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INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE: “PLURAL DIPLOMACY”

Radovan Gura – Gilles Rouet*

“Diplomacy is the police in grand costume”, wrote Napoleon in his *Maxims and Thoughts*, an aphorism that suited **Talleyrand**, Minister of Foreign Relations. However, what was this diplomacy?

Much later, **Satow** defined diplomacy as “*the use of intelligence and tact in the management of official relations between the governments of independent states, or the conduct of affairs between states by peaceful means*” (1979 [1917]). This definition faithfully reflects the functioning of the world political system after the Treaty of Westphalia. The state becomes a fundamental element of the international system and it is thanks to the principle of respected sovereignty that this system becomes widespread.

Foreign policy and diplomacy have become two different and complementary approaches and means. From the point of view of the states, foreign policy refers to the set of priorities on which they base their actions vis-à-vis the other actors of the world political system, including the essential goals that a national government wants to make prevail in the frame of the international scene, for the pursuit of its interests. This process also includes the means a state uses to achieve its goals. Foreign policy is a strategy, a set of actions and objectives of a state outside its borders, while diplomacy is one of the means of the state to achieve these foreign policy objectives. The purpose is to explain the objectives of the strategy and to help to determine better ways to bring the policy towards acceptance of new topics. Communication is thus at the centre of diplomacy.

At the end of the last century, the Westphalian political system transformed

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itself into a “global” system in a world that became the McLuhan and Powers’ “global village” (1989). New networks of interdependence were formed; new actors appeared and generated new influences. “Traditional” diplomacy, one of the ways to manage and influence these relationships, has adapted. The expansion of international organisations, multinationals, non-governmental organisations and other entities has created new networks.

New actors have emerged in the international system, especially non-state actors. The field of diplomacy has therefore diversified: diplomatic activities no longer concern states alone, and within states, no longer only diplomatic personnel. Practices and objectives that can be qualified as diplomatic are now vested in multinational organisations, companies, parliaments, etc.

The singular diplomacy was not surprising. It was a diplomacy of the possible, of a specific time: if not “long” at least calibrated in decades, of a reality built by the articulation between information, negotiation, representation and coordination, of an anticipation without unwanted reaction or comment, a business of professionals who tried to overcome their impressions, feelings, prejudices.

Following the logic of globalisation, everything is or becomes diplomacy; diplomacy is in evolution, dynamic: economic, cultural, climatic, touristic, sporting, spatial, culinary, research, religious, digital, health, etc. New actors have emerged, new methods, new practices and new concepts: parliamentary diplomacy, diplomacy 2.0, *public diplomacy*, etc.

The ambition of the international conference “Plural Diplomacy” which took place at the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations of Matej Bel University, Banská Bystrica, on 25th and 26th of October 2017 was to capture these evolutions.

This conference was realized as part of the activities of the Jean Monnet Chair ad personam “Identities and cultures in Europe”, in partnership with the Think Tank Europanova, the Center for European Studies of the University Alexandru Ioan Cuza of Iasi, French Institute Slovakia, the Public Policy Research Laboratory of the New Bulgarian University and LAREQUOI, Management Research Laboratory of the University of Versailles St Quentin en Yvelines.

98 specialists from 22 different countries initially proposed 83 contributions. 53 were selected and 35 were the subject of a public presentation and discussion. Organised in course of two days, several sessions thematically grouped the contributions: parliamentary diplomacy, European diplomacy, sports diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, economic diplomacy, new practices, new actors and new perspectives. More than twenty French specialists have travelled to Banska

Bystrica, from the universities of Toulouse, Grenoble, Lyon, Paris, Versailles and the College de France, to discuss with contributors from Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, the United Arab Emirates and, of course, from Slovakia.

The solemn opening of the colloquium was provided by His Excellency **Mr. Christophe Léonzi**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the French Republic to the Slovak Republic, **H.E. Yordanka Chobanova**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Slovak Republic and **Mr. Liam Wasley**, Deputy Head of the Diplomatic Mission of the United States Embassy in Slovakia. The French Embassy in Slovakia was particularly interested in the themes of the conference and His Excellency **Mr. Léonzi** then took part in the conference as a contributor, developing the theme of European diplomacy.

The first day was concluded by **Mr. Denis Simonneau**, diplomat, former member of ENGIE's Comex in charge of European and international relations, on videoconference from the Permanent Diplomatic Mission of the French Republic to the UN in New York.

During the sessions devoted to parliamentary diplomacy and prepared with **Antony Galabov**, advisor in the Parliament of the Republic of Bulgaria, the contributors exposed the development of the diplomatic role of the parliamentarians, with the example of the Francophonie (**Philippe Péjo**), the interventions of the MEPs in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict (**Orkhan Mirzayev**), and the activities of the Association of European Senates (**Lukas Jakubiak**). At the conclusion of the colloquium, **Manon-Nour Tannous** and **Bertrand Ollivier** proposed an analysis of the Syrian crisis and the role of parliamentary diplomacy (French) between 2011 and 2017.

European diplomacy is relatively recent and under construction (**Christophe Léonzi**). One can doubt its real capacities (**Jean Crombois**) but it is also possible, for EU, to consider this supranational device as a "catalyst" of all diplomacy of the Member States (**Oana Andrea Macovei**). This diplomacy can be economically oriented, for example to consolidate institutions and exchanges between the EU and Moldova (**Carmen Gabriela Pascariu & Muschei Ion**), or to intervene on data protection devices (**Ratislav Kazansky & Miroslav Brvnistan**). The analysis of the current relations between Russia and the EU illustrates the limits of the "political imagination" of this European diplomacy (**Loredana Maria Simionov**).

Since ping-pong in China or football in Armenia, sports diplomacies have emerged. **Peter Terem**, **Ivan Stulajter** and **Matus Stulajter** proposed an analysis

of this evolution, a "strategic issue" for the Gulf States (**Michel Raspaud**) or an issue of international recognition for Kosovo (**Jean-Baptiste Kastel**). Culture, in all its forms, is also at the centre of various forms of diplomacy, *soft power* or not, culinary (**Brahim Labari, Leila Errhouni, Lamia Benjelloun**), linguistics (**Elena Zhogovska**) or patrimonial (**Bernardin Kouhossounon**).

Economic diplomacy is not new, but takes on new forms, with the duty of vigilance (**Florian Flavereau** and **Marine Bastiege**). Corporate culture is developing a new form of diplomacy in Europe (**Imane Bouterfas**), Slovak companies are using the tools of economic diplomacy (**Gabriela Kormancova**) and a normative dimension is therefore needed (**Magdalena Kania**). Corporate diplomacy analysing cases of Japan (**Louis-Caleb Remanda**) or Algeria (**El Hadi Guesmia, Abrika Belaid** and **Lagha Chegrouche**), may also have a role for peace, as in the example of the Hyundai group in Korea (**Seock-Jun Yoon**).

Supranational companies thus develop new diplomatic practices that may have a direct impact, for instance, on the management of human resources (**Zaneta Lacova, Jana Marasova** and **Anna Vallusova**). The corporate diplomat is now a key player (**Mourad Attarça**), and a management function of international relations within companies is now professionalised in a way, ultimately, fairly close to the official diplomacies (**Denis Simonneau**).

New practices, new perspectives: the United Arab Emirates are taking steps very different from those of Western countries (**William Guéraiche**), a military diplomacy is in evolution, especially in Central Europe (**Jozef Zigray**), and new players are participating in a new global diplomacy (**Lucian-Dumitru Dirdala**). Think Tankers, intellectuals, academics are now included in the diplomatic field (**Lucie Desmoulins, Zhao Huang**). Diplomacy "ecological" (**Vihren Evgeniev Mitev**), climatic (**Dieudonné Toukea**), scientists (**Aurélie Ewango-Chatelet**) assert themselves on the international scene while the media and other information vectors are part of a global system and under the control of markets and/or policies (**Maria Rostekova** and **Guy de Balbine**).

The contributions resulting from this colloquium will, after evaluation, be published in France, in collective thematic works. For ten years, the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations has organised scientific events of this type in partnership with French and European academic institutions. This symposium was thus the fifteenth and we published 18 collective works at Bruylant, in Brussels and in the Local & Global collection at L'Harmattan, Paris.