Research Article

Importance of Soft Power in Digital Diplomacy

Dijital Diplomaside Yumuşak Gücün Önemi

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Abstract

"Diplomacy", defined as the art of interstate negotiation, is a term used in international relations. It is shaped according to the effective communication skills of diplomats on various issues. An important type of diplomacy of the recent two decades is a new form of diplomacy known as digital diplomacy. Digital diplomacy is defined as the use of the internet and modern communication technologies to achieve diplomatic goals. In this context, the main purpose of this article is to explore the importance of soft power in digital diplomacy. It is to determine that soft power plays an important role in public diplomacy and it is possible to use it effectively to achieve a diplomatic goal through digital diplomacy in the 21st century. As a method, the historical origin and development of diplomacy has been researched from the relevant scientific sources. This article covers the examination of digital diplomacy, the modern form of diplomacy. Soft power, after all, is a power that defines the ability of a country or organization to influence others and achieve their goals through attraction and persuasion rather than coercion. Soft power is the ability to shape the preferences and behavior of others through culture, values, and other non-coercive ways. It is based on building relationships, encouraging cooperation, and winning hearts and minds. Therefore, it is seen as a more effective and sustainable way in the modern world.

Keywords: Digital diplomacy, Public diplomacy, Traditional diplomacy, Hard power, Soft power.

Öz

Devletlerarası müzakere sanatı olarak tanımlanan "diplomasi", uluslararası ilişkilerde kullanılan bir terimdir. Diplomatların çeşitli konulardaki etkili iletişim becerisine göre şekillenmektedir. Son 20 yılın önemli bir diplomasi türü ise, dijital diplomasi olarak bilinen yeni bir diplomasi biçimidir. Dijital diplomasi, diplomatik hedeflere ulaşmak amacıyla internet ve modern iletişim teknolojilerinin kullanılması olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Böylece diplomasi kurallarını değiştirmeksizin, aksine onu daha geniş kazanımlar düzeyine yükseltmek mümkün olabilmektedir. Bu bağlamda makalenin temel amacı, dijital diplomaside yumuşak gücün önemini keşfetmektir. Yumuşak gücün kamu diplomasisinde önemli bir rol oynadığını ve 21.yüzyılda dijital diplomasi yoluyla diplomatik bir hedefe ulaşmak için etkin kullanımın mümkün olabileceğini belirlemektir. Yöntem olarak ilgili bilimsel kaynaklardan diplomasinin tarihsel kökeni ve gelişimi araştırılmıştır. Makale, diplomasinin modern biçimi olan dijital diplomasinin bilimsel eserlerin yansıra, sosyal medyadaki örnekleriyle incelenmesini kapsamaktadır. Yumuşak güç sonuç olarak, bir ülkenin veya kuruluşun başkalarını etkileme ve hedeflerine zorlama yerine cazibe ve ikna yoluyla ulaşma yeteneğini tanımlayan bir güçtür. Yumuşak güç kültür, değerler ve diğer zorlayıcı olmayan yollarla başkalarının tercihlerini ve davranışlarını şekillendirme yeteneğidir. Yumuşak güç, siyasi hedeflere ulaşmak için askeri veya ekonomik zorlamanın kullanılmasını içeren sert güçten çok farklıdır. Yumuşak güç, ilişkiler kurmaya, işbirliğini teşvik etmeye, kalpleri ve zihinleri kazanmaya dayanır. Bu nedenle, modern dünyada daha etkili ve sürdürülebilir bir yolu olarak görülür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital diplomasi, Kamu Diplomasisi, Geleneksel diplomasi, Sert güç, Yumuşak güç.

1. Introduction

Diplomacy is understood as the art of negotiations between representatives of different states. It usually refers to international diplomacy, the conduct of international relations through the intercession of professional diplomats with regard to a full range of topical issues. It is the profession, activity or the skill of managing international relations, typically by a country's representatives abroad; the practice of dealing with others in a tactful, plus, sensitive way. Yet as the 20th century came to end, a new form of diplomacy known as digital diplomacy began to immerge/appear. Digital diplomacy is defined as the usage of internet and modern communication technologies, aiming to achieve diplomatic targets or goals. Nowadays, not only is the importance of digital diplomacy significantly high, but also we should not underestimate influence of it on international interaction between countries. In addition we have to admit that digitalisation does not change the fundamental objectives of diplomacy, but to improve it to a level of wider achievements (Hocking, Melissen, 2015).

Cumulatively, the internet is having a profound effect on the two cornerstones of diplomacy: information and communication. Digital diplomacy looks at three aspects of the interplay between internet and diplomacy: Internet driven-changes in the environment in which diplomacy is conducted (geo-politics, geo-economics, sovereignty, interdependence); the emergence of new topics on diplomatic agendas (internet governance, cyber security, privacy and more); and use of a new Internet tools in the practice of diplomacy (social media, big data and more). The taxonomy goes beyond the typical narrow focus on social media and public diplomacy in contemporary literature on digital diplomacy to cover the overall interplay between internet and diplomacy (Swiss-Maltese NGO "Diplo", 2021).

Analysing how the digital diplomacy functions by a country can show if that country is making maximum use of the digital skills, knowledge and capacities of each diplomat and therefore how efficient the public diplomacy is. In conclusion, this study aims to understand the importance of soft power in digital diplomacy.

2. Aim and Methodology

The main purpose of this article is to explore the importance of soft power in digital diplomacy. In other words, this research is conducted to show that soft power plays a significant role in public diplomacy and in 21st century is the main tool to reach any diplomatic goal through digital diplomacy. Digital skills help to enhance the level of professionalism among diplomatic civil servants.

The methodology of this article is to study the historical ways of diplomacy and its development till its modern form – digital diplomacy, to learn the instruments of different types of diplomacy and to realise the advantages and disadvantages of digital diplomacy as a "soft power", and what will lead us to understand the main topic of the article – importance of soft power in digital diplomacy.

Research methods: This article is based on classic study method, including search, collection and compilation of materials in text books, articles according to diplomacy topic, research on social media posts, study, analysis and selection of compiled materials. The source of case materials is the articles in journals, posts in social media Twitter and news, published in internet.

➢ Compilation the materials (literatures, scientific journals, documents, internet resources, social media channels and platforms, etc.). In this phase, the raw materials were collected and categorized for further investigation and research;

➢ Study and analysis of the collected materials (noticing the contents of the materials, formats, historical backgrounds). The materials which didn't have influence on diplomacy or foreign policy were filtered;

➢ Selecting and management of the appropriate materials based on importance and relativity to the topic of study.

To conclude this methodology authors read and analysed the works of leading scientists in the field of diplomacy, digital diplomacy, soft power etc. Among them – Bjola C. and Holmes M. (2015) "Digital Diplomacy: Theory and Practice"; Hanson F. (2012) "A digital DFAT: Joining the 21st Century",

"Baked in and Wired: eDiplomacy@State", "Internet Wars: The Struggle for Power in the 21st Century"; Hocking B. and Melissen J. (2015) "Diplomacy in the Digital Age"; Kampf R. and Manor I., etc. (2015) "Digital Diplomacy 2.0? A Cross-national Comparison of Public Engagement in Facebook and Twitter"; Kelley J. R. (2010) "The New Diplomacy: Evolution of a Revolution. Diplomacy & Statecraft"; Kuhn T.S. (1962) "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions"; Manor I. (2018) "The Digitalization of Diplomacy"; Mcluhan M. and Powers B. R. (1989) "The global village: Transformations in World Life and Media in the 21st Century"; Nye J. (2005) "Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics"; Riordan S. (2016) "The Strategic Use of Digital and Public Diplomacy in Pursuit of National Objectives" and many others.

It is to reveal the importance of soft power in digital diplomacy based on the theoretical framework and the application examples in recent years. In order to have better understanding, this article will study these terms, briefly: traditional diplomacy, public diplomacy and digital diplomacy, and their instruments.

3. Diplomacy and the Major Types of Diplomacy

Through history, states have had to establish contact with other states and this is how diplomacy appeared. It has been as important and vital for one state as keeping the control of its own territory and society.

Diplomacy through ages changed its own face several times. Only one feature remains – the relations; relations between one state and another state, another state's public, or another NGO through classic ways, society movements and/or thorough digital technologies.

3.1. Diplomacy

Diplomacy is the skill of tactful approach to manage the relationships and negotiations between individuals, organizations, or nations. It involves using communication, negotiation, and compromise to achieve mutually beneficial agreements and resolve conflicts.

At its core, diplomacy is about building and maintaining relationships. This involves understanding and respecting the needs, values, and interests of others, while also advocating for one's own interests. Diplomats must be skilled communicators, able to convey their ideas and concerns clearly and effectively.

In the context of international relations, diplomacy is a critical tool for promoting peace, stability, and cooperation among nations. Diplomats engage in a wide range of activities, from representing their country's interests in negotiations and treaty talks, to providing humanitarian aid and support during crises.

Diplomacy also involves a deep understanding of cultural differences and customs, as well as political and economic systems. Diplomats must be able to navigate complex power dynamics and understand the motivations and goals of various actors in order to achieve their objectives.

Overall, diplomacy is an essential skill for anyone seeking to navigate complex relationships and achieve positive outcomes in negotiations and/or conflict resolution. It requires a combination of empathy, strategic thinking, and effective communication, and is a vital tool for promoting cooperation and building a more peaceful world (Bjola, Holmes, 2015: 181-183).

3.2. The Major Types of Diplomacy

In spite of the fact that the form, size and the executive instruments have changed or better to say, developed, diplomacy remained as the channel between different states and the importance raised more, since its existence. However, the more the states and the societies improved themselves, the more diplomacy also got the advantage of this improvement and adapted itself to the existing challenges, found the way through the limits and practiced new facilities (Melissen, 2005: 5). This evolution of diplomacy produced three major types of it which are now practiced by countries, upon their choice and capabilities.

The three major type of diplomacy are:

> ➢ Traditional Diplomacy;

> ➢ Public Diplomacy;

> ➢ Digital Diplomacy.

3.2.1. Traditional Diplomacy

Traditional diplomacy focuses on relations between states, exclusively, and takes place at the level of negotiations between officials of the two states. In traditional diplomacy the authorities do not inform the general public about the progress and results of the diplomatic dialogue. For holding diplomatic meetings for traditional diplomacy only the government officials of another country are important, not any other organizations nor their representatives do not play any role (IGI Global Publisher, 2023). The dialogues between the officials of the two countries are confidential under the traditional diplomacy; the essence of the conversation is never made public. Traditional diplomacy is an official kind of relationship between two countries. Actors of traditional diplomacy are states with their own representatives and diplomats. Traditional diplomacy could not be conducted between state from one side and non-governmental organization/sector from another side. To communicate with some state the diplomats from another state used to come across long distances. Interaction between states was on usual base. The role of diplomats was on the shoulders of few individuals close to governor of a country. Diplomats went abroad to act on behalf of their states. In this way institutions appeared for diplomats, the ones who professionally conducted negotiations. It means that practice to use politicians, close to governor of state, was stopped. And era of professionals in diplomatic corps was started. Process of negotiations and the results of it was hold in secret (Siracusa, 2010).

Professional diplomats in their own country or abroad in embassies started to communicate with colleagues from foreign countries. Common result of negotiations was "mutual consent", sometimes a stronger state forced its competitor to make concessions. Each country kept negotiations with partners in secret in order to have strategic advantages in negotiations. It was possible on the base of only two-side communication, only representatives of two countries were involved in interaction. Agenda of traditional diplomacy was often egoistic, ambitious emancipation – capture of new territory, land and/or sea, seizure of power, issues of peace and war (Marks, Freeman, 2022).

Diplomacy was based on the understanding that the state is a community of organized people on a sovereign national land with clearly defined borders and limits where the territory is the currency of diplomacy. In traditional diplomacy, the geography of territory is important. The agenda of the negotiations was agreed in advance. One country, through its representative, passed the document to another country and asked to negotiate the issues mentioned in the letter. If there was no mutual agreement on some points, they were not raised during the bilateral meeting. The two sides represented the laws of their countries, their territories, and they could not challenge either the laws or the territory, except through war or another form of aggression.

Traditional diplomacy represents the national interests of states, but its development takes place in a multilateral environment. Countries come together and form programs for a common outcome and with a global agenda outlined by international organizations. The modern world, in which the territory of the state is not the defining principle of diplomacy, does not require the consequences of traditional diplomacy. Different functions, expanded range of state and non-state negotiators in international relations caused the appearance of public diplomacy (Siracusa, 2010).

Over time, the participants of the states joined the organizations, established internationally, such as UN, NATO, UNESCO, WHO, etc. and negotiations became more open and transparent due to societies developments, internally and internationally. Some states continued direct bilateral negotiations whilst some countries conducted negotiations with other states under the patronage of mentioned international organizations. Agenda of communications was changed from security issues and moved more towards social and economic priorities for population.

Briefly, traditional diplomacy involves the state officials, government bureaucrats in diplomacy process. Traditional diplomacy typically involves formal negotiations and interactions between diplomats and government officials from different countries. Here are a few examples of traditional diplomacy:

➢ *Bilateral meetings between heads of state or government:* Leaders of different countries often meet to discuss bilateral issues and strengthen ties between their nations. For example, the meeting between US President Joe Biden and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in March 2023 (**Figure 1 and Figure 2**).
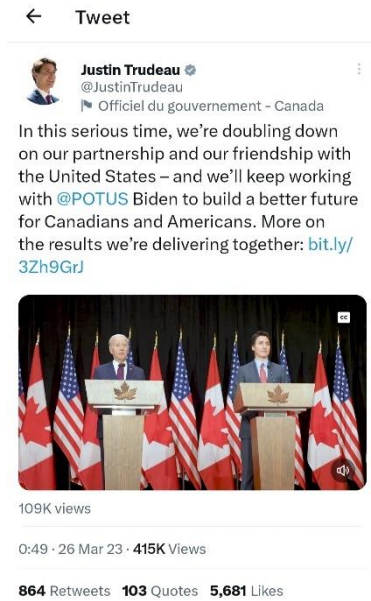
Figure 1: Meeting between US President Joe Biden and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, tweet in English
(Source: Trudeau, Twitter, 2023, image collected by authors)

Figure 2: Meeting between US President Joe Biden and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, tweet in French
(Source: Trudeau, Twitter, 2023, image collected by authors)

➢ *Multilateral meetings and summits:* Diplomats and government officials from several countries may convene at international forums to discuss global issues and coordinate their policies. Examples of such meetings include the United Nations General Assembly and the G7, G20, and BRICS summits (**Figure 3**).

The G20 summit ended in the resort island of Bali with India taking over the G20 presidency on a high note, stressing that it will forge "inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented" agenda under its leadership of the twenty-nation grouping of the world's richest and most powerful nations.

Figure 3: G20 Summit
(Source: The Daily Guardian, 2022, image collected by authors)

➢ *Diplomatic visits*: Diplomats and officials from one country may visit another country to meet with their counterparts, establish or strengthen diplomatic relations, and exchange views on various

issues. For example, Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to London to meet Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in March 2023 (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4: Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to London
(Source: The Jerusalem Post, 2023, image collected by authors)

➤ *Diplomatic notes and communications:* Diplomats often exchange formal written communications, known as diplomatic notes, to convey messages, express concerns, and make requests. These notes are considered an essential tool of traditional diplomacy.
➤ *International treaties and agreements:* Diplomats negotiate and sign treaties and agreements to establish legally binding frameworks for cooperation on various issues, such as trade, security, and the environment. Examples of such agreements include the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5: Trans-Pacific Partnership signed

(Source: The Guardian, 2018, image collected by authors)

3.2.2. Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy tries to build a good understanding, strong communication between civil servants from one country and public from another country. The best instrument of conducting a public diplomacy is media. It influences very much on thoughts, decisions and perception of people. Intellectuals at Tufts University in the mid-1960s first time used a term "public diplomacy" to explain the influence of international relations of United States (Kennedy, Lucas, 2005). During Cold War Soviet Union tried to

spread communist ideology to the world, and United States used information agencies, broadcasting organization "Voice of America" to spread human rights, liberty, democracy, free market ideas. Diplomats, policy makers, mass media carry out propaganda against communist ideas to public. This led to emergence of public diplomacy.

In post-Cold War Era United States continued influence on European and Asian countries to become a "global hegemony". At the same time European countries practiced public diplomacy to achieve mutual goals in security, economical issues, to develop a multilateral cooperation among European countries. The result of such cooperation is the establishment of European Union. Over time term "public diplomacy" started to be used in diplomatic meaning about general public.

"New public diplomacy" uses non-state actors, for example, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to increase cooperation with foreign public. This kind of communication generates horizontal relations: from people to people, not from state to people; "New public diplomacy" takes advantages of film-making, internet, social media and other platforms (Pamment, 2012: 9).

After all the constant involvement of public diplomacy instruments, it is necessary to mention that the role of state actors is very important in understanding of the parameters of public diplomacy. They allow diplomatic action and they also support the overall diplomatic effort. Solutions of conflict situations become more difficult without the intervention of state actors into the issues, because non-state actors do not have power and diplomatic skills to solve problems. Only experienced diplomats can deal with difficult issues. Consequently, the successful work of public diplomacy needs approval and support from state actors (Melissen, 2005).

In other words, public diplomacy is a relationship between states, international organizations, foreign citizens, etc. Public diplomacy uses different channels – youth exchange programs, non-governmental organizations, bilateral cooperation programs, economical support programs, sports, film industry, mass media, etc. The main purpose is to involve as many people as possible to strengthen the country's national image and create the necessary foreign policy.

Public diplomacy can take many forms and be used in a variety of contexts. Here are a few examples:

➢ *Cultural exchanges:* Governments may arrange for cultural exchanges between their citizens and those of other countries as a way of promoting mutual understanding and respect. For example, the US government sponsors the Fulbright Program, which funds academic exchanges between Americans and citizens of other countries.

➢ *Public speeches:* Government officials and other public figures may give speeches to foreign audiences in order to explain their country's policies and values. For example, the former US President Barack Obama gave a speech in Cairo in 2009 aimed at improving relations between the United States and the Muslim world (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6: The former US President Barack Obama gave a speech in Cairo

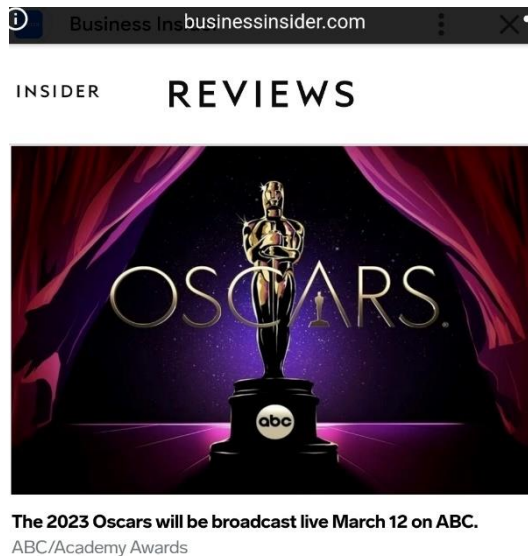(Source: MSNBC News, 2011, image collected by authors)

➢ *Social media:* Governments may use social media to communicate with foreign audiences and shape their perceptions of the country. For example, the Canadian government's Twitter account often posts messages in English and French languages to engage with a global audience (**Figure 1 and Figure 2**).

➢ *Humanitarian aid:* Providing humanitarian aid in times of crisis can be a way of demonstrating a country's values and building goodwill with foreign audiences. For example, Israel provided humanitarian aid to Turkey that was affected by natural disasters – earthquake in 2023 (**Figure 7**).

Figure 7: Prime Minister of Israel Benjamin Netanyahu's Tweet in Hebrew in translation to English

(Source: Benjamin Netanyahu's Twitter, 2023, image collected by authors)

➢ *Cultural diplomacy:* Governments may sponsor cultural events, such as film festivals, concerts, or art exhibitions, in order to showcase their country's culture to foreign audiences (Melissen, 2005: 163-164). For example, the British Council organizes the annual Edinburgh Showcase, a showcase of British theatre and dance that attracts international audiences. There are other events such as EuroVision Song Contest, Cannes Film Festival, Grammy Awards, etc (**Figure 8**).

Figure 8: Oscar Award

(Source: Business Insider News, 2023, image collected by authors)

These are just a few examples of the many ways public diplomacy can be used to promote a country's interests and values on the global stage.

3.2.3. Digital Diplomacy

Digital diplomacy occurred at the end of 20th century as new form of diplomacy. Approximately from beginning of 2001, the digital diplomacy, as a part of public diplomacy, started to be defined as usage of ICTs based on the new platforms of social media. Those, who agree to this understanding of digital diplomacy, think that medium was changed, but not the message. Marshall McLuhan in his book "The Medium is the Massage" argued that media are doing "massage" to the brain of people in order they will behave in particular way. The way, how exactly we are sending and receiving information is more important than the information itself. Instead of speaking to people by TV channels and/or by radio, the public officials use Facebook, Twitter and/or YouTube channels. Others think that digital diplomacy is a larger concept than an instrument of modern politics (McLuhan, 1967).

Ministries of Foreign Affairs have gone through paradigms shifts, technology-driven evolutions – emergence of telegraph and radio, telephone, television and lately internet based facilities.

The term "paradigm shift" can apply here. This term was created by an American scientist, Thomas Kuhn, with the meaning of a basic and deep change in a scientific practices and concepts, like physics, which already exists. This term was used for scientific and experimental theories but started to apply on other events. A paradigm shift is an evolutionary change, when a generally accepted and established way of thinking became a new way in scientific progress. Paradigm shifts by Thomas Kuhn is a scientific revolution, when one layer of knowledge changes to another (Kuhn, 1962). In the middle of the 19th century an electric telegraph was developed. This is a device that made it possible to transmit printed information over a distance in encoded form.

Radio is the device with receiver antenna, which using electromagnetic waves between 30 hertz (Hz) and 300 gigahertz (GHz). A transmitter generates radio waves and a radio receiver gets these waves. Radio broadcasting began in California in 1909. Radio remained to be the most popular broadcasting system till television dominantly opened its place among population since the second half of the 20th century. Television is a telecommunication medium, using the waves but the receiver can decode the waves into picture and sound, formerly in two dimensional monochrome (black and white), later in colour and recently even in three dimensional pictures. Television was used in experimental forms in 1920s. After World War II, black-and-white TV broadcasting was popular in Great Britain and USA. Television sets were almost in every institution or house.

Television in 1950s years became the main medium to influence on people's opinion. Colour broadcasting appeared in United States of America and other developed countries in the mid-1960s. Television has been used for different purposes, including news such as political, social, scientific, cultural and national or global events, entertainment and shows, and commercial based programs like advertisement clips or shows. At times, some of these programs merged to another to gain even better results, for instance a commercial brand produces an entertainment show.

In both radio and television broadcasting system, there are two major components. One side is the organization that produces something to broadcast and the other side is the receiver side which mainly includes the society and population. Before internet becomes popular, society individuals could show their reactions or involvement in any part of the broadcast by traditional ways, including phone calls or postal mails. Considering the post delays or phone line traffics, the expectation of the society was adjusted to a non-immediate response.

It seemed that both components agreed to have a, more or less, one-way direction road. However, it was not an absolute one-way, since a person could call on specific programs to request a song, or re-broadcasting a show, or having some criticises. We must bear in mind that in the best case, and if there was an interaction, it was between the organization/the incorporation and people, while there was not a good measure of the real opinion of the receivers, except the rate of the subscribers, mails or phones.

Privatisation of a phenomenon "internet" (1993-1998), was a revolution in many aspects, specifically in traditional way of communication. Internet, technically, is the network of connected computers on the base of Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) and Internet Protocol (IP) for interaction between devices and networks. National Science Foundation of USA (NSF) created the NSFNET network for communication between universities and data centres. Connecting to NSFNET was free. There were 7,500 domain names in 1993 (Hart, 2003). With the transfer of the NSFNET to commercial use, the modern Internet has emerged. Quickly, since it started to be in common access, people understood the easy facilities and the advantages. Users, as individuals, gained higher value in this system. The individuals became the main part of the system to exist. It, encouragingly, opened a wide road of communication with the real meaning, interactively. There was not a one-way road from any entity to the public. It started to be a dialogue shaped communication.

The value of "time" got a new meaning. To exchange a few sentences, there was no need to stay behind the cable phone lines, nor did it need to wait for days till the postal mail arrives. The advantage of, somehow, immediate exchangeability added the value of the whole system. Not only the system, but the individuals also became the main part of this communication. Having the advantage of immediate reaction, the brutality of the system showed another face to the traditional system. Society stepped into an era in which massive reactions can happen in seconds. It is not limited to reactions only, but even for simple communications, like sharing some photos, letters or information, users need a few seconds to finish the task. Information became available regardless the geographical location or Time-zones. Possibilities of filtering the massive opinions started to fade out as the facilities and speed became more.

Nowadays, to share a photo or video with family in another city or country, we do not have to wait for days, to send a C.V., we do not need to print and wait for mail delivery, to react on a television show, we do not need to wait behind the busy telephone lines, to react on a social event, we do not wait for years till the voting time.

Electronic mail (e-mail) - technology and service for sending and receiving electronic messages (called as "letters", "e-mails" or "messages") by users of computer network (including the internet). The emergence of e-mail was in 1965 when Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) employees Noel Morris and Tom Van Vleck wrote the mail program for the Compatible Time-Sharing System (CTSS) - operating system installed on an IBM 7090/7094 computer (Vleck, 2001).

Through years as internet, like other technologies, went through the tunnel of development, many domains appeared trying to bring more facilities and having e-mail was one of the basic ones. Not only having e-mail facility, but also increasing the capabilities of it such a having multiple recipients, attachments, compressing the large size attachments, or even having design facilities. The same time developers developed other platform of communication and this is the time that social networks stepped into a new phase. Creation of simultaneous chatting platforms or online blogs increased not only by numbers but also by the capabilities.

This journey, more or less, reminds us of yahoo messenger, Viber, WhatsApp, telegram or the other platforms like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. The more facilities laid down on each platform, the more the users subscribed and the more popular they became and the cycle continued like more subscriber encouraged the developers to develop their platforms. We can see how, for example, Facebook developed during its history.

Through years, the number of individuals grew as social network users and surely the society figures, such as commercial or industrial incorporations also started to get the benefit of this granted gift, exactly like how they did with the traditional broadcasting systems. In this journey, not only the industries and business developers hopped on this fast moving train but also the public figures, specifically the politicians and politics activists also enjoyed this technology treasure.

Ilan Manor from The University of Oxford, United Kingdom claims, that "2017 marks a decade since the advent of *digital diplomacy*. Digital diplomacy and using it started as an experiment by a few pioneer foreign ministers and later turned to be a standard form of practice by other foreign ministers and diplomats. What Sweden did, opening a virtual embassy in Second Life in 2007 platform or formation of US digital outreach team in 2006", are good examples.

Usage of digital technologies in diplomacy has grown widely during the last decade and there are numerous examples proving that. Norwegian Ambassadors use Skype to communicate with students. Palestinian authorities use Facebook to influence on Israeli or international diplomats and even citizens. Indian authorities develop computer games to influence on Indians all over the world, or Georgian authorities promote Online Georgian Language courses on internet platforms. United Nations Ambassadors use WhatsApp to coordinate their votes on resolutions. Kenyan Foreign Ministry is increasingly using Twitter to deliver emergency consular aids. Now it is quite common for Ministers of Foreign Affairs to recruit software specialists for data processing and analysis or even using "Bots" to manipulate data and/or influence the audiences. All in all, using digital technologies, which was started as an experimental practice, has turned to be a global phenomenon (Manor, 2018, 2019).

Also Ilan Manor defines, that some terms of "digital diplomacy" focus more on the conceptualization of diplomacy in a digital world. For instance, we can indicate the case with "networked diplomacy" and "21st century statecraft". Other terms refers to the characteristics of digital technologies. Examples include: "public diplomacy 2.0", which draws its name from the concept of web 2.0; "net diplomacy", which relates more broadly to the internet and "twiplomacy", which refers to Twitter. Some terms even focus on the attributes of the digital society. These include "selfie diplomacy" and "real time diplomacy". Finally, terms such as "cyber diplomacy" relate to new diplomatic arenas. Other scholars employ the term "digital diplomacy".

Yet, this term has traditionally been defined within the context of specific studies. For instance, in 2015 Elad Segev and Ilan Manor defined digital diplomacy as the use of social media by a state to achieve its foreign policy goals and manage its national image. The same year Corneliu Bjola and Marcus Holmes defined digital diplomacy as a tool for change management while in 2012 Potter stated that digital diplomacy is the conduct of diplomacy through networked technologies. Finally, in 2016, I. Manor re-defined digital diplomacy as the overall impact Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have had on the conduct of diplomacy – ranging from the email to smart phone applications (Manor, 2018).

United States of America, as one of the world leaders, became a pioneer in digital diplomacy, to give possibility to many countries to take advantages of digital diplomacy later.

Table 1: Beginning of digital diplomacy, the United States of America

Year	Event
1996	Director of the US Information Agency J. Duffy created the first online magazine named Washington Files by gathering several magazines
1996 - 2000	The US government creates several more electronic journals and tries to bring exchange alumni together through the Department of State's website
2001	The United States broadcasted the appearance of network diplomacy – NetDiplomacy (Metzl, 2001)
2002 - 2003	During the Administration of George W. Bush, traditional radio and TV channels move to online broadcast in internet also.
2006	Creation of the first group of specialists (Digital Outreach Team) to inspect information and disinformation about the United States of America
2006	US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice introduces the first official US Department of State blog, Dipnote. George W. Bush administration starts a government portal (America.gov), which publishes positive information about the United States, and several electronic journals – eJournal USA, Weekly Newsletter, Student Corner (Spieth, 2021)
2007 - 2008	15 departments are created in the Department of State, CIA, Department of Defence, as well as in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). These departments are monitoring and analysing international and national social networks, blogs, chats, as well as broadcasting positive information about the United States in internet Resources

Year	Event
2009	Hillary Clinton, as Secretary of State in Obama's administration, initiated the program for the renewal of US foreign policy, which was named "Public Administration in the 21st Century". One of the directions of this program is digital diplomacy
2009 - 2010	Judith McHale, Undersecretary of State for public diplomacy, outlined the strategy for new US public diplomacy in documents "Public Diplomacy: Strengthening U.S. Engagement with the World" and "Public diplomacy is a National Security Imperative", which outlined the main objectives of digital diplomacy: ➤ Discrediting the ideological opponents of the United States; ➤ Confronting to information activities of China on the Internet; ➤ Limitation of the media presence of Russia in the space of the former Soviet Union countries; ➤ Encountering to Iran's foreign cultural policy implemented through social networks
2010	The US State Department has developed another strategy for the development of American diplomacy. The name of the document is "IT Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2011-2013 – Digital Diplomacy". The first project was to build a special research office in Harvard University to learn the political views of users in social networks and blogs in foreign states. The second project during spring 2010 was to conduct the first conference on Cyber Dissidents "Global Success and Challenges" at the George W. Bush Institute in Texas. The US government had invited bloggers to the conference who confronts their governments' actions on human rights, press freedom and the Internet. Countries such as Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, Iran, Russia, China and Colombia were represented at this conference. The third initiative of the US State Department was the purpose to create, with the support of the internet, groups of dissidents in "non-democratic" countries. During autumn 2010 a project was launched called Civil Society 2.0 (U.S. Department of State, 2010). The project aimed to bring together specialists in the field of computer sciences, information technology and internet technologies with non-governmental organizations and activists from various parts of the world
2011	In the United States some numbers of documents were adapted, which affect the military-political aspects of the development of the internet. Pentagon's Cyberspace Strategy was announced in June 2011 which introduces cyberspace as a space for warfare, like land, sea, air and outer space
2012	U.S. department of State recruited 150 fulltime experts as e-diplomacy staff (followed by some other countries). Social network Twitter, in particular, started to be an important tool which is used by states to implement their foreign policy and to influence on the public opinion
2012 - 2014	US public diplomacy started to turn from Monologue concept as a one-way road to the concept of dialogue as a two-way road in its dissemination of information. The new concept provides the elements of the real dialogue including listening and responding as in feedbacks and interactions since public opinions started to be considered. The result was creation of personal pages by US government officials on social network

(Information collected by the authors from internet open resources in July 2022)

Therefore, digital diplomacy refers to the use of technology and social media platforms to enhance communication and engagement between nations, their representatives, and citizens. The importance of digital diplomacy in today's world cannot be overstated. The rise of the internet and social media has changed the way diplomacy is conducted, and nations have recognized the potential of these platforms for projecting their soft power (Riordan, 2016: 10-13).

One of the essential benefits of digital diplomacy is that it provides a platform for nations to engage with audiences that were previously inaccessible. Social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have millions of users globally, and by leveraging these platforms, nations can reach out

to new audiences, especially young people who are increasingly turning to social media for information and news.

Another benefit of digital diplomacy is that it allows nations to bypass traditional media channels, which can sometimes be biased or unresponsive. By using social media platforms, nations can communicate directly with their audiences, presenting their policies and values in a more authentic and unfiltered way.

In general, the main goals of using digital diplomacy can be categorised as:

➢ Protecting interest of states in the international arena;

➢ Formatting and maintaining of the positive image;

➢ Fulfilling of foreign policy tasks and goals;

➢ Improving awareness of the world community about the state;

➢ Strengthening relations with supporters;

➢ Influencing or putting pressure on other actors and/or oppositions;

➢ Discrediting opponents;

➢ Conducting propaganda and anti-propaganda;

➢ Other goals.

Digital Diplomacy is also essential for enhancing a nation's reputation globally. Through social media platforms, nations can present themselves as progressive and forward-thinking, highlighting their achievements and successes while addressing any misconceptions or negative perceptions that may exist.

Digital diplomacy is crucial for building and maintaining relationships with other nations. By using social media platforms, diplomats and representatives can engage with their counterparts in other countries, exchange ideas, and build trust and understanding.

The concept of "social network" appeared in 1954, introduced by the sociologist James Barnes. At that time, this phenomenon had nothing to do with the internet and was interpreted as follows: "a "social network" is a social structure consisting of a group of nodes, which are social objects (people or organizations), and the connections between them (social relationships)". That means, a social network is a group of people between whom there are certain relationships, either two-way or one-way. With the advent of the Internet (1969), the scientific concept of James Barnes began to gain popularity. This led to the development of social networks on the worldwide web.

The first social network using computer technology appeared in 1971. It was used by the military to transmit information through the ARPANET. 17 years later, in 1988, the Finnish scientist Jarkko Oikarinen invented the IRC protocol – Internet Relayed Chat - and the software to implement it. It was the time that it became possible to communicate with each other in real time. However, social networks gained real popularity in 1995. Then the American Randy Conrads created "classmates.com" – the first social network in the modern sense in which registered users get access to the catalogue of graduates of various educational institutions. Thus, anyone could find classmates. "Classmates.com" immediately became very popular. By the way, its popularity has not decreased yet – more than 50 million people use the social network.

Facebook Inc. was founded on February 4, 2004 by four students who studied at Harvard University: Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz and Chris Hughes. At the same time, a website of the same name appeared. It was originally only available to Harvard students. A little later, registrations were opened for Boston universities, and then for all Americans with an email address with the ".edu" domain. Since September 2006, Facebook became available to all Internet users over the age of 16. Today it is one of the five most visited websites in the world. Unsurprisingly, the network has a monthly visitor of 2.934 billion people (Kemp, 2022).

The history of Twitter began in March 2006. Initially, the service was used for internal communication between employees of the company of the same name. On 15th July, 2006, Twitter became available for

public messaging: tweets sent in the program are immediately displayed on the user's page and instantly come to subscribers. The first message was sent by the owner of the system, Jack Dorsey, he wrote: "Just setting up my twttr" ("Just setting up my Twitter"). Today Twitter is very popular among Internet users. In the SimilarWeb ranking about top websites, it ranks 4th and has 6.8B total visits as of November 2022 (Similarweb, 2022).

Free application for sharing photos and videos – Instagram – appeared in the App Store on October 6, 2010. Instagram was originally called Burbn (the project is named after the bourbon, which one of the founders of the network is very fond of). It allowed users to "check-in" at different locations, schedule meetings with friends, and post photos. After analyzing the statistics, creators Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger realized that people use this application to share photos more than using for check-in.

"They were posting and sharing photos like crazy", - Sawyer noted. In this regard, he, along with a colleague, decided to get rid of all functions, leaving only the calculation of the photo. It turned out that Burbn, called later "Instagram", has already gained unprecedented popularity (Tolentino, 2012). Today, the app is ranked 5th on the SimilarWeb list and has 6.1B total visits, the visitors have uploaded over 16 billion different images and videos as of November 2022 (Similarweb, 2022).

In modern society, the role of social networks is steadily increasing, since one of their main features is interactivity and freedom from the vertical pile of power. Also useful features of social media data that make them relevant is the ability to carry out social, political, legal and campaign activities, containing feedback mechanisms; the ability to gain quick response to requests from citizens directly through a social network; the ability to influence political and social processes in society; the ability to highlight political leaders; open access to social and political materials, to administrative documents located on the pages of these Internet resources.

According to statistics, more than 40% of the world's population communicate through social networks. Today, there are a wide variety of applications and sites among which the most popular ones can be distinguished, such as: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. Social networks are the objects of disseminating political information, as well as a way to promote science and social knowledge through Internet resources.

Social network is the term with which we define social media sites in internet to link one another for any desired purpose that can include personal, commercial, social, educational or political. One can use it to connect with family or relative while the other may use it to promote a product into society and of course the political leaders can use the highly strong influence capability of it to direct their goal into the society.

While an incorporation uses a platform to encourage society of using a product, with less costs and larger coverage, a political activist may use the same or different platform to promote an idea, not to mention that the reaction or the results of that will appear much faster than the traditional ways (Desreumaux, 2018). It is necessary to indicate that different platforms, with different owners/incorporations, also compete to ease and facilitate their applications for users in order to cover as many demands as the users need. For instance, Facebook and Twitter compete with each other for supremacy in the use of official purposes.

Social media has become an important instrument of diplomacy. The worldwide spread of online channels contributes to the germination of the principles of openness and transparency, which no one previously adhered to. Social media offers the facility of unlimited free communication; therefore, it can be named as a strong communication instrument.

Despite different interpretations in the meaning of the role of social networks, all participants in international relations understand the importance of digital diplomacy.

The efficiency and effectiveness of political leaders in social networks is also very important. For example, Twitter or Facebook has long been used by political leaders not only as a platform for communication with like-minded people and adherents, but also as a platform for making a public statement. An example of effective digital diplomacy is the activity shown, for example, on the social network Twitter by Barack Obama, the 44th president of the United States from 2009 to 2017, with 132 million of followers, Narendra Modi, prime-minister of India, with 82 million of followers, Recep

Tayyip Erdoğan, president of the Republic of Turkiye with 19.2 million of followers, Joe Biden, current president of USA, with 24.9 million of followers, Emmanuel Macron, 25th president in French history (it is customary to count the French presidents from Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, who became the 1st president of the Second French Republic in 1848), with 8.5 million of followers, Justin Trudeau, the 23rd Prime Minister of Canada, with 6.2 million of followers, Boris Johnson, British politician and writer serving as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, with 4.6 million of followers, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the 6th President of Ukraine, with 6.4 million of followers, Swedish Prime Minister 167 thousands and Andreas Norlen, the Speaker of the Riksdag, Swedish Parliament, with 22.7 thousands of followers etc. (figures extracted and collected by authors in July 2022, recourses – public pages of politicians, diplomats in Twitter).

There are lots of examples of digital diplomacy at different levels. On one hand, it empowers individuals, on the other, it enhances administrative efficiency.

Diplomats use social networks for enhancing their own image and image of their country and encouraging policy loyalty. Since it makes a country and politicians more accessible to their auditory and more recognisable for followers, social networks help promote a country's tradition and policy.

In conclusion, the importance of soft power in digital diplomacy cannot be overstated. In today's globalized world, where information and communication technologies are transforming the way we interact, nations must leverage these platforms to engage with audiences, project their values and policies, and build relationships with other nations. By doing so, nations can enhance their soft power and increase their influence on the global stage (Melissen, 2005: 73-75).

4. Instruments of Diplomacy

The instruments of diplomacy are the various tools and techniques used by nations to conduct their diplomatic activities and advance their foreign policy goals. These instruments include but are not limited to negotiations, treaties, international agreements, cultural and educational exchanges, economic sanctions, military alliances, etc.

Overall, the main instruments of diplomacy are realised in three powers, including the classic "hard power", "soft power" and the recent "smart power", and their use depends on the specific goals and circumstances of a given diplomatic engagement.

4.1. Hard Power

"Hard power" is a term that is often used in international relations and refers to the use of military and/or economic strength to achieve political objectives (Grey, 2011).

The concept of hard power dates back to ancient times, when military might was often the deciding factor in conflicts between nations. Throughout history, powerful empires and nations have used their military strength to expand their territories, protect their interests, and intimidate their enemies (Wagner, 2014).

In modern times, hard power has become increasingly associated with the use of technology and economic resources to achieve strategic objectives. For example, the United States has often used its economic and military power to influence other nations and promote its interests around the world.

Despite its effectiveness, hard power has also been criticized for its potential to create conflicts and escalate tensions between nations. Critics argue that a focus on military strength can lead to a disregard for human rights and democratic values, as well as increased instability and insecurity in the international system.

Hard power in diplomacy refers to the use of coercive tactics such as military force, economic sanctions, and other forms of political pressure to achieve foreign policy objectives. Here are some examples of hard power in diplomacy:

➢ *Military force:* The invasion of Iraq by the United States in 2003 is an example of the use of military force in diplomacy. The goal was to remove Saddam Hussein's regime and establish a democratic government in Iraq.

- *Economic sanctions:* Economic sanctions are often used as a form of hard power in diplomacy. For instance, the United States and the European Union have imposed economic sanctions against Russia due to its annexation of Crimea in 2014 and invasion in Ukraine in 2022.

- *Cyberattacks:* In recent years, cyberattacks have become an increasingly popular tool for nations to exert hard power. For instance, the United States and Israel are widely believed to have used cyberattacks to damage Iran's nuclear program.

- *Nuclear weapons:* The possession of nuclear weapons is a form of hard power in diplomacy. For instance, North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons has allowed it to pursue its foreign policy objectives with greater confidence.

- *Diplomatic isolation:* Diplomatic isolation is a form of hard power in diplomacy that involves isolating a country from the international community. For instance, many countries have imposed diplomatic sanctions against North Korea in response to its nuclear program.

These are just a few examples of hard power in diplomacy.

When the diplomacy suffered from lack of having proper reactions and behaviour against the complicated difficulties and challenges of the new world by traditional hard power solid tools, "soft power" occurred to be a granted gift to give wider set of tools to dominate the challenges by its wide variety of assets. While stepping into modern world ever since 2 decades before, soft power seemed to be the proper key to unlock the situations which could not be solved by traditional means (Melissen, 2005: 4).

As the traditional form of diplomacy, "hard power", is quite an old form of diplomacy but the modern world's new needs and challenges demanded for improvements and wider capabilities, where soft power came into existence. Hard power can be contrasted with "soft power", which involves the use of diplomacy, cultural influence, and other non-coercive means to achieve the same goals.

In recent years, there has been growing recognition of the importance of soft power in achieving long-term political goals. Many nations have begun to invest in diplomacy, cultural exchange programs, and other non-coercive means of achieving their objectives.

Overall, while hard power remains an important tool in the international arena, there is increasing recognition of the need for a more nuanced and balanced approach that incorporates both hard and soft power strategies.

4.2. Soft Power

Soft power refers to a nation's ability to influence the opinions and attitudes of people in other countries through non-coercive means such as culture, values, and policies. Digital diplomacy plays a critical role in enhancing a nation's soft power by allowing it to engage with audiences on a global scale and project its values and policies.

Soft power is a term used to describe the ability of a country or an organization to influence others and achieve its goals through attraction and persuasion, rather than through coercion or force. It refers to the ability to shape the preferences and behaviour of others by means of culture, values, policies, and other non-coercive means. Soft power is often contrasted with hard power, which involves the use of military or economic coercion to achieve political objectives. Soft power is seen as a more effective and sustainable way of achieving influence in the modern world, as it relies on building relationships, promoting cooperation, and winning hearts and minds (Nye, 1990, 2005, 2009).

Here are some examples of soft power:

- *Cultural exports:* When a country exports its films, music, literature, and other forms of cultural expression to other countries, it can create a positive image of its culture and values, and generate interest and respect for its people and way of life. For example, the popularity of Korean pop music (K-pop) and Korean dramas (K-dramas) has helped to spread Korean culture around the world and enhance South Korea's soft power.

- ➢ *Social events:* This involves the use of diplomatic channels to promote a country's image and interests. For example, a country might send its artists, scholars, or athletes on cultural exchange programs or sponsor international events to showcase its culture and achievements. This can help to create goodwill and build relationships with other countries.

- ➢ *Education:* When a country provides educational opportunities to foreign students, it can help to promote its culture and values and create a positive image of its education system. For example, the US has a large number of foreign students studying in its universities, which helps to enhance its soft power and influence.

- ➢ *Foreign aid:* When a country provides humanitarian or development aid to other countries, it can help to create goodwill and build relationships, as well as promote its values and interests. For example, China's Belt and Road Initiative, which aims to promote economic development and infrastructure projects in other countries, has helped to enhance China's soft power and influence.

- ➢ *Corporate social responsibility*: When companies engage in socially responsible activities, such as environmental sustainability, community development, or human rights advocacy, they can enhance their brand reputation and create a positive image of their country of origin. For example, the Japanese electronics company, Sony, is known for its commitment to environmental sustainability, which has helped to enhance Japan's soft power and influence (**Figure 9**).

The Sony group has a vast variety of products mainly involved in the electronics, entertainment, and gaming sectors. It has a presence in diverse fields and has managed to stand out in the market. Along with this, the organization has a wide range of (Corporate Social Responsibility) CSR initiatives too.

Figure 9: Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative by SONY

(Source: Media website Cross Barriers, 2021, image collected by authors)

However, diplomacy turned to realise that neither the hard power was enough to encounter the new challenges, nor could the soft power tools – despite how wide the territory of usage has been – face the new difficulties. It was about the time to consider that in most, if not all, upcoming challenges, a combination of both ways can lead to a better success, while either hard power or soft power could fail alone.

However, as soft power limits showed its lack of influence in interaction with some countries, a new practice of using a combination of both hard power and soft power appeared, each could cover the other's shortages. As hard power has the vital pressure but without influence on the societies and publics; while soft power does not have enough strength on some specific governments; states started to use both powers at the same time, which was later called as "smart power".

"Smart power" is a term that was coined by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., a political scientist, to describe a concept of foreign policy that combines hard power (military force and economic coercion) and soft power (attraction and persuasion) in a balanced way to achieve a country's foreign policy objectives (Nye, 2009).

Smart power is not about relying solely on one type of power or the other. Instead, it is about knowing when and how to use each type of power to achieve the desired outcome. For example, in some situations, the use of military force may be necessary, but in others, it may be more effective to use soft power tools, such as international relations, economic aid, and cultural exchange.

In essence, smart power is about using all the resources at a country's disposal to achieve its goals in a way that is effective, efficient, and sustainable. By doing so, a country can enhance its influence and promote its interests without resorting to excessive force or coercion.

Overall, the concept of smart power recognizes the importance of both hard and soft power and seeks to integrate them in a strategic and thoughtful manner to achieve foreign policy objectives.

5. Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Diplomacy as a "Soft Power"

In recent years, the practice of diplomacy has evolved to include digital communication as a crucial component. Digital diplomacy involves the use of various technological tools and platforms, such as social media, to facilitate communication between diplomats and foreign publics. There are several advantages and disadvantages associated with this new form of diplomacy.

One of the main advantages of digital diplomacy is its ability to facilitate communication and engagement between diplomats and foreign publics in real-time. Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook allow diplomats to engage with individuals and organizations on a global scale, which can help to build relationships, promote mutual understanding, and disseminate information more effectively. Additionally, digital diplomacy can help to increase transparency and accessibility, as it enables diplomats to share information and updates more easily with the public.

However, there are also some disadvantages associated with digital diplomacy (Hanson, 2012: 30-31). One of the main challenges is the potential for miscommunication and misunderstandings. Digital communication can be impersonal and may lack the nuances of face-to-face interaction, making it difficult to convey tone and context accurately. Additionally, the use of social media can also lead to the spread of misinformation or propaganda, which can damage diplomatic relationships and create mistrust.

Often digitisation and usage of e-government applications trigger some difficulties. With the expansion of rights and opportunities in digitalization, the need to anticipate the consequences of institutional changes is increasing and it causes resistance to changes (Bilgin & Dölek, 2022: 3285).

Overall, digital diplomacy has both advantages and disadvantages. While it can help to facilitate communication and increase transparency, it is also important to be aware of its limitations and potential drawbacks. Diplomats and policymakers must carefully consider when and how to use digital communication tools to ensure that they are effective and appropriate for achieving their goals.

5.1. Benefits of Digital Diplomacy as a "Soft Power"

In recent years, digital diplomacy has emerged as a crucial tool in the realm of diplomacy. Digital diplomacy refers to the use of digital communication technologies such as websites, social media platforms and other digital tools in conductive diplomatic activities and engaging with foreign audiences. Digital diplomacy can provide several benefits as a soft power tool. Here are some of them:

➢ *Accessibility:* Digital diplomacy allows diplomats to communicate with a large audience beyond the traditional diplomatic channels. Through social media platforms, websites, and other digital tools, diplomats can reach people in real-time, engage with them, and create a positive image of their country (Bjola, Holmes, 2015: 87).

➢ *Censor-less transparency:* Digital diplomacy promotes transparency in diplomatic activities. Diplomats can use digital platforms to share their activities, promote their policies and communicate with the public. This can help build trust and credibility with the public.

➢ *Speed and time efficiency:* Digital diplomacy is fast, and diplomats can respond to global events in real-time. They can also quickly disseminate information, making it an effective tool for crisis management and conflict resolution.

> *Realistic and direct contact:* Digital diplomacy allows diplomats to engage with people from different backgrounds, cultures, and nationalities. It can promote cross-cultural understanding and provide a platform for constructive dialogue.

> *Cost efficiency*: Digital diplomacy is cost-effective compared to traditional diplomatic activities. Diplomats can reach a large audience without the need for extensive travel and can use digital tools to reduce communication costs.

> *Data processing:* In traditional way, it takes tremendous amount of time and costs to collect, categorise and process the data while it always is at the risk of human error, which in nature, is a part of manual jobs. Moving towards using digital diplomacy, data processing will be easier and with almost zero error.

> *Ease of use for users:* in spite of the first generation of computers, nowadays, the user of a smart phone, does not need to have any special knowledge to be able to use the majority of the communication applications or social media. Things have become very easy-to-use for the users. This act has helped digital diplomacy to be even more pervasive and universal.

> *Globalization movement*: considering different characteristics of digital technologies, it has become so much popular and globally in access that not-using it will cost fading out of the life flow. One, either a normal civilian or a high-ranked diplomat either has to use the technology or being left behind the society.

> *Monitoring the threats:* Ever since the civilization happened, safety and security has been the major part of the authorities to survive and keep their territory and society invincible. Using the high-end technology clearly decreases time, costs and errors.

Overall, digital diplomacy can be a powerful soft power tool that allows countries to promote their policies and values, build relationships, and engage with people from all over the world.

5.2. Risks of Digital Diplomacy as a "Soft Power"

As a form of soft power, digital diplomacy can be an effective tool for enhancing a country's international reputation and influencing public opinion. However, there are also several risks associated with digital diplomacy as a soft power tool, including:

> *Limited effectiveness:* While digital diplomacy can be effective in reaching a broad audience, it may not be as effective in engaging with key decision-makers or building relationships with other countries. This is particularly true in countries where social media and digital communication technologies are not widely used.

> *Lack of control:* Digital diplomacy activities are often decentralized, with multiple government agencies and officials engaging with foreign audiences independently. This can lead to a lack of control over the messaging and coordination of digital diplomacy efforts, resulting in inconsistencies and mixed messaging.

> *Cultural misunderstandings*: Digital diplomacy activities can inadvertently offend foreign audiences due to cultural misunderstandings. The use of inappropriate language, imagery, or symbols can undermine a country's diplomatic efforts and damage its international reputation.

> *Merciless bareness:* It is clearly known that whatever goes on social media spreads out globally with the speed of light. Knowing its advantages, we should consider the fact that the mistakes are also travelling throughout the globe with the speed of light, unstoppably.

> *Nature of anonymity:* Traditional media, including TV, newspapers, radio, etc. used to publish interviews or the public opinion of the people that were identifiable. In digital world of social media, nowadays, opinions come from the accounts that can stay hidden or anonymous. Even one single person can create different accounts and spread the ideas which may be not in the right way all the time. This also includes the reactions to the diplomats' activities in social media. Bots also play a confusing game. In such digital world, it is not easy to analyse the public's opinions and realise if they are real or not.

- *Misinformation/propaganda:* Creating information, having statistics and accessing the information is very easy in compare to the traditional ways. However, this easiness is also dangerous because this easiness also applies on creation of fake news or false information. Creating fake or false information may be used with internal purposes by different parties, or to excuse a foreign policy, even to legitimize a military invasion (Zaman, 2018):

    - Accusing Iraqi regime of developing nucleic and mass destruction weapons by US government, used as a reason for military interfere (Nichols, 2004);

    - Accusing Syrian opposition for using chemical weapon against citizens by Syrian government, used as a reason to brutally suppress the oppositions (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2013; Reuters, 2014; Deutsch, 2017);

    - Accusing Ukraine Government of suppressing Eastern regions of Ukraine and its citizens by Russia to justify its military invasion (Treisman, 2022; Government of Canada, 2023).

Unfortunately, simplicity of creating and publishing information in social media has two sharp edges and this nature of it can be as harmful as it can be useful.

- *Hacking and cyber terrorism:* as discussed, it doesn't need to be a computer or IT specialist to be able to use the digital social media platforms. It may sound pleasant but it means the users are highly at risk and very much vulnerable here. IT specialists, who create such platforms, can also use this technology to hack users for any benefit or reason, such as destroying the fundamental structure of critical industries, creating chaos or pushing the public opinions from one party to another.

- *Lack of knowledge:* Speaking of users who do not have technical knowledge on IT technology, we should know this lack of knowledge is not limited to the technicality of the science. It is believed that mainly diplomats and politicians do not have enough knowledge of using all the capacity of the available social media and applications to their best. This lack of knowledge results in limiting the politicians and diplomats to the very superficial performance in digital world while stopping them to use the maximum real potential of the social media capabilities. Diplomacy expert Shaun Riordan wrote in Twitter: "... diplomats have obsessed with social media, often with no obvious strategy or useful outcomes. Alternative digital tools exist, but have been largely ignored. As a consequence, the majority of serious diplomacy is still not digital" (Riordan, Twitter, 2018).

- *Uncontrollable freedom*: Freedom of speech has been always known as a positive terms and a sign of a modern and democratic society. However, in the last years we can find the time spots when this freedom of speech in digital social media, which does not cost too much to spread out opinions, that this freedom of speech could initiate and spread some movements at the cost of many lives. In the very recent events, the movement against COVID19 vaccination - followers of conspiracy theory – could gather so many people and surely it cost lives.

- *Limitlessness of social media nature:* Another characteristic of social media, that has both positive and negative sides, is the nature of limitlessness. This limitlessness can sometimes cause unpredictable results. Looking into "Arab Spring" and how simply it started from Tunisia and how big it overwhelmed Middle East, can be an alarm for all governments that as much as they can use the benefit of this technology, the oppositions also can get the benefits. This is a dangerous world, everything can be seen unlimitedly, shared unlimitedly, and the harms can also be unlimited.

Overall, while digital diplomacy can be a powerful tool for soft power projection, it also carries significant risks that must be carefully managed to ensure its effectiveness.

6. Conclusion

In today's interconnected world, digital diplomacy has become an essential tool for countries to project their power and influence beyond their borders. Soft power is a crucial component of digital diplomacy as it refers to a country's ability to persuade others to adopt its values and beliefs without using force.

Soft power can be achieved through various means such as cultural exchanges, educational programs, and economic partnerships, all of which can be facilitated through digital platforms. By using digital

channels, countries can reach a larger audience and engage in conversations with people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Furthermore, social media has become a powerful tool for countries to shape public opinion and influence on political discourse. By creating engaging and informative content, countries can build relationships with people around the world and promote their values and policies.

In conclusion, soft power is critically effective to the level of success of digital diplomacy. Taking the advantages of digital platforms, countries can promote their values and beliefs, build relationships with people around the world, and shape public opinion. In an increasingly interconnected world, digital diplomacy and soft power cannot be ignored in the practice of diplomacy, as it turned to be essential to form the relations and proceed the interaction between different countries.

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Importance of Soft Power in Digital Diplomacy

Dijital Diplomaside Yumuşak Gücün Önemi

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Genişletilmiş Özet

Uluslararası ilişkiler alanında kullanılan bir terim olan "Diplomasi", devletlerarası müzakere sanatı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu nedenle devletlerin dış ilişkilerini yürüten büyükelçi, elçi, konsolos, temsilci, daimi delege ve ateşe gibi diplomatlarının, çeşitli konulardaki etkili iletişim becerisine göre şekillenmektedir. Ancak devletler ve toplumlar kendilerini geliştirdikçe diplomasi de bu gelişmeler ışığında mevcut zorluklara göre sınırlarını aşmış ve yeni ortamlara uyum sağlamıştır. Diplomasinin bu evrimi sonucu, ülkelerin tercihlerine ve yeteneklerine göre mevcut geleneksel diplomasiye, kamu diplomasisi ve "Dijital Diplomasi" eklenmiştir.

Geleneksel diplomasi devlet veya hükümet başkanları arasındaki ikili/çok taraflı toplantılarla, farklı ülke liderlerinin ikili meselelerini tartışmak ve ülkeleri arasındaki bağları güçlendirmek için sık sık bir araya gelmeleri olarak bilinmektedir. Buna en iyi örnek, ABD Başkanı Joseph Biden ile Kanada Başbakanı Justin Trudeau arasındaki görüşmedir. Geleneksel diplomasi eylem çeşitleri olarak öncelikle çok taraflı toplantılar ve zirveleri görebiliriz. Buna göre birkaç ülkeden diplomatlar ve hükümet yetkilileri, küresel sorunları tartışmak ve politikalarını koordine etmek için uluslararası forumlarda bir araya gelebilirler. Bu tür toplantılara örnek olarak Birleşmiş Milletler Genel Kurulu ve G7, G20 ve BRICS zirveleri verilebilir. Diplomatik ziyaretler ise, bir ülkenin diplomatları ve yetkilileri, muhataplarıyla görüşmek, diplomatik ilişkiler kurmak veya güçlendirmek ve çeşitli konularda görüş alışverişinde bulunmak amacıyla başka bir ülkeyi ziyaret edebilir. Örneğin, İsrail Başbakanı Benjamin Netanyahu'nun Mart 2023'te Birleşik Krallık Başbakanı Rishi Sunak ile görüşmek üzere Londra'ya yaptığı ziyaret. Diplomatik notlar ve iletişimlerde, Diplomatlar mesajları iletmek, endişelerini dile getirmek ve taleplerde bulunmak için genellikle diplomatik notlar olarak bilinen resmi yazılı iletişim alışverişinde bulunurlar. Bu notlar, geleneksel diplomasinin temel bir aracılar olarak kabul edilir. Son olarak uluslararası anlaşmalar ve anlaşmalarda, Diplomatlar ticaret, güvenlik ve çevre vb. gibi çeşitli konularda yasal olarak bağlayıcı işbirliği çerçeveleri oluşturmak için anlaşmalar müzakere eder ve imzalar. Bu tür anlaşmalara örnek olarak iklim değişikliğine ilişkin Paris Anlaşması verilebilir.

Diğer bir diplomasi ise, kamu diplomasisidir. Buna göre bir ülkenin yetkili kamu görevliler ile diğer ülkenin halkı arasında iyi bir anlayış ve güçlü bir iletişim kurmaya çalışılır. Kamu diplomasisi yürütmenin en iyi aracı ise, medyadır. Bu nedenle insanların düşünceleri, kararları ve algıları üzerinde çok etkilidir. Diğer taraftan yabancı halkla işbirliğini artırmak için devlet dışı aktörler, örneğin sivil toplum kuruluşları kullanılır. Bu yatay bir iletişimdir ve devletten insanlara değil, insanlardan insanlaradır. Başka bir deyişle, kamu diplomasisi devletler, uluslararası kuruluşlar ve yabancı vatandaşlar arasında, kitle iletişim araçların etkin kullanımıdır. Bundan amaç, ülkenin ulusal imajını güçlendirmek ve gerekli dış politikayı oluşturmak için mümkün olduğunca çok insanı sürece dahil etmektir. Bu diplomasi biçiminde kültürel alışveriş ile hükümetler, karşılıklı anlayış ve saygıyı geliştirmenin bir yolu olarak kendi vatandaşları ile diğer ülkelerin vatandaşları arasında kültürel alışverişler düzenleyebilir. Örneğin, ABD hükümeti, akademik değişimleri finanse eden Fulbright Programına sponsorluk yapmaktadır. Halka açık konuşmalarda, hükümet yetkilileri ve diğer tanınmış

kişiler, ülkelerinin politikalarını ve değerlerini açıklamak için yabancı izleyicilere konuşmalar yapabilirler. Örneğin eski ABD Başkanı Barack Obama, 2009 yılında Kahire'de ABD ile İslam dünyası arasındaki ilişkileri geliştirmeye yönelik bir konuşma yapmıştır. Sosyal medyada, hükümetler sosyal medyayı yabancı izleyicilerle iletişim kurmak ve ülke algılarını şekillendirmek için kullanabilir. Örneğin, Kanada hükümetinin Twitter hesabı, küresel bir izleyici kitlesiyle etkileşim kurmak için genellikle İngilizce ve Fransızca dillerinde mesajlar yayınlamaktadır. İnsani yardımlarda, kriz zamanlarında insani yardım sağlamak, bir ülkenin değerlerini göstermenin ve yabancı izleyicilerle iyi niyet oluşturmanın bir yolu olabilir. Örneğin İsrail, doğal afet depremlerden (2023) etkilenen Türkiye'ye insani yardım sağlamıştır. Son olarak kültürel diplomasi ile hükümetler, ülkelerinin kültürünü yabancı izleyicilere sergilemek için film festivalleri, konserler veya sanat sergileri gibi kültürel etkinliklere destekleyici olabilir. Örneğin, British Council, İngiliz tiyatrosu ve dansının sergilendiği yıllık Edinburgh Showcase'i düzenlemektedir. Eurovision ŞarkYarışması, Cannes Film Festivali, Grammy Ödülleri gibi başka etkinlikler de vardır.

Diplomasinin araçları, ulusların diplomatik faaliyetlerini yürütmek ve dış politika hedeflerini ilerletmek için kullandıkları çeşitli araç ve tekniklerdir. Bu araçlar müzakereleri, anlaşmaları, uluslararası anlaşmaları, kültürel ve eğitimsel değişimleri, ekonomik yaptırımları, askeri ittifakları vb. içerir, ancak bunlarla sınırlı değildir. Genel olarak, diplomasinin ana araçları ise klasik "sert güç" ve "yumuşak güç" ve son dönemdeki "akıllı güç" dahil olmak üzere üç güçte gerçekleştirilir ve bunların kullanımı, belirli bir diplomatik angajmanın özel amaçlarına ve koşullarına bağlıdır.

Diplomasi konusundaki son gelişmelere bakıldığında ise, yeni bir diplomasi biçimi ve diplomasinin yumuşak gücü olarak olarak Dijital Diplomasiyi görmekteyiz. Buna göre Dijital Diplomasi, diplomatik hedeflere ulaşmak amacıyla internet ve modern iletişim teknolojilerinin kullanılması olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Böylece diplomasi kurallarını değiştirmeksizin, aksine onu daha geniş kazanımlar düzeyine yükseltmek mümkün olabilmektedir. Dijital diplomasi, 20.yüzyılın sonunda yeni bir diplomasi biçimi olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. 2001 yılı başından itibaren kamu diplomasisinin bir parçası olan dijital diplomasi, sosyal medya platformlarına dayalı olarak bilgi ve iletişim teknolojilerinin kullanımı olarak tanımlanmaya başlanmıştır. Dijital diplomasi anlayışı, ortam değişse de mesajın değişmediğini; bilgiyi tam olarak gönderip alma yolunun, bilginin kendisinden daha önemli hale geldiğini içermektedir. Bu nedenle kamu görevlileri, insanlarla televizyon kanalları ve/veya radyo aracılığıyla konuşmak yerine Facebook, Twitter ve/veya YouTube kanallarını kullanmayı tercih etmektedir. Bu durum, dijital diplomasiyi modern siyasetin bir aracı olmaktan çok daha geniş bir kavram haline getirmektedir. Bu bağlamda makalenin temel amacı, dijital diplomaside yumuşak gücün önemini keşfetmektir. Yumuşak gücün kamu diplomasisinde önemli bir rol oynadığını ve 21. yüzyılda dijital diplomasi yoluyla diplomatik bir hedefe ulaşmak için etkin kullanımın mümkün olabileceğini belirlemektir. Yeni kamu diplomasisi", yabancı halkla işbirliğini artırmak için devlet dışı aktörleri, örneğin sivil toplum kuruluşlarını (STK'lar) kullanmaktadır. Bu tür bir iletişim, yatay iletişim olup, devletten insanlara değil, insanlardan insanlara bir iletişimdir.

Dijital diplomasi, yumuşak bir güç yönünde aracı olarak çeşitli faydalar sağlayabilir. Bunlar erişilebilirlik, sansürsüz şeffaflık, hız ve zaman verimliliği, gerçekçi ve doğrudan iletişim, düşük maliyet, veri işleme, kolay kullanım, küreselleşme hareketi ve tehditlerin izlenmesidir. Buna göre dijital diplomasi, diplomatların geleneksel diplomatik kanalların ötesinde geniş bir izleyici kitlesiyle iletişim kurmasını sağlar; diplomatlar, faaliyetlerini paylaşmak, politikalarını tanıtmak ve halkla iletişim kurmak için dijital platformları kullanabilirler. Bu, kamuoyunda güven ve güvenilirlik oluşturmaya yardımcı olabilir. Dijital diplomasi hızlıdır ve diplomatlar küresel olaylara gerçek zamanlı olarak yanıt verebilir; bilgileri hızlı bir şekilde yayabilir, bu da onu kriz yönetimi ve çatışma çözümü için etkili bir araç haline getirir. Dijital diplomasi, diplomatların farklı geçmişlerden, kültürlerden ve milletlerden insanlarla ilişki kurmasına imkânsağlar. Geleneksel diplomatik faaliyetlere kıyasla uygun maliyetlidir. Veri işleme daha kolay ve neredeyse sıfır hatayla gerçekleştirilebilir.

Yumuşak güç biçimi olarak dijital diplomasi, bir ülkenin uluslararası itibarını artırmak ve kamuoyunu etkilemek için etkili bir yöntem olabilir. Ancak yumuşak güç aracı olarak dijital diplomasi, çeşitli riskleri de içerir. Bunlar sınırlı etkinlik, kontrol eksikliği, kültürel yanlış anlamalar, acımasız yalınlık, anonimliğin doğası, yanlış bilgilendirmedir. Ayrıca ne yazık ki sosyal medyada bilgi oluşturmanın ve

yayımlamada bilgisayar korsanlığı, siber terörizm ve kontrolsüz özgürlük gibi genel riskleri de bulunmaktadır.

Makalede Yöntem olarak, ilgili bilimsel kaynaklardan diplomasinin tarihsel kökeni ve gelişimi araştırılmıştır. Makale, diplomasinin modern biçimi olan dijital diplomasinin bilimsel eserlerin yansıra, sosyal medyadaki örnekleriyle incelenmesini kapsamaktadır.

Yumuşak güç biçimi dijital diplomasi sonuç olarak, bir ülkenin veya kuruluşun başkalarını etkileme ve hedeflerine zorlama yerine cazibe ve ikna yoluyla ulaşma yeteneğini tanımlayan bir güçtür. Yumuşak güç kültür, değerler ve diğer zorlayıcı olmayan yollarla başkalarının tercihlerini ve davranışlarını şekillendirme yeteneğidir. Yumuşak güç, siyasi hedeflere ulaşmak için askeri veya ekonomik zorlamanın kullanılmasını içeren sert güçten çok farklıdır. Yumuşak güç, ilişkiler kurmaya, işbirliğini teşvik etmeye, kalpleri ve zihinleri kazanmaya dayanır. Bu nedenle, modern dünyada daha etkili ve sürdürülebilir bir yolu olarak görülür. Yumuşak güç, dijital diplomasinin başarı düzeyi üzerinde kritik derecede etkilidir. Dijital platformların avantajlarından yararlanan ülkeler, değerlerini ve inançlarını tanıtabilir, dünyanın dört bir yanındaki insanlarla ilişkiler kurabilir ve kamuoyunu şekillendirebilir. Giderek birbirine bağlanan bir dünyada, farklı ülkeler arasındaki ilişkileri oluşturmak ve etkileşimi sürdürmek için gerekli hale geldiğinden, diplomasi pratiğinde dijital diplomasi ve yumuşak güç göz ardı edilemez.