

FORMAL AND SIGNIFICANT MUTATIONS OF TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY

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Abstract: The purpose of this thesis is to make an empirical research over the existing literature regarding the new paradigms of diplomacy in the new era and identify future approaches of the field that enhance our understanding over the subject. Furthermore, we will analyze the instruments through which NGOs combine elements of commercial and economic diplomacy in their mission to support national business environment. The additional objective includes identifying relationships between the variations of public diplomacy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy is a vast subject, discussed and treated in many scientific papers. This concept, its diplomatic activities and the involved institutions have undergone undeniable metamorphosis. If originally, diplomacy represented an official document that gave certain privileges, in the XXI century it is difficult to make a comprehensive and eloquent description of the field.

The spectrum of action of diplomacy extends from traditional diplomatic institutions to economic actors involved in international economic and commercial transactions. The complexity of means and instruments specific to the diplomatic art came naturally as a response to the world evolution. Globalization, international relations, the diminishing importance of national borders imposed new paradigms of traditional diplomacy.

If originally diplomacy was the preserve of official foreign institutions and it required an unique diplomatic protocol, nowadays it is practiced in all spheres of manifestation of international economic relations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Regarding literature, a pertinent review is difficult to make. Without being exhaustive, we try to render several opinions of researchers in order to create an overview of most relevant approaches.

Charles Martens considered diplomacy as "having determined principles because it is founded on notions more or less positive and has a specific and distinct purpose, to govern relations that exist or must exist between various countries."¹

In the common sense, diplomacy is the science of foreign relations or foreign affairs of states and in a narrower sense, the science or art of negotiations. Therefore, traditional diplomacy is defined in the literature as being the preserve of state institutions.

Berridge characterizes diplomacy as "the behavioral relations between sovereign states through national and international officials, the latter being members of a national diplomatic service or temporary diplomats."²

Following the above definitions we have to emphasize the distinction between foreign policy as a matter of state relations with other powers and diplomacy as a process of dialogue and negotiation, through which states promote their bilateral relations and settle international litigations by peaceful means.

3. FORMAL AND SUBSTANTIAL METAMORPHOSIS OF TRADITIONAL DIPLOMACY

Globalization, the interdependence between the multitude of actors involved in international economic, strategic, political relations, the mixture of conflict and cooperation in the relations between nations, technology, all this led to resizing and restructuring of international relations.

Today, the term of diplomacy goes beyond the sometimes rather narrow politico-strategic conception, being inappropriate to view diplomacy in a restrictive or formal sense as being the preserve of foreign ministries and diplomatic service officials.

In the context of international mutations, in economic, commercial, political, strategic areas, the country is no longer represented only by state institutions. In this new world order, people felt the need to create their common economic goals and to offer mutual support. This is why it emerged regional entities such as non-governmental organizations (NGO's). Common markets were created, free trade was established and economic procedures were designed for the financial support of emerging countries.

In a multilateral vision we can say that the diplomatic process of a state is accomplished by a multitude of actors, both state and non-state actors. From official diplomats, domestic ministers, advisers from different international organizations, transnational corporations to non-governmental organizations and "private" individuals are all involved in the diplomatic phenomenon. The term of diplomacy is very linked to concepts as international negotiation, advocacy, lobbying but also in a widening content with issues regarding terrorism, immigration, refugees crisis.

Given the international changing settings, players and blocs, the diplomatic process includes a wide range of domestic and foreign policies. The reason consists in transnational boundary-crossing transactions, population cross-movement, globalization of economies, e-commerce, market integration.

In accordance with Barston in the Modern Diplomacy paper, the international system post-2000 can be characterized through four areas:³

- The fluidity in bilateral and other relations;

¹ Martens, C. (2013). *Le guide diplomatique. Precis des droits et des fonctions des agents diplomatique et consulaires*, Gale.

² Berridge, G.R., Alan, J. (2003). *A dictionary of diplomacy*, 2nd ed. New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

³ Barston, R.P. (2014). *Modern diplomacy*. fourth edition, Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

- The international system is not multipolar. International relations in the post-2000 system are based on much looser groupings, networks and exchanges, which activate in parallel to existing multilateral and regional institutions;
- The key pillars of international order are security, trade and international and economic relations
- High level of regional organization and bilateral diplomatic activity.

As a natural consequence of the above, the traditional diplomacy is facing mutations that literature still tries to discover and define.

The diversity of functions as well as the simultaneous participation of multiple state and non-state actors in the international relations led to the emergence of public diplomacy, which also metamorphosed in different types based on the fields of interests referred to. The interconnectivities and interdependencies created by the process of globalization changed the approaches of the political and economic international relations, changed in a word the entire perspective over the world. This is the reason nowadays we still make researches over the variations of public diplomacy.

3.1 PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Although the concept of public diplomacy has become complementary to traditional diplomacy under the impact of globalization, the specific objectives of the latter were preserved in time.

Public diplomacy is a public face of traditional diplomacy. The basic distinction between traditional diplomacy and public diplomacy, as seen by Melissen is “the former is about relationships between the representatives of states, or other international actors; whereas the latter targets the general public in foreign societies and more specific non-official groups, organizations and individuals.⁴”

Even though Hans Tuch defined public diplomacy as “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies⁵”, we will agree the fact that nowadays public diplomacy is not a uniquely stately activity, but rather one of a multitude of non-state actors. The new paradigm of diplomacy takes into consideration that even citizens became participants in promoting their country abroad. “International companies operating in a global marketplace are now also facing up to their social and ethical responsibilities and their public diplomacy policies are slowly but surely becoming more sophisticated.⁶”

Nevertheless, public diplomacy remains an instrument of international relations, used both of state and non-state actors in order to fulfill their national economic, political and strategic goals by technics of negotiations, representation and observation.

The literature regarding the variations of public diplomacy is as complex as it is fragmented. Certain approaches consider economic diplomacy the main mutation of public diplomacy and all the other conversions of diplomacy being parts of the integer. In this regard, commercial diplomacy, business diplomacy or national NGO’s diplomacy are

⁴ Melissen, J.(2005.) *The new public diplomacy, soft power in international relations*. Palgrave, Macmillan.

⁵ Tuch, H.(1990).*Communicating with the world: US public diplomacy overseas*. New York: St. Martin’s Press.

⁶Olins, W. (1999).*Trading identities: why countries and companies are taking on each others’ roles*. London, Foreign Policy Centre.

supposed to be the preserve of economic diplomacy, with little contextual differences. In literature the concepts of commercial or economic diplomacy are often used interchangeably, but still there are theorists and specialists that consider a unification approach being unacceptable.

3.2 THE ACTORS OF DIPLOMACY

The question that arises is the extent to which diplomacy as a concept is tied to the state and public interest or whether it pertains to a broader range of social actors and their individual interests. Naray defines commercial diplomacy as: “an activity conducted by public actors with diplomatic status in view of business promotion between a home and a host country. It aims at encouraging business development through a series of business promotion and facilitation activities.”⁷

This classic definition slightly contradicts the more relevant opinion of Lee⁸ who argues that commercial diplomacy is “the work of a network of public and private actors who manage commercial relations using diplomatic channels and processes”.

Within this flattened world as Friedman affirms and thus increasingly competitive global market place, we agree Lee’s point of view. Diplomacy, be it commercial, economic or corporate it became the prerogative of all state and non-state actors involved in both national economy and international commercial transactions.

If we analyze the mutations of diplomacy from the implied actors point of view, we can up-scaling the theory of Saner & Yiu who noted “that when commercial diplomacy is conducted by private actors, it is called corporate or business diplomacy.”⁹ One exhaustive classification found in the literature over the variations of diplomacy is the following:

Table no. 1: Divergent postmodern diplomatic roles¹⁰

	Functions	Roles
State actors	Economic Diplomacy	Economic Diplomats
	Commercial Diplomacy	Commercial Diplomats
Non-state actors	Corporate Diplomacy	Corporate Diplomats
	Business Diplomacy	Business Diplomats
	National NGOs	National NGO Diplomats
	Transnational NGOs	Transnational NGO diplomats

Source: International Economic Diplomacy, Mutations in postmodern times

We made further research over the topic and identified the mutations of diplomacy, as literature describes. We will present them in comparison so we can conclude afterwards over the necessity of all this paradigms.

⁷ Naray, O. (2008). *Commercial diplomacy: a conceptual overview*. Conference Paper, 7th World Conference of TPOs, The Hague, Netherlands.
⁸ Lee, D. (2004). *The growing influence of business in U.K diplomacy*. International Studies Perspective, Vol.5.
⁹ Saner & Yiu (2003)
¹⁰ Saner, R., Yiu,L. (2003). *International economic diplomacy, discussion papers in diplomacy*, Netherlands, Institute of International Relations, Clingendael.

3.3 ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY VS COMMERCIAL DIPLOMACY

Commercial diplomacy is often confused with economic diplomacy¹¹ but also with other types of diplomacy.

“Economic diplomacy is concerned with general economic policy issues and trade agreements.¹²” In a more concrete definition, economic diplomacy is “the process through which countries tackle the outside world, to maximize their national gain in all fields of activity, including trade, investment and other forms of economically beneficial exchanges, where they enjoy comparative advantages, it has bilateral, regional and multilateral dimension, each of which is important.¹³” In addition economic diplomacy “seeks to secure the nation’s interest and to serve economic interests through diplomatic means.¹⁴”

Even though both have an overarching economic objectives, commercial diplomacy is more applied to the concrete needs of business.

It is agreed that the core of commercial diplomacy focuses on business development. Potter defines it as: “the application of tools of diplomacy to help bring out specific commercial gains through promoting exports, attracting inward investment, and preserving outward investment opportunities and encouraging the benefits of technological transfer.¹⁵” Commercial diplomacy includes area as trade, tourism, technology, protection of intellectual property.

Obviously this both models of diplomacy are linked. The actors implied in both kind of diplomacy are, from our point of view, disagreeing Saner & Yiu, both state and non-state individuals. As we will demonstrate in this article, the work, role and mission of NGOs implies technics both of commercial and economic diplomacy.

3.4 CORPORATE DIPLOMACY VS BUSINESS DIPLOMACY

“A corporate diplomat should be able to function in two culture: the culture of the business unit and the corporate culture that is usually heavily affected by the nationality of the global corporation.”¹⁶

Steger see the role of corporate diplomacy within the context of the relationships between the firm and its environment.¹⁷ Strange consider corporate diplomacy within the political economy, especially related to the links between companies, companies and governments.¹⁸

¹¹ Mercier, A. (2007). *Commercial diplomacy in advanced industrial states*, discussion papers in diplomacy, No.18, The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.

¹² Yiu, L., Saner,R.(2003) *International economic diplomacy: mutations in post-modern times*, discussion papers in diplomacy, No.84, The Hague, Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael.

¹³ Rana, K.S. (2007). *Economic diplomacy: the experience of developing countries. The new economic diplomacy: decision-making and negotiations in international economic relations*. Aldershot, Ashgate.

¹⁴ Muller, M.(2002). *South Africa’s economic diplomacy: constructing a better world for all*, Diplomacy& Statecraft.

¹⁵ Potter, E. (2004). *Branding Canada: the renaissance of Canada’s commercial diplomacy*. International Studies Perspective, Vol.5.

¹⁶ Saner & Yiu.(2003)

¹⁷ Steger, U. (2003). *Corporate diplomacy: the strategy for a volatile, fragmented business environment*. John Wiley& Sons

¹⁸Strange, S. (1992). *States, firms and diplomacy*. Frieden, J.A. and Laxe, D.A. (eds), *International political economy: perspectives on global power and wealth*, Psychology Press.

In contrast with Steger opinion, Saner and Yiu (2001) believe business diplomacy is the one which makes the external environment conducive for business activities.

“Business diplomacy pertains to the management of interfaces between the global company and its multiple non-business counterparts and external constituencies. For instance, global companies are expected to abide by multiple sets of national law and multilateral agreements set down by international organizations. On account of a global economy, business diplomats negotiate with host countries, interface with local and international NGOs in influencing local and global agenda. At the firm level, they will help define business strategy and policies in relation to stakeholder expectations, conduct bilateral and multilateral negotiations, coordinate international public relations campaigns, collect and analyze pertinent information emanating from host countries and international communities.¹⁹”

Even though the two concepts behave similar elements, a distinction can be made if we take into consideration the distinctive features of terms “corporate” and “business”. In this regard business diplomacy may be performed also by individuals entrepreneurs who seek to attain personal economic benefits, that are not part of any specific corporation or do not pursue the interests of their employers. Whereas, corporate diplomacy is strictly the prerogative of national and multi-national companies, business diplomacy is also performed, alike economic and commercial diplomacy, by nongovernmental organizations as chambers of commerce and industry.

From a pertinent approach we would say that both corporate and business diplomacy are more paradigms of corporate management with emphases over negotiation and organizational culture. Conceptually, negotiation relates to diplomacy in general and corporate and business diplomacy, in particular. Various studies show that both in domestic and external relationships, skilled negotiators try to create business opportunities and attain performances through different tactics.

3.5 NGOs DIPLOMACY

Literature also distinguishes between national NGOs diplomacy and transnational NGO diplomacy. In our point of view is a slight differentiation. National NGO’s have also international economic and strategic projects and we can affirm that they also operate at international level. In literature, national economic NGOs “represents the interests of civil society in the economic sphere and consist of various constituencies ranging from consumer protection, anti-corruption to shareholder groups and environmentalists.²⁰”

Transnational NGO diplomacy is seen as the ability to organize advocacy events and lobbying activities at cross-border levels. NGOs closely work to state institutions, being part of state delegations abroad that promote popular sympathy for the state’s foreign policy.

In our opinion, modern diplomacy subsumes all the variations and mutations, with all their diverse, complex and interconnected characteristics.

It is obviously that official diplomats of embassies and Ministries of Affair will always have roots in traditional diplomacy. Given the globalization, the multiplication of national interests, state diplomats should acquire additional competencies in order to engage constructively in international economic policy and in the same time to cope with increasingly complex post-modern environment, including the activity of NGOs.

¹⁹ Saner and Yiu (2001).

²⁰ Saner and Yiu (2001)

Even though the new paradigms of modern society are very complex, interrelated and require specific means, tools and resources for each domain of expertise, we consider that all mutations that literature reveals over diplomacy are at least unnecessary. If every field and economic activity is linked with diplomacy, it will be diminished the essence of the concept. Literature argues that there is also the paradigm of “diplomacy of agriculture”, energetic diplomacy”, “diplomacy of telecommunication” and that in our point of view it goes beyond the true meaning of diplomacy.

Nevertheless, we should give modern diplomacy its place in this globalized society. Non-state actors such as national or international non-governmental organizations are an important voice in international debates regarding development policies. The involvement in international cooperation, the struggle to defend the interests of business environment in relation to state authorities and their main mission to promote the national product, make NGOs competent and well-networked non-state actors, which require an enlargement of the notion of diplomacy.

One of the oldest and most influential non-governmental organizations that support trade and promote international economic relations is the chamber of commerce of each country. The national chambers are internationally more powerful and visible and "have joined efforts through transnational advocacy networks²¹". They became member and formed international organizations with the same mission but with wider roles, functions and organizational structure, having complex instruments of action built for regional and even global economic spectrum. These associations developed rules, guidelines, procedure codes to facilitate international commercial transactions and to implement the culture of best practices in companies.

An analysis of the Romanian chamber system, identify the importance of the Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce from Romania's (UBCCR) action in the new vision of economic and commercial diplomacy. In the context of an extensive research of the types of modern diplomacy will be highlighted by the specific example of UBCCR that the diplomacy of NGOs is closely interdependent and sometimes confused with the economic or commercial diplomacy.

The activity of Romanian chamber system is governed by organic law 335/2007. Romanian chamber system aims to support local economic actors, promote national product, increase exports and attract foreign investments.

4. MODERN DIPLOMACY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UNION OF BILATERAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FROM ROMANIA

4.1 PRELIMINARY SPECIFICATIONS

The Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce from Romania, represented by the bilateral chambers of commerce is a non-state actor involved in the modern diplomacy efforts in order to contribute to the development of international economic cooperation between Romania and the partner countries. The Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce was established in 1995, as a result of the decision of bilateral chambers of commerce to unite their forces for a better contribution to the promotion of the foreign trade relations of Romania through economic and commercial diplomacy. Even though UBCCR was created relatively recently, it had a rapid and efficient development. Today it

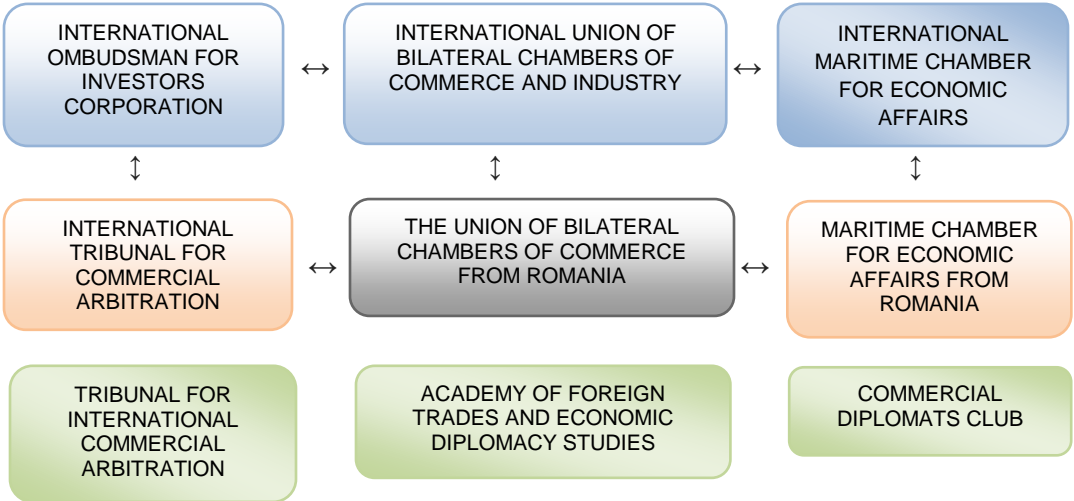
²¹ Keck, M. E., Sikkink, K. (2000). *Activists beyond borders: advocacy networks in international politics*, Cornell University Press.

has a multitude of projects, which are developed both regionally and globally. According to UBCCR bylaws can be established just one bilateral chamber of commerce between Romania and another country.

The main mission of UBCCR is through means of economic and commercial diplomacy to promote, defend and support the economic interests of the business communities in relation to public authorities and other institutions in the country and abroad.

4.2 THE INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF THE UNION OF BILATERAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE FROM ROMANIA

Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce from Romania developed direct tools of action as well as organizations that through economic and commercial diplomacy are in serve of business environment. UBCCR created more channels of communications and established specific organization in order to face the challenges to integrate the complex issues of the new era into a coherent diplomacy. Conflict prevention diplomacy, maritime diplomacy, vocational training are just few of the projects of UBCCR.



Source: www.uccbr.ro

Figure no. 1: The integrated system of the Union Bilateral Chambers of Commerce from Romania

Training diplomats both as generalists and specialists is considered one of the most important priority of the organization, in order to effectively manage a more proactive, more public, more complex and multi-directional diplomacy. In a period of profound transformations and reestablishment of the world economic pylons, UBCCR found necessary to create the *Academy of Foreign Trade and Economic Diplomacy Studies*. The main objective of the Academy is to form an elitist corps of future economic diplomats of Romania, able to present both in country and abroad, in a professional way, the Romanian economic offer, with a view to attract foreign investments and to promote the domestic products on the external market.

As a consequence of the educational part that specialize new diplomats, with little experience though, UBCCR found opportune to launch *the Economic and Commercial*

Diplomats Club. The community aims to be a place where diplomats with experience as the representatives of foreign embassies accredited in Bucharest and the economic and commercial diplomats have the possibility to change ideas and cooperate on new projects with mutual national advantages.

International Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce and Industry was the biggest challenge of UBCCR. The organization of global economy addresses to multiple spheres from surveillance of trading resources to proposals on international policy developments and sectoral cooperation. The organization acts to foster the development of the bilateral economic diplomacy concept and its variations, to defend and promote the interests of the bilateral chambers of commerce and industry and to facilitate the understanding of different mentalities and culture of the business environments, worldwide.

As part of the integrated concept of modern diplomacy, was established *the International Ombudsman for Investors Corporation (IOIC)*, a non-profit, non-governmental and non-political transboundary organization. Its activity, organized under the Nonprofit Mutual Benefit Corporation Law, is closely linked with the one of the International Union of Bilateral Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

One way of action of modern diplomacy is peacefully settle the international litigation through arbitration, mediation and conciliation. In this respect, IOIC aims to represent the interests of the worldwide investors by investigating and solving complaints of maladministration of economical, commercial and other similar rights.

The integrated system of UBCCR's diplomacy includes also *the International Maritime Chamber for Economic Affairs (IMCEA)*, a voluntary entity of the National or Regional Maritime Chambers for Economic Affairs and other similar entities. The organization represents its members in general issues towards governments and regional or international authorities, and supports and defends the common interest of the international business community in terms of economics and maritime, aiming to promote the development of industry, trade and services in the maritime economic area, according to the requirements and demands of the market economy and globalization.

IMCEA objective is to contribute to the development of the maritime economic cooperation and to strengthen the international relations between partner countries.

The UBCCR vision regarding Romania's foreign trade is based on bilateral agreement. As essence the Union dynamically promotes the bilateral public and private economic interests, playing an important role as stakeholder in the implementation and development of social responsibility on foreign trade from the concept to *modus vivendi*.

To conclude, we previously demonstrated that a non-state actor mixes features of commercial, economic, business diplomacy, even though literature defines it as an organization whose activity is based on NGO's diplomacy.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Undoubtedly, the core role of diplomacy has changed, diplomats being redefined from "gatekeepers" to "facilitators" and "coordinators".

Although diplomacy has previously been the privilege of state actors, the new era is adding new voices to the entire economic and political international spectrum. We deepened the role of a part of the chamber of commerce system and demonstrated that their prerogatives are in essence based on the modern diplomacy. This model of organization is one of the most important, influential and complex representative of economic and

commercial diplomacy. Complexity is determined by their size, area of action, the diversity of offered services and the influence over the authorities.

The research in the field demonstrated that the mutations and paradigms of traditional diplomacy are multiple. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten the essence of diplomacy. Although societies evolved in a way that became difficult to frame them in old patterns and define them by the traditional concepts, we appreciate that we still need to keep proportions in order not to overlook the intrinsic functions of diplomacy.

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