

Faizullaev, Alisher. 2022. Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone (Hardcover). Leiden: Brill. 306pp. 151,58 €

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Since the early 21st century, the study of diplomacy has extended in terms of processes and dynamics through diverse geographical areas. In the current application of diplomacy, it is recognized that it is under pressure to involve a social dimension in the decision-making process on foreign policies and global agendas.

Not long ago, scholars and practitioners considered the societal dimension irrelevant to discussing diplomacy's function. However, as seen in the flourishing extension of the academic literature, diplomacy is progressing as an attractive field of research moving beyond the discipline of International Relations and Diplomatic Studies.

The study of the relationship between diplomacy and society beyond structural and elitist perspectives is a relatively new area of diplomatic studies, and the book *Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone* is more useful than ever. Discussing the social dimension of diplomacy, Professor Alisher Faizullaev invites us to think of diplomacy as a collaborative space beyond the orthodox perspective of diplomacy as a select sphere for states and their international institutions.

The book *Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone* argues “that both traditional and new sociopolitical actors, including states, organizations, companies, groups, and individuals, can use diplomacy to manage existing relationships, resolve problems, and protect interests.” (p. 2) From an interdisciplinary dialogue between Diplomatic Studies, Psychology (Chapter 8), and Sociology especially using the Symbolic Interactionism and Game Theory approaches of Ervin Goffman (Chapter 9), the discussion offered in this book expands a theoretical approach

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to diplomacy, moving from a traditional understanding of diplomacy to trans-professional and everyday diplomacy. (Chapter 9)

With these perspectives in mind, the book fosters a more complex understanding of diplomacy. *Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone* argues that “genuine diplomacy represents a positive and constructive idea and practice, and dialogical instruments of mutual influence serve a dignified and commonly acceptable coexistence of entities such as states, organizations, and individuals.” (p. 4)

To develop his arguments, the author organized the book into nine chapters. Through these chapters, Professor Faizullaev exposes a coherent logic to demonstrate emerging Social Diplomacy. While reading this book, we can observe diplomatic action and diplomatic actors regarding “selfhood, distinctiveness, dispositions, and attitudes within the Self-Other paradigm or in the context of the actors’ engagements with other entities.” (p. 4)

From the Self-Other paradigm and the interactional perspective, the author discusses different approaches to understanding the practice and thinking of diplomacy; following these theoretical frameworks instead of ‘approaches’ professor Faizullaev studies the emergence and patterns of “unconventional ambassadors” (Chapter 4) and calls instead of ‘invites’ to rethink the diplomatic functions through their missions, objectives, methods, and skills from a dialogical approach. The book also offers theoretical arguments to think of diplomacy as a social practice (Chapter 7) and develop the notion of Social Diplomacy (Chapter 8). At a micro-level, with an approach of Game Theory, using the perspectives of Schelling (social psychology) and Goffman (symbolic interactionism), the author develops an analysis of micro-interactions (greetings) as a critical element of social engagement in the practice of everyday Social Diplomacy.

The challenges associated with multidimensional global inequalities make it necessary to consider how ordinary citizens participate in increasingly complex and interdependent societies. To reinforce this idea, it is necessary to recognize that states are not well-equipped to face the challenges of global dynamics. The book *Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone* offers a critical message: club and elitist diplomacy models are inadequate to address current global challenges and societal pressures. So, it is essential to recognize that the involvement of ordinary citizens in diplomacy is an innovative contribution to contemporary diplomacy. Still, it is not easy to organize their inclusion and participation.

This book’s perspective on diplomacy and societies proves the necessity to recognize how diplomatic infrastructures have been transformed from closed circuits into open spaces. So, the arguments offered by Professor Faizullaev call on us to reconsider diplomacy related to the social function of diplomacy and the importance of thinking of it as a co-working space where collaborative thinking is fostered. These arguments are pertinent if we distinguish that global order requires an effective inclusion of ordinary citizens to address the everyday globalization dynamics that affect people’s daily lives worldwide.

Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone demands instead of ‘invites’ us to consider

the emergence of social diplomacy. This book discusses the construction of social diplomacy between multilateral organizations, governments, civil society actors, and individuals, promoting cooperative dynamics by fostering thinking beyond interest and hierarchies. In this sense, with a collaborative approach, Social Diplomacy results from interactions between actors, individuals, and institutions. Thus, in this book, we observe the development of trans-professional diplomacy with a permanent promotion of inclusive diplomacy worldwide.

Recognizing that the subject of Public Diplomacy, as the author does in this book, is too vast for any single theory and has many variables, geographies, models, and instruments in its practices, the book *Diplomacy for Professionals and Everyone*, through Social Diplomacy, invites us to revisit the understanding of processes applied by Public Diplomacy, beyond disciplinary and structural approaches, by which diplomatic actors advance their ends abroad through the engagement of the public.

This book is a valuable seminal step in promoting interdisciplinary and trans-professional dialogue between Sociology, Psychology, and Diplomatic Studies. Based on the advances developed by Professor Faizullaev, it will be necessary that in future studies on these interdisciplinary dialogues, particularly with the sociological perspectives, they have to be treated with greater precision and rigor by contemporary sociological theories. Better consistency in the use of sociological theory will help to avoid inaccuracies and repetitions, as happened in some parts of this book, and the sociological theories will be presented clearly and more precisely according to their complexity in the face of the study of the application and thinking of diplomacy.

As an incipient sociopolitical process, Social Diplomacy is an evolving incomplete and shows a new set of inclusive conditions that make the traditional understanding of diplomacy pretty obsolete and many orthodox diplomats uncomfortable. However, the challenges of inclusion mentioned above should be visible in the everyday practices of diplomats and require the addition of new functional qualities to their diplomatic performance, including strengthened skills for interacting with ordinary citizens and involving non-state actors in the decision-making process.

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