
Book Review

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City Diplomacy: Current Trends and Future Prospects
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Nowadays, we cannot deny the importance of cities. Indeed, more and more people live, work and move about in cities, which encourage the development, wellbeing, safety and security of citizens. Public diplomacy is the source of city network and all the interactions between residents and international governments. The goal of the book is to improve understanding public diplomacy thinking and practices. City diplomacy can be defined as the local governments' actions intended to increase the cities global profile and interests.

The book provides four sections, including three conceptual section and analysis section. The first section approaches Global governance through city networks, by identifying key actors and technics to advance local policy interests, representation structure and power dynamics. The second section of the book focuses on "*local strategies for global engagement and Communication*". The purpose is to study and demonstrate how local entities such as regions, municipalities or cities are now becoming main actors on the international scene.

The first section analyses the utility of city networks, how this technique works and its background. The authors emphasise its positive impact, especially in some areas such as climate change or public health. Furthermore, in these chapters they arise some questions to the readers like how can City Networks be an advantageous tool for the global policy? What conditions are needed for the establishment of this mechanism and its secretariats? Is there any real case of a City Networks agency which has been successful?

The second section treats of the city and mayor branding in the world. The authors explain the theory about it and their implication and then successfully provide actual and factual examples to develop their ideas. This section depicts that, in this globalised world we live in cities and their rulers have now a real power on the international scene and relationships. By explaining it this way, completely, with theory and examples it allows the reader to really learn, understand and to be able to apply it by themselves in the future but also to be able to criticise it.

The last conceptual section examines broader governance systems, how cities act at local, regional and global levels and how they enhance their global role. The performance of cities, their identities and images have broadened in recent years. Are there

mechanisms to integrate cities into the international context? As for the member states of the European Union, does the EU offer tools to strengthen the visibility and global commitment of European cities? Moreover, what are the missions and values of the US MOIA, and why could they become more sustainable institutions serving as diplomatic actors?

Finally, the analysis section offers four study cases of city diplomacy and city branding in terms of their location, period, size, environment and social and political context.

The first section is *Global Governance Through City Networks*. It begins with the chapter “*Beyond Networking? The Agency of City Network Secretariats in the Realm of City Diplomacy*”, in which the authors emphasise the potential of city networks as possible actors in global politics. It starts talking about how the phenomenon of city networks has been developing over the last few years, and how it is becoming increasingly numerous and important. The chapter also explains that the CNs role is not limited to their constituent territories, but thanks to their impartiality they can be a useful tool for international diplomacy. This statement has been illustrated by the huge impact that network secretariats have made in climate governance, especially with the launched of the CitiesIPCC campaign, and by the fact that they have been essential in the urbanisation of world politics. Furthermore, it expresses the need to carry out more exhaustive research into city networks, in order to learn in what diplomatic global spaces they can exert their influence, and the consequences of their activities.

In the following chapter, “*Cacophony or Complementarity? The Expanding Ecosystem of City Networks Under Scrutiny*”, Hannah Abdullah and Eva Garcia-Chueca talk about the importance of collaboration between city networks and the effects of the increasing tendency of multi-stakeholder arrangements. Firstly, they describe the contribution that urban policies could make to achieve objectives in different areas, such as climate change, poverty eradication, food security and public health. They say that the key to the success of city networks is that they provide a model of international governance based on impartiality, since they lack political or ideological interests. However, the authors then express concern that this effectiveness may disappear. On the one hand, this could be a result of the competitiveness that is emerging from the increasing size of the ecosystem of city networks. On the other hand, it could be caused by the privatisation of these platforms, because they would no longer represent the interests of the different territories but rather focus on their own economic benefit. Thus, it is manifested the need to include citizens in the decision-making process to attend the democratisation of global governance.

The last chapter of this section, called “*Marine Protection as Polycentric Governance: The PEMSEA Network of Local Governments*”, analyses the function of city governments in the emerging polycentric systems of global governance, targeting networks in East Asia and, in particular, in the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia Network of Local Governments. Benjamin Leffel starts contrasting the PNLG and the C40, that are two different networks composed by local governments and whose objectives are related to climate change. He compares the selection process, requirements, and steps for membership of these organisations, underlining the importance of having an Integrated Coastal Management site. The latter is so important that the collaboration of Xiamen on designing a project that reduced conflicts between maritime shipping and fisheries enable the city to become the secretariat for the PNLG. Indeed, then he explains that the fulfilment of marine policies

distinguishes PNLG cities in China from the ones that are not members. Moreover, the author shows evidence of how marine policies in member cities improve thanks to the help from PNLG and PEMSEA in the implantation of Integrated Coastal Management. Finally, he explains the gap between Global North actors and Global South cities policy, due to the failure of knowledge exchange and the lack of transnational municipal network cities in the Global South, and expresses the necessity of reaching global scale solutions to fight the consequences of climate change.

Chapter 5 begins with explanations about city diplomacy, using cities and city Mayors branding to give them an image, a reputation on an international scale. Then the authors develop how negative emotional engagement can produce positive outcomes, how a “common enemy” is important to create bonds. For example, using the rhetoric of an enemy to generate animosity and then a will to do something about it. They show that social medias, more specifically Twitter, can be used to reach such outcomes by creating direct discussions between the authorities and the citizens and that these discussions can enhance the international image and role of cities. This chapter also explains how cities which have these kinds of reputations can create a network that will grant them a greater influence. It finishes with a case study that demonstrates their theoretical explanations.

Chapter 6 starts with the reminder that city branding has become an important tool of soft power and that museums play a main role in the image and reputation of a city. Indeed, museums aren't anymore just cultural ambassadors for a city, but they also improve tourism, economy, political influence and diplomacy. They, for the biggest of them at least, have become active actors in international relationships. So the author demonstrates that now to be viable a museum should ally “hard” assets such as great historical and multi-cultural collections and “signature” architecture (going from the shape of the building to the immersivity and the way to present the collections) with strategic social activities. These activities can be of two main kinds: hosting international event or more sustainable innovative expositions. The former increases the diplomatic power of the city by creating connections, links and even diplomatic meetings, and it boosts tourism, economy, employment, etc. for a short period of time. The latter consists in the creation of evolutive and immersive long-term exposition in collaboration with other museums and produce advantages that are more sustainable. By having both museums generate a significant “amount” of soft power and they become a central hub for international collaboration.

Chapter 7 focuses on un-nation branding and more specifically on the case of Israel's un-nation branding. The authors remind us of the critical importance of nation branding as a generator of soft power and that it is more complex to brand an entire country than a city. Some countries can have a bad image to the eyed of the rest of the world (because of war, human rights violations, etc.) or/and have poor soft power resources that can make the branding very difficult. In the case of Israel, it is both, they have the worst image in the world and are depleted in soft power resources which makes nation branding to change that reputation almost impossible. Then this chapter analyses the technique that was used by the government: un-nation branding. Very different from city or nation branding it is the action to surrogate the cities branding to the nation branding.

The government decides to brand cities without mentioning the name of the country to make them more attractive, to generate more soft power, and with the hope that in time the reputation of the cities will be naturally extended to the entire country by the outside world. In the case of Israel the authors present their study and conclusions of the

un-nation branding campaign: “two cities, one break” created to put in light and increase the reputation and the tourism in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem without mentioning Israel.

Chapter 8 asks the question “*do cities leverage summits to enhance their image online?*” and uses an empirical study of the twittersphere of the Inaugural U20 Mayoral Summit, Buenos Aires in Argentina to try to answer this question. To realise this study the author used three main questions as a guideline. During the event most of the participants, leaders of cities from around the globe gained a better visibility and the hosting country got an improvement in his international visibility, reputation, economy, etc. as always with mega-events like this one. Online, during the summit, more tweets were sent and those directly related to the summit were mostly emotionally neutral. The author then analyses these results to find an answer or part of an answer to this question.

Chapter 9 analyses the typology of cities’ insertion in the international setting. Identifying the level of internationalisation allows to solve diverse governance problems and to improve the decision-making in public policy. As far as cities role in the international system is concerned, three levels can be observed: as a subject of analysis in academia, with their agency as an international actor or their influence on politics decision-makers. The image of the city as perceived by other actors is the essential element. We can find four types of images based on the intensity of the insertion, which means on the level of activities engaged, including external projection, international presence, territorial attractiveness and global recognition. Each level contains two ways of insertion, which can be used jointly or independently. As a result, cities are able to insert themselves in the international system. Most implement international activities but not all of them. Indeed, all cannot perform all the insertion ways and mechanisms. In fact, they should consider this insertion as a specific or cross-cutting public policy in order to build a positive dynamic for both temporary and permanent urban residents. The source of motivation for internationalisation remains public policies.

Chapter 10 explains several instruments of EU cities in order to raise their presence and enhance their soft power in the EU. When it comes to generating influence, the two main strategic frameworks are public diplomacy and city networks. We can add three other types of instruments of European city diplomacy: classical diplomatic representation, EU-led campaigns and EU cooperation projects. Firstly, the role of city diplomats can be given to mayors and other local representatives or to the embassies. Acting as an ambassador, the representative of the city exercises a negotiating role before the European Union institutions in order to find their legitimacy and influence by participating in EU events. Secondly, another tool of European city diplomacy is the cooperation projects. In other words, they receive complementary funding according to their strategies. Thirdly, EU-led campaigns promoted by the EU aims at the participation in policy making of European cities. Cities adopt different attitudes depending on their own type and frequency of instruments use. As a result, three scenarios may enhance the effectiveness of the instruments of city diplomacy (the bywatcher, the silent silo and the strategist) based in three key indicators (capacity, intensity and coordination).

Chapter 11 examines the sustainability of Mayo’s Office of International Affairs, which are the only governmental organisations officially in charge of conducting international affairs by protecting their precarious values in the United States. Their missions encompass improving a city’s international leadership, global influence and representation. Actually, their current tasks are more aimed at economic level. As a result, their missions may not be achieved because of the overwhelming variety of conflicting or short term aims. This chapter provides us some policy recommendations to

protect the precarious value and to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the MOIA. First of all, MOIA should have an institutional leader during incubation and maturation. These organisations also have to strategically define and identify functions and programs. Then, building and maintaining external and internal constituencies are required. Finally, they should ensure competence and commitment of the operators by recruiting selectively skilled staff members and understanding the decisions and behaviour of employees. Thanks to these policies, MOIA will achieve their long-term goals.

Chapter 12 treats the case of Singapore as an international peacemaker, that allows us to understand the relation between city branding and city diplomacy. Having hosted the 2018 Trump-Kim Summit has allowed Singapore to acquire an international reputation in peace negotiations. The leveraging of its existing brand used in order to engage in diplomacy has definitively strengthened its brand. This study shows the cohesive and collaborative framework of various actors and influencers, namely government actors, business leaders and private citizens. What we should remember is that hosting foreign political summits may improve the city's branding efforts, both as a business and cultural destination and as a way of enhancing their soft power.

Chapter 13 examines paradiplomacy and city branding. Perceived as the most dangerous city, Medellin in Colombia is also nominated as the most innovative city in the world. After a long period of violence and weak economy, government had decided to change this image based on local development plans concerning technological, social, cultural and educational fields. Thence, paradiplomacy and city brand are increasingly developing in terms of city internationalisation. It also constitutes a significant improvement of its visibility and connectivity with other states by the participation of local communities, the relationships with stakeholders, the change of public transportation system, and so on. What should be noted is that a dangerous city with a tenuous economic situation as Medellin can radically change its image and identity.

Chapter 14 deals with the city diplomacy in young democracies. Using the case of the Baltics, we can see that young democracies are changing in social, legal and political ways. In reality, these cities collaborate and cooperate in order to solve common global issues, but they create diplomatic links by city-twinning, city networking and smart city concept for the goals of knowledge development, cultural and business relations. In addition, the major international actors play definitively an important and active role in city diplomacy and they represent both the city and the state. The case of Baltics bolsters the local authorities thanks to personal initiatives from mayors and international affairs. Moreover, the young democracy states have increased partnerships established by city-to-city networking.

Chapter 15 analyses the case study in the city Diplomacy of small urban Centers. As a small city, Turku (in Finland) has limited agency and a tight decision-making system. It uses local incentives to create international contacts related to economic, cultural and political aspects. Nevertheless, the city diplomacy depends on the national and international environment of the city. Indeed, small cities need to make diplomatic efforts to enhance their capacities. Moreover, to fight against its marginality, Turku is trying to increase its profile and to push citizens to adapt and internationalise. Despite its limited agency, Turku increases the opportunity of autonomous international actions by organising many activities and being more active. As a small urban centre, the pooling of limited resources is necessary to promote local interests, which will coalesce different local agency in the management of international contacts.

Regarding City Networks, it seems to me that this method is a huge opportunity for global policy that should drastically be exploited. Successful initiatives such as the Cities IPCC, or networks such as PNLG and C40 show the significant potential that they have in concerning issues like climate change. Seeing this, I personally think it is an opportunity that cannot be missed, so cities must invest and focus on research to be able to implement this model of international governance. If the benefits of City Networks were better known, many territories would not hesitate to implement this practice, so as far as I am concerned there is a need to spread more information about this subject.

The city and mayor branding, as shown by the authors, represent now a new way of improving the international relationships, diplomacy, tourism, economy and of course the image of a city or its ruler. It is a fact that it allows even cities and not just countries anymore to act and discuss a lot of topics (very important and on a wide spectrum e.g.: culture and environment) then makes possible to improve and enlarge the possibilities to change things in the world. Making advertisement and improving an image was proved by the authors to be a new way to get the “power” and the influence not just for the city’s wellness but for the world too.

In terms of cities insertion in the international system, I think that cities should be aware that in case of shortcomings related to the strategies of the typology of insertion in the international context, they could encounter problems of urban management. When it comes to European cities, the different opportunities offered by the European Union allow them to choose the type of approaches to use such as ambassadors, funding, European Commission label, which gives them more resources to rebuild their visibility and influence. As far as US MOIA is concerned, I believe that other countries should draw inspiration from this intermediate power to promote the global interests of local voters, transforming cities into precarious values.

As a conclusion, the book is intended for many practitioners who would like to think out and deepen the topic of global governance and systems of diplomacy to nation branding and strategic communication. We definitively recommend this book, in the sense that it scrutinise city diplomacy through a variety of fields such as education, migration, climate change, human rights and many others. This could be a good incentive for scholars and professionals to consider cities as legitimate actors on the international scene. Therefore, plenty of specific topics related to city diplomacy should still be the subject of further studies.