

Critical Review

Noya, Javier (2007) – *Diplomacia Pública para el siglo XXI. La gestión de la imagen exterior y la opinión pública internacional*. Madrid: Ariel, 469 págs.

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The author of the book *Diplomacia Pública para el siglo XXI*, Javier Noya, is a researcher at the Real Instituto Elcano in the fields of external image and public opinion, in addition to being a Sociology Professor at Universidad Complutense and of Public Diplomacy at Escola Diplomática (School of Diplomacy). The study undertaken by Javier Noya is of major importance to all those who are analysing or following up the changes that have been taken place in the international area, more precisely in the area of diplomacy and of international relations. It must be pointed out that the issue of public diplomacy had its origins back in 1965, thanks to diplomat Edmund Gullion, dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University, and to Edward Murrow, a CBS journalist and head of the United States Information Agency during the Kennedy administration.

Whereas, in the past public, diplomacy was a mere propaganda tool, currently it aims to promote national interest, by understanding, inform about and influencing external matters. In this sense, public diplomacy sums up all activities of external communication targeted not only at the elites or opinion-leaders, but also at public opinion at large, and which, in the long-term, aim to influence positively the image and perception of a country. It must be stressed that the main goal of public diplomacy is to indirectly influence the behaviour of an external government, exerting influence on the attitudes of citizens through information, education, and culture.

Javier Noya chose to divide his book into six parts. The first refers to external image and its management, interlinking the external image actions with the country brand as an integral strategy that encompasses the economic, commercial, and tourist dimensions, besides political aspects, and as if dealing with a product to be sold as a reaction to the globalisation process.

In the second half, the author enters the theoretical and conceptual field of public diplomacy, associating it with the soft power theory proposed by Joseph Nye. The latter envisages two forms of public diplomacy; direct, and indirect. With regard to direct public diplomacy, it adopts a three-dimensional approach, as it covers daily



communication, strategic communication, and the development of relations in terms of their durability. Concerning the indirect form, it must be understood as meaning the role of live television, the positioning of the corporate fabric in the market, and everything encompassing culture, ranging from the British Council and the Camões, Cervantes, and Confúcio Institutes, to cinema, theatre, and literature.

In the third part of his book, titled "Estados Unidos, de la Guerra Fría a la Guerra de Irak", Javier Noya focuses his attention on the image portrayed by the United States regarding Europe and the Arabic world, in particular the impact of the Bush administration on the diplomatic front. In this part, the author studies the role of public diplomacy in the fight against international terrorism after September 11, such as the STARS strategy, which corresponds to the following:

- S: stimulate the awareness of relevant players in the USA about the anti-Americanism issue and corresponding consequences;
- T: transform north-American attitudes that may be aggravating the problem;
- A: accentuate the positive qualities of the United States and its contribution to the international community;
- R: recruit corporate leaders in world strategic markets so that they can establish bridges based on mutual respect;
- S: stand as a link between the private sector and the North-American government's public diplomacy.

With regard to part four, Javier Noya examines European power, specifically the examples of the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. In what concerns the United Kingdom, the author analyses not only the impact of 9/11, but also focuses his attention on the image of the country after the intervention in Iraq, presenting examples of campaigns that act as stabilising instruments in image recovery among the population. Besides, public diplomacy should serve the eight strategic objectives of the Foreign Office, such as: (1) a world free of global terrorism and mass destruction weapons; (2) protect the United Kingdom from illegal immigration, drugs trafficking, and international crime; (3) promote an international system based on respect for the rule of law; (4) build a safe and effective European Union; (5) foster economic interests in an open and global economy; (6) encourage sustainable development anchored on democracy; (7) guarantee security and energy supply; (8) secure the safety and good government of British territories overseas.

As for France, the author stresses the elitist image as a synonym of luxury and "liberating power" under the motto "liberty equality, fraternity". According to the Legros report, France should undertake the following path: (1) strengthen the knowledge of foreign languages and cultures; (2) undertake an active policy in the exchange of students and scientists; (3) change the attitudes of political and economic elites in order to change the negative image. In the neighbouring country Germany, the public diplomacy strategy consists, above all, in defending the following: (1) act as a booster of the European Union; (2) compromise, at a global level, in finding solutions for political, economic, and ecological crises; (3) open up to the world in the fight against racism and xenophobia; (5) affirm itself as a land of ideas and research; (6) promote history in terms of music and popular art, and foster sports and fashion: (7) stand out as a land where life can be enjoyed.



The fifth part focuses on European Union cases and on the soft power carried out by transnational players, such as international organisations and Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOs). It must be pointed out that the European Union does not have a public diplomacy and that, according to specialists, its increased presence in the international arena is necessary to improve its image. However, despite not having a specific public diplomacy, it ends up exercising a series of public diplomacy activities, such as having delegations in EU countries, the external actions carried out by the Directorates-General for Education and Culture, the Euro-Mediterranean Conference, and the intercultural dialogue programmes of the directorate-general for education and culture. In the face of this, it is equally believed that the European Union unequivocally needs a public diplomacy and a positioning strategy as a humanitarian power, since it funds around 70% of all humanitarian aid, which, by analogy, should sell itself as a "global alliance of democracies", and take advantage of its capacity for regional integration through the promotion of "region-building" and acceptance of its cultural diversity, ranging from culture to politics. With regard to the soft power exercised by transnational players, the role of the United Nations stands out, as it is viewed both as a universal organisation, particularly with regard to its General Assembly, and as an individual association, as illustrated by its Security Council. Besides the United Nations, Javier Noya touches on the issue of the legitimacy of NATO and of its role, given that it has a public diplomacy department set up in 1999 on the occasion of the Kosovo crisis. This department includes: (1) an academic affairs unit; (2) television and radio studios; (3) a network of officers in member countries; (4) information offices in Kiev and Moscow; (5) an integrated data service; (6) programmes such as the Committee for Modern Society Challenges; (7) publication of the *NATO Review*. In the specific case of NGOs, their humanitarian stance through promotion and defence of universal values among the public stands out.

Finally, the sixth and final part deals with the image of Spain abroad, in which the author describes, for almost one hundred pages, the inclusion of Spain in Europe and in the world, from Franco to current times. At the end, he delineates a public diplomacy strategy for the country as part of the global objectives of defence of the Brand Spain, with ten measures to implement such aspiration: (1) strengthen coordination among inter-agencies; (2) set up information and strategic services within each agency with analysis departments; (3) increase the culture of image mediation; (4) carry out market segmentation and, in addition, identification of countries; (5) reset objectives; (6) carry out training sessions in marketing and communication; (7) develop digital marketing, such as the Internet and television; (8) conduct cultural actions externally; (9) organise internal audience awareness raising sessions on public diplomacy; (10) reinforce coordination among central administration sectors.

In effect, public diplomacy must be understood as follows: (1) short-term (hours or days), when the management of news is done as a reaction to events, and in a way that reaffirms strategic objectives. Events are not brought forward, rather, answers to hypothetical scenarios are prepared in advance; (2) medium-term (weeks or months), whose strategic communication intends to actively influence the information agenda, by making things happen or by organising strategic activities to increase visibility and improve the valorisation of a country. This has to do with the strengthening of messages that affect perceptions; (3) long-term (years), in the context of building links to create and nurture social and cultural relations between countries and among



countries, and which are interesting from a strategic viewpoint and where our own values are acknowledged. Precisely, the management of news requires government communication professionals able to react, agile in their relations with the media, in the face of smears campaigns. Strategic communication requires medium-term planning with imaginative capacity to conceive and develop activities that can compete for public opinion from the exterior. It resorts to a network of intermediaries who collaborate without identifying themselves as participants. Relation building is built on by an entity or institution that is far from the political sphere in order to increase the trust it may generate. It requires the involvement of professionals with experience of the civil society, corporate marketing, NGOs, political parties, and trade unions.

With effect, this is a book whose reading is strongly recommend, for its scientific and academic quality, and for being a guide for implementing public diplomacy, as the latter is presented as an instrument with an international dimension. One of the aspects that perhaps Javier Noya failed to analyse is the growing role of public diplomacy combined with the smart power exercised by the Popular Republic of China in a multilateral perspective, particularly after September 11.

It must equally be noted that, in the case of Portugal, despite the fact it was not analysed in this book, public diplomacy is still at an embryonic stage. This despite the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to implement it in the context of external policy and corporate strategy abroad, in an attempt to identify niche markets with the support, among others, of the Camões Institute and the *Agência para o Investimento e Comércio Externo de Portugal* – AICEP (Portugal's Agency for Investment and External Trade). In fact, public diplomacy is a vital strategic resource for states as actors in international relations, and where public opinion relies on when it comes to influencing or improving the image of a country, both internally and externally.

Finally, Javier Noya underlines the importance for Spain to develop a European public diplomacy, and to carry out initiatives to brand the country in the context of a global and competitive world such as the one we have today.

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