and agreements in the information sphere, publishes the Russian Foreign Ministry's *Information Bulletin*, *Diplomatic Journal*, as

[34] Both at the press center of the Information and Press Department of the Foreign Ministry and special facilities in the central building. Other premises can also be used.

well as provides information for the Ministry's website on the Internet.[35] Information support for Russian foreign and domestic policies is provided internationally in coordination with the Press Service of the President of Russia, Department of Government Information and press services of other federal agencies.

Information support for foreign and domestic policies prioritises conveying to the broad international community objective and accurate information about Russia's stance on international problems, foreign policy initiatives of the Russian authorities, as well as appropriate and timely coverage by the foreign mass media of positive trends in the social and economic life of the country.[36] No less important for cultivating a positive attitude towards Russia is the need to work with compatriots (Executive Order on Measures to Implement the Russian Federation Foreign Policy Signed by V. Putin, 2012). The leaders of the Russian Federation have repeatedly emphasised that one of the core tasks of the Foreign Ministry is "to provide protection of legitimate rights of our compatriots, ensure comprehensive protection of their interests, and preserve ethnic, cultural and other identities of the Russian diaspora abroad".[37] According to some estimates, approximately 25 million Russians live abroad. They can be regarded as a certain "bridge" in the relations between the Russian Federation and the country they live in. So the Foreign Ministry and its foreign missions seek to maintain contacts with Russians living abroad (in particular, with young people who are either second or third generation of migrants) in order to preserve the Russian language and enlarge its influence outside Russia.

The Foreign Ministry commissioned a web portal *Russkiy Vek* ("Russian Century") aimed at the Russian diaspora abroad. It was designed to inform the broad public, diaspora organisations, Russian and foreign state bodies about Russia's activities in support of compatriots living abroad, in particular, about the implementation of the State programme to assist the

[35] http://www.mid.ru/

[36] These ideas were set forth in a number of official documents, in particular in the Doctrine of Information Security of September 9, 2000: The second ingredient of the national interests of the Russian Federation in the information sphere comprises information support for the state policy of the Russian Federation that involves conveying to the Russian and international public trustworthy information about the state policy of the Russian Federation and about its official position on socially significant events in Russian and international life.

[37] The speech made by Dmitry Medvedev at a meeting with Foreign Ministry staff/Press Service of the President of Russia//http://www.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/0/C878E186E254440A4425799F00585897

voluntary resettlement to the Russian Federation of compatriots living abroad.[38] In future, supporting Russian compatriots abroad will also be highly relevant, as is seen from President Putin's speech: "Respect for one's country is rooted, among other things, in its ability to protect the rights of its citizens abroad… I would like to stress that the Foreign Ministry and all diplomatic and consular agencies must be prepared to provide real support to our citizens around the clock".[39]

In the context of globalisation, international relations are characterised by a most intense inter-state competition for influence over public opinion and its support, which implies cultivating a foreign policy image that meets the interests of one's nation. A state cannot successfully withstand external challenges without public support. According to an American scholar Glen Fisher, it is not enough to ensure that your foreign colleagues' diplomats understand the policy of your country. It should be explained to the public, whose opinion is taken into consideration in the Foreign Ministry policies (Fisher, 1972: 4). Any efforts made by a country, including Russia, in the sphere of public diplomacy are targeted at shaping public opinion abroad in order to garner full support for the foreign policy (Fisher, 1972: 5). Public diplomacy has vast capacities and is aimed at maintaining an open dialogue, comparing positions and creating an environment conducive to fostering international exchange (Fisher, 1972: 6).

Modern Russia actively participates in fundamental and dynamic changes that affect, directly or indirectly, all the actors, including Russia itself. The country is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, in possession of vast capacities and resources in all spheres; it maintains dynamic relations with virtually all international actors; therefore, the Russian Federation is bound to exert certain influence on the shape of the new world order.

International relations have changed since the end of the Cold War and the scope of international cooperation had expanded considerably until around 2008. From the moment of the Georgian-Russian War, a marked decline in the relations of the West with Russia have been observed, and especially in the wake of events in Ukraine in 2014. A new time has come for the country, but this change should not be viewed solely from a temporal perspective. Besides the tasks of adjusting to a new environment and

[38] About Russkiy Vek. Russkiy Vek web portal. Retrieved from http://www.ruvek.ru/?module=pages&action=view&id=13

[39] Putin, V., Russia and the Changing World. *Moscow News*. Retrieved from http://mn.ru/politics/20120227/312306749.html (accessed 27 February 2012).

rules of conduct in the international arena, where changes are so dynamic that they may often go unnoticed, the state has to address a host of national imperatives, which completely overshadows challenges on the political agenda.

Conclusion

Public diplomacy, as a form of communication that involves a government seeking to communicate and interact with foreign publics, has long been a tool of managing and regulating international relations by the Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation. When strained periods in state-to-state relations evolve, historically and contemporarily, official diplomacy can fail as a result or be not as effective in realising national goals and interests. This can provide additional impetus for a state actor to seek public diplomacy as a means of navigating the constraints of traditional diplomacy. Historical and contemporary influences on the nature and direction of Russian public diplomacy include the development of new communication technologies, the development and direction of domestic politics and the nature of international relations and the balance of power.

The Soviet Union was established in 1922 and immediately faced international isolation on the part of the international community, which made the prospect of employing traditional methods of diplomacy rather difficult and likely ineffectual. First and foremost though, the foreign policy and therefore public diplomacy was guided by the political ideology of Marxism-Leninism rather than by a public diplomacy with an emphasis placed on classical arts and culture, which is non-political, but still remains a good means of projecting a positive image at the popular level. Gradually, the Soviet Union developed its public diplomacy toolkit as the foreign policy and international relations developed. This occurred at the political, institutional and practical levels as the conditions of the global environment transformed and evolved. After the Second World War, the Soviet Union has developed to become one of the two super powers in a bipolar global order, competing for influence with the US-led Western Bloc. Although the primary focus was on armed conflict (Korean War and Vietnam War), there was the aspect and element of soft power too, which was demonstrated by the approach of humanitarian diplomacy in the Third World. However, much of the capability and will was lost in 1991 with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The Russian Federation reeled for some years in the early 1990s in terms of political will and suffering from a severe lack of resources in defining a clear foreign policy approach and direction. The guiding ideology of the Soviet Union was discredited and lost, and a new search was embarked upon in order to regain international influence through active engagement with foreign publics. This new approach has been guided by pragmatic interests and goals rather than ideology (Simons, 2014). The development of new information communication technologies have enabled more proactive and engaging means of communication and interaction with the growth of NGOs and digital diplomacy being employed. Innovation and creativity in approaching public diplomacy solutions have been further driven by the current strains in Russia's relations with the governments of Western states. As a result, we are witnessing yet another round of a global battle for the hearts and minds of global publics amid growing competition and rivalry in international relations.

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CHAPTER 3

Russian Public Diplomacy and Nation Branding

Semed A. Semedov and Anastasiya G. Kurbatova

At present, one of Russia's most important tasks is to define and create its "competitive identity" and make the country's image in the global information space attractive, unique, recognizable and highly effective (Simons, 2013). This is now possible because Russia has reformulated its self-image after the end of the Soviet Union. However, as Russia has discovered in the various attempts to reshape her international image and reputation, it is very difficult to try and rebrand a country that has a high international profile and possesses a strong existing brand (Simons, 2011). Developing a successful state image strategy requires high-level cooperation in all spheres: political, economic, sports, cultural, humanitarian and educational. Weaknesses in Russia's state image strategy have emerged during its participation in the information war of 2013–2018. Russia is striving to use modern Information Age tools to manage and promote its international

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image. Similar efforts have also been undertaken by other nations (e.g., the "re-Islamization" of the Middle East or India's "Hinduization").

The national branding of Russia is a set of measures aimed at creating an attractive image of the country in the world. State and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) help mold the country's image in a variety of areas including economic, cultural, scientific, media and humanitarian (Simons, 2018). At the same time, Russian state policy has a serious impact on the country's reputation, which arguably is the most valuable asset in an information society. It should also be noted that national branding can be used to inform the public about a country's attributes, such as its quality of life and successful development.

Institutions of Public Diplomacy and Branding

Our analysis of the Russian Federation's national brand uses British expert Simon Anholt's global national brand methodology. According to this methodology, national brands are evaluated on the following six parameters: export, management, culture and cultural heritage, people, tourism and investment and migration. Recently, Russia has been giving more attention to the nation-branding dimension of public diplomacy as a way to exert cultural and humanitarian influence. As such, it supplements Russia's national foreign policy.

Russia's socio-political sphere has changed dramatically since 1990s. Most Russians now believe traditional values and national pride are being restored after years of oppression and humiliation (Suslov, 2016). This newly acquired sense of dignity has contributed to the emergence of a new generation of activism (e.g., NGOs) focused on protecting Russia's global interests. A recent survey found that more than 60% of Russians believe that the perceived distortion of Russia's role in defeating fascism is more painful than the imposition of economic sanctions by the United States and other Western powers.[1]

It is not a coincidence that the patriarch of US foreign policy, Henry Kissinger, said in a recent interview that "it is not possible to bring Russia into the international system by conversion. It requires deal-making, but also understanding. It is a unique and complicated society. Russia must be

[1] Complex Analysis of Statistical Data WCIOM from 2016 to 2018, August 2018, [online] Available at: https://wciom.ru

dealt with by closing its military options but in a way that affords it dignity in terms of its own history".[2]

As part of this trend, a number of active and highly professional NGOs oriented to foreign policy have emerged to spearhead the efforts in the field of public diplomacy. Notable examples include the Russian Peace Foundation, The Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation, Andrey Karlov Children's Foundation, the Public Initiative "Creative Diplomacy" (PICREADI) at the Russian Public Council for International Cooperation and Public Diplomacy, the "International Diplomatic Forum" at the Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, NPO Foundation for the Support and Protection of the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad (The Foundation's founders are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and Rossotrudnichestvo) and others. The federal agency *Rossotrudnichestvo*, a key national institution that defines guidelines and coordinates activities in the field of public diplomacy, has also intensified its activities abroad. In particular, *Rossotrudnichestvo* has expanded its international presence, increasing the number of representatives and Russian centers of science and culture abroad by one-third.[3]

While all nations' public diplomacy efforts are basically similar, Russia has formulated and deployed its own particular techniques because of the current turbulent international environment. From the Russian perspective, an information war has been launched against the Russian Federation whose goals are to (1) distort and falsify history and (2) promote Russophobia in the international public consciousness by representing Russia and Russians as aggressors on the world stage (Doctrine of Information Security, 2016). An important distinctive feature of this trend is the strategy of compromising not only the Russian state and its leadership but also the Russian people as a whole. Russia's depiction as a rogue state is reinforced by "fake news" media and the creation and distribution of memes with the theme that "There is no bad nation—only bad people. But the Russians are bad altogether".[4] This abovementioned situation creates a difficult environment for Russia to convey its own message to global publics.

The core of Russia's public diplomacy's narrative is principally evolving around the idea of the unity of the "Russian World". As early as 2004, the

[2] Kissinger, H., Interviews for The Atlantic. Interviewed by Jeffry Goldberg, 2016. [online] Available at: https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/11/kissinger-order-and-chaos/506876/ (accessed July 29, 2018).

[3] Interview of the Head of Rossotrudnichestvo Eleonora Mitrofanova at RBC, 12 September 2018, [online]. Available at: http://rs.gov.ru/ru/news/34439

[4] Anastasiya Mironova, Is 'Russian' the Name of a Rascal?, *Gazeta.ru*, 9 August 2018, available at: https://www.gazeta.ru/comments/column/mironova/11885785.shtml (circulation date August 14, 2018).

current head of *Rossotrudnichestvo* (who took office in December 2017), former Permanent Representative of Russia to the UNESCO, E.V. Mitrofanova emphasized this concept: "Unifying the Russian diaspora reinforces and spiritually enriches both our compatriots who have settled abroad, for any number of historical, political or economic reasons, and the nations they have settled within".[5] Today, Russia offers the world a number of alternative paradigms. For example, Russia introduced the concept of global multi-polarity ("Unity in Diversity") as a way to oppose the Western model of a monocentric world order. Within this framework, Russia's identity positioning can be defined as conservative traditionalism and the right of every nation to defend its historically established values. This creates communication priorities within the frame of international communications and public diplomacy.

Having identified this task as a priority, *Rossotrudnichestvo* created a network of NGOs (expert advisory councils) in February 2018 to pursue its agenda. The expert advisory councils' work corresponds to the provisions of the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation of 2016 (II paragraph 7, III paragraph 48). For example, the Expert Advisory Council for Public and Humanitarian Programs aims to assist *Rossotrudnichestvo* by fostering discussions about key humanitarian issues facing the international community. The Council sponsors carefully organized international events for specifically targeted foreign academic and expert groups featuring Russian experts in political science and cultural affairs.

Two other examples include the Valdai Discussion Club and the Russian Council for International Affairs. These organizations are the main actors in the field of Russian expert diplomacy. Both hold roundtables and discussions on various international issues with the participation of foreign experts, politicians and officials. Russian expert advisory councils also attend major international events at Russian foreign-oriented economic forums (e.g., the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum and the Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok). The councils also interact with a variety of international organizations in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Eastern Europe, China (bilaterally), Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS countries) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

[5] Mitrofanova, E. V., "Russian World" Without Borders, *Russia in Global Politics, 1* (January/February 2004), 32–37.

Programs and Approaches to Branding in a Hostile Information Environment

Today, Russian is spoken as a native language by 154 million people and the total worldwide Russian-speaking population is 280 million.[6] One of Russia's most important public diplomacy objectives is promoting and preserving the Russian language abroad under the framework of the federal target program "Russian Language" for 2016–2020. *Rossotrudnichestvo*, public NGOs and a host of academic institutions work to promote Russian-language learning globally. The global use of Russian differs by region. In Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, Russian-language interest has grown. However, there has been a decrease in Russian-speaking populations in regions formerly within the Soviet sphere of influence.

Reversing this trend is a priority of Russian foreign policy but is made more difficult by the concerted efforts of many governments and organizations to brand Russia as the "aggressor state". Russia has responded by using the resources of public diplomacy to protect the desires of Russian-speaking populations to speak and learn the language of their ancestral homeland. Preserving and promoting Russian abroad requires active interaction with the Russian-speaking diaspora abroad. This is one of the objectives of public diplomacy. As Henry Kissinger noted in an interview with *CBS News*:

> For him [Mr. Putin], the question of Russian identity is very crucial. Because as a result of the collapse of communism, Russia has lost about 300 years of its history. […] And so that the question of 'What is Russia?' looms very large in their mind. And that's a problem we have never had.[7]

In addition to the physical and tangible effects of the Soviet collapse in 1991, Kissinger also implies the importance of intangible human emotions, together with the repercussions for the Russian national mentality and directions of foreign policy. The advent of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has created new divisions between natives of the

[6] Ethnologue: Languages of the World in 2017. https://www.ethnologue.com (circulation date August 11, 2018).

[7] Flores, R., Henry Kissinger says "I hope we're doing some hacking" in Russia, *CBS News*, 18 December 2016, [online] Available at: https://www.cbsnews.com/news/henry-kissinger-hacking-russia-donald-trump/ (accessed August 13, 2018).

Russian Federation and other neighboring nationalities. It is perceived by Russian officials that over the past 25 years a new generation in Russia and the CIS has been influenced by propaganda directed against Russia as part of the previously mentioned information war. The resulting Russophobia threatens to cast Russia as an "Evil Empire" or international outcast that should be strongly held in check.

Rossotrudnichestvo and Russian foreign policy NGOs are also conducting work aimed at countering the falsification of Russian history. Toward this end, a number of public programs started disseminating information internationally to combat stereotypes about Russian civilization and history. These efforts include introducing target audiences to key historical figures in Russian history, conducting historical and memorial events abroad coinciding with World War II jubilee dates and sponsoring international photo exhibitions (photo diplomacy). One result of these efforts is the inclusion of Russia in a variety of European cultural events.

The Inter-Ministerial Working Group on the Preservation of the Russian Historical and Cultural Heritage in the United States, through the website "Russian America: History, Culture, Diplomacy", presents unique documents from the Ministry's archive dedicated to Russian historical and cultural heritage in the United States.[8]

Strengthening and protecting historical and memorial sites dedicated to World War II is another important way of countering anti-Russian propaganda. A number of countries including Poland, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Hungary, Norway, the Baltic States and the Czech Republic have recently enacted regulations aimed at removing symbols of communism and occupation. However, such actions encroach on monuments to Soviet soldiers. Russian public diplomacy is forming a favorable image of Russia internationally. As stated by G.B. Karasin:

> In an effort to build trust and goodwill among nations, cultural and humanitarian exchanges will become an even bigger part of Russia's future public diplomacy agenda. Russia seeks to be an open, friendly country despite efforts to provoke conflict and isolate it by certain external forces.[9]

[8] Briefing by Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesman Maria Zaharova, Moscow, 30 August 2018, http://www.mid.ru/web/guest/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3330587##18 (circulation date August 31, 2018).

[9] Speech by G.B. Karasin during the meeting of representatives of Rossotrudnichestvo at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 23 July 2018, official You Tube channel of the MFA, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aY5_YxdeyfQ&t=5s (circulation date July 27, 2018).

Russian NGOs and academic institutions are working intensively to monitor social and public attitudes toward Russia and to assess its cultural and national brands' recognition. Russian cities have also been active in NGO public diplomacy as illustrated by the expansion of twin city initiatives. As of 2018, 161 Russian cities have twin city relationships with more than 1100 cities worldwide, with the International Association of "Pure Cities" (IMAPG) playing a large role in this effort.

In addition to such bilateral efforts, the entire Russian Federation regions are also cooperating with foreign regions to promote their distinctive cultures and traditions, so sub-state diplomacy is also part of Russian nation-branding efforts. The success of the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games, the 19th World Festival of Youth and Students (2017) and the FIFA World Cup (2018) undoubtedly contributed to changing foreign attitudes about Russia.

There are indications that Russia has begun to use military power as a national-branding mechanism. According to foreign experts, President Putin's March 2018 speech before the Federal Assembly was intended to highlight Russia's new high-tech strategic and tactical weapons to an international audience. However, the use of "diplomacy of force" in the form of combined arms exercises and Russian combat operations in Syria do not contribute to Russia's image as a peace-loving state.

Branding in Education and Research Diplomacy

In this regard, the head of *Rossotrudnichestvo*, E.V. Mitrofanova, particularly noted the strategic need to maximize efforts to work with young people. Maybe that's the reason for Russian MFA promoting new public diplomacy (PD) youth-oriented formats, for example, a network of Eurasian, BRICS, European and the Young Diplomats forums. The First Global Forum of Young Diplomats was held in Sochi in 2017 as part of the World Festival of Youth and Students (visited by over 20,000 leaders from 180 countries). The event was the culmination of over four years of work by the Russian Foreign Ministry's Council of Young Diplomats, who held similar regional forums in which only young diplomats took part.[10] In total, the final document of the global forum on the establishment of the

[10] *Press Release on the Results of the First Global Forum of Young Diplomats*, 24 October 2017, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2920079 (accessed July 1, 2018).

International Association of Young Diplomats was supported by more than 60 states. According to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation G.B. Karasin:

> Based on the results of the 2017 World Festival of Youth and Students, we can say that we have achieved student unity around the values of friendship and justice.[11]

One of the most vital tasks of public diplomacy is to foster a new generation of partnerships in foreign countries based on mutual trust as well as to provide intellectual and expert support to Russian compatriots abroad through social and humanitarian communication and cooperation. Since 2015, *Rossotrudnichestvo*, together with the Ministry of Sports of Russia, the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia and the All-Russian Federation of the School Sports, has been the co-organizer of the World Games of Young Compatriots. This event is one of the most ambitious and resonant yearly projects for the youth of the Russian-speaking diaspora abroad. The Games use sports and healthy lifestyles to help develop interaction among the Russian-speaking youth living abroad and increase their understanding of Russian culture.

Russia is also prioritizing outreach to ethnic Russians living in countries of the former Soviet Union (e.g., the Baltic States and Ukraine). Russia encourages the majority population in these countries to grant Russian-speaking minorities civil, social, economic, cultural and other rights and freedoms. The cultural and humanitarian direction of public diplomacy is realized through such cultural exchange mechanisms that promote Russian culture. Between 2011 and 2018 more than 20 reciprocal cross-cultural festivals were held with European, Asian and Latin American countries. Similar cultural events with Middle Eastern countries have also begun (e.g., Qatar in 2018 and Turkey in 2019).

One of the challenges of promoting the cultural and national traditions of Russia is that it does not have a clearly expressed brand as did the USSR. One reason is that ethnic performers tend to dilute their national flavor to suit the tastes of an international audience. In 2018 the Film Fund began assessing the international demand for Russia cinema. The

[11] Speech by G.B. Karasin during the meeting of representatives of Rossotrudnichestvo at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 23 July 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/main_en (circulation date July 27, 2018).

Russian Federation is represented at international film festivals in Hong Kong, Cannes, London, Los Angeles, Toronto and others.

Russia also uses public diplomacy to promote the achievements of Russian education and science. Between 2015 and 2018, Russia's rank improved from the seventh to the fifth place on the list of the most attractive European countries for training.[12] This improvement can be illustrated by the fact that 187,000 people came to Russia for training in the first half of 2018 compared to merely 169,000 in all of 2017. *Rossotrudnichestvo's* efforts have also resulted in a significant increase in the interest of foreigners to study in Russia. *Rossotrudnichestvo* launched the RUSSIA.STUDY project, which operates in 11 different languages, with the aim of attracting potential students to its universities. Russia provides annually 15,000 places for foreigners to study for free (this number is not so great, as far as only Romania annually gives Moldavia 5,000 fully covered scholarships). The agency also pays great attention to working with the alumni of Russian (Soviet) higher education institutions, the number of which exceeds 500,000.[13] Education diplomacy is used by many countries around the globe to improve the image of their country by providing an interactive forum for the foreign student and the host country and can be an effective foundation for a lasting relationship (Lindsay, 1989).

In a speech before the Federal Assembly on March 1, 2018, the president of the Russian Federation spoke of the need to make it easier for talented foreign students and scholars to become Russian citizens.[14] A vivid positive example of Russian nation branding in the sphere of science is the Primakov readings[15] held annually by the Primakov Institute of

[12] Germany Remains 'Best Country for International Students,' Above UK and France, *The Local Germany*, 21 February 2018, https://www.thelocal.de/20180221/germany-remains-best-country-for-international-students-above-uk-and-france (circulation date July 25, 2018).

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

[14] In Russia the Number of Foreign Students has Increased, *Parliamentary Newspaper*, June 2018, https://www.pnp.ru/politics/v-rossii-vyroslo-chislo-inostrannykh-studentov.html (circulation date August 13, 2018).

[15] The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 23 July 2018, http://www.mid.ru/en/main_en (circulation date July 27, 2018).

World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO) which is aimed at promoting cooperation between the leading international relations scholars and decision-makers. It is ranked by the Pennsylvania University Global think tank index[16] among top ten world discussion platforms. Such initiatives contribute greatly toward Russia's public diplomacy.

Since 2011, *Rossotrudnichestvo* has been responsible for bringing young people to Russia for short-term study programs in politics, public affairs, science and business. And, in 2014, the Government Commission on the Affairs of Compatriots Abroad (KKADR) launched the Program of Educational Travels to Russian Historic Sites ("Hello, Russia!"). Every year this program brings to Russia more than 700 young people from all over the world.[17] Russia also promotes its achievements in the fields of science, technology and space research. Every April, workshops about Yuri Gagarin, the first human to go into space, are held in Western countries as are conferences devoted to Russian scientific achievements. Russia has risen from the 28th to the 13th place in the number of papers published in social science journals (both print and internet based). From 2015 to 2017, the number of Russian published works in the social sciences rose to 1.5%, outpacing even China in this metric.[18] These efforts, for Russia to become more internationally competitive in the education and research sectors, seem to have born some initial tangible results.

Branding and Public Diplomacy for Economic and Financial Development

Changing trends in Russia's image policy show that the emphasis in promoting a national brand is important for humanitarian development, such as improving the standard of living, quality of life, ecology, developing public health and education and cultural and sporting achievements. However, the image of modern Russia is extremely important to its economy, politics, trade, finance, science, culture, sports and education. This

[16] For the 2017 index results please see https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1012&context=think_tanks

[17] See more on Rossotrudnichestvo website, http://rs.gov.ru/ru

[18] HSE: Russia Became the 13th in the World by the Number of Publications in Social Science, *TASS*, 1 August 2018, https://tass.ru/nauka/5421129 (circulation date August 17, 2018).

has become even more important in the Information Age, when information and communication have emerged as key assets to ensure a nation's international leadership. The positive image of Russia and its reputation in domestic and foreign business circles are important factors in promoting the country's national interests on the world stage.

The necessity for being internationally branded economy was realized in Russia in early 2000s. In 2006, the Russian government hired Ketchum Inc. to develop a proper Russian image and implement a business image strategy.[19] After the first wave of investors occurred and an economic boom passed, the Russian government joined the competition for foreign capital and established in 2011 The Russian Direct Investment Fund, aimed at attracting equity investments. Russia's accession to the WTO was followed closely by foreign businesses, as it was expected as a green light for Russia's economic upgrade. Meanwhile, in 2013, Goldman Sachs signed three-year contract with the Russian government to help attract foreign institutional investors.[20] In the result, according to Ernst and Young, in 2017, foreign investors put up capital in a record number of projects in Russia.[21] As a result of the latest steps, Russia advanced to the 31st place in the global ease of doing business ranking, representing an improvement from the 35th place in the previous year and 40th place two years ago or 120th place seven years ago.[22] Russia has developed several effective tools for nation branding in the economic dimension.[23] Roscongress,[24] founded in 2007 with the aim of contributing to develop Russia's economic potential and strengthen the country's image by organizing congresses and exhibitions with an economic and social focus, organizes regional forums established in order to work with local and

[19] Garcia, T., Ketchum Acquires Moscow Firm, https://www.adweek.com/digital/ketchum-acquires-moscow-firm

[20] Corcoran, J., Russia Hires Goldman as Corporate Broker to Boost Image, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-02-05/goldman-sachs-hired-by-russia-as-corporate-broker-to-boost-image

[21] Khutko, A., Russian Economy Attracting a Growing Number of Foreign Investors, https://www.ey.com/ru/en/newsroom/news-releases/ey-news-european-attractiveness-survey

[22] Russia Carries Out Several Reforms to Improve Business Climate, http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/10/31/russia-carries-out-several-reforms-to-improve-business-climate

[23] Velikaya, A. A., Nation-Branding: The Case of Russia, http://rethinkingrussia.ru/en/2017/08/nation-branding-the-case-of-russia

[24] See https://roscongress.org/en/news/

foreign business circles. The best known are in Sochi, Krasnoyarsk, Vladivostok and Saint Petersburg. The main economic event annually held is St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF),[25] attracting over 14,000 participants from 143 countries, representing government and business leaders, academic and media experts. Besides these forums, coordinated by Roscongress, another one—VTB Capital's RUSSIA CALLING![26]—also brings together policy-makers, investors and business figures to promote dialogue and encourages strategic investment into Russia's economy.

Another positive step for promoting the image of Russia among foreign business circles was the establishment of the Russian Export Centre[27] in 2011—it coordinates inter alia the activities of Russian trade representative offices abroad in supporting export projects. Some of Russia's world-famous business schools are also shaping the country's economic image. For example, Moscow School of Management, Skolkovo[28] (which earns annually, by the way, only three times less than LSE), has established the Institute for Emerging Market Studies (SIEMS), shaping Russia's business image in BRICS, developing and emerging countries. SPIEF, Russian Export Centre and the Skolkovo Business School are the best practice examples of nation branding, but in the current business climate governmental authorities and civil society should pay serious attention to re-attracting foreign investors. Besides, much should be done for developing strong recognizable brands: according to Brand Strength Index 2017 the strongest Russian brand which is Sberbank (with state participation) is worth US$11.6 billion, while the American private brand Amazon is worth US$109.5 billion.[29]

Discussion and Conclusion

Hosting major international events has certainly raised Russia's standing in the world. However, the doping scandals that followed the 2014 Winter Olympics and the recent Ukrainian events forced the Russia's leadership to change its image strategy. Russia needs to update its cultural myths:

[25] See https://www.forumspb.com/en/

[26] See http://www.vtbcapital.com/events/2017/moscow/about/index.php

[27] See https://www.exportcenter.ru/en/company/

[28] See http://school.skolkovo.ru/en/

[29] Brand Finance Global 500, The Annual Report on the World's Most Valuable Brands, 2008, http://brandfinance.com/knowledge-centre/reports/brand-finance-global-500-2018

"Spirituality of Russia", "Russia is the custodian of eternal universal values" and "Incredible Russia". Russian strategy should be underpinned with vivid national charm, "Russian spirit" and should emphasize "unique and genuine Russianness". To some extent, this shortfall was overcome at the World Cup (2018).

Russia should use marketing technologies, advertising and information campaigns to strengthen international perceptions of Russian's achievements. Combining public diplomacy with marketing makes it possible for state policy to be sold as a product to a foreign audience. In other words, the government's image is a national brand. Successful public diplomacy campaigns are not just the dissemination of some positive information about Russia in foreign media but, above all, the integration of influential politicians and government agencies into a brand management system that supports a unified, long-term national strategy.

Russian public diplomacy is institutionalized, which creates problems that must be solved as quickly as possible. Traditional bureaucracies are not equipped to deal with the pace of change in modern society—change largely driven by the development of information technology.

To solve these problems, we believe the following nation-branding steps should be taken:

- establish NGOs similar to The Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation. These organizations will be tasked with improving the image of the country;
- determine how to finance public diplomacy NGOs;
- develop nation-branding strategies, set priorities and establish a nation-branding training system;
- develop a special nation-branding program for border regions;
- improve the nation-branding mechanism of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) member states such as Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that occupy the top priority in Russian public diplomacy;
- within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, Russia needs a strategy of public diplomacy which should then be disseminated widely. Economic integration without cultural, scientific, educational and sports cooperation will be short-lived. Culture, education and science will help cement the integration process because they are rooted more deeply in national identity and therefore less prone to change. Within the Eurasian Economic Union, Russia still maintains

significant educational and scientific ties. Therefore, linkages and cooperation need not be developed from scratch. It will also be beneficial to develop a nation-branding strategy within the emerging international global organizations like BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa);

- branding various Russian regions, using the twin cities initiatives and launching new tourism programs, could contribute a lot toward Russia being associated not only with "balalaika" and "vodka" but with Tomsk University, Karelian resort or Baikal omul. So, "out-of-the-box" thinking and a broad discussion on revealing key tasks, segmentation of the target audience and proposing a long-term branding strategy are of great necessity.

Despite certain structural and institutional shortcomings, efforts to overcome the alienation of foreign publics from Russia are succeeding because bilateral and multilateral international relations have become more systematic and focused. In the end, this success should create an environment of trust and mutually beneficial cooperation. In the digital age, Russia is trying to find the right solution for making Edmund Gullion's "the last three feet" approach toward the foreign audience (seen as people who are or will be close to the decision-making and agenda-setting process) while branding itself as attractive, credible and open minded and conducting dialogue rather than monologue. It uses PD and humanitarian cooperation tools for succeeding. Still, it should strive to be a leader in technology, economy and knowledge.

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CHAPTER 4

Development Diplomacy of the Russian Federation

Stanislav L. Tkachenko

Since Ancient Greece, the mission of 'Diplomacy' has been the management of relations between two or more states, concerning their strategic and political interests. On the other hand, 'Development diplomacy' (DD) has always been and is nowadays an interstate mechanism to fight poverty and hunger, provide assistance to those states, regions, or communities, which are in need of sustainable growth and reliable social, economic, and political institutions. The prime object of development assistance is population, while any form of diplomacy has political leadership and ruling elites of a state as the most important target.

During the Cold War period, two superpowers in their struggle for expansion of spheres of influence have been competing for the Global South, descending with a time being from military flare-ups to non-violent competition. Since the 1970s, the main area of competition was in promotion of unique Soviet or US strategy of political ideology and national

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socio-economic development in foreign states. The Soviet model has been designed to construct a socialist state-planned economy. On the contrary, US overarching priority was a capitalist market economy.

Such clarity in approaches to the politics of development and to the role of national diplomatic services in their accomplishments disappeared soon after the end of the Cold War. Popular in the 1960s, the US model of the 'Stages of Growth', associated with ideas of American economist Walt Whitman Rostow, has been neglected in the 1990s due to the changing international environment in the Global South as well as in the former socialist economies of Central and Eastern Europe (Rostow, 1960). A new agenda of development shifted to issues of human rights, protection of minorities, peacekeeping and security regimes, strengthening of the liberal nature of international trade in goods and services, environmental sustainability, global health, and the right to food and clean drinking water.

Since the moment of its origin and until recently, DD was fully within the sphere of responsibility of governmental structures. Ministries of foreign affairs, economy, and finance were among many others in this field. These bodies historically have acted at the national level of governance. Since the 1950s, however, they began to coordinate efforts with foreign partner institutions within frameworks of the United Nations (UN), including the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (part of the World Bank Group currently) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). For already 40 years, another inter-governmental organization (IGO), the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), is trying to convince its member states, that is, the most economically advanced nations of the world, to target annually 0.7% gross national income (GNI) for Official Development Assistance (ODA). Until now a few states in the world were able to accomplish that aim, including Denmark, Luxembourg, Sweden and the UK. Global ODA budget in 2017 was about US$147 billion, and the largest donors were the USA, Germany, the UK, Japan, and France.

Financial aid is a crucial element of the contemporary model of DD. The network of actors who are involved into DD is growing, and it coincides today with the community of key actors in the international system. Still, governmental structures play leading roles in this area. In Germany, for example, all federal ministries provide funds that can be classified as Official Development Statistics (ODA), while a major role belongs to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office (Lundsgaarde, 2014, p. 22). In the USA, 27 governmental agencies are involved in the management of ODA

resources, while leading positions belong to the State Department and United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The definition of DD declares that it is a special sphere of diplomacy practice which is done through different forms of interstate development assistance and aid. That's why we should consider the DD as distinctive form of public diplomacy where technical aid and economic assistance are forms of soft power resources of a sovereign state. DD is a privilege of the wealthy and powerful states which use DD as an instrument to reach a wide range of their foreign policy aims. Their activities create a positive image of a state and attract the attention of the international community to the values associated with aid: mutual assistance, sustainable growth, and protection of economically and socially vulnerable groups of population.

The key instrument of DD is 'aid'. It includes activities consisting of delivering certain resources for free or on conditions which are more favorable than those already existing at international markets. Instruments of DD are material aid (food, goods, and medications), financial aid (loans, donations), and technical aid (transfer of 'know-how' and training).

The tremendous success of the UN initiative of the Millennium Development Goals of 2000 and the decision to continue this program for another 15 years have provided global dimension to this sphere. Indeed, diplomatic services of over one hundred nations were involved recently into negotiations on the revision of the Millennium Development Goals and global meetings as, for example, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. Nevertheless, the level of bilateral interstate relations as well as the paradiplomacy dimension, which include assistance on subnational level (region to region or municipality to municipality), are very important nowadays as well.

DD requires openly expressed political will from both sides of the process: readiness to provide the other state with assistance from the donor's side and the willingness to accept foreign aid for the recipient. The aim of the assistance should be transparent: to build efficient, accountable, and transparent governance; to improve quality of life for people; and to establish appropriate and reliable institutions.

In this chapter, we consider Development Diplomacy as an integral part of public diplomacy by the Russian Federation. It is an element of Russia's diplomacy that implements its goals by applying soft power resources, first of all—economic, financial, and intellectual. It goes in line with the foreign policy strategy of Russia and assists in the establishment of mutual understanding and positive interdependence between Russian authorities and the recipient country.

Interdisciplinary Nature of Development Diplomacy

Development assistance requires deep expert knowledge across different sectors of the economy and technology. Consequently, it is impossible without custom-made structures for the management of aid, which should on an ongoing basis cooperate with the national diplomatic service. This later requires a high level of competences in those areas, which are covered by development assistance and require diplomatic support. That's why we consider DD as an inter-disciplinary sphere in the global political economy, which requires, at least for a while, the involvement of professionals in those areas where it is exercised.

Assistance to the economic development of former colonies as well as aid to states, which have suffered from two world wars and multiple regional conflicts, have been totally concentrated on interaction of state actors and their structures in the executive branch of power (ministries). Nowadays, non-state actors, including international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), play an increasingly larger role in debates on tasks of 'development'. Their opinion is taken very seriously by those in governmental institutions who are responsible for the formulization of an optimal model of 'sustainable socio-economic development'. The most powerful instrument which is in disposal of above-mentioned INGOs is an ability to strengthen public awareness on a wide range of issues from environment to low social standards of social policy and the violation of human rights. Politically and ideologically, many INGOs are malicious to the neoliberal Washington Consensus (Karns & Mingst, 2009, pp. 16–18). Often, they vocally support ideas of direct state intervention into the national economy for the building of a modern economy and see such intervention as natural and legitimate. Participation of INGOs in the achievement of DD aims could be considered as clue marker of willingness of a state to apply DD as strategic instrument of its international politics.

'Development Diplomacy' as Part of 'Public Diplomacy'

Until recently, leading scholars who study public diplomacy didn't explicitly examine the area of development assistance as an element of 'soft power' for economically advanced nations (Cull, 2008; Melissen, 2005; Rana, 2011). Due to its obvious social effect, almost any act of giving aid and assistance to those who suffer from socio-economic hardships can, in

itself, be regarded as a form of public diplomacy. Meanwhile, DD goes beyond feeding those who are hungry. Its aim is to put a recipient state on a path of economic growth and social reforms, assistance in integration into the global economy, and the search for its own place in the international division of labor.

From perspectives of the major theories of international relations, agenda of 'development', including sustainable development, has been the focus of their attention for several decades. It includes a number of structuralist schools, including those, which share the basic views of realist/nationalist perspectives, as well as several neo-Marxist theories. Since then, the thesis of 'development' is associated closely in a worldview of leaders in Africa, Latin America, and some of East Asia's emerging economies with protection of the domestic market, assistance to selected sectors of national industry, export promotion, and the establishment of administrative/tax barriers on imports. Often, neo-Marxists and classical realists agree with each other on the existential danger of global markets for economically weak states with underdeveloped institutions of market economy and fragile political system. That's why a model of development, which was actively promoted by Soviet scholars and prominent representatives of the 'Dependency School', has presupposed a complex of protectionist measures for closing the domestic market and the refusal of the export of primary commodities in favor of export of end products.

Since the early 1960s, a monopoly of Structuralism in cross-discipline debates on the 'development' of former colonies and their integration into global economic system has been broken by liberals from the most economically advanced nations (Lewis, 1955; Rostow, 1960). Being widely represented in parliaments and governments of G-7 and OECD states, monetarists and neo-liberals were forced to formulate their position toward 'development' and their role in solving problems of former colonies and other underdeveloped nations. Rapid economic growth in Japan, USA, and Western Europe in the 1980s–1990s resulted in a tremendous increase of resources which were put to the purpose of ODA (Hynes & Scott, 2013). As a side effect of neo-liberal interference into 'development assistance', states of the Global South have been considered as atomized actors, which have been forced to compete to limited volumes of financial resources, available for development assistance. Developing nations were advised to give up an idea of policy coordination with the same type of states within the United Nations or regional integration organizations. Competition for limited resources among developing states very often led

to destructive consequences for recipient states in the Global South. Being forced to implement radical economic reforms in line with Washington Consensus principles (trade liberalization, privatization, deregulation, avoidance of large fiscal deficits), these states have eliminated sectors of their national economy, cut social programs, opened domestic markers for foreign capitals, and downgraded their role in the global economic system to function as a supplier of natural resources and low-cost labor.

Faced with demands to coordinate the activities of donors and recipients, Global South states were forced to admit foreign advisors to manage their economies. It has followed by the loss of control in the governance process at both the economic and social spheres. Experts of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD (DAC OECD) were very true in their remark that the fragile domestic political situation in these countries required close collaboration between security, diplomatic, economic, and development actors (DAC OECD, 2007). Running up against the inability to provide such coordination, some states in the Global South have outsourced their sovereign rights to manage their domestic economy to experts of IGOs, very often represented by citizens of G-7 member states. Multiple anecdotes on 'World Bank experts', who understood almost nothing in domestic socio-economic processes in the Global South, but promulgated everywhere 'privatization', liberalization', 'hard-line monetary policy', and 'fiscal economy', have affirmed widespread proliferation of that practice. Today the international community faces a challenge of 'customization' of its efforts to assist development. Development diplomacy, which is implemented at the national level as well as at the level of designated IGOs, should play a crucial role in this process.

In 2008, experts in Washington's Institute for State Effectiveness (ISE) have developed "the broad pattern of developmental activities" designed to make 'diplomatic peacemaking' of leading economic powers more instrumental. It has included (ISE, 2008, pp. 8–10):

- Ongoing monitoring
- Needs assessment
- Mobilization of resources and donor conference
- Establishment of offices on the ground
- Country assistance strategies
- Locally driven development
- Debt cancellation
- Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration.

All the above-mentioned areas require diplomatic accessary as well as cooperation among donors and recipients. In many cases a 'donor conference' is not feasible and can be replaced by regular contacts of diplomats and experts, but the general approach of ISE experts should be welcomed as balanced and realistic.

For Alberto Alesina and David Dollar (1998), development assistance in the majority of cases directly connected to political and strategic reasons, which stay behind the decision of a donor state to assist and readiness of recipient to accept aid. Very often it could be explained by the shared past of former empires (currently donor states) and their colonies (currently recipients), as well as willingness of their elites to secure special relationship in a new post-colonial format—political and technical assistance in frameworks of integration associations and defense alliances and support to former colonies in the processes of their transit to democracy and market economy, as well as in liberalization of their foreign trade regime. Another research work of German scholars (Dreher, Nunnenkamp, & Thiele, 2008) has demonstrated that political motives, in particular, voting at the UN General Assembly, decisively influence decisions of the US Administration to allocate assistance resources via USAID.

We should strengthen transitory status of DD among instruments which could be utilized in the foreign policy of sovereign states. On the one hand, DD is closely associated with economic diplomacy as Nye noted (Nye, 2004). On the other hand, Nye himself and many experts have pointed out that the practice of training foreign students should not be seen as exclusively economic but rather as an element of public diplomacy. In his other book published in 2011, Nye pointed out that economic resources are the sources of both hard and soft power, and they include aid programs (Nye, 2011).

The European Union is widely known for its practice of linking its economic aid with fulfillment of a set of political and economic conditions. Brussels announced 'conditionality' as one of the most important principles of its activities in the foreign policy arena, especially toward ACP countries.[1] European INGOs have publicized wide-scale debt relief of poor and least developed states, known as Highly Indebted Poor Countries. Good example here is 'Eurodad'—a dynamic network of 47 European NGOs in 20 countries which pushes governments and powerful business

[1] ACP—African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of states. Its main objectives are sustainable development and poverty reduction within its member states, as well as their greater integration into the world's economy.

institutions to adopt transformative changes to the global economic and financial system. Mode of INGO operations in DD area includes monitoring of activities of international financial institutions (IFIs), dissemination of information on alarming situations in the Global South, coordination of efforts of multiple stakeholders in this field, as well as putting information pressure on the institutions of legislative and executive power in some states with an aim to promote socio-economic development.

DD of leading states in the international arena, including the Russian Federation, nowadays demonstrates that this form of diplomacy is closely connected to public diplomacy. Democratization of diplomacy implicated that negotiations on development agenda occur not behind closed doors but openly, and the public knows about every move at different stages of negotiation. Economic diplomacy is highly relevant in this area due to its resources and the accumulated experience. It assists to establishment of good political relations between states as well as promotes positive interdependence. Such trust-based relations form an atmosphere of trust and encourage the growth of mutual trade in goods and services, increase the volume of investments, and a higher level of mobility of economically active population.

Development Diplomacy of the USSR

The term 'development assistance' was never popular in USSR. Instead, Soviet leaders and diplomats have preferred to speak about the 'building of socialism' in developing states. As a rule, Moscow had in mind an elaborated version of the 'model of development' which had been imposed to all 'states of socialist orientation' regardless of the socio-economic and political situation in any concrete country. Such model had foreseen a rigid set of radical reforms (construction of heavy industry factories, forced collectivization of rural economy, and a cultural revolution) as well as close cooperation of developing nation with the USSR in the foreign policy sphere, Soviet credit arrangements, direct supplies of goods, training of specialists in Soviet universities, as well as the dispatching of Soviet specialists of non-military professions. Typically, this interplay has been accompanied with a large-scale military cooperation, which has included arms sales, training of officers in Soviet military academies, as well as the occasional participation of Soviet military advisers in the establishment of military forces in developing nations, and armed conflicts with domestic political opposition.

We think that such activities of USSR should not be seen as 'development diplomacy'. The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs didn't play a

prominent role in such activities. Strategic decisions have been made by the Politburo of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Central Committee and were exercised by numerous Soviet 'relevant ministries'.[2] Their operations abroad have been coordinated by specialists of the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Ministry of Defence. Soviet propaganda has presented a process of socialist camp's enlargement as intrinsic and relevant to the will of people in different parts of the world. But after 'Prague Spring' of 1968, the attractiveness of USSR and its model of 'socialist development' had declined significantly. That's why already in the 1970s, US-Soviet competition for superiority of 'development models' has been replaced by a violent confrontation of two superpowers in the Global South, a chain of 'regional conflicts' (in fact—proxy wars between Washington and Moscow), and the militarization of interstate relations with developing states. It is revealing that soon after the disintegration of the USSR in 1992, a new Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has only closed nine African embassies, four general consulates, as well as the majority of trade missions and cultural centers as element in the process of 'optimization' of Russia's presence in world affairs.

'Development Diplomacy' in Contemporary Russian Foreign Policy

The aim of Russia's DD coincides with those of its public diplomacy. They are directed toward shaping a positive image of Russia, an attraction to its resources, and opportunities as a partner-state in the international system. Recently, a new target was added to the list—to destroy 'cordon sanitaire' which the US Administration and Congress are building around Russia, using instruments of classical diplomacy as well as wide range of tools of economic warfare.

The Executive Office of Russia's President and the federal government are nowadays two centers for elaboration of the national model of DD. Russia's first ever G-8 Presidency (in 2006) put issues of development assistance and DD to the center of Moscow's efforts to stay in the club of global economic leaders. Crisis in Russia's relations with Western powers, which started in the spring of 2012 after the return of Vladimir

[2] At the moment of USSR disintegration, there were 26 all-union ministries, 11 union-republican ministries (including Ministry of Foreign Affairs), as well as 19 all-union and union-republican state committees, typically equal in their power with ministries.

Putin to Kremlin for his third presidential term and deepened in spring 2014 due to the crisis in Ukraine and referendum in Crimea, have undermined Moscow's economic resources and its willingness for scaling its emerging model of DD to regions outside of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Strategic decisions in the sphere of DD are done in Russia at the Presidential Executive Office (Chief of Staff Anton Vaino). There are several subdivisions in the Kremlin, which are permanently or occasionally involved in DD: the Foreign Policy Directorate (Alexander Manzhosin); the Directorate for Interregional Relations and Cultural Contacts with Foreign Countries (Vladimir Chernov); Directorate for Social and Economic Cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States Member Countries, the Republic of Abkhazia, and the Republic of South Ossetia (Oleg Govorun). Their decisions and policy recommendations are actualized by structures of executive power at federal and regional levels. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Sergey Lavrov) plays a special role in this process due to its unique legal status among executive power bodies involved in the foreign policy sphere. According to the decree of President Dmitry Medvedev, "On the coordinating role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation in conducting a unified foreign policy line of the Russian Federation", which came into force on November 8, 2011, it is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is fully responsible for the implementation of measures of DD in foreign countries. In those cases, when activities in the sphere of DD require changes in Russian legislation, it is the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation which traditionally reacts positively to requests from the Kremlin and the federal government of Russian Federation.

Russia's Version of "DDD": Diplomacy, Defence, Development

US President Barack Obama and US State Secretary Hillary Clinton had initiated a conceptual redesign of American foreign policy strategy, which was aimed at providing national security via parallel drive in three separate spheres: development, diplomacy and defense.

Concept of 'Three D' was imbedded into debates on transformation of contemporary diplomacy by Hillary Clinton (US Department of State, 2010). In her speech at the Brookings Institution on May 27, 2010, US Secretary of State declared: "One of our goals coming into the administration

was … to begin to make the case that defence, diplomacy, and development were not separate entities, either in substance or process, but that indeed they had to be viewed as part of an integrated whole and that the whole of government then had to be enlisted in their pursuit" (Garamone, 2010). According to Hillary Clinton, the White House has placed 'development' in the center of contemporary US diplomacy. But a closer look at the structure of US budget expenditures shows that there were defense spending, which at all stages of US history after the end of the Cold War had been the top policy priority.

According to the opinion of the Chairman of the 2017 Munich Security Conference Wolfgang Ischinger, the optimal spending target for efficient international engagement should be 3% of GDP/GNI for the most economically developed states. It includes a 2% GDP defense target, 0.7% of GDP spending for Official Development Assistance (ODA), and 0.3% GDP for the functioning of national diplomatic service. German Liberal Party (FDP) even explicitly declared the 3% spending target for '3D' as its policy aim for German federal budget since 2018 (Koenig & Haas, 2017, pp. 3–4).

For the Russian Federation, an idea of tying up security, development, and foreign policy priorities is not new. Today, two types of DD can be accentuated: (1) in the context of post-conflict reconstruction (in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, and several countries of Central Asia); (2) in the context of settlement of socio-economic problems, which impede the sustainable development in different countries across the globe. Russian diplomatic missions provide decision-makers in Moscow with well-balanced political analysis of recipient's domestic and foreign policy. They also play the role of mediators in negotiations on elaboration of concrete plans on practical implementation of DD measures. Kremlin is using Russia's emerging economic power and targeted international development funding to guarantee national security, as well as to reach political and economic objectives.

The Russian Federation became one of the first countries, which has implemented in practice the above-mentioned 'Three D' concept, combining elements of traditional diplomacy, economic assistance, and defense cooperation for advancement of its national interests. Such policy has to be interdisciplinary, and it plays an increasingly larger role in Russia's positioning in global affairs. Russia's 'Three D' policy actualizes to the full extent in relations with a number of states, which are partners of Russia in such inter-governmental organizations as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). It is exactly such format (economic integration and defense cooperation as an

element of collective security) that gives Moscow an opportunity to experiment with different forms of interstate integration, as well as to provide urgent financial and economic assistance to partners in periods of economic turmoil and threats to their national security.

In contemporary global affairs, Russia behaves as a great power which is able to combine a wide range of civilian and military instruments and policies toward those regions, which Moscow considers as areas of its 'privileged interests'. This approach is based on the notion that 'state power' in contemporary politics is a combination of hard and soft power elements as well as the willingness to use coercive diplomacy in those cases, where it could be feasible. For the Kremlin, coercive diplomacy is based on the conviction that hard power only matters if it can be used for practical purpose (Tkachenko, 2017, p. 135). It also rests on the ability of Russian politicians and public servants to carefully utilize military resources for conflict interventions which are of strategic importance for Russia. That's why Russia is highly interested in the further improvement of its 'Three D' model.

Structural and Regional Aspects of Russia's Development Diplomacy

Most critical forms of assistance in DD are macroeconomic aid (credit facilities to stabilize exchange rate; balancing deficit of budget, debt forgiveness) and structural aid (education, agriculture, industry, etc.). Russian leaders have declared that national policy in the sphere of development is directed toward enlargement of ODA as soon as it would be coordinated with partners in frameworks of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Group of 20, BRICS and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In June 2007, President Vladimir Putin had enacted the national strategy in the sphere of development: 'Concept of Russia's Participation in International Development Assistance' (Russia's Participation, 2007). It has presented a vision of the substance and priorities of Russia's policy concerning the provision of international financial, technical, and humanitarian aid. The long-term priority for Russia has been declared as socio-economic development of recipient countries, resolving crisis situations, and strengthening Russia's international position and credibility. In April 2014, President Vladimir Putin approved new version of the document: 'Concept of the Russian Federation's State Policy in the Area of International Development Assistance' (Concept, 2014).

The announced objectives of Russia's policy in the sphere of DD were the following:

1. elimination of poverty and promotion of sustainable socio-economic development;
2. influencing global processes in order to form a stable and just world order based on universally recognized rules of international law and partnership relations among States;
3. responding to natural and man-made disasters and other emergencies;
4. providing support for international efforts and initiatives to improve the transparency, quality, and effectiveness of international development assistance, and active participation in the development of common approaches to the implementation of agreed decisions in that area; and
5. strengthening a positive image of the Russian Federation and its cultural and humanitarian influence in the world (Concept, 2014).

The volume of Russia's ODA, which includes bilateral and multilateral formats of aid, has been growing consistently since the early 2000s. It was about US$100 million in 2004, US$1,258 billion in 2016, and US$1,193 billion in 2017 (QWIDS OECD, 2018). The analysis of development projects, which have been successfully implemented with Russia's active anticipation, shows that the top priorities of national DD are public health, food supply security, agriculture, human development, education, and reinforcement of institutional capacity.

Top regional priority for Russia's DD is the CIS member states. In 2009, Russia initiated the establishment of the EURASEC Anti-Crisis Fund (currently—The Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development) and donated US$7.5 billion to its resources. Another major direction of Russia's ODA is connected with the World Banks' structures as well as with global initiatives and multilateral trust funds. For example, in 2016, Russia allocated US$5 million to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization for aid to African countries. In the autumn of 2017, Russia has written off debts of several states in Africa for over US$20 billion (Lavrov, 2018).

DD of Russian Federation uses the sphere of higher and vocation education as its privileged area of activities. Russian universities are accepting foreign students and professionals every year from developing countries free of charge for both degree programs and short-term training. There

are over 273,000 foreign students in 2018 in Russia including 15,000 students who have entered their university programs for free due to federal government scholarships distributed via Russian embassies in foreign countries (Ivoilova, 2017).

Interstate trade between Russia and its partners plays a role of key tool in dealing with problems of their socio-economic development. Exports from recipient countries to Russia provide employment opportunities, accelerates their economic growth, and modernizes their old-fashioned socio-economic structure. Equally, exports from Russia to recipient countries help them partly solve problems of technological retooling and establish conditions for economic growth. Due to the relative weakness of Russian economy, it is not able to fully protect partner countries from market risks and guarantee the inflow of investments. Still, Russian diplomats could assist partner-states in dealing with threats of information asymmetry, as well as raising awareness of their public and private institutions in economic and business decision-making. Therefore, economic diplomacy of Russian Federation matters in dealing with challenges of development in partner countries, especially in the CIS.

Non-state actors are nowadays allowed to play an essential role in Russia's DD, but always under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and/or Russian embassies. Russian NGOs are able to deal with different aspects of development including environmental, social, and cultural. They disseminate the best available practices in the above-mentioned areas; provide critical assessment of other states' development policy; promote involvement of civil society institutions into activities, oriented on putting developing countries on the track of sustainable social and economic growth. In many cases, expertise of NGOs in domestic politics of recipient countries helps to identify the level of institutions of governance on which development efforts are the most acceptable.

Conclusions

The Russian Federation sees itself as a great power rising after a decade of military and economic decline. The principal goal of its contemporary foreign policy is to consolidate great power potential inherited from the USSR and putting its national economy on a track of sustainable socio-economic growth.

The aim of Russia's DD is shaping its positive image and building a positive perception of the country and its people among other nations.

The Kremlin and Russian diplomats utilize educational diplomacy, digital diplomacy, citizen diplomacy, and diaspora diplomacy as instruments of public diplomacy. DD is yet another tool at its disposal of the Russian legislative and executive powers' institutions, which is utilized for the building of a positive image abroad, improvement of bilateral relations, and post-conflict reconstruction in some cases (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, South Ossetia, Syria, etc.). Russian DD should be treated as a full-fledged element of its public diplomacy. Currently, it is done almost totally by public institutions (ministries and state-controlled corporations). But in the near future, we should expect more active involvement of non-state entities (NGOs) into Russia's DD, two-way communication between the Russian government and civil society on all aspects of DD's agenda. We also should expect declaration of Russia's long-term DD's aims, which would go beyond reaction on economic and social shocks as well as great powers' rivalry in Eurasia and elsewhere. Contemporary DD of major global economic powers is oriented on relationship building, where actors are both public institutions and civil society organizations.

Expert and institutional support of Russian DD is on a low level. Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to learn to master different forms of DD, which have been successfully utilized previously by other states. At the top of agenda for Russian diplomacy are challenges of conceptual foresight of socio-economic consequences of measures to be implemented in framework of DD, as well as more active and wide-scale involvement of the growing NGO community of Russia into this area.

A full-fledged US-Russia 'war of sanctions' as well as the US-China economic confrontation is undermining the ability of contemporary DD to conciliate strategic interests of sovereign states. Instead of endorsement of positive interdependence, contemporary 'Three D' policy of the US Administration encourages mentality of 'zero-sum game' and the practice of political conditionality. In response to that, growing volumes of development aid provided by China and Russia to the Global South and CIS states are assigned to undermine the political and economic power of Washington and its ability to convert economic power into foreign policy achievements.

Efficiency criterion should be applied to the utilization of economic and institutional resources for accomplishment of positive foreign policy objectives by means of DD. The previous history of Soviet and American DDs show that it is hinged on the volume of donor's resources as well as a set of political factors, including the balance of power in some regions

and electoral politics in recipient countries. DD should go hand in hand with other instruments of donors' public diplomacy: awareness-rising campaigns, scientific exchanges, and transfer of know-how. Key indicator for DD's efficiency is the same as for public diplomacy—building up a positive image of the donor country among citizens of the recipient country as well as in the broader international community.

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CHAPTER 5

Russia's Policy and International Cooperation: The Challenges and Opportunities of Soft Power

Natalia Bubnova

In its initial meaning, the term 'soft power' introduced by the political theorist and practitioner Joseph Nye back in 1990 (Nye, 1990), implied only the appeal that the country carries for other states and their citizens: that is, the positive impressions consistently associated with the country which are translated into political influence. Thus, neither carrot nor stick were part of Nye's understanding of soft power. He identified as its sources the country's culture (which has significance for other states and their population groups who know and appreciate it), its political values if they indeed guide the respective domestic and foreign policy, and its foreign policy per se if perceived as equitable and authoritative. 'Between the "hard" and the "soft" poles, other resources are located, perceived in terms of power: economic and political power is closer to the "hard" pole, while educational and ideological are closer to the "soft"'—writes Pavel Parshin, senior researcher at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (Parshin, 2013). Yet, in and by itself, culture and foreign policy, according

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to Nye's definition, do not belong to 'soft power' but only feed it and inform it. It is based on this assumption, and with Nye's definition in mind, that this material has been written. Nye sees soft power as the most legitimate form of legitimacy projection, as opposed to coercion and political or economic 'hand-outs'.

Hard Power Versus Soft Power in Hot Spots: Cohesion or Collusion?

In the last several years, Russia—for the first time since the disintegration of the Soviet Union—used military force abroad. In Georgia, Crimea, and in Syria, it has achieved some tactical goals. Yet, simultaneously it 'lost' first Georgia, then Ukraine, and Western countries, or rather those countries' public opinions. True, in Georgia, it was Saakashvili's troops that were the first to use military force against the sleeping Ossetian city of Tskhinval—as confirmed by the European Union (EU) Tagliavini Report[1] a year later. And it was only after that and the killing of Russian peacekeepers that the Russian troops moved in through the Roki Tunnel which marks the border and where they had stood put until then. Yet, regardless of the circumstances, the eight-day war will remain in the national memory of Georgians, and despite some healing of bilateral relations, this first ever Russia-Georgia military clash cannot help but affect future attitudes and relations.

And in Ukraine—if at the end of the 2000s, 70% of the population were against North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership, now—after Russia's joining of Crimea and several years of hostilities in the east of Ukraine—the majority have come to support joining the Alliance. The rift within the Russian Orthodox Church has also become a reality, with the Moscow Patriarchate failing to keep Ukraine within its fold and the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople expressing support for autocephaly for the Ukrainian Church, which since the seventeenth century had been in the Moscow Patriarchate's realm. If the Russian Church splits apart with Constantinople, with which it has already interrupted communications, this will likely be the gravest break-up of Christendom in centuries, with a severe blow to Russia's soft power.

[1] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/30_09_09_iiffmgc_report.pdf (accessed 17 October 2018).

When the military clashes in Ukraine started, the West was quick to see the events as separatists' actions supported by Moscow and Russia's aggression, while in Russia the developments were perceived as a civil war resulting from an illegal government overthrow supported by the West. Those immediately called 'separatists' by Western media initially did not make claims for independence, but sought protection of their rights and participation in decisions affecting their future, and they were, arguably, not the first to use force (Simons, 2016). The news programmes on Western TV stations refrained from showing the shelling of cities and towns in Eastern Ukraine, the deaths of civilians, and the two million refugees nearly half of whom fled to Russia while the Russian side had a hard time admitting the presence of Russian military in the neighbouring country preferring to call them 'vacationers' (Arbatov & Oznobishchev, 2016, p. 98). Meanwhile, Russia's soft power all the way throughout the period of the conflict was going down among the Ukrainian population who were finding their new identity formed on the basis of resentment against the 'aggressor'. Russia, with its actions during the Ukraine crisis, enhanced Europe's solidarity with the United States—and this was solidarity in confronting Russia, or as Western pundits prefer to put it, in 'self-defence against Russia'.[2] NATO found new reasons for its existence, and the United States found arguments to convince its allies to increase military expenditures.

Western pundits might never understand how painful for Russians was the Georgian and then the Ukrainian conflict—with Georgia always perceived as a country of friends and heaven on Earth for Russians and 53% of Russians having Ukrainians as their immediate relatives. American politicians might not want to reread Minsk Agreements which stipulate that Kiev must first stop using force and adopt constitutional changes and new election rules with the participation and consent of East Ukraine regions' representatives—before it regains control over the border and other reconciliation measures take place. But regardless of Western knowledge or lack of it, the Russian side will have to take into account the changed post-war attitudes in both Georgia and Ukraine, and the fact that the United States has replaced Russia as a key external influence there, and Moscow will have to consequently work with perceptions formed by both the trauma of war, largely seen as instigated by Russia, and the Western narrative. While, after the alleged interference into the US presidential elections,

[2] Interview with Ambassador Alexander Vershbow, Echo Moskvy, 29 September 2018.

the investigation of Trump's 'Russia collusion', and the Skripal poisoning, Russia-West relations have gone south, and Russia is by and large presented by Western pundits and politicians as an aggressor and a pariah state.

In Syria, along with the desire to prevent the Islamic State (IS) from seizing Damascus and taking control of the country, Russia with the use of its military force in a way sought to increase its soft power: regain great power status and its recognition by the world's leading actors, become a key participant in resolving today's biggest international crisis, recover its influence in the Middle East, and make Western countries talk to her, which they had stopped doing after the events in Crimea. Simultaneously, Moscow hoped to convince the West to refocus from overthrowing Assad's regime to helping create a broad coalition of Syrian forces against the IS. Yet the consolidated action with the West did not occur, and Russia and the United States have increasingly been finding themselves on different sides of the line of fire. Despite the advance of Assad's troops, supported by Russia's Air-Space Forces, the situation in Syria remains complex and tense. Many experts point out that the Islamic State (IS) cannot be defeated by force alone. There needs to be a political solution, in which the role of soft power cannot be overestimated.

How to get the local population to abandon the support of IS? How to achieve this when the IS skilfully employs soft power? It not only uses payments to combatants and the fear, it also attracts adherents though social networks, TV clips, social programmes for local citizens, and, last but not least, works with the human conscience touching upon such preeminent concepts as the meaning of life and death, while at the same time offering success, might, and victory 'here and now' …as well as eternal bliss forever after.

Yet the Gallup Institute, which carried out a survey covering over 90% of the world's Muslim populations, came to the conclusion that tensions result more from political convictions than religious differences. The results of that poll, conducted in 2011 on the eve of IS's offensive, resonated with the statements made by Russia's prominent philosophers, Merab Mamardashvili and Grigory Pomerants, who believed that at the base of religions there is more in common than at their surface. As for political convictions, one must engage with those who hold them. In Yemen, for example, during the Arab spring women played a leading role in the revolutionary events, since main TV channels in that country overwhelmingly transmitted US series and shows, and housewives, when at home and with a lot of spare time, by and large, watched them (Bubnova,

2012). It is also widely believed that the opportunity for women to vote presents a positive alternative to the promises made by IS. Yet, needless to say, women, even if arguably, make a better world,[3] are not in and by themselves sufficient for the change to take place. It is important to develop special programmes to 'win the hearts and minds' of diverse categories of the Arab countries' populace, from which IS attempts to draw new recruits.

Despite the exacerbation of tensions and the widespread militant fervour spurred by official propaganda and TV broadcasts, two-thirds of Russian citizens remain in favour of improving relations with the West, according to the survey[4] conducted by Russia's leading polling agency Levada Centre. Moreover, in the recent period, among those Russians polled positive attitudes towards both Europe and the United States have risen closer to the negative ones and are at around 40% for each category,[5] with positive sentiments mounting further, by double digit numbers, in the wake of the World Football Cup hosted by Russia in the summer of 2018. The official Moscow leadership, despite its numerous disillusionments and frustrations, multiple trials and errors, also seems to understand the need for fixing the disastrously spoilt Russia-West relations, though some TV talk-show participants have started suggesting that Russia should go its own way and disregard the West's offences and insinuations (and some Russian pundits have even alleged that the latest intelligence failures play into the Kremlin's hands or were even instigated by it in order to consolidate populace around the 'Western threat').

Yet the Russian leadership has used a certain inherently contradictive 'mix' to try to improve relations: a combination of 'hard power' and declarations of its willingness for cooperation. In this disingenuous pair it is the 'hard power' that manifests its dominance by increased weapons programmes, sabre-rattling, threats, demonstrations of force, and even hints at the possibility of using nuclear weapons. In October 2018, on the eve of NATO Arctic manoeuvres in the north of Norway, the British newspaper *The Telegraph* wrote, with a reference to a Dutch general, that Russian ships were approaching NATO vessels very closely, and Russia's

[3] Bubnova, N., Why Women Make Russia a Better Place to Live, *The Moscow Times*, 7 March 2012, https://themoscowtimes.com/articles/why-women-make-russia-a-better-place-to-live-13103 (accessed 1 October 2018).

[4] Levada Centre, December 2015.

[5] https://www.levada.ru/indikatory/otnoshenie-k-stranam/

warplanes were overflying NATO's at such low altitudes that it could be regarded a provocation.[6] On 2 November, a Russian airplane Tu-142 (Bear-F in NATO classification) overflew, soaring overhead, the US Sixth Fleet's flagship Mount Whitney involved in Exercise, while Tu-160 strategic bombers carried out a ten-hour mission over the Barents and Norwegian seas. On 5 November, a Russian SU-27 fighter armed with air-air missiles overtook a US Navy reconnaissance plane EP-3E Aries over the Black Sea near the Russian borders.

Those in favour of war games, sabre-rattling, and threats supposedly believe that this makes others reckon with Russia, consider her as the 'significant other' albeit the one presenting a challenge or even a threat. It should be noted in this respect that Western countries themselves had substantiated such a position when demonstrating more willingness to listen to Russia after it had started its military action in Syria.

Yet flexing muscles, engaging in military provocations, and ambiguous and careless referrals to nuclear weapons are all fraught with the possibility of a real military confrontation or even a full-fledged war. Western countries perceive such behaviour not as a warning against action, but as a pre-action. They respond by taking their own measures, and the threat of a military confrontation continues to grow, inciting a new spiral of an arms race. Needless to say, the United States respects power, and Russia should pay due attention to its armed forces which were largely neglected throughout the 1990s. However, the escalation of mutual shoving as well as the increased militarism within the societies have created an atmosphere which could prompt a rank-and-file missile launcher operator to push the start button at a moment of intensified risk. While as President Theodore Roosevelt justly noted over a hundred years ago, one does better to speak softly when carrying a big stick.

About Ratings Without 'Blaming the Mirror'[7] Or the Mirror Holds Up to Nature

The Soviet Union was a totalitarian country with oppressive government, closed borders, and lack of personal freedoms, yet its 'appeal' indices globally, despite some ups and downs, were in general quite similar to those of the United States from the 1940s till the end of the 1980s (largely because

[6] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/

[7] From a Russian proverb 'Do not blame the mirror if the face is crooked'.

of the Soviet assistance to what was called 'Third World' countries in their struggle for independence against colonialism and in building their economies). It is also telling that in all but two post-Soviet states outside of the Baltics, the populations according to polls continue to say that during the Soviet period life was better than now.

However, by contrast, during the years of Barack Obama's presidency, Russia in all of the world's regions was liked much less than the United States. According to the authoritative Pew Research rating (Stokes, 2015), in May 2015, only 30% of those polled regarded Russia favourably and only 24% believed it could be expected to do the right thing in world affairs. In the world's regions, the opinions distributed as follows: Europe (favourably regarded the US—69% and Russia—26%); Africa (favourably regarded the US—79 % and Russia—37%); Asia-Pacific region (favourably regarded the US—66% and Russia—37%); Middle East (favourably regarded the US—29% and Russia—25%).

According to the findings of Pew Research, Barack Obama was viewed even more positively than the United States on the whole. Yet this was the case not because of American strength, but to the contrary because Obama had initially promised to reduce the role of force in international politics, renounce the rule of the strong in the world, and abandon an America-centred approach. The latter thesis—alas!—was consequently modified due to political considerations, and Obama, like presidents before him, succumbed to the pressure of perceptions dominating in the United States and found himself repeatedly making reference to 'American exceptionalism'—the word previously conspicuously absent from his vocabulary, including from his bestselling book 'The Audacity of Hope' (Obama, 2006), written before he took office.

With Donald Trump, this favourable approach to the United States has reversed. The American appeal has plummeted globally—with the exception of Vietnam and Russia—and the US president now scores even less than his country on the whole. In the spring of 2017, 74% of the world's population gave Donald Trump a virtual 'no-confidence' vote (vs. 59% in Putin's case), though they did recognise his strength (Spring 2017 Global Attitudes, 2017). A year later, in spring 2018, Trump got 70% 'no votes' (Spring 2018 Global Attitudes, 2018). The America First policy, the lack of appreciation for other states and international organisations, the unwillingness to play by the rules and observe commitments, the ease of breaking out of agreements and accords, the manifested 'unileaderism' (Feffer, 2018), and attempts to take advantage of other countries through bully-

ing and threats (what the so-called deal-based approach actually represents) have all affected negatively how the United States is perceived in other countries.

Yet the American people per se, with the obvious exclusion of one individual—Trump—continue to be liked rather than not in other countries (with the exception of Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon). Even more liked are American music, movies, and television (65% favourability worldwide) (Spring 2017 Global Attitudes). And the 'US government's respect for personal freedoms of its people' (not of other peoples!—N.B.) meets appreciation. The proponents and critics split almost evenly on the issue of American ideas about democracy (43 for, 46 against), and the majority is more pronounced with regard to 'not liking American ideas and customs to spread here', that is, into the specific country where the survey was conducted. The median populations in countries polled, overall like democracy, but they are not all that sure about the way it is practised by Washington. Yet they believe that their respective countries' relations with the United States will 'survive Trump' and 'outlive' him without significant changes—and, in this, one finds one key impact of the American soft power.

This resonates in the results produced by two surveys—one conducted by the RAND Corporation and the other published by the international consulting company FutureBrand (Country Brand Index, 2016). The former's ranking was based on the answers to the question: in which country, if not their own, the surveyed would have preferred to live, while the latter—on the real life impressions of people who are frequent travellers and were asked to score the countries' values system, quality of life, business potential, heritage and culture, tourism opportunities, and the authenticity, uniqueness, quality, and attractiveness of the products they make. In the first case, Russia appeared in the last third tier, far behind the United States. In the second case, it came out 31st out of the overall number of 75 countries, ending up between Greece and Bahrain, although ahead of many East European states such as Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary, and Romania, which means that Russia is definitely a brand, but still somewhat in the middle of the world for attractiveness.

Of course, the doping scandal, the Skripals' poisoning and consequent diplomatic feud, the sanctions and the sending out of Russian diplomats, the allegations about Russia's meddling into the US and West European countries' elections, along with the investigation of supposed Russia collusion, all cannot but hurt Russia's global image, especially in the United

States and Europe. Three-quarters of both Republicans and Democrats say that they are closely following news about Russian alleged involvement in the 2016 election, but Democrats more often say they are following it 'very closely': 42% versus 33% for Republicans. While according to the Gallup Report released in August 2018, the majority, albeit slim, of those following the news, believe that Russia interfered and changed the outcome of the US election—with the Democrats overwhelmingly sharing this opinion (78%) and Republicans convinced otherwise (58%). Though the majority still believe in the need to improve bilateral relations, 'Americans, who viewed Russia favourably for the better part of a decade after the breakup of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, have had a decidedly negative opinion of it for the past five years', concludes the report (Jones, 2018). While a recent Pew Research poll has found that 90% of Americans view Russia's power and influence as a threat.[8]

Yet there are other ratings as well. At a recent seminar at the think tank Memorial in Moscow, American researcher Dina Smelts presented the results of a poll conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs which showed that the majority of Americans believe the role Russia plays in the world has increased, while also a majority find that the US role has been reducing.[9] Several leading Western publications, including *Time, Forbes,* and *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, named President Putin the Person of the Year and the world's most powerful individual. And YouGov poll about the world's top-most admired men put Vladimir Putin on the sixth place, higher than the Dalai Lama and Pope Francis (Yegorov, 2016). A number of Russian pundits have even alleged that the demonisation of Russia, the emphasis on its role in cyberspace, and the mêlée around Russia's alleged meddling into the US elections have a tendency to give her the air of omnipotence which should be welcomed by those close to Kremlin—the conclusions that appear both presumptuous and self-defeating. It is not only 'things dark', but occasionally some innovative modern endeavours that Russia gets international attention for. The 2014 Sochi Olympic Games scored high on this list, if only not for the consequent doping scandal which tainted the positive impressions. Moscow, as Russia on the whole, also hugely benefited from the super-friendly,

[8] http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/07/13/key-public-opinion-findings-on-trump-putin-and-the-countries-they-lead/ (accessed 14 October 2018).

[9] Россияне и американцы в глазах друг друга, 25 September 2018, https://www.memo.ru/ru-ru/events/calendar/405#list (accessed 1 October 2018).

welcoming, open-to-the-world, and ready-to-help image conveyed during the World Football Cup in the summer of 2018. Other international sports and cultural events where Russia's representatives perform well also contribute to its ratings. Such as the Physics Olympics in Indonesia in July 2017 where high school students from Russia won all the gold medals and the first place as a team. Or the Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires in Argentina in October 2018 which brought the Russian team the highest overall medals count.

Moscow repeatedly gets into the top places of smart city/urban tech rankings—though this is often done through programmes that are not supported by Moscow citizens and meet with a lot of criticism on social networks. However, this notwithstanding, PricewaterhouseCoopers named it one of the world's top developing cities in public care. And in June 2018, Moscow became the leader of the UN Local Online Services Index (LOSI) rating—because of the city's online feedback platform Active Citizen. While the Intelligent Community Forum included Moscow into the top 7 of the global smart cities. Irrespective of the attitude to Moscow's controversial major, the city does deserve credit for its vibrant cultural life, with rich museums, world-class modern art exhibitions, intellectual forums, international book fairs, and a cascade of world-class theatre festivals overlapping each other.

Yet the only ratings of country preferences where Russia got into the leading ten were, expectedly, local, such as the one compiled by the Moscow School of Management Skolkovo, together with the Ernst & Young audit firm (now EY). Their first ranking comprised the 20 at that time fast-developing countries. Based on this survey, the most popular states included (starting from the top): China, India, Russia, Brazil, Turkey, Mexico, South African Republic, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Estonia, Ukraine, Chile, Rumania, Lithuania, Croatia, Argentina, Costa Rica, and Indonesia. And the second rating compiled by Skolkovo and Ernst & Young included G7 countries and the first seven countries from the first list, with the final ranking as follows: United States, France, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Italy, Japan, and China, India, Russia, Brazil, Turkey, Mexico, and South African Republic. In the 2016 global soft power survey, Russia came out only 27th among the 30 top countries (McClory, 2016)—although some have estimated this as high taking into account the immense negative treatment that Russia has been receiving in Western mainstream political statements and media.

Parallel ratings compiled in Russia help soft power only if they are perceived as being authoritative abroad. The rankings of Western agencies, especially if they are based on 'perceptions' and opinions of respondents from other countries, may carry a subjective component in the overall estimate and bear the impact of an unfavourable political atmosphere. They are, nevertheless, important in forming the public opinion in Russia and abroad and should be taken into consideration.

Russia's Problems with the Use of Soft Power: Better Late But Better

Russians historically were never particularly apt at using soft power. True, the country's living standards were never very high, yet even in addition to this, local pundits were never good at marketing. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, its international programmes for well over a decade were limited to maintaining cultural centres in other countries and supporting the Russian language abroad, and that at a bare minimum. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, there were no projects to promote the country's image, no Russian NGOs dedicated to these purposes, and no effort to develop and preserve a common understanding of history. The Russian Federation's Constitution adopted in 1993 declared that the Russian state does not have an official ideology.

The special feature of Russian diasporas in various countries abroad is that they were very disunited. Having fled the carnage of the 1917 Revolution and Civil War, escaped after the Second World War or in the 1970s, the Russian immigrants historically were generally against the country that they had left and were not prone to associate with it let alone help it. In the United States, in the 1990s, after the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russian immigrants were the most commercially successful of all immigrant groups, yet, according to the polls, the least united. Thus, unlike in the case of Armenians, Jews, or Ukrainians, there was and to this day still no Russian lobby in DC.

When parting with the Soviet past, the democratic leaders of the new Russia naively thought that they would be embraced on par by an accepting civilised world, guided by 'universal human values'. Now, on the 30th anniversary of the publication of Michael Gorbachev's book 'Perestroika and New Thinking', it is clear how much wishful thinking was involved, yet these ideas were very akin to Russia's historic mentality of 'universal responsiveness'. This is one of the reasons why the Soviet Union, unlike

many empires before it, disintegrated almost bloodlessly. Words 'national interests', 'zones of influence', 'actors', and 'rules of the game' (implying, besides the rules per se, a game to play) were at the time of the country's break-up markedly absent from the Russian political dictionary. The Russian Federation's first Foreign Minister, starry-eyed Sergey Kozyrev, in the early 1990s, notoriously told Richard Nixon that 'Russia has no national interests of its own' (Simes, 1999) and asked for suggestions if any. However, this 'wishful' rhetorical expression lacks substance in the world of politics and international relations.

With 26 million Russians finding themselves all of a sudden 'abroad', it was not so hard to understand why in the Baltic Republics, for instance, ethnic Russians were stripped of their citizenship rights and every effort was made to squeeze them out. It was harder, though, to justify why the European Union and world human rights organisations took no notice of this phenomenon, and still harder—why Russia showed no concern either and did not raise a voice to protect the rights of ethnic Russians and other post-soviet ethnic minorities abroad. It was not accidental that Russians living in the former Soviet republics—and not they alone—were complaining that Russia 'was losing' its neighbouring countries—in the sense that there was an alienation growing. To a significant extent, this trend was stimulated by the West. The nation-building taking place in these new states—largely with the assistance of Western educational funds—proceeded on the basis of a 'rejection' of 'Russianness'. In Ukraine, for instance, even under allegedly pro-Russian presidents, the massive hunger which had occurred under Stalin's rule, especially coined for this purpose with a newly invented Ukrainian word 'Holodomor', started to be presented as having been deliberately targeted against the Ukrainian population. While in reality the massive deaths resulting from hunger were due to the forced collectivisation of the early 1930s and were a common tragedy that did not select between ethnicities and killed millions of not only Ukrainians but Russians, Kazakhs, and Belarussians as well. With all due respect to Anne Applebaum who in her recent book claims differently, there have been many other published materials (Kasyanov, 2009; Finkel, 2011) dedicated to the topic which presented figures, archive documents, and witness testaments showing that Ukrainians were not singled out for those crimes and which depicted how, already in our time, Western countries helped form an anti-Russian narrative in this respect in Ukraine.

Yet it was only when tensions with the West started to increase—and after what in Moscow was perceived as Western attempts to secretively

erect barriers against it (see, for example, Hillary Clinton's reference to such measures in her book 'Hard Choices', Clinton, 2014), Western-sponsored colour-revolutions, the Arab Spring, and the US interference in Russia's elections—that the Russian authorities gradually came to intensify PR and promotion efforts abroad.

In the early 2000s, the first World Congress of Russian Compatriots took place in Moscow and then the World Coordination Council of Russian Compatriots was founded, comprising 137 organisations in 53 countries. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that its goal was to help Russian-speaking citizens in various countries get their citizens' rights respected. In 2007, the Russian government established the Russky Mir Foundation, with the aim of retaining and promoting the Russian language and supporting its study abroad, which would offer educational programmes, organise cultural events and festivals, and conduct information projects. Consequently, it opened nearly 100 affiliates in various countries. Attempts were also intensified at public diplomacy.

The term soft power was first officially used in 2010 during Dmitry Medvedev's presidency in the Addendum to the Russian national Foreign Policy Concept, and then repeated in several consequent Moscow's strategic documents. Though this was not defined in the Addendum, the context of the document implied cultural diplomacy.

The concept of Russian World (*Russky Mir*) was formulated, or rather re-established. Many Western analysts interpreted it as expansionist[10]—they even translated it occasionally as Greater Russia, implying Russia's alleged desire to regain the territory of Ukraine and Belarus. Yet however opaque, the concept's local interpretation never included expansion, but it meant a returned awareness of kinship, of common language and values, and the promise of assistance to the dozens of millions of ethnic Russians left outside of the borders after the break-up of the Soviet Union—albeit as it was repeatedly stressed, assistance by diplomatic and political means only.

The year 2008 saw the creation of two foreign offices of the Russian think tank the Institute for Democracy and Cooperation: one in Paris and the other in New York (the latter was closed in 2015)—with the declared mission of building bridges between Russia and the West and serving as a

[10] Seddon, M., and Olearchyk, R., Putin Suffers Crimea Blowback with Orthodox Church Schism, *Financial Times*, 14 October 2018, https://www.ft.com/content/72934a1e-ce29-11e8-b276-b9069bde0956 (accessed 15 October 2018).

platform for discussion. During Medvedev's interim presidency, two think tanks were instituted in 2010 by a presidential decree: the Gorchakov Fund, whose stated goal was to promote public diplomacy and improve the country's image abroad, and the Russian International Affairs Council, created 'to facilitate Russia's peaceful integration into the global community' and cooperation with foreign experts on international issues. Later, in 2016, the Dialogue of Civilizations Institute, with headquarters in Berlin, was set up, the first Russian think tank founded by big business—the close-to-Putin tycoon and former head of the Russian Railroads Vladimir Yakunin. The Institute opened representative offices in Moscow and Vienna and conducts research in international affairs and security issues. These newly founded institutions added to the total of more than 100 Russian think tanks, including the local research institutes working in the field of social sciences. At least two of them have been rated in the world's top 100 (McGann, 2018). It should be noted, however, that the total number of think tanks in Russia compared with the prior year, according to the same ranking has gone down from 122 to 103 (unlike in other BRICS countries—China, Brazil, and India—where think tanks have been steadily growing). This is likely the result of the Russian Law on Foreign Agents and the government's other repressive measures to prevent foreign influence and funding.

For the domestic audience, TV political talk shows have been used as the main instrument of state influence, broadcast on state-affiliated key federal channels, and viewed by a plurality of the population, generally identified as Putin supporters (though his ratings plummeted to 39% in October 2018 in the wake of the controversial pension reform). While for foreign viewers, the government founded Russia Today TV station (later renamed RT), which started from an English-language channel in 2005 and then moved on to broadcast in Arabic (2007), Spanish (2007), German (2014), and French (2017). Along with international content, RT's regional channels offer some locally focused broadcasting. Though some question these figures, RT has been reported to surpass Al Jazeera as the most often watched foreign TV station in the United States, and it leads in the YouTube views among all TV networks worldwide. Radio Sputnik started Red Line broadcasts in English and over a dozen other foreign languages. Russia Beyond the Headlines (in 2017 renamed Russia Beyond) was set up to produce news, commentary, opinion, and analysis on Russia's culture, politics, business, research, and public life. While its project Russia Direct offered online expert commentaries on these issues

(it was closed the same year when Russia Beyond abandoned its printed versions).

A lot of the above has been seen in the West as propaganda or PR at best. While the state-sponsored broadcasting and information campaign are perceived as defensive in Russia, in the United States it is interpreted as offensive. Suspicions rule. And the historical Cold War animosities, old time connections, and old and new special services affiliations further spur them. For instance, the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, whose mission also includes public policies, research, and international relations, has been headed since 2007 by Sergey Stepashin, a former Counter-intelligence and Federal Security Service (FSB) chief.[11] And Vladimir Yakunin, as he himself repeatedly admitted, had worked for the KGB as well.[12]

Yet if one makes an objective comparison between Russia's key government-affiliated TV stations, such as RT, on the one hand, and leading US TV networks, on the other, the latter would not necessarily come out as less biased, or ensuring more balanced interpretations and lack of fact omissions or outright factual errors. Not to even mention the anti-Russian hysteria prevalent in leading American liberal media, which by far exceeds the anti-American fervour on Russian TV talk shows and which does not distinguish between Russia's government and the Russian people.

Another regretful phenomenon was that in the West, for countries surrounding Russia, the choice from the late 1990s on was presented in the paradigm of 'either/or': join with the West and part with Russia or remain with Russia and get lost. More than once in the mid-2000s, when supervising a succession of expat interns at the Carnegie Moscow Centre or serving as scientific advisor to double-degree European students (i.e. those getting simultaneously an MA from European and Russian universities), the author happened to hear or read in their texts a preconceived judgement that 'Russia was against the EU'. While in reality, at that time, both the Kremlin and, according to the polls, the majority of Russia's population in fact were actually in favour of the EU and did not at all perceive a third country's relations with the latter and with Russia as mutually exclusive. Interestingly enough, more than half of the Russians

[11] https://24smi.org/celebrity/4435-sergei-stepashin.html

[12] Yakunin, V., *The Treachurous Path*, Biteback Publishers, London, 2018, https://www.znak.com/2018-04-12/v_velikobritanii_vyhodit_kniga_yakunina_o_rossii_kooperative_ozero_putine_i_rzhd

even supported the Ukrainian pro-EU rally on Maidan until its participants started throwing Molotov cocktails at the law enforcement officers and until blood was spilled.

The preconceived erroneous perceptions about Russia were not helped by the fact that the experts from Russia itself were by and large handpicked by Western universities and think tanks if and when they shared views prevalent in the West. The Russian intellectual elite to a large degree made this possible. Russian society was always split and the level of self-criticism among intelligentsia was traditionally very high, bordering on the extreme.

It was those most critical that contributed to the general outlook with regard to Russia, and thus their views were taken as self-satisfying and self-fulfilling prophecy in the West. Arguably, they also made it more difficult for the more objective information to reach 'the ears of the beholders'—since, going counter to the preconceived, or rather ill-conceived notions, it ran the risk of being perceived as propaganda.

Interestingly, recent polls show that with young Russians now, this centuries-old inferiority complex is all but gone (Shestopal & Smulkina, 2018)—perhaps from having travelled abroad more than their parents and communicated globally via social networks but also of course under the influence of the patriotic campaign run by the government. Yet this better self-appreciation, though fully appropriate and valuable in itself, may help improve mutual understanding only if along with it they do not simultaneously succumb to negative stereotypes about their contemporaries in Europe and the United States—by and large promoted by government-controlled TV channels and running counter to the national tradition of benevolent interest and empathy to other nations.

National Idea in Search of Impact

Russia's leaders, including Vladimir Putin, for a long time kept reiterating that Russia did not need a national idea. And when Putin, more than a decade after the Russian state was formed, evoked the notion of Russia's zone of 'special interests' or 'privileged interests', it sounded as if it was verbalised in an adopted language, with words from the Western vocabulary. It was already at the beginning of his third term that Putin said that there is but one national idea in Russia and it is patriotism. Ironically, whether aware of it or not, Donald Trump seemed to build upon this idea, too, during his 25 September 2018 UN speech.

Yet, even when the Russian leadership did not want to think along the lines of a national idea, there was always one for Russia, at least as far as Russian culture and literature goes (until recently, Russia was a very literature-centric country), independently of whether politicians were aware of it or not (Bubnova, 2011). To make things simple, it has always been to approach politics with moral criteria, include in national interests equitable solutions to the world's problems, and to do right and serve good.

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said that our strong side is justice and truth, yet from the point of view of a national mentality, it has always been of principal importance to have this not only in words but in deeds, and not only for oneself but for others as well, with attention and assistance to the weak. And Nye's definition of soft power should also be remembered, implying that foreign policy benefits soft power only when it is truly guided by values. In this respect, there currently exists a significant gap between the official propaganda and the real practice, which leads to the erosion of soft power. Some Russian pundits, such as, for instance, the Director of the Nemtsov Centre in Prague, Alexander Morozov, have argued that the emphasis on things non-material is not at the core of Russian culture. Yet in this case, the author draws on the support of many other thinkers, starting from Russian nineteenth-century historian Nikolay Karamzin and novelist Feodor Dostoevsky and going all the way to our times to philologist Dmitry Likhachev. Karamzin, for instance, stated, 'To do good without knowing for what is the eternal deed of the unreasoning Russian heart'. And Dostoevsky famously wrote about 'Russian universal responsiveness'.

Yet Russia's traditional soul-searching, emphasis on meanings, and reach for truth and justice are largely misperceived by Western public and pundits alike. It once surprised the author in the 1990s to see that the polls conducted in the United States revealed that the Russians were stereotyped as sly. Former Director of US National Intelligence James R. Clapper was widely quoted when calling Russians 'typically, almost genetically driven' to be untrustworthy, 'to co-opt, penetrate, gain favour, whatever'[13] (this racist remark coming from an individual who himself had been engaged in spy business). Similarly, Tymothy Snyder of Yale in his recently published book 'The Road to Unfreedom' claims that Russia deliberately seeds chaos, and in doing so seeks to export its 'values' which allegedly include 'relativism, post-truth, and cynicism'

[13] https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/meet-press-may-28-2017-n765626

(Snyder, 2018). These stereotypes run completely counter to how Russians perceive themselves, absent a narrow strata of hypercritical intellectuals.

According to the polls, they see themselves as both resilient and enduring and at the same time open-hearted, empathic, easy-going, responsive, welcoming, and also generous, merciful, indulgent, and understanding towards not only weak, dependent states but also towards adversaries (Shestopal & Smulkina, 2018). It is worth noting that those foreigners who have lived for a certain time in Russia tend to value the same qualities in Russians that the latter themselves emphasise: openness, friendliness, empathy, spirituality, and interest in other countries (Chernomorova, 2015). And the Moscow rulers, despite all their faults and faux pas, from their perspective, perceive themselves as standing up for their own country and the world's other states against US domination, and providing the information that is missing from the Western rhetoric, the latter being indeed viewed as deliberately evasive and misleading.

Though Russians were always known to be good warriors (two of Europe's all-out invasions, Napoleon's and Hitler's, were rebuffed first and foremost by Russians), the 'bear-image' of the nation is not entirely correct: the force in the country has never been perceived as the main argument and war was always regarded as a disaster. When SIPRI Yearbook (SIPRI, 2016) gave Russia a high rate for militancy, it used the methodology that counted, first, involvement in wars (in Russia's case it counted Ukraine) and, second, the number of people killed in those conflicts—it appeared from the Yearbook's explanations that all of the victims in Lugansk and Donetsk might have been counted for Russia.

In the 1990s, after the end of the Soviet Union, Russia was arguably the world's most pacifist country. The problem was that in the early 1990s when the Soviet Union was disbanded, insult was added to injury—when the country disintegrated, the promises of NATO's non-expansion were not kept, and Russia was treated as a defeated nation. Yet as Andrey Kortunov smartly said about Putin's statement that the disintegration of the Soviet Union was a major catastrophe of the twentieth century (common imprecise translation 'the greatest'), 'One should not mistake nostalgia for ambition' (Kortunov, 2016). The West and the United States actually superimpose on Russia their own historical inclinations and experiences with conquering space. Russia does not seek to retrieve the lost territories, does not aspire to revive the Soviet Union, and does not want to subjugate the neighbouring countries. What it **is** interested in is having friendly or at least neutral relations with neighbours, commanding respect,

being treated on par, and being taken into account—and of course having no military hostilities and ethnic minorities vandalised in the countries near its borders.

When Russians say what they appreciate about their country, it is not the government, but the land, the natural resources, the culture, the people, and history (despite the still ambivalent attitude to the latter, yet with an unambivalent lack of expansionist inclinations) (Shestopal & Smulkina, 2018, p. 55). What Russians consider important they have had at the world's highest level and above. Pushkin, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, and Tchekhov; great poetry and the unique tradition of poetic translations; composers Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Rakhmaninov, and Shostakovich; Russian religious philosophers of the early twentieth century and the above-mentioned Pomerants and Mamardashvili; rebels and dissidents; Nobel prize winners, Pavlov, Tsiolkovsky, Vernadsky, and world-renowned immigrants, Bunin, Nabokov, Solzhenitsin, and Brodsky; the twentieth-century Russians' favourites—writer Bulgakov and bard Vysotsky; Russian Vanguard painters Falk, Chagal, Kandinsky, Filonov, Malevich, and Constructivist architecture; uniquely Russian Sots Art and the local version, parallel to the European, of Hyperrealism; Stanislavsky and his famous 'method'; Russian outstanding repertory theatre and classical ballet and circus; Bolshoy, Mariinsky, the Moscow Gypsy Theatre Romen, and Olonkho Theatre of Yakutia; great movie directors Sergei Eisenshtein and Andrei Tarkovsky, along with the unique school of animated films some of which were recognised as world's best; piano, violin, and alt players; Shalyapin, Richter, Rostropovich, and Gergiev; Pavlova, Ulanova, and, of course, Plisetskaya; cosmonauts and Arctic explorers; figure skaters, hockey players, gymnasts, synchronic swimmers, and chess players; not to even mention the notorious vodka, balalaika, shchi, blinis, matreshkas, and sputniks—are all a very important part of the world heritage.

Many outstanding Russian achievements, however, such as radio and arguably television, helicopters and arguably airplanes, space missiles and satellites, catapults and spacesuits, Kotelnikov first controllable parachutes and Kalashnikov rifles, the Periodic Table (called Mendeleev Table in Russia), and the double mercerisation technology for producing viscose fibre, polio vaccine (invented at about the same time in France and in the USSR), and Ilizarov apparatus for bone reconstruction, and so on, were either never properly patented (for the above-mentioned lack of the marketing expertise), or were related to what in the English language is known as 'high culture', which, in this age of clip perceptions, does not

as easily provide for reproduction and dissemination as mass culture does. And the Russian language, which is considered difficult, does not facilitate the task of promoting locally created books, films, and research either. While such values of Russia's life as wide spaces and pristine unfettered nature; still not overly regulated freedom to wander around woods and mountains and swim in lakes and rivers; the diversity of various ethnic groups, with their own rich cultures and the habit of living side by side with each other; the aspiration for non-material meanings and intellectual depth; and bright emotionality, poems, songs, and passions are as difficult to translate externally as the Russian language and are often not given much reflection by Russians themselves.

When Putin started speaking of 'conservative values' that Russia allegedly adheres to and stands guard over, this has also sounded somewhat alien, the words drawn from Western vocabulary and more familiar and intended to appeal to external audiences rather than to Russians themselves. Yet, it is true that Russia remains a land where genders are not in confrontational relations, and women are not under pressure to behave like men in order to be respected as business colleagues or bosses, where heroes are those who step into the harm's way to save people and not actors and sportsmen, where lawyers are not more important than poets, where children do not report on their parents, and friends are the ones who are ready to die for you. Though along with all these fine qualities Western observers also frequently notice Russians' lack of rationality, propensity for emotional behaviour, affinity for extremes, and, of course, the habit of dispensing too much responsibility to central authorities, as well as the lack of tradition of common action.

Russia's soft power would grow if along with all of the cultural achievements, she would be able to cite the resurgence of democratic institutions, the protection of human rights, the freedom of press, independent judiciary, transparent and competitive elections, the rotation of government—those values as shown in the above-cited polls are considered important by pluralities in countries worldwide. The increased pressure on civil society and the jailing of opposition figures, the expanding control over media and real prison sentences for reposts and 'likes' on the Internet, the sanctioning of the liberal journal *The New Times*, the bureaucratic 'take-over' of science and research institutions, the attempt at suffocating independent theatre by sidelining the Union of Theatre Workers and the Ministry of Culture's withdrawal from the national Golden Mask Theatre Festival, the persecution of world-renowned directors Kirill Serebrennikov and Alexey

Malobrodsky, and the conviction in Russia and the consequent hunger strike of their Ukrainian colleague Oleg Sentsov are all tragic events in and of themselves, and at the same time steps, or rather obnoxious missteps, on the path to weakening whatever soft power the country has. Yet unlike in the Soviet period, there do exist private businesses, individuals speak up their minds and travel abroad, books get published without political censorship and most people in Moscow get their news from independent media, foreign films make the bulk of movie theatres' programmes, research institutes in the field of social sciences adhere to international standards of impartiality and in-depth research, and Internet connects people across borders—though recent laws challenge its free operation.

Conclusion

Despite the recent upsurge in armed conflict globally, the role of soft power in international relations has been steadily increasing. Russian political discourse to this date still lacks a common understanding of what soft power is, while Russia's policy actors much too often tend to focus on military programmes, pressure through strength, coercive influence, and the use and the threat of use of force. Though, internationally, some note Russia's renewed military strength and increased role in global politics, her relations with Western countries are at an all-time low. The doping scandal, the allegations surrounding Skripals' poisoning, and the investigation of Russia's supposed interference into the 2016 US presidential elections hurt Russia's global image, especially in the United States and Europe. The country is largely seen as toxic, and thus its soft power is eroding. Yet as Greg Simons correctly notes, 'The current state-state level of political conflict and diplomatic impasse that exists between Russia and the West means that other means and channels of communication and audience are needed and sought' (Simons, 2018, p. 199).

Until now, there has been no formulated strategy in Russia with regard to the use of soft force. One can thus agree with the President of the Russian International Affairs Council, Igor Ivanov, who says: 'Russia is seriously lagging behind other countries and, consequently, it is at a disadvantage in the formation of public opinion abroad'.[14] The untapped resource of Russia's soft power, meanwhile, rests in what both local pundits and western Russian experts often turn a blind eye to. It is the desire,

[14] Roundtable on Public Diplomacy, *Russian International Affairs Council*, June 21, 2012.

engrained in Russia's traditional culture, literature, and national perceptions, for doing good, seeking a meaning that goes beyond material benefits, tending to the weak, and considering the needs of each and every nation, whether large or small. This soft power, if activated and promoted through public diplomacy, would go a long way in the world which would see a gradual expansion of the space of human freedom and dignity.

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CHAPTER 6

Russian Digital Diplomacy: A Rising Cyber Soft Power?

Natalia Tsvetkova

Russian digital diplomacy is a communication policy that engages with foreign target groups through social media and the Internet. The official beginnings of digital diplomacy date back to the year 2012, when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced Russia's new practice of government-sponsored dissemination of the country's political stance via social networks. At that time, the Ministry opened its first account on YouTube; however, Russian digital diplomacy existed before, in terms of Twitter diplomacy, or "twiplomacy", of various Russian informational agencies—like *Russia Today* (RT), *RIA Novosti*, and *Voice of Russia*—and in terms of personal accounts of Russian political establishment in global social networks.

In contrast to such countries as the United States, France, Germany, Iran, and China—which quickly developed the digital apparatus of public diplomacy and became global leaders in shaping public opinion through the Internet in target countries—Russian digital diplomacy was relatively modest until 2013 (Simons, 2015b). In subsequent years, however, Russia

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has unexpectedly emerged as a new digital power, revisiting traditional and forgotten propagandistic approaches that were not seen since the end of the Cold War.

This chapter reveals the new methods of digital diplomacy that have modified the face of public diplomacy in terms of exploiting, provocative, inflammatory, and proactive informational measures. This chapter addresses such notions as public diplomacy and digital diplomacy, as well as the related topics of propaganda and strategic communication. Public diplomacy implies informational, educational, cultural, sports, religious, and digital projects sponsored by the government and aimed at promoting the security interests and foreign policy goals of a state. Digital diplomacy (or Internet diplomacy) is a key part of public diplomacy and is defined as the instrument for promoting the political interests of a state through the cyberworld. The concepts of propaganda and strategic communication are often defined as analogous terms and are also referred to as informational and digital projects of public diplomacy.

Current public diplomacy, digital diplomacy, propaganda, or strategic communication, and all other active measures of information are applied to some extent by all leading countries, in order to make an impact on domestic political affairs in foreign communities. The rainbow of this impact can be very broad, from meddling in local elections, to the change of a political regime, to the establishment and reinforcement of dialogue, cooperation, and partnership. The fusion of sharp and soft instruments reflects a new trend in public diplomacy and in Russian digital diplomacy in particular (Nye, 2018). The most important factors that have determined this fusion must be noted here.

First, the explosive growth of social media has produced a unique situation in the field of public diplomacy, in terms of the unpredictable effects of cyber-propaganda. The speed of engagement and the emotions have greatly increased, and users can be mobilized in months, days, or even hours; thus, political life in an offline world can change rapidly due to developments online. Twitter revolutions in Arab countries in 2010–2011, liberal demonstrations in Russia in 2011, Ukraine protests in 2014, Iranian small-scale rallies in 2017, and more are reported to have been stimulated by the information disseminated within local social media. It is the speed of dissemination of information, and its invisible effect on target audiences, that create opportunities for different entities and users to interfere in domestic political events of foreign countries and impact a target audience. In addition, instruments incorporated in social media platforms—such as

inexpensive advertising, targeting users according to their political interests, and widespread dissemination of a post by means of "likes" by friends and by friends of friends—have shaped new approaches for the expansion of influence on target audiences through Facebook and Twitter. The actions of loyal users on a post contribute to the post's profound dispersion among those who are interested in reading about and discussing a problem.

Second, the unprecedented number of citizens who use social media and the Internet also contribute to the efficacy of digital diplomacy. In the United States, for example, more than 87% of the population uses the Internet, and United States ranks 13th among 139 countries where access to the cyberworld is available. In Russia, 70.5% of the population are Internet users, and it ranks 40th (The Global Information Technology Report, 2016, pp. 163, 189, 239). Most developed countries host high numbers of citizens who use social media to read or watch news and to consume political reality through the lens of news feeds. The rise of mass consumption of political information and news through visual presentations, short videos, or footage taken by unprofessional journalists (such as bloggers on YouTube) has contributed to the fast spread of information, ideas, values, and more. News broadcasts via television have lost their popularity, creating wide possibilities for amateur broadcasters "cooking" special political videos on social media sites to make an impact on target audiences.

Third, the digital diplomacy of the United States began flourishing during the Obama administration. The government of the United States demonstrated to the world new approaches for mobilizing people and—more importantly—for promoting information related to problems neglected by mainstream media in target countries, which disparaged the images of local politicians and transformed online discussions into protest movements in the streets. The activity of US policy in the Middle East in 2009–2012 in terms of public and digital diplomacy had an enormous impact on Russia. These and other approaches of American digital diplomacy were taken on, replicated, and upgraded by Russians.

Many Russian approaches to digital diplomacy have been labeled by experts as immoral, cynical, and politically unethical. This position reflects the opinion of those receiving Russian digital diplomacy, and it is understandable. Nevertheless, the Russian move into digital diplomacy has some positive contributions. Moscow has raised new questions for experts about how powerful the political impact of social media is on citizens, opinions,

and mass media. The Russian case has contributed to revisions in marketing and ethical norms in the policies of social platform companies. Putting aside the ethical aspect of cyber-diplomacy, this chapter evaluates the approaches of Russian informational activity on the Internet in terms of strategic communication and public diplomacy, as well as their prospective application by other countries and non-governmental entities.

Digital Diplomacy: As a Concept and in Practice

Digital diplomacy presents a number of communication opportunities for an actor in engaging foreign audiences. It has enabled two-way, dialogical foreign policy engagement via a wide spectrum of non-governmental and civil society organizations and actors whose participation is intended to be vital in attaining foreign policy goals. Engagement has come to be regarded as synonymous with the impact of digital media on the conduct of twenty-first-century diplomacy and the "necessity of actors from outside of government being able to share in the co-creation and co-delivery of policy" (Pamment, 2016, p. 2048). As such, the potential of digital diplomacy has influenced and affected traditional diplomacy elements by changes in the structure and processes of foreign ministries. It means information is disseminated faster and more widely, enabling people to interact with and reflect on the words and deeds of policymakers and practitioners (Adesina, 2017, p. 11; Ross, 2011; Westcott, 2008). As a result, leading global actors adopted digital diplomacy as a quick and cost-efficient means of reaching global target audiences.

The world is becoming increasingly digitally connected and networked via the proliferation of Internet access and the expansion of mobile information and communication technologies. By 2010 there were some two billion Internet connections worldwide and are rapidly growing. The growth in social media users, for example, has enabled direct connections among different audiences, the United States has seized upon this opportunity. As Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton pursued the policy of *21st Century Statecraft*, where traditional foreign policy tools were complemented by innovating and adapting the instruments of the Department of State to enable the full advantage of technology to connect with global networked communities. This enabled rapid communication responses to crises and acted as a tool for empowerment of selected demographics, such as women (Ross, 2011). Digital diplomacy has been at the forefront of the Obama administration's efforts to counter the narrative of Islamic extremism by

revitalizing US soft power and public diplomacy and developing a creative means of communication to complement physical acts (Hallams, 2010). This was in response to the United States being put on the back foot through the skillful use of digital diplomacy by terror groups such as Al Qaeda, which was a tangible demonstration of the ability of a weaker actor to even the playing field.

Russia's Digital Diplomacy, Early 2000s–2012: Looking for a Message and Target Audience

In the context of the current unfolding confrontation between Russia and the West, it is unbelievable that some years ago, in the early 2000s, Russia tried to convince the global community of its liberal development and democratization. Russian public diplomacy projects had a global outreach, which *The Washington Post* described as Russia's desire to "tell its story of economic growth and opportunity for its citizens" and to declare "a conviction that the country [Russia] is a global player" (The Washington Post, 2008). At that time, promoting a positive image of Russia in the world was the main priority of the country's public diplomacy, and the global community was defined as the main target audience for its cultural and informational projects.

The most illustrative example of that approach was the documentary series *Cracking the Myths*, aired in 2007–2008 by *Russia Today*, which sought to convince target audiences that the widespread perceptions of Russia as a threat and imperialist force were merely myths. The first part of each installment surveyed negative perceptions of Russia, and the second part debunked them. The approach was based on marketing a positive image using the formula in which the negative thesis meets with its anti-thesis and generates positive inference. Experts in the documentaries, as well as voices of ordinary people and images of economic development in Russia, convinced the global audience of Russia's positive stance. In that sense, Joseph Nye's concept of soft power and his ideas of engagement and attraction formed the cornerstone of that period of Russian public diplomacy. However, to experts in the field of public diplomacy, it was clear that an indefinite positive image was too intangible, and a global audience too wide, to promote Russia and attract people. Russia faced two known but crucial dilemmas in its digital initiatives: who was a target audience in foreign countries, and what kind of message must be sent to them?

The effectiveness of public diplomacy depends on accurately defining a target audience or the consumers of messages. Two particular groups in a foreign society were likely to be the primary targets of Russian public diplomacy. The first was people who had some ties to the USSR, the Russian language, or Russia. This was a large and heterogeneous audience, including both old and young generations, with varying levels of education and political stances. Aspirations of the audience may be positive concerning Russia, its government, and even Soviet virtues. These Russian-speaking audiences living in all parts of the world had access to the Russian-language information coming from Moscow. For several years, Russia began unexpectedly broadcasting 90% of all news for Russian-speaking populations, outpacing American and European international broadcasters who had traditionally been leaders in the production of Russian-language news for the international community.

The second group was both left and right movements who resisted mainstream news, political establishments, and the social order in different countries. Russia aimed its public and digital diplomacy at divergent political groups in foreign countries, often opposing each other. In contrast to many other countries, whose target audiences were politically homogenous, Russia selected both the liberal and anti-liberal and the left and right target audiences, lightening their contradictory positions on a problem. It should be also noted that this approach of Russia in targeting opposing audiences is in stark contrast to Soviet informational activity, which had rigorously supported a limited audience, notably pro-Communists and leftists. However, the current variety of target audiences demanded a message that could unify all these different political and social groups (Tsvetkova, 2008).

It is well known that the effectiveness of public diplomacy depends on a persistent, convincible, and positive message. For example, American public diplomacy sells a message about human rights, freedom, and democracy, and this message transfers a brand of the United States. The German approach was to sell the brand of the nation as creative, comfortable, and technologically oriented. Some years ago, Germany developed a new brand in its cultural diplomacy, which was termed “Germany—Land of Ideas”. The digital diplomacy of Iran promotes the message of Iran as a successor to Persian and Islamic culture. The message of Soviet public diplomacy encapsulated as “Proletarians of all countries, be united!” was a convincible message for targets abroad. In the 2000s, Russia did not elaborate similarly. The failure to introduce a positive, attractive message shifted Russia to the policy of anti-messaging, in terms of “question more”

campaigns that criticized a domestic life in target countries and promoted an alternative political stance of Russia (Simons, 2015b; U.S. House of Representatives Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, 2018, p. viii).

What occurred later in Russian digital diplomacy can be described as a stage of revisiting, reshaping, and redeveloping. The priorities, messages, and target audiences of Russian public diplomacy became fixed and clear in 2013–2018, in the idea of a strong Russia with economic and political influence over a vast territory stretching from Eastern Europe to the Pacific. As this idea entered the discourse of both domestic and foreign policy, the goal of improving the country's image on a global scale was substituted with smaller, more concrete regional interests. Moreover, Moscow was upset and humiliated by the policy of the United States, which supported both a liberal opposition inside Russia and "color revolutions" in the countries around Russia, severely undermining the presence of loyal and buffer states along Russian frontiers, which Russians historically saw as a security necessity. Moscow was eager for revanchism. Furthermore, global informational campaigns against Iraqi leader Hussein, Libyan leader Kaddafi, and Syrian leader Assad taught the Kremlin a lesson: offensive informational campaigns were better than defensive ones.

These factors, among others, led to modifying Russian digital diplomacy in terms of aggressiveness and a critical stance against the West. Russian public diplomacy reshaped its values and messages to be sold abroad. The disparity of life in Western countries—framed as a threat to Russian identity, politics, and culture—was revived in terms of a new digital offensive. Traditionally conservative values, such as a strong traditional family, statecraft, and religion, became the essence of Russian messages, and they were reported to be shared by those audiences who were inclined to conservatism (Simons, 2015a). This shift in Russian public diplomacy can be labeled in terms of the Russian conservative shift that can be contrasted with liberal soft power.

Russia's Digital Diplomacy, 2013–2018: From Critics of Everyday Life to Reality Show Campaigns in Target Countries

Critics of everyday life and politics in target countries have encapsulated Russia's digital diplomacy policy and defined its goals, messages, and target groups since 2013. The alternative news produced by Russian

international channels sought to disrupt mainstream liberal discourse in the United States and Europe. As the approach of political advocacy began to prevail in Russia's international broadcasting activities, Russia's flirtation with anti-capitalist, anti-liberal, and anti-US elements, along with its dialogue with conservative, nationalistic, populist, and right-wing parties, narrowed the target audience of Russian public diplomacy. In contrast to depicting a decadence of values of the West, Moscow began using its information outlets to demonstrate itself as a guardian of traditional values. Putin's famous 2013 speech about the denial of Christian values and traditional identities by many Euro-Atlantic countries became a strategic imperative of new Russian public diplomacy (Putin, 2013).

In order to save its identity, Russia was reported to promote a so-called Russian World, a worldwide culture of traditional and conservative values that embraced all those citizens who had positive perceptions of Russia and who spoke or wrote in Russian. The political crisis in Ukraine and the relinquishment of Crimea to Russia formed a message about a strong Russia that defended the Russian World. To justify the events in Crimea, the pillars of Russian information projects incorporated the message found in such slogans as "Russia defends Russians around the world", "the Russian World comprises all the people who have cultural, language, and historic connections to Moscow", and "Russia must protect its cultural and language legacies around the world". As a result, they have constituted a new foundation for Russian digital diplomacy that will last a long time (Russia Today, 2015).

Strong criticisms of politicians and of failures in social, economic, and political spheres in foreign countries became a consistent part of Russian public diplomacy. Day by day, Russia intensified its proactive and reactive informational campaigns. RT's advocacy campaigns broadcasted what fell outside the coverage of Western media and disseminated provocative, even incendiary information. In doing so, the channel won part of the global audience that had articulated anti-Western opinions or had praised Russian positions concerning world affairs. One illustrative example was the RT talk show "The World Tomorrow" anchored by Julian Assange. The show featured dialogues with members of anti-US groups, including a leader of Hezbollah and members of antigovernment parties in different countries, such as a leader of the antigovernment movement in Bahrain. The Russian diplomacy project stirred up enthusiasm among foreigners who participated in protest movements in the United States and European countries (movements known by hashtags like #Anonymous, #OccupyWallStreet,

#OccupyChicago, and #Ferguson), movements that horrified mainstream news from rival channels in the United States, Great Britain, France, and others. RT aired a documentary about the Occupy Wall Street movement and framed the movement as a struggle of the people against the ruling class. The US political system was described as being dominated by corporations, and the White House was accused of being a toy in their hands. Moreover, RT claimed that the US system could be changed through revolution, demonstrations, and protest movements.

In particular, the dissemination of strong anti-US sentiment became a regularly revisited strategy. Russian public diplomacy revived Soviet propaganda tools, reacting immediately to critics and negative statements about Russian foreign policy from the United States and other countries with a technique known as *whataboutism*, as in "What about US foreign policy, relations with Iraq, protest movements, shootings, etc.?" The mantle of that approach was an RT advertising campaign targeted at Americans, posters for which were distributed in the streets of US cities in 2014; it sought to convince the audience that US military intervention in Iraq was based on lies and deception maintained by US media, and it invited the public to "go to RT.com for the second opinion" (Tsvetkova, 2017, p. 249). Russia's informational messages became sharper in 2015–2018. Russia had learned how to present a sincere fact in a strong negative tone. For example, a documentary about the protest movement that unfolded in the United States after the victory of Donald Trump, called "Cultures of Protest", detailed some violent cases of the political resistance to the new President. Despite giving some balanced facts, this documentary had presentism, tonality, and a degree of anti-mainstream opinion that could shatter the value consensus of a viewer. The West was not ready for this type of Russian public diplomacy and perceived it as propaganda on the offensive. From time to time, the mainstream media and experts announced the need for rebuttal information campaigns, but almost all of them brought forth only such alarmist messages as "Russians are coming", "Russians are here", and so on.

The amplification of divisive problems and polarization of political issues have recently become the main attributes of digital diplomacy. Digital projects promote polarized opinions and positions on important issues and promote oppositional profiles in foreign states. The most famous illustrations were posts on Facebook, which focused on divisive messages across the ideological spectrum, touching on topics from LGBT matters to race issues and from immigration to gun rights, in the United States

(U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2017). Such accounts as "Secured Borders" and "LGBT United" are reported to be promoted by Russia in order to impact American audiences. The accounts advertise the divergent values that inflame discussions among users in both the cyber and the real world. Social media has certainly maximized user "engagement" that is exploited by propagandists. Advertising a message among favorable users assures the users of their opinions and positions more and more and leads them to be the expanders of a message that amplifies an issue (U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2017). An illustrative case was the posts published by "Secured Borders" on Facebook. Some of the posts declared that the borders of the United States must be secured from illegal immigration, but other posts demonstrated all the sufferings, grievances, and hardships of the deported immigrants. Thus, the profile skillfully showed two sides of the problem, but political differences were exacerbated and divisions over the problems were consequently worsened (U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2017, p. 22).

Discussions about problems have been intensified by establishing multiple sources of information and profiles on social media, which has been found to be more persuasive than a single source, profile, or account. A variety of posts have emotionally resonant content. It must be noted that the establishment of twin profiles, which have invisible differences in their titles and were accompanied with popular hashtags—for example, #blacklivesmatter or #patriotic—increased the number of followers and likers and thus expanded a message among users. Some experts argue that during 2015–2017, Russia created 120–470 Facebook pages for American citizens (The New York Times, 2017a). These pages posted more than 80,000 posts and were seen by 126 million Americans, with 29 million users engaging in some action with the posts, notably sharing, liking, or writing a comment (U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2017). The most popular of such pages are "Blacktivists", "United Muslims of America", "Being Patriotic", "Heart of Texas", "Secured Borders", and "LGBT United". They dealt with the thorniest issues, such as immigration from Muslim countries, illegal immigration, liberal values and xenophobia, racial problems, and issues about sexual minorities. These six platforms are reported to have accumulated nine million active interactions and responses (The Washington Post, 2017).

Hosting on YouTube and the visualization of information have proven to be effective approaches to disseminating information. YouTube has been the most effective platform of influence on foreign audiences. No bots and

no advertising/advocacy campaigns can reach the eyes and ears of users like videos and footage on YouTube can. Self-made videos about protests and video blogs (vlogs) by independent journalists produce an illusion of truth and confidential information seen in feeds. The news broadcasted through YouTube also turned out to be a main source of information. For example, "RT America" received most of its views from Americans who watched YouTube. The channel had more than 800 million views and 400 million followers on YouTube, hundreds more followers than Facebook and Twitter (Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2017). Most audiences who watched RT did not search for its TV broadcasting; rather, they watched the YouTube content.

Promoting and advertising a hashtag is another effective tool in intensifying divisive issues. Promoting and advertising a hashtag, which can expose numerous details about a problem, has become one of the well-known approaches to digital diplomacy since the Arab Spring of 2010–2011. During that period, hashtags were successfully applied by activists to mobilize people for street demonstrations. Hashtags played a role in protest movements in Russia in 2011 and 2012, and today this element of social media is used by any entity that develops digital campaigns. For example, the tweets of RT and other agencies of Russian digital diplomacy frequently shared hashtags posted about WikiLeaks and vice-versa. The #podestaemails hashtag campaign proposed a long read about the details of the presidential campaign of former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, contributing to some extent to a negative image of this candidate. Later, it became clear that the administration of Twitter made a decision to deter the expansion of the hashtag in summer 2017 (U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2017).

The engagement with target audiences through social media cannot be effective without a clear understanding of the aspirations, interests, and intentions of the target audience itself. Nowadays, digital diplomacy creates effective approaches to deal with the targets. *Social media reconnaissance* has become the preferred tactic for infiltrating and influencing a like-minded audience. In previous years, social media platforms provided open and robust data on people, which led to selecting key influencers on social media. Facebook offered available insights into key targets' political preferences (U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2017). Up to 2018, social media provided a unique chance to quickly and effectively mobilize active users and the ordinary public in different countries. This effective mobilization is not centered on vague ideas, as earlier, when Russia

disseminated ambiguous messages about its positive image; rather, it is centered on specific problems identified by short and attractive hashtags sent to the infiltrated target audiences. Here, bots—machine-driven communication tools—disseminate a view to the targets. Bots, not traditional international broadcasting, promote and share the stories with many thousands of users; bots can compose thousands of tweets with false and true information, accompanied by a set of hashtags; and bots can put a hashtag on Twitter's trending list, leading to a story being picked up by genuine supporters and thus further finding its way. The main effect of the bots is that they can broadcast hashtags and topics that advance a county's narratives directly into the feeds of social networks.

Disclosure campaigns or *doxxing* are also related to the current digital diplomacy. These approaches of digital diplomacy involve obtaining and disseminating confidential information by hacking, in order to embarrass or harm opponents. The most recent and serious event was the breaking into servers and the stealing of data from the Committee of the Democratic Party in August 2016. The disclosure of correspondence between Hilary Clinton's assistants, herself, and the leaders of the Democratic Party demonstrated "dirty politics" and damaged her trustworthiness. The danger is that any political campaign in many countries could wittingly or unwittingly use doxxing against opponents that would widen possibilities for various entities to impact elections in foreign countries. Moreover, creative hashtags and videos could inflame thousands of social media users to resists the efforts of mainstream media to smoothen a situation. For example, RT disseminated an English-language video called "Julian Assange Special: Do WikiLeaks Have the E-mail That'll Put Clinton in Prison?" that kept anger at a fever pitch in those who were against Hilary Clinton (Russia Today, 2016).

The final and possibly the strongest digital approach was an information campaign aimed at pushing users to make public actions, termed *reality show campaign*. The most famous and widely discussed case was the so-called "vote-by-text" campaign, which "encouraged" American users to vote by SMS and tweets and not to go to voting centers. The other case, provoked by a fake social media campaign, was the street demonstrations of supporters and opponents of a Muslim library in Texas. These cases, ascribed to Russia, have been found to play a central role in global digital diplomacy and might be applied by those countries who develop digital diplomacy (The New York Times, 2017b; U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, 2017).

The practice of bots, disclosure, and offline campaigns brought digital diplomacy to the next level. It is clear that a machine will win target audiences. Artificial intelligence and its application in digital diplomacy will become the next level in the development of public diplomacy, as seriously discussed by both American and European experts (Department of State, 2017). A robot would be able to give a precise and convincible answer to thousands of commenters under a post and to disseminate a message among millions of people.

Conclusion

Russian digital diplomacy has gone through two stages in its development. Its beginning can be referred to the early 2000s, when Moscow tried to promote a positive but ultimately too-abstract image of Russia as a part of the global community system. Problems with elaborating attractive messages and with defining a target audience demonstrated a weakness in its first steps. In 2013, the goals of Russian foreign policy started being revised in terms of replacing indefinite global outreach with a definite regional approach to build a new empire; when conservatism began to dominate in politics, Russian digital diplomacy found its target audiences, goals, and messages.

To some extent, Russia's digital diplomacy was born as an e-replica of the digital diplomacy of the United States, who appealed directly through Twitter and Facebook to pro-liberal communities around the world. Russia has learned this approach, among other American digital approaches, and has exploited them to attain its own political goals. Moreover, Russia polished these tactics, introducing such new ideas as: narrowing the target audience to anti-establishment and marginal groups; highlighting and expanding hot problems neglected by mainstream mass media; changing a stance of the audience by countless posts, tweets, and smart hashtags; and making disclosure campaigns become a part of digital diplomacy.

Unsurprisingly, digital diplomacy—or rather, the unexpected digital offensive or neorevanchism of Russia—has caused concern in governments and experts in Germany, Great Britain, France, and the United States. Recent emotions that inflamed citizens show that nobody was ready for Russia's active position in terms of imperialistically promoting its own opinion and position. If we put aside emotions and evaluate these digital approaches in terms of communication and influence, it is clear that Russia was the first to accumulate and apply all the possible instruments

provided by the development of social platforms that would be used by countries who develop Internet diplomacy. Moreover, Russia has contributed to a public understanding of social media's power to mold public opinion and has contributed to re-assessments and to revisions in the policies of transparency and of political advertising on social media. Finally, Russia has gained its status as a digital empire by changing Internet diplomacy in countless ways, big and small.

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CHAPTER 7

Russian Public Diplomacy Through Higher Education

Alexey Fominykh

According to Marc Leonard (2002) and Joseph Nye (2008), there are three dimensions through which the diplomacy currently carried on in public by Russia can be analysed. The first is the mobilisation of media for daily communication with foreign public. This is often carried out with the aid of classic propaganda technology. The second is the launching of ambitious, albeit sporadic, strategic nation-branding projects (e.g., 2018 FIFA World Cup and the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics) which have their own symbolism and also provide a platform for the communication of reinforcing 'central themes'. The third dimension is less overt than the first two and involves long-term and systematic networking with the aim of developing durable relationships with key individuals. The tools used in this direction include seminars, conferences, exchanges, scholarships and access to media channels (Nye, 2008, p. 102).

The focus of this chapter is on initiatives by the Russian government to attract foreign nationals to study in Russian institutions of higher education (HEIs) and Russian universities' practice of outreach as an aspect of

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public diplomacy. The chapter will for the most part concern state or public institutions in Russia, as private HEIs have low involvement in training international students, 97 per cent of whom are on full-time diploma and degree programmes and almost every recipient of a government scholarship is at a state university.[1]

The Russian Federation has in excess of eight hundred academies and universities inside the country and some thirty active HEIs abroad.[2] It has promoted an agenda to place itself among the world's leading higher education systems in support of a modern, knowledge-based economy. Internationalisation is regarded as a main element in improving the quality of education provided by and the reputation enjoyed worldwide by Russian universities. Together with government support, aimed at enhancing the global academic rankings of the strongest schools and sending scholars for overseas study, Russian universities are presently attracting large numbers of international students. The UNESCO database on global flow of tertiary-level students reports that, in 2018, there were more than 243,000 international students in Russia which places it fourth after the United States, the UK and Australia and in front of France, Germany, Canada, China and Japan.[3]

Two factors are at work here. The first is the need for Russian universities to enrol more students from other countries to raise both their revenues and their status. The second is the view held by the political class in Russia that higher education and increased use of the Russian language are valuable resources in seeking to change the political context worldwide, particularly in Eurasia. Regarding itself as a Great Power, as well as flexing its military and diplomatic muscle, Russia also seeks to project its soft power to its neighbour countries and perceives educational exchanges as a valuable part of public diplomacy. Promoting higher education programmes in which instruction will be primarily in the Russian language, together with recruiting international students (especially in countries that were once part of the Soviet Union), provides an overlap between the

[1] *Education of Foreign Citizens in the Higher Educational Institutions of the Russian Federation*: Statistical Collection, Issue 15. Moscow: Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, Center for Sociological Research, 2018, 184 pp., pp. 10–11.

[2] *Information and Analytical Materials on the Results of the Monitoring of the Efficiency of Higher Education Institutions*, Moscow: Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2017, http://indicators.miccedu.ru/monitoring/?m=vpo

[3] *Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students*, Montreal, QC: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow

interests of HEIs and those of the government. This sort of interdependence between diplomacy and education has been the source of Russian universities' distinctive style of international outreach as well as of Russia's public diplomacy.

Higher Education in the Context of Public Diplomacy

The role in public diplomacy played by international educational exchanges is crucial. As academic discipline, international education reviews exchanges as worthy goals in and of themselves, beyond politics and ideologies. However, educational and cultural endeavours are an integral part of public diplomacy and also components of propaganda (Lindsay, 1989, p. 427). Public diplomacy and international education are both complex phenomena whose implications can be vigorously debated. For the sake of simplicity, when this chapter discusses international education it has in mind "the informal, nonformal, and formal educational relationships among peoples of various nation-states" and is not focused on global supra-national issues that a comprehensive definition would otherwise need (Gutek, 1993, p. 33). International students are defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as students who reside in their country of study neither usually nor permanently or—as an alternative—as students educated in another country.[4] Under either definition, an international student is one who has moved to another country from his or her country of origin in order to study.

Educational exchanges can only form an effective part of public diplomacy if they are coordinated with foreign policies intended to foster international cooperation. It is also true that their human aspect makes exchanges vulnerable when the political context is antagonistic. In the right circumstances, however, they can significantly change attitudes (Scott-Smith, 2009, p. 55). According to Joseph Nye, "because exchanges effect elites, one or two key contacts may have a major political effect" (Nye, 2005, p. 14).

More complicated is the correlation between public diplomacy, international education and propaganda. Different scholars take different approaches to the 'uncomfortable question' of connections between

[4] OECD, *Education at a Glance, 2012: OECD Indicators*, Paris: OECD, September 2012, http://www.oecd.org/edu/EAG%202012_e-book_EN_200912.pdf, p. 371.

international education and propaganda, with some emphasising educational content rather than propaganda or public diplomacy:

> To what extent they [international exchanges] may or may not be instruments of propaganda is debatable. If propaganda is viewed as the attempt to influence mass attitudes continually, then educational and cultural programs may be aspects of propaganda. If the focus is on short- and intermediate-range political objectives, then educational and cultural affairs may not be components of propaganda. The debate may be complicated further if funds for educational and cultural programs are gathered through the information or propaganda rationale of an agency. (Lindsay, 1989, p. 433)

Whereas propaganda refers to the deliberate manipulation of information to achieve the desired result, exchanges are (ideally) the most 'two-way' form of public diplomacy, opening up spaces for dialogue and the interchange of alternative viewpoints (Scott-Smith, 2009, pp. 51–52). 'Propaganda' as a term has negative connotations that still dog discussions on policies in international education. Thanks to the legacy from the Soviet regime, this is particularly true of Russian efforts. A number of Russian texts indicate no concern about the mixing of public diplomacy, propaganda and soft power, and these terms are quite frequently used to mean the same thing, especially in speeches by politicians.[5] 'Propaganda' did not historically in Russia carry a negative connotation; it referred to any form of public persuasion and communication and did not of itself include suggestions of manipulation or deceit. *Propagandirovat* (to propagandise) is a verb appearing throughout Russian texts on soft power, cultural diplomacy and public diplomacy, meaning 'to promote' or 'to advocate for'. It is necessary to take account of cultural and linguistic aspects of terminology because they reflect the attitude of the society towards public diplomacy and will impact international education practices.

[5] Transcript of Remarks by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the Opening of the International Public Forum 'The Role of People's Diplomacy in the Development of International Humanitarian Cooperation', Moscow, 16 December 2010, http://www.mid.ru/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/224806?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_7OvQR5KJWVmR&_101_INSTANCE_7OvQR5KJWVmR_languageId=en_GB

Historical Background

The way higher education dovetails with foreign policy can be seen in how both sides in the Cold War used educational exchanges as a way of building alliances and combating rival ideologies. In the United States, short-term exchanges like the International Visitor Leadership Program and the Eisenhower Fellowships courted foreign leaders, both actual and prospective. There were also programmes like the Fulbright Program which offered scholarships to study for a full degree course. The USSR had similar programmes that used anti-imperialist solidarity as a way of drawing thousands of students from developing countries that were slanted towards socialism. Even overloaded with Marxist propaganda, the Soviet model of international student recruitment was able to compete with the West, making the *Soviet Union* the third most popular study destination in the world by the end of the 1980s (after the United States and France) (Tsvetkova, 2008, pp. 213–214).

The late 1980s saw the fall of communism and the end of the Cold War and changed the nature of the competition to attract international students. The end of the Soviet Union in 1991 saw Russia let go of its ambition for worldwide leadership in education and end its large-scale programmes of aid to developing countries and parties sympathetic to communism in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Russia's international image suffered as a result of the country's large-scale economic and social upheavals. The year 1990 was the peak year for foreign students in Soviet universities, most of whom studied in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, which became the Russian Federation (RSFSR).[6] In a single year, the number dropped from 126,500 to 89,400, and by 1996 it had reduced to 59,600.[7]

[6] Foreign Students in Russia: 1950–1990, *Education in Russia* website, http://en.education.mon.gov.ru/articles/24/

[7] Arefyev, A., *Inostrannye studenty v rossisyskikh vuzakh: Doklad na Tretyem Vsemirnom Forume vypusknikov sovetskikh i rossiyskikh vuzov* [International Students in Russian Higher Education Institutions: Report at the Third International Forum for Foreign Alumni of Soviet and Russian Higher Education Institutions], Moscow: Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, November 2012, p. 1.

Focusing on the 'Near Abroad'

The early 1990s were a time of geopolitical turbulence which drastically changed the nature of the international student body at Russian universities. Students from the new independent states were now foreign nationals, and neither they nor Russian universities' international services were prepared for the extent of the change. Outreach recruitment in the former Soviet republics was not practised by Russian universities for a number of years and there was a great deal of doubt in the 1990s about whether there was any benefit from studying in Russia. On the other hand, there was no need for Russian universities to advertise their offerings to those who had previously been Soviet citizens because there was no major change to educational systems. New borders put new economic, political and legal obstacles in the way of academic mobility to follow what would previously have been domestic academic routes in what had been the Soviet Union.

Only ethnic Russian migrants from the former Soviet republics grew in number during the 1990s in Russian universities, though 'ethnic Russian' is used here to describe people of a number of ethnicities who were for the most part Russian speakers. Between 1990 and 2003, half of the eight million or more ethnic Russian migrants from the former Soviet republics were from Central Asia—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan—which were home to more than one-third of this Russian 'diaspora'(Peyrouse, 2008, p. 1). For migrants from the former Soviet republics, their constitutional right (on a competitive basis) to receive free higher education was and remains a strong incentive as it offers an opportunity to become naturalised citizens of the Russian Federation. For the most part, an ethnic Russian migrant student will achieve Russian citizenship after graduation and therefore cease to be a foreigner.

Ethnic Russian students from newly independent states generally received the designation 'Russian compatriots' (*sootechestvenniki*); according to the 1999 Federal Law, a compatriot is, in Russian terms, "any citizen of the former Soviet Union, even if he or she, or their forebears, never lived in the RSFSR (now the Russian Federation)" (Zhuravsky & Vyhovanets, 2013). The 1999 Federal Law's Article 17 sets out measures designed to defend the rights of compatriots in the areas of culture, language, religion and education. Foreign nationals able to prove their compatriot status could claim a right of admission equal to that of a Russian citizen, including enrolment in programmes where tuition was free.

The Russian Federation's compatriot legislation undertakes an obligation to negotiate the recognition of educational documents, academic degrees and other qualifications among members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This process began in 1998 when agreements were signed with Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Eleven CIS countries, the exception being Turkmenistan, concluded in 2004 a detailed agreement by which equivalence would be recognised of educational documents for complete secondary general education, primary vocational education and secondary vocational education.[8] By 2009, all CIS countries had agreed on this recognition, at least for certificates of graduation from high school.

The Russian language, economic interdependence and proximity combined to make countries that had once been part of the Soviet Union—and especially those in Central Asia—the largest and closest market for Russian universities. What motivated Russia was deeper than a desire for economic integration or to assist in development. Yelena Osipova identifies that the desire to re-establish, reinforce and build upon already existing and deeply held historical ties with the former Soviet republics is inevitably interrelated with the primary focus of the Russian foreign policy on the CIS (Osipova, 2012, p. 16). When President Putin made his 2005 annual address to the Federal Assembly, he referred to a continuation of what he called Russia's 'civilizing mission' on the Eurasian continent.[9] President Medvedev in 2008 signed the 'Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation' which once again identified the CIS as the area of highest priority in Russia's foreign policy. Included in the Concept was a commitment to support the educational and cultural rights of ethnic Russians living outside Russia and a welcome for the reintegration of the national educational systems of post-Soviet states as re-establishing and developing a common cultural and civilisation heritage.[10] In 2010, President Medvedev said that Russia was able to capitalise on existing bonds with former Soviet

[8] *Soglashenie o vzaimnom priznanii I ekvivalentnosti dokumentov o srednem (obschem) obrazovanii, nachalnom professionalnom I srednem professionalnom obrazovanii* [Agreement on Mutual Recognition and Equivalence of Documents on Secondary (General) Education, Initial and Secondary Vocational (Special) Education], signed at Astana on 15 September 2004, http://www.russianenic.ru/int/agreements/eq2.html

[9] Putin, V., Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, *Kremlin*, 25 April 2005, http://archive.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/04/25/1223_type63372type63374type82634_87049.shtml

[10] Kontseptsiya vneshney politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii [Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation], *Kremlin*, 15 July 2008, http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/785

republics and emphasised further integration with the CIS to achieve its objectives in foreign policy, and public diplomacy in particular (Osipova, 2012, p. 16). By the late 2000s, Russia's main foreign policy priority was the area that had previously made up the Soviet Union, and the majority of its educational and cultural programmes were focused there.

This geopolitical thinking led Russia to regard its higher education's underrepresentation and an increasing reduction in the use of Russian as the language of the former Soviet republics as a threat to Russian national security. A weakening of its cultural influence in the South Caucasus and Central Asia was seen as representing success for the public diplomacy of rival foreign nations and as demanding a Russian response. According to the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation website, academic exchange programmes with educational establishments in the United States, Europe, Turkey and China undermined the traditional dominance in academic and cultural spheres of Russia in the 'near abroad.'[11]

At the end of 2015, President Putin signed the Strategy of National Security of the Russian Federation. The document actually referred to a necessity to increase the export of high-quality Russian education, with the first targets being CIS member states, and the need to make Russian more attractive as a global language for training. These were listed among the priorities for national security from then until 2020.[12]

Russian Universities Go International

Russian foreign policy, until the later years of the noughties did not greatly stress the export of higher education, but that changed in 2008 with an expansion of Russia's scholarship programme which subsidised study by foreign nationals at Russian universities, from 7000 students (the quota set in 2003) to 10,000 per academic year.[13] To increase the percentage of

[11] Starchak, M., Rossiyskoe obrazovanie na russkom yazyke kak factor vliyaniya Rossii v Tsentralnoy Azii: chto proiskhodit I chto delat, *Russkiy Mir Foundation*, 16 February 2009, http://www.russkiymir.ru/russkiymir/ru/analytics/article/news0003.html

[12] *Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii ot 31 dekabrya 2015 goda № 683 'O strategii natsionalnoi bezopasnosti Rossiyskoi Federatsii'* [Presidential Decree of 31 December 2015 No. 683 'On the Russian Federation National Security Strategy'].

[13] *Postanovlenie Pravitelstva Rossiiskoi Federatsii 'O sotrudnichestve s zarubezhnymi stranami v oblasti obrazovaniya* [Russian Federation Government Resolution 'On Cooperation in the Field of Education'], No. 638, 25 August 2008, http://www.rg.ru/2008/09/03/sotrudnichestvo-dok.html

CIS citizens among those receiving a scholarship, there was a redistribution of annual country quotas by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This had the effect of subsidising a larger number of students from post-Soviet states at the expense of the rest of the world. The annual quota for foreign students was increased again in 2013, this time to 15,000, resulting in significant growth in the percentage of students who were CIS citizens. The CIS share of international students in Russia in 2008 was 36.1 per cent, a little less than 38.1 per cent from Asia-Pacific (predominantly China, India and Vietnam) which supplied more international students globally than anywhere else.[14] The CIS share had risen to 53.4 per cent by 2017, while Asia–Pacific was down to 25 per cent.[15] A number of small, provincial universities have taken no international students from anywhere other than the South Caucasus and Central Asia, the majority of whom speak Russian well. Further increases in scholarships to 20,000 per annum by 2019 was discussed, but the Russian Federation's economic difficulties and the Western sanctions imposed on it since 2014 have caused these plans to be deferred.[16]

Russian universities see CIS countries as their priority international market for a number of reasons. The first is that they are closer to Russia both geographically and culturally, with the Russian language still the main means of local communication, to say nothing of ethnic Russian communities living there. The second is that two decades of independence have allowed countries like Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan to reach a level of economic stability that allows young people from the emerging middle class to study abroad and, for the reasons already stated, Russia is the choice of many of them. Then there is the fact that Russian universities have been forced to become more open internationally and more foreigner friendly because of changing demographics. Russian birth rates by the early 1990s had significantly reduced the number of high school graduates, causing stiff competition for applicants among Russian HEIs. This

[14] Arefyev, A., and Sheregui, A., *Education of Foreign Citizens in the Higher Educational Institutions of the Russian Federation: Statistical Collection*, Issue 8, Moscow: Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Russian Federation, 2011, p. 24.

[15] *Education of Foreign Citizens in the Higher Educational Institutions of the Russian Federation: Statistical Collection*, Issue 15, Moscow: Ministry of Education and Science of The Russian Federation, Center for Sociological Research, 2018, 184 pp., p. 29.

[16] Chernykh, A., and Kiseleva, E. *Rossiya naraschivaet import studentov dlya prodvizheniya svoikh interesov v mire* [Russia Increases Imports of Students in order to Promote its Interests in the World], *Kommersant*, 24 April 2015, http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2715149

was accompanied by high birth rates in Central Asia which has become the most mobile student population, the number of its students who study abroad doubled between 2003 and 2012. UNESCO figures indicate that in Central Asia domestic tertiary enrolment has not kept pace with the growing demand for higher education.[17]

Reform of higher education in Russia pushed a number of universities, and particularly those of small or medium size, close to collapse and when the Ministry of Education and Science introduced a new quality assurance policy, the implication was that international development would be monitored and enrolment of international students would be a key performance indicator. The need to maintain their funding from the government and uphold their reputation domestically and internationally caused universities to begin a search for students in new markets. Many of them would see the best solution to their problems as lying in attraction of students from countries that were once part of the USSR.

When the government increased federal subsidies for the enrolment of CIS citizens, higher education in Russia faced a need for change in its marketing policies. The *Rossotrudnichestvo*[18] was created in September 2008 and linked universities with foreign policy. This was a new institution for public diplomacy; it operated under the auspices of Russia's MFA and demanded the worldwide promotion of Russian higher education, giving Russian universities a greater ability to promote themselves abroad. This meant that, after 2008, it was the universities that were to take on the task of recruiting international students, with the Ministry of Education and Science merely setting and distributing government scholarships and country quotas and the *Rossotrudnichestvo* being required to undertake direct communication with foreign publics to recruit students.

The offices of the *Rossotrudnichestvo* outside Russia had the power to change country quotas, because the demand for tertiary education in Russia in a number of developing countries, especially those in Africa and Asia, always exceeds supply while demand from developed countries varies over time. Limitations in human and material resources meant that the new agency must collaborate with universities to offer organisational and technical support to universities' marketing campaigns outside Russia.

[17] *Global Flow of Tertiary-Level Students*, Montreal, QC: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://www.uis.unesco.org/education/pages/international-student-flow-viz.aspx

[18] The *Federal Agency* for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation.

Universities run by the state were instructed that their international students should be recruited from the most geopolitically significant countries. Universities, in other words, were expected to follow the guidelines on foreign policy laid down by the government. There is a very high level of engagement on the part of Russian universities in the government's public diplomacy and HEIs are also generally dependent on foreign policy guidelines. The best illustration of this may be what happened when Turkey downed a Russian warplane over the Turkey/Syria border on 24 November 2015. Russia introduced sanctions against Turkey and, in the following week, more than 40 Russian universities complied with 'urgent recommendations' from the Ministry of Education and Science and broke ties of academic cooperation with Turkish partners.[19]

Part of the *Rossotrudnichestvo's* inheritance from Soviet times is a network of Russian Centres of Science and Culture (RCSC). The majority were small libraries or cultural offices operating out of Russian diplomatic missions abroad.[20] Between 2009 and 2011, a number of new RCSCs were set up, mostly in CIS countries. Farit Mukhametshin, former Russian ambassador to Uzbekistan and the *Rossotrudnichestvo's* first director, said that the RCSCs' task was to represent 'Russia's face abroad'[21]and stressed the need for increased funding to make RCSCs viable competitors to the UK's British Council, Germany's *Goethe Institut*, Spain's Cervantes Institute, France's *Alliance Française* and China's Confucius Institutes.[22]

The RCSC became the main avenue through which Russian higher education was advertised abroad and operated as the local agent for a number of Russian HEIs. All parties benefited from this collaboration; the *Rossotrudnichestvo* in reaching more prospective international students beginning with Russian compatriots and universities in being authorised to choose applicants and to strengthen their position abroad through the

[19] Chernykh, A., Turtsiyu otchislili iz vuzov [Turkey Expelled from Universities], *Kommersant*, 2 December 2015, http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2867368

[20] For the list of the Russian Centres for Science and Culture, see the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation at http://www.mid.ru/nsite-sv.nsf/mnsdoc/08.03.025

[21] Interview with Farit Mukhametshin; see Farit Mukhametshin: *Rosiyskie centry nauki I kultury dolzhny stat' litsom RF za rubezhom* [Farit Mukhametshin: Russian Centres of Science and Culture are Called to Become the Face of the Russian Federation Abroad], *Vesti.Ru*, 11 August 2009, http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=308779&cid=7

[22] Evgenyev, E., *Na ocheredi London, Tegeran, Singapur* [London, Tehran, and Singapore are in the List], *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 28 December 2011, http://www.rg.ru/2011/12/27/muhametshin-poln.html

use of government resources. Russian universities have been authorised since 2012 to sign bilateral agreements to cooperate with the *Rossotrudnichestvo* and to establish joint action plans for outreach activities.[23]

There are four main aspects of interaction between the RCSC and the universities. The first is for the RCSC to be the location for exclusive direct communication with foreign publics in Russian universities' outreach presentations. Outreach events can be conducted one or two times each year in a given country and, on occasion, have been intensive marketing campaigns with a high degree of media coverage. The RCSC also provides sources of information from which universities' promotional materials can be disseminated.

The second is through joint expositions of Russian universities at international educational fairs, exhibitions and festivals. Although a few of the wealthier universities choose to perform on their own and exhibit at more expensive and prestigious events, these RCSC events are the only way that many of the smaller schools can afford to be represented, taking part at no charge or at a discounted rate in educational fairs and so accessing countries where they might otherwise be invisible.

Third is the *Rossotrudnichestvo's* facilitation of contacts between universities and local pro-Russian NGOs, which for the most part are cultural societies, centres, clubs and foundations that either work as part of Russian embassies or are supported by the *Russkiy Mir* Foundation. While the numbers of structures of this sort may look impressive, Konstantin Kosachev, the *Rossotrudnichestvo's* director between 2012 and 2015, admitted that more than 5,000 pro-Russian NGOs around the world could sometimes operate less effectively than a number of US and European foundations (Kosachev, 2012, p. 187). Efficient or not, such NGOs are in some countries the only channel that makes possible legal communication with the local public.

Fourth is the assistance given to some universities by Russian diplomatic missions in establishing regional branches. Lomonosov Moscow State University, for example, has opened branches in Astana, Tashkent, Baku, Dushanbe and Yerevan. Worthy of note is the network of joint Russian (Slavonic) universities that operate in Armenia, Tajikistan and

[23] *Otbor inostrannykh grazhdan na obuchenie v vuzakh Rossii* [Screening of the Foreign Citizens for Study in the Russian Federation], *Rossotrudnichestvo* official website, 11 April 2014, http://rs.gov.ru/node/877

Kyrgyzstan under bilateral intergovernmental agreements with joint jurisdiction by the Russian Federation and the host country. Russia also continues its ambitions to extend RCSC's global network to 100 countries, to support pro-Russian NGOs, and to promote Russian-language studies and cultural diplomacy initiatives (Kosachev, 2012, pp. 188–189). The Russian government is also attempting to restore ties with Soviet and Russian universities' alumni around the world, and in 2018 the Global Alumni Alliance of Soviet/Russian Academic Institutions acted as an umbrella for 68 country associations.[24]

Conclusions

The politics of large-scale recruitment of international students by universities and public diplomacy agencies (*Rossotrudnichestvo*, RCSC) has led to an increase in the number of government scholarships, primarily to students from countries that were once part of the Soviet Union. By 2018, more than half of all the full-time international students in Russia were citizens of CIS countries. Many smaller and medium-sized universities have reoriented their international marketing towards former Soviet republics, thus beginning to internationalise and culturally diversify their campuses.

The Russian government sees international education in countries that were once part of the Soviet Union as a competitive environment of geopolitical rivalry and, accordingly, encourages state-owned universities to recruit an increasing number of students and establish partnerships in what it sees as a very strategic region with the aim of taking on competitors from the United States, the European Union, Turkey and China. In exporting Russian higher education, Russian universities work not only for their own reputations and economic success but also as agents of public diplomacy, complementing official institutions' activities. This is particularly the case in the South Caucasus and Central Asia, which regions require a less aggressive style than Russia practices in the West and in nearby European countries such as the Ukraine and the Baltic states. It fears that its Eurasian allies will accuse it of imperialistic behaviour; Russia attempts to maintain political influence with populations who still share

[24] *Vsemirnaya Assotsiatsiya vypusknikov rossiyskikh (sovetskikh) vysshikh uchebnykh zavedeniy* [Global Association of Alumni of the Russian (Soviet) Higher Education Institutions], http://forum-vipusknikov.ru/associations/

closely similar political habits and cultural values through an emphasis on public diplomacy including scholarship programmes and education exchanges as part of developmental assistance and a drive for economic integration.

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CHAPTER 8

Russian Science Diplomacy

Elena Kharitonova and Irina Prokhorenko

Although science diplomacy is not a new foreign and public policy tool, its popularity has increased in recent years due to a number of factors. One such factor is that numerous traditional and new challenges faced by the international community require decisions and responses based on scientific evidence. Simultaneously, in the case of Russia and the West, relations have seriously deteriorated in the past several years and the scientific community remains one of the few groups that is capable of bridging the gap. This community maintains connections, dialogue and personal contacts alive and is looking for solutions to common problems via track two diplomacy. Russia has vast experience in using science and technology achievements to improve its international image and interaction with other countries. Recently, Russia adopted a long-term strategy for the country's science and technology development, which envisages using science diplomacy as one of its public diplomacy tools. Regardless of intention, does Russia possess the institutions, the human and financial resources and the skills to achieve tangible results in this direction? This chapter focuses on Russia's current and future science diplomacy potential.

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Science Diplomacy in Russia: Priorities, Resources and Constraints

It is almost impossible to discuss science diplomacy without referring to some episodes of Russian and Soviet history. Pierre-Bruno Ruffini, from Le Havre University, begins his book on science diplomacy by discussing the symbolic meaning of the scientific cooperation initiated by the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States, Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan, in 1985. (Ruffini, 2017, p. 1). The influential report 'New Frontiers in science diplomacy' by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS, United States) and the Royal Society (United Kingdom) starts with a brief history of science diplomacy that highlights East-West negotiations on nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and other peace and security issues, where the influence of scientific communities was essential (Royal Society, 2010, p. V). Scientists have been playing a prominent role in Soviet and Russian foreign policy in formal and informal ways, be it by supporting government policy or by challenging it. Their impact ranges from the promotion of the advantages of socialism and to the negotiation of milestone treaties and of international peace initiatives. Scientific achievements such as space exploration, or discoveries of new elements in the periodic table, were an important part of Soviet identity both within the country and abroad.

Today, in the age of globalization, countries aspiring to benefit from the new world stratification and secure favorable strategic prospects must integrate themselves in the global economy and its infrastructure. When developing science and technology domestically, there is a need to build links with the international scientific community becomes a crucial foundation for this endeavor.

The assessment of Russian science diplomacy resources is a complex task. Russia is the last of the top ten countries in the world ranked by gross domestic spending on R&D, measured in purchasing power parities (PPPs). In 2016, Russia's R&D spending reached US$39.9 billion. The number of researchers and professionals engaged in science in the country is high: it is ranked fourth in the world with almost 429,000 people employed in the sector. And the same time the country ranks only 34th by gross domestic spending on R&D measured as a percentage of GDP (1.1%) and by number of researchers (in full-time equivalent) per 10,000 employed in the economy. It is 47th in terms of spending per researcher, substantially behind the leading nations. The number of publications and

citations of Russian scientists indexed in Web of Science and Scopus is steadily growing, as well as the number of patent filings from Russia. There is a substantial share of publications co-authored with researchers from other countries—in 2016 around 25% of all publications. The wages in science organizations have substantially increased recently, by more than 50% from 2017 to 2018. At the same time, the Russian share in global publications output is still relatively low. In 2016, the proportion of Russian articles in peer-reviewed publications indexed by Web of Science or Scopus was 2.56% of all publications indexed that year, by which Russia ranked 14th in the world (Gorodnikova, Gokhberg, & Ditkovskij, 2018, pp. 268–271, 285–288).

Today the term 'science diplomacy' is increasingly often used in Russia, especially among the academic community. In 2017, during the election campaign for the president of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS), science diplomacy was mentioned in the manifesto of two out of five candidates.[1] The same year a prominent think tank, 'Russian International Affairs Council', organized an expert discussion on science diplomacy and Russian-American cooperation in the Arctic.[2] In addition, the country's leading foreign affairs university, MGIMO, hosted a round table on science diplomacy organized by the Royal Society and the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR).[3] In September of the same year, Andrei Fursenko, aide to the president of Russia, gave an interview where he stated that the importance of science diplomacy in growing.[4] In late 2017, the Russian Academy of Sciences held a special session on science diplomacy

[1] *Vybory prezidenta Rossijskoj akademii nauk* [The Election of the Russian Academy of Sciences President], *The Russian Academy of Sciences* official website, http://www.ras.ru/news/shownews.aspx?id=95f7af2c-b6b8-4849-820a-6c64fc287c99

[2] *Nauchnaya diplomatiya: sotrudnichestvo Rossii i SSHA v Arktike* [Science Diplomacy: Russia-US Cooperation in the Arctic], *Russian International Affairs Council*, http://russiancouncil.ru/news/nauchnaya-diplomatiya-sotrudnichestvo-rossii-i-ssha-v-arktike/?sphrase_id=262533

[3] *Kruglyj stol Sovremennaya nauchnaya diplomatiya: opyt Rossii i Velikobritanii* [Round Table 'Contemporary Science Diplomacy: The Russian and UK Experience'], *MGIMO*, http://imi.mgimo.ru/ru/ob-institute/struktura/12-glavnaya/1078-kruglyj-stol-sovremennaya-nauchnaya-diplomatiya-opyt-rossii-i-velikobritanii.html

[4] Brilev S., *Fursenko: znachimost' "nauchnoj diplomatii" rastet* [Fursenko: The Role of Science Diplomacy is Growing], *Vesti.ru*, 2 September 2017, https://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?2927856&id=2927856

and international science cooperation[5] and in January 2018 the newly elected president of the Academy presented a plan on the future of RAS to the president of Russia, highlighting the importance of science diplomacy.[6] Further, science diplomacy was the major topic of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Global Research Council held in May 2018 in Moscow.[7]

But what exactly is science diplomacy and how can Russia benefit from using it in the twenty-first century? The widely accepted description put together by AAAS and the Royal Society encompasses three interrelated dimensions of science diplomacy: *science in diplomacy* (providing scientific, expert and analytical support to foreign policymakers), *diplomacy for science* (facilitating international scientific cooperation) and, finally, *science for diplomacy* (using scientific cooperation to improve relations between countries, including the so-called track 2 or track 1.5 diplomacy, in which think tanks play an important role) (Royal Society, 2010). Many activities can qualify as 'science diplomacy' under this broad definition. Ruffin from the WZB Berlin Social Science Centre argues that contexts in which the term 'science diplomacy' emerges are just as diverse as the actors:

> Science diplomacy thus is first and foremost a new umbrella term to characterize the role of science and technology in numerous policy fields that have an international, boundary-spanning, component. […] The idea of science diplomacy, then, provides a new, more strategic and—more or less—coherent framework to integrate existing instruments in international S&T policymaking. (Ruffin, 2018)

By influencing the international agenda, participating in diplomatic missions and establishing new contact networks, scientists create a new environment for international relations, in which politicians and diplomats need to take into account the opinions and interests of national and international scientific communities.

[5] *Glava RAN rasskazal, kak povysit' ehffektivnost' nauchnoj diplomatii* [The head of Russian Academy of Sciences Spoke About the Ways to Increases the Effectiveness of Science Diplomacy], *RIA NOVOSTI*, 10 October, 2017, https://ria.ru/society/20171010/1506532050.html

[6] Sozaev-Gur'ev, E., *RAN osvoit nauchnuyu diplomatiyu* [RAS Will Master Science Diplomacy]. *Izvestiya*, 22 January 2018, https://iz.ru/698783/egor-sozaev-gurev/ran-opredelili-rol

[7] *Global Research Council. 2018 Annual Meeting*, https://www.globalresearchcouncil.org/meetings/annual-meetings/2018-meeting

Science diplomacy in major countries is to some extent bound to economic interests, while international interaction related to the humanities and social sciences seems to be put aside. In many cases, science diplomacy efforts are mainly focused on implementing national science, technology and innovation policies, on supporting national businesses and on engaging the scientific community in R&D. Further, there is often a focus on providing solutions to the most important global problems. At the same time science diplomacy can be regarded as a form public diplomacy or as an instrument for increasing a country's soft power. It can also play a substantial role in global governance as a way to manage global risks and to look for solutions to problems affecting the majority of peoples and states. When experts become negotiators, and contribute to mending relations between countries, science diplomacy contributes to conflict resolution. These areas overlap: for instance, the country's role in global governance and in solving global issues can positively affect its attractiveness abroad.

The recent increase of attention to science diplomacy in Russia can be explained through each of these lenses, but it seems that the soft power and conflict resolution considerations slightly prevail over the global governance theme and economic considerations. While some other countries highlight the role of science diplomacy in 'bringing countries together to work on shared challenges, from responding to emergencies to implementing the sustainable development goals',[8] Russian policymakers and experts often focus on the communicative potential of science diplomacy, on its role in improving relations with other countries as well as on science as a way to position the country as one of the leading global powers.

The distinction between science diplomacy and international science cooperation is not always obvious. It is clear that science is international in its nature and researchers from different countries inevitably interact and influence each other. Yet not every international scientific contact contributes to science diplomacy. Western experts argue that science diplomacy is always connected with national interests:

> Science diplomacy's direct relationship with national interests and objectives distinguishes it from other forms of international scientific co-operation, which are sometimes commercially oriented and often occur without direct state participation. (Turekian et al., 2015, p. 5)

[8] *UK Parliament, 2018. Science Diplomacy. POSTNOTE Number 568. February 2018*, http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-0568/POST-PN-0568.pdf

Science diplomacy can sometimes be a by-product of international science cooperation, when contacts between researchers aimed at solving scientific problems provide an opportunity to improve a country's image, overcome stereotypes, come up with a constructive international agenda and pave a way for cooperation between states. At the same time, there is always a risk of politicizing science and turning it into a propaganda tool rather than a science diplomacy instrument. There is also the question of the independence, objectivity and impartiality of the scientific community as an actor in politics and international relations, as well as the issue of the relative autonomy of science institutions as non-state actors of world politics.

As for Russia, science diplomacy can be considered as one of the ways to mitigate the conflict between Russia and the West and overcome the lack of trust between them. There are allegations of misinformation, propaganda wars, undermined democratic processes and manipulation from both sides. Usually scientists are considered to be less easily manipulated and influenced by propaganda than others and at the same time are not as limited in their public activities and speeches as diplomats. Polls show that people in different countries trust scientists more than politicians, journalists and representatives of many other professional groups. In the United States people tend to trust scientists more than media or elected officials.[9] A total of 79% of British people would generally trust scientists to tell the truth, while only 25% say the same about journalists and 22% about government ministers.[10] Russia has one of the highest rates of trust in science (89%) and at the same time one of the lowest rates of awareness of new scientific and technological achievements (18%) (Gorodnikova et al., 2018, pp. 263–266). A higher level of trust in scientists provides a possibility to rebuild trust between nations and overcome some of the myths and misconceptions about 'the other'. Can science diplomacy make a difference and change negative stereotypes about the country? Can scientists help policymakers reach a better understanding? And can scientists become better diplomats and ambassadors?

Science diplomacy in Russia can also be regarded in the context of Eurasian integration and processes in the post-Soviet space. In the Soviet

[9] *The Politics of Climate*, Pew Research Center, 2016, http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/10/04/the-politics-of-climate

[10] *Ipsos MORI Verasity Index*. Ipsos MORI, 2016, URL: https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/migrations/en-uk/files/Assets/Docs/Polls/ipsos-mori-veracity-index-2015-charts.pdf

period science and technology developed rapidly. After the collapse of the USSR, many of its industrial, technological and scientific networks suffered heavily, yet some continued to function. In Russia, scientific centers in Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Novosibirsk and other cities as well as in smaller scientific towns (*naukograds*) experienced major problems with financial, infrastructural and human resources. The links with scientific communities in former Soviet Republics weakened, as these countries developed their own trajectories. Increased attention to science and innovation in the 2010s in Russia and growing interest toward science diplomacy can also be discussed in relation to the post-Soviet space. Can links between scientists, the use of the Russian language for research and publications and the former experience of collaboration become a part of a broader agenda and improve relations between Russia and its neighbors in the long term?

Mechanisms and Instruments of Emerging Russian Science Diplomacy

Unlike, for example, in the United States, United Kingdom, Switzerland or France, in Russia, science diplomacy as a distinctive research field is still emerging. It is also not fully formed as a relatively independent foreign policy area. But the preconditions for science diplomacy are nevertheless present. In 2010, the president of Russia approved a policy document on the main directions of international cultural and humanitarian cooperation. The document envisages such cooperation both in bilateral and in multilateral formats, including in science and education. Contacts in these areas are becoming increasingly important in the context of the country's modernization.[11] The publication was an addendum to the Concept of Russian Foreign Policy. The new Foreign Policy Concept approved in 2016 also mentions science and research in different contexts. It speaks of the need to deliver unbiased information about the country to the international community and highlight Russian cultural and science achievements.

[11] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, *Prilozhenie № 1 k kontseptsii vneshnej politiki Rossijskoj Federatsii: Politika Rossijskoj Federatsii v sfere mezhdunarodnogo kul'turno-gumanitarnogo sotrudnichestva* [Addendum No. 1 to the Foreign Policy Doctrine of the Russian Federation: Russia's Policy in the Spheres of International Cultural-Humanitarian Cooperation], *Government Document*, 2010, http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/224550

The concept also entails responding to many global challenges, including economic development, global disparities, environmental issues and terrorism, using research-based approaches.[12]

In 2016, a presidential executive order introduced a new long-term Scientific and Technological Development Strategy of the Russian Federation. According to the document, science is an instrument required to respond to several 'grand challenges'. These challenges create substantial risks for society, economy and governance but at the same time provide new opportunities and prospects for the country's scientific and technological development.[13] The publication of this strategy can be regarded as the result of the country's political class becoming aware of a new international political reality. It can also be seen as a demonstration of Russia's commitment to respond to the ongoing competition for global leadership. Approaches to training academic personnel are being revisited. Attitudes to science, its role in global affairs and its place in politics and diplomacy are changing.

The 2016 Strategy puts science and technology at the heart of responding to many global and national issues. The role of science is to forecast global changes, to consider new trends, expectations and needs of the Russian society, to detect new 'grand challenges' in good time and to provide an effective response. One of the priorities is to create a model for international scientific and technological development, as well as for international integration, that could allow mutually beneficial interaction while at the same time protect the identity of the Russian scientific sphere and Russia's national interests. This is particularly relevant in the era of globalization and internationalization of science.

There are a number of publicly funded governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in Russian science diplomacy. The most prominent of them are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Federal

[12] *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on 30 November 2016). http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2542248?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_cKNonkJE02Bw&_101_INSTANCE_cKNonkJE02Bw_languageId=en_GB

[13] *Ukaz Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii ot 1 dekabrya 2016 goda № 642 O strategii nauchno-tekhnologicheskogo razvitiya Rossijskoj Federatsii* [Presidential Decree of 1 December 2016 No. 642 on the Russian Federation Scientific and Technological Development Strategy], 1 December 2016, http://static.kremlin.ru/media/acts/files/0001201612010007.pdf

Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (*Rossotrudnichestvo*), the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) and the Analytical Centre for the Government of the Russian Federation. There are also prominent think tanks, first of all, Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) and MGIMO University, ranking 34 and 90 in the 2017 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report, respectively.[14] There is also the international Valdai Discussion Club established in 2004 and the Russian International Affairs Council created at the initiative of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Education in 2010.

The Russian Academy of Sciences has traditionally played an important role in the country's science policy and in international scientific cooperation. Established as the Russian Academy of Sciences and Arts by Peter the Great in 1724, its development relied greatly on the results of the Tsar's innovations, including facilitated access to foreign specialists. Among the first honorary members of the Academy were the famous mathematician Leonhard Euler, the brothers Daniel and Nicolaus Bernoulli, the French writer and philosopher Voltaire, the Swedish biologist Carl Linnaeus, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant and other great. The main reason for bringing foreign specialists into Russia was to develop Russian science to close the gap with Europe. However, a diplomatic dimension was always present.

After the Russian Revolution, the Academy transformed into the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and then in 1991 back to the Russian Academy of Sciences. The history of the Academy in the USSR includes outstanding achievements but also human tragedies. During the Cold War, science and technology was in the center of competition between the two superpowers. This made the Academy powerful but at the same time vulnerable. Science cooperation with Western countries was extremely limited.

Economic and political disarray of the 1990s left the Academy and its institutions in a dire state, the effect of which is still felt today. Although the end of Cold War opened many doors for scientific cooperation and science diplomacy, the poor state of the Academy and of the scientific field in general led to a major brain drain and a human resources crisis, as well as to the decay of infrastructure. Many promising scientists either left the

[14] McGann, J., *Global Go to Think Tank Index Report*, University of Pennsylvania, 2017, https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1012&context=think_tanks

country or changed their occupation. The former reputation of Soviet and Russian science was significantly undermined. In the early 2000s the economic situation improved, but nevertheless the financing of the RAS remained insufficient, and science diplomacy potential remained low.

The new push for reforms started in 2013 with a number of administrative measures, including the creation of the Federal Agency for Scientific Organizations (FASOs), Russia. The Academy's institutions were originally placed under its authority. The reform was widely criticized by the scientific community. Following negotiations, an agreement was reached on the principle of shared responsibility between the RAS and FASO. In 2018, FASO became a part of the newly established Ministry of Science and Higher Education that emerged after the Ministry of Education and Science split into two agencies. Today, the management problems still exist, and the Academy struggles to re-establish its status as the most respected and influential scientific institution in Russia.

According to the abovementioned Strategy for Scientific and Technological Development of Russia, the government's road map prepared in 2017 envisions a special role for the Academy in creating a modern system of management in science, technology and innovation and securing a higher investment appeal for the R&D sphere.[15] In July 2018, the president of Russia signed a legal act on amendments to the federal law on 'Russian Academy of Sciences',[16] enhancing the authority of the Academy.

The Academy's experience and its science diplomacy potential received legal foundation in terms of *science in diplomacy* and *science for diplomacy*. The Academy became responsible for providing expert support and advice to Russian authorities including foreign policy bodies. It also gained a formal role in forecasting the main trends of scientific, technological, social and economic development of the country, as well as in guiding and

[15] *Plan meropriyatij po realizatsii Strategii nauchno-tekhnologicheskogo razvitiya Rossijskoj Federatsii na 2017–2019 gody (pervyj ehtap)* [Action Plan on the Realization of the Russian Federation Scientific and Technological Development Strategy for 2017–2019 (first stage)], http://static.government.ru/media/files/g5OvkCKBOKLEhAXjN94ogSBElV39ObPA.pdf

[16] *Federal'nyj zakon ot 19 iyulya 2018 g. N 218-FZ "O vnesenii izmenenij v Federal'nyj zakon "O Rossijskoj akademii nauk, reorganizatsii gosudarstvennykh akademij nauk i vnesenii izmenenij v otdel'nye zakonodatel'nye akty Rossijskoj Federatsii"* [A Federal Law from 19 July 2018 on Amendments to the Federal Law on 'Russian Academy of Sciences' and amendments to certain legislative acts], http://static.kremlin.ru/media/acts/files/0001201807190053.pdf

supervising the activities of scientific organizations and higher education institutions. The Academy's power to implement international science and technology cooperation has increased.

The Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) is another major player in science diplomacy. It was established in 1992 as a federal organization controlled by the government. It runs competitions and provides grants for scientific research, including funding for projects and events involving foreign partners. The foundation has contacts with many of these.[17] In the last ten years the funding of the foundation increased several-fold[18] and its international reach continues to expand. The fund recently supported a 2016–2018 project entitled 'Practices of science diplomacy: natural sciences in international social and political context' led by MGIMO professor A.V. Shestopal. RFBR has taken part in and/or initiated many of the abovementioned public events and discussions on science diplomacy. The organization positions itself as one of the 'flagship platforms' for science diplomacy.[19]

The governmental and non-governmental organizations responsible for improving Russia's image abroad, facilitating public diplomacy and overseeing international development, are also involved in science diplomacy. *Rossotrudnichestvo* was established in 2008 and replaced former agencies responsible for promoting Russian culture abroad. It works under the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and is represented in around 80 countries through 'Russian centers for science and culture'. However, science is not central to the activities of *Rossotrudnichestvo*. The organization's latest annual report for 2017 lists many cultural and educational activities and programs promoting Russian and just a few science-related projects: 'days of Russian science' in three of its offices; a 'Russian scientific humanitarian expedition' in Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Vietnam; and an International Humanitarian Science Forum in the United

[17] Zolotukhina, D., *Mezhdunarodnaya deyatel'nost' RFFI: Fond pomogaet integratsii rossijskikh uchenykh v mirovoe nauchnoe prostranstvo.* [RFBR's International Activity: The Fund Helps Russian Scientists Integrate in the Global Science Space], *Scientific Russia*, 5 October 2017, https://scientificrussia.ru/articles/yaroslav-sorokotyag

[18] *Finansirovanie* [Funding], *Russian Foundation for Basic Research*, http://www.rfbr.ru/rffi/ru/funding

[19] *RFFI stal flagmanskoj ploshhadkoj nauchnoj diplomatii* [RFBR Became a Flagship Platform for Science Diplomacy], *Russian Foundation for Basic Research*, 24 May 2018, http://www.rfbr.ru/rffi/ru/news_events/o_2061365

Kingdom.[20] The organization plans to increase the effectiveness of its science-related activities.[21]

The Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund was established in 2010 by a decree of the president of Russia. Science diplomacy as a form of public diplomacy is a major part of its activities. It funds projects and organizes events involving foreign policy experts and researchers from different countries. It also facilitates discussions on foreign policy issues. The organization's priority areas for the 2019 funding cycle include international cooperation to tackle new challenges and threats, such as the development of the Arctic, security issues in the Middle East and many others.[22]

Major scientific events also contribute to Russian science diplomacy. The Primakov Readings, organized by IMEMO, RAS and dedicated to the memory of the academic and statesman Evgeny Primakov, have become a prime example of such events. The Primakov Readings are an international forum where leading experts from Russian and foreign research centers and think tanks meet to discuss the most pressing issues in global economy, politics and international security. The forum was supported by the president of Russia and was ranked seventh among the best analytical conferences in the world in the Pennsylvania University 2017 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report.[23]

These forums, along with the country's universities and institutions, contribute to the development of scientific, educational, cultural, economic and other connections with governmental and non-governmental bodies in foreign countries. The Russian Academy of Sciences and its institutes conduct fundamental and applied research in collaboration with

[20] *Doklad o rezul'tatakh deyatel'nosti Rossotrudnichestva po realizatsii vozlozhennykh na nego polnomochij v 2017 godu* [*Rossotrudnichestvo* Annual Report for 2017 on the Realization of its Mandate], *Rossotrudnichestvo* official website, http://rs.gov.ru/ru/pages/389

[21] *V Rossotrudnichestve obsudili prioritety v rabote po prodvizheniyu dostizhenij rossijskoj nauki za rubezhom* [A Discussion on the Priorities in Promoting Russian Science Achievements Abroad Took Place at *Rossotrudnichestvo*], *Rossotrudnichestvo* official website, 2 October 2018, http://rs.gov.ru/ru/news/35325

[22] *Perechen' prioritetnykh napravlenij Fonda Gorchakova na 2019 god* [A List of Priority Areas for the Gorchakov Fund for 2019], https://gorchakovfund.ru/upload/files/priority_2018.pdf

[23] *Plan meropriyatij po realizatsii Strategii nauchno-tekhnologicheskogo razvitiya Rossijskoj Federatsii na 2017–2019 gody (pervyj ehtap)* [Action Plan on the Realization of the Russian Federation Scientific and Technological Development Strategy for 2017–2019 (first stage)], http://static.government.ru/media/files/g5OvkCKBOKLEhAXjN94ogSBElV39ObPA.pdf

partners from other countries. They represent Russia in international science and technology projects and programs. Further, they organize and conduct joint scientific events with foreign partners and participate in international scientific organizations. The Russian Academy of Sciences and its institutes also represent Russian scientists in international scientific unions and their international bodies. They conclude agreements on scientific cooperation with science academies and science organizations from abroad, participate in information exchanges in science and distribute information about mutual scientific activities. They also organize scientific exchanges for professional development and research and international academic mobility programs.

Conclusion

The concept of science diplomacy in Russia is becoming more popular and the number of organizations and agencies involved in different activities that contribute to science diplomacy has grown in the last ten years. At the same time, a national approach to science diplomacy is yet to be agreed upon. Unlike some other countries, Russia does not have an official position of a scientific advisor to the foreign ministry. There is also no national strategy on science diplomacy, and existing infrastructure abroad is not used to its full capacity. Coordination between organizations and agencies participating in science diplomacy activities is a complex task, and there is some competition for state funding.

At the same time, the state of national science remains the major concern in terms of Russian science diplomacy. Current ambitious reforms, the increase in funding for research and development and the adoption of the Scientific and Technological Development Strategy are intended to radically improve the national scientific management system, update scientific infrastructure, raise the prestige of science and attract the best specialists from Russia and other countries. However, is not easy to overcome the legacy of the crisis years, and it is unclear whether the human and financial resources allocated will be sufficient or whether they can be used effectively.

This creates uncertainty in terms of Russia's science diplomacy potential. In many cases Russian science diplomacy agencies rely on scientific achievements dating back to the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union to promote Russia abroad. The breakthrough in space exploration in the 1960s gets a lot of well-deserved attention and is a theme of various exhibitions and events abroad. The UN proclaimed 2019 as the International

Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements[24]—a tribute to another outstanding achievement of a Russian scientist, Dmitry Mendeleev—which provides numerous opportunities for Russian science diplomacy activities. The prestigious forums initiated in the Cold War era such as the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs continue to influence international relations and work as science diplomacy platforms for Russia and other countries. But the contemporary face of Russia's science should also be represented in order to improve perceptions of the country abroad.

Thus, the success of the modernization drive and the ability of Russian science and technology to respond to modern challenges and to be competitive in the era of globalization will be vital for the success of the country on the international arena. Science diplomacy, whether it is regarded as a part of a country's public diplomacy and soft power strategy, as an instrument to manage conflicts and to reach mutual understanding or as a way to participate in global governance, fully relies on the progress of Russia's national science, technology and innovation strategy.

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[24] *2019 is Proclaimed the International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements*. UNESCO, 22 March 2018, https://en.unesco.org/news/2019-proclaimed-international-year-periodic-table-chemical-elements



CHAPTER 9

The Role of Civil Society in Russian Public Diplomacy

Elena Stetsko

In the context of globalization, the escalating crisis in international relations and the threat of new local and world wars, there is a demand for social technologies that, on the one hand, would help to create a favourable image for world politics actors (primarily states) and spread their influence through non-military methods. On the other hand, such mechanisms would facilitate the building of more trusting relations between countries and institutions. A question of non-military influence, it implies the popularization of values and lifestyles, which, being introduced into the consciousness of the population, form stable images of the friend and the foe, the "consumer paradise" or "prison of nations". These images become a necessary basis for justifying (legitimizing) the chosen foreign policy course inside the country and for getting support from the international audience.

An active pursuit of these goals—holding events where the achievements of science, culture, education, sport, economic and technological development are used—is the realization of the so-called soft power (Nye, 2004). However, this "soft power" can be used spontaneously and

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randomly, or it can be a focused strategy, with clearly defined subjects of activity and a target audience. The latter means that "soft power" becomes a part of the state's foreign policy potential and a kind of multilateral dialogue with the use of modern information and social technologies, aiding "public diplomacy" to develop (Cull, 2006). However, it is crucial to understand that public diplomacy becomes a working and effective tool only if all actors understand the need for their participation and the nature of their tasks, as well as the importance of opportunities.

Consequently, government entities should first create specialized institutions dealing with this issue; secondly, understand the characteristics of the target audience and how to communicate with it; thirdly, provide legal opportunities for a broad and open dialogue, both within the country and with the foreign audience. Since the target audience is the entire population of foreign countries (taking into account, of course, the differences between social groups and strata), the effective use of "soft power" is also possible with the involvement of representatives of different social and professional strata of the domestic civil society: this helps establish broad contacts and dialogue on political, cultural and humanitarian problems. Without the participation of civil society institutions, all efforts of public diplomacy of any country acquire the character of propaganda and lose the resort of "soft power".

In Russian politics, the understanding of this interconnection took place gradually, as the need for public diplomacy was being recognized as part of the foreign policy strategy and the creation of a more favourable image of the Russian Federation. However, the concept of civil society and its institutions required conceptual and practical adaptation to the Russian realities.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the possibilities and successes of the civil society of the Russian Federation in the sphere of public diplomacy. To achieve this goal, we first point out the potential of the main structures of civil society: non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including those in the field of global communications. Next, we consider the specifics of the formation of civil society and NGOs in Russia and in the post-Soviet space in the 1990s and up to the present day. We believe this is necessary for a fuller understanding of the current difficulties of non-governmental organizations. Then, we focus on the legal status of NGOs in Russia and the problems arising from it. In the end, a review of the activities and problems of modern Russian NGOs in the field of public diplomacy is presented. Finally, a conclusion is drawn about the peculiarities

of the domestic project of public diplomacy and the role of civil society in its implementation.

Possibilities for the Development of Civil Society as a Domain for the Implementation of Tasks of Public Diplomacy: Current Trends in the Area

Discussions on non-governmental organizations are always centred on the development of civil society, what structures constitute it and how they interact with government and business. Without going into theoretical disputes about the formation of the concept of civil society, let us focus on a simple definition: civil society is a system of institutions and relationships independent of the state aimed at providing conditions for personal self-realization. Often, the aggregate of these institutions is also called the "third sector", while the other two are government and business. In this perspective—identifying civil society with the third sector—the emphasis in research is placed on the possibility of providing social services. The latter approach is not only more pragmatic but also more popular in modern studies, as it allows one to develop (to a certain extent) a methodology for studying civil society, and it is based on legal and economic analysis as well as on the methods of small group analysis and management organizational analysis (Stetsko, 2015, p. 50).

However, in our view, the understanding of the possibilities of NGOs as subjects of public diplomacy is more conducive to another definition of NGOs given by a Russian political scientist, Alexander Sungurov, "[…] civil society can be imagined as a certain type of communication process between the state and the citizen. As practice shows, such communication is only possible with discursive, dialogue relations between its subjects" (Sungurov, 2007, p. 16).[1] During the Soviet period, there was no dialogue with civil society. And the very question of the existence of civil society at that time is debatable. Communication was based on the state's monologue. However, as early as in the 2000s, it became clear that the dialogue between the state and civil society structures is not only a technology that maintains social balance and blunts protest activity but also an opportunity to use the potential of civil society to solve political problems. The flourish of public diplomacy

[1] Sungurov, A. (2007), *Grazhdanskoe obshchestvo i ego razvitie v Rossii* [Civil Society and Its Development in Russia], p. 16, available at: http://shkola-munitcipalnogo-politika.ru/upload/files/hrestomatia/Sungurov_gr_ob.pdf (accessed 10 August 2018).

and the use of "soft power" by Western countries in the 1990s and the 2000s have become an excellent "case" for study and application in Russian conditions.

There are several possibilities and reasons for adopting the idea of NGO for the domestic and foreign policy of the Russian state (Stetsko, 2003). (1) Neutral status of NGOs: they can be used as a platform for meetings and dialogues of different formats; (2) opportunity for the realization of social and political activism, which includes involving citizens in meaningful projects and a filter for selecting experts, political scientists and officials; (3) Ability to monitor projects and utilization of funds; (4) Their importance for internal cohesion and the formation of a new institution of the "gathering of the Eurasian lands"—the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)[2]—and the interaction of the public in this direction means mending destroyed bridges and building new ones; and (5) interaction with non-neighbouring countries in the framework of sustainable and understandable ideas, projects and venues—implementation of the Russian "soft power".

Features of the Formation of Civil Society and Non-governmental Organizations in Russia (and the Post-Soviet Space)

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, one of the main manifestations of "soft power" in the post-Soviet space was the activity of foreign non-governmental organizations, aimed primarily at helping the population create an effective system of civil self-administration, responsibility and self-help—that is, institutions of civil society. Despite the totalitarian past, as well as cultural and ethno-confessional differences in different post-Soviet states, the idea of NGOs as the basic structure of civil society had taken root: national non-governmental and non-profit organizations began to appear and increase in number annually. Their development can be considered not only as a manifestation of civic activity but also of the existence of the "third sector" in the economy of these states. However, this "good deed" also revealed numerous weaknesses of the state systems of power and government, the relations between elites and subjects, as

[2] The Eurasian economic Union (EAEU) is an international organization of regional economic integration with international legal personality, established by the Treaty on the Eurasian economic Union of May 29, 2014. Website found at http://www.eaeunion.org/#.

well as determined internal threats to the stability of the states, potentially emanating from the new institutions.

As early as during perestroika in the USSR, it became clear that the existing public organizations did not meet the democratic principles and needs of the population; created for top-down, they were imbued with the ideology of the ruling party and controlled by it. Numerous public organizations of the USSR were, rather, mere props of voluntariness and social motivation. How and by what principles other organizations were built, and whether they could be effective enough in the human rights and social sphere—were the questions that were impossible to answer independently, without studying the external experience. There was only the experience of party institutions, which, according to the apt expression of former Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, boiled down to the fact that "whatever public organizations we create, we always get the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)".[3] Moreover, we should not forget that under the conditions of perestroika and the subsequent disintegration of the USSR, people not only gained hope for democratic transformations but were also impoverished, faced with an unprecedented unemployment and economic crisis.

Under these conditions, civil initiatives, and indeed citizens, needed financial support and the acquisition of skills for public participation, as well as establishing human rights organizations, socially oriented NGOs and charity structures. These were the two directions (financial donation and training) in which the overseas non-governmental and charitable organizations and foundations that had opened their representative offices in Russia and former Soviet republics began to work. And no matter how much we now talk about ideological expansion, subversive activities of "foreign agents", the formation of the "fifth column" and the promotion of "colour revolutions", at the first stage (in the late 1980s–early 1990s), activities of foreign NGOs had a rather humanitarian nature. They helped the people survive and learn self-organization and create civil society structures. Russia and other post-Soviet states simply did not have the resources or the means to help their citizens during this period (Stetsko, 2016).

One of the first organizations in our country (starting in 1988) to carry out a number of humanitarian programmes was the Open Society Institute founded by George Soros. Since 1991, the European Community

[3] InPearls.ru (2019), https://www.inpearls.ru/author/viktor+chernomyrdin (accessed 14 August 2018).

(subsequently the European Union) has been providing technical and financial assistance to Russia within the framework of the Tacis—Enhancing Cetacean Habitat and Observation (ECHO) programmes and the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). Since 1992, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which was implementing democracy development programmes in partnership with non-governmental organizations, has been operating in Russia. Since 1993, the development of civil society in Russia has been supported by the British Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) that has been providing grants, funded training and consulting.[4] Given the transitional nature of society at the time, some core areas were focused upon by the emerging organizations.

As part of this activity, a large number of human rights, women, educational, environmental and small business-promoting organizations have emerged. Some of the funds were engaged in giving grants to students, young scientists and researchers to continue their work abroad. The latter is rightly estimated now as an organized "brain drain", although for specific people at that time it was the only chance to continue studying science and research. The Soros Foundation, which was active in the post-Soviet space until 2004 and provided the largest support for non-state non-profit organizations, spent nearly US$1.3 billion "to support local scientists". Also, Russia turned out to be the largest recipient of the Soros Foundation grants: in the period from 1987 to 2003, it received US$721 million (by comparison, Ukraine got US$142 million and Belarus got US$27 million).[5]

Financial and consulting assistance was provided not only through charitable foundations and international organizations but also with the direct support of foreign governments, primarily the United States. According to the Information and Analytical Portal "War and peace":

> In 1992, the US Congress passed 'The Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act' under which funds were allocated to support post-Soviet states (the Baltic countries were not included in the scope of this law). In total, during the period from 1992 to 2006, the US allocated US$27.7 billion as aid to the post-Soviet states

[4] War and Peace, Non-governmental Organizations and Civil Society in Russia, 17 August 2011, available at: http://www.warandpeace.ru/ru/reports/view/60892/ (accessed 30 January 2017).

[5] Ibid.

> (excluding the Baltic States). Of these, approximately US$3 billion was spent on 'supporting democratic institutions', 'helping the media, public organizations', etc. Russia has also received the most money for this item US$1.1 billion (Ukraine's share was US$600 million and Belarus got US$114 million).[6]

This represents a large financial investment, for which one should expect a return on investment.

Were these actions of the Western countries a manifestation of "soft power"? By all means, but they were also intended for gradual "democratic transit" of post-Soviet countries with predictable policies and the preservation of leverages. However, in the late 1990s, the situation began to change. Western countries and relevant institutions faced increasing difficulties. In our opinion, they were caused by three groups of factors. The first one included political, economic and structural changes in the post-Soviet states themselves. First of all, there was a redistribution of power and financial resources and the rise of national elites. These elites, in order to avoid the risks of being overthrown from the outside, had to conduct a more independent policy. That means that the criteria for the legitimacy of the authorities were to be determined by the very authorities themselves, rather than be indicated from abroad, even on the basis of the most democratic principles. This prompted national governments to respond harder to the "challenges" of the NGO community, especially those financed from abroad.

The second group of factors was related to problems in the structure and activities of the non-governmental organizations themselves, established in the Russian Federation and other former Soviet republics. These problems were due to both political and economic realities in the countries, and the peculiarities of national mentality and the remaining stereotypes of "Soviet" thinking. As a result, the established national NGOs were very dependent on donors, many were unable to continue their activities when the funding ended. "One of the weakest points of the NGO sector is financial stability".[7] Paternalistic expectations and fears of independent initiatives contributed to the development of corruption schemes. "Some "NGO-holdings" are almost always "feeders" for local

[6] Ibid.

[7] Bekkuliev, R., *Polozhenie nepravitel'stvennyh organizacij v Kyrgyzstane uhudshaetsya* [The Situation of Non-governmental Organizations in Kyrgyzstan is Deteriorating], 4 September 2015, http://golos.kg/?p=26524 (accessed 26 January 2017).

officials, often personally friends with them".[8] At the same time, national governments could and only provided very modest financial support to NGOs. "The legislation regulating NGOs' activities was for a long time poorly developed and enabled the authorities, if necessary, to "broadly interpret" the letter of the law".[9] "NGOs have also been suffering from the lack of professionalism of staff that is ready to deal with any topics, should there be funding".[10] Another group of factors need to be considered also.

The third group of factors includes changes in the political and economic situation in the Russian Federation and the formation of its new status in the world arena. President Vladimir Putin's coming to power and the improvement of the economic situation at the beginning of the 2000s contributed to the strengthening of Russia's position and its independent and resolute foreign policy. New strategic vectors and instruments were also sorted out: the post-Soviet space and the active use of soft power mechanisms. In fact, the Russian Federation entered the geopolitical game and defined anew its traditional spheres of influence. The priority areas of the soft power of the time were propaganda of Russian culture and the Russian language as a means of international communication; dialogue and assistance to compatriots; and the promotion of the idea of the "Russian world". "The natural sphere of our interests remains the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] space." [11] In the institutional and economic sense, soft power was to be realized through a new idea of uniting the "lands" (now the economic one—the EAEU), as past integration projects (the USSR, the CIS, etc.) had failed. Also, in connection with the new positioning of Russia, it was

[8] Danilov, A. (2010), *Pervyj iz semi porokov NPO v Kazahstane—problema verifikacii* [The First of Seven Vices of NGOs in Kazakhstan is the Problem of Verification], http://rus.azattyq.org/content/seven_vice_kazakh_ngo_verification/2194690.html (accessed 27 January 2017).

[9] NAVINI.BY (2015), *Gosudarstvo ispol'zuet tretij sektor isklyuchitel'no v svoih interesah* [The State Uses the Third Sector Exclusively in Its Own Interests], https://naviny.by/rubrics/society/2015/08/27/ic_articles_116_189605 (accessed 27 January 2017).

[10] Kuzhekov, Zh. (2009), *V kuluarah Grazhdanskogo foruma zagovorili o korrupcii v srede kazahstanskih NPO* [On the Sidelines of the Civil Forum Talked about Corruption among Kazakh NGOs], http://rus.azattyq.org/content/kazakhstan_ngo_forum_/1887203.html (accessed 27 January 2017).

[11] Lavrov, S., *Prisutstvie rossijskih NPO v SNG ne sootvetstvuet potencialu* [The Presence of Russian NGOs in the CIS Does Not Meet the Potential], Russkie.Org, 5 March 2013, available at: http://www.russkie.org/index.php?module=fullitem&id=28664 (accessed 27 January 2017).

necessary to present the new image on the international arena. This required a strategy of public diplomacy and implementation structures (institutions). The civil society's support for all these projects was to be ensured, among other things, by using the potential of non-governmental organizations, both those operating at the time and those to be newly created. As part of this process, the legislation on NGOs was also altered (Stetsko, 2016).

Russian Legislation on Non-governmental Organizations

Russian legislation on the activities of NGOs is perhaps the most stringent. The legal status of non-governmental organizations is regulated by the Civil Code of the Russian Federation and also—mainly—by the law on "public associations" ('Ob obshchestvennyh ob' 'edineniyah)[12] and "non-profit organizations" ('O necommercheskih organizaciyah').[13] Almost every year, these laws are amended and supplemented. The most important additions to these fundamental laws were—in a brief—the laws on "Foreign Agents" ('O vnesenii izmenenij)[14] and "the activities of foreign and international non-governmental organizations that are undesirable on the territory of Russia",[15] adopted, respectively, in 2012 and 2015.

[12] Federal Law of the Russian Federation (1995) of 19.05.1995 N 82-FZ (ed. of 8 March 2015) '*Ob obshchestvennyh ob"edineniyah'* [On Public Associations], *ConsultantPlus*, available at: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_law_6693/ (accessed 29 January 2017).

[13] Federal law of the Russian Federation 2015, *'O nekommercheskih organizaciyah' (s izmeneniyami na 30 dekabrya 2015 goda),* [On non-profit organizations (as am Federal Law Ended on 30 December 2015)], *The Legal Information Consortium «Kodeks»*, available at: http://docs.cntd.ru/document/9015223 (accessed 29 January 2017).

[14] Federal Law of the Russian Federation, '*O vnesenii izmenenij v otdel'nye zakonodatel'nye akty Rossijskoj Federacii v chasti regulirovaniya deyatel'nosti nekommercheskih organizacij, ypolnyayushchih funkcii inostrannogo agenta'* (2012) [About modification of separate legal acts of the Russian Federation regarding regulation of activity of the non-profit organizations performing functions of the foreign agent], *ConsultantPlus*, available at: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_132900/ (accessed 29 January 2017).

[15] Federal Law of the Russian Federation from May 23, 2015 N 129-FZ (2015), *'O vnesenii izmenenij v otdel'nye zakonodatel'nye akty Rossijskoj Federacii'* [About Modification of Separate Legal Acts of the Russian Federation], *Garant*, Available at: http://ivo.garant.ru/#/document/71035684/paragraph/1:1 (accessed 29 January 2017).

The Law on "Foreign Agents" is aimed at strengthening the state control over the activities of political non-profit organizations receiving financing from abroad. The complexity of the registration and reporting procedures, audits and penalties, all these seriously hinder the ability to conduct "subversive" activities. The official register of these organizations ensures that they have a certain image in society: depending on the angle of view, either the fighters for democracy or the "fifth column". Public attitude towards them is one of the makers of public opinion. Despite a real reduction of NGOs funded from overseas in Russia, those who remain continue working.

The law on "undesirable activities of foreign or international NGOs" was adopted not only as an addition to the previous one but also as a preventive measure in relation to the spread of possible religious extremist organizations. The decision on "undesirable status" is taken by the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation in agreement with the Russian Foreign Ministry. Violation of this law provides for administrative and criminal liability.

At the same time, along with the aforementioned restrictive measures in relation to NGOs, one of the priorities of the Concept of Long-Term Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020 approved by the Federal Government on 17 November 2008 № 1662-p[16] is the development of civil society institutions. As a result of proper legal registration and some practical steps, the term "socially oriented non-profit organization" was filled with real content. Its activities are aimed at addressing social problems, the development of civil society in the Russian Federation and the types of activities provided for in Art. 31.1. FZ "On non-profit organizations". The Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation has launched Unified Automated Information System Portal to support socially oriented non-profit organizations, which serves both as an information base and as a form of mechanism to ensure transparency of state policy towards NGOs. Socially oriented NGOs (SO NGOs) can count on government grants, subsidies and, in some cases, direct financing. Such socially and state-oriented NGOs, undoubtedly, include organizations working in the sphere of public diplomacy.

[16] The Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, Socially-Oriented Non-profit Organizations (SONCO), available at: http://economy.gov.ru/minec/activity/sections/SocOrientNoncomOrg/ (accessed 27 January 2017).

Non-governmental Organizations, Their Activities and Problems in the Sphere of Public Diplomacy of the Russian Federation

The need for and the development of public diplomacy is mentioned in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (2016), in the section on humanitarian cooperation. Since the middle of the 2000s, the government of the Russian Federation began to invest in this area of activity. Thus, the Russian news channel "Russia Today" (RT) was established in 2005, and the Russkiy Mir Foundation was founded in 2007. In 2008, Roszarubezhtsentr was transformed into Rossotrudnichestvo (The Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation). In 2010, The Alexander Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund and the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC) were established. Such organizations and foundations have status of NGOs, funded mainly by the state. The founder of the Gorchakov Fund on behalf of the Russian Federation is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The RIAC has several founders in addition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—they include the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation; The Russian Academy of Sciences; the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; and Interfax Information agency.

The conceptual foundations of Russia's public diplomacy are the traditional (in this context) idea of creating and promoting an attractive image of the Russian Federation in the international arena, as well as the idea of the "Russian world" as an interstate and intercontinental community united by affiliation with Russia and adherence to the Russian language and culture. The concept of the "Russian world" allows one to reach a wider audience of compatriots, people with Russian roots and lovers of the Russian language and culture. At the same time, the "Russian World" contains a certain messianic and civilizational component. These are theoretically and emotionally vulnerable points. The very phrase "Russian world" is perceived as a multivalued and contradictory symbol, which can be widely interpreted as the "us/them" dichotomy: "what belongs to Russia" and "everything else", as some kind of identification model offered to people. The corresponding value connotations are brought in by the citizens themselves. The multi-vector nature of these concomitant meanings and the crudity of this concept were also noted in the study of

the Institute of Sociology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, based on various interpretations of the concept of the Russian world.

> The relative majority of respondents—33%—perceive the Russian world as a special civilization with its own values historically formed in Russia, which emphasizes the civilizational perspective of Russia's perception as the most adequate, as well as the viability of the very idea of the Russian world. At the other extreme, a quarter of the respondents, which is also a lot, believe that there is no Russian world, demonstrating immunity to this political and ideological construction. For a considerable number of Russians, political meanings are important: 16% of the respondents say sympathizing with Russia is what makes one a member of the Russian world; the presence of Russian citizenship is important for 13%; another 13% distinguish sharing a common history and political past; 8% identify the Russian world with the Soviet model of society. And only 8% understand the Russian world as a kind of formation, fastened by Orthodoxy.[17]

In our opinion, the concept of the "Russian world" will not be further developed, as originally it had the goal of serving as a unifying slogan into which everyone can put their own nuances of understanding.

All institutes involved in public diplomacy projects as a whole can be divided into the following: (1) implementing the political agenda and training professional experts and (2) participating in international projects, in accordance with their professional activities (schools, colleges, museums, theatres, scientific centres, other NGOs). Institutes, whose founders are government structures and ministries, belong to the first category. In their activities, two dimensions can be distinguished: internal and external. This is due to the two main objectives of Russia's foreign policy: (1) the revival of the Eurasian unity and the construction of a large regional association—the Eurasian Economic Union and (2) building relationships with the rest of the world. These directions are equal in their importance, but the internal one, according to our estimates, is developing more actively.

First of all, the Russian language, which has historically formed a unified communication field, contributes to it. Second, the Eurasian direction

[17] Drobizheva, L. (2015), *Kakim Russkij mir vidyat rossiyane* [How the Russian World is Seen by Russians], *The Russkiy Mir Foundation*, https://russkiymir.ru/publications/193790/ (accessed 13 August 2018).

of public diplomacy allows to use and (re-)create many regional NGOs—think tanks—which in itself contributes to a more objective analysis of information and the development of the expert community. Among them, the following organizations should be singled out: the Eurasian Movement of the Russian Federation; Centre for Eurasian Studies, Byzantine Club, Eurasian Communication Centre, Workshop of Eurasian Ideas, Eurasia. Expert, Eurasian Development, Eurasian Analytical Club, Business Eurasia and others. There is certainly a gap in the possibilities (financial, information, publication) between regional and capital centres though.

Third, the Eurasian direction provides ample opportunity for attracting young people: the idea of integration requires personnel for its promotion and realization. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the subject of public diplomacy is, basically, the entire civil society. Each person, building connections with near and far abroad, becomes a representative of their country, a people's diplomat. As these links (in tourism, student exchanges and business) become an integral part of life, there is a need for skills in public diplomacy. This direction is handled by the Gorchakov Fund. A good example of such activities was the holding of the Summer Diplomatic School in the Chelyabinsk region in the summer of 2018. The Fund's traditional and very successful programmes on developing public diplomacy in the regions of the Russian Federation and the post-Soviet space are the Baltic Dialogue, the Caucasian Dialogue, the Caspian Youth School, the School for Central Asia, the Russian-Georgian Dialogue of Young Experts and others. The International Education Forum "Eurasia" is the project that unites young people from different countries. Other areas of research and project activities are the countries of the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East and the Balkans. Projects aimed at "far abroad" are also dealt with by the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC).

We must certainly mention here the activity of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) (Moscow Patriarchate) in the sphere of public diplomacy. Holding the legal status of a public religious association, the ROC has been actively participating in international life in the last decade, defending Orthodox believers and compatriots, establishing a dialogue with the Vatican, other Christian faiths and religious institutions, with international organizations such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Council of Europe. "Since 2003, the working group for cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church

and the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been successfully operating".[18] ROC representatives participate in the annual meetings organized by Rossotrudnichestvo on the issues of supporting non-profit organizations in the implementation of humanitarian projects.[19] Despite an active public debate about whether the church should participate in secular life, its international activities contribute to the formation of Russia's image, expanding the opportunities for Russian spiritual and religious influence.

The Russian Foreign Ministry actively supports relations with non-governmental organizations in the development of public diplomacy. Two areas can be distinguished here: (1) the creation and maintenance of a departmental organization "Council of Young Diplomats", whose members may be employees of the Foreign Ministry and foreign missions under the age of 35 and (2) annual meetings of Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov with representatives of non-profit organizations. In addition to completing professional tasks, "the Council of Young Diplomats participates in the Forum of Young Diplomats of the Eurasian Space, as well as in the Forum of Young Diplomats of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) countries, developing partnership relations with colleagues, which will become the basis of joint work in the future".[20] Foreign Minister Lavrov's meetings with representatives of non-profit organizations usually assess the international political situation and the opportunities and problems that non-governmental organizations working in the international arena have. In this regard, it must be said that the activities of any non-governmental organizations implementing international projects and participating in networks and coalitions of international organizations fit into the sphere of public diplomacy; by solving

[18] Alexy II (2009), *Russkaya pravoslavnaya cerkov' v mire* [The Russian Orthodox Church in the World], *International Affairs*, 2, https://interaffairs.ru/jauthor/material/77 (accessed 9 August 2018).

[19] Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate (DECR), 25 July 2018, Predstaviteli Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Cerkvi prinyali uchastie v diskussii v ramkah Soveshchaniya rukovoditelej predstavitel'stv i predstavitelej Rossotrudnichestva za rubezhom, [Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church Took Part in the Discussion at the Meeting of Heads of Representative Offices and Representatives of Rossotrudnichestvo Abroad], available at: http://smd-mid.ru/news/smi-o-nas (accessed 19 August 2018).

[20] Council of Young Diplomats Russian Foreign Ministry (2019), available at: http://smd-mid.ru/news/smi-o-nas (accessed 20 August 2018).

professional and humanitarian problems, these NGOs translate the Russian vision and readiness for joint work at different levels. At the last meeting with NGO representatives, Sergey Lavrov noted that the participation of our civil society organizations in multilateral platforms is not yet very developed.

> Only 70 domestic NGOs have consultative status with ECOSOC, while more than 4,000 organizations are represented there. Speaking about the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organizations of the Council of Europe, only four Russian NGOs are permanent participants. At UNESCO, only three of our public structures have achieved the status of a partner.[21]

Among other reasons for this, material and financial aspects were named. This is quite true; although, in our view, other reasons can also be given: the relatively short history of the development of domestic NGOs as well as the continuing unpreparedness and weakness of human resources. The latter problem affects a broader range of issues related to the legal status of NGOs, the possibility of permanent work in them, public prestige, the ratio of amateur performance and external regulation.

Assessing the problems of the development of Russian public diplomacy and NGOs working in this area, it is necessary to turn to the experts' opinions. In particular, very fair assessments are presented by Natalia Burlinova, President of the Centre for Support and Public Initiatives "Creative Diplomacy" (*Kreativnaya Diplomatiya*). The main problems, in her opinion, include the spontaneity of the development of this direction, as well as the lack of consistency and any development strategy, as well as a lack of officials' understanding of this field of activity (Burlinova, 2014). The remaining problems, which Burlinova notes, can be attributed, in general, to the development of civil society and Russian NGOs: insufficient funding, weak development of the civil sector, lack of professionalism and strong NGOs' dependence on the interests of donors and grantors (in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s).

NGOs' funding and dependence on donors in the Russian Federation, in our opinion, will remain serious problems related to each other. What

[21] Ibid.

has historically contributed to this fact is the cautious attitude towards organized civic activism and paternalistic sentiments. Dependence on foreign donors was eliminated by the Law on Foreign Agents, and the role of the global donor was assumed by the state and some domestic non-state funds. However, it is still too early to talk about sufficient funding. The dependence, with fairly limited opportunities for diversification of fundraising, is preserved. We shall admit, however, that at least there is a clear and uniform understanding of the tasks of the main grantor now. For the development of state-created institutions of public diplomacy, this is common practice. For the development of other non-governmental organizations, it is just a change of donor, although with the understanding of the inevitability of this fact in modern realities. Overcoming this dependence is possible with the encouragement of civic initiatives and the development of trust between various social groups, organizations as well as power structures.

In our opinion, in general, the main problem of Russian civil society now (as in the past) is a lack of public initiative or confidence that it can be effective. A high degree of centralization of power and the desire to control not only the issues of economics, politics and security but the process of forming even the most grass root regional public institutions leads either to social apathy or to the desire to capture the state trend, fit into it and make it part of one's career. (This remark does not apply to organizations created for reasons of survival or shared disasters, such as the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, various societies for the disabled or for support for people with addictions, and so on. However, these organizations do not exhaust all potential opportunities for public activity.) For the effectiveness of public diplomacy, a wide degree of freedom of public life, the simplicity of creating non-governmental organizations and a variety of opportunities for fundraising are important. After all, public diplomacy is not only the institutions created by the state in this sphere, it is also thousands of public organizations that have the opportunity to interact freely with their foreign counterparts and directly translate values and modus vivendi. Public diplomacy is not just propaganda of achievements and the inspiration of sympathy, it is the establishment of trust. Institutions of public diplomacy created by the state alone cannot fully achieve this goal. If one limits oneself to them, then it will be not more than a light version of official diplomacy.

Conclusion

Summing up, we can say that, for Russian foreign policy, the need for the development of public diplomacy has been a successful, albeit not a trouble-free, project aimed not only at implementing "soft power" and promoting the image of the Russian Federation but also at creating and developing the existing structures of civil society. The initiator of this project is the state, which is quite natural within the framework of implementing the foreign policy strategy of any country. The difference of the domestic project from Western analogues is greater centralization of the institutions of public diplomacy and the predominance of government funding. This is due to the traditionally large share of the state in all sectors of public life, the legal status of NGOs as well as a certain paternalism of public consciousness. Such features largely do not coincide with the historical ideas of civic engagement; however, in the modern world, NGOs are a social technology that is flexible and successful enough to be used by countries with different political regimes.

In general, ideas and activities in the sphere of public diplomacy are shared by active subjects of civil society of the Russian Federation, reaching eventually all citizens, even if they are not well versed in terminology and institutions. The need to demonstrate the best features of the national character, the achievements of science and culture, to develop a dialogue with other countries and peoples is a coinciding trend of state policy and public sentiments and demands. The main task for the public diplomacy of Russia (and other states) in the context of the growing information war is to maintain an open dialogue both with the foreign target audience and with the institutions within their own country, and also not to overstep the boundary where public diplomacy ends and propaganda begins.

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CHAPTER 10

Multiple Facets of Russian Public Diplomacy in International Organizations: A Case Study

Maria Chepurina and Evgeny Kuznetsov

The closure of the Russian consulate in San Francisco and the American consulate in Saint Petersburg, as well as the mutual expulsion of diplomats between Russia and the West, illustrate that in a situation with high political tensions, traditional diplomatic channels can be ineffective. However, in the atmosphere of suspicion and mistrust, the sphere of multilateral diplomacy is one of the few remaining viable options. This cooperation sphere was previously tested during the Cold War, showing its longevity, flexibility, and relative efficiency. Whereas, in the multilateral sphere, traditional diplomacy is, of course, key, it also needs a public diplomacy toolkit to support it.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this chapter are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of either any organization or government. The analytics provided are based on open source information.

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During the early 2010s, the concepts of "soft power" and "public diplomacy" became catchwords among Russia's politicians and diplomats.[1] Introduced in 1956 by Edmund Gullion, Dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, as a substitute to the negatively connoted term "propaganda", the term "public diplomacy" has evolved significantly over the past 50 years (Chepurina, 2014). Since the early 1990s, after the end of the Cold War and especially since Joseph Nye's introduction of the term "soft power" (Nye, 1990), which is described as the power of attraction that facilitates alignment of behavior among other states, "public diplomacy" has been associated in the US with a system of institutions involved in cultivating and promoting America's soft power (Burlinova, 2017).

It is noteworthy that these two terms do not have the same clear-cut distinction in Russia. They are often used, by both diplomats and government officials, as synonyms. The 2013 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation defines "soft power" as "a comprehensive toolkit for achieving foreign policy objectives building on civil society potential, information, culture, and other methods and technologies alternative to traditional diplomacy".[2] The quotes provided in this chapter should thus be analyzed by taking this specificity into consideration.

Russia is convinced that the possession of soft power gives countries advantages such as a greater margin of maneuver in foreign policy and the attraction of foreign investment (Simons, 2018). Soft power, a country's power of attraction, is believed to be one of the key means to achieve these objectives.

The 2016 Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation not only refers to "public diplomacy" and "soft power" in the same manner as the 2013 and 2008 Concepts. It also mentions the importance of Russia's "public diplomacy" and the means in which it can increase Russia's "soft power", highlighting that alongside "traditional methods of diplomacy, "soft power" has become an integral part of the efforts to achieve foreign

[1] The Kremlin's favorite buzz word is still "soft power", in "Russia Direct", 10 August 2013; Medvedev Explains How Russia's Soft Power should be in the World, in "RIA News", 3 September 2012, http://ria.ru/riatv/20120903/742179425.html; Medvedev Urges to Catch Up with FRANCE and the USA in Terms of PR, in "Life News", 3 September 2013, http://lifenews.ru/#!news/100660 (accessed 10 October 2017).

[2] Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, 12 February 2013 [Online], available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/122186 (accessed 10 October 2018).

policy objectives.[3] This includes the tools offered by civil society, as well as information and communication technologies and humanitarian assistance.

Humanitarian aid channels, a greater openness to civil society, more active use of national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) abroad, interactive media coverage, and international organizations provide a platform for public diplomacy. The focus of this chapter is on extending the usual perception of public diplomacy forums and actors to include international organizations. It also assesses how Russia uses these means. In other words, this chapter provides a response to two key questions: is there a public diplomacy component in Russia's engagement in multilateral diplomacy, and what are the strategies and how efficient are the outcomes?

International Organizations as Public Diplomacy Platforms

While there are few studies on the subject of "soft power" in international organizations in Russia, American scholars have been actively involved in writing about the "soft power" of international organizations, and, more specifically, of the United Nations (UN). The founding father of the "soft power" concept, Joseph Nye (Nye, 2004), argues that despite the apparent weakness of the United Nations, it remains a key multilateral institution. The UN gives legitimacy to states' actions in the eyes of the international community, and a lack of such legitimization can then incur damage to the state's image. In addition, as underlined by Richard Armitage and Joseph Nye (Armitage & Nye, 2007), "the true strength of the United Nations still lies in the norms embedded in its charter" and in the operational departments and UN agencies that can support states in implementing their global strategy. Violating any of the articles of the UN Charter or refusing to fund to some of the UN agencies can thus be considered as steps harmful to the state's image and, therefore, its "soft power" potential.

Working on an extremely large scope of topics confronting humanity, such as disarmament, good governance, and health, to name but a few, the

[3] Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016 [Online], available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id /2542248 (accessed 10 October 2018).

UN is a primary platform for dialogue between its 193 member states.[4] As was humorously noted by former UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, the UN is at times considered merely as a "talking shop", where "no issue is too small to be debated endlessly". However, talking can more often than not achieve things. "It's the talk that put UN peacekeepers on the ground…It's the talk that marks the world's first steps toward dealing with climate change, the global food crisis and a daily array of humanitarian crises. The convening power of the UN is the ultimate 'soft power' on the globe" notes Ban Ki Moon.[5]

As Nye highlights (Armitage and Nye, 2007), those dismissing the soft power of the United Nations are mistaken. He argues that "with no forces of its own and a relatively small budget, the UN has only as much power as it can borrow from its member states". In the meantime, the UN has "considerable soft power that arises from its ability to legitimize the actions of states, particularly regarding the use of force. People do not live wholly by the word, but neither do they live solely by the sword". The 2003 invasion of Iraq and the current situation in Syria are strong examples of the difficulties faced by the UN in balancing out the interests of its member states. In the meantime, any action taken by a state in the absence of the UN Security Council approval runs the risk of greatly raising the political and image costs of the operation.

The key factor of UN's legitimacy is the universality of its membership and the existence of the General Assembly, in which all states, no matter their size or budgetary contribution, have equal representation—"one nation—one vote".[6] This power of attraction and capacity to maneuver to present constructively the country's position within these platforms, which have their key meetings broadcasted and followed globally, have become crucial.

International organizations are special platforms for diplomatic cooperation. First of all, they provide a unique forum for communication with foreign elites and, through these elites, with foreign publics. Comprising 193 member states, the United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA)

[4] United Nations: Overview, http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/overview/index.html (accessed 10 October 2018).

[5] Articles by the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. More information on: https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/articles/2008-06-17/more-just-talk (accessed 10 October 2018).

[6] United Nations: General Assembly: Overview, http://www.un.org/en/ga/ (accessed 10 October 2018).

session, which takes place every year in September in order to bring together world leaders, is also a high-level event for public diplomacy and outreach. Apart from the main agenda, those meetings provide invaluable opportunities for informal and behind-the-scenes negotiations, outreach, and networking. It is also an opportunity for raising a countries' visibility. With heads of state and key ministers flying in for the occasion, the debates are followed closely by the media and public. Dominique de Villepin's speech against the war in Iraq in 2003 and Vladimir Putin's address in 2015 at the UN General Assembly are some of the telling public diplomacy examples that have made history.

The UN General Assembly is a stage for states to globally promote their position, gain support for it internationally, and to build alliances. This brings us back to the definition of public diplomacy by Melissen (2007, p. 13). "Public diplomacy is often portrayed as a one-way information flow … In reality, some of the more intelligent initiatives remind us less of the traditional activities of information departments. It is more about dialogue with foreign audiences". The author then highlights that "public diplomacy is no altruistic affair and it is not a soft instrument. It can pursue a wide variety of objectives such as in the field of political dialogue, trade, foreign investment, and civil society work, and it also includes hard power such as alliance management, conflict prevention, and military intervention".

As mentioned earlier, the UN General Assembly gives all countries equal voting rights. When a resolution is to be adopted, each and every country has the same weight when it comes to voting. A favorable voting result on a resolution submitted by a country within the General Assembly is thus, to a certain extent, an indicator of its attractiveness. There are states that on the official level follow the voting practices and track voting cohesion in the United Nations, both in the UN Security Council and in the UN General Assembly. Due to this, for the past 34 years, the US State Department has produced a report which provides a statistical assessment of the "overall voting of UN member states in each calendar year in comparison with the US voting record".[7]

This data, officially considered as a tool to gain insight into a "country's orientation in world arenas: where it stands, with whom it stands (at least

[7] Voting Practices in the United Nations 2017: Report to Congress Submitted Pursuant to Public Laws 101–246 and 108–447, March 2018, https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281458.pdf (accessed 1 September 2018).

in a UN context), and for what purpose", have been equally used by US scholars to assess the evolution of America's soft power within the United Nations (Datta, 2009). According to these statistics, of the 93 resolutions voted on in 2017 at the UNGA, on average other countries aligned their voting preferences with those of the US 31% of the time, which was a 10% decrease from 2016.[8]

On the overall, public diplomacy within international organizations is not a quick win, and it often works best with a long horizon. It is also sensitive to the country's overall global standing, its contribution to the budget of the organization in question and tailored activities, and it requires focused efforts to be maintained and increased.

Tools of Russia's Soft Power in International Organizations

According to a widely cited soft power ranking prepared by the British company Portland and the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, Russia ranked 26th among 30 leading soft power countries globally in 2017.[9] It was preceded by China, that was ranked 25th, as well as France, the UK, and the US, which were among the top three. The ranking was based on six basic criteria: government, culture, global engagement, education, digital, and enterprise.

The issue of interest in this rating is that the "global engagement" criteria include Official Development Assistance (ODA), membership in international organizations, and individual and NGO activities as part of the public diplomacy toolkit.

Soft Power of Russia's Official Development Assistance

Since the return to the international donor community in 2004, Russia has significantly increased its development assistance from 50 million to

[8] State Department Juked the Stats in Report on Voting Patterns at the United Nations, 1 May 2018, https://www.undispatch.com/state-department-jukes-the-stats-in-report-on-voting-patterns-at-the-united-nations/ (accessed 9 October 2018).

[9] Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power, 2018, https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2018.pdf (accessed 1 September 2018).

about US$1.2 billion (2017).[10] Nevertheless, Russia's ODA/Gross National Income (GNI) ratio stands at 0.08, which is approximately five times lower than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 0.4. According to the UN Financial Tracking Service (FTS), in 2017, Russia donated about US$21 million to the UN agencies, predominately World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), in support of countries that were mainly affected by natural disasters and military conflicts.

This aid also had a "public diplomacy" component to it, notably through the choice of recipient countries. These included Syria, North Korea, Palestine, Yemen, and Sudan, while Bangladesh, for example, affected by the Rohingya crisis, was not among Russia's aid recipients. For the first ten months of 2018, this aid amounted to about US$6 million.[11]

About half of the Russian ODA was also in the form of debt relief. From 2016–2017, Russia wrote off debts for Kyrgyzstan, Cuba, North Korea, Syria, and Armenia. While such support facilitates economic recovery in these countries, these procedures usually get little visibility among the local populations. This lack of visibility contributes little to the strengthening of the public image of Russia as a donor country among beneficiaries as well as the other members of the donor community.

Overall, Russian development assistance is missing one important component—branding. It does not yet have a clearly visible and distinguishable "logo" or slogan, similar to that of United States Agency for International Development—USAID ("From the American People"). Its visibility abroad is also limited due to the lack of a single coordination agency similar to German Society for International Cooperation—GIZ (Germany) or Japan International Cooperation Agency—JICA (Japan) that would unite policy development, operations, monitoring, evaluation, and public relations. Remarkably, while the first edition of Russian policy on international development in 2007 envisaged a specialized agency as

[10] Oecd.org, Development Aid Stable in 2017 with More Sent to Poorest Countries, 2018 [Online], available at: https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/ODA-2017-detailed-summary.pdf (accessed 9 October 2018).

[11] Fts.unocha.org, 2018, available at: https://fts.unocha.org/data-search (accessed 9 October 2018).

soon as a significant level of assistance was reached and relevant experience accumulated, the latest version issued in 2014 had no such reference.[12]

At the present moment, according to the official Russian concept of international development assistance,[13] the only single structure responsible for the ODA is subcommission on international development currently headed by the Vice Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov that includes representatives from the key Russian ministries and government agencies. This body is responsible merely for coordination among ministries, primarily Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development, and Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Russian Federation (EMERCOM), which are directly involved in the program implementation. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the transfer of funds, the Russian Embassies abroad along with Rossotrudnichestvo manage cultural and educational projects, and EMERCOM delivers humanitarian aid in case of emergencies.

When it comes to soft power development and ODA, Turkey can be considered as an interesting example. Because of its active development assistance, Turkey still keeps its place in the global soft power rating despite international criticism related to its internal policies and political system. In 2017, Turkey's ODA reached an unprecedented US$8 billion, which was 40% higher than in the previous year.[14] Turkish development assistance is channeled through Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), an agency that was created in 1992 with its initial goal being to support Turkic-speaking countries of the former Soviet Union. Nowadays, TIKA has offices in 56 different countries around the globe. Different from Russian ODA, a big share of Turkish aid goes through national and international NGOs rather than UN development agencies or bilateral aid channels. In 2015, TIKA allocated US$476 million to NGOs for their international development programs, while only US$73 million was donated to the UN bodies. Turkish NGOs serve as a powerful tool of the national soft power and promote the government foreign policy agenda.

[12] For more information, see: https://www.minfin.ru/common/img/uploaded/library/2007/06/concept_eng.pdf (accessed 1 September 2018).

[13] International Development Assistance Concept of the Russian Federation, 24 May 2016 [Online], available at: http://kremlin.ru/acts/bank/38334/page/1 (accessed 17 October 2018).

[14] Oecd.org, Development Aid Stable in 2017 with More Sent to Poorest Countries, 2018 [Online], available at: https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-data/ODA-2017-detailed-summary.pdf (accessed 9 October 2018).

Non-governmental Organizations in Russia's Multilateral Diplomacy

The "Soft power 30" rating acknowledges the trend in a power shift from state to non-state actors, for example, corporations, NGOs, multilateral institutions, civil society groups, and even individuals.[15] Research by Joseph Nye (1990) shows that soft power is more effective if it is separated from the government so that it cannot be labeled as "propaganda". The advantages of NGOs are rooted in their direct contacts with beneficiaries and their specific knowledge of their needs and capacities to affect the national and international agenda.

With the spread of information technologies, individuals and groups of citizens have become increasingly visible, even in the multilateral sphere, having the capacity to both cooperate and name-and-shame globally. This almost leads to a situation where "public diplomacy is increasingly described as diplomacy *by* rather than *of* publics" (Melissen, 2007).

The 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, which now has over 160 state signatories, was adopted following an initiative by six small NGOs. Knowledgeable about a specific subject, NGOs can at times be more flexible and persuasive than government representatives.

Russian NGOs are officially considered as partners in the expansion of the international public relations of the state. However, in practice, their positions are often weak and lack a clearly defined public diplomacy objective. Thus, only 281 Russian NGOs have consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) compared to the 409 NGOs from Belgium, 866 from France, and 1057 from Brazil. Only a few Russian NGOs are active abroad, most focus on delivering humanitarian assistance, provide medical care, and implement small-scale development projects in Syria. There are also several foundations affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church that have cultural and educational programs in Syria and Serbia. However, there is no public data available on state grants or other support that is provided to these organizations.

Experts equally note that the Russian Red Cross could be used to a much greater extent to contribute to Russia's soft power abroad on behalf of the government without contradicting its principle of neutrality. The

[15] Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power, 2018. https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2018.pdf (accessed 1 September 2018).

Red Cross National Societies of the United States, the UK, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands are key humanitarian actors along with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). During the last ten years, the Turkish Red Crescent, with an annual budget of US$500 million, provided assistance to 78 countries.

Last but not least, the soft power of the Russian language and its culture are equally important factors of soft power promotion. The Club of Russian Arts and Literature at the United Nations in Vienna is an example of such soft power production. Created in 1968 with the support of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the International Organizations, the club aims to popularize Russian language and culture, organize events around important anniversaries such as the 9 May (Victory Day), and serve as a networking hub. However, over the past 20 years, the club's activities have been affected by the reduced support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and fewer Russian UN employees which would act as the club's volunteers. With a voluntary membership of over 500 people and a monthly newsletter, it remains, nevertheless, a visible element of Russian "soft power". As noted by its organizers, the importance of such a club is its existence, as few other countries have such clubs, as well as in the popularity of the events organized (Fig. 10.1).



Fig. 10.1 Branding of one of the oldest clubs at the UN Headquarters in Vienna, the Club of Russian Arts and Literature

The Human Factor

Watching the tough battles that Russian ambassadors lead in the UN Security Council, Russians tend to think that their point of view in this organization is heard and understood. Indeed, Russia has a rather unique position in the United Nations, as a state with the veto power in the UN Security Council. However, imposing a veto is a "hard power" tool. Since the foundation of the UN, the USSR has, from this perspective, gained the image of being "Mr. NYET" ("Mr. NO"), due to its usage of the veto more frequently than any other permanent member of the Security Council.

Russia, as a founding member of the United Nations, has its share of high-level political positions within the Secretariat and UN agencies. For example, Yuri Fedotov serves as the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with the rank of Under-Secretary General and the Head of the UN Office in Vienna. Vladimir Voronkov was appointed to the position of Under-Secretary General of the newly established United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office. Vitaly Naumkin had the position of senior political advisor to the UN Envoy on Syria, which is another issue of key importance to Russia. However, at the lower managerial level, Russian representation does not reflect its status or ambitions within the UN.

As indicated by the US Department of State, the "ability of UN agencies and other international organizations to effectively carry out their programs depends largely on the quality of their staffs". The US government thus "has a vested interest in the composition of their staffs and actively seeks to ensure that these organizations' applicant pools include highly-qualified American candidates".[16] Having a good representation of the country's nationals at all levels within international organizations can be seen as an element of developing the country's soft power (Table 10.1).

In 2017, 541 Russian citizens were employed by the United Nations in the international professional category, and 392 Russians worked for the UN as general field service staff and national professional officers in the UN Country offices, notably in Moscow.[17] The majority of Russians are

[16] US Department of State: Employment Opportunities with the United Nations and Other International Organizations, 2009, https://2001-2009.state.gov/p/io/rls/iva/112404.htm (accessed 8 October 2018).

[17] Un.org, Chief Executives Board for Coordination, Personnel statistics. CEB/2018/HLCM/HR/10, 2018 [Online], available at: https://www.unsystem.org/CEBPublicFiles/CEB_Personnel_Stats_2017.pdf (accessed 8 October 2018).

Table 10.1 Member-countries representation and contribution in the UN system

	International staff members in 1996	*International staff members in 2016*	*International staff members in 2017*	*Financial contribution for 2018 as of 2 October (million USD)*
USA	1941	3212	3228	1,200[a]
France	1248	2059	2213	118
UK	1017	1656	1747	108
Italy	655	1462	1640	91
Canada	646	1244	1373	71
Germany	702	1249	1315	155
Spain	316	876	**997**	**59**
China	317	588	654	192
Russian Federation	*564*	*549*	*541*	*75*
Belgium	507	380	531	21

[a]Data refers to 2017; USA has not submitted yet its contribution for 2018

working at the Secretariat in New York and go on peacekeeping missions. Russian representation in UN specialized agencies, except the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), is modest. For example, there are only 18 Russians in the United Nations Development Programme UNDP, the UN major development agency with a field presence in 166 countries. In addition to this, it is also important to note that a large portion of these staff members are working in the translation and interpretation services as Russian is one of the official languages of the United Nations.

If these numbers are compared with the other Security Council permanent member states, we can find out that there are 3,228 US, 2,213 French, 1,757 UK, and 654 Chinese citizens in the international professional category. This gap is partly explained, according to the Russian Foreign Ministry, by the difference in the UN budget contribution[18] linked to the gross national product (GNP), which for Russia is lower in comparison to those of France or the UK. However, Canada, with a similar financial contribution, has two times higher the number of staff than Russia; Belgium with a contribution three times lower than Russia's has approximately the same number of staff.

[18] Department of International Organizations, Russian Foreign Ministry (2016) Re: Low Level of Russian Representation in the United Nations. [email].

Table 10.2 UN Security Council permanent members in top-level positions

	D[a] level staff members in 1996	*D level staff members in 2017*	*UG[b] level staff members in 1996*	*UG level staff members in 2017*
USA	223	260	16	28
UK	126	170	3	14
France	103	122	8	11
China	17	49	3	14
Russian Federation	*32*	*25*	*5*	*7*

[a]D level refers to Director positions in D-1 and D-2 categories
[b]UG level comprises Assistant (ASG), Deputy and Under-Secretary General (USG) positions as well as Special Representatives of the Secretary General, Force Commanders in peacekeeping missions and Special Envoys

In addition to this, throughout the past 20 years, the United Nations' structure has grown rapidly. Several new bodies, programs, missions, and offices were opened. From 1996 to 2017, the number of international professional staff almost doubled, increasing from 18,031 to 36,306. The majority of UN member countries also adopted their policies to fit new challenges, trained new specialists, and strengthened their positions in the UN. During this period, the number of Italian staff members in the UN tripled and the amount of French staff doubled. Russia, however, went in the opposite direction. The number of Russian professional staff dropped from 564 to 541. The negative trend of decreasing Russian participation can be continuously noted over the past years (Table 10.2).

Today, what is primarily lacking in Russia is easily accessible information for entry-level professionals. Applicants for UN professional positions are required to have some years of UN or similar international experience with an NGO or a state agency. Many of the UN professionals enter the system through the Junior Professionals Officers (JPO) Programme, financed directly by the UN member states. Currently, about 30 countries and all of the permanent Security Council members, except Russia, support JPO.[19]

France, for example, financially supports aspiring young experts through its Junior Professional Programs, enabling selected candidates to work in various international organizations with their salaries paid directly from

[19] Un.org, United Nations JPO Programme, 2018 [Online], available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/jpo/donor-countries/ (accessed 8 October 2018).

the state rather than the organization's budget. Another tool is a weekly newsletter and an interactive webpage on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that provides updates on vacancies considered to be of key interest for France in main international organizations. It also provides an explanation of the procedure to gain national support for preselected candidates. Similar policies are equally pursued by Germany, Italy, and Japan, all of which have solid soft power rankings.

It is possible that this will gradually shift, albeit slowly. The year of 2018 in Russia has officially been named a "Year of Volunteers". There are about seven million people in Russia involved in the volunteer movement, and this number is growing every year. However, only a few people in Russia are familiar with the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) Program that mobilizes thousands of volunteers all over the world for UN agencies and peacekeeping missions. According to the UNV 2017 report, there were only 13 Russians in this program, while 175 came from France, 105 from Italy, and 103 from Spain.[20] This trend will be slightly reversed in 2018 as, under the partnership with UNV, Russia's government has allocated funds to support the deployment of at least 20 Russian citizens to serve as UN Volunteers. At the end of September, 14 UN Youth Volunteers from the Russian Federation took part in assignment preparation training before employment in different UN bodies across 13 different countries around the world.[21]

A targeted approach by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other designated agency, which will include easily accessible information, clear objectives, and points of contact, is thus needed to reverse this trend.

Conclusion

In his annual meeting with ambassadors in 2018, President Vladimir Putin did not refer to either "soft power" or "public diplomacy". Since 2016, the interest in Russia's soft power promotion seems to be decreasing (Burlinova, 2017). Russia is yet to fully acknowledge the fact that state institutions such as *Russia Today*, *Sputnik*, *Rossotrudnichestovo*, and

[20] Unv.org, UNV Statistical and Financial Information for 2017, 2018 [Online], available at: https://www.unv.org/annual-report/annual-report-2017 (accessed 8 October 2018).

[21] Unv.org, Russian UN Youth Volunteers Prepare for Deployment to Assignments in Africa, Asia and the CIS, 2018 [Online], available at: https://www.unv.org/our-stories/russian-un-youth-volunteers-prepare-deployment-assignments-africa-asia-and-cis (accessed 8 October 2018).

EMERCOM are no longer capable to make a substantial contribution to the improved image of Russia without being accused of propaganda.

In the new realities, a subtler approach is to use Russian NGOs and activists in the multilateral sphere as drivers of Russian soft power. To compete with the countries that are considered as leaders in soft power, Russia should decentralize its approach, shifting from classic to multilateral diplomacy. However, such decentralization would require a centralized policy to create a single international development agency and adopt a clear program for increasing Russian representation within international institutions. Today, and in the years to come, Russia will need more, not less, influence, networks, and eventually people to promote and share its position in the multilateral diplomatic sphere.

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CHAPTER 11

Russian Business Diplomacy in Southeast Asia

Andrey Bykov and Kirill Solntsev

It's been quite long since the West started using the term "business diplomacy". However, the literature on business diplomacy is still lacking the scope of empirical research, which makes the definition of this term too loose, without clear common boundaries. This collocation covers both the building of stable and long-term relations between government bodies and the management of international and foreign companies, as well as state foreign economic activity aimed at supporting its business abroad. In Russian discourse, the term does not fall within the category of the firmly established and generally accepted, and the terminology used does not always coincide with that in the West.

The term or rather the collocation "business diplomacy" is by no means a rare occurrence in modern Russian political discourse. But it appears to have different meanings. Even the authors of the section failed to reach an agreement on how it should be interpreted. But what they do agree on is that the phenomenon of "business diplomacy" undoubtedly exists, there are structures and institutions, including Russian, playing certain roles in business diplomacy, we see entities operating, we can trace the dynamics of their interaction and, also, in longer term, the evolution of the

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phenomenon. Business diplomacy is rooted in the creation and maintenance of mutually beneficial relations at the level of people-to-people diplomacy.

Defining People-to-People and Business Diplomacy

According to Cull (2010), there are seven lessons from the past that are important to understand and take into account for the future of public diplomacy. These lessons are: public diplomacy must begin with listening; there must be a connection to policy; public diplomacy is not for a domestic audience; to be effective requires credibility, which has implications for the bureaucratic structures around public diplomacy activity; the most credible voice in public diplomacy is not necessarily one's own; it is not "always about you"; public diplomacy as an activity is everyone's business (2010, p. 11). These observations and lessons imply a certain shift in the approach to engaging in public diplomacy, which should be more focused, relevant, engaging, credible and widespread. This is where track II diplomacy (citizen diplomacy) is critical in forming collaborations and partnerships, progressing beyond the monologue and dialogue stages. Cowan and Arsenault (2008, p. 27) note that "in this world of economic, political and cultural interdependence, monologue, dialogue, and collaboration, when appropriately practiced, are all essential tools for effective public diplomacy, both online and offline". All of the above leads to the observation that an advantage of grassroots, people-to-people public diplomacy programmes is that they tend to be more credible and directed towards a more clearly defined and engaged audience. The challenge, however, is to secure reliable funding for their activities (Payne, 2009, p. 604). There is a need to now link people-to-people diplomacy to the understanding and the practice of business diplomacy.

Business diplomacy is understood as the situation when a business takes the lead (as opposed to government-led) as the diplomatic actor that act to seek and secure profit-making and the further survival of the enterprise. The practice of business diplomacy offers an approach to geopolitical and non-commercial risk management based upon diplomatic acts of communication (Kesteleyn, Riordan, & Ruel, 2014, p. 304). In practice, business diplomacy is said to occur when a company's commercial interests align with a government's national interests in order to influence or persuade a foreign government and/or business to attain common goals (Saner & Yiu, 2003, pp. 14–15; Small, 2014, p. 377). The practice of business

diplomacy requires all of the elements outlined as being necessary to be present in people-to-people diplomacy, such as the seven historical lessons formulated by Cull, in order to not only meet the definitional standards, it also impacts upon the chances of success. The following section lays out how the concept and practice of business diplomacy is viewed from a Russian perspective.

Russian Understanding of Business Diplomacy

To illustrate the emerged pseudo-pluralism of opinions, let's take a look at some of the examples of how the word combination "business diplomacy" is being used. Speaking at the rally of the Association of Entrepreneurs of "Delovaya Rossiya (Business Russia)" in October 2016, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin said that "Communications between business communities play an important role in expanding Russian cooperation with other countries". The President thanked "Business Russia" for the development of international economic cooperation, considering this process "business diplomacy". He further explained that patriotism and the implementation of state interests through the interests of commercial structures are the qualitative characteristics of this phenomenon. Here, we can see business diplomacy being understood as a tool for achieving diplomatic results not through diplomatic means, but through the execution of commercial agreements. Similar, in essence, interpretation of "business diplomacy" is provided by those Western experts who believe that large Russian companies, such as Gazprom, Rosneft and some others, are not just commercial enterprises, but the tools of state policy which Russian official authorities use to exert direct pressure on foreign governments. Sometimes, this is roughly called "energy blackmail".

A somewhat different meaning is attached to "business diplomacy" by Russian businessmen. Thus, the editorial written by Alexander Polyansky, editor-in-chief of *BOSS*, the Russian business magazine, and dedicated to the issue of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), points out that business would be interested in the government making certain concessions to the WTO and some countries, first of all in Western Europe, which demanded a reduction in energy tariffs for Russia to join the organization.[1] This case shows difference in attitudes by business and

[1] Polyansky, A., Diplomacy of Business is More Effective than that of State, *BOSS* (11), 12 November 2002, http://www.bossmag.ru/archiv/2002/boss-11-2002-g/biznes-diplomatiya-e-ffektivnee-gosudarstvennoy.html (accessed 12 November 2018).

government to expedient decision-making on international issues, where business is proving more effective compared to government, and mechanisms for their implementation, where business is dependent on government bodies. At the same time, it confirms the common viewpoint that, generally, the interests of the state and business (at least, the big business represented in Russia by the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP)) coincide.[2] Therefore, both business and the state are pursuing a common policy, which is "business diplomacy".

Quite different is the common perception of "business diplomacy" collocation within business circles at different levels. In prevalence is the perception that business diplomacy is the ability of businessmen to "come to terms" with government bodies both within their home countries and abroad where companies have business interests.[3]

Russian Business Diplomacy in Practice

In our opinion, business diplomacy is the activity of non-governmental commercial structures and their representatives in the form of non-governmental associations and partnerships, which is aimed at promoting their interests outside the state of origin, involving them in international relations as active players (subjects). This can take shape of self-promotion of own interests in third countries or through public-private cooperation.

Impressive, though not always positive, illustrations of business diplomacy in a historical retrospective can be provided by East India and West India companies during the period when they were not official state institutions. These companies, implementing their private and/or corporate initiatives, entered into relations with state institutions of other countries without any support from foreign policy institutions of their countries, and sometimes violating the principles and rules of interaction that were built between the countries at the diplomatic level. Moreover, the business diplomacy of that time itself had to a certain degree shaped the contemporary system of international relations and laid down the principles according to which public and non-public diplomacy was built and was functioning.

[2] As a joke, the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs is sometimes referred to In Russia as an oligarchs' trade union.

[3] See, for example, Kim, I., and Kiselyov, D., Business Diplomacy of Natalia Rotenberg, *Russian Regions*, 4 March 2018, https://www.gosrf.ru/news/35182 (accessed 12 November 2018) and other.

The modern conditions undoubtedly make business diplomacy different from that of the colonial period. However, there is no denying the very fact of its existence. One of the most important factors that dominate modern international relations is globalization. However, globalization itself is by no means the result of the development of political systems and relations. It emerged as the result of scientific and technological progress and the development of the system of international economic relations in general and the international division of labour in particular. The most vivid example of the existence of business diplomacy today is the emergence and vigorous activity of transnational corporations (TNCs), and their assumption of active roles as players in international relations. Frequently, TNCs, when pursuing their own interests, act as agents of state interests, but, on the other hand, it is by no means rare for corporations to take steps that contradict the official policy established by the authorities of their countries of origin. Moreover, we can often see how TNCs put own interests not only above those of their nations but also without regard to the position of international organizations and regulatory institutions. In this case, the origin of the company has no significance: American as well as European, Asian and Russian corporations pursue policies of their own. Perhaps, a certain exception from that rule are the companies from the People's Republic of China, although in the medium term they will probably choose to separate own interests from those of official Beijing.

Much has been written about how compelling can be the influence of TNCs on the policies of certain countries. There is no need to elaborate on this. More import is the mechanisms they use, such as recruitment of high-ranking former officials. For example, on 29 September 2017, the extraordinary general meeting of shareholders of NK Rosneft, PJSC in St. Petersburg unanimously elected former German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder as the chairman of the board of directors of NK Rosneft.

There is even a possibility of such a metamorphosis when, starting from promoting the national interests, management and/or owners of a company can gradually become agents of foreign interests within own countries. An example of the above is the following. Nikolaus Wilhelm Knauf, heading an originally German company, Knauf, which has become international today (one of the world's largest producers of building materials, etc.) is the Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation in Nuremberg. He is an active supporter of attracting foreign, primarily German, investments in the Russian economy. Incidentally, the institute of honorary consuls

itself—engaged in an outside capacity, but considered official representatives—existed in the USSR until 1925 and again "emerged" in the Soviet Union in 1988.[4]

The ability to influence the policies of foreign states through the institute of advisors to high-ranking officials can be illustrated by the example of James Giffen—the head of the American company Mercator—who actively lobbied the interests of the American oil companies Mobil, Texaco, Phillips Petroleum and so on, while an advisor to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev.[5] In this case, however, we see a violation of laws of the company country of origin—tax evasion, which does not remove the issue of business diplomacy in different forms from the agenda.

Let us examine the options for public-private cooperation, primarily the cases of business diplomacy in the countries of Southeast Asia. Within the framework of public diplomacy in the global economy, a special place is occupied by business diplomacy, which uses various negotiating tools combined with commercial and diplomatic experience. One of the pillars of this kind of diplomacy is public-private cooperation. The term of public-private partnership is too narrow to span the diversity of relations between state and business because it implies limited period of contractual relations. The context of business diplomacy assumes public-private cooperation—that is, any kind of productive relationship between companies and government structures.

In Southeast Asia, the state traditionally plays a special role. Here, it exerts much more influence to regulate the national economy than in the West. In the context of public authorities getting increasingly involved in business affairs, it is extremely important to reckon with regulatory bodies, develop routine interaction with them and acquaint themselves with the local system of checks and balances, with formal and informal rules for doing business.

Proper interaction with state is of special importance to foreign business, which brings business diplomacy to the forefront, which can be considered in terms of public-private cooperation. When entering the markets

[4] *Regulations on Honorary Consuls of the Russian Federation*—Techexpert, http://docs.cntd.ru/document/901727605 (accessed 12 November 2018).

[5] Kozlovsky, V., *The Trial of Mr. Kazakhstan Completed in the USA*, 7 August 2010, https://www.bbc.com/russian/institutional/2010/08/100807_giffen_trial.shtml (accessed 12 November 2018) and other.

of Southeast Asia, any enterprise, group of companies or business association in order to be successful in its overseas undertakings must thoroughly investigate, even meticulously analyse, the existing national and regional ecosystem of governmental ministries, departments, agencies and other organizations. Also developing own strategy that will determine a set of practical measures and steps in implementing corporate "foreign policy" and positioning the company in public space of the country of entry will lead to success.

Foreign public-private cooperation for any company should be carried out simultaneously on two vectors—on the one hand, seeking to reduce the risks of communication with regulatory and supervisory bodies according to the principle "do no harm" and "prevent problems in advance" and, on the other hand, getting more benefits from communication with development institutions and sectoral ministries.

In the first instance, the whole variety of business diplomacy tools needs to be employed—communicating with authorities directly influencing the activities of foreign business in a country and analysing the legal environment—primarily government regulations, which act as certain official guidelines. The principle "When in Rome …" applies to the issue of doing business in any country, but in Southeast Asia, it is all the more valid due to national, religious and mental specifics of the population. Each state in this region is peculiar in its own way to such an extent that, for example, to resolve similar disputes in business, states may use different, sometimes totally opposite, approaches and laws. To prevent the negative impact of local specifics, a constructive dialogue with all regulators and policymakers should be established. Major roles in the process are to be played by such departments of a commercial organization as "compliance" and "government relations", which should act hand in hand with the "international business development" department.

This region is of particular interest to the Russian business. Not only because the sanctions-oppressed economy makes many companies look more closely at Asian markets but also because Russian technologies and services are more in demand in the markets of Southeast Asia than in Western countries. After a period of decline in export-import operations in 2014–2016, 2017 brought the sales turnover between Russia and this region up to some US$16.8 billion (the fifth macro-region in terms of foreign economic activity and the first in terms of growth rates), a quadruple annual rise, thus making it strategically important for all Russian business diplomacy. It should be noted that the increase in turnover does

not have direct correlation with the so-called Eastward turn of Russian policy, although it undoubtedly finds political support in connection with the emerging line of the foreign policy.

The turnover dynamics between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) are presented below.[6]

Turnover between ASEAN and EAEU, million USD

	Country	*Year*				
		2013	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*
ASEAN	Armenia	14.7	43.8	11.8	11.8	27.5
	Belarus	507.3	728	632.5	391.7	445.2
	Kazakhstan	415.4	440	331.5	338.7	578.9
	Kyrgyzstan	16	16.2	9.5	6.7	6.6
	Russia	19,984	22,571.1	13,969	4782.1	16,788.5
	EAEU	*20,937.4*	*23,799.1*	*14,954.3*	*5531*	*17,846.7*

The importance of Southeast Asia for Russia is explained by the growing middle class in the region of 630 million population, followed by an increase in consumption and other factors. Firstly, the ASEAN countries differ greatly in the levels of development of industries, agriculture and services. Therefore, Russian companies can find partners (both suppliers and consumers) regardless of technological level of own production—price is much more important here. Secondly, new transportation routes, including the north-south direction, make it possible to expect a reduction in the logistic costs of the final product, often an important component of total costs. Moreover, transport infrastructure can integrate the Northern Sea Route, which is why it is no coincidence that Singapore has become an observer state in the Arctic Council. Finally, mutual interest in the development of advanced technologies. Russian technologies are in demand in the countries of the region, and Singaporean and Malaysian technologies—in Russia.

The possible establishment of a free trade zone (FTA) with ASEAN not only paves the way for EAEU members to new markets, sources of investment and investment opportunities but also provides a chance to integrate

[6] *ASEAN International Merchandise Trade Statistics (IMTS, in US$)*, https://data.aseanstats.org/trade (accessed 12 October 2018).

their national industries and individual production into international production chains that appear and function with the participation of ASEAN members, as well as for the technological modernization of the economies of the participating countries (Aliev et al., 2017, p. 8).

In the second case, we are talking about the well-planned routine work of a company to obtain various types of state support, which are available in abundance in most countries, in some cases compiled into a coherent system, while in other countries seeming more like a disorderly pile of instruments and preferences. There are conflicting examples of how national development institutions function in Southeast Asia. For example, in Singapore, the state system of business support, including foreign, has been built due to the economic prerequisites formed over decades of active economic growth. Here, we can observe a full-fledged ecosystem of state institutions—from state-run funds to business development agencies. And everything they do is aimed at attracting high-quality sustainable business. Public-private cooperation has been simplified as much as possible here, through the effective system created in the country, and provides multiplication effect as long as businesses collaborate systematically with local development institutions.

Another case in point is presented by such countries as Cambodia and the Philippines, countries known for their relative political stability, but not included in the Asian top ratings, regarding ease and safety of doing business. In these countries, the work of development institutions and the use of measures to support foreign business are often not facilitated, but rather go against the tide. To counterbalance unfavourable economic conditions, the state invades the economic sphere in order to mitigate market disruptions and shortcomings, and smoothen the rough edges of the economic system.

In this case, subjects of business diplomacy need to draw on the example of public diplomacy in adverse or unfavourably disposed countries. This, first of all, implies the need to manage risks and probabilities, since even the state in this case cannot always guarantee success or help avoid negative factors. In such a case, to take advantage of public-private cooperation, a foreign company should keep public policymakers involved all along and routinely assess risks to adjust activities at every step of the way. It is also important to be ready to quickly withdraw the business from a country if something goes wrong.

In Russia, it is possible to identify structures and platforms that organize and coordinate the interaction between business and the state at the

international level. Speaking about the latter, we should certainly mention the two largest international economic forums—that of St. Petersburg and the Eastern forum (held in Vladivostok), where representatives of business and political elite are brought together from all over the world. Also, there are a number of region-wide forums that are also of interest for foreign partners—those are Innoprom in Yekaterinburg, the Siberian Economic Forum in Novosibirsk and the Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum. All those platforms see regular participation of companies from Southeast Asia as well as leading politicians from this part of the world.

There are also structures that facilitate international cooperation and interaction with the state authorities of the Russian Federation, as well as with the authorities of other countries. Some sort of specific architecture has in fact been shaped, even a hierarchy, which influences the way of how companies behave in a particular region of the world, their informal stance on various issues as well as support measures. At the top of the taxonomic level, the following institutes can be identified as such—the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation (RF CCI) and the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. These are the structures that to a certain extent compete with each other, with their relations often being regulated at the informal level by government employees and heads of large state corporations. Also of importance are personalities of their leaders, both former and active ones. Thus, for a long time, RF CCI was headed by the former Russian Prime Minister, famous diplomat—Yevgeny Maksimovich Primakov. And it was with him that the regional network was formed inside and outside the country, which only underwent later transformations. The head of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs is now the former minister Alexander Nikolayevich Shokhin—the former deputy chairman of the country's government, one of the people behind the establishment of the socio-economic system that currently functions in the country. Moreover, he is on the board of the ruling United Russia party.

There are also industry associations of employers and manufacturers and so on. The most active business association is Delovaya Rossiya (Business Russia), uniting together over 3000 entrepreneurs working in the non-primary sector of the economy. Business Russia is actively promoting the interests of business community and interacting with the authorities, including through specialized business events of their own or organized jointly with other associations and government organizations of different countries. Business platforms and events are used not only as a

tool for solving local issues but also as a serious tool to build a national branding in the global economic arena—this has already become a prerequisite for creating favourable conditions for the activities of Russian companies abroad.[7]

Standing alone is the Agency for Strategic Initiatives (ASI)—a non-governmental organization exercising real influence on who is admitted to become a member of the government, governor appointments and on introduction and development of priority national projects. ASI's weight in international affairs is somewhat less compared to domestic, but also significant.

The sphere of assisting Russian companies in their expansion to foreign markets is represented by such institutions as the Russian Export Centre, which has now been transferred under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation, the Russian Industrial Fund, which is also the creation of the above Ministry, the Russian Direct Investment Fund and Vnesheconombank, as well as others. They are also to be attributed to higher-level structures, but this time, in fact, state owned.

Middle level is represented by regional chambers of commerce, regional and interregional associations, development and investment attracting agencies and so on. Usually, they provide the infrastructure for interaction between business and provincial administration, border areas as well as foreign partners (often prioritizing certain countries and regions).

Finally, the bottom level, in fact, the most useful working tool to maintain actual relations, consists of small CCIs (representing different towns), the structures of sister cities and other very diverse, often one-of-the-kind structures and institutions. In our opinion, this level also includes such an institution as business councils that exist in many countries, either linked to business and industry and other associations or even acting independently.

Business councils and similar business associations offering a set of tools and measures to support businesses from other countries, helping them to adapt to local conditions, now play an increasingly important role and occupy an important place in public-private cooperation in some countries of Southeast Asia. Business councils are not just an important tool for public-private cooperation involving third parties but also the structures

[7] Velikaya, A., *Nation-Branding: The Case of Russia*, 30 August 2017, http://rethinkingrussia.ru/en/2017/08/nation-branding-the-case-of-russia (accessed 12 November 2018).

that can hedge against the lack of information about local markets, poor communication with government bodies and conflict situations occurring in the process of public-private cooperation.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation (RF CCI) is a non-governmental non-profit (NP) organization that brings together business representatives to achieve the goals and objectives as defined by the Law of the Russian Federation "On Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the Russian Federation" and the Charter of the Chamber on the basis of membership. The RF CCI represents the interests of small, medium and large enterprises. A total of 75% of the RF CCI membership base is small and medium enterprises SME's.

Currently, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation represents more than 52,000 organizations and over 300 associations of businessmen and commercial organizations at the federal level, as well as in excess of 500 business associations at the regional level. In the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, there are over 180 chambers of commerce and industry.

The goals of the RF CCI, in particular, include the following:

- promotion of the export of Russian goods and services;
- promotion of a positive image of Russian manufacturers;
- building relations with business circles of foreign countries and international business organizations; and
- assistance in attracting investments, introduction of innovations and advanced domestic technologies.

Thus, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation, in general, is called upon to work towards creation of a positive image of Russian manufacturers, and, therefore, of the country as a whole. Currently, the RF CCI has over 30 representative offices. In addition, the Chamber has 74 business councils for cooperation with other countries. Their work is aimed at developing mutually beneficial cooperation between Russian and foreign businessmen. Most business councils work to develop cooperation with a particular country, although there are business councils of BRICS (on cooperation with Brazil, India, China and South Africa), the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization), the Eurasian Council (on cooperation with Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and ASEAN, which seek to develop relations with intercountry associations.

By-region specialization of business councils is as follows:

- CIS and the former Soviet Union—10,
- Europe—16,
- Far and Middle East and Africa—24,
- Asia—18,
- America—6.

So, not every country has a dedicated business council. In particular, there are councils for cooperation with Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Singapore; recently the Russia-Philippines Business Council resumed its work, but there are no business councils for cooperation with such ASEAN countries like Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar and Brunei Darussalam, as well as two countries with ASEAN observer status. The presence of a single business council for cooperation with ASEAN countries does not make up for the absence of such councils with individual countries.

Among the business councils, the most active in the Asian region are the Russia-Singapore Business Council, the Russia-ASEAN Business Council and the Russia-Indonesia Business Council. The latter, for example, of all the key forms of business diplomacy and interaction with foreign counterparts, gives priority to annual joint meetings within the framework of the Russia-Indonesia business forums timed to coincide with the meetings of the Russia-Indonesia joint commission on trade, economic and technical cooperation.

It is worth noting that there is also much activity on the part of Asian business associations, including business councils in Russia. For example, the Chamber of Commerce of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has its representative office in Moscow. It carries on systematic work on building relations between Vietnamese and Russian companies, primarily using the advantages granted by the agreement on the free trade zone between the Eurasian Economic Union and Vietnam. Similar structures in Russia represent the Philippines, Cambodia and Thailand. The main agent of Singapore's business diplomacy is Enterprise Singapore, the national agency reformed last year, represented by its Moscow office, which provides organizational, information and financial support to companies from Singapore.

In the Russian Federation, there are three basic formats for the activities of business councils. Most of them exist in the form of organizations without a legal entity status—a kind of a club of some organizations

and commercial companies. Close to them is the form with NP status (non-profit partnership). The third option is to assume the format of an autonomous non-profit organization (ANO). There is another fourth, rarest option, when council itself functions in the format of an organization without a legal entity status, but with an executive structure created for it by decision of the governing body, which has a legal entity status.

Let us take a look at the work of the Russia-Singapore Business Council established in October 2009 on the initiative of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation supported by the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and the State Corporation Rostec. The choice of this council was due to the fact that upon its establishment the greatest progress had been seen in the trade and economic relations between these two countries. (There is no doubt that the creation and activities of the council were just a few of great many relevant factors, although highly important.) Moreover, during the period since 2013 (except for 2016), Singapore has been the main foreign economic partner for Russia in Southeast Asia. Today, Singapore is the place where more than 400 Russian companies operate, while Singapore companies in recent years have been among the largest foreign investors in the economy of Russian regions (Bykov & Goh, 2012).

The main goals of the Russia-Singapore Business Council include:

- execution of decisions of the Russia-Singapore Inter-governmental High-level Commission (HLC);
- increasing the role of interested representatives of the Russian business community in the formulation and implementation of state policy in the field of Russia-Singapore economic ties;
- promotion of Russian technologies, goods and services in the markets of Southeast Asia;
- bringing best foreign practices to Russia;
- attracting investments in Russian regional projects;
- informational support of participants of the Russian market and the market of the Southeast Asia countries;
- establishment of the Russian Cultural Centre in Singapore; and
- arranging tours of Russian music, art and sports stars,.

It is noted that commercial goals are combined with cultural and purely diplomatic objectives.

In the period 2009–2014, the Russia-Singapore Business Council (RSBC) had been acting mostly in representative capacity, participating in HLC sessions and organizing visits and meetings of Russian officials and business representatives. Since 2014, it has changed its operations, with main emphasis placed on the expansion of bilateral and multilateral turnover between Russia and Singapore and other countries of Southeast Asia. By the decision of the Board of the Council, LLC RSBC Trade House was established that assumed not only the functions of the Council's executive structure but also started to execute real contracts, mainly in the sphere of high-tech sectors. In December 2017, with the support of the Council and the State Corporation Rostec, the company called Progression was established in Singapore, which was also granted the authority of trade house and the Centre for the promotion of Russian high-tech companies and presentation of investment projects.

At the time of its creation, RSBC represented about ten companies. In 2018, the Council already consists of about 60 Russian companies and production associations (which employ about one million people), with about another 30 companies and organizations being partners of the Council, representing mainly Singaporean companies and some other companies from South and Southeast Asia. A branch of the RSBC operates in Novosibirsk, and its representatives are active in St. Petersburg, Orel, Cheboksary, Yekaterinburg and Singapore. In 2018, Russia-Singapore Youth Business Council was established by the Council and Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

What is it actually doing?

There are regular international conferences and round tables held, attended by invited government officials, company leaders and recognized experts in particular fields. The largest forum on cooperation with ASEAN took place in May 2016 in Sochi. It received over 2500 participants. One to two conferences are held annually in some countries involving 20–250 participants. The so-called business missions are held when groups of foreign businessmen visit regions and particular companies in Russia, and, respectively, Russian groups abroad. Direct contacts and negotiations are organized between companies or business associations. Since 2014, there have been about 20 business missions of Russian companies to Singapore organized by the RSBC. Business councils are very active participants in preparing the agenda for high-level inter-governmental commissions. They participate in the preparation and sometimes oversee the programmes with certain years dedicated to a specific country or city. Thus,

the year 2016 was dedicated to Russia and ASEAN; 2018 to Moscow and Singapore. Active participation, and sometimes replacement in the process of cooperation, is seen on the part of business councils and trade missions. For example, Singapore also witnessed reopening of the trade mission only at the end of 2017. The activities of business councils informally and gradually promote positive image of the country, which helps to develop its reputation, increase mutual understanding between countries and peoples.

Turning into an important line of activity is the organization of large-scale Russia-Singapore business dialogues. The first two of them were held in 2016–2017 in Moscow, the third—in 2018 in Singapore. They have already become the leading dialogue platform for representatives of the authorities and businesses of the two countries. In addition, we see the organization of numerous business missions of representatives of Russian companies to Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, the Philippines and employees of Singaporean companies to the Russian regions, bilateral business meetings and multilateral round tables for industrialists, investors and representatives of the service sector and trade.

In December 2017, the RSBC organized and held in Phnom Penh the first Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) Business Forum—Cambodia under the patronage of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC)—the supranational body of the Eurasian Economic Council, which now includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. In May 2018, at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, the RSBC acted as a partner of the Russia-ASEAN business breakfast, organized by the Russia-ASEAN Business Council and the EEC. Thus, the RSBC, being a non-governmental organization, is currently playing a very significant role in the development of Russia-Singapore economic relations, and also participates in preparing agendas for cultural and other areas of cooperation.

Finally, it was the RSBC that in 2014–2015 was one of the initiators that stressed the need to create a free trade zone between the EAEU and Singapore. At the Eurasian Forum "Eurasian Week", held in October 2018 in Yerevan, an idea was voiced from the rostrum, albeit jokingly, that the Russia-Singapore Business Council might be turned into Eurasian-Singapore Council.

One of the potential tools to promote integration in the EAEU-ASEAN space can be the electronic international trading and service Business-to-Business (B2B) Platform RSTrade, which now operates in four languages: Russian, English, Indonesian and Chinese. It is 100% Russia designed. It

represents high-tech industrial and service companies. Its functionality includes trade, logistics, legal and financial services, payments and documents in electronic format in the online mode, automated customs services and contract manufacturing—a unique service that allows manufacturing of products at the facilities of other companies, localization of technologies and productions and building of international teams to assign research tasks. In 2017, the Platform was integrated into the GISP (the State Industry Information System) portal, supported by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation; in September 2018, an agreement was signed on integration with the largest service platform in Southeast Asia—KamelOne—operated by Singapore company vCargoCloud, and in October 2018, it was announced that RSTrade was becoming the main service of foreign economic activity for the Eurasian network of industrial cooperation, subcontracting and technology transfer, being created under the auspices of the EEC.

Now the Platform is being used by as many as some 82,000 companies from 17 countries. Another 14 represent the platform of vCargoCloud. Thus, the RSBC tools are gradually becoming an effective gateway to enhance interaction between the EAEU and ASEAN, among other things preparing the ground for comprehensive agreement on a free trade zone between the EAEU and ASEAN. The example of the Russia-Singapore Business Council is a case in point of how successful business diplomacy can be at that grassroots (basic) level.

Conclusion

In general, in our opinion, the tools of business diplomacy in recent years play an increasingly important role in both interstate relations and in communications between major international integration associations. This factor should be taken into account when preparing the agenda for international summits and when analysing the current international situation and forecasting trends. However, tools and institutions of business diplomacy can play both constructive and destructive roles. Russian business diplomacy has its crucial differences from business diplomacy of Western countries. Its institutions are often more acceptable and much easier to understand for Eastern countries, many of which have similar structures. The Russian business diplomacy model needs to be further analysed, also using the comparative analysis against Western and Eastern systems.

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CHAPTER 12

The Baltic Sea Region: Cooperation in Human Dimension

Daria Akhutina

Along with the official public diplomacy that is provided for by the state, people's diplomacy can be used as a complementary tool that is sufficient for promoting the interests of the country or for contributing to the creation of a positive reputation for the country. Such a concept had already been in place during the time of the Soviet Union. This was when people's diplomacy was directly financed by the state and, with some few exceptions, totally dependent on the state, as it was part of its entire strategic approach in the international arena. In modern Russia, people's diplomacy has not always gone hand in hand with the official public diplomacy and has sometimes even run counter to official foreign policy.

In this chapter, the transformations of the people's diplomacy and human dimension of the international cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) during the last three decades is considered. The material and logic of this chapter is based on the author's experience while working at the Council for Baltic Sea State's Secretariat in Stockholm, Sweden. When talking about the BSR, the following countries are considered to be a part of it both geographically and/or ethnically: five Nordic countries—

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Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden; Germany and Poland (prior those parts of the countries that are adjacent to the Baltic Sea); three Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; and the Russian Federation (north-western—NW—part of Russia).

People-to-People Diplomacy and Managing International Relationships

Many of the divides and challenges that face the world, ranging from the local to global scale, have seen traditional diplomacy and politics fail to solve. In order to heal these divides, an increasing level of enthusiasm and hope have been placed on the role of public diplomacy, through being seen as a more credible and popular means of resolving these issues (Payne, 2009a, p. 487). Exchanges involving citizens across borders is an effective means of connecting people and ideas in an effort to generate influence; it is also increasing the cost-effective means of engaging in people-to-people diplomacy that is supported by advances in new communications technologies (facilitating those connections).[1] An Oxford reference defines the concept and practice of "people-to-people diplomacy is a transnational conflict-resolution strategy, underpinning the role that private citizens may play in mitigating hostile interstate relations."[2] There are differing ways of conceiving and defining this form of diplomacy.

> Citizen diplomacy or people's diplomacy is the political concept that average citizens can engage as representatives of a country or a cause either inadvertently or by their own design (United States Department of State. Retrieved 23 August 2016).

Citizen diplomacy is a crucial and highly effective tool in times of political tension, especially when official channels are either unreliable from the point of view of foreign communities or are ineligible to act abroad. It can be realized in many forms, such as cultural exchanges, professional and

[1] Walker, J. W., and Gaynor, D., Smarter Diplomacy: Doubling Down on People-to-People, *The Centre for Citizen Diplomacy* (original article in *The Diplomat*), 1 March 2014, https://www.centerforcitizendiplomacy.org/resource/smarter-diplomacy-doubling-people-people/ (accessed 15 January 2019).

[2] People-to-people Diplomacy, *Oxford Reference*, http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195334685.001.0001/acref-9780195334685-e-564 (accessed 15 January 2019).

expert relationships, academic and youth exchanges, cooperation at the level of twin cities and municipalities, cooperation among civic organizations, and international athletic events. "People diplomats" can be any kind of individual, including, but not limited to, students, travellers, representatives to different professions, artists, and business people. One of the often-stated advantages of people-to-people diplomacy is the potential of greater credibility and ease in working with a target audience, especially when there is no governmental involvement and therefore agenda setting or controlling function.

However, both in concept and practice, it is necessary to include the government as it is a significant stakeholder. There are, simultaneously, advantages and disadvantages to a formal government-led public diplomacy approach. Advantages can include, by working with government officials, access to specific publics and support for the implementation of projects (including financing). Official cooperation can also ensure credibility within the public sphere of the country concerned. This can include greater press coverage in traditional print and electronic media. There is a flip side, the most obvious of which is the possible distrust in the government-supported public diplomacy programmes by the intended target audience. As such, there is a risk of the erosion of credibility and trust, and the programme in spite of its intentions may be seen as propaganda and not in the interests of the local population (Payne, 2009b, p. 603). The intention of people-to-people diplomacy is to engage proactively, between different stakeholders to achieve a common good.

People-to-people diplomacy requires a broad spectrum of stakeholders to actively engage in a collaborative project in order to meet common goals as the basis of their mutually beneficial relationship. Cowan and Arsenault (2008, p. 21) stress that "collaborative projects almost without exception include dialogue between participants and stakeholders, but they also include concrete and typically easily identifiable goals and outcomes that provide a useful basis and structure upon which to form more lasting relationships." People-to-people diplomacy can, therefore, be a means to the realization of the management and governance of human security.

There are three levels of peace-making diplomacy: the upper-level where political elite diplomacy takes place; at mid-level public diplomacy interaction between political elites and ordinary people; and the lower-level people-to-people diplomacy that witnesses interactions among ordinary people (Handelman, 2012, p. 2). Traditionally, human security has been the preserve of governments; however, this is increasingly being

called into question owing to a lack of capacity or lack of interest in solving issues and events. One of the emerging conclusions in this setting is that governments are increasingly being required to work more closely with the non-governmental sector to promote human security. Communication and work on human security from the grassroots level is better placed to deal with the fundamental problem. This form of activism is increasingly being enabled and supported through the development and use of information technology (Axworthy, 2001), which enables dialogues and collaboration to take place in order to create and maintain international networks and relationships.

There are various possible modes of interaction in people-to-people diplomacy that create active interaction between the sides, such as dialogue groups, educational projects, scientific collaborations, multinational workshops, and partnership in peace-making grassroots organizations. This interaction can be effective in building collaborations and coalitions. However, when not including governmental elements the scale of the activity is quite small and limited in nature, which can mean that any spirit of change at the grassroots level may not transfer to the operational political level (Handelman, 2012, p. 2). When operationalized within the context of public diplomacy, the gap between the political elite and the ordinary person can be narrowed.

People-to-people diplomacy has a very special role and specific features when it comes to neighbouring societies that belong to the different countries. People from neighbouring geographical areas have always been united by common concerns, such as those of air and water quality, mobility, diseases, civil security, and striving for natural communication among neighbours. People naturally strive to work together and find effective solutions to challenges in order to make their region a safer and more comfortable place for all citizens.

The Landscape of the Cooperation Structures and Platforms in Baltic Sea Region Dealing with People' Diplomacy in the 1990s–2000s

Friendship Societies

An All-Union Culture Society with Foreign Countries (Rus. abbrev. VOKS) was established in 1925, transformed in 1958 into the Union of the Soviet Friendship Societies for Cultural Relations with Foreign

Countries (Russian abbrev. SSOD), and then afterwards in 2008 it was changed to the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and the International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudichestvo).

The friendship societies of the Soviet Union were based on memberships from the different organizations that were playing the role of "people ambassadors" like museums, universities, enterprises, as well as others that are attractive for foreign audiences. The majority of the friendship societies abroad were built with strong support from the Soviets and were financed by the Soviet state. For that reason, many of them ceased to exist in their original form after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

When talking about the BSR, the Finland–Russia Society can be mentioned here as an exception. The establishment of the friendship society in Finland had been very much supported by the Finnish Government and was founded in 1944, less than a month after the Moscow Armistice that ended the Continuation War between Finland and the USSR. This Society promoted the signing of the Finno-Soviet Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance, which then became the basis for Finnish–Soviet relations from 1948 through to 1992. The Society is active, influential, and is still in demand of the local community in comparison to the many other re-established friendship societies in the Nordic countries, where they are unpopular among citizens and are often perceived as marginalized groups of former communist regime supporters.

Despite the many outdated methods of the SSOD structure, some concepts can still be taken into consideration. For example, the strong focus on working and having links with foreign elites and policymakers. This applies especially when those, who are invited formally by non-governmental organizations "NGO" were able to perform as individuals sharing their personal views in different kinds of debates. Secondly, it would never have been possible to organize many of the very visible events without the strong financial support from the state. These events include things such as cultural exhibitions, concerts, and wide-scale youth exchanges.

After the cold war years, the beginning of 1990s with its spirit of open borders became a period of great inspiration for international cooperation on the people-to-people level as well; schools, universities, newly established NGOs, cultural institutions, businesses, and cities got the impulse to create relationships with their colleagues abroad. For NW Russia, thanks to its geographical proximity and close contacts with neighbouring

countries, has enabled it to develop especially intensively. On the other hand, the economic situation of Russia at that time did not allow any financial support to be given to the domestic actors to develop these relations. Consequently, it led to complete dependence on foreign donors and their priorities. For the sake of justice, it must be noted that many of them did strive to consider the interests of their Russian partners, while still prioritizing their own goals for the main applicants of foreign funds. Huge amounts of the budget of the foreign grants had been intended to cover their own services and products.

Thanks to the first international projects in the 1990s, not only the joint Cross-Border-Cooperation (TACIS) projects but also the cooperation projects paid for with foreign grants, many Russian institutions received decent modern equipment: the first fax machines, printers, computers, and later the first laptops and mobiles. Since Russia had been considered a "development" country, no contribution in cash had been required from Russian partners, but rather only contribution "in kind," which meant the usage of their existing office premises and infrastructure.

Despite Russia's level of dependence, many of the first projects of the 1990s were generally positive, which paved the way to knowledge and experience exchanges, thus widening the scope of vision, establishing closer people-to-people relationships, and facilitating intercultural dialogues. If during the time of the Soviet Union, international contacts and friendships were available for narrow groups of selected actors, during the 1990s, these became open for far wider audiences.

When considering the conditions of economic growth and stability in Russia, it was the beginning of the 2000s that Russia ceased to be a country in considered undergoing development and the requirements of many, though not all, foreign donors changed. Russian partners required contributions in cash as well, which significantly reduced the capability of Russian institutions to take part in joint international projects. This was at the same time that the dependence on domestic actors to contribute their cost of participation in the international projects increased. In many cases, it was the local municipalities' budget, businesses, or some other "richer" institution that could afford such a financial contribution, which did not necessarily coincide with the competencies required for the project implementation. Such an approach became very challenging for smaller organizations and NGOs, which often possessed the necessary competence and expertise, for instance, in the fields of social care and the environment. The financial support from the Russian state during this time remained

very limited or absent entirely. Access to financial support is selective and dependent on personal contacts. At the same time, the people ambassadors from the cultural sphere, starting in the 2000s, gained access to the domestic sponsors from businesses striving to be visible in international activities and willingly provided sponsorship for events such as joint concerts, concert tours, exhibitions, or other similar events.

The Russian "foreign agent" law, officially "On Amendments to Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation regarding the Regulation of the Activities of Non-profit Organizations Performing the Functions of a Foreign Agent," introduced in 2012 by legislators, but not actively enforced until 2013, negatively influenced the people-to-people contacts and joint projects in neighbouring countries, since they were and still are very much dependent on joint international projects. The overwhelming majority of these projects are very far from any kinds of "political activity" and are mostly within pure humanitarian spheres. However, the local authorities and NGOs were scared by formulations in the law, which, due to their lack of clarity, allowed for misinterpretation. This caused them to prefer to avoid projects or international activities that could potentially cause problems. At this cross-border dimension of people diplomacy, the law caused damage to the local communities which could be used, especially in times of tension as valuable resources to preserve people-to-people level relationships.

The Baltic Sea Region and the countries which belong to it either geographically or ethnically are very diverse due to their historical and cultural backgrounds, but also with regard its socio-economic developments. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many families, friends, and partners had been divided by state borders, which especially concerns the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The relationship for three decades experienced different times: from the complete denial of common roots and language to the realization of the economic benefits of knowledge of the Russian language, especially in connection with the opportunity to work in the Russian market and on Russian clients.

The Expanded Amount of Cooperation Structures Appearing in 1990s in the Baltic Sea Region

The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) was established in 1992. In the beginning, only two members of the CBSS were European Union (EU) members—Denmark and Germany—and it were these countries

that established the Council with the aim to ease the transition to a new international landscape of the BSR. The initiative was taken by the then foreign ministers of Denmark and Germany, Uffe Elleman-Jensen and Hans-Dietrich Genscher, respectively. They stated that "in light of political changes in Europe, the dream was to create a forum, which could serve as a driving force behind political and economic stabilization and cooperation in the new Baltic Sea region." According to the Copenhagen Declaration, the founding document of the CBSS, the goal was "to strengthen the cohesion among these countries, leading to greater political and economic stability, as well as a regional identity." The Council was a first attempt at building confidence and relations based on trust in regard to the new political realities of the region. By the end of the 1990s and the mid-2000s, the situation in the Region had dramatically changed by the majority of the CBSS member states entering the EU. Currently, there are only three CBSS member states that are not EU member states. Thus, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) has fulfilled many of the objectives set in 1992and remains a structure with a rather unique potential, which especially applies to its comprehensive membership, encompassing EU members and non-members, including Russia, as well as the European Union. No organization, other than the CBSS, currently has the mandate to initiate and organize a high-level political dialogue within the region. Having two key directions in the activity—political dialogue and practical cooperation through the facilitation of joint project activity—enables them to complement and gain from each other. The CBSS established its own project support facility fund, very much designed for the "people" diplomat actors, including NGOs from all CBSS Member States. The CBSS three long-term priorities, which were revised in 2014, are Regional Identity, a Sustainable and Prosperous Region, and a Safe and Secure Region, envisaging the involvement of both governments and civic actors. Apart from the revision and streamlining of priorities in 2014, there was a realization that the CBSS on the approach to 2020 still needed to decide what it was best placed to achieve from 2020 onwards towards 2030. For that reason, the CBSS Group of Wise Men and Women entitled the "CBSS Vision Group" was established in Reykjavik on 20 June 2017 to solve this apparent connection between what has been achieved, what is being accomplished currently, what is the potential moving forwards, and what has to be updated. The foreign ministers of the member states and a High Representative of the European Union invited the CBSS to appoint an independent group of wise women and men with the task to elaborate a

report with recommendations for a vision for the Baltic Sea Region beyond 2020 and especially on the future role of the CBSS. The Vision Group's work has resulted in the **Vision for the Baltic Sea Region beyond 2020**. This report was presented on 18 June 2018 in Stockholm at the meeting of CBSS foreign ministers. The member states expressed their continued support for the mission of the CBSS while also emphasizing the need to focus on restoring trust in the region.[3]

The **Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM)** actively entered the arena of international cooperation in the BSR by opening their first office in Russia in St. Petersburg in 1995. The NCM offered a great opportunity for financial support for people-to-people diplomacy actors from NW Russia in fields where civil organizations had been very active, such as the environment, working to combat human trafficking, social care, culture, gender equality, and human rights, providing a wide scope of instruments for different kinds of studies, visits, and exchanges for Russian representatives to Nordic countries. It was basically the only existing financial instrument that supported the involvement of the civil society organizations from the entire BSR, with the only exception being Germany. It did not offer much large funding but it was sufficient for NGOs to create joint projects with. Over a period of almost twenty-five years, the NCM has established several offices in NW Russia in Petrozavodsk, Kaliningrad, and Archangelsk. In 2015, the NCM had to suspend the Russian office's work as it was being included into the list of "international agents."[4]

In 2001, **the Baltic Sea NGO Forum** was established in the framework of the CBSS and has since proved its value as a unique platform for a wide, cross-sectorial dialogue aiming to bring together NGOs, politicians, decision-makers, and academia. It has worked to improve cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region by making common efforts towards collaboration on issues of vital importance. One significant achievement of the Forum is that it is no longer just an event, but rather the BS NGO Forum has grown into the BS NGO Network.[5] It now has the potential to become a sustainable framework for NGO cooperation in the region, if

[3] *Vision for the Baltic Sea Region beyond 2020.* Report by the Council of the Baltic Sea States Vision Group, http://www.cbss.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Vision-Group-Report.pdf.

[4] Activities of the Nordic Council of Ministers: Annual Report 2016, http://norden.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1137469/FULLTEXT01.pdf.

[5] *The Baltic Sea NGO Network*, http://www.balticseango.net/about-us/.

not for the lack of financial support and its dependency on the conditions of each of countries, which currently remains unequal.

European Union-Russia, the Regional Dimension

The enlargement of the EU and NATO in 2004 has fundamentally changed the geopolitical landscape of the Baltic Sea Region. Since 2014, new geopolitical realities have emerged affecting regional cooperation and trust among the countries in the region has decreased. The confidence building and problem-solving capacities of the international and regional institutions demanded new and reinforced approaches. An increase in military presence and activity in the region implied the risk of turning the region, which should be based on peace and cooperation, into one of new confrontations. The promotion and facilitation of people-to-people contacts have become more difficult in an era of increasing distrust among nations. While civil society in the region remains strong, it is in the process of transformation, and as a result, its contributions are not always translated into a language that policymakers are able to process and take account of. This hinders the use of the creative potential of individuals and civil society actors within the context of regional cooperation.

Since 2014, the referendum in Crimea and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine have seriously affected the bilateral political dialogue between the EU and Russia. As a result, some of the policy dialogues and mechanisms of cooperation are temporarily frozen, and sanctions directed at promoting a change in Russia's actions in Ukraine have been adopted.

However, Russia remains a natural partner of the EU and is still its largest neighbour, having a border over 2500 km long in the Baltic Sea Region. For the EU, Russia will always remain a strategic partner in combating regional and global challenges. Coming back to the history of EU–Russia relationships, the launching of the Northern Dimension (ND) initiative for the EU in Rovaniemi by the then Prime Minister of Finland, Paavo Lipponen, in September 1997 played a crucial role for the future development of the region. The political purpose of the initiative was to prepare the European Union and the Baltic—Northern region—for the next round of European Union enlargement. The political purpose was obviously not the only one purpose, and it was not by occasion that the ND had been initiated by Finland. Finnish companies have had a long experience in doing business with the Soviet Union and were not going to give up these positions, even in modern Russia.

That's why one of the key elements of the proclaimed Northern Dimension initiative was the creation of a healthy business framework and the removal of existing trade barriers. This project-oriented approach was put forward as an appropriate solution. The two big scale projects should be mentioned in this context: the upgrading of the railway between Helsinki and St. Petersburg which reduced the travel time to a bit more than three hours and reduced the time needed for border and customs control by doing it during the trip. As to the investments needed for infrastructure, billions of Finnish marks had been solely invested from the Finnish side. The costs soon paid off with a significant increase in the flow of travellers, both leisure and business which positively affected economic development on both sides of the border. The train, which was named Allegro, became the very first fast train in Russia.

Another important investment and the biggest Northern Dimension environmental project in the region was the South-Western Wastewater Facility in St. Petersburg. The Nordic Investment Bank (NIB) and the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) took on a leading role in securing the international financing for the project. Also, the EU TACIS Programme and national funding were involved. Finland contributed €10 million to this project. The Finnish initiative, which was transferred to the Northern Dimension in 1999, is a joint policy (renewed in 2006) between the EU, Russia, Norway, and Iceland that provides a framework to

- promote dialogue and concrete cooperation;
- strengthen stability, well-being and intensified economic cooperation; and
- support economic integration, competitiveness, and sustainable development in Northern Europe.

In addition to the four ND Partners, namely the EU, Russia, Norway, and Iceland, the EU member states in their national capacity, the Regional Councils, the Arctic Council (AC), the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC), the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Nordic Council of Ministers (NCM), International Financial Institutions (IFIs)—for example, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Nordic Investment Bank (NIB), and the Nordic Environment Finance Corporation (NEFCO), as well as other financial institutions—universities, research centres, the

business community, Canada and the United States as observers, and Belarus, in practical cooperation, also participated. Thereby, the policy covers a broad geographic area—from the European Arctic and Sub-Arctic to the southern shores of the Baltic Sea and countries from, or in the vicinity of, north-west Russia in the east and Iceland and Greenland in the west.

The Northern Dimension became an integral part of the common agenda between the enlarging EU and Russia, paving the way for a systematic political dialogue and continuity on the issues of common concern regarding the joint development of the common spaces—the Baltic Sea Region and the Arctic. The practical and sectorial cooperation decided to facilitate the following thematic issues within the four Northern Dimension Partnerships:

- environment (NDEP),
- public health and social well-being (NDPHS),
- transport and logistics (NDPTL), and
- culture (NDPC).

Each ND Partnership has the secretariat in countries of Baltic Sea Region and actively involves a large number of the regional actors, including regional organizations and cultural institutions, local and regional authorities, the academic and business communities, civil society governments, and academia, which in this way strengthens the people-to-people level of regional cooperation. Thus, the political crisis could affect the activities of ND partnerships, causing financial and even thematic limitations, as they work to accomplish their tasks.

Through the enlargement of the Union, Kaliningrad became a Russian enclave inside the Union. Russia and the European Union started working on practical solutions to avoid new barriers for free movement of people and goods in the region. In 2012, an agreement between the governments of the Russian Federation and Poland on local border traffic entered into force, which led to intense economic growth on both sides of the border with the establishment of small companies in trade and tourism, such as shops, restaurants, and hotels, the diminishment of unemployment, and the contribution to the socio-economic developments of the bordering regions. In 2015, Russians spent US$75 million in Poland, and Polish people in Russia spent US$105 million. Unfortunately, this favourable economic situation stopped in July of 2016 with the abolishment of visa-free regime agreement. The overall political context operates contrary

to the obvious advantages and mutual benefits of the cross-border relationships in the region.

A significant step in consolidating the resources of EU-Member States from the BSR countries has been taken by establishing, in 2009, "The European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR)"—the first macro-regional strategy in Europe. A couple of years later, in 2012, the joint group with the purpose of finding the common areas and possible synergies between the North-Western Russian Strategy 2020 and the EUSBSR had been established. The joint group functioned under the leadership of Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for the European Neighbourhood Policy, and Igor Slunyaev, the former minister of the Ministry of regional development of RF. The areas for mutually beneficial cooperation have been defined as innovation/science, ecology including agriculture, transport including maritime safety, culture and tourism, and people-to-people contacts, including social, health, education, and youth. The joint group ceased to exist after 2014 leaving these areas highly relevant for regional cooperation and offering good opportunities to benefit the development of the entire region. Basically, the people-to-people contacts are lying exactly in the plane of the directions defined by the joint group, reflecting the overall perspectives of the EU–Russia cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region.

One of the major actors in the BSR, involving the people-to-people format of cooperation, is **The Baltic Sea States Sub-regional Cooperation (BSSSC)**, founded in Stavanger, Norway, in 1993, and it has acted as a political network for decentralized authorities (sub-regions) in the Baltic Sea Region. Its participants are the regional authorities of the ten Baltic Sea states: Germany, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Russia. The Cooperation in the Barents Euro-Arctic region was launched in 1993 on two levels: the intergovernmental **Barents Euro-Arctic Council** (BEAC) and the interregional **Barents Regional Council (BRC)**. The overall objective of Barents cooperation has been sustainable development. The Barents Regional Council united fourteen member counties and a representative of the indigenous peoples in the northernmost parts of Finland, Norway, Sweden, and north-western Russia. The BEAC was established in 1993 with the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration, the regional representatives, together with the indigenous peoples, signed a cooperation protocol that established the Regional Council for the Barents Euro-Arctic Region with the same objectives as the BEAC, to support and promote cooperation and development in the Barents Region.

During the Cold War, the Barents region was an area of military confrontation. The underlying premise was that the close cooperation could secure long-term political stability and reduce possible tensions. This objective has been successfully achieved. The Barents cooperation fostered a new sense of unity and closer contact among the people of the region, who are successfully going through the hard times of political tension.

The Union of the Baltic Cities (UBC), founded in Gdańsk, Poland, in 1991 by 32 cities of the BSR, has now expanded to 107 cities from 10 different countries of the Region. It is a network that facilitates human connections and mobilizes the shared potential of the member cities for democratic, economic, social, cultural, and environmentally sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region. With the purpose of promoting, developing, and strengthening cooperation and exchange of experiences among the cities in the Baltic Sea Region, it acts on behalf of the cities and local authorities in common matters towards regional, national, European, and international bodies by advocating the common interests of the local authorities in the region and by contributing to joint Baltic identity, cohesion, and common understanding in the region.

With all the diversity of this regional cooperation, each organization strives to avoid duplication and find its niche, thus comes the question of the added value for each of the cooperation structures in the Region, often in the context of the overlap with EU-formats dealing with very similar issues. Most often the answer is found in the composition of membership, having Russia as a member is an obvious advantage for all cooperation platforms, mentioned above, in the BSR. By having all the countries of the region on-board, it makes a comprehensive approach in meeting current challenges, for the sake of the regional development and the welfare of the citizens, possible.

Despite the variety of the cooperation platforms in the Region, the peoples' diplomacy and its actors lack the financial instruments covering the participation from the entire region; most existing funds are linked to the EU BS Strategy and therefore support only the EU Member States, some of these funds exclude participation from Germany (NCM and Swedish Institute). The EU-Russian CBC programme finances only bilateral projects from physically bordering areas, the bigger Interreg BSR programme, where Russia, due to its delay in joining the agreement with the EU, became a part of the programme only at third (last) call, and is not available for most of the institutions in the Region due to the limited number of potentially supported projects and the complicated procedure

of project applications. The CBSS has its project support facility fund covering all the Member States, but it has a limited capacity since it was designed to support only very small "seed money" projects; the total amount of the fund is €1 million for three priorities for three years. Primarily, such spheres of people's diplomacy, such as education and culture, suffer a lot from this unfavourable situation with funds.

Conclusion

Political tension in Russia's relations with Western countries, starting in 2012 and deepening in the spring of 2014 due to the crisis in Ukraine and the referendum in Crimea, brought times of severe endurance for people-to-people relationships. In the Baltic Sea Region, the situation can be compared with a many-layer cake; on one hand, long traditions of partnership and also personal friendships among municipalities, cultural institutions, NGOs, and businesses performed as a safety bag to maintain the high level of interaction; on the other hand, the general negative political context could not but affect the regional cooperation in the BSR—many joint cooperation programmes, even in Northern Dimension's partnership, became either frozen or cancelled, organizations' budgets were cut off in parts foreseen for international cooperation on both sides. The law "on international agents" reduced, as mentioned above, the number daring to openly receive financial support in the framework of joint projects. With some exceptions, the EU–Russia CBC programmes 2014–2020, available for the limited number of actors, were started with a delay and were subjected to a lengthy approval procedure.

The potential of people's diplomacy in Russia remains underestimated and is not fully used. The resources of the state-supported organizations created specifically to act in this field remain scattered, facing a lack of coordination and a common approach. Most of them are tasked to work with compatriots abroad or for the promotion of studies on the Russian language. Having all respect to the importance of these tasks, activities in the field of people's diplomacy cannot be reduced solely to these two components. One has to admit that compatriots are not always able to influence public opinion among foreign communities and are sometimes not even recognized as a part of them. When regarding language issues, very few enthusiasts desire to learn a language for the sake of culture as the majority perceives language as an instrument to be used in the context of their life—be it business or personal goals. No matter how many Russian

language classrooms do exist, interest will not just appear. In the situation when the obvious need cannot be found, the motivation to learn the (Russian) language will be low; in another word, language studies is a "with following" activity which should be "warmed up" with some special interest and purpose.

The support to non-state actors is insufficient and has a very fragmental coverage of the foreign countries, and the majority of support goes to foreign communities from countries with a friendly orientation towards Russia. More efforts towards supporting people-to-people relationships in Western countries with a more challenging environment would be appropriate. All that concerns in full extent the countries of the BSR.

A special financial instrument for the support of the joint projects and initiatives in regional cooperation facilitating people's diplomacy could be offered from the Russian side, being available to both Russian actors of the people's diplomacy and for the foreign actors of people's diplomacy. Such financial instruments, underlining their special mission to maintain and develop the human dimension of the regional cooperation, despite political tensions, could perform as an effective tool to complement the public diplomacy provided by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the visible contribution to the regional development, creating a spirit of trust and good neighbourhood.

Close relations have been maintained between the countries of the Baltic Sea Region from very old times up to the present day. In the interaction landscape, cooperation on the people-to-people level could play a critically important role, making a significant contribution to both the stability and the favourable social climate of the region, diminishing the risk of conflicts, and decreasing tensions. This is done through the promotion of traditions of good neighbourhood and mutual trust and tolerance, things that are beneficial to all the countries and citizens. For this reason, both civil society organizations and governments should work together to support and strengthen the public diplomacy level of regional cooperation.

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CHAPTER 13

Strategic Communication of Russia in Latin America

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Strategic Communication in the Public Administration System and Foreign Policy

In Russia, unlike in the USA, the term "strategic communication" (SC) is not used in official documents. The latter has elevated the concept of strategic communication to state policy at the highest level (National Framework for Strategic Communication, 2010). In spite of an abundance of state institutions,[1] documents (Office of the Under Secretary of Defence for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, 2004; Office of the

[1] The Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications (DNSA/SC); The Centre for U.S. Global Engagement; The Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R/PPR) and bureaus of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Public Affairs, and International Information Programs which are overseen by the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, etc. The structures are constantly changing and developing.

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Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, 2010; etc.), and scientific research (Corman, Trethewey, & Goodall, 2008; Fisher, Lucas, & James, 2011; Murphy, 2008; Patterson & Radtke, 2009; Paul, 2011; O'Hair, Fredrich, & Dixon, 2010), it is still in its nascent stages of development there.

Russia tends to use the terms "state information policy", "information security", "information support for foreign policy activities", and some other related definitions, which do not exclude, however, the need for strategic communication, because it is implicit in these terms. At the same time, it is important to avoid abandoning strategic communication in the current state informational policy, that is, relating the tactical unity of acts, words, and images to the strategy for the development of Russia.

The *Doctrine of Informational Security of the Russian Federation* (2016, Chapter I, paragraph 2c) defines information security as "…the state of protection of the individual, society and the State against internal and external information threats, allowing to ensure the constitutional human and civil rights and freedoms, the decent quality and standard of living for citizens, the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and sustainable socio-economic development of the Russian Federation, as well as defence and security of the State".

Strategic communication in the realm of foreign policy combines the synchronization of affecting an allied state and non-state actors through friendly "deeds, words, and images" and through a wide range of communications within the framework of information warfare addressing foes and enemies. However, separating one from the other is extremely difficult for the following reasons:

- It is not easy to forge alliances in the contemporary international field due to the conflicting interests of governing elites, which are often quite controversial.
- The modern realities and interpretations of conflict deliberately blur boundaries between war and peace, between military and civilian systems, and spaces between information and influence or manipulation (Armistead, 2004; Arpagian, 2010; Brunner & Cavelty, 2009). This allows for the development and application of new kinds of informational impact and information weapons.

The majority of Russian and foreign experts quite reasonably consider information and psychological warfare as a clash of opposing parties aimed

at limiting the capabilities of the other side in the hope of their destruction (Armistead, 2010; Brusnicyn, 2001; Linebarger, 2010; U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2014; Veprincev, Mnaoilo, Petrenko, & Frolov, 2005). However, in reality, the winner is ultimately the one that not only and not so much destroys, but the one that creates something new and more progressive. If this pattern ceases to work, there will be a general decline of humanity.

In order to usher in a qualitatively new level of development, it is vital for Russia to raise the efficiency of management systems in all domains of society. The increase in Russia's capacity to utilize strategic communication might become one of its most efficient tools for developing new systems of this sort. It will decrease the burden on the administrative and financial administration organs, have a real impact on the speed of economic growth, and reinforce Russia's international position and state security. It is worth noting that we are not talking about replacing physical action with communication manipulation mechanisms—Russia needs real progress, not a propagandistic imitation.

In the following section, we attempt to show synchronized deeds, words, and images in the current politics of Russia. Moreover, we use the example of Latin America, where Russia has made significant breakthroughs since the beginning of the century.

Strategic Communication of Russia in Latin America Is on the Rise

Within the vast array of factors that could lead to increasing Russian presence in Latin America, primary attention is rightfully paid to the political, economic, and military factors. However, the growing and dynamically developing system of information and communication support of Russian foreign policy deserves no less attention. It is especially important to highlight the recent progress of Russia's strategic communication in the region.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union, the system of foreign policy propaganda became poorly coordinated, controversial, low-powered, inefficient, and far from the needs of suiting Russia's long-term interests; at the time, foreign policy communications were the responsibility of separate bodies, without any strategic context. A Western-backed new elite, steeped in corruption, tried to hold power in the country as the economy declined and the population slid into poverty, intensifying property

stratification, and science and education degradation; however, natural resources and substantial nuclear potential remained key assets.

The situation has started to improve since the presidency of Vladimir V. Putin, followed by that of Dmitry A. Medvedev, and continued once again by Vladimir V. Putin, since 2012. However, many strategic solutions of national development have been delayed and the citizens' well-being is connected to oil prices and other resources; these convey negative images of Russia to Latin America. Nonetheless, as changes have occurred, Russia's presence has risen in the region. The ideological component does not matter here; Moscow is ready to cooperate with countries which have left–socialistic and right–conservative governments. This approach gives good results. From 2005 to 2009, Russia's trade turnover with Latin American countries increased to US$18 billion from about US$6 billion in the years prior. Some experts have cited the achievements of Russian foreign policy in Latin America as "the most efficient outcome of Moscow's international activities in recent years" (Strategic Culture Foundation, 2012).

In the mid-2010s, the dynamics of trade and economic cooperation between Russia and Latin American countries, in a number of areas, lost much initial momentum, and trade turnover began to decline. There was an imbalance between a relatively high level of political trust and relatively weak economic interaction. All this required the activation and expansion of Russian–Latin American cooperation in the economic sphere, specifically in the sphere of Russian exports of technological products. The future of Russian–Latin American relations largely depends on how successfully this task will be solved (Jakovlev, 2017). Finally, the future depends on the global situation and the capacities of Russia for rapid progress under unfavorable international conditions. No less important is how the countries of Latin America adapt themselves to the new conditions of global markets, which seem rather problematic in the short-term perspective. Volatile social conflicts and political instability negatively influence Russia–Latin America ties and cooperation.

A new foreign policy course needs to be charted, in addition to the introduction of more strategically expansive communication support. The *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation* has a particular provision in their information support for foreign policy activities. It points out that Russia seeks to ensure that the world has an objective image of the country, develops its own effective ways to influence foreign audiences,

promotes Russian and Russian-language media in the global information space and provide them with necessary government support, is proactive in international information cooperation, and takes necessary steps to counter threats to its information security (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 2016).

A very important role for the development of Russia's strategic communication in Latin America involves numerous summit meetings. During 2010, official visits of D. Medvedev to Argentina and Brazil contributed to the consolidation of collaboration. Vladimir Putin officially visited the region many times. For example, in mid-July 2014, just after Western sanctions were introduced against Russia, President Vladimir Putin's tour of the Latin American region was unprecedented in its duration and geographical scope. In six days (July 11–17), the Russian president visited four countries—Cuba, Nicaragua, Argentina, and Brazil—discussing with their leaders a wide range of issues about international life and Russian–Latin American cooperation. In addition, in Brazil, Vladimir Putin made contact at a multilateral and bilateral level with the presidents of almost all South American states within the framework of the BRICS summit in its outreach format.

"Home to our friends, home to people close to us", "close cooperation", and "multipolar world" are the key messages of the modern Latin American Strategy of Russia; these concepts have enjoyed broad acceptance among local elites and the general public abroad.

Russia aims to stabilize relations with Latin America and extend the achieved level of collaboration in the region, taking into account mutual interests and material and financial opportunities. An important role is given to cultural and educational exchanges and expanding the system of foreign specialists' preparation in Russian education.

In 2008, *RIA Novosti* opened its Cuban bureau. It was a step toward a more complete presence of the leading Russian news agency in the region. In 2010, a further strengthening of the informational presence of Russia in the region took place as Spanish columns from *Rossijskaya Gazeta* appeared in the biggest Latin American newspapers (*Clarín* and *Jornal do Brasil*), and *Russia Today* began broadcasting in Spanish.

The Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (*Rossotrudnichestvo*) plays an important role in the public diplomacy of

Russia. It was established in September 2008.[2] The agency is subordinated to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its head is nominated by the president of Russia. *Rossotrudnichestvo* operates beyond the Russian Federation through representations or through representatives as part of diplomatic missions of the Russian Federation in 73 countries around the world.

The activities of *Rossotrudnichestvo* and its foreign departments are aimed at forming and establishing an omni-faceted notion of contemporary Russia, its material and spiritual potential, and the content of its domestic and foreign policy. *Rossotrudnichestvo* collaborates not only with state authorities, but it has fruitful cooperation with NGOs such as the Russian Association of International Cooperation (which unites over 70 social unions, including funds of friendship with foreign countries), *Russkiy Mir* Foundation, Andrey Pervozvanny Foundation, *Russkoe Zarubezhye* Library Foundation, and many others.

Among *Rossotrudnichestvo*'s media partners are ITAR-TASS, RIA Novosti, channels such as *Russia Today*, the radio stations *Sputnik*, *MIR*, *Golos Rossii*, and magazines such as *Russkaya misl*, *Russkiy vek*, *Russkiy Mir*, and many other leading Russian, foreign mass media, and compatriot editions in Russian. Only *Rossotrudnichestvo* has offices in nine Latin American countries. The agency's events are grouped according to country and direction: international conferences, social events, work with compatriots, Russian language studies, cultural and educational events. For example, "New Generation-2016", a forum of young leaders from Latin America and Spain, took place in Moscow. Young specialists in the sphere of economics, politics, and scientific and cultural collaboration visited Russia as part of a program of short-term study tours for foreigners, entitled "New Generation", which has been coordinated by *Rossotrudnichestvo* since 2011 (Rossotrudnichestvo, 2018).

The Russian Orthodox Church has been a dynamic actor in the process of Russian public diplomacy in Latin America. On multiple occasions, the Church initiated events of regional importance. Among the significant events was the visit of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia (head of the Russian Orthodox Church) to Latin America in 2016. During his first ministerial visit to the region, Patriarch Kirill visited a number of countries, including Cuba, Brazil, and Paraguay. The meeting in Cuba between

[2] The agency Rossotrudnichestvo leverages more than 80 years of experience of its predecessors: the All-Union Society of Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the Union of Sovietic Societies of Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, the Russian Centre for International Scientific and Cultural Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (Roszarubezhcenter).

Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis was the most important event of this trip (Russkiy Mir, 2016).

It is possible and necessary to further develop strategic communication in Latin America. For example, *Rossotrudnichestvo* can more actively avail of the achievements of modern multimedia technologies; Russian organizations in the sphere of public diplomacy still use social media poorly. Publication of art and academic literature in Spanish and Portuguese is also in dire need of state support. Private publishers can earn money by engaging in such projects. I remember how satisfying it was as a Portuguese person to receive a book in Portuguese entitled "Russian Kitchen" (published by Progress Publishing House); however, that happened 29 years ago and has not happened again since.

It was not easy for Moscow to develop the current relations with Latin America. It had to endure the open hostility of the administration of President Bush and then it faced the almost undisguised unfriendly attitude of President Obama's conservative team members, that is, the ambassador staff in Latin America which Obama had inherited from the Republicans. Washington stonewalled almost all of Russia's initiatives on the international arena and especially those which concerned Latin America (Strategic Culture Foundation, 2012). Russian presence in Latin America continues to be unwelcome by the administration of President Trump.

Strategic Communication: War or Peace?

Psychological warfare in Latin America is multilevel. In the region there are:

- clashes of values, interests, and goals of different political forces at the national level;
- friction and tensions between different Latin American countries of different political orientations (e.g., between Colombia and Venezuela, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, etc.);
- conflicts of interest between Russia, China, the USA, and its NATO and EU allies (generally only partly related to events in Latin America itself); and
- growing rivalry between transnational corporations (TNCs) and transnational banks (TNBs) in the face of growing international competition, declining international trade, and instability in global commodity and financial markets. A transnational oligarchy has accumulated more and more resources, provoking social tensions.

In the presidential republics of Latin America, of course, the role of heads of state in the formation of domestic and foreign policy is great. Presidents and their governments, who must operate within the zone of interests of local oligarchical clans and interests of TNCs, inevitably fall into the epicenter of psychological warfare.

The forecasts for the development of relations between the Latin America and the USA under the new US administration have been very negative. This is largely due to the content and form of President Trump's statements about the countries in the region. From the very beginning of his election campaign, President Trump spoke disdainfully about Mexicans and the alleged Mexican government policy of encouraging Mexican illegal emigration to the USA (Edelman, 2016). President Trump called the late leader of the Cuban revolution, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba Fidel Castro, a "brutal dictator", and promised that his administration would do everything possible to ensure that the Cuban people began their path to prosperity and freedom. In August 2017, he did not rule out military intervention in Venezuela's affairs (Nelson, 2017). Such statements do not add to Trump's popularity among the left-leaning countries of Latin America.

In many ways, Russia is a natural winner here, because its capital, energy reserves, international influence, and military technology represent an appealing alternative to feeding the politically unpopular perception of American dominance in the region (Fillingham, 2010). So we can say that the roots of the more independent stance of Latin American countries are determined in an increasingly multipolar world by much more fundamental reasons that the aspirations of any one leader of Latin America, or the faults or successes in the geopolitical games of the USA and Russia, if these can be said to really exist. Is it possible to see a way out of the blind alley of rising tension in the relationships between Russia and the USA, for Latin America in particular? We shall try to open some perspectives in this area from the point of view of the strategic communication of two powers.

Once again, we want to repeat that strategic communication is the projection in mass consciousness of some strategic values, interests, and goals. These goals can more or less coincide, coexist, or compete, to be at odds, at war, or to exclude each other. If the strategic communication of Russia and the USA (and, desirably, that of other countries as well) projects a great number of coinciding basic values into the public conscience, this possibility would be the best option for most of Earth's population, as well as for those countries themselves and for global safety. If we want peace,

our main goal should be to obtain a harmonious coincidence of interests, values, and goals, although this does not depend on strategic communication completely. It does not mean defending immoral compromises; it means defending pluralism with regard to the means and models of development based on a dialectical unity of the main laws, as well as national and regional peculiarities of human development.

We consider it possible to present our general recommendations for the optimization of strategic communication of the two countries in the analyzed region within the framework of the word and deed policy, rejecting an information war in favor of mutual beneficial cooperation.

- In order to decrease the tension between and improve the images of the two nations in Latin America, it makes sense to launch joint projects in domains which are crucial to an increase of prosperity and liquidation of the current arrearage of Latin American countries. Thus, an increased involvement of Latin American partners in these projects is needed, especially in hi-tech elements. The projects should be open for participation to other countries and unions, such as the EU, China, India, Japan, and so on. Any possibility of turning Latin America into an object of neo-imperialistic claims or using it to divide the spheres of influence should be excluded. However, consistent acute competition between states does not exclude cooperation and even implies it.
- Global joint projects should be undertaken which involve Latin American partners, such as the search for and development of alternative energy sources, life (especially its active period) prolongation, solutions for alimentation and ecological problems, and so on. It is very important to accomplish projects vital for all mankind through joint efforts. A good example is ITER (International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor) (ITER, 2018). In southern France, 35 nations are collaborating to build the world's largest tokamak—a magnetic fusion device that has been designed to prove the feasibility of fusion as a large-scale and carbon-free source of energy based on the same principle that powers our sun and stars.
- There should be maximum possible transparency with regard to the preparation and implementation of joint projects.
- A well-thought-out consultation system and meetings of strategic communication experts should be put in place in order to discuss the emerging problems on time. The efficiency of strategic communications

as means of collaboration is negligible when strategic interests and goals are drastically mismatched. In this case, strategic communication inevitably becomes a tool of information warfare. Illusions to the contrary should not be harbored.

- Thus, compromises are essential, in addition to searching for ways to combine interests. Strategic communication can be very fruitful for the creation of a climate which enables such a search, but it can aggravate the situation as well. To a certain extent, strategic communication itself is an important (and partly autonomous) factor of rapprochement or estrangement of parties, and it is vital to ensure that it serves to accomplish the former.

Such a program of joint optimization of strategic communication in the region is completely impossible to implement in the circumstances of growing tension between Russia and the USA. There is need for serious, revolutionary to its core, economic, technological, social, and political shifts in the two countries, with consideration of their national peculiarities. This is in the common interest in order to overcome the threat of a new world war and to provide conditions for the worthy democratic and progressive development of mankind.

Strategic communication of the countries will have to deal with the ongoing theoretical and practical problems of further integration of "words and deeds" in real policy. It is necessary that strategic communication reach beyond a largely propagandistic level and become not only an element of communication support for foreign policy but also a more equal part of foreign policy management, with the appropriate set of tools for communication management, that is, professional people management via communications.

Conclusions

What are the competitive advantages Russia can use in its strategic communication in Latin America? Russia as a recovering economic power and alternative resource for the supply and production of arms (together with the EU, China, and other countries) symbolizes an alternative for Latin Americans. At the same time, Russia can rely on memory of the mighty force of the former USSR but without the risk of causing fear of communism on the part of right-wing Latin American elites. Neither those who like Russia nor those who hate it, will be able to find communism in this country today.

There is no problematic past shared with Latin America, especially when compared with Russia's history with the USA. With regard to cultural and interpersonal contacts, Russian culture is closer to multi-active Latin American culture than to linear-active or reactive cultures. There is an evident desire to increase the price of services to the USA on the part of the Latin American elite interested in the USA; there exists a desire to organize swift modernization for those who don't believe in US support.

There are obvious flaws in US foreign policy during the last two decades in the region and around the world; there exists evident unwillingness for Latin America to remain a "backyard" for the USA. Russia is mainly motivated by its economic interests; however, being a nearly totally self-sufficient nuclear superpower with natural resources, unlike other world powers, gives it an important geopolitical role in Latin America.

The instability of strategic communication of modern Russia is mainly determined by the instability of its economic resource-based situation, scientific and technical inferiority (more serious than in the USSR), and volatile social problems. If the current model of socio-economic and political development was to change in a positive direction it could open new strategic perspectives and consequently revolutionize strategic communication.

From the point of view of theoretical research and practical implementation of strategic communication, Russia seems to be lagging behind the USA. However, this is only on the surface; in fact, they are on the same (propaganda) level. The transition to this new level of strategic communications in the USA is not yet complete and the competitive advantages of communications are neutralized by negative facts of the communication sphere itself, which predetermines a negative perception of the USA in Latin America.

The problem of strategic communication should not be restricted to the field of administrative cooperation, even at the highest level, especially when the theoretical basis of strategic communication is far from well developed. For the civil academic realm there is simply no opportunity to fully accumulate the experience of the strategic communication of the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other state ministries and structures. At the same time, the dominance of the military structures in developing the concept and practice of strategic communication could have a deforming effect on the strategic communication of Russia in times of peace, making it "over militarized" which, logically, makes them significantly less efficient. A shining example of such an "over militarized" strategic communication was the USA under G. W. Bush Administration.

Consequently, it is impossible to develop an efficient strategic communications concept and strategy using only the experience of the state executive structures, existing academic centers, and interdepartmental coordination. It is necessary, at a minimum, to have a large *interdepartmental analytical center* on strategic communication with appropriate hierarchy and subordination, an appropriate level of access for the employees to strategic information, and so on. Until there is an understanding of its importance at the highest state level, cardinal changes in the efficiency of strategic communication are hardly possible.

In addition, it is very important to prepare specialists so that they are well versed in all forms of strategic communication, and so they understand these as a system and as an essential part of public management (and to develop the relevant programs of MS, PhD studies, MBA, and EMBA programs). In this way, Russia has a good chance of introducing some innovative solutions; however, it should not simply copy the Western experience.

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CHAPTER 14

Russia's Public Diplomacy in the Middle East

Vladimir Morozov and Greg Simons

During the years of the Cold War, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) was a zone of intense geopolitical competition between the US-led and Soviet-led blocks in order to achieve influence in order to control transportation routes, secure energy supplies and to sell armaments. While the bipolar world order up until the final years witnessed the seesawing of the cycle of competition and conflict, the end of this phase could be seen in the First Gulf War of 1990–1991 when the Soviet Union in its final throes was a mere spectator. From this moment until at least 2003, the United States became the sole superpower actor capable of projecting large-scale hard power in the MENA region and was able to act in accordance with its national goals and interests.

Events of the Iraq War in 2003 gave some vague indication of a possible change; Vladimir Putin in his first term as President of Russia had promised to restore at least some of Russia's international prestige. In the wake

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of the new path, Russia (plus other countries such as France and Germany) openly opposed the US intentions to invade Iraq. The growing suspicions of US intentions, as well as increasing Russian engagement in international affairs and relations peaked during the period of the so-called Arab Spring, when Russia began to position itself as a counterweight of US-led foreign policy.[1] This period of branded revolutions was seen as masked geopolitics that threatened Russia's then current and future interests and goals in the region (Koromaev, Zinkina, & Khodoonov, 2011; Bazarkina, Vinogradova, Manoilo, Pashentsev, & Simons, 2012; Primakov, 2012). Passive reactions to Iraq in 2003 and Libya in 2011 were replaced by active counteractions in Syria by 2015.

The Middle East region has always been and remains one of the key original purposes of Russian foreign policy. The region has been a zone of increased conflict for many years. Even at the end of the last century, few could foresee the extent to which the situation there would worsen at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Recent years have not led to a normalization of the situation in those countries of the region that lives in state of permanent conflict.[2] The development of the situation indicates the need for new ways and mechanisms that could, if not resolve the conflict, at least help to reduce its acute phase. That is why the study of Russia's public diplomacy (PD) in the Middle East is of special interest. In addition to traditional instruments of diplomacy, "soft power" has become an integral part of efforts to achieve foreign policy objectives. This primarily includes the tools provided by civil society, as well as various methods and technologies, from information and communication, humanitarian and other types.

Middle East as a Zone of Global Competition

Geopolitics is a contested term with regard to its definition and perception. When understanding the politics of geopolitics, it is necessary to point to both perception and outcomes. "Geopolitics is not just a way of seeing. It is also the actions and outcomes that simultaneously transform spaces, places and politics" (Flint, 2017, p. 302). Thus, geopolitics can be

[1] For example, see the Foreign Policy Concepts of the Russian Federation from the year 2013, http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/122186.

[2] https://mgimo.ru/about/news/experts/blizhniy-vostok-stabilnaya-nestabilnost/.

seen as both a practice and a representation (Flint, 2017, p. 36). Not long after the end of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, Brzezinski (1997) noted that the United States needed to gain and retain control of Eurasia in order to assure global dominance. Part of the task was therefore to prevent any one particular actor or constellation of actors that would be capable of challenging US global hegemony. At the beginning of the new century, Cohen (2003, p. 33) noted that there is an increase in the number of the world's major and regional powers, and also a strengthening of global and regional organizations. However, he saw this as not being sufficient to eliminate disturbances in the international system, with global terrorism and irredentist wars causing considerable turmoil.

The first issue to examine briefly is what are Russia's interests and motivations in the MENA region seen from the perspective of Russia and others? A 2018 Chatham House report on Russian policy across the Middle East put it down to a number of factors, many relating to geopolitical competition. Although some mention is made of economic factors, such as the international oil and gas markets, being drivers of Russian engagement and influence, the majority of factors were in connection with "a challenge to US and EU interests," the confrontation with the West, as a means to avoid international isolation and as a counter to Western sanctions as well as putting pressure on the West, a Russian suspicion of the Arab Spring and to cater to the domestic political constituency (by increasing Russia's perceived international prestige) (Kozhanov, 2018). However, this ignores a number of indicators, including the fact that Russian engagement in the MENA region began before the current tensions with the United States and EU.

The above assessment of the factors influencing Russia's increased engagement in the MENA region differs vastly from Dmitry Trenin's analysis. Russia certainly sees itself as a global player, which to an extent requires an active presence in key global regions, which MENA is certainly owing to a number of reasons. Trenin states that Russia's key objectives in the region include containing and reducing Islamic extremism and radicalism in other regions that have the potential to expand into Russia and the post-Soviet neighborhood; building long-lasting geopolitical alliances with friendly regimes and forces in the region by supporting them; establishing a modest Russian military presence in the region; expanding the market opportunities for Russian arms, nuclear industry, oil and gas and food; attempting to attract foreign investment in Russia, especially from

the rich Gulf States; supporting and coordinating energy prices through coordinating policies with the primary energy producers in the Gulf (Trenin, 2016). Russia has incrementally increased its presence and activity in the MENA region in the last decade, along the lines suggested by Trenin.

Russia began its diplomatic push into the MENA region from 2008, when, among other things, it offered Syria and Egypt nuclear power stations, and to re-establish its military presence in the Mediterranean Sea through making the Syrian port of Tartus operational again.[3] One of the observed net results of Russia's increased activity and interaction in the MENA region has been noted in the form of increasing influence. Vladimir Putin's 2017 tour of the Middle East prompted an observation from Ishaan Tharoor:

> he exhibited the kind of clever strategic policymaking that the US is simply not doing in the region. […] what you're seeing is Russia steadily coming in and re-building ties, asserting its influence, being an active player in the region—at a time when US policy in the Middle East is incredibly inconsistent and incoherent.[4]

Thus, the observation is as US presence and influence wanes, Russia has been successful at opportunistically taking advantage of these specific circumstances and project itself as a consistent, reliable and dependable actor that has a demonstrated willingness to stand by its allies and partners. Unlike in the Soviet era, Russia's current approach is highly pragmatic in relations with Arab states, and in building an alliance with other rising and regional powers that seek a more pluralistic global order. Putin's fourth term in office has prompted predictions to "expect more Russian attempts to deepen its political, security and economic ties with the region."[5] The progress and success of Russian re-engagement in the Middle East have prompted some in the United States to strategize on how to counter and pushback the progress.

[3] Russia and the Muslim World, *Geopolitica*, 2 November 2013, https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/article/russia-and-muslim-world-0 (accessed 10 October 2018).

[4] World Staff, Russia's Influence in the Middle East is Growing, *PRI*, 14 December 2017, https://www.pri.org/stories/2017-12-14/russia-s-influence-middle-east-growing (accessed 10 October 2018).

[5] Esber, F., Arab World's Relations with Russia Will Only Grow Stronger, *Arab News*, 9 May 2018, http://www.arabnews.com/node/1299491 (accessed 10 October 2018).

One such "thought experiment" was on pushing back Russia in the Middle East in 2018. Although they considered an "across-the-board competition" with Russia throughout the Middle East as being a mistake, a number of other steps were considered. One of these was to increase the number of US troops in Syria, increase aid to the "rebel" forces and other "anti-regime" efforts. There was also an attempt to influence countries in Russia's "Near Abroad" as a mechanism of negotiation for leaving the MENA region as the US sphere of influence. The logic was that this would "force" Russia to accept that any deal must have US backing. Other proposals include the "United States might also try to ingratiate itself with longstanding US allies, warts and all."[6] This implies putting on the backburner such values as human rights, rule of law and democracy. Such reasoning also seems to lack a solid grounding and understanding of the on-the-ground situation that has changed significantly in the last decade.

Russian Diplomacy in the Middle East: Public Diplomacy in Practice

When considering Russia's public diplomacy in the Middle East, it is first of all necessary to define two key provisions. First, the territorial framework of the "Middle East" concept. As a rule, in Russia, the classic official approach of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the Department of the Middle East and North Africa being one of the departments, is used. It includes the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Sudan and Tunisia. Addressing the topic of Russia's public diplomacy, the author proposes to analyze the situation in the largest scope (in terms of territorial or political significance) of countries that correspond to the geography of the Middle East.

In this context, it also makes sense to consider some countries of the so-called Greater Middle East[7] (it is important not to confuse the term

[6] Byman, D. L., Pushing Back Russia in the Middle East: A Thought Experiment, *Brookings*, 13 April 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2018/04/13/pushing-back-russia-in-the-middle-east-a-thought-experiment/ (accessed 10 October 2018).

[7] The Greater Middle East is a political term, denoting a set of contiguously connected countries, stretching from Morocco in the west.

with the notion of the New Middle East).[8] Among the countries of the Greater Middle East, Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan (Ottaway & Carothers, 2004, pp. 1–7) as well as Egypt will be taken into consideration. The fact is that in promoting its public diplomacy, Russia applies a unified approach to all these countries, however taking into account the peculiarities of each country. Considering Egypt along with the Middle East countries where Russia implements its public diplomacy, is conditioned, despite the contradictory nature of the current state of bilateral relations, by Moscow and Cairo's mutual desire to renew and develop a mutually beneficial cooperation. This country, which has a significant political clout in the Arab world, strives to consolidate its leadership within it. Moreover, Egypt's role in the settlement of tensions in the Middle East[9] is increasing. Additionally, Egypt is one of the few countries where there are two Russian Centers of Science and Culture (RCSC).

Secondly, how should one define public diplomacy? The author proposes to stick to a classical approach, according to which soft power is understood as a method of influencing the consciousness of a society with its own values and ideals with the aim of turning a political tool into a means of achieving goals with no coercion (Nye, 2002, 2004). Public diplomacy is understood as a means used by states to form a foreign nation's view on something in order to achieve the required results.[10]

In September 2000, with the passing of the Doctrine of Information Security,[11] a more consistent and concerted effort to communicate on and

[8] The term "New Middle East" was first revealed to the world in Tel Aviv in June 2006 by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. He was called upon to replace the obsolete and somewhat obsessed concept of the "Greater Middle East." Zbigniew Brzezinski believed that the Eurasian Balkans [5], as well as the South Caucasus (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia), and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan) were to become the countries of the new Middle East. See, for example, Nazemroaya, Mahdi Darius Plans for Redrawing the Middle East: The Project for a "New Middle East." Global Research—https://www.globalresearch.ca/plans-for-redrawing-the-middle-east-the-project-for-a-new-middle-east/3882.

[9] http://www.mid.ru/en/maps/eg//asset_publisher/g1LePFf60C7F/content/id/668948.

[10] For more information, see: First Lecture on Public Diplomacy: Concepts & Methods by Ambassador Kishan Rana. [Electronic resource]. Access mode: https://www.diplomacy.edu/pd/intro/evolution.

[11] There have been modified versions of this doctrine, see http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2563163 for a version from 2016.

about Russia, and to have a greater impact in the global information flows was signaled. One of the results of the discussion and the creation of the doctrine was the establishment of further international broadcasting instruments to compete for global attention and influence. Russia Today (now RT) has been successful in its impact on the international audiovisual landscape, and in some circles has come to symbolize Russian attempts at accumulating soft power.[12] Coming back to the topic of this chapter, RT Arabic was launched in May 2007 with some 500 staff (including 100 journalists) that has the mission to focus on Russia's relations with the Middle East that started with a potential audience of 300–350 million viewers.[13] By the stage of its entry in to the Arab satellite TV channel market, RT Arabic was competing with some 280 existing TV outlets. In addition to international communication and broadcasting, attempts have been made to shape relations through physical interaction.

Russia has been able to utilize to some degree its Islamic identity through its centuries-old historical interactions with the Muslim world[14] and indigenous populations of Muslims as a cultural identity and relational basis.[15] These international relationships and interactions are being enabled through the creation of organizational bodies in and by Russia as well as Russia seeking membership to international bodies in the Islamic world. Organizations that are created in and by Russia have been increasingly engaged since 2005. Government Organised Non-Governmental Organisations (GONGO) such as the Russian International Affairs Council and the Gorchakov Foundation have been engaged in Middle Eastern questions and relations.[16] Other groups also exist, such as the

[12] Klimentov, V., RT, Russian Soft Power in Images, *Ina Global*, 9 July 2013, https://www.inaglobal.fr/en/television/article/rt-russian-soft-power-images (accessed 10 October 2018); Audinet, M., RT, Russia's Voice to the World, *Le Monde Diplomatique*, 8 April 2017, https://mondediplo.com/2017/04/08RT (accessed 10 October 2018).

[13] BBC Monitoring, Russia Reaches Out to Arab World Through TV, *Arab Media & Society*, 18 May 2007, https://www.arabmediasociety.com/russia-reaches-out-to-arab-world-through-tv/ (accessed 10 October 2018).

[14] Russia and the Muslim World, *Geopolitica*, 2 November 2013, https://www.geopolitica.ru/en/article/russia-and-muslim-world-0 (accessed 10 October 2018).

[15] Yakis, Y., Russia and the Islamic World, *Arab News*, 22 May 2017, http://www.arabnews.com/node/1103421 (accessed 10 October 2018). Estimates vary, but one estimate is that there are 17 million Muslims living in Russia, which is 12 per cent of the population.

[16] For example see https://gorchakovfund.ru/en/news/view/dynamics-of-russian-iranian-relations-was-discussed-at-the-international-conference-in-tehran/ or http://russiancouncil.ru/en/projects/regional/middle-east/.

think tank Group of Strategic Vision—Russia-Islamic World that was founded in 2006 by former Prime Minister Evgeny Primakov and former President of Tatarstan Mintimer Shaimiev in the wake of Russia joining the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation as an observer.[17] These groups are a means of developing relationships between Russia and the MENA region, and as a means to develop information and knowledge on the region. A more formal level of diplomacy and interaction takes place in international organizations, such as the Declaration of Cooperation with Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)[18] or the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation where Russia has been an observer state since 2005.[19] Russia's success or failure in diplomacy and influence is often viewed within the lens of a contextual relationship with rivals in the MENA region and especially the United States.

There is no single approach to assessing and measuring the effectiveness of a country's public diplomacy. Each state uses its own tools and methods of public diplomacy. As a basis for this analysis, the activities of the RCSC (departments of Rossotrudnichestvo—see below) in the above-mentioned countries, the digital dimension of Russia's public diplomacy and the activities of some non-governmental organizations are taken into consideration. Commonly, the activities of all actors of Russian public diplomacy in the Middle East can be reduced to the following main areas of activity: strengthening the position of the Russian language, education in Russia, promotion of Russian culture in the world and support to Russian diaspora (compatriots) abroad. In countries that are in a state of conflict or experiencing economic problems, humanitarian diplomacy is of utmost importance. Humanitarian diplomacy in this context is viewed as the delivery of humanitarian aid. Other main areas of activity are the promotion of international development and sub-state diplomacy initiatives of Russian regions.

The key Russian public diplomacy actor is *Rossotrudnichestvo—the Federal Agency for the Affairs of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and for International Humanitarian Cooperation*—was established in September 2008.[20] The activities of

[17] Group of Strategic Vision "Russia-Islamic World", *Russia-Islamic World*, no date given, http://rusisworld.com/en/about/ (accessed 10 October 2018).

[18] Refer to the following link, https://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/4931.htm.

[19] See https://www.oic-oci.org/page/?p_id=179&p_ref=60&lan=en for further details.

[20] http://www.kremlin.ru/acts/bank/28020.

Rossotrudnichestvo and its foreign missions are aimed at implementing the state policy of international humanitarian cooperation, facilitating the dissemination abroad of an objective view of modern Russia.[21] *Rossotrudnichestvo* is viewed as a major instrument of Russia's current PD arsenal.

The Agency is granted full authority to nurture cultural ties as a strategy to project the country's soft power abroad. Among Middle Eastern countries, *Rossotrudnichestvo* has its centers (RCSC) in Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia and Egypt (the Russian Center of Science and Culture in Cairo, as well as the Office of the Russian Science and Culture Center in Alexandria). In most of the RCSCs in the Middle East, they encourage the population to study the Russian language. For this, for example, the "brand" of the Russian poet Alexander Pushkin is often used. Other soft topics (i.e. non-political in nature) are used in others to create emotional bonds between Russia and foreign publics in MENA.

The Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, founded in 1882 by the Decree of Emperor Alexander III[22] also plays an important role in the Middle East in the sphere of public diplomacy. In particular, the Public Center for the Protection of Christians in the Middle East and North Africa, which functions within the society, contributes to the creation of a positive image of Russia through the Russian Orthodox Church. This is especially important in Syria, where before the conflict in 2011 more than 10% of the population were Christians. Almost a million Christians left the country because of the terrorist attacks which destroyed temples and the purges carried out on religious grounds. *The Russian Orthodox Church* called to help the Syrian people, and not only those who are Christian. In 2017, the Interreligious Working Group was established in Russia to provide humanitarian assistance to the population of Syria, which included both Christians and Muslims of the country. In a year, Syria received several large consignments of humanitarian cargo. The assistance is distributed through both local religious communities and directly to the people in need, regardless of their religious affiliation.[23] Such actions are usually accompanied by holding round tables with the participation of leaders of Christian confessions and Muslim communities of Syria. Politics and the image of Russia

[21] http://rs.gov.ru/en/about.
[22] http://www.ippo.ru/protection.
[23] http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5271038.html.

are successfully broadcasted to the local population through representatives of religious communities. For example, in February 2018, a delegation of the *Interreligious Working Group* visited Syria and Lebanon and a round table was held in Damascus with the participation of representatives of almost all Syrian religious communities.[24] The Syrian party particularly noted that the believers of Russia are not indifferent to the tragedy in Syria and try to help its suffering population, adding that Russia's actions changed the course of events in their country by giving the people hope for complete liberation from terrorists and the restoration of a peaceful life. Statements of this kind form a positive image of Russia for a small but politically significant part of the Christian population. Within the action, along with Syrian Christian and Muslim leaders, 77 tons of humanitarian aid was distributed. A unique feature of the action was that the help was distributed in churches and mosques jointly by Christians and Muslims of Syria and Russia. Weekly Bible lessons take place at the Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church in Damascus. They are free, have an educational character and are open to all. Such interreligious solidarity became the most important part of the project, which has a positive impact on the image of Russia in Syria.

Now, we are going to take a look at the activities of some RCSCs in the Middle East. The Soviet Center for Science and Culture in *Syria* was opened in Damascus in 1976. In early 2013, due to the intensification of the armed conflict in Syria, the cultural center was closed for visitors. The head of the office was recalled from Damascus on March 5, 2013.[25] In early 2014, its activities were partially resumed and a representative from Rossotrudnichestvo was sent. But then in 2015 the center was again closed.

The RCSC in Damascus has always played a significant role in consolidating Russian compatriots, it has contributed to the emergence of local Russian diaspora in Syrian cities and to establishing contacts between compatriots. Its activities have two main directions: humanitarian diplomacy and the promotion of Russian education. According to the concept of promotion of Russian education on the basis of the offices of *Rossotrudnichestvo* abroad,[26] the overseas missions of *Rossotrudnichestvo* contribute to increasing the competitiveness of the Russian education

[24] http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/5271038.html.

[25] http://syr.rs.gov.ru/en/about.

[26] http://rulaws.ru/acts/Kontseptsiya-prodvizheniya-rossiyskogo-obrazovaniya-na-baze-predstavitelstv-Rossotrudnichestva-za-rubezhom/.

system. A few years ago, the quota for Syria was 200 places, last year it was increased to 455 places, and in 2018, 500 people could come to study and obtain a degree in Russia. The total number of applications for admission was more than 2000.[27] Other forms of PD are practiced in Syria too, which is a long-term and strategic partner in the region.

As for humanitarian diplomacy, which is close to public diplomacy, Russia provides systematic assistance to Syrians, both through international organizations and on a bilateral basis, to the government in Damascus. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations, since the beginning of the civil war in Syria, Russia has allocated about US$52 million to provide humanitarian assistance to Syria. In 2015, the government signed a decree on the allocation of US$2 million to provide humanitarian assistance to Syria.[28] Since 2012, Syria has regularly received humanitarian assistance through the Ministry of Emergency Situations. From 2013 to 2015, the Ministry of Emergency Situations carried out 35 flights to Syria and neighboring Lebanon and Jordan, delivering 600 tons of humanitarian cargo to the Syrians. In 2016, the flights continued. In December, the Ministry of Emergency Situations sent to Syria in the Aleppo region an airmobile hospital with 75 members of medical staff.[29] The ongoing conflict in Syria has prompted different forms of Russian help and assistance.

The Russian Center for the Reconciliation of Warring Parties[30] is negotiating with the administration of the province of Homs to increase supplies of bread to the previously created de-escalation zone in the area. Given the complexity of the political situation in Syria, the RCSC in Beirut provides assistance to the RCSC in Damascus. Thus, after a long break, a conference of organizations of Russian compatriots, as well as a concert organized by *Rossotrudnichestvo* with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Syria, at which Russian musicians performed and conducted master classes, were held in the city of Damascus. In the framework of the project "Russia-Syria: basketball, uniting countries", famous Russian basketball players held a "Match of Friendship" with the Syrian team with the support of the Syrian Olympic Committee. In addition, in December

[27] https://www.interfax.ru/russia/614408.
[28] https://fts.unocha.org/.
[29] http://www.mchs.gov.ru/dop/info/smi/news/item/32998925/.
[30] http://syria.mil.ru/syria/bulletins/bulletin.htm.

2017, the RCSC in Damascus hosted a children's New Year performance and distribution of gifts for the children of Syrian orphanages.[31]

In addition, *the Russian humanitarian mission* (RSM) actively participates in the broadcast of public diplomacy in Syria.[32] Among the projects of the organization, there are development programs and projects aimed at improving the quality of life, medical programs, educational programs, training courses on the basics of safety and Russian textbooks for Arab schoolchildren. It is important to note that the Russian humanitarian mission positions itself as a non-profit organization set up to carry out humanitarian and charitable activities to help victims of social, national, religious and military conflicts; victims of repression; refugees and internally displaced persons; and to promote strengthening peace, friendship and harmony among peoples, preventing social, national and religious conflicts. Russian Humanitarian Mission (RSM) is the first non-governmental Russian organization that professionally provides humanitarian assistance primarily abroad. Relations with other Muslim countries have been developing as well.

As for *Pakistan*, apart from the projects related to the dissemination of information about Russian holidays, such as Family Day, Love and Fidelity Day, Victory Day holding thematic meetings, and so on, the emphasis is placed on education and science: selecting foreign citizens to train in the Russian Federation, conducting seminars on Russian education and presentations of Russian universities.[33] In 2018, Russia and *Lebanon* celebrate the 55th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations, and the festivities went beyond statements at the level of heads of state. The event coincided with dance and other art groups from Russia touring in Lebanon.[34] In 2018, on the basis of the Jordan-Russia House of Friendship, the project of a future park dedicated to Russia in the city of Amman was presented.[35]

The Russian Center of Science and Culture in *Egypt* consists of two Russian centers—one of which is in Cairo and the other in Alexandria. The Russian mission's activities are aimed at developing cultural and humanitarian cooperation with Egypt, popularizing the Russian language and Russian culture, promoting in Egypt the idea of a modern Russia, its

[31] http://syr.rs.gov.ru/ru/news.
[32] http://rhm.agency/.
[33] http://pak.rs.gov.ru/en/news.
[34] http://jor.rs.gov.ru/en/announcements/1579.
[35] http://jor.rs.gov.ru/en/news/32892.

material and spiritual potential and informing about the main priorities of the country's domestic and foreign policy. These tasks are implemented using people's diplomacy carried out through cooperation with non-governmental public organizations, through cultural exchanges and the broad participation of society in solving political problems.

Another important task of the Russian mission is to strengthen ties with compatriots permanently residing in Egypt and to promote cultural, scientific and business cooperation with Russia. The RCSC successfully develops links with civil society institutions by using public diplomacy. Among such public organizations is the Egyptian Association of Alumni of Soviet and Russian Universities (Headquarters on the territory of the RCSC in Cairo), which includes more than 400 people and actively participates in the activities of the Embassy. The RCSC also cooperates with the Egypt-Russia Friendship Society (currently under reorganization), the Association of Builders of the Aswan Dam, the Journalists' Syndicate, the Union of Artists, the Association of Businessmen, a number of youth organizations and many others.

The RCSC holds Russian language courses on a regular basis. Thousands of young Egyptians study there. The books are adapted to local specifics. The centers also facilitate the recruitment of foreign students to Russian universities and maintain contacts with their graduates, of which there are several thousand in Egypt. The RCSCs in Cairo and Alexandria play a significant role in the formation of the cultural and aesthetic space of Egypt and continue to hold leading positions among foreign cultural centers and representations in terms of diversity of their work, activity and attendance. The RCSC in Cairo is visited by more than 600 people every day. Other forms of PD include the city-city level, for example, since 2005, Alexandria and St. Petersburg are twin cities.

The RCSCs in the countries of the Middle East are actively working to implement the state program on organizing the voluntary resettlement in the Russian Federation of compatriots living abroad.[36] It aims, among other things, to support compatriots who wish to live and work in the Russian Federation, in moving and/or registering their legal status in Russia.

In early February 2018, in the RCSC in Cairo, the "Russian fan house 2018" opened. Thus, numerous fans of the Egyptian soccer team had the

[36] https://xn%2D%2Db1aew.xn%2D%2Dp1ai/mvd%20/structure1/Glavnie_upravlenija/guvm/compatriots.

opportunity to obtain all the necessary information about the World Cup 2018, the cities of the tournament, tourist routes, technical support and so on. On the basis of the "Russian Fan House," designed in accordance with all the requirements of Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), meetings with the stars of the Egyptian national team, exhibitions and presentations of Russian regions, lectures and seminars with the participation of representatives of the Egyptian Football Federation and the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Egypt were held.

The Russian Centers of Science and Culture in Cairo and Alexandria, together with the Commission of Ethnography and Anthropology of the Moscow Branch of the Russian Geographical Society, have established a project of virtual exhibitions dedicated to the Russian regions. Moreover, *Rossotrudnichestva* organizes live broadcasts of the most important events on local television.

Russia's public diplomacy in *Israel* deserves special attention. In the Middle East region, the state represents one of the leading countries and claims to be the leader. Moreover, the development of Russian-Israeli relations is the example of pragmatic interstate relations, freed from ideological factors (Morozov, 2015). The Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Israel was opened in Tel Aviv on 10 October 2007. It is one of the youngest RCSCs.

In 2018, a number of young people from Israel received the right to study at Russian universities for free.[37] There were 15,000 vacancies for foreigners to study in Russia in the federal budget, and Israel has 60 of these vacancies, although there were many more applications. In the field of higher education in Israel, Russia organizes such events as Graduate Day, exhibitions of Russian higher education institutions, the Day of Russian science abroad. As a whole, Russia is actively working on exporting its education.

In promoting its image, Russia often uses the ties of the peoples of the two countries. Though small in number (about 4500 people), but very authoritative Circassian community of Israel, compactly living in the north of the country, hosts a festival of national culture every summer. Almost every year, teams from Adygea, Kabardino-Balkaria and other regions of the North Caucasus, with which the Israeli Circassians are connected by cultural and historical ties, are invited to the festival. The head of the village administration Zakaria Napso said in his speech at the opening of the

[37] https://ria.ru/society/20180801/1525750596.html.

festival that one of the goals of this cultural event is to strengthen ties with friends from Russia. The participation of the representatives of the Republic of Adygea in the resonant Israeli event became an important event for Russia's image.

There were intense humanitarian relations between Russia and Israel in 2017. Russian theaters, ballet and opera, music ensembles, famous actors and writers and journalists, as well as pop artists, satirists and humorists went on tour to Israel. The promotion of Russian theater and cinema is also an integral part of Russia's public diplomacy. The largest Israeli cities hosted Chekhov Moscow Art Theater, E. Vahtangov Theater, the Taganka Theater, the Theater of Nations, the State Musical Theater led by A. Rybnikov, the Moscow Jewish Theater "Shalom," the St. Petersburg Grand Drama Theater, the Moscow Circus on Ice and the Circus "Moscow." It is already a tradition that D. Matsuev's concerts are held each year with great success.

New Russian films participated in the annual international film festivals in Jerusalem and Haifa. In addition to that, meetings with prominent Russian filmmakers (K. Shakhnazarov, P. Chukhrai, V. Todorovsky, A. Uchitel) were held in the cities of Israel. The annual 16th Festival of Modern Israeli Cinema and the Third Jewish Film Festival took place in Moscow. In 2017, two projects were launched: "Open lecture" and "The Untold Time," within the framework of which well-known Russian writers appeared before Russian-speaking Israelis. The projects continued in 2018 as well. The same year, the Northern region of Israel hosted many cultural and business events related to "St. Petersburg meeting in Haifa" that was dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Government of St. Petersburg and the municipality of Haifa. The Russian RCSC organizes two to three new Russian film viewings at least once a month. Exhibitions of artists, sculptors, photographers, designers, as well as music and art evenings are organized on a regular basis. A representative Israeli delegation took part in the World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow and Sochi, and military cooks from Israel participated in the III Army International Games for the first time.

After approval of the law "On the celebration of May 9th" by the Knesset in June 2017, this significant date was first celebrated in the history of Israel at the state level.[38] Memorial and cultural events, the main part of which was held under the patronage of regional authorities,

[38] https://knesset.gov.il/spokesman/eng/PR_eng.asp?PRID=13424.

involved a significantly increased (compared to previous years) number of Israelis, mainly representing "the Russian street." At the same time, they were joined by many Israeli citizens who were not from the USSR-CIS, both Jews and Arabs. It is to be noted that there were many participants from the Israeli Defense Forces (an appropriate decision was made by the education department of the army). Thus, today, it is already possible to talk about the approval of the tradition of mass Victory Day celebration in the North of Israel.

The main symbol of celebrations in all cities of the northern region was the St. George ribbon. Ribbons were distributed during the reception of citizens in the Consulate General, as well as on the streets and in the "Russian" shopping centers of Haifa. There is a social demand for events dedicated to the Great Victory among broad strata of Israelis. It is noteworthy that the ceremonies are becoming more and more consonant with the Russian ones. Every year, the action "Immortal Regiment" gathers momentum. This time it took place in six cities. The action initiated a few years ago by the local "Russian street" is now supported by local authorities.

From the point of view of attracting young people, special attention is paid to sports events held for the last several years with the support of the Consulate General of Russia in Israel. They held a traditional chess tournament with the participation of students of the Haifa Russian-language schools "Mofet-Basmat" and veterans. It is the eighth time that a youth tournament of martial arts has taken place. This year, it was attended by teams from ten cities of Israel. In Haifa, youth and youth competitions in sambo recently took place.

All events with Russian participation were broadcasted online on the page of the Consulate General on Twitter, and covered by several Israeli media. Russia's image in Israel is formed by the information policy of local media and the opinion of dominant groups of the population. It should be taken into account that, with the total population of Israel in mid-2017, 75.5% of the total population of Israel were Jewish, 20.2% were Arabs and 4.3% were representatives of other national minorities. Among the Jews, 61% were born in Israel and 39% were immigrants, 1.2 million of whom are from the former USSR and CIS countries.

In recent times, due to Russia's role in the Syrian settlement, the popularity of the country and of leading Russian political figures has started to grow significantly in the eyes of the Israelis. For example, if we talk about the frequency of mentioning the names of Russian politicians and

businessmen (based on well-known Haifa sociologist Bocharova),[39] then the name Vladimir Putin is mentioned 385 times, which accounts for 43% of all mentions of Russian politicians.

Still, according to a sociological survey conducted recently by the newspaper *Maariv*, Russia was on the 26th place with the result of 9.6% in the list of friendly countries of Israel. 46.6% of survey participants spoke for strengthening relations with Russia. This indicator should be considered positive, since just a few years ago it did not rise above 32–34%. However, if we try to determine the general attitude to Russia, it is to state that only 14% are really positive toward Russia. That is, they consider her "native, friendly, would like to return," while 7% refused to answer the proposed questions. The attitude of some respondents was anti-Russian.[40]

Another dimension of Russian public diplomacy in the Middle East is *Russian science*. Russia is striving to reintroduce the former Soviet soft power card of people's diplomacy by enhancing cooperation and awarding scholarships to study in Russia. The Soviet Union was once considered to be the third destination for studying abroad after the United States and France. Many leaders of the Middle East once attended Soviet educational establishments, among them Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the sixth President of Iran Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

The previous glory of the Soviet education system inspires Russia's current plans to attract more international students. The Russian government is planning to invest US$60 million in bringing more foreign students to the country by 2019. Russia is seeking to maintain its alumni as a cohesive group. Earlier, there were calls for creating an organization for the Soviet and Russian alumni all across the Middle East. By various estimates, there are more than 200,000 alumni of Soviet and Russian universities residing currently in the Middle East and North Africa: 100,000 in Syria, 40,000 in Yemen, 30,000 in Libya, 15,000 in Jordan and 10,000 in Egypt.

One more institution that operates in the sphere of public diplomacy, implemented by Russia through the educational environment and direct contacts between universities, is the World Association of Higher Education Graduates. It is a non-profit organization that unites legal entities, foreign citizens and stateless persons (within the territory of the

[39] For the calculation the information of the leading Russian-speaking Israeli Internet sites is taken: "izrus.co.il," "newsru.co.il," "israelinfo.co.il," "kyrsor.co.il."

[40] https://www.maariv.co.il/.

Russian Federation and abroad) who graduated from higher education institutions of the Russian Federation (USSR). It is based on voluntary membership and was created to represent and protect general, including professional, interests, in order to achieve socially useful goals, as well as other purposes that are not contrary to the law and of a noncommercial nature.[41] The organization relies on the development of contacts with graduates of Russian (Soviet) universities and implements joint projects to strengthen the position of the Russian language and culture abroad and to increase the competitiveness of Russian universities as international scientific and educational centers. Active work is carried out in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa—Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Iran, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Syria. The largest is the Association in Lebanon, founded in 1970 with 4,000 graduates and which currently has a total number of graduates in the country amounting to 10,000. At the same time, the youngest is the Palestinian Association of Graduates of Russian and CIS Universities, which was founded in 2007.[42] The activity of this organization can be seen as part of Russia's public diplomacy: it allows maintaining contacts with graduates of foreign states who studied in the USSR or Russia. It is important to understand that these people, who return to their country after being educated in Russian universities, tell the population of their own country about Russia, and also participate in the political process with the knowledge that they acquired in Russia or the USSR.

Science in the modern world and effective educational exchanges have been successfully used as an instrument of foreign policy. In modern Russia, within the framework of the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia, more than 12,000 foreign students enter Russian universities every five years. The number of foreign students is gradually increasing. Education in Russia not only contributes to the formation of a positive image of the country in students but also helps with the implementation of the foreign policy objectives. Not all RCSCs in the Middle East were established simultaneously. For example, the RCSC in *Amman* (Jordan) was opened only in 2009, while the Russian Center for Science and Culture in *Rabat* (Morocco) has been operating since 1968.

As for *Palestine*, there special projects are aimed at counter-terrorism activities. A distinctive feature of the RCSC website in Palestine is the

[41] https://www.alumnirussia.org/licenses/.
[42] https://www.alumnirussia.org/associations/4/region.

existence of a link to the "Together Against Terror" website,[43] designed to inform about safety measures, and the need to fight against terrorism as a nationwide task.[44] The fact is that "hard" force turned out to be unsuccessful. The United States is currently losing the struggle for the minds and hearts of people in the Muslim world, according to a number of researchers (Pesto, 2010), and the role of "soft power" appears to be more efficient (Panova & Lebedeva, 2018). However, the educational component in the RCSC in Palestine is also important. For example, there is a library with 3500 books, which are available to all. Public diplomacy in Palestine is an important part of Russia's policy. This state is in a state of conflict, and in order to solve its problems, efforts at the state level are not enough. Developing compromises options, involving citizens in the settlement process requires the use of public organizations. NGOs of various countries, including Russia, that are able to monitor the situation on the ground, contact with conflicting parties and provide channels of influence. For example, civil diplomacy in parallel with the specially established authoritative UN Commission could make population support compromise solutions (Fedorchenko, Krylov, & Morozov, 2018).

One of the youngest RCSC in the Middle East is in *Turkey*. It was founded only in 2014.[45] In addition to the traditional activities of the RCSC in the Middle East, there is an Electronic Reading Room of the Boris Yeltsin Presidential Library, the Information and Educational Center "Russian Museum: Virtual Branch." The RCSC provides access to Russian educational resources with a program for supporting educational activities based on the use of multimedia electronic training modules in various disciplines. So, public diplomacy in Turkey uses new information technologies. As for the other countries of the Greater Middle East, there are no Russian centers of science and culture neither in Afghanistan nor in Iran.

Social networks play a huge role as a tool of public diplomacy in the modern world. Users are a powerful audience that not only transmits information, coordinates actions and shares video clips but also "broadcasts" ideas. So, the governments of many countries seek to put their public diplomacy programs on the cyberspace, where the target audience is social network participants and users of Internet resources. In recent years,

[43] http://www.antiterror.ru/library/broshures/160613456.html.

[44] http://pse.rs.gov.ru/uploads/document/file/6864/osnovnye-mery-protivodeystviya-terrorizmu-v-rossiyskoy-federatsii.pdf.

[45] http://tur.rs.gov.ru/en/about.

Table 14.1 Overview of Russian and US digital diplomacy in MENA

	Twitter (thousand)		*Facebook (thousand)*	
	Russia	*US*	*Russia*	*US*
Bahrain	1.7	8.3	–	36.6
Egypt	5.2	121	7.7	1000.0
Israel	4.1	53.9	1.3	90.7
Jordan	4.5	42.4	6.9	542
Iraq	6.5	75.8	6.4	1500.0
Yemen	0.6	51.1	0.6	82.9
Qatar	1.9	30	1.8	38.3
Kuwait	4.8	22.9	2.5	19.9
Lebanon	3.1	36	1.2	79.7
Libya	–	418.1	–	449
UAE	1.1	19.3	2.5	68.4
Oman	0.02	13.7	–	14.6
Palestine	0.9	14.3	1.5	305
Saudi Arabia	3.2	109.8	0.2	137
Syria	0.4	78.4	4.7	90.3
Turkey	14.1	88	4.2	204

Source: Vladimir Morozov and Greg Simons/Russian and U.S. embassies' in MENA region accounts (Twitter, Facebook)

Russia has been making efforts to step up its digital diplomacy. A new term was born—"twiplomacy." Twitter and other social networks are nowadays widely used by foreign policy departments. In order to assess the state of Russian public diplomacy in the digital sphere, one can compare the number of subscribers to the accounts of social networks of Russian representative offices abroad, to the number of subscribers of American missions abroad (see Table 14.1[46] for an overview). The choice of the United States as an object of comparison can be explained by the country's leading role in using information and communication technologies to solve problems of advancing its foreign policy interests (Tsvetkova, 2011). As for social networks, Facebook is chosen as the most popular social network in the world and Twitter, which occupies the middle position in the list of the most popular social networks in the world.[47] Although

[46] Vladimir Morozov and Greg Simons—based on Russia's and US accounts on Twitter and Facebook.

[47] https://www.web-canape.ru/business/socialnye-seti-v-2018-godu-globalnoe-issledovanie/.

it should be noted as a word of caution, measure of activity does not necessarily equate to measure of effect (the number of social media followers does not necessarily equal the amount of actual influence).

The analysis shows that Russia is lagging behind in the digital space: the number of subscribers to US embassy accounts exceeds the number of subscribers to the pages of Russian offices tens and hundreds of times: maximum—234 times. This is, for example, the case of Iraq, where the number of subscribers to the account of the American Embassy amounts to 1.5 million, while the number of subscribers to the Russian embassy is only 6000. A huge gap in Facebook is also evident in countries such as Syria (both on Facebook and Twitter), even despite the large supply of humanitarian aid from Moscow and the generally friendly opinion of the population about Russia. There is no country where the number of subscribers to Russian missions exceeds the number of subscribers to American ones. Moreover, unlike the United States, Russia does not have any accounts either on Facebook or on Twitter in Libya.

This analysis is not the only indicator of the state of Russia's digital diplomacy in the Middle East, but it shows the need to strengthen work in this direction. However, it should be taken into account that Russian digital diplomacy is young compared to America's. Russia decided to try to influence other countries with soft power later than the Americans did. The reason for such a "delay" in many respects was that the political goal to restore Russia's influence in the world arena appeared only in the 1990s (Lebedeva, 2018).

Although the Russian Foreign Ministry has not been among the pioneers of digital diplomacy, in a few years it was able to become one of the prominent figures in this field. Russian diplomats have understood the advantages of this new practice and how it helps to achieve foreign policy goals and seem to feel quite experienced on the Internet, so now their main task is find a way to make digital diplomacy more effective. This is very important for Russia, since it has, with its 243 missions abroad, the fourth largest diplomatic network in the world.[48] The problems that Russia has to face include a formal approach, little attention to the visual component and insufficient use of the language of the local audience. Some accounts are inactive or are updated infrequently, indicating either disinterest or lack of resources.[49]

[48] https://globaldiplomacyindex.lowyinstitute.org/country_rank.html.

[49] http://russiancouncil.ru/blogs/shakirov/rossiyskaya-tsifrovaya-diplomatiya-v-2016-godu/.

It can be argued that some instruments of public diplomacy, like the Russia Today channel, are more effective in the Middle East and the North African region. RT Arabic, which began broadcasting in May 2007, marks its ten-year anniversary on the air. Over the years, RT Arabic journalists have provided exclusive, live reporting from some of the most conflict-ridden areas around the world, including Syria, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and Egypt. According to an Ipsos study, RT's audience in the Middle East and North Africa is ten million people weekly. On Facebook and YouTube, RT Arabic is more popular than the Arabic-language versions of BBC, CNN, Sky News, Deutsche Welle, France 24 and Al Hurra.[50] The work of RT Arabic has been praised internationally. Palestinian National Authority head Mahmoud Abbas said, "We have a lot of TV channels in the Arab world, but we watch RT, because it provides accurate information." Nabil Fahmy, who served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt from 2013 to 2014, said that RT Arabic "plays an active part and works professionally, impartially and effectively." During his visit to Russia, Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi, President of Yemen from 2012–2015, thanked RT for its work in the Arab world in general and in Yemen in particular.[51]

During its time on the air, RT Arabic has won a number of international awards, including AIB, the New York Festivals and the BD Awards, and is a three-time winner of the Al Ghadeer International Festival held in Iraq. In 2012, the RT Arabic website was recognized by Forbes as one of the top three best news outlets in the Arab world. It is recognized as one of the authoritative channels of the alternative information by regional audience.

Thus, the analysis of Russia's public diplomacy in the Middle East shows the following. While Russia's activities in this direction appear largely to be successful, difficulties are also apparent—a comparatively small audience, the lack of a target audience, financing issues and so on. However, it is necessary to understand that all the shortcomings can be dealt with. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to better adjust the mechanisms and institutions related to the international information policy to the realities of today's world. At the same time, according to the author, the basic directions of public diplomacy and its ideological content should remain the same as it is especially effective in the countries of the Middle East.

[50] https://www.rt.com/about-us/press-releases/rt-arabic-10-years/.
[51] https://russian.rt.com/press_releases/article/386016-rt-na-arabskom-10-let-v-efire.

Conclusion

With the removal of a number of secular regimes that held the varied ethnic and religious communities of the countries and region in a relatively stable state through the application of hard power, large swathes of the region have collapsed in economic and security terms. This has created a vacuum that is being filled by local, regional and international actors vying for influence. Russia is one of those international actors in the region, which has found itself defending its interests (such as in Syria) and seeking to expand its military, diplomatic, political and economic influence. The shatter belt is most noticeable in Syria, which has seen a US-led coalition seeking to regime change a Russian ally, and almost succeeded in doing so in the summer of 2015. This prompted Russia to become overtly and directly involved in the conflict.

Although Russia has been increasingly engaged in the MENA region from 2006 to 2008, the process of preparing for that engagement is through the establishment of means of international broadcasting (such as RT Arabic) and mechanisms for creating and maintaining political, economic and diplomatic relationships (such as Organisation of Islamic Cooperation). This has laid the groundwork for establishing dialogue and relaunching diplomatic efforts to influence actors and events. Russia's success has to some extent been a product of serious mistakes made by the United States and the European Union (EU), which set the scene for competition and conflict.

Russia is engaged in a broad variety of public diplomacy programs with many countries of the Middle East. These are managed by agencies and institutions in Russia that are responsible for specific aspects; some of those institutions and agencies have their origins from the period of the Soviet Union or even Imperial Russia. This is testimony to the long history of interaction with the Middle East and North Africa. Some countries do feature more prominently in terms of their priority status that is confirmed by the quantity and quality of the relationship and engagement. One of those countries is Syria, which Russia not only invests hard power in but soft power too (e.g. through humanitarian aid, interreligious dialogue and education). To some extent, Russia and other countries too have been able to opportunistically capitalize on blunders made by the United States that has seen it lose influence in the region.

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CHAPTER 15

Conclusion

Anna A. Velikaya and Greg Simons

Overview of Chapter Findings

A number of generalised observations and findings can be derived from the sum of the collective knowledge generated by taking the bigger picture that emerges from the various individual chapters. The chapters of this book reveal a very wide and differentiated understanding and approach to the conceptualisation and practice of public diplomacy (PD). There is also the observation that, even if there is a strong ideological character to all matters pertaining to the state, the underlying reason for initiating acts of interactive international communication is very often practical and pragmatic in nature. Therefore, as and when circumstances and need requires it, public diplomacy evolves and transforms to meet the existing (and future) challenges and attempts to capitalise on the current (and future) opportunities that exist.

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Chapter 1 begins setting the scene for the book by engaging in analysing some historical aspects of public diplomacy in Russia's past, especially in the period of the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union was established after the Russian Civil War in 1922, it found itself isolated in the international community as its ideology and foreign policy were viewed negatively. As a result, traditional state-to-state diplomacy did not function as it could or should; alternatives were needed in order to manage international relations through dialogic forms of communication. While its politics and ideology were considered to be contentious, the Soviet Union chose to engage in cultural diplomacy through the establishment of institutions, clubs and societies as a means of proactively engaging foreign publics. The Russian Federation has created a number of different institutions and organisations (including non-governmental organisations—NGOs) to regulate and manage public diplomacy efforts, which is based on the pursuit of pragmatic interests and goals. After Crimea in 2014 and the ongoing conflict in Donbas (eastern Ukraine), Russia has found itself to be isolated increasingly from the US-led Western international order as the Soviet Union was back in the early 1920s. Although there are differences, such as the lack of a strategic ideology that is exported globally, the lack of a system of functioning traditional diplomacy is evident. The circumstances and political will determined a search for other means of diplomacy and global communication.

In the following chapter, a realisation of the restraints and constraints imposed by the historical legacy on the contemporary environment is revealed. In addition, what is also discovered by Semedov and Kurbatova is that the resulting sum of a country's reputational image and brand is not solely based on the communicational work planned and performed by Russia. Other countries, including those that are in competition or conflict with Russia, do have a vested interest in reducing the attractiveness and resonance of Russia's image. As Russia has gradually sought to take a more active and prominent role in international relations and international affairs, its efforts and creativity in the sphere of public diplomacy have become more creative and active. In an increasingly crowded marketplace of country brands and reputations, Russia seeks to develop a competitive identity in order to facilitate the realisation of foreign policy. Russia has taken a broad approach to the issues of nation branding and public diplomacy via a variety of areas (economic, scientific and cultural for example). As the authors show, success not only depends on a high level of cooperation in all of spheres of the state but also on the ability to successfully break

from the negative influences of the past while maintaining a consistent and credible balancing of word and deed in the present.

The lessons of development diplomacy of the Russian Federation repeat a number of the same lessons as above. Before drawing on some of those lessons, a brief point needs to be clarified. In the context of the Russian public diplomacy lexicon, there is a difference in meaning and implication that differs from the Anglo-US world, where the term "humanitarian" refers to the people-to-people form of communication and interaction (hence, when academics apply for a visa to Russia, it is often under the category of "humanitarian visa.") However, the term and practice of development diplomacy include the delivery of humanitarian aid. Russia's development diplomacy has been undergoing a significant evolution and revival with the increased global competition and confrontation in a global struggle for hearts and minds. Although it was also present during the Cold War for the same reasons of competition for influence, hearts and minds, these are concrete pragmatic goals and interests that are being pursued—increase global influence and enhance economic potential. There are some threats and challenges, such as the current low level of expert and institutional support of Russian public diplomacy, and the current confrontation that is manifested in the sanctions and counter-sanctions.

Chapter 4 is concerning the challenges and opportunities for soft power through international cooperation. Simultaneously, as there is a global increase in tensions and conflict, Russia is increasing its outreach via her soft power resources of culture, fine arts, literature and so forth. Russia's conceptualisation and practice of soft power differ from Nye's original definition and understanding. This demonstrates a certain current tendency to initially borrow some concepts and practices from the United States and the West but then to embark upon developing them for Russia's specific sets of needs and conditions. Public diplomacy is seen as the potential (as yet inadequately tapped) catalyst that could activate Russia's soft power potential. Soft power and public diplomacy both concern the use of attraction and the building of relationships between the communicator and their intended audience. The increasingly confrontational and conflictual nature of global affairs means that Russia is looking for innovative and creative ways to reach out and connect with foreign publics.

Following from this topic of soft power via international cooperation, Chap. 5 explores Russia's digital diplomacy efforts and the search for soft power via this new mechanism of mass communication. The origins of Russia's digital diplomacy efforts can be traced back to the year 2012.

These programmes are not without contention or controversy, especially given the Russian troll narrative that is intended to compromise and undermine such efforts. Russia has been steadily developing and evolving its digital diplomacy efforts in order to reach out to global audiences more efficiently and effectively.

From cyberspace to the Russian education system, Chap. 6 covers the topic of the higher education system being an element of Russia's public diplomacy efforts. The Russian government has been steadily trying to attract and recruit foreign students and researchers to their colleges and universities. This situation creates a mutually beneficial environment for foreign students/researchers, Russian universities and Russia's public diplomacy by establishing relationships based on students' desire for an education, Russian higher education becoming more internationalised, and mutually beneficial interaction between foreign nationals and the Russian higher education sector within the framework of public diplomacy.

The conceptualisation and practice of Russian science diplomacy is the subject of Chap. 7, where the authors argue that in the context of the West-Russian deterioration in relations the scientific community is one of few areas where there is still some capacity and will to maintain working relations and to search for solutions to common problems via track two diplomacy. Such programmes have also existed historically, between the Soviet Union and the West. There are a number of tangible and intangible aspects in engaging in scientific cooperation, where the result has the potential to bring a great deal of global attention and even prestige (intangible) as well as possible scientific/technological breakthroughs (tangible) within the additional context of attempting to build international trust and relieving some international tension. However, at the same time, such undertakings require sufficient institutional support, human capital and financial resources to sustain in addition to the requisite political will.

Staying with the notion of people-to-people forms of interaction and communication, Chap. 8 addresses the role of civil society in Russian public diplomacy. According to Nye's original idea of soft power, non-state actors and institutions have a critical role to play in creating and maintaining a country's soft power potential. Thus, the Russian government understands the need to shape a more positive international image of Russia, and the resulting policy has brought additional actors and institutions to fulfil such a role and task. As a result, there have been attempts to develop the expert community and the institutions that support their

work. Specialised institutions as *Rossotrudnichestvo* and the Alexander Gorchakov Foundation have been established, and a domestic and international expert community has been evolving through the creation of interactive forums and events that discuss key issues of the day.

While the role of civil society and their inclusion into the programmes of Russian public diplomacy are of importance, so is the engagement with international organisations, which is the theme of Chap. 9. Russia and its predecessor states have a long history of engagement in international organisations, such as the United Nations (UN). The engagement is predicated on the goal of having Russia's interests and priorities represented in international organisations by having a significant representation through its citizens working in the structures of them. In the 1990s, the political will evaporated, and this policy was discontinued. Seemingly, there has been a desire to return to the policy of influence there, which has been greatly reduced relative to other leading countries in the UN.

Chapter 10 covers the issue of Russian business diplomacy in Southeast Asia, which seeks to build stable and long-term relations between government bodies and the leadership of foreign and international companies. Business diplomacy has played an increasingly important role in the management of interstate relations and in communications between major international integration associations (e.g. ASEAN, Eurasian Union and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS). As noted by the authors, there are some differences between business diplomacy as practised by Russia as opposed to Western countries, which can have the potential to create an air of lack of familiarity and therefore trust (through lack of understanding). The Measure of Activity (MOA) and Measure of Influence of Russian versus Western business diplomacy are specially earmarked for the need for further research in order to be better understood.

The human dimension of cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region is the issue analysed in Chap. 11. Citizen diplomacy or people's diplomacy concerns the idea of getting citizens actively involved as representatives of a country or a cause. This has a history in both the Soviet period and currently in the Russian Federation. Such an endeavour can be managed through the creation of task- or issue-specific societies and organisations, such as fighting pollution in the Baltic Sea. The author concludes that this form of diplomacy is essential to maintain during the current tensions, but Russia still has not realised the full potential of people's diplomacy as yet. This is further hampered by a lack of coordination, financing and a common approach to various issues being engaged in.

In Chap. 12, the area of interest and analysis moves from the Baltic Sea to Latin America. In this chapter, the author stresses the need to pay attention to the quality of strategic communication in fostering long-term and mutual values, interests and goals as an integral part of public diplomacy. This requires the clear and consistent message in the forms of both the word and the deed, careful consideration and attention to the synchronisation of engagement and activities. This requires special attention to the formulation and delivery of key messages, the perception of Russia in the region (past and present) and its current practice of public diplomacy. Russia needs to understand and decide upon its competitive advantage over other potential partners, and the basis and outcome of creating and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships.

The final Chap. 13 shifted attention away from Latin America to the Middle East and North Africa, where there has been a sharp increase in international competition and conflict for geopolitical and economic influence. Russia has been gradually building up its capacity to engage audiences in the region since at least 2008, such as RT Arabic and engaging with regional organisations such as the Organisation of Islamic Countries. This came in the wake of a long absence that was precipitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union along with almost all influence in the region. The absence was a result of not only a lack of financial resources but also a lack of political will. Russia's re-entry has been the result of the will to become engaged in one of the world's important transport hubs and energy supply, and also the miscalculations of the United States in the region (especially in wake of the 2003 Iraq War in terms of the Global War On Terrorism and followed by the Arab Spring). Russia has positioned itself as being a counter to what it describes as being the instability caused by US foreign policy, which is openly demonstrated in Syria. Although there is a precarious balancing act performed, given that Russia engages with many "incompatible" states, such as both Israel and Iran, this can have potentially negative consequences if mismanaged.

Three Questions Posed

What Is Russian Public Diplomacy Exactly?

This book presents how public diplomacy (PD) is conceptualised and operationalised from a Russian perspective, which differs from the Western one. The theme that connects this book is Russia's public diplomacy

actions are found in various multifaceted domains—scientific, culture, academia and education, business, digital spheres and much more. Its purpose was not to examine how public diplomacy is defined in Russia, but rather to give a comprehensive overview of contemporary Russian public diplomacy. This background leads the authors to search for a framework to analyse Russian PD in terms of its goals, actors and instruments.

Still, coming to the conclusion, we may assume that in Russia PD is viewed as engaging foreign target audience by fostering cooperation in political, economic and cultural spheres for promoting national interests of the own country. This is an interactive engagement between the communicator and the target audience, where the intended audience is actively interacting and not passively consuming the communication, which is understood as not only being words but also deeds.

Ideally, Russian public diplomacy (as with other countries) intends to engage in relational communication in order to create and maintain relationships with intended foreign audiences. The communication is intentional and deliberate, even if the outcome may not be what was originally intended by the planners. As such, PD differs from other communicational instruments, such as propaganda. Even though propaganda may be a component of PD, it is not the same thing. PD concerns an active form of interaction between the communicator and the intended audience, where the audience has a chance to give feedback; it is dialogic in nature. Propaganda relies on the manipulation of "truths" and "realities" by the communicator to prime and mobilise an audience emotionally. However, the communication is very often monologic in nature, which gives the audience little chance to give feedback to the system of communications.

Lastly, as many of the chapters demonstrated, PD is not some magic bullet for various policy or issue problems, and should be approached with careful consideration and a long-term vision. Real problems do require real solutions rather than attempting to create a façade to mask the situation. Public diplomacy is not or should not be a stand-alone form of communication, but a supportive informational/communicational component of tangible policy goals.

What Does Russian Public Diplomacy Look Like, Historically and Contemporarily?

Russian public diplomacy has a centuries-long history. Without knowing these roots, it's impossible to analyse it meaningfully as the wider context

is not presented. Its importance cannot be underestimated, especially in times of global confrontation. Although the current deterioration of Russian-Western relations seems to be unprecedented, history proves that it's not the case. The hazardous image of the "Russian bear" was invented centuries ago. But the work of capable Russians in the sphere that we would now call public diplomacy had laid grounds for cooperation. Tsar Peter the Great took the best European practices to Russia; his late successor Empress Catherine the Great (see Sophie Auguste Friederike von Anhalt-Zerbst-Dornburg) was in correspondence with the philosophers Rousseau and Voltaire. It was under her rule that we may remember eighteenth-century case—Russia-UK "Ochakovo crisis" of 1791.[1] The Russian Empire and the UK were then on the verge of war. Then the brilliant use of public diplomacy tools by Russian Ambassador Count Semyon Romanovich Vorontsov, according to Moscow State University Professor Oxana Zakharova, enabled a change of public opinion by the British side[2] and to postpone the war for almost 60 years. Russian diplomats under the guidance of the Ambassador were publishing articles in leading British newspapers; the Ambassador was also actively working with British business circles who were interested in trade growth and was doing track II talks with Parliamentary opposition.

If, nowadays, Russian tycoons in the West create a mostly negative reaction towards their home country, then Russian aristocrats were integral part of European elites (Ambassador Vorontsov's grandson Sidney Herbert was British War Secretary during the Crimean war). During foreign campaigns of the Russian army, its troops helped to restore European towns after the Napoleonic invasion. Through the use of what we would now call "development assistance," Prince Nikolai Grigoryevich Repnin-Volkonsky Governor-General (Viceroy) in Saxony, until being replaced by the Prussian General Government, was working to stabilise and rebuild Saxony and attempted to turn its capital Dresden into the centre of German art. Such examples are countless; one of the most outstanding is the activity of Russian General Skobelev—to restore Bulgarian infrastructure, he was even criticised at home for being too "Pro-Bulgarian."

[1] During the Turkish-Russian War of 1787–1792, Britain wanted to maintain the continental balance of power, which it saw was being threatened by Russian gains in the war. Consequently it created the Triple Alliance in 1788 (Great Britain, Prussia and United Provinces) in an effort to counter the growing Russian influence.

[2] Zakharova, O., *Ochakovskij krizis: publichnaya diplomatiya v 1791 g*, https://gorchakov-fund.ru/news/view/ochakovskiy-krizis-publichnaya-diplomatiya-v-1791-g/.

Russian Imperial public diplomacy had various facets. It was gaining crucial importance in the periods of international disarray and post-conflict settlement. But in the periods of peace, it was also very important and included various aspects, including cultural ones. In the Russian Empire, members of foreign Royal families (e.g. a friend of the famous Russian geographer Petr Petrovich Semenov-Tyan-Shansky, the Belgian King Leopold II, Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid, Prince Albert), well-known foreign researchers and geographers (Baron Ferdinand Richthofen, Roald Amundsen, Fridtjof Nansen and others) were elected the honorary members of the Russian Geographical Society, what was positive for the image of the country among foreign decision-makers. Golden and Silver age of Russian culture have also influenced foreign public opinion. Dostoyevsky, Turgenev, Chekhov and Tolstoy were the best Russian public and cultural diplomats.

The period of Revolution and Civil War (1917–1922) has had a very dramatic impact upon Russian history. The best representatives of Russian intelligentsia "white émigré" were forced to leave the country on the "philosophers' ships." Such notorious arts figures as Sergei Rachmaninoff, Feodor Chaliapin, Yul Brinner, Serge Diaghilev and George Balanchine; Nobel Prize winner Ilya Prigogine, inventor Alexander P. de Seversky, aviation pioneer Igor Sikorsky and pioneer of television technology Vladimir K. Zworykin; and philosophers Nikolai Berdyaev, Ivan Ilyin and Pitirim Sorokin have become Russians in exile. Although it was tragedy for the country, the first wave of Russian emigrants have unwillingly become public diplomats of Russia. The majority of them were "Russians," even becoming citizens of other countries. During the Second World War period, they were raising international aid for their fellow countrymen suffering from the Nazi invasion, to help their "mother Russia."

Analysing public diplomacy of the Soviet Union, it's necessary to highlight various aspects of the Communist party and Communist *International* activities, coordinated from Moscow. So, strictly speaking, not all the PD initiatives were Soviet; some of them concerned Eastern bloc countries, but analysed nowadays they may be seen as Soviet. At first, after its creation in 1922, Soviet Union was in international isolation. But the efforts of its leaders and passionate proponents, including in the sphere which we now call public diplomacy, had contributed towards its international recognition.

Here, we can remember the first woman ambassador, Alexandra Kollontai, the daughter of Russian military consul in Sofia, General

Mikhail Domontovich. She had close connections with the top thinkers of Europe's socialist movement and was secretary of the International Women Secretariat under the Communist International. Reading her diplomatic diaries, we can find out that she was working hard in the sphere of public diplomacy. It's interesting to recall here one fact. In 1924, a Norwegian professor of philology had taken a trip to Leningrad and after returning back had written unfavourable book about Soviet Union and had sent it to Norwegian schools. When he was applying for visa in 1928, Alexandra Kollontai had a personal talk with him and finding out that he was going to work in Soviet libraries over philological materials, she had approved him the visa and given him practical advice. Professor Broke's visit to Moscow had coincided with the visit of Afghani Amanullah Khan. The Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Georgy Chicherin had called Ambassador Kollontai to Moscow to accompany the wife of a Shah. She was trying to provide visits to all the concerts and receptions for Professor Broke and his wife as well. When the Professor went back to Norway, he was delighted with Soviet Union. Alexandra Kollontai remembers that even Norwegian King Haakon was joking: "What have you done to our Professor, he is now a prominent Bolshevik?"[3] This anecdote clearly demonstrates that the value of people-to-people relations within the frame of PD was relevant in the past, and remains relevant today in a global atmosphere of intense geopolitical competition and conflict.

Soviet public diplomacy held a serious role during the détente movement. Expert communities had a positive experience when it came to drafting the Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968), minimising the outcomes of military nuclear programmes in Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, India, Iraq, Pakistan and South Africa. The Dartmouth Conference and the Aspen Security Forum have laid the ground for international cooperation. Détente talks had started in the period of most serious confrontation in the 1970s.[4] At this stage, Soviet PD was centred on what it could offer as an alternative to the offer from the US-centric world to the Third World in an ideological struggle for hearts and minds.

A special dimension of Soviet public diplomacy was aimed at Warsaw Pact countries as Albania (until 1968), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East

[3] Kollontai, A., *Diplomaticheskie dnevniki*, Academia, Moscow, 2001, p. 210.

[4] Velikaya, A. A., Russian–U.S. Public Diplomacy Dialogue: A View from Moscow, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 2018, pp. 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41254-018-0102-1.

Germany (until 1990), Hungary, Poland and Romania. Singers' contests, film festivals and even championships of friendship armies were arranged within the framework of cultural exchanges. The work was undone by events in Hungary in 1956 and the Prague Spring of 1968, where these violent events were met negatively even by loyal supporters of the socialist orientation and had undermined a lot of efforts in the sphere of public diplomacy. Soviet Union had lost "The Kitchen debate": in the end of the 1980s, young people all over the world wanted to wear jeans, drink Cola and listen to Deep Purple. Hearts and minds of the internal and external youth audiences were won by people who were ignored by the official Soviet cultural establishment: Russian rock singers, such as Vladimir Vysotsky, were becoming the role model for the youth.

Historically, Soviet public diplomacy included strategic communications elements—Soviet propaganda was aimed at engaging and countering elements. The Soviet Union had a strong centralised public diplomacy system aimed at the needs of foreign policy. Regardless of successful initiatives, ideological component was so strong that it was undermining these success stories. Still, being a superpower, Soviet Union was public diplomacy superpower as well. Children of the oppressed leaders were receiving education in Soviet Union. It is enough to mention that in the famous **Interdom** (Ivanovo International Boarding School)—a school for children of repressed revolutionaries from all over the world were learning, such as the daughter of Spanish Civil War activist Dolores Pasionaria Ibárruri (whose son Ruben had died fighting for Red Army against fascism in 1942), Son of Máo Zédōng and son of Eugene Dennis—the long-time leader of the Communist Party USA—Timur Timofeev—to be corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Or among alumni of **The Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN)** are presidents of Namibia, Angola, Sri Lanka, the South African Republic, Gabon, Guyana and Nigeria; the prime ministers of Bangladesh and Kazakhstan; a UN Chief Executive Officer on Education, Culture and Science; and a Director of the European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES)—a part of UNESCO. If RUDN University was aimed at raising elites for countries who have just acquired their independence, Soviet Union had established another institution for training leaders where communist ideas were oppressed. **The Academy of the Social Sciences of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union** was training political leaders for the non-socialist countries. The most prominent Soviet professors there were critically thinking scholars, preparing their students even to illegally work in their home countries. Atmosphere in the Academy was unique—

lecturers were even sometimes wearing jeans, what was outstanding in the 1960s for the Soviet Union.[5] Even though this period was marked by a strong ideological guidance, the value of education diplomacy was clearly understood by this time and the notion of building relationships with future leaders.

Historically, Soviet public diplomacy included strategic communications elements—Soviet propaganda was aimed at engaging and countering elements. The Soviet Union had a strong centralised public diplomacy system aimed at the needs of foreign policy. Regardless of successful initiatives, ideological component was so strong that it was undermining these success stories.

Since the end of the Cold War in 1991 until the early 2000s, Russian programmes on involving foreign audience were substantially cut. In Russia, it was seen as a unilateral disarmament in this sphere. The necessity for using PD was only once more realised in Russia during the early 2000s. That is the reason why all mechanisms of its participation in the engagement with foreign audiences and international development assistance have only been recently re-established.

Currently, **the key actors** within the sphere of PD are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the *Rossotrudnichestvo* Federal Agency (part of the MFA body), the Gorchakov Foundation, the Russian International Affairs Council and the Ministry for Emergency Situations (EMERCOM). Also, Russian NGOs (e.g. the Russian Humanitarian Mission, Creative Diplomacy and The Institute for Literary Translation) and think tanks (the Valdai Club,[6] PIR-Centre,[7] the Russian Committee for BRICS research,[8] the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy,[9] Network of Eurasian studies,[10] Berlek-Centre[11]) are active participants of Russian PD. Russian academic, cultural and sports diplomacy are also part of this process. But generally we can assume that Russian public diplomacy is state-centric and consists of the mainly state-based PD initiatives.

[5] Ahtamzian, A. A., and Trofimov, V. A., *Fedor Danilovich Ryzhenko—Our FDR*, http://www.vestnik.mgimo.ru/sites/default/files/pdf/ahtamzyan_3.pdf.

[6] Website found at http://valdaiclub.com/.

[7] Website found at http://www.pircenter.org/en/.

[8] Website found at http://www.nkibrics.ru/.

[9] Website found at http://svop.ru/.

[10] Website found at http://sibir-eurasia.ru, http://evrazia-povolzhye.ru.

[11] Website found at http://berlek-nkp.com.

Just How Effective Are Russia's Numerous Public Diplomacy Programmes and Efforts?

Russian public diplomacy is facing various problems, which can be said for most countries' efforts in this endeavour. Measurement problem is one of the most important. Sometimes, Russian access to PD success depends on the amount of people involved in the PD programmes (preferably—big forums and costly nation-branding events) rather than on the in-depth definition of the target audience and media coverage of the project.

Meanwhile, it is necessary to emphasise that until recently Russian PD initiatives were focused on intergovernmental relations or projects with cultural intelligentsia neglecting the work and interaction with civil society and expert communities. The problem of people working in this sphere is that it is very politically sensitive. During the 1990s, it seems that Russia forgot how to actively engage with foreign public, and when the Federal Agency became responsible for it *Rossotrudnichestvo* was created; some people working there had no idea of how to engage a foreign audience. Even now, some Russian public diplomats demonstrate a certain level of disrespect for local culture and languages, not knowing and not even learning it after many years of staying in the country (especially evident in post-Soviet space). Or they are focused on working mainly with the Russian diaspora ("compatriots"), neglecting to work with other citizens of foreign countries. Or instead of organising conferences, they are annually hosting craft doll exhibition, calling it the brightest event of the year.[12] They rarely listen to the field experts working in the country—for example, Russian tourist promotion agency "Visit Russia" in one Scandinavian state was opened during summer vacation, and this costly event did not attract its intended target audience. This provides the confirmation that communication, which PD is all about, concerns not only talking but listening too.

Russian PD needs to undergo a thorough audit. It is necessary to attract both well-informed and critical scholars and practitioners capable of making their assessments and suggestions heard by the decision-makers. Maybe because of the Soviet heritage in the sphere of PD, "dissent is often confused with disloyalty." Personalised approach with the target audience requires a scrupulous understanding of its needs and interests, which is necessary rather than desirable.

[12] Personal correspondence of the authors.

Every country is interested in better visibility and good reputation in international community. The recent international events have undermined Russian efforts in this sphere. Even the partial disqualification of the Russian Olympic team and the whole Paralympic team during Rio Olympic Games in 2016 had, to some extent, undermined the positive achievements of sports diplomacy. Not to mention the later diplomatic incidents that have negatively influenced the image of the country.

Ukraine's case should also be considered. In Ukraine, Russia was working with political elites, but was mistaken in its work with the public opinion. Russia's PD approach was based on special relationships with Ukrainian elite while neglecting the work with civil society. The Russian efforts were aimed at the stakeholders already interested in cooperation. Russia could therefore hardly attract the audiences and potential "difficult partners" in the Western part of the country that is traditionally viewing Russia with negative stereotypes, unlike Eastern part. In the last two decades, Russia has invested more than US$200 billion in the Ukrainian economy,[13] while the United States has invested US$5 billion "in the development of democratic institutions and skills in promoting civil society and a good form of government."[14] Therefore, the Russian donation policy towards Ukraine has proved to be inefficient and ineffective. Besides, Russian NGOs were working mainly with the so-called "young leaders," neglecting the work with the professional or academic community. Russia's weak economy and internal problems, such as social injustice, socioeconomic discrepancies, corruption and dysfunctional legal system, all add up significantly to undermine a lot of PD initiatives in the region. Russia is not often the role model of behaviour for its neighbouring countries for the above-mentioned reasons and perceptions.

A country's image is shaped by attractive lifestyle, a successful welfare system and effective governance. The main potential attractions of Russia are its people and its geography and that is precisely why substate diplomacy would be very timely. More than 190 nationalities of various religions coexist in Russia. According to Professor Irene Wu, while it is well known that the United States has a large immigrant community, it is less

[13] Ulyukaev, A., *Development of the Russian Economy Will Depend on the Extent of Stimulation and Support of the Economic Growth*, http://forumspb.com/bfx-cc/system/uploads/docs/SPIEF_Review_2014.pdf.

[14] Nuland, V., *Remarks at the U.S.—Ukraine Foundation Conference*, http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2013/dec/218804.htm.

widely recognised that Russia is the second largest immigrant country in the world.[15] About 12 million immigrants from over 140 countries live in Russia. This multi-ethnicity influences Russian public diplomacy as well. Then and now, public diplomacy is "the gathering of influence of Western Russia, the Far-East, Siberia, and the North Caucasus to their respective neighbourhoods."[16] That's why the Russian experience is unique to some extent, as far as it is based on the mixture of Western and Asian approaches.

The Bigger Picture

In Russia, as well as throughout the majority of post-Soviet countries, public diplomacy is actively debated and engaged in academic, policy and practitioner circles, but generally, it is viewed as engaging foreign audiences through fostering cooperation in political, economic and cultural spheres with the purpose of promoting country's national interests. Whereas in Western countries (especially the United States) PD combines two components—engaging allies (mainly through educational and cultural activities) and confronting enemies (such as violent extremism and foreign propaganda through the use of strategic communications) (Tsvetkova, 2016)—in Russia, PD is perceived as aiming to create an objective and favourable image of the country, without undermining the efforts of other actors. The point being made is that it is seen in Russia that public diplomacy can hardly be combined with strategic communications, seen as having influential channels to work with foreign audiences, the necessity of which was realised in Russia in the beginning of the 2000s. This occurred as a result of three reasons: "CNN effect," in which Russia could not effectively present its position on the NATO airstrikes on Serbia to the international public; the change of neutral political course to the Western one by some neighbouring countries—what was seen in Russia negatively; and acquiring substantial financial opportunities due to the oil boom that had occurred then. Russia developed its own public diplomacy institutions and international broadcasting tools. Russian public diplomacy is facing Western perceptions of it as a propaganda tool, aimed at

[15] Wu, I., *Measuring Soft Power in the International System*, International Studies Association Annual Congress—2018, San Francisco. Author's personal archive.

[16] Lambert, M., *Some Reflections on Russian 'Soft Power' in Contemporary Times*, http://picreadi.com/michael_lambert2?fbclid=IwAR337ENexU2LN4DCPNeTZiAWW55AfCyjr3domct19Z_580MzPD28NxSs7FY.

undermining public diplomacy efforts of other states. Russian information warfare and PD are conflated. The intention of the authors was to demonstrate that this limited way of seeing things can prove to be detrimental to understanding the wider picture and perspective. Still, an analysis of Russia's international broadcasting tools and digital diplomacy seen in Russia as more a part of the strategic communications narrative, rather than PD, is provided in the book.

Although Russian public diplomacy is attracting a growing research interest, it is still a much understudied field, even in Russia. Western perspectives usually analyse Russian PD through the lens of strategic communication and hybrid warfare, while in Russia PD is seen as an instrument of dialogue, not containment. So, the practice and terminology of PD are different in Russia, and it is not the same as its Western alternatives, as it includes the elements of *engagement*, but it does not include the elements of *countering (foreign propaganda/terrorist threats*[17]*)*, which are supposed to be the part of the strategic communications narrative. Besides, the term is interpreted in a much narrow sense in Russia in comparison to other countries (Velikaya, 2018); as far as Russia is concerned, there are separate spheres for public and citizen diplomacy. Still, the recent trends demonstrate that maybe in the coming years, there will be some merger of the terms.

Both Russia and post-Soviet countries have unique approaches towards synonymous term of public diplomacy—**humanitarian cooperation**: it is seen as being broader than public diplomacy, international development cooperation and international aid. Even the key multilateral mechanism for conducting the humanitarian cooperation of Eurasian countries—the Intergovernmental Foundation for Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (IFESCCO) created in 2006—in Russian is called "International Humanitarian foundation." Meanwhile, it is necessary to empathise that humanitarian cooperation has nothing in common with the Western doctrines of humanitarian interventionism and the responsibility to protect (R2P). Humanitarian cooperation covers cooperation in the sphere of education, science, arts, sports, tourism and mass media. These are the areas that are traditionally seen as part of PD in other countries (Simons, 2018). So, although humanitarian cooperation is a foreign policy instrument, because of the diversity of its actions, it attracts a great variety of activities and actors involved. In this book, humanitarian cooperation is analysed as synonymous to public diplomacy (what is true

[17] The Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM), https://www.state.gov/m/a/dir/regs/fam/.

if we look at the field activities), while we should admit that in Russian academic discourse these terms are seen as separate—humanitarian cooperation being broader than PD.

Target Audience

Russian public diplomacy is targeted at foreign audiences with "international orientation"—present political and economic elites, tomorrow's future leaders and decision-makers ("movers and shakers") and potential tourists and investors.

There is one peculiarity of segmentation of target audience for Russia and other post-Soviet states. Due to the demonstrated respect of the state sovereignty of the partner states, usually, they are not attracting critically thinking circles of neighbouring states in PD initiatives. PD events usually attract mainly representatives of official institutions and academia and semi-governmental structures, not those who can be seen as opposition. It brings benefits for the current relationships with the political leaders of neighbouring states, but in case of the regime change, there are no "movers and shakers" to build cooperation with.

Geographically, target audience of Russian public diplomacy may be divided into "top priority" partners (Eurasian formats–Commonwealth of Independent States, Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Greater Eurasia), "difficult partners" (Euro-Atlantic community), "needing aid" (receivers of the humanitarian aid) and "interested in dialogue" (BRICS, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, Vietnam and Singapore).

Message

Russia promotes a message of support for multilateralism (not multipolar, as it may be only two poles, but polycentric world); the central role of the United Nations in international affairs with the role of safeguarding nation state's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity,[18] and the non-interference in internal affairs. With this message, Russia looks for partners to help promote this message—be it Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) or other integration formats.

[18] *10th BRICS Summit Johannesburg Declaration*, http://www.brics2018.org.za/sites/default/files/Documents/JOHANNESBURG%20DECLARATION%20-%2026%20JULY%202018%20as%20at%2007h11.pdf (accessed 1 August 2018).

Russia's public diplomacy is and will continue to work to counter what Kennan called "the legalistic-moralistic approach" to international problems. Russia insists that coercive democratisation can bring nothing but harm to states with a specific way of development, and that the nation state is the only reliable guarantor of world order. Russian approach towards public diplomacy differs from the Western one, appealing to the human rights agenda, democratisation, transparency and the rule of law. Undoubtedly, a set of rights like free speech, the freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of religion and equality for men and women under the rule of law is universal. But Russia would not agree that values prevail over national interests.

Russia's position on Syria, Iraq and Libya was translated through PD and strategic communications mechanisms were warmly welcomed by millions of ordinary people all over the world. However, Russia still has much untapped potential in offering its own framework on international engagement through PD methods. Besides monitoring the "free world" by countering coercive democratisation, another Russian message is protecting traditional values. According to Professor Nicholas Cull,[19] when analysing these Russian PD efforts, we should admit that they find understanding in many corners of the world.

However, the basic foundational guiding idea of PD as an interactive and mutually beneficial activity that creates relationships between Russia and foreign publics in order to facilitate the realisation of a more favourable image and reputation and policy in exchange for something (based upon culture, education, sport, business, R & D and other spheres) remains central to the aims and goals of the activity. The importance of which is further elevated and heightened during periods of international competition and conflict.

Regional Priorities

Analysing Russian public diplomacy, it is impossible to neglect its regional surrounding, which constitutes its top foreign policy goal,[20] and the vast

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

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

amount of its efforts abroad are focused in close proximity to it. Meanwhile, this is a region of growing importance situated in the crossroads between the "East-West" and "North-South" trade routes in the heart of Eurasia. Located on the historical and modern Silk Road, it is still developing its public diplomacy strategy. Still, the recent trends demonstrate that Eurasian states are about to offer new PD agenda in frames of the Greater Eurasia initiative (flexible integration platform with the involvement of the members of the Eurasian Economic Union—EAEU, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation—SCO and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—ASEAN[21]).

Countries of the region brand themselves as platforms for political negotiations (e.g. Minsk summit over Ukraine—2015, Astana and Moscow with the Syria talks—2017–2018, decision of Ashkhabad to host United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia since 2007). Eurasian countries attract tourists through cultural heritage, but at the same time, they are trying to create a unique self-distinctive, modern image by building functioning institutions.

The PD of Russia and other Eurasian countries is closely correlated with nation branding. And there are some common features. These countries organise costly nation-branding events (like Olympic and Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) Games in Russia, World Expo in Kazakhstan/World Nomad games/World Kokpar Championship in Kyrgyzstan), instead of solving burning internal problems. Also clear communication strategy is only introduced (e.g. Astana Expo 2017 commercials were not very convincing in comparison with Dubai 2020).

There is still work to be done for the successful PD strategy in the region. One of the key elements contributing towards sustainable development of the Eurasian countries is the dialogue of civil societies and expert communities. And in this sense, PD is crucially important, as far as it fosters long-lasting process of regional cooperation. Based on different formats of relationships, it enables not only to listen to the neighbour's opinion but also to hear it. Still, a lot needs to be done, new tools need to be implemented in order to harmonise the relations, strengthen much-needed trust and mutual understanding between countries of Eurasian region. Neighbourhood worries should be taken into account.

[21] Moscow welcomes EU's participation in 'Greater Eurasia' project, says Lav rov, http://tass.com/economy/996087.

Analysis

Russian public diplomacy is facing various problems. One of the serious problems for Russian PD is that administrative structures have enough resources for international cooperation, while academic institutions are facing the lack of finances. Almost no field studies in the top priority countries are conducted by Russian MA and PhD students. Some Russian initiatives are very disputable. It looks like Russia is fond of establishing monuments rather than going to the universities of its partner states. Russian language is one of the main Russian assets in the region. But the title of the key foundation promoting Russian language "Russkiy Mir" (Russian World/Russia Peace) meets negative connotation in its neighbouring countries (we can imagine how American English-language promoting structure "Pax Americana" would be perceived in Mexico). It was created in addition to the world-recognised The Pushkin State Russian Language Institute (Pushkin Institute) founded by USSR in 1966, having 300,000 alumni only in Cuba.

Measurement problem exists. Sometimes Russian access to PD success depends on the amount of people involved in the PD programmes (preferably big forums and costly nation-branding events) rather than on the in-depth definition of the target audience and media coverage of the project.

Meanwhile, it is necessary to empathise that till recently Russian PD initiatives were focused on intergovernmental relations or projects with cultural intelligentsia neglecting the work with civil society and expert community. The problem of people working in this sphere is very sensitive. During the 1990s, it seems that the Russians forgot how to actively engage with the foreign public, and when the Federal Agency responsible for it, *Rossotrudnichestvo*, was created, some people working there had no idea of how to engage a foreign target audience. A lot has changed since then. Brilliant professionals like Ambassadors *Alexander Axenenok*, *Leonid Drachevskiy*, *Igor Ivanov, Igor Khalevinskiy* and *Eleonora Mitrofanova* are contributing greatly towards the realisation of Russian PD.

Unfortunately, Russian civil society is not widely involved in public diplomacy. There are various reasons for this—from the administrative barriers to the misunderstanding of businesses on the importance of nation branding. We are also witnessing the lack of actors, especially of independent ones. Russian civil society involved in international cooperation is legally cut from Western finances, while local resources may be received

mainly from administrative institutions.[22] As a result, as it is mentioned by Professor Tatiana Zonova, "currently, there are 51 Russian NGOs that enjoy consultative status with the ECOSOC, which amounts to only 1.5% of the total number of NGOs worldwide with such a status."[23] As a result of this situation, people entering into this field can hardly survive in this restrictive atmosphere.

Some General Observations

There are a number of common observations that can be deduced as a result of the information and knowledge of the chapters in the form of conclusions and lessons, some of which were brought up in the Introduction. Across many of the chapters in this book, it is clear that the latest public diplomacy front line is found in social media. This definitely increases the relevance, importance and activity on social media, with different forms of communicative and interactive forms of diplomacy by international actors that include Russia. This form of public diplomacy interaction offers a means to negate the traditional geopolitical constraints of time and space, which limited an actor's ability to communicate and engage with audiences in order to compete with other competitors for global influence. Digital diplomacy offers an instantaneous means to engage geographically dispersed audiences at a relatively low cost. Given that Russia has positioned itself as being in opposition to what it sees as the negative influence of US-led foreign policy and the US is more powerful in economic and military terms, soft power and public diplomacy offer an asymmetric means of engaging global audiences. This is at a time when there are changes in how geopolitics is waged in an increasingly unstable and volatile system of international relations. Mathew Fraser speaks of *geopolitics 2.0*; he notes three significant shifts: (1) states to individuals; (2) real world to virtual world mobilisation and power; and (3) old media to new media. He also notes that states have reacted to these changes by either censoring and/or deploying web platforms to achieve their goals and assert their influence (Fraser, 2009). This is an ideal environment for the potential of public diplomacy, especially given the recent lack of prog-

[22] *Mnogograntnoe tvorchestvo*, 2 June 2018, https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/3649014 (accessed 15 July 2018).

[23] Zonova, T. V., Will NGOs Survive in the Future?, *Russia in Global Affairs*, 16 November 2013, http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/book/Will-NGOs-Survive-In-the-Future-16202.

ress by traditional government-to-government diplomacy in resolving the existing tensions and issues.

Digital diplomacy offers Russia a potential route around the gatekeepers of mainstream media that tend to emphasise negative news and characteristics. The many-to-many forms of interactive communication that is central to social media facilitates public diplomacy and people-to-people diplomacy efforts through enabling direct contact, communication, interaction and collaboration between individuals and groups. These form the basis of mutually beneficial relationships in the sphere of politics, economics, culture and other areas. As noted by the authors, the various programmes have not reached their full potential for various reasons in this demanding and competitive information environment.

One of the issues that was discussed in the Introduction was the characterisation or labelling of Russian communications efforts as being hybrid warfare or propaganda. These concepts and practices were defined, and imply the use of deception, manipulation and subversion of a societal and the governmental structures. In other words, this is not a relational partnership or collaboration, but rather an entirely asymmetric one-way transactional relationship that would only benefit the Russian government. The various chapters demonstrate that the means used to create and maintain relationships through communicational activities within the realm of public diplomacy demonstrate a reciprocal intent and collaborative approach. All five components of public diplomacy that are identified by Cull (2008)—listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange and international broadcasting—have been deployed in Russia's programmes. This has caused controversy in mainstream media and political circles, which tend to assume and project the worst and most sinister of intentions, while conflating measure of activity with measure of effect (MOE). Russia also views many Western activities and intentions with the same lens of cynical and sinister intent. This seems to be connected to the current appalling state of relations at the governmental level between the West and Russia, where a significant trust deficit is clearly evident in a gradually worsening cycle of relations at this level.

Russia's approach to the theory and practice has been stated as different, but there are similarities as well. In this regard, Russia's application and intent of public diplomacy are not differing from other countries' practice, which is about gaining influence and securing foreign policy goals. The activities of Russia's public diplomacy programmes that are highlighted in the chapters of this book are intended to generate a more

positive image of the country and its people. This is done through focusing on the different competitive advantages that are possessed, for example, cultural attractions, business opportunities or common goals that enhance human security (to mitigate such risks as environmental degradation or reducing the risk of armed conflict). Certainly, the attention paid to such foreign policy tools as soft power and nation branding, although not strictly public diplomacy, is aimed at creating a competitive identity for Russia on the global stage during a period of intense competition and conflict. In comparison to Western approaches, Russia's approach to public diplomacy is more tactical and operational in nature, seeking relatively modest cultural and/or political and/or economic goals in a particular country or region. These efforts are also characteristically having a more active governmental involvement and less non-governmental involvement. The effectiveness of the public diplomacy efforts is limited by the institutional organisation structure of Russian public diplomacy that is limited by the effects of stove piping as a result of different competing organisations' lack of coordination and apparent lack of cooperation. There is no one lead organisation that coordinates and directs the resources and efforts of the public diplomacy programmes.

Perspectives

Analysing possible steps to undertake, it becomes clear that fostering PD ties with the top priority partners could help in creating a positive agenda. What is urgently needed for Russian PD is the prioritisation of the target audience. The limited resources spent on the various forums and youth festivals could bring more international dividends if they were also spent on academic exchanges. While Russia organises costly nation-branding events, Russian scholars have no free budget on international projects, and academic diplomacy suffers seriously.

A hallmark feature of Russian public diplomacy is not using "countering" component against foreign propaganda/violent extremism, which is seen as the part of the strategic communications, not a PD narrative. Russian PD is used mainly for attracting partnerships and building dialogue with the difficult partners. Through its public diplomacy, Russia promotes the message that the nation state is the only reliable guarantor of international peace and stable world order.

The importance of international dialogue and empathy during times of confrontation is increasingly important. Public diplomacy, at the moment,

is in a state of flux due to the introduction of digital tools, the emergence of global conflicts and paralysis in international/multilateral forums. PD can be used to bring nations closer together even while their delegates go head to head at the UN. Public diplomacy (and even pathways to prosperity—P2P) initiatives would be very timely to de-escalate global disarray. History proves that détente talks had started in the period of most serious confrontation in the 1970s. Similar public diplomacy tools should be implemented. Regardless of the difficulties in Russian-Western relations, according to the latest Foreign Policy concept, strategic priority is to "establish a common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific by harmonising and aligning interests of European and Eurasian integration processes, which is expected to prevent the emergence of dividing lines on the European continent."[24] With regard to dialogue on de-weaponising public diplomacy, excluding strategic communications component should be high on the agenda. Even in the Cold War era, there were direct negotiations on influence operations and disinformation campaigns.[25] Nowadays, when official diplomacy often becomes deadlocked, public diplomacy could become very timely.

Future Research

During the course of research and writing this volume, a number of issues and aspects of public diplomacy are in obvious need of further academic and intellectual attention. There is a growing amount of work being published on the topic of public diplomacy by non-Western countries, even if there is still a relatively disproportionate amount of attention paid to the likes of the United States, France, the UK and other leading Western international actors. In some regards, this book can be considered as a modest step in "De-Westernising" the research agenda on public diplomacy using the Russian Federation as an example of a non-Western international actor that is seeking to generate influence and a place on the world stage. There are many more countries that make up the non-Western world, which offer a wealth of potential research that can broaden and

[24] Ibid.

[25] January 2017. Public Diplomacy and National Security in 2017. Building Alliances, Fighting Extremism, and Dispelling Disinformation. Katherine A. Brown, Shannon N. Green, and Jian "Jay" Wang, https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fspublic/publication/170117_Brown_PublicDiplomacy2017_Web.pdf?FaqyYdWYJBGWo24kpc01vqlSW2ZcwyNf.

expand the current focus and knowledge of the conceptualisation and practice of public diplomacy.

Also linked to the subject of this particular book, which covers not only the contemporary period of Russian public diplomacy but also the historical origins provides a "laboratory" and a timeline that enables an examination of its evolution. This enables opportunities for detailed studies on the organisational learning, similarities and differences of historical and contemporary approaches to the conceptualisation and practice of public diplomacy, and the environmental specificities that shape the needs and approaches. Of course, this applies to all countries and not just Russia. It can potentially provoke such lines of inquiry and questioning as looking for the examples of best practice, successes and failures of public diplomacy, whether history has a habit of repeating itself.

This leads on further to exploring the age-old problem and dilemma of measure of activity (MOA) versus measure of effect (MOE). Researchers and practitioners alike have been tempted to equate MOA with MOE, which can produce false or misleading results. Research needs to explore much more stringently and critically how these two measures are and are not related. A much greater in-depth exploration of the presence or absence of connections and influence between these measures could be undertaken, although this is a very tall order to undertake in a conclusive and meaningful manner.

An aspect and product of the current hyper-politicised research environment is the projection and construction of moralised and ethical lenses to human activity. Although this approach may be helpful at times, its subjective overuse will ensure that the object or subject of study will not be objectively understood in terms of the concrete motivations and likely to be subjectively misunderstood via presumed diametrically opposing sets of constructed morally/ethically framed projections. This situation has created a "weaponisation" of the public diplomacy narrative. To "de-weaponise" public diplomacy requires being able to separate it from other forms of political communication, such as the over-conflation with propaganda. This stems from the current global search for actor legitimacy at the expense of the opponent/competitor, but creates confusion and incorrect assumptions. Certainly, public diplomacy may use elements of strategic communication or international broadcasting, but it is a higher order form of mass communication. Therefore, the future research agenda could look at the tactical or operational role of these elements and concepts of mass communication as being part of the communication process and not as the whole of the process.

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