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Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy Analysis in the 21st Century: Navigating Uncertainty through Digital Power and Influence

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**Public Diplomacy and Foreign Policy Analysis in the 21st Century: Navigating
Uncertainty through Digital Power and Influence**

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Abstract

In an era defined by digital networks and geopolitical risk, public diplomacy is gaining traction for global leaders to address uncertainty. This paper investigates the use of decentralized politics in public discourse and its implications for leadership. Individual global actors have increased public diplomatic efforts as a focus due to political uncertainty, particularly since 2016. The case of Ukraine and its President Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's use of digital and public diplomacy in the conflict with Russia emphasizes the importance of looking at individual actor impacts in international relations rather than just states. The study should concentrate on how digital tools, such as social media, shape public opinion and influence global events. Digital media is regarded as a potent conduit for political power and influence. The purpose of this essay is to encourage further investigation into this rapidly evolving field.

Keywords: diplomacy, foreign policy, digital, decentralized, Ukraine

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Introduction

Rising uncertainty in global politics and frameworks of political leadership communication in the digital age are complementary topics. The need for effective public diplomacy among political leaders has grown because of the rising unpredictability of political outcomes. In recent years, digital and decentralized communication has rapidly transformed the landscape of presidential public diplomacy and foreign policy (Scacco et al., 2018). With the expansion of Online Social Networks (OSN), politicians generally, and heads of state specifically, have been able to bypass traditional media channels and reach audiences directly. Thus, they transform the way they engage in public diplomacy and execute their foreign policy agendas. The opportunities for decentralized communication and digital diplomacy for political leaders have also posed new problems for effectively conveying their messages to the public. The classic signal-versus-noise debate persists when researchers investigate political discourse online. The challenges of the Donald Trump era, with its saturated presence on Twitter, were matched by the mirrored opposition of legacy media companies.

This creates a competitive, fraught, opaque diplomatic environment. Political leaders are one of the many beneficiaries of decentralized communication playrooms that circumvent traditional media gatekeeping, thereby revealing opportunities for international relations scholars to examine wholesale the staid view of state and systems thinking. Through the examination of individual agent-actors in global leadership, a contextualized understanding of political decision-making emerges through insights into traits, political acumen, and public diplomacy. Politically savvy global leaders in the 21st century exert influence and power through digital discourse, thereby exhibiting this effort through OSNs (Scacco & Coe, 2016). The digital world should be

considered a key modulator of discourse in global leadership, as its usage can be a potent mediator of political power and influence. Scholars have called for examining individual impacts and leadership communication to further understand global leadership (Mendenhall et al., 2019). In an age of rising uncertainty in global politics, defining what constitutes a global leader still requires a uniformly agreed-upon language. In existing research, the paucity of terminology around "global leadership" confuses international and domestic leaders. Also, ambiguous definitions, conceptualizations, and operationalizations made it "hard to articulate the underlying construct" (Mendenhall et al., 2019, p. 553). This research references 'global leadership', which is a role played by the heads-of-state, the key diplomat in a majority of state governments.

Therefore, this investigation seeks to elevate the gaps in public diplomacy research concerning global leadership and its attendant dimensions of responsibility. The study of international relations (IR) has long been conducted under the assumption that leadership decisions are made in a vacuum, disregarding the influence of communication and messaging. However, this oversimplification failed to capture the dynamic and multifaceted nature of political leadership in international affairs. To provide a more comprehensive view of leadership challenges within atmospheric uncertainty and political challenges, theories should include an analysis of the intersection of public diplomacy and digital communication. There is a benefit in the research analysis available, but it requires rethinking traditional IR norms and integrating the individual level of analysis for agent actors and communication into theories.

Significance of the topic

The study of presidential public diplomacy and foreign policy has traditionally been dominated by top-down models that focus on the roles of central institutions and formal

communication channels. However, the rise of digital and decentralized communication has necessitated the development of new frameworks that consider the president's role as a digital actor, and the impact of this new communication landscape on the execution of foreign policy. A more robust evaluation tool for agent-actor understanding can be created through the revision of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) tenants.

Overview of the Study

This essay proposes a revision to the framework for analyzing presidential public diplomacy, digital and decentralized communication, and foreign policy under the auspices of FPA. First, it provides an overview of the critical categories of leadership communication, and specifically, the challenges of messaging within global uncertainty. It will explore the more traditional framing of presidential diplomacy and agenda-setting. This study provides an overview of the relationship between decentralized communication, presidential public diplomacy, and foreign policy analysis. Finally, it will discuss the implications of this framework for future research.

Problem Statement

The current international relations (IR) method needs to acknowledge the role of individual actors in global leadership. Leadership decision-making and communication are often viewed as byproducts of state behavior or systemic alliances. Rising global uncertainty should direct researchers' attention to the function of individual leadership and the agency of players, such as presidents, prime ministers, and legislative leaders. Most IR theories treat the state as a black box, making it self-contained with metaphysical decision-making properties. This focus on decision-making at the state and system levels results in a deterministic viewpoint. This view

disregards the significant role of communication and messaging in determining leaders' decisions and actions. In the current IR framework, a hole must be filled to understand the role of leadership in global politics. A more robust and agile framework for IR would consider the impact of individual actor leadership and their ability to agenda-set through public diplomacy and digital communication.

Purpose Statement

This essay's objective is to provide a brief overview of an enhanced framework for analyzing international relations by focusing on the part that individual leadership plays in the process and, more specifically, the role that public diplomacy and messaging have in global politics. A paradigm that accounts for the specifics of digital communication and the fluidity of global politics is required in an age of increasing uncertainty. Effectiveness, consistency, transparency, and the utilization of digital media technologies are all crucial and should be emphasized within this framework. Leaders can better manage the digital era's complicated and constantly changing political landscape by focusing on increased uncertainty in global politics and investigating effective political leadership communication frameworks. Geopolitics can be better understood through a more in-depth understanding of leadership behavior to incorporate the influence of communication and messaging in the process of agenda-setting by leaders. Providing a more nuanced understanding of leadership behavior in the international arena will require rethinking traditional norms of international relations and incorporating leadership agency and communication into previously established IR theories.

The linkages between political leadership and communication-related to global leadership per the aperture of rising uncertainty are clear. Exploring this connection through the lens of IR

theory and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) needs to be more utilized. This overview includes theoretical frameworks, contemporary practices, and examples.

This essay also seeks to elevate an understanding of digital diplomacy, global political leadership, and agent-actor impacts, all mediated by social media and electronic platforms. Theories of IR are a mix of ideas about power struggles and balancing actions at the state level (Waltz, 1959; Weber, 2001). IR's dominant paradigm focuses on structure and systems. This way of judging how a state action has been called the "problematique" (Hudson & Day, 2019) needs to be fixed by putting humans at the center of foreign policy decisions. When looking at the leadership psychology of global leaders and politicians' actions, how they can be influenced and how power and policy are communicated is even less explored.

Research Questions to Consider

The rapid rise of digital power and influence has disrupted traditional statecraft and public diplomacy models. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected through digital networks, how countries communicate with one another and engage with foreign publics has changed dramatically. This shift has profoundly impacted the evolution of public diplomacy frameworks and how they are practiced, and include limitations and challenges of incorporating these changes into existing frameworks. Moreover, navigating uncertainty through public diplomacy, digital power, and influence requires effective strategies in a rapidly changing world. As digital technologies and networks continue to reshape international relations, it is crucial to understand how public diplomacy can effectively manage uncertainty and promote stability.

Finally, the recent transformations modeled by Ukraine and its President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in public diplomacy offer valuable lessons for the international community. Through

innovative approaches to geopolitics, strategic messaging, and decentralized communication, Ukraine and its leader have demonstrated the power of public diplomacy in shaping global events and influencing international relations. Further research is needed to understand these transformations and the role of public diplomacy in shaping the future of geopolitical power and influence.

RQ1: How has digital power and influence impacted the evolution of public diplomacy frameworks, and what are the limitations and challenges of incorporating this impact into existing frameworks?

RQ2: What are the most effective strategies for navigating uncertainty through public diplomacy and digital power and influence?

RQ3: What transformations have Ukraine and Volodymyr Zelenskyy modeled through public diplomacy on geopolitics, strategic messaging, and decentralized communication?

Retool Foreign Policy Analysis

Theories of IR are a mix of ideas about power struggles and balancing actions at the state level (Waltz, 1959; Weber, 2001). IR's dominant paradigm focuses on structure and systems. This way of judging how a state action has been called the "problematique" (Hudson & Day, 2019) needs to be fixed by putting humans at the center of foreign policy decisions. When looking at the leadership psychology of global leaders and politicians' actions, how they can be influenced and how power and policy are communicated is even less explored. The linkages between political and communication-related leadership per aperture of rising uncertainty are clear.

Exploring this connection through the lens of IR theory and Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) needs to be more utilized. Therefore, owing to the paucity of focus on individual agencies, examining global leadership requires a multidisciplinary, whole-of-leadership approach (Hudson & Day, 2019; Osland, 2019). Drawing on frameworks from IR, including FPA, gives scholarship an opportunity for a more comprehensive view of leadership behavior, as demonstrated through communication models. Turning the lens to global leadership, whether in the explanatory power of current leadership studies, presupposes leadership qualities and traits in the political and industrial spheres. Leaders viewed as the best candidates have vision, courage, compassion, effectiveness, and civility.

Foreign policy analysis (FPA) is a useful tool for investigating the relationship between individual global leaders and the impact of communication and messaging on their decision-making. FPA investigates the interaction of actors, events, and ideas in the foreign policy-making process in depth. FPA can shed light on how communication and messaging shape the decision-making of these leaders by analyzing the various actors involved, including presidents, prime ministers, and legislative leaders, as well as the goals, strategies, and outcomes of their actions. FPA also considers the role of non-state actors in shaping foreign policy, such as the media, civil society organizations, and other influencers. These actors have become even more influential in the political landscape in the digital era, and it is critical to understand their impact on global leadership and decision-making.

Researchers can use FPA to investigate the historical context and domestic political influences that shape foreign policy. This can aid in the identification of patterns and trends in leadership behavior, as well as provide a more nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics of global leadership. The current framework for international relations must be modified to fully

recognize the impact of communication and messaging on the decision-making of individual actors in global leadership. Incorporating FPA into this framework can provide a more complete and nuanced understanding of individual actors' roles and communication in the foreign policy-making process. Leaders can better navigate the digital era's complex and ever-changing political landscape and investigate effective political leadership communication frameworks in an era of increased uncertainty with this understanding.

Global Leadership Communication: Digital Networks and Public Diplomacy

Research suggests that communication, particularly presidential rhetoric, has unique power (Kernell, 1986). Leadership communication as a function of global leadership is an important dataset for scholars to gain insights into traits, political skills, and knowledge. Rhetoric has been a crucial aspect of geopolitical power dynamics since Thucydides wrote about the Peloponnesian War (Menaldo, 2013). Leaders use public statements for international diplomacy, information, and mobilization of ideology for moral and psychological superiority (Toye, 2014). Statecraft, the highest level of political skill and knowledge, is required for political leadership (Bellamy, 2019; Burns, 1978; Menaldo, 2013; Syed, 1963). Policymakers must adapt to the changing landscape of international relations and develop strategies that effectively use new forms of diplomacy such as public and digital diplomacy as statecraft evolves in the digital age.

The rise of DePol emphasizes the need for a more comprehensive approach to diplomacy that considers the roles of all levels of government and civil society organizations. Policymakers must invest in education and training programs that equip statecraft practitioners with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively communicate and engage with stakeholders in the host country to fully realize DePol's potential. Mastering the host country's language, understanding local cultures and norms, and utilizing digital tools and technologies for

communication and exchange are required for success in public diplomacy. Policymakers must also develop clear guidelines and protocols for using digital networks and technologies in diplomacy in order to ensure their ethical and responsible use, including measures to prevent the spread of false information and protect individuals' and communities' privacy.

The integration of digital technology into international relations has necessitated a rethinking of traditional statecraft and public diplomacy practices. To remain competitive in the global arena, policymakers must now consider the utilization of digital tools, such as digital diplomacy and decentralized political communication (DePol), to advance their foreign policy objectives and increase their country's international influence. Leadership through communication, including subgenres of public diplomacy (Sobolieva, 2019), digital diplomacy, and infopolitik (de Gouveia & Plumridge, 2005), offers a rich field of data. State leaders are increasingly under pressure in the digital age, and the head diplomat for a nation, whether president or prime minister, will set the communication agenda.

The concept of an infopolitik foreshadowed the more recent concept of decentralized diplomacy (DePol). The use of information as a tool to achieve political goals and objectives is referred to as an infopolitik. By contrast, DePol is concerned with how digital technologies and decentralized networks change the nature of diplomacy and international relations. In the Information Age, both concepts are shaped by the increased availability of information and the speed with which it can be disseminated. Infopolitik encompasses various activities, such as public opinion manipulation and media narrative management. In contrast, DePol emphasizes the role of digital technologies in facilitating direct and decentralized communication between states and non-state actors. The study of infopolitik is vital for understanding the history of the digital

age and how information has been used to influence public opinion and political decision-making.

DePol, on the other hand, is critical for understanding digital technologies' current and future role in shaping global politics and diplomacy. The influence of technology via social media has enabled the formation of networks and the propagation of a nationalist, populist agenda. Social media enables politicians to shape their agenda with direct-to-public information subsidies, which are seen as official news releases.

Using social media for statecraft enhances a person's probability of being influential. Considerations surrounding the effectiveness and reach of modern leadership and reinforcing national identities are critical considerations of modern digital diplomacy. Public sentiments are contextualized in social media. The use of social media, particularly Twitter, as a tool for political communication and foreign policy initiatives has become a highly debated topic in public diplomacy and international relations. Twitter-based diplomacy has bridged the gap in traditional statecraft by providing a platform for the more widespread dissemination of a country's foreign policy. While some traditional politicians view diplomacy as centered on altruism and humanity, modern diplomats embrace social media because of their extensive reach and rapid dissemination of information. This has resulted in OSNs being used for various diplomatic messages, from announcements of inter-state cooperation to diplomatic insults and tense exchanges. The phenomenon of social media diplomacy, particularly Twitter-based diplomacy, highlights the changing nature of power and influence in the digital age, and its potential impact on foreign policy and public diplomacy (Chen et al., 2021).

When leadership is mediated by technology, it is necessary to reconsider the most effective methods for offering inspiration, vision, and purpose (Burns, 1978/2008). Notably, one

must consider the emotionality of followers in high-stakes conflict situations since emotions strengthen the bond between the leader and follower (Avolio et al., 2009). There is little doubt that further development of technologies such as Twitter, Telegram, and Instagram, faster data transmission rates, wireless networks, integrated mobile devices, and automatic translation will substantially impact leadership (Srikanth et al., 2022).

Diplomacy: Decentralized and Digital

Diplomacy is a delicate practice that aims to foster positive relationships between nations without using coercion or instilling animosity. It seeks to advance the interests of a state by taking into account its unique geographical, historical, and economic context while striving for the best possible outcome. Decentralized diplomacy and online social networks have become important tools in promoting diplomatic efforts in the digital age, opening up new channels of communication and collaboration between states.

This researcher contends that it is critical to comprehend the various strategies employed by diplomats in order to achieve their objectives. While secret negotiations and the development of international agreements and laws are traditional methods of diplomacy, advances in technology and digital communication have opened up new avenues for diplomacy, including the impact of decentralized political systems and the role of digital platforms. These developments broaden the scope of diplomacy and present practitioners with new challenges and opportunities.

In the era of DePol and digital advancements, public diplomacy has become an increasingly important aspect of statecraft. Unlike traditional diplomacy, which focuses on the balance of power between countries, public diplomacy concerns the nature of governance within a given country. It involves meaningful exchange and demonstrable expression in policy development and action (Haluga & Kurecic, 2021, p. 102). To be successful in this domain,

modern statesmen must be able to work with all levels of government and civil society groups, requiring continuous, high-quality education and a mastery of the host country's language. The use of modern communication and technology also plays a critical role in public diplomacy, presenting challenges and opportunities for those engaged in this vital work. Diplomacy includes "meaningful exchange" and "demonstrable expression in policy development and action" (Copeland, 2008, p. 102). It is about something other than the balance of power between countries, like traditional diplomacy. Instead, it is about the kind of government each country has. Public diplomacy increases possibilities for the modern statesperson to work with all levels of government and civil society groups. It requires continuous, high-quality education, mastery of the host country's language, and the use of modern ways and tools of communication (Haluga & Kurecic, 2021).

The impact of technology on the public debate has been substantial and yet builds upon the "going-public" approach of leadership espoused by Kernell (1986). Without waiting for the media to relay his story, a diplomat may post updates directly to Instagram, Twitter, or Telegram from any location and under any circumstance. Less disciplined politicians who lack circumspection may abuse the accessibility and reach of social media, as evidenced by President Donald J. Trump of the United States (Parajon et al., 2019a; 2019b). Technological developments, the rising importance of peacekeeping, the professionalization of administration, and the increase of internal specialization all contribute to what Haluga and Kurecic (2021) calls the "modernization of statecraft," or diplomacy. This new approach to diplomacy emphasizes transparency and accountability at every level of government, coverage in both mainstream and alternative media outlets around the world, the widespread dissemination of policy ideas through

digital channels, and the active participation of the general public (Gold, 2020; Haluga & Kurecic, 2021; Kernell, 1986; Scacco & Coe, 2016).

Diplomacy is increasingly carried out via digital networks and social media. Digital diplomacy is the leading form of state-to-state public communique in the 21st century. As noted, there are few theoretical frameworks to access in the IR field to explain the impacts of individual leadership (Hudson & Day, 2019). There is even less theory for the impact of modern leadership communication and, more specifically, digital diplomacy, except surrounding presidential rhetoric (see Kernell (1986) for further reading). Digital diplomacy, and DePol is utilized in bilateral and multilateral affairs for both reactive and proactive purposes, but is an effective way to “brand” a nation. (Aronczyk, 2008). Currently, some hostile actors employ digital diplomacy for the purpose of reputation-washing or to counteract negative global media attention. Digital diplomacy is often utilized to shape public opinion by presenting a favorable image of international actions, such as the decision to provide Ukraine with military support during their ongoing conflict with Russia. Due to the visibility of digital diplomacy, through its representation in mainstream media and the use of visual elements such as logos, slogans, and symbols, it serves a recursive function, convincing domestic elites, stakeholders, and the general public that their government is engaged and empathetic to both domestic and international concerns (Aronczyk, 2008; Scacco et al., 2018).

Balancing Against Uncertainty

The connectedness and reach of nations using social media have undergone a significant transformation. The development, refinement, and widespread adoption of social media have created opportunities for the frequency and reach of political leadership, particularly for

influential individuals who outperform others in space (Hall et al., 2018; Lam et al., 2021). The influence of technology via social media has enabled the formation of networks and propagation of a nationalist, populist agenda. Social media enables politicians to shape the agenda with direct-to-public information subsidies, which are seen as official news releases. Using social media for statecraft enhances a person's probability of being influential. Industry and transnational corporations need a paradigm to understand leadership communication mediated by social media. Although not the focus of this study, the gaps in the existing research are consistent with political leadership gaps. Considerations surrounding the effectiveness and reach of modern leadership and reinforcing national identities are critical considerations of modern digital diplomacy.

Public sentiments are contextualized inside social media. When leadership is mediated by technology, it is necessary to reconsider the most effective methods for offering inspiration, vision, and purpose (Burns, 1978/2008). Notably, one must consider the emotionality of followers in high-stakes conflict situations since emotions strengthen the bond between leader and follower (Avolio et al., 2009). There is little doubt that further development of technologies such as Twitter, Telegram, and Instagram, faster data transmission rates, wireless networks, integrated mobile devices, and automatic translation will substantially impact how leadership is shown (Srikanth et al., 2022). Online Social Networks are vital to crisis communication as bidirectional discourse (Haq et al., 2022). Such attempts can transmit data, propaganda, or misinformation. Research shows that public diplomacy needs a new way of doing things. Diplomats should change how they communicate to fit the new information and communication tools of public diplomacy.

These new ways of doing public diplomacy, called digital diplomacy (DD) or Hashtag Diplomacy, have been made possible by the Internet and social media (BCW Twiplomacy, n.d.). Instead of official authority, statesmen's behavior develops a country's soul, where morality and decency are found (Allen, 1992). The concept of soft power, first introduced by Joseph Nye in 1990, has become increasingly relevant to the current global landscape. Soft power refers to a country's ability to influence others through attraction and persuasion as opposed to coercion or the use of force. In the 21st century, the rise of digital diplomacy has shifted how countries exercise their soft power, with many relying on digital communication and the media to reach a wider audience and convey their messages. Digital diplomacy has had a significant impact on public diplomacy and DePol. DePol refers to the use of digital networks and platforms to engage with the foreign public and promote a country's image, interests, and policies. In this sense, DePol is an extension of traditional public diplomacy, focusing on digital tools and platforms. One advantage of DePol is that it can reach a broader and more diverse audience.

For example, through social media, countries can engage with the public, which may need help to reach through traditional diplomatic channels. Adept public diplomacy can increase a country's soft power, allowing for the dissemination of information and messages on a larger scale. However, it is essential to note that digital diplomacy also presents new challenges and risks. The anonymity and interconnectedness of the digital world can make it difficult to control the spread of information and messages, leading to potential misinformation. Furthermore, the use of digital media for DePol can be subject to manipulation and influence operations, as seen in the recent phenomenon of state-sponsored trolling and disinformation campaigns. Despite these challenges, DePol and digital diplomacy offer new opportunities for countries to exercise their soft power and engage with the foreign public. As the world continues to become

increasingly interconnected and digital, DePol and digital diplomacy will likely play an essential role in shaping global political discourse and influencing the foreign public. Therefore, countries and leaders must understand and effectively utilize digital media to promote their interests and values. The intersection of soft power, digital diplomacy, and DePol highlights the importance of considering new and innovative ways of exercising influence and engaging with foreign publics.

Through digital media and platforms, countries can reach a wider audience and promote their images, interests, and policies on a global scale. However, it is crucial to understand and address the challenges and risks associated with digital diplomacy to utilize these tools to effectively promote soft power. Technology foresight can help foreign policy analysis by providing insights into future technological trends and advancements, which can significantly impact foreign policy. By incorporating technology foresight into foreign policy analyses, policymakers can better understand the potential implications of emerging technologies on international relations, economic interactions, and security issues. Technology foresight can help identify critical areas of opportunity and risk, and inform the development of proactive foreign policy strategies that consider future technological developments. Additionally, technology foresight can assist in understanding the role of non-state actors such as tech companies in shaping international relations and foreign policy.

By anticipating technological trends, foreign policy analysts can develop more informed and forward-looking policies and better prepare for the challenges and opportunities posed by emerging technologies. The intersection of soft power, digital diplomacy, and DePol highlights the importance of considering new and innovative ways of exercising influence and engaging with foreign publics. Through digital media and platforms, countries can reach a wider audience and promote their image, interests, and policies on a global scale. However, it is crucial to

understand and address the challenges and risks associated with digital diplomacy to utilize these tools to promote soft power effectively. Technology foresight can help foreign policy analysis by providing insight into future technological trends and advancements, which can significantly impact foreign policy. By incorporating technology foresight into foreign policy analysis, policymakers can better understand the potential implications of emerging technologies on international relations, economic interactions, and security issues. Integration of technology into international relations has created new challenges and opportunities for diplomacy. Therefore, it is crucial for foreign policymakers to employ technology foresight to identify critical areas of opportunity and risk. This can be achieved by examining future technological developments and considering their potential impacts on international relations. Furthermore, technology foresight is also valuable for understanding the increasing role of non-state actors, such as technology companies, in shaping the global landscape and influencing foreign policy.

By anticipating technological trends and preparing for the challenges and opportunities they pose, foreign policymakers can develop proactive strategies that are better equipped to navigate the rapidly changing dynamics of international relations in the digital age. Additionally, incorporating online social networks (OSN) into technology foresight analysis can provide important insights into the ways in which technological developments affect public opinion and shape global discourse.

Contemporary Case Study: Ukraine Resilience and Eastern Europe's Shared Sentiment

A comprehensive public diplomacy strategy is essential for promoting a country's national interests and improving its international image. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine demonstrated the importance of a well-crafted public diplomacy strategy in advancing

the country's interests. In his address to the European Parliament on February 24, 2022, after Russia invaded Ukraine, President Zelenskyy compelled European policymakers to provide further support. He emphasized Ukraine's role as the gateway to Europe and its commitment to liberal order principles and European values, arguing that these values merit Ukraine's eventual membership in the European Union (Berry, 2022; Jacinto, 2022).

The president's public diplomacy tactics in his address to the European Parliament highlight the importance of clear and compelling messaging in public diplomacy efforts. His approach demonstrates the potential impact of well-crafted public diplomacy strategies in advancing a country's national interests and improving its international image. Media and digital platforms have become critical tools for the execution of public diplomacy. President Zelenskyy has effectively leveraged these platforms to bring attention to the conflict in Ukraine and call for aid and support.

President Zelenskyy has also utilized public diplomacy to request that NATO establish a no-fly zone above Ukraine and impose sanctions on Russia, including trade prohibitions. He also called on European nations and companies to cease doing business with Russia and to provide aid for rebuilding efforts in Ukraine. Through his efforts, President Zelenskyy helped build a coalition focused on Russian aggression, thereby transforming the global response to the conflict in Ukraine, and the sustained use of public diplomacy and digital platforms by Ukraine and its President has proven effective in bringing attention to the conflict and calling for aid and support. The campaign's success in bringing Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine (#freetheleopards and #theleopardsarefree) highlights the power of leader-directed communications in global politics and the potential of public diplomacy as a tool to promote a country's interests on a global stage (Dahl & Shapiro, 2020; Hall, 2021, January 21).

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's approach to public diplomacy highlights the importance of a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy to promote a country's national interests and improve its international image. His use of clear and compelling messaging, effective utilization of media and digital platforms, and collaboration between the government, scientific and cultural sectors, and ordinary individuals demonstrate the potential impact of well-crafted public diplomacy strategies in advancing a country's interests; Ukraine has understood that to do the essential job of bringing transparency to the Russian invasion worldwide, it must remain fiercely independent of political pressures (Kearney, 1994; Perlberg, 2017, March 19). Political and humanitarian issues in Ukraine have historically been subject to media and political bias, gaps in responsible data use, peace and resilience, and journalistic repression (Dugyala, 2020, June 7; Easley & Giuliani, 2020; McGill University, n.d.; Repucci & Slipowitz, 2020; Sulzberger, 2019). Since taking office, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has evolved his public diplomacy and risk communication. In his first 90 days in office, he had four tweets in English (Zelenskyy, 2023). This evidence reinforces the theory that public diplomacy is not only principally aimed at domestic audiences but also the corpus of global citizens and policymakers in the West.

On February 24, 2022, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy made a significant address to the European Parliament in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. At this address, President Zelenskyy strongly called on European policymakers to take action and provide further support for Ukraine (Berry, 2022; Jacinto, 2022). In his statements, President Zelenskyy emphasized Ukraine's role as a gateway to Europe and as the defender of liberal order principles and predominantly European values. He repeatedly made this argument in front of the

EU and national parliaments, asserting that Ukraine's commitment to these values merits its eventual membership in the European Union (Berry, 2022).

Digital Revolutions

The states of Estonia, Lithuania, and Ukraine have undergone significant digital transformations in recent years, incorporating digital technologies and strategies into various aspects of their economies and societies. This transformation has been driven by the need to improve efficiency, competitiveness, and quality of life for their citizens. A key component of their digital transformation has been the implementation of DePol, or digital diplomacy, which has been instrumental in enhancing their diplomatic efforts and relationships with other countries. By leveraging digital technologies, these countries have been able to increase their reach and impact in international diplomacy, strengthening political ties and promoting democratic values and issues on a global scale. The connectedness and reach of nations using social media have undergone significant transformations. The development, refinement, and widespread adoption of social media have created opportunities for the frequency and reach of political leadership, particularly for influential individuals who outperform others in the space (Hall et al., 2018; Lam et al., 2021).

Digital Transformation and DePol

Estonia has been a leader in digital transformation and has been recognized as a digital society with a highly developed e-government system that includes e-services, e-identification, and e-voting. Through DePol, the country was able to effectively communicate its political messages and priorities to the international community and engage in virtual diplomatic negotiations and meetings. It has also undergone significant digital transformation with a focus

on developing its digital infrastructure, encouraging the adoption of digital technologies by businesses and citizens, and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship.

Through DePol, Lithuania has been able to enhance its diplomatic engagement and strengthen its political ties with other countries, promoting its democratic values and interests in the international arena, and has been undergoing digital transformation, with a focus on improving its digital infrastructure, promoting the use of digital technologies in various industries, and supporting innovation and entrepreneurship. Through DePol, Ukraine was able to increase its diplomatic reach and impact, promoting its democratic values and interests in international diplomacy. The digital transformation of Estonia, Lithuania, and Ukraine has been characterized by the integration of DePol as a critical component, providing these countries with the tools and platforms necessary to effectively engage in international diplomacy and promote their democratic values and interests on a global scale.

DePol to Challenge Russian Aggression

In recent years, there has been growing concern among many in Eastern Europe over the Russian Federation's perceived attempts at colonial expansion and interference with their internal affairs. This phenomenon has led to a resurgence of anti-Russian sentiment and calls for stronger diplomatic measures to counter Russia's influence in the region. The term "Russian colonialism" has been employed to describe the Russian government's attempts to assert its control over neighboring countries and maintain its sphere of influence.

The reasons behind Eastern Europe's sentiment towards Russian colonialism and proposed policy prescriptions for diplomacy aimed at addressing this issue. The legacy of Soviet domination in Eastern Europe continues to shape the region's relationship with Russia. Many Eastern Europeans view Russia's actions as a threat to their national sovereignty and

independence, and there are concerns about Russia's attempts to reestablish its sphere of influence in the region. This sentiment is further exacerbated by the numerous human rights violations that have resulted from Russian colonial policies, such as the annexation of Crimea and the conflict in eastern Ukraine (Götz, 2015; Götz, 2016a; Götz, 2016b); Eastern European nations have focused on the issue of Russian colonialism in the region through a comprehensive diplomatic approach.

Both bilateral and multilateral cooperative efforts as well as unilateral digital campaigns have produced global awareness. These approaches have brought about multilateral cooperation, which involved heightened engagement, strengthened support for the European Union and NATO, reinforced support for human rights and civil society organizations, and an emphasis on transparency and accountability. We also recognize the crucial role Ukraine must play in this endeavor, as it has experienced significant impacts from Russian colonial policies. Thus, we call for a collaborative effort among the international community, including Ukraine, to effectively address and mitigate the effects of Russian colonialism in Eastern Europe. In conclusion, acknowledging the historical context of Eastern Europe's relationship with Russia and adopting a comprehensive diplomatic strategy is crucial in addressing the issue of Russian colonialism and promoting stability and security in the region. The international community should prioritize supporting Eastern Europe in its efforts to counter Russian aggression and ensure that the human rights of the region's citizens are respected.

The President of Finland, Sanna Marin, effectively communicated her nation's geopolitical stance by speaking out against Russian aggression through various public platforms, such as speeches, interviews, and social media. Under her leadership, Finland took a significant step towards joining NATO after 80 years of resistance. Marin's diplomatic prowess is

demonstrated through her control of the nation's messaging in response to Russia's hostile actions. In a recent address to the European Parliament, Marin reflected on the past and admitted to Finland's previous naivete regarding Russia. She acknowledged that her country should have heeded the warnings of their Baltic and Polish neighbors who had lived under Soviet domination. Her candid comment highlights a multifaceted understanding of the situation in Europe and serves as a powerful campaigning public announcement. This statement reflects Marin's insightful leadership, strong communication abilities, and diplomatic skills in navigating complex geopolitical matters (Drachenberg 2022).

Conclusion

In a complex political landscape, clear and engaging communication is imperative for political leaders. The relationship between political leadership, communication, and global leadership is the focus of this article. In a world of increasing global uncertainty, clear communication and intentionality are essential. Theories of international relations and foreign policy were utilized in this research to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject. The ability of leaders to communicate effectively with the public is critical to their political influence on a global scale. The growth and widespread adoption of social media have transformed the interconnectedness and reach of nations, leading to an increase in political leadership, especially among influential individuals. Digital diplomacy, through its direct delivery of information to the public, allows politicians to set the agenda and reduce uncertainty.

Digital diplomacy (DePol) and digital technologies can greatly enhance multilateral diplomatic efforts in supporting democracies and mitigating global uncertainty. DePol offers a platform for increased communication and collaboration between nations, strengthening political ties and raising the visibility of democratic issues on the international stage. It also enables

virtual meetings and negotiations, reducing the need for in-person interactions and improving decision-making efficiency.

DePol can improve the reach and impact of multilateral diplomacy in supporting democracies, allowing organizations to share information and coordinate their efforts more effectively and efficiently. Additionally, DePol can support human rights and civil society organizations in democracies by providing a platform to share information, coordinate efforts, and amplify their voices. This can also aid in promoting transparency and accountability by facilitating the sharing of information and evidence that can be used to hold relevant parties accountable for their actions.

In conclusion, the integration of DePol and digital technologies into NATO, EU, and multilateral diplomatic efforts can provide significant benefits in supporting democracies, promoting stability and security in the region, and mitigating the effects of global uncertainty.

Summary of Key Findings

Diplomatic engagement plays a critical role in supporting democracies and mitigating the impacts of global uncertainty. By utilizing digital diplomacy, also known as DePol, the international community can increase its engagement with democracies, offering them diplomatic and economic assistance, strengthening political ties, and increasing the visibility of their issues in the international arena. The European Union and NATO also play a significant role in supporting democracies and maintaining stability in the region. DePol can be utilized to facilitate collaboration and communication between these organizations, allowing them to more effectively offer political and economic assistance and counteract the negative impacts of global uncertainty.

Human rights and civil society organizations are critical to promoting democratic values and combating global uncertainty in democracies. DePol can provide funding and technical assistance to these organizations, as well as facilitate communication and collaboration between them, promoting the protection of human rights in the region. In terms of promoting transparency and accountability, DePol can play a significant role in holding relevant parties responsible for their actions in response to global uncertainty. This can include utilizing digital measures such as sanctions, which can be more easily implemented and monitored through DePol.

DePol and digital diplomacy can serve as effective tools in accomplishing the policy prescriptions of enhanced diplomatic engagement, reinforcing the EU and NATO, supporting human rights and civil society, and promoting transparency and accountability. These tools can facilitate communication and collaboration, allowing the international community to more effectively support democracies and mitigate the impacts of global uncertainty.

Implications For Future Research

The advancement of digital technology has dramatically altered the landscape of international relations and public diplomacy. Despite the significant impact of digital power and its influence on the evolution of public diplomacy frameworks, further research is required to fully understand the limitations and challenges of incorporating these changes into existing models. Furthermore, there is growing interest in exploring the most effective strategies for leveraging digital power and influencing uncertainty in public diplomacy. The rapidly changing political landscape and rise of digital communication have led to an increased focus on the importance of effective public diplomacy among political leaders.

Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) has traditionally operated under the assumption that leadership decisions are made in isolation, ignoring the impact of communication and messaging.

However, this oversimplification needs to capture the complex reality of leadership in international affairs. To address this, FPA theories need to include an analysis of the intersection of public diplomacy and digital communication at the individual level for agent actors. A new framework is necessary to analyze the president's role as a digital actor and the impact of decentralized communication on foreign policy. This framework should recognize the role of individual actors in leadership and the influence of public diplomacy and messages in global politics. In today's decentralized digital landscape, there needs to be more than the traditional top-down approach of presidential public diplomacy and foreign policy, which focuses on formal communication channels.

Modern diplomacy is one that emphasizes the importance of effective communication, consistency, transparency, and the use of digital media technologies in a constantly evolving political environment. By integrating leadership agency and communication into existing FPA theories, a more nuanced understanding of leadership behavior in international relations can be achieved. Finally, the recent transformations in Ukraine and the leadership of Volodymyr Zelenskyy have provided a unique opportunity to study the impact of public diplomacy on geopolitics, strategic messaging, and decentralized communication. Further research is required to deepen our understanding of these developments and inform best practices in the field of public diplomacy.

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