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ANALYTICAL ESSAYS: EVALUATION, SYNTHESIS, REFLECTIONS

Between Statecraft and Humanism: Diplomacy and Its Forms of Knowledge

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Diplomacy is concomitant with humanity's highest hopes and deepest frustrations. Complex global problems demand—but might not receive—deep understanding, skilled advocacy, and sustained negotiation and innovation. Diplomatic method, this article argues, emerges by combining advocacy and reflexivity, and in modernity as dialectic between statecraft and humanism. Statecraft is currently dominant, but humanist aspirations remain pertinent, if often repressed. By examining the issue of diplomatic knowledge in functional and historical contexts—and crucially by looking at it beyond information and intelligence gathering—the article examines how humanism becomes a usable praxis in diplomacy. Specifically, how humanist praxis aspires to provoke thinking and encourage the production of knowledge that can bring about changes in diplomatic perspective and policy. Practitioners can thus connect to diplomacy not merely as passive servants of policy but as active humans pursuing more than restricted technical goals. This enhances not simply a top-down, policy implementation practice, but a bottom-up diplomacy from different places, utilizing the increasingly globalized "new common knowledge" to share insights, define action, and support diverse initiatives. The humanist legacy, in short, highlights diplomacy as a knowledge practice, pursuing a range of national, cross-national, and postnational goals, negotiating interests but also social meaning and identity, something that encourages its revisiting as a mode of living.

Does diplomacy have a meaningful existence outside the bureaucratic, foreign policy culture that is traditionally associated with? What can one learn from the way it was known and conceptualized in early Renaissance Europe, including its association with humanism? Should that knowledge be utilized to reinvigorate diplomacy to meet the challenges of contemporary global life? This article suggests that these are highly pertinent questions for anyone interested in another diplomacy today.

Work in Diplomatic Studies (DS) over the last couple of decades or so has challenged the idea that diplomacy is the special preserve of the state, the foreign ministry and their authorized agents.[1] This opening up to nonstate actors constitutes an important development that is increasingly recognized by

[1]See, among others, Der Derian (1987); Constantinou (1996); Sharp (1999); Cooper and Hocking (2000); Neumann (2002); Riordan (2003); Lee and Hudson (2004); Jönsson and Hall (2005); Adler-Nissen (2009); Cornago (2010); Opondo (2010); Pigman (2011). Works within the so-called English School that adopt a state-centric perspective but are generally open to normative questions and alternative understandings of diplomacy are Butterfield (1954); Watson (1982); Wight (1991).

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the discipline of International Relations (IR), and, ironically, by the very state actors whose diplomatic uniqueness was proclaimed ex cathedra.[2] The state-centric definition provided an extremely limiting understanding of diplomacy that has had tremendous implications on how scholars and practitioners viewed their field. It framed the issue of what to know in diplomacy as well as how to study and practice it. It framed the issue of where to look for exemplars and insights. It even framed the issue why one ought to be educated or trained in diplomacy. Humanist concerns with regard to diplomacy mattered to conventional scholars only to the extent these affected national policy and interest.

An avalanche of exclusions, marginalizations, and exoticizations has accompanied the conventional, state-centric perspective. All kinds of pre-Westphalian polities, institutions, and practices have been set aside or given only brief or anecdotal mention. All kinds of colonial encounters have been left outside the Western diplomatic purview or downgraded to "internal" relations and governance. All kinds of unofficial mediations and innovations have been left unexplored or treated as worthy of concern only to the extent they run in parallel to the official diplomatic track and its priorities. All kinds of human ways and means of dealing with others within and across cultures have been seen to bear only anthropological or trendy metaphorical significance. Redressing these epistemic shortcomings has been the purpose of a range of critical approaches to diplomacy—both within and across the IR discipline.[3]

These critical approaches adopt a broader definition of diplomacy, and it is worth clarifying in what ways this differs from politics. In my understanding, diplomacy is a particular way of dealing with the political imperative. If politics is about *the organization of life in common*, diplomacy is about *how we can live together in difference*. In the controversial conceptualization of politics as the application of the friend–enemy distinction (Schmitt 1996), diplomacy can be viewed as a response to the possibility of violence, engaging with and talking to the enemy about those things we differ in and indeed those we may share. In less bellicose terms, however, politics can be seen to draw communal boundaries, institutionalize power relations and administer the population within them, and through this boundary-making activity inevitably engage in the "foreignization" of identities (Hellman 2012). Diplomacy is therefore needed to mediate estrangement (Der Derian 1987), while retaining separateness (Sharp 2009).

Furthermore, to be a diplomatic subject—not merely a political subject—is to *aspire to a mode of living beyond governmentality*. It is to claim to be in a relationship where one is not reduced to another's command and control. In other words, claims to diplomatic subjectivity aim to elevate one into an interlocutor whose *separate* will, interests, and ways of being deserve to be recognized as constituting "external" affairs. By contrast, the denial of diplomatic subjectivity reduces one into a subject of governance whose will, interests, and ways of being must be negotiated within the terms and parameters of "domestic" politics, sovereign authority, and the administration of populations (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010; cf. Opondo 2012).

Given this broader perspective, and the possibilities that "plural diplomacies" (Cornago 2013) have opened up, it becomes necessary to look at the diplomacy question beyond the concerns and know-how of statecraft (though this, no doubt, remains crucial and valuable). It requires the fostering of knowledge from a diversity of sources that are not geared to affirm the sovereign certainties

[2]US Department of State (2010).

[3]For a useful state of the art review of diplomatic studies, see Murray (2008) and note 1 above. For interesting works outside the IR discipline see, among others, Volkan (1999a,b); Wellman (2004); Gunaratne (2005); Konrad (2007); McConnell, Moreau, and Dittmer (2012).

of states and the prioritizing agendas of their policies. It is precisely at this juncture of the debate that diplomacy meets and needs humanism. As elaborated below, humanism brings to diplomatic practice the search for *other knowledge* (not merely foreign interest), learning to appreciate and incorporate *rival perspective* (not just rhetorical skill), and on the whole *thinking outside the box* and *rethinking the given*. I argue in this article that this knowledge search and pluralization should not be viewed as an impractical romanticization of a bygone past in diplomacy. It is most pertinent for contemporary practice, especially if we conceive diplomacy as having a life beyond party advocacy and the techniques of policy implementation.

Consider how we live in a world of complex problems, emerging crises, constant fears, and wants—real as well as fabricated. The diplomatist increasingly needs to find ways of understanding but also of explaining these issues to stakeholders at home *as well as* abroad, finding ways of agreeing but also of disagreeing over these issues in terms that are credible and acceptable, not only to negotiating elites but to the domestic and foreign publics that are increasingly mediated through public diplomacy. Plural knowledge is needed because plural actors and plural audiences are being addressed and negotiated. Today, in a globalized, networked, and interdependent world, more than ever, what is diplomatically at stake cannot be simply and naively how to strategize to get "our" way with others, but rather how we can innovate to live together with others with whom we inescapably interact, who will not become "us," and with whom we cannot hope to agree, at least not always or in everything. The humanist legacy, in short, highlights diplomacy as a knowledge practice, pursuing a range of national, cross-national, and postnational goals, negotiating interests but also social meaning and identity, something that encourages its revisiting as a mode of living.

Diplomacy and Knowledge

While there is a proliferation of critical understandings of what diplomacy is or should be in the 21st century, a key question remains unexplored: What forms of knowledge are relevant for understanding the environment within which diplomacy operates? Differently put, what kind of knowledge about actors, processes, and issues constitutes necessary diplomatic knowledge and what kind "undiplomatic" or surplus knowledge for the purposes of fulfilling the diplomatic function? It has been recently suggested (Neumann 2012:169–176) that there are two distinct modes of knowledge production in diplomatic practice, one stemming from the diplomats "working abroad" and the other from those "working at home"; in other words, between those in the field concerned with the "gathering and processing of information" and those at the headquarters engaged with "text-producing practices." Perhaps Neumann is overstretching the home/abroad binary given the increasing electronic and transnational access to information. I propose a different distinction below, namely between *advocacy-knowledge* and *reflexive-knowledge*, which builds on the Hermetic tradition of diplomacy that combines the orator, the interpreter, and the mystic, as outlined elsewhere (Constantinou 1996:147–153). Neumann is nonetheless right to highlight the "central drama for the individual diplomat" who has to switch, juggle, and in the end reconcile different knowledge-producing tasks, while often being aware that she or he may be doing the one at the expense of the other.

Diplomatic practice is predicated on knowledge that changes in space and time. As codified in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961), one of the primary purposes of diplomacy is to gather information, ascertain conditions and developments, and be constantly up to date about issues of legitimate concern. Much effort and resources are spent in this regard; thousands of

diplomatic dispatches are daily drafted, read (or supposed to be), and archived in Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Organizations; thousands of oral communications and briefings also take place, and may or may not be archived for posterity. It would be wrong, however, to reduce diplomatic knowledge simply to information or intelligence gathering or dispatch writing or public release spinning. How information is secured and appropriated, who has an input in the production of diplomatic knowledge, what regimes of truth does it support or challenge, ought to be matters of political concern.

Indeed, issues concerning diplomatic knowledge are sometimes hotly debated. A recent example is the WikiLeaks affair concerning the unauthorized release of thousands of US diplomatic cables. The public exposure of secret dispatches constituted for US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, a gross violation of the foundational norms of diplomacy, and nothing less than "an attack on the international community, the alliances and partnerships, the conventions and negotiations that safeguard global security and advance economic prosperity."[4] On the other side of the debate, WikiLeaks and its supporters saw the release as part of the public's right to know what our diplomats and politicians are up to, what they knew but didn't tell us, what they knew but hypocritically ignored, what they wrongly assessed and assumed they strongly knew; in short, exposing the conspiracies and inadequacies of the "invisible government" that runs our affairs (Assange 2006).

This is obviously an important debate and one ought not to minimize its significance, but a more subtle issue has been totally missed; specifically, the symbiotic relationship between diplomatic knowledge and practice. This issue cannot be reduced to either the official "ensuring of good intelligence and confidentiality" or the activist "exposition of lies and untold truths," important as both may be. Addressing this other issue means coming to terms with an ontological puzzle: namely, how *what one knows in diplomacy and what one makes of that knowledge depends on what one understands diplomacy to be—and vice versa.* I maintain that this is not a vain philosophical problematic. It is a serious and diachronic challenge that students as well as practitioners of diplomacy need to come to terms with in order to appreciate the complex and contested character of contemporary diplomacy and ultimately its potential for change.

When Henry Kissinger (1994), for example, outlines how diplomacy should combine vision and pragmatism—Wilsonian idealism and Rooseveltian realism—the pertinent knowledge that this practice requires is rather limited by the fact that he already has a fixed ontology of diplomacy as statecraft. Kissinger's vision is at best an innovative formulation–implementation of foreign policy, not of building and cultivating relationships within and across alternative political communities. His statecraft is essentially "mancraft" (Ashley 1989), a domestication of what it means to be human, which does not allow for the possibility that human collectivities can be otherwise related, negotiated, and indeed diplomaticized.

This is where humanism enters the picture, specifically as "a usable praxis," whereby thinkers and practitioners "who want to know what they are doing, what they are committed to" (Said 2003:6), familiarize themselves with the wide spectrum of human relations, escape the dominant perspective, and thus connect to diplomacy not merely as passive observers or public servants but as active humans. In other words, they begin to look critically and self-critically at diplomatic action on all fronts. They engage in introspective or human diplomacy, practice "homo-diplomacy"—that is negotiating identity borders, one's own interests, and needs—not just strategic "hetero-diplomacy," that is concerned with persuading or controlling others by way of implementing given policy (Constantinou 2006). The humanist legacy of diplomacy does not erase or brush aside

[4]http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-11882092.

state and statecraft. But it enhances diplomacy from other sources and thus provides new perspectives and narratives where neither the state nor statecraft is allowed to dominate over diplomatic knowledge and practice.

In underscoring this humanist promise, one must nonetheless not forget how the Western humanist project was used to eradicate alternative ways of living and colonize indigenous polities, languages, and memories (Grovoqui 2002; Mignolo 2003; Chowdhry 2003; Agathangelou and Ling 2009; Muppidi 2011). The European humanist knowledge has also been allied with statecraft to empower the Western/imperial diplomatic subject in highly problematic ways (Constantinou 2000; Constantinou and Der Derian 2010; Opondo 2010; cf. Neumann 2011). However, I concur with Said's view that in the end, this "tragic humanistic truth" brings with it the task of also documenting the civilizational barbarism, which is "at the heart of humanistic education," if one does not seek to apply humanism in an "uncomplicatedly redemptive way" (2003:22–23). In other words, the humanist promise of diplomacy is precisely the hard labor required, the *ambitious knowledge quest* that keeps open the possibility of questioning past, present, and future *foreign* policy. This is in contrast to statecraft that is fundamentally concerned with the *technical knowledge* that supports such policy, limits the knowledge quest, and forecloses the questioning of it.

The Location of Diplomacy

The practice of diplomacy is predicated on, and complicated by, the way it is spatially and temporally imagined. Diplomacy changes face, posits a different ontology, whenever its practitioners conceive themselves as being *on the side* or *in the middle*. This procures different knowledge forms and normative aspirations as to its scope.

One-sided diplomacy promotes (in the conventional scheme) the interests of State A vis-à-vis State B, or (in the pluralist scheme) the interests of any valued Self over a less valued yet significant Other. In both schemes, it can entail the implementation of a "foreign" policy, the advocacy of internally formulated positions, perhaps even of "common interest" by way of pursing enlightened "self interest." It also involves the active work (negotiation, lobbying, publicity, branding, coalition building, and so on) of the authorized representatives of two (or more) sides.

Mid-space diplomacy enhances mediation, involves activity that brings different sides together, a third actor that puts two (or more) sides in a constructive "relationship." It can include the good offices of a conciliator, but also the work of a cultural translator or cross-cultural communicator who consciously seek to inform, moderate, and potentially shift the views of opposing sides. Based on the identity/difference, inside/outside logic, one-sided diplomacy follows the us/them opposition, whereas mid-space diplomacy assumes a position in-between these. Note, however, that both the former and the latter can still be exclusionary processes as certain stakeholders may be "sidelined" by others.

The topological qua conceptual shift has a direct impact on diplomatic practice. Where a diplomat *stands* deeply influences what she or he *does* or *is expected to do*. The one-sided diplomat acquires legitimacy from "inside" a political unit—from the "national' or the "communal"– and uses his or her craft to support representations and actions mostly directed to the "outside" or "non-national." The mid-space diplomat acquires legitimacy from the interstitial—from the *inter*national or *inter*communal—making the most of not taking sides or by functionally distancing oneself from the sides; in other words, uses one's craft to support actions that re-engage and re-position the "sides." Crucially, whereas being *on one side* tends to restrict the development of diplomatic knowledge in line with the dominant narratives, positions, and instructions of distinct and "egotistic"

political units, being *in the middle* allows more flexibility by seeking ever new knowledge and insights from plural locations, across national frontiers, from within humanity's contrasting histories, value systems, and beliefs. For the latter kind of knowledge, the "point is to understand the ontological bases of knowing from perspectives that do not privilege a singular history of knowledge associated with a specific world region or of conceptions of knowledge that implicitly or explicitly presume their self-evident universality" (Agnew 2007:138).

It is important to recognize that the conceptual location of any diplomat cannot be determined or fixed in an absolute or static way. Whether one works for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the resident embassy or the mission to or from an international organization, or for the promotion of a "good cause," the clan, the corporation, the region, or municipality, *in short wherever one diplomatically stands, can always be modified temporally in the process of practicing diplomacy.* One cannot reduce the diplomatic paradox (or naively assume its resolution) through an essentializing binary of *one-sided* versus *mediatory* diplomacy. It would be a risky assumption to make—as any seasoned practitioner can tell one—that, say, state diplomats (always) necessarily function within the first conception of diplomacy and United Nations' diplomats (always) necessarily function within the second conception. Rather, the same diplomats *may at various times move across both terrains*—consciously or unconsciously—in the course of diplomatic activity (Sharp 2009; Neumann 2012), employing the "situational ethics"—not an abstract code of moral commands—of statecraft or of the human encounter (Jackson 2004; Opondo 2012).

In discharging their work, diplomats may find that they must (at least sometimes) become advocates and defenders of established policies and positions of their state or organization, and also (at least sometimes) become mediators of the ideas and positions of others, tasked with translating and presenting them in the other's best possible terms. For the former task, they select knowledge supporting "our side"; for the latter, knowledge that seeks to understand and explain the concerns of "all sides."

In sometimes contrasting and sometimes combining rival knowledge, the practice of diplomacy emerges in different forms in different historical moments, through dialogical exchanges rather than monological discourses. The dialectic of *statecraft-humanism* is registered in modern diplomatic thought yet broadly missed by contemporary practice and scholarly work, whereby statecraft tends to be the main focus. It is partly redressed by works highlighting the existence of distinctive or alternative diplomatic cultures and traditions (e.g., Bull 1977; Der Derian 1996; Wiseman 2005; Constantinou 2006) or mediating the tension between universalism and particularism, which "constitutes and produces international society" (Jönsson and Hall 2005:33–37).

In sum, whether one practices one-sided or mid-space diplomacy deeply impacts on the kind of knowledge one seeks. Yet, the kind of knowledge one seeks and accredits as valuable—as necessary for the satisfactory discharge of diplomatic objectives—can also determine whether one will in the end engage mostly in one-sided or mid-space pursuits.

Statecraft/Humanism, Advocacy/Reflexivity

What is politically at stake in posing such questions is the *kind* of knowledge that is utilized for foreign policy formulation and diplomatic engagement. For to be a diplomatic stakeholder—a term that has become crucial for a "new diplomacy" beyond states and governments (Riordan 2003)—would simply be a vain exercise, unless one participates meaningfully in the formation and transformation of knowledge upon which issues are presented, debated, and decided. Thus, the production of diplomatic knowledge should be understood not only within the

parameters of the diplomatic service that is in the business of legitimating foreign policy nowadays, but also within the context of the mediation work and questioning that is necessary for the understanding of social and political phenomena (Gadamer 1975) and, more ambitiously, with regard to critical humanist concerns that seek to "awaken consciousness," through dialog, esthetics, and affect, to new forms of being and becoming (Irigaray 2000; Halliwell and Mousley 2003).

Awakening consciousness is something that cannot be easily raised with regard to diplomacy. It is generally viewed as a luxury that statecraft cannot afford given the pressing problems that it needs to resolve in a world of perpetual crisis and insecurity. From the perspective of statecraft, diplomatic knowledge is essentially credible and usable information or "intelligence," and diplomatic practice is concerned with its overt and clandestine collection. "Intelligence is the sensory apparatus of the state" and as such "the means by which the state perceives both threats and opportunities in the international environment" (Freeman 1997: 31). Yet what the state collects and senses is largely preformed, prepackaged information, developed through the lense of national culture and ideology. It is not just about the knowledge that magnifies power and allows "capabilities to be applied with precision" (Freeman 1997:31), but about the kind of knowledge that limits political possibility to a purely technical policy level. In statecraft, consequently, diplomatic knowledge becomes a mere instrument for understanding adversarial positions, coding and decoding intentions, assessing comparative advantages and weaknesses, and so of maximizing bargaining power and capability (Craig and George 1983). It is not about maximizing political vision and possibility.

The Renaissance humanist tradition, by contrast, encouraged critique, revision, and new possibility. By seeking to emancipate itself from the static categories of religious universalism, it was concerned not only with the *knowledge of the Other* so as to better control it in the absence of divine authority. It was also concerned with that *other knowledge* that ought always to be pursued and be available for self-development, transformation, and virtuous conduct. The famous quote by Terence, "I am human, nothing human is alien to me" epitomizes this humanist knowledge quest. With respect to diplomacy, the knowledge of sovereign princes was highly important yet would not suffice and needed to be complemented by humanist "knowledge of the world… useful in the conduct of life" (Callières 1770).

Through *humanist knowledge,* one could develop new discourses of relation and a more enlightened comportment, emphasizing not only right but also duty and responsibility, both within and across communities. It also underscored Vico's *sapienza poetica,* "historical knowledge based on the human being's capacity to make knowledge, as opposed to absorbing it passively, reactively and dully" (Said 2003:11). It presupposed the fabrication, incompleteness, and in the end the tragedy of human knowledge, promoting a constantly critical and self-critical attitude about what one knows. Humanism has been

> the exertion of one's faculties in language in order to understand, reinterpret and grapple with the products of language in history, other languages and other histories… humanism is not a way of consolidating and affirming what "we" have always known and felt, but rather a means of questioning, upsetting and reformulating so much of what is presented to us as commodified, packaged, uncontroversial, and uncritically codified certainties. (Said 2003:28)

This critical tradition speaks directly to knowledge in and about diplomacy and actually precedes the Renaissance. The issue of diplomatic knowledge can be approached by looking into its connection to two specific modalities of

diplomacy: (i) the advocacy, self-promotion, policy implementation mode; and (ii) the reflexive, self-inquisitive, questioning mode. A close examination of ancient Greek practice reveals how these two diplomatic modes were institutionalized in the life of the polis and indeed how two separate terms were employed to describe them (Constantinou 1996). That is: (i) *presbeia,* which had to do with embassies to other city-states, with oration, persuasion, and negotiation; and (ii) *theoria*, which had to do with embassies to the oracle and other freelance embassies that were sent around the world and served as missions of problematization and knowledge gathering. The *theoroi* were not sent as advocates to persuade others or to negotiate agreements but as seekers of new knowledge. They were thus concerned with mediating divine or ecumenical knowledge at a different functional level than the *presbeis* did. The reflexive mode of *theoroi* necessitated that they assume more intensely as part of their mission the manner of the intermediary or itinerary theorist in the way the orators or advocate-diplomats (*presbeis*) were not expected to.

The reflexive mode, as shown elsewhere (Constantinou 2006), has not been an exclusivity of ancient Greek diplomatic practice, and versions of it can be found in other international societies and historical periods. To practice a well-balanced diplomacy, one cannot have only the one mode without the other. If there is only advocacy, diplomacy becomes just a game of persuasion and bargaining of interests and positions. If there is only reflection, diplomacy becomes just philosophy and perpetual problematization of interests and positions. Moreover, the forms of knowledge required vary from one mode to the other, in the sense of what is viewed as relevant and credible knowledge and what as surplus or irrelevant information.

Take a practical question of what is essential to know in a specific diplomatic meeting; for example, how far, if at all, should one be acquainted with "foreign" religious mythology and how it differs or bears resemblance to "ours," when one's mission is basically to persuade the other side to sign an agreement? The answer to this question may differ from diplomat to diplomat but also from one context to another (e.g., the kind of agreement, the place of religion in that society, the degree of persuasion required, and so on). Diplomatic conduct can also shift on the basis of *advocacy-knowledge* or *reflexive-knowledge.* Specifically, one's comportment can radically shift if knowledge is required just for persuading or scoring a diplomatic point rather than to (also) revise, if and where necessary, one's own foreign policy objectives and public discourse (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010). Although this may well develop into an internal dissonance and epistemic struggle between advocacy and reflexivity, state-centric and humanistic approaches to diplomacy, the co-habitation of the two in early modern Europe raises interesting questions.

Early Modern Reflections on Diplomatic Practice

Early modern diplomacy as developed in Renaissance Italy is a historically specific attempt to deal with "the foreign" outside religious universalism and secular dilettantism. It renewed classical knowledge and utilized "other languages and histories" in order to understand the character of the emerging political community—the state or *lo stato*—under whose authority people lived at the time, and in doing so also to understand inter-state relationships.

Machiavelli has been a key figure in this development, and it is useful to recall his take on diplomatic knowledge, specifically, his advisory letter to ambassador Raffaello Girolami about the importance of getting to *know* well both the King of Spain to whom he was sent and the Florentine ruler that sent him on his embassy. This was by way of practicing diplomacy virtuously, fulfilling the ambassadorial mission not just *faithfully* but *adequately.* (Machiavelli 1522/2004:41). In other

words, Machiavelli's advice is for spherical diplomatic knowledge looking both outside and inside the state (cf. Putnam 1988). To be sure, for Machiavelli, this is done for the purposes of statecraft; but note that statecraft is best served by recognizing the limits of advocacy, by getting to know what is possible on either side of the diplomatic encounter. The diplomat ought to be unequivocally the *agent* of his Prince, yet he should not forget that he is also a *mediator* between Princes.

"Prince or Peace" is a major puzzle in the diplomacy of early Renaissance Europe (Mattingly 1988:181–232). The ethical predicaments of diplomatic practice are strikingly articulated by key humanist figures of the time. Writing in the late fifteenth century, in his *De Officio Legati*, Ermolao Barbaro views the ambassador as someone who serves the wider humanity, "who brings people together with treaties" or working to maintain treaties or "to bring about peace with enemies," at the same time as he works to "retain and amplify the status of his own city" (Hampton 2009:47). Serving both humanity and the state appears feasible and quite natural also to other scholars, like Etienne Dolet, who see the ambassador's role as that of preserving peace while pursuing the interests of his prince, as Hampton (2009) persuasively explains in his study of literature and diplomacy in early modern Europe.

Nonetheless, shifts in diplomatic teleology became a challenge and tragic concern for other humanist writers. There was extensive debate at the time whether the diplomat was an agent or a mediator, indifferent or responsible as to the moral consequences of his communications and actions. Much discussed with regard to diplomatic knowledge was the predicament of *how much should the Prince know*, whether the diplomat ought to report *everything* back to his master or whether he had an obligation to narrate, gloss, and re-present it in a way that would not create unnecessary ill-feelings between rulers and thus endanger peace.

Some scholars were caught in the one or the other side of the spectrum. For the late-sixteenth-century theologician-jurist, Alberico Gentili, writing in *De Legationibus*, though "the ambassador is an interpreter [*legat interpres est*]," he cannot represent "something at variance with the substance of the negotiations" or conceal any information whatsoever from his sovereign (Gentili 1594/1924; 175–176). Similarly, for essayist Michel de Montaigne, writing on "The Doings of Certain Ambassadors," "the duty of the servant is fully and faithfully to report events as they occurred, so that his master can be free to arrange, judge and select for himself… [thus, the ambassador] should consider himself not merely subordinate in authority but also in wisdom and counsel" (de Montaigne 1991:79) For Gasparo Bragaccia, however, who wrote a treatise on the office of the ambassador earlier (1625), dedication to peace takes priority and thus feeding raw or provocative information to one's master would be a betrayal of the diplomatic function. To support his thesis, Bragaccia radically interprets the term *ambassador* by linking it to Latin *ambo*, "both" or "two," thus suggesting that the ambassador is quintessentially divided between two sides, something that bestows upon him special responsibility (Hampton 2009:50).

The internal tension and clashing duties of being *on one side* or *in-between sides* is nowhere better illustrated than in Torquato Tasso's allegorical poem, *The Messenger:*

> If the one who brings together minds is the go-between between those whose minds he brings together, *it does not appear that he should be more on the side of one than on the side of the other. For a mediator always participates equally in both sides.* But on the other hand this seems most inconvenient, since *the ambassador belongs completely to the one whom he represents, and not to the one in whose court he resides.* Hence his goal should be rather to carry out negotiations to the satisfaction of the prince his master, with no regard for the usefulness or honour of the other.
> (quoted in Hampton 2009:54–55; my italics)

Tasso thus dramatizes the statecraft/humanism divide: the pressures of faithfully promoting one-sided state interest *vis-à-vis* faithfully identifying with all sides, working to bring minds together to promote humanist goals and mutual understanding. For Tasso, bridging this divide appears to be the major yet irresolvable challenge of the new Renaissance diplomacy. Though for Tasso "the ambassador should be allowed to make a considerable number of changes in the language and other parts of his instructions" (quoted in Gentili 1594/1924:178) in the end he must learn to live with his split personality and double character, called upon to act both as agent and mediator, tragically divided and oscillating between the demands of his political community and the demands of humanity.

It would take the legal innovation (and rhetorical "protestant" twist) of Gentili to calm down the ethical predicaments of the double, divided ambassador. Gentili sees a potential problem but also a possible symbiosis between a "moral" ambassadorial self and an "immoral" princely demand. For him, "the ambassador's personality is mixed [*mixta*], not double [*non duae*] and since in this mixture the right of God is the stronger, the other element should certainly be controlled by it" (Gentili 1594/1924;173–174). Not having a split personality, but a mixed one, the ambassador owes fidelity to his Prince but only to the extent that this does not violate his moral conscience, in which case he ought to inform his master and not take up his post, if the two cannot be reconciled. Gentili allows that the *persona mixta* may differ from one ambassador to the next, so practically it need not pose a problem: "I know very well how much these principles differ from the current code of morals. But I am depicting the ambassador, not as he generally is, but as he ought to be" (Gentili 1594/1924:174). In principle, the ambassador ought to perform virtuously according to Christian precepts and conscience; in practice, his conduct leaves much to be desired as his personality "mixture" may be calibrated according to the scales of his temporal sovereign.

It is crucial here to understand the environment within which these debates were taking place, including the significant changes in diplomatic practice at the time. The progressive move in Renaissance Italy from ad hoc to long-term or resident embassies changed and systematized the ways of acquiring diplomatic knowledge. This was possible due to a temporal shift in the political imaginary of the period, emphasizing the continuity and infiniteness of worldly affairs rather than apocalyptic imminence (Kantorowicz 1957:284–291). The concern with Christian eschatology diminished in importance and was substituted by an emerging concern with human affairs and secular information. One needed to re-discover the Other beyond holy books and increasingly through travelogues. A new knowledge quest was also initiated, in a sense relaunching the classical *theorias*, which were already taking place in the Islamic world in the form of *talab al-'ilm,* "travel in search of knowledge" (Mancall 2006:11). From this perspective, especially in Venice, the production of ambassadorial knowledge adopted a secular face, turned into a humanist endeavor at the same time as it remained a core instrument of statecraft.

The chasm between diplomatic theory and social theory in understanding (and in the case of the former often misunderstanding) what happened to diplomacy during this period, can best be illustrated by contrasting Harold Nicolson and Max Weber. Nicolson is pretty negative about "the confused and highly competitive diplomatic method bequeathed to us by the Italian Renaissance" (Nicolson 1954:46). In typical Orientalist style, he charges "the Venetians [who] owing to their long and intimate relations with the East, became indoctrinated with the Byzantine theory of diplomacy and transmitted to their fellow Italians the oriental defects of duplicity and suspicion" (Nicolson 1954:27). For Nicolson, Italian diplomatic knowledge is merely espionage, the diplomat nothing more than an "honourable spy." Thus he caricatures the Machiavellian *virtù* as a form

of diplomatic *combinazioni* (cunning, recklessness, and ruthlessness) that was only concerned with short-term gains than long-term interests (Nicolson 1954:31). If diplomacy is duplicitous today it is because of the Italian/Venetian legacy, Nicolson unequivocally contends. In his conceptual scheme, no Venetian practices are redeemable or worthy of investigation.

By sharp contrast, Max Weber underscores the cultivated, humanist character of diplomacy that emerged in Venice, and outlines the costs of its loss. In "Politics as a Vocation," he argues that,

> In the Occident, influenced above all by the reports of the Venetian legates, diplomacy first became a *consciously* cultivated art in the age of Charles V, in Machiavelli's time. The reports of the Venetian legates were read with passionate zeal in expert diplomatic circles. The adepts of this art, who were in the main educated humanistically, treated one another as trained initiates, similar to the humanist Chinese statesmen in the last period of the warring states. (Weber 1991:89)

From this perspective—as a "*consciously* cultivated art"—early modern diplomacy was for Weber much more than statecraft, and the Venetian *relazioni* (ambassadorial "reports"; more of which below) was at the center of this development. Diplomatic knowledge and practice did not merely display the moral and cultural axioms of classical times, which indeed became fashionable in Renaissance Italy, but sought fully to emulate them. The interest in the formation of diplomatic knowledge, as "passionately" debated and contested in expert diplomatic circles in Venice, including the *Collegio*, constituted a venerable humanist institution. It was a conscious cultivation of what it meant to be both a virtuous ambassador and a genuine humanist at the time. Humanism provided an advanced education in diplomacy, which entailed openly, artfully, and scholarly debating about political affairs as well as foreign cultures.[5]

Humanist Praxis and Chinese Statesmanship

Weber's link to ancient Chinese humanism and statesmanship is not a casual reference. It points to the late Warring States Period (appr. 475–221 BCE) that saw the rise and respectful co-existence of different philosophical schools of thought in China. During this period, people and rulers were seeking peace but also new knowledge and perspective. These schools concerned themselves with social conduct and guidance given the breakdown of political and moral order. There was no single dominant school of thought, no dominant perspective from which to securely judge human affairs or affairs of state. The passionate-free debate of this period was captured by the saying, "let a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend" (famously misappropriated by Mao in Communist China).

The literati that Weber refers to freely moved and were welcomed across the warring states offering their rival epistemologies and ways of thinking to different rulers. It is indicative that Weber projects this kind of atmosphere to early modern European diplomacy: an atmosphere of philosophical pluralism that as in China was less concerned with securing uncritical certainties and idealist truths but rather with contesting them in pursuit of new wisdom, praxeology or "the way" in daily affairs (Graham 1989:3). It was that ability of Oriental humanism—and early modern Occidental humanism—to provoke thinking, labor for knowledge, and not to exclude but to welcome changes—even radical shifts—in perspective that European diplomacy progressively lost.

[5]However, there is an ongoing debate about the extent of the humanist impact on the "oratorical" and "ornamental" diplomacies of Renaissance Italy (Reus-Smit 1999:72–73).

Unlike Europe where the humanist tradition influenced but did not strike deep roots in the state officialdom, in China, the opposite was the case. According to Weber, the humanist education of the mandarins "determined the whole destiny of China" and if the European "humanists in their time had had the slightest chance of gaining a similar influence" Europe would have developed very differently (Weber 1991:93). In his essay on "The Chinese Literati," Weber underscores their significance in terms of openness to knowledge pursuits but does not idealize their humanist background, which was prolific in "puns, euphemisms, allusions to classical quotations, and a refined and purely literary intellectuality" (Weber 1991:437).

Weber's argument is rather that humanist education, despite its limitations, brought about a different kind of political culture. From the angle of diplomatic practice, note how poetry, travel diary, and "brushtalk" (ideographic calligraphy) were part of the official diplomatic instruments used by Chinese ambassadors to communicate abroad or outside the center. But it was also a means to represent, reflect upon, and ultimately seek to understand the Other at home. Humanist praxis could indeed bring radical shifts in diplomatic perspective that could disempower the status quo and trouble policy commitment. No doubt humanist scholarship could also be used to legitimate established policy and support specific elite commitments. But overall humanist diplomatic language provided the backdrop for foreign policy reflection, for example, concerning relations with Japan in the late nineteenth century for the major policy debate within China on whether to treat Japan as a cultural "kin" or as a "barbarian" under European control (Howland 1996).

Furthermore, though generally missed in Western literature, the Chinese officials were not monolithically Sino-centric in their international relations with Western powers. The idea that their "obstinate" Sinocentricity clashed with the cultures and norms of the European society of states has been persuasively challenged (Liu 2004). Instead, the Chinese made serious efforts to learn and use Western legal norms and principles, even quoting where necessary from Vattel's *Law of Nations*, concerning sovereignty, noninterference, and self-defense. In these instances, it was Western diplomacy that rejected the use of such international legal principles in the context of "otherworldy" China, precisely because such principles clashed with their policy objectives (Chen 2011).

Weber views as an exemplar of humanist praxis, Li Hung Chang, the influential late-nineteenth-century statesman and diplomat, who is famously known as "a one-man foreign office" (that is, the *Zongli Yamen* that dealt with foreign relations, and established under Prince Gong in imperial China). His humanist background made it possible for him (a necessary though not sufficient condition) to view and conceptualize the non-Chinese Other outside the conservative Sino-centric view (as represented by Empress Cixi) and which characterized the relations of the Chinese empire with its subjects, vassals, and barbarians in other contexts. He did much to develop the doctrine of nonconfrontation and co-existence with the foreigners in China, and was a leading figure of the movement of internal change and self-strengthening of China through learning and emulating the technological achievements of foreigners. From this perspective, he is credited for his "vision" and "openness" but also for his readiness to endorse the "unequal treaties" that Europeans and Americans demanded, entrenching the value of retaining foreign legations at Peking, the terms of which he personally negotiated with the Europeans after the Boxer rebellion (Moser and Moser 1993). His perspective was Sino-centric but not Occidentalist (Buruma and Margalit 2005); his legacy remains controversial and ranges from diplomatic genius and innovation to appeasement and treason.

It is this "risky" new knowledge and praxis that Weber finds most fascinating and commends as a sign of cultivated diplomatic art inspired by humanism.

Although in the history of Western diplomatic thought this kind of thinking was never lost as an ideal, it lacked intensity and sustainability, and thus its guiding light became dimmer after the Renaissance. Under this dimmer light, the humanist arts of diplomacy became subservient to the bureaucratic needs of statecraft, which had little time for radical shifts in perspective that undermined policy. Stripping diplomatic knowledge from "humanist" meditations and "diverse" thoughts rendered it the kind of information stream and intelligence we are currently (officially) accustomed to. Though not eradicated in Europe, the humanist disposition of diplomacy was effectively coopted by statecraft.

Taming Reflexivity, Coopting Humanism

The cultivated art of diplomacy in early modern Europe was undermined by "the necessity of a formally unified guidance of the whole policy" (Weber 1991: 89). This brought about the rise of expert officialdom. The unification of the state apparatus gradually demanded the development of the cabinet (in Venice the replacement of the Collegial system) that was now surrounded by chosen trusted advisors, not humanist truth fighters and radical perspectivists. At the same time, the diplomatic officialdom was unified under the direction of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, requiring similar discipline and fidelity. Diplomacy was professionalized and diplomats became government servants, serving the promotion and continuation of specific foreign policies, and inevitably developing career and personal interests within the state apparatus.

A significant difference between medieval and early modern Italian ambassadors and later practitioners was that for the former, diplomatic practice constituted a self-financed *civic duty* rather than a *career* (Queller 1967:163–174). This gave them a critical distance from the state that the professional diplomats lacked. It made it easier for them to approach diplomacy as active citizens or noble agents with "freer" instructions and expressions of opinion. Not that the career diplomats could not express dissenting views and suggest alternative perspectives to a problem. They certainly could and occasionally would. But note that they could not bring these to be debated before a public forum (as happened in Venice or in the ancient Greek polis), or even meaningfully debated within government, if contrary to the established policy and if serious elite investments have already been made. This constituted a great loss as to the knowledge flow and plurality of viewpoints that was technically sacrificed in discharging official diplomatic work.

The taming of reflexivity was intensified with *the political rise of the lawyer* whose ethic of responsibility was clearly different to that of the humanist scholar. The lawyer's craft was "to plead effectively the cause of interested clients" (Weber 1991:94), and though the advocacy mode is certainly an important aspect of diplomacy (as suggested above), in practice this meant increasing demands for the kind of knowledge that strengthened governmental arguments. Information that could weaken such arguments might be useful to know, but publicly had to be sidelined. From the perspective of drafting policy briefs and supporting policy investments, the technical report was progressively elevated over and above the more meditative *relazioni.*

To fully appreciate the point, it is important to distinguish between the "standard" reporting as conventionally understood and the practice of *relazioni* that Max Weber refers to, a distinction that is almost totally missed in Diplomatic Studies. The Venetian *relazioni* was a comprehensive scholarly reflection and advisory essay on the *relation* between Venice and other city-states. To be sure, its main concern was the promotion and preservation of the state of Venice; yet, this was done within the context of the promotion and preservation of the "republic of ideas." In other words, it was about what we know about others and

their ways of doing things but also *how that speaks about our way of doing things on the basis of what we know about others.* Introspection was thus a vital aspect of this "foreign" knowledge. To this extent, *relazioni* was not simply intelligence (though that was definitely an aspect of it) but also knowledge meant to expand our knowledge of other peoples and cultures and (when most successful) to help us understand ourselves. That is why the *relazioni* was distinguished from *rapporti* or *dispaccio* or *avvisi* (news-letters) and to collapse this practice within the ambit of those writings is to totally miss its uniqueness. Moreover, and most crucially, there may have been limits as to the publicity of other kinds of diplomatic reports—meant for the eyes of the ruler or only his confidants—but on the contrary *relazioni* was supposed to be an open and debatable source of diplomatic knowledge. "The bad habit of reporting only to a restricted body" (Queller 1967: 144) that occurred in certain periods with regard to *relazioni* was a cause for concern and eventually rectified through Venetian legislation.

Diplomatic historians find it difficult to account for *relazioni*'s literary-oratorical style, given that diplomatic reports in their contemporarist understanding are supposed to be economic, precise, and "user friendly" from the point of view of statecraft. Even erudite scholars of Renaissance diplomacy, like Mattingly, hurriedly refer to "the unique series of fascinating documents, the Venetian *relazione*" only to effectively lump them together with mere reports concerned with "the collecting, processing and packaging of information" (Mattingly 1988:98, 99). For other diplomatic scholars, the practice is looked down upon and ignored: "For those who want to chart the development of diplomacy itself, the *relazioni* are not as helpful as ordinary dispatches" (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995: 53). It thus appears as a Venetian idiosyncrasy from which we have nothing to learn about diplomacy.

Even for someone like Queller, to whom we owe a lot for rescuing the practice as a distinctive diplomatic moment, the "influence of the Renaissance in Venice" is negatively credited for giving this "ancient and laudable custom" a "more literary character" (Queller 1967:142, 146). For Queller, the *relazioni* were "generally straightforward, businesslike, and only very moderately given to literary adornment," and this misconception leads him, for example, to criticize the "pretentiousness" of Marco Foscari's *relazione* on Florence—"full of learned allusions" (1973:182). By contrast, for other Renaissance scholars, Foscari's *relazione* is paradigmatic, "a tour de force" (Bowd 2000:413).

Why this marginalization and belittling of *relazioni* by contemporary diplomatic scholars? Why this exoticization of free diplomatic reflexivity, treating it as surplus information and meditative indulgence from the perspective of the technical needs of statecraft? The way the presented issues are interpreted by contemporary scholars is indeed troubling. Note in this regard, Foscari's allusion in his *relazione* to the *theoria* of the Romans to Athens in order to study local laws and customs before drafting their own laws, which Queller (1973:182) belittles as pretentious supposition. Is it? Even if it is, why does the Renaissance ambassador feel the need to tell this tale to the Venetians? All in all, Foscari's deliberate parallelism of what the Venetians could learn from the example of Florence—especially about the need of retaining not just stability but liberty within the Venetian republic—is treated as surplus, nondiplomatic business, and oratorical supplement.

Parallel to these developments, the European global expansion and the subjugation of non-European peoples further shaped and tamed the humanist quest for (diplomatic) knowledge. Imperial diplomacy was primarily concerned with knowledge that was supporting and legitimating that expansion (Said 1979). European humanism was reduced—perversely—to a civilizing mission, tainted by racism, hypocrisy, and inertia (Fanon 1967; Carroll 1993). European diplomats had little opportunity to exercise their humanist art officially during their

service, although they could on occasion do so through other public channels. The transgressions from normal practice of the White Mughals in India—becoming more humanist intermediaries than servile agents of the East India Company—offer one pertinent and fascinating case (Dalrymple 2004).

Coming to better-known diplomatic practitioners, an interesting case is Ernest Satow who had official diplomatic postings in Japan, China, and Siam but also published considerably on Far Eastern politics and cultures as well as on diplomatic practice. Quite irrespective of some inevitable Orientalist biases in his writings, the humanist aspects of his "non-official" historical accounts and travelogues are quite fascinating to read, especially his exposition of the various Western misperceptions of local customs and troubling implementations of Western foreign policy in late-nineteenth-century Japan and Siam.

Such as: the complications of insisting "upon enforcing Treaty provisions than desirous of meeting the convenience of native officials and European merchants" (Satow 1921/2000:19); or the policy of "enforcing the whole of the demands made by Her Majesty's Government… [that] probably killed a good many persons that were innocent… [and] thereby elevated what was in the beginning a crime against public order into a *casus belli*" (Satow 1921/2000:89); or the recognition that "the blood of foreigners who fell under the swords of Japanese murderers [i.e., the Samurai], and the lives which were sacrificed to avenge it bore fruit in later days, and fertilized the ground from which sprang the tree of the national regeneration" (Satow 1921/2000:136). Did these thoughts make it into the official dispatches? Even if they did, did they inform a public political debate or were they used to revise policy? Or were they typically treated "discreetly" in a way that did not invalidate the primary goals of British foreign policy? The official needs for advocacy requiring secrecy, deception, and tamed knowledge thus displaced reflexive, heuristic, traveling knowledge that can bring about real change in our understanding of the activities of the Other as well as those of the Self (Guillaume 2011).

Such knowledge pursuits, if not excluded or marginalized, are used euphemistically and in a token way, which means in effect that their potential is co-opted by raison d'état. On occasion, scholars like Ernest Satow almost sensationalize reflexivity, such as in his seminal text *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice*. One sees clear humanist remnants in, for example, the view that "A good diplomatist will always endeavor to put himself in the position of the person with whom he is treating, and try to imagine what he would wish, do and say, under those circumstances." (1917:133–134). Satow goes further, graphically explaining the extent to which this ought to be done, quoting the celebrated eighteenth-century authority on diplomacy, Francois de Callières, in the original French:

> He must subdue his own feelings to get in place of the Prince with whom he deals, he transforms himself, so as to speak in him, he enters himself in his opinions and inclinations after having known him, and asks himself, as if in the place of the Prince with the same power, the same passions and the same prejudices, what effects do these ways of representing him produce in me? [*si j'étois en la place de ce Prince avec le même pouvoir, les mêmes passions & les mêmes préjugez, quels effets produiroient en moy les choses que j'ay à luy representer?*] (1917:134)

If taken at his word (i.e., not as a camouflaged injunction to know thy enemy or rival), what Satow via Callières expects the diplomat to do is nothing less than an act of transformation and reversal of roles. In fully discharging one's diplomatic functions, it is never enough for the diplomat to just represent one's side. One must learn to represent—mentally and privately—the other side as well, not merely to sympathize but to empathize. One must learn to appreciate the other's case and position given the other's power, ideological commitments, biases, etc.

Although it is important to warn about the reverse danger here, namely, how by eschewing moralism and empathizing with the sovereign, *any* sovereign, one can easily become an apologist for statecraft.

Otherwise, Satow's-Callières' moral appears to be complete openness to the changes in perspective that the diplomatic encounter with the Other brings, and which potentially tames advocacy. Diplomatic agency is never enough; mediation is necessary and called for. This can indeed become troublesome for statecraft, when assessed by the advocacy demands of "the side" one represents, and that is why, as it has been perceptively pointed out (Sharp 2009:69–71), state diplomats persistently disappoint their masters.[6]

To that extent, what is perhaps most frustrating with conventional diplomatic theorists is not their unreconstructed state-centrism but rather how their brilliant humanist insights remain undeveloped and in the end are canceled by banal recitations of duty vis-à-vis the fear of "localitis" or "going native." Consider the following example on the clash of loyalties:

> The professional diplomatist is governed by several different, and at times conflicting loyalties. He owes loyalty to his own sovereign, government, minister and foreign office; he owes loyalty to his own staff; he owes a form of loyalty to the diplomatic body in the capital where he resides; he owes loyalty to the local British colony and its commercial interests; and he owes another form of loyalty to the government to which he is accredited and to the minister with whom he negotiates. (Nicolson 1963:122–123)

A great insight about the inescapability of the mediating role of the diplomat! Yet it is brought low by Nicolson's warning that, in the end, one should be extremely careful in discharging one's duties, in case "a more subtle and unconscious disloyalty may intrude" (1963:122–123). Although understandable from a state-centric perspective, the point about the "conflicting loyalties" becomes quite limiting in scope (unless one very generously sees Nicolson as covering his back while winking to his colleagues). In other words, it is not used to appreciate the complex ethical predicaments of contemporary diplomacy but to securiticize diplomatic practice, that is the need for vigilance not to unconsciously yield to the humanist melodies of postnational sirens. From this perspective, Nicolson's "humanist" rhetoric elsewhere is exposed and qualified; specifically his criticism of the kind of diplomacy practiced by "missionaries, fanatics and lawyers," praising instead the diplomacy of "humane sceptics" (Nicolson 1963:50). Nicolson's humane skepticism is subservient to the reasons and demands of the state one serves. There is no meaningful diplomacy *in-between*, only a diplomacy of *sides*, civilized by an elitist body of worldly-wise diplomats, recognizing that all national certainties are built on sand yet cynically carrying on with their practice. Mixed personas, in Gentili's terms, whose ethics are calibrated to the needs of statecraft.

Diplomacy as a Mode of Living

If we do not see diplomacy exclusively in terms of statecraft, it will be possible to move to an ethic of diplomacy as a mode of living. What we have received rather strongly from humanistic culture is "the idea of coexistence and sharing" (Said 2003:xvi). This idea highlights how we live together and in relation to others and share with them the material and spiritual resources of the world. It underscores the need to get acquainted with the languages and histories of the other—not as a mere strategy for knowing the enemy or rival—but for self-development,

[6]Interestingly, the recent 6th edition of Satow's *Guide* airbrushes the Callières' quote (see Ivor Roberts 6th (2009) edition, p. 620; cf. to 1st edition).

and ultimately self-knowledge and self-critique. If diplomacy is a practice that genuinely responds to the challenge of how we can live together in difference—that is, not only and simplistically about how we get our way with others—the humanist legacy outlined above plays a crucial role and cannot be ignored.

Interestingly, a long time ago, Socratic philosophy developed a contemplative mode of living by appropriating the function of ancient Greek *theorias,* the sacred and ecumenical embassies in search of knowledge (Constantinou 1996:45–64). Unexamined life—not aspiring to self-knowledge—was not worth living, Socrartes proclaimed, and in pursuit of a worthy mode of living he promoted a life in philosophy linked to the reflexive activities of the solemn Greek embassies, their incessant questioning of the known and quest for the new. In Plato's *Gorgias,* he underlined this mode of living as a political praxis. Quite an ironic reversal that two and half millenia afterward a case needs to be made for reflexivity in diplomacy as well as for a mode of living that takes seriously the diplomatic disposition. I seek to make the case, however, by working *with* but also *against* Socratic philosophy (at least in the way we received it through Plato).

Specifically, in approaching diplomacy as a mode of living, I argue for an ethic that takes seriously the Socratic suspicion toward received knowledge, *what* we know and *how* we know it, while resisting the transcendental mediating role of the philosopher-ruler depicted in Plato's *Republic.* The critical humanism discussed above is particularly concerned about the risks of the latter. The ethic in question strongly embraces the incredulity toward certainties, boxed thinking, and exclusive ways of doing things. The diplomacy of life it espouses is never about the advocacy of final truths, winning arguments, and scoring points for one's side, but about working within and across "sides" to *consciously* produce—and where necessary revise—the knowledge upon which truths and interests are based.

It has been argued that "the great quality of diplomats is that they don't know for sure what are the exact and final goals—not only of their adversaries but also of their own people" (Latour 2002:38). This uncertainty and suspicion about goals creates an interesting working ethos. Though it can take an elitist I-know-better-than-politicians attitude, Latour underscores the positive flexibility and innovation that it brings into the negotiation of complex problems. The *uncertainty about goals* creates an ethos that prioritizes creative collaboration and resolution rather than maximalist pursuit of politically contingent goals. The diplomats seek to come to an agreement in a way that addresses the concerns of all, given the incredulity they have about everyone's ends and interests. Living up to this specific quality diplomats can be flexible in shifting perspective, offering a range of options for one's side but also for the other side, by way of meeting the "tentative" goals of the sides they represent or seek to mediate.

It is from this angle of the incredulity of the ever-changing goals in politics as well as in life that one can understand and appreciate the *multidirectional character of contemporary diplomacy* (Constantinou 2012). Foreign policy may be obsessed with achieving goals, but it is diplomacy that tests their feasibility and in the end negotiates alternatives when they prove unfeasible or when an impasse is reached. Diplomacy thrives in negotiating the given and achieving a series of modi vivendi—limited or temporary agreements—that allow life to go on when major differences persist. To be sure, this should not be idealized given that through a modus vivendi an unjust status quo may be perpetuated. The subject of co-existence can also be manipulated in international relations (Odysseos 2007)—cases that humanistic knowledge should constantly expose, unsettle, and help to revise. Yet the point not to miss is that in life as well as in politics, we may aspire and advocate universals but in the end need to negotiate particulars. To that extent, diplomacy as a mode of living makes one attentive to how "there

are more ways than one to differ—and thus more than one way to agree" (Latour 2002:43). We can agree to differ, and remain friends, even live next to each other as enemies, by suspending ends and concentrating on means, devising ways of living together in difference and even in containable conflict.

Ways of living together change across space as well as time. In the contemporary hyper-mediated world, state capacities have significantly changed while networks challenge the nature of power through new lattices of relatedness, responsiveness, and affectivity. Competing sources of authority have emerged, constituting a new "global heteropolarity," in which a wide range of new actors are producing profound global effects through interconnectivity (Constantinou and Der Derian 2010:18). Professional diplomacy is also rapidly shifting from an elitist club activity to global networking (Heine 2006). Claiming today that diplomatic knowledge is or should be the specialist preserve of official ambassadors or bureaucratic elites is to say the least an anachronism—though a dominant one within national diplomatic services. Both state and nonstate actors produce and act upon knowledge that is transnational and often commonly available or freely contested on the Internet, if someone skillfully and persistently searches. Diplomatic imagery has also intensified and its effects changed as we have entered what I call a *post-protocol era*. Consider how photojournalism can address marginalized issues and impart knowledge through affect (e.g., on indigenous conditions of living); old and new media parade not just official choreography but diplomatic unintentionality (e.g., Obama's exaggerated bow before the Saudi King); uncensored innovators manipulate images to denigrate high profile leaders on the Web (e.g., George W. Bush having sex with Osama bin Laden).

Quite irrespective of where one stands diplomatically, on the side or in the middle, there is increasingly diplomacy *from below* and *from noncentralized places* combined with transnational *issue-specific actorship*, often with rich and rival knowledge resources. Calls for the "humanization" and "democratization" of diplomacy are of course not new (Mowat 1935; cf. Nicolson 1963). The main difference with debates nowadays is that the demos—at least over specific issues—is potentially global, embracing the whole humanity, meaning that we are moving toward, if not already experiencing, a global hyperdemocracy (Attali 2009). Anyone from the globalized demos can now become a citizen-diplomat or an activist-diplomat without much difficulty in view of radical changes in communication and traveling. Concerned global citizens can be self-delegated to war or crisis zones, physically or virtually, making representations that can have a real asymmetrical impact on the ground (Hardt and Negri 2004:303–306). "Guerilla diplomacy" is a term used by some authors (Copeland 2009) to describe this new phenomenon. "Celebrity diplomacy" is another term used to describe the "glitzy," more comfortable activism and good cause advocacy of famous personas (Cooper 2008; Tsaliki, Frangonikolopoulos, and Huliaras 2011). New diplomatic actors can emerge overnight, creating new diplomatic spaces and channels of communication, if strong commitment over an issue exists, acquiring symbolic power that can exceed that of states and shape events in dramatic fashion, positively or negatively. In short, humans, individually or collectively, seek to influence and impact on the work of official diplomatic services, but also produce their own alternative "diplomatic services" where the need arises.

Moreover, this globalized demos has increasing access to a "new common knowledge" (Hardt and Negri 2004:xv–xvi), including information gathered and knowledge produced independently, which often-times contradicts the officially sanctioned one. Although globalization may bring about a superficial familiarity with the foreign that is antithetical to credible information and intelligence associated with traditional diplomacy (Rana 2011:75), it has nonetheless multiplied

the sources of information to an enormous extent for the benefit of both traditional and nontraditional diplomatic actors. From this perspective, developments in the international political and information order make it more possible to redeem the "revolutionary humanism" of early Renaissance Europe (Hardt and Negri 2000:70–74). This new common knowledge and the speed with which it can be disseminated certainly have the potential to radically shift diplomatic perspectives, where policymakers may least expect it. The production, utilization, and critique of knowledge employed to support or challenge diplomatic action (of which WikiLeaks is but one example) is on the rise, and the new common knowledge that is made available on a global scale increasingly offers new possibilities for diplomatic engagement but also for revolution.

There is considerable potential, especially with respect to empowering diplomacy from below or from nontraditional centers and networks. This includes increasing concern over human rights and human security issues in this highly monitored, globalized era, where such issues are flagged by state as well as nonstate diplomacy (Siracusa 2010). There are, however, notable dangers, not least of which are the double standards and normative biases of humanitarian interventions and peacebuilding processes, that import and promote into conflict situations particular, Western or liberal, types of institutions, economies, and methods of reconciliation and governance (Richmond 2004). There are in addition dangers with regard to the sensationalization through Internet slack-activism of fashionable human security issues, which may succeed in terms of awareness and advocacy but are very limited on reflexivity and accountability. Humanist or humanitarian or human security discourse bereft of the spirit of humanism outlined above.

Put differently, whereas the humanist promise points to more reflexive possibilities in diplomatic life, there are extensions of sympathy that are used strategically in ways that might betray that promise. Consider the recent Kony2012 media campaign advancing the case for the United States and African Union military action against the Lord's Resistance Army, dealing with the major problem of child soldiers by further militarizing the region, and which inevitably created much controversy.[7] The Web is indeed a tremendous new space for information, advocacy, and diplomatic activity, empowering new actors and civil societies, mobilizing the youth and even the children, yet often reduced to "humanistic" chat-exchange and *shallow reflexivity*. Moreover, statecraft is fighting back, and there is an attempt to coopt these new innovations, currently pioneered by the US State Department (other states following closely), by appointing cyber-technocrats to high diplomatic posts as well as developing virtual diplomatic programs that mobilize US citizens to promote US foreign policy abroad.[8] The message: one can be a state diplomat in one's spare time, acting on behalf and supporting the goals of one's state.

There are in the end many different ways of practicing diplomacy, as there are many different ways of living together in difference. This article has tried to show that ways of knowing affect ways of doing, and vice versa. To approach diplomacy as a mode of living is to fully appreciate this knowledge-praxis nexus and how it impacts on the practice of diplomacy beyond the venerable profession. It is to open up to how knowledge, goals, and interests concerning Self and Other are contingent, need to be approached incredulously, and should be negotiated—whenever one finds oneself on the side or in the middle—with both sense and sensibility.

[7]http://www.kony2012.com. See also Karlin and Matthew (2012).

[8]See http://www.state.gov/m/irm/ediplomacy/

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