

Globalization and diplomacy: End of diplomacy or global diplomacy?

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*The worth of an idea lies in what it stimulates,
even if by provocation, even while it is itself
wildly wrong.*

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Globalization has become the academic term to explain the current transformation process at the end of the 20th century. This being so, the present article wishes, first, to identify the effects that the process of globalization generates in diplomacy; and, second, to evaluate the interpretations that are made on the way in which such process influences the future and the validity of diplomacy.

For this purpose, we will assume that the interaction between globalization and diplomacy goes through the State. That is, since the nature of the State's activities is being affected by the current economic and political processes, and considering that diplomacy constitutes an element of the State's activities, then we can affirm that the administration, the role, as well as the conception of diplomacy are also being affected.

Having explained the interaction between globalization and diplomacy through the State, we will analyze and evaluate the two theses that currently exist regarding the future of diplomacy. The first one argues that diplomacy will become an obsolete institution as it will not be able to overcome the challenges arising from technological advances and the current changes that globalization is driving in international relations; this is the so-called "pessimistic" thesis, which envisions the "end of diplomacy". From this perspective, it is implicitly affirmed that technological change and the development of *direct diplomacy at the highest level* (presidential summits) as well as the *jet diplomacy*, lead traditional diplomacy to a situation of obsolescence, crisis and uselessness (Der Derian 1987). In contrast, the second thesis is less pessimistic about the future of diplomacy. From this point of view, the question of whether diplomats should be

considered as anachronistic relics or not depends on the activities attributed to them, and this in turn is linked to the way diplomacy is understood; it is the thesis that we will call "conditional". In this regard, a multidisciplinary approach to diplomacy has been developed, which seeks to overcome the traditional concept of diplomacy and its narrow field of political affairs (Barston 1988, Hamilton and Langhorne 1995). This second thesis gives rise to a vision of "global diplomacy".

Globalization and the State

It is said that every state pursues two main objectives: national security and social welfare, both of which constitute what is called the "national interest". In order to achieve these objectives, each national government plans policies that are implemented both within its territory (domestic policy) and beyond its borders (foreign policy, diplomacy). In the pursuit of welfare, the activities of the state are aimed at improving the standard of living of its citizens. In this task, the goal of achieving development is a fundamental component.

On the other hand, when planning a policy, it is usual to evaluate the characteristics of the context or terrain in which the policy is to be applied in order to achieve a given objective. This is because evaluation not only helps to design better strategies, but also makes it possible to foresee the eventual possibilities of success of this policy. In this context, the process of globalization finds its relevance in the analysis of the subject we are dealing with.

What is meant by globalization? This term refers to "the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections between the states and societies which make up the modern world system. It describes the process by which events, decisions and activities in one part of the world can come to have significant consequences for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the globe" (A. McGrew 1993:23). Obviously, it is recognized that the existence of linkages across different regions of the globe is not a new phenomenon, but the intensity of such linkages is (RIPE 1994:2).

Although it is recognized that "globalization" is a process that affects almost all dimensions of human life, it is worth noting that this term has become a category of analysis to define the current era of "turbulence and volatility in which *economic life* in general is being rapidly and fundamentally restructured and reorganized" (P. Dickens 1992:1). In other words, globalization *in the world economy* is the globalization that is emphasized in the academic field and, in turn, is the one that is relevant to our work. In describing the economic dimension of the globalization process, it is said that the speed and pace of technological change in recent years have produced structural changes in the international environment. In this context, the dynamics of globalization are given by the integration of open markets, capital flows, trade and information.

In short, according to the version most widely disseminated by specialists, globalization in the world economy is characterized by the ongoing process of internationalization of production and finance, fueled by the great speed of technological progress.

However, what effects does globalization generate on the State? There are two interpretations. The first one states that transnational corporations (TNCs) are the main actors leading the dynamics of globalization, since they are the only ones capable of capturing the greatest benefits generated by the accelerated pace of technological change. Thus, this interpretation continues, the importance of corporations as major players in the world system has increased substantially (S. Strange 1994:110). Other authors go further, to suggest that the growing importance of TNCs translates into a decline in the importance of the state, and a threat to both national autonomy and sovereignty; and, finally, a threat to the development of democratic politics (D. Held: 1992). From this perspective, the restructuring of the state emerges as a response to the demands of the market mechanism (M. Debene 1993:241).

On the contrary, the second interpretation affirms that the role of the State has been enhanced by the globalization process. In this group of authors, the degree of emphasis ranges from the exaltation of particular national features for the development of global competitiveness (M. Porter 1990: 19), to

considering that "today's globalization is *created by* the States, which are currently undergoing a process basically of reorganization and not of marginalization" (L. Panitch 1994: 63). This view emphasizes the restructuring of the state as a *sine qua non* condition for the emergence of the market mechanism (M. Debene 1993:241). Indeed, due to the process of globalization, most states have significantly extended the regulation of internal and external affairs, since the emergence of a global system implies that many of the traditional functions of the state (defense, health, social welfare, etc.) cannot be fulfilled without some form of international coordination, cooperation and collaboration. Moreover, states face increasing pressures from domestic civil society to regulate those transnational activities that have a direct impact on their interests and daily livelihoods (A. Mc Grew 1993a:322).

It should be noted that in this process there was a convergence with respect to a new perception of the role of the state in the economy and in development policies. On the one hand, the 1980s witnessed "the neo-liberal transnational revolution" (Overbeek 1992), initiated during the governments of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan, a phenomenon sustained by monetarism in the economic sphere and the emergence of the "new right" in the political arena. On the other hand, the external debt crisis of the 1980s led developing countries to apply structural adjustment policies and to move towards more open and market-oriented economies, a change that is synthesized in "the consideration of exports and private investment as the main engines of growth, a role that had previously been given to import substitution and public investment" (Rosenthal 1996:12).

In this context, it can be said that the dynamics of globalization are created by States and companies in a relatively equal interdependence. Thus, while states shape the new global economy both through national trade policies - by encouraging or discouraging investment - and through explicit policies to regulate and control TNCs, corporations generate global changes in economic activity through their strategies, operations and investment decisions (P. Dickens 1992:8). In this framework, the focus of state intervention shifts from old forms that "politicize" the activities to which the

state is committed (domestic socio-economic activities organized outside of market forces), to forms that let the former socio-economic activities be governed by market supply and demand (depoliticization of the economy). This is the basis for the emergence of the so-called "competition state" (P. Cerny 1990:133).

According to this model, state activities involve three substantive shifts: i) from macroeconomic interventionism to microeconomic interventionism reflected in the conceptualization and operationalization of "industrial policy"; ii) from the development and maintenance of industries based on comparative advantage to the development of "competitive advantage" in order to produce flexible responses to rapidly changing international markets; iii) from a general maximization of social welfare to the promotion of enterprise, innovation and profitability (P. Cerny 1990).

Globalization and diplomacy

We conceive diplomacy as an extensive activity of the state, which carries out foreign policy and transcends states as sole interlocutors. Diplomacy is therefore related to the management of relations between states and other actors. From a state perspective, diplomacy is related to planning, advising, conducting, implementing and evaluating foreign policy, in pursuit and defense of the "national interest". As such, it is the means by which states - through their formal representatives and others - as well as other actors, "articulate, coordinate and secure particular or broader interests, using correspondence, private conversations, exchanges of views, advocacy, visits, political and economic threats, as well as other related activities" (R.P. Barston 1988:1).

Now, diplomacy emerges as a state activity and as a state institution to the extent that the government becomes aware that what other states do outside its borders may cause problems within other borders, and also affect the policies and objectives of other states. Moreover, governments are aware that the task of achieving national security and social welfare requires state action and coordination outside their own borders (García Bedoya 1981). In short, diplomacy and foreign policy emerge to address the

consequences of the fact that states "enjoy their independence not absolutely or in isolation but within a framework of interdependence" (A. Watson 1986:34). To the extent that globalization implies a deepening of interdependencies, then it is possible to try to identify the effects of globalization on diplomacy.

An article written by Edward Morse in 1970 states that the process of modernization has altered the character of foreign policy in three distinct ways: i) it has effectively done away with the classic distinction between domestic and foreign policy; ii) it has altered the balance between "high politics" and "low politics"; and iii) it has significantly reduced the degree of control that any state can exercise on the domestic and international stage (Morse 1994:169-181). Globalization in the 1990s has intensified these three trends.

Trend towards convergence of domestic and foreign policy

It was quite common to assert that foreign policy differed from domestic policy in three respects: ends (national interest versus particular interest), means (any means pursuing the "national interest" versus domestically "legitimate" means), and setting (anarchic international society versus centralized domestic order). This analytical distinction is supported by the fact that "externalities" - generated either by domestic or foreign policies - did not significantly alter policies in other fields (E. Morse 1994:171).

The intensification of interdependencies between the different internal and external policies of the State, brought about by the process of globalization, makes such an analytical distinction currently quite debatable.

In fact, the globalization process currently underway is developing a greater structural interpenetration of national economies with each other and with market forces on a global scale. As a consequence, it becomes increasingly difficult to "isolate national allocation processes with political criteria", because globalization seems to dictate certain norms of international behavior in terms of macroeconomic policy-making; these norms imply the use of economic and market criteria for national resource allocation

processes (Rosenthal 1996:17).

Similarly, the historical conception of the State as the appropriate forum for determining policies in economic matters, among others, is a changing conception, because the transnationalization of business and trade demands international regulation that transcends national policy. Thus, it is already a common theme to refer to the diminishing autonomy of States in the formulation of their national policies, especially economic policies. In the words of P. Cerny: "neither state nor non-state actors can separate their objectives and strategies from their own national context, the games in which they participate are, to an increasing degree, transnational games" (P. Cerny 1990:220). Consequently, "at the end of the twentieth century, politics can no longer be understood as a purely local or national social activity, but must be conceived as a social activity with a global dimension" (A. McGrew 1993:3).

On the other hand, the increase in governmental activities leads to a change in the relationship between internal and external policies. The dynamics of the state extending its responsibilities to more and more areas can be explained by two reasons. First, the improvement through state intervention of the material welfare of its citizens has become one of the central functions of state activity fueled by growing social demands on a national scale. In this process, new areas have joined the sphere under state responsibility. Secondly, the shift in the paradigms of development and economic growth towards the market mechanism as the distribution mechanism - among other factors - explains the upward trend of the "competition state".

Within this framework, it is argued that free trade and free enterprise are necessary to modernize the national productive system; in turn, the latter is necessary to face international competition in a global economy. As a consequence, it is argued that the role and function of the state is being internationalized: "the internationalization of the state" is the term used to describe this process. In doing so, foreign policy is closely linked to trade policy, industrial policy and domestic macroeconomic management.

This process leads to a new relationship between domestic and foreign policy. Why? Since governments rely on international transactions to satisfy their domestic demands, distributive policies in the domestic and international spheres appear intimately related, leading to a fusion of foreign and domestic policy in the field of social welfare distributive policy (W. Hanrieder 1994:150). From this point of view, the classical distinction between domestic and foreign policy breaks down.

The growing importance of "low politics" and the rise of state-firm diplomacy

Previously, there was a traditional distinction in the sphere of politics, which seemed to make the two elements of "national interest" coincide: security and social welfare. Thus, the Cold War being the conceptual framework, issues related to security and power (e.g. balance of power, disarmament, zones of influence, geopolitics) were considered as "high politics", while those related to social welfare and wealth (trade, production, investment, technical cooperation) were considered as "low politics".

Today, this traditional distinction has been superseded, as the process of globalization and the end of the Cold War have led to changes in policy objectives. These changes are illustrated by the growing importance of "low politics" as expectations of economic growth and development are now linked to the market. Consequently, we find here a fundamental change in the nature of diplomacy.

How can we explain this process? Broadly speaking, there are three key factors that can explain the dynamics of this change. First, territorial objectives linked to security and "high politics" have become obsolete and unattractive due to the development of nuclear weapons that have increasingly raised the costs of territorial expansion. Secondly, the process of globalization, especially in the economic field, and the end of the Cold War, particularly as it triggered a growing consensus on economic issues around the market economy, gave greater importance to economic issues. Third, a general transformation in domestic societies -especially the so-called "revolution of rising expectations"- generated increasing state intervention

in pursuit of mass social and economic welfare as the main source of state legitimization.

Within this conceptual framework, the objectives of state policy shifted from a traditional diplomacy dealing with the balance of power and the pursuit of international peace to a diplomacy seeking social welfare. On the other hand, global trends in the international economy - such as rapid technological development, increasing capital mobility and lower communication and transportation costs - led companies to plan their activities on a global basis. These two changes, in the policy objectives of the state and in the strategies of companies, explain why "global competition" is the new game for both states and companies.

Susan Strange asserts that the net result of these structural changes is a very intense competition among states for global market shares: "States now compete more for the means to create wealth within their territory than for power over more territories". In this context, it is argued that transnational companies have very necessary economic assets for any State wishing to develop and gain world market shares; these are: a) mastery of technology; b) easy access to global sources of capital, and c) easy access to important markets. Therefore, this competition forces States to negotiate with foreign and domestic companies "to obtain that the *value-added is realized* in their territory and not somewhere else". This is the basis for the negotiation of "state-firm diplomacy", which is the new dimension of diplomacy today. The other two dimensions are state-state diplomacy and firm-firm diplomacy (the current strategic alliances) (S. Strange 1994: 107-108).

The decreasing capacity of the State to control its foreign policy

The declining ability of the state to control its foreign and domestic policy is another trend shaping today's diplomacy. There are many reasons to explain this trend. One of them is the growing number of international and transnational relations that take place in a non-governmental context, facilitated by technological development, especially in the areas of transportation and communications. By "transnational relations" we mean those networks, associations or interactions that cut across national

societies, creating links between individuals, groups, organizations and communities within different states. The fact that they marginalize governments by operating at the societal level and beyond direct state control constitutes their main distinguishing feature (A. McGrew 1994:7).

However, the growing number of actors - State and non-State - is not the only phenomenon linked to the growth in the volume of international business. There is another trend that is currently taking place in the governmental sphere and which we can consider as another factor that problematizes the State's control over foreign policy. What is this trend? Due to both the growing complexity of the foreign policy agenda and the expansion of the number of national public offices and agencies increasingly involved in international affairs, problems of national coordination and institutional rivalry arise over responsibility for the conduct of non-traditional areas of foreign policy, which are now considered foreign policy (R.P. Barston 1988:25). Consequently, it is argued that the influence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in designing foreign policy and setting national objectives in the international arena is declining.

Finally, because of the intensification of interdependence, not only must internal and external objectives be compatible with each other at the national level, but also the objectives of each of the member states of the international community, if the welfare consequences are to be efficiently distributed on a global scale. This is a demanding task, since the economic nature of the objectives and the growing number of actors involved in this effort make consistency and efficient coordination an elusive goal. And, of course, the end result is beyond the decision of any one national government (E. Morse 1994:179).

Two theses on the future of diplomacy

But how are the effects of globalization on both the State and diplomacy to be interpreted? There are two theses regarding the future and the validity of diplomacy. Let us evaluate them.

The pessimistic thesis

It is argued that the latest trends - such as summit diplomacy, *jet* and fast jet diplomacy, ministerial delegations, special missions and direct diplomacy - are the result of both progress in the means of communication and the ongoing process of international relations that tend to become increasingly complex, thus requiring more "specialist" than "generalist" diplomats. The "pessimistic" thesis holds that diplomacy cannot meet the current challenge posed by both new technological advances and the increasingly complex demands produced by contemporary global and international relations.

What are the reasons proposed to support this thesis? First, although technological development in transportation and communication supports the expansion of transnational relations, it has also been used by some scholars to question the future viability of diplomacy (Der Derian 1988:1). It is argued that modern technology has rendered obsolete certain institutions of modern diplomacy, and especially professional diplomats as well as resident embassies. The problems facing governments, it is argued, have become so technical today, and at the same time communications are so accessible, that "experts" can and should now deal with them directly (A. Watson 1986:133). At the same time, heads of government meet far more frequently than was physically possible even until recently, and, in the interim, remain in closer direct contact through telephone and other rapid means of communication (A. Watson 1986:121-123).

Second, the increasingly complex demands arising from contemporary global and international relations are linked to the growing complexity of the foreign policy agenda and the expansion of the number of agencies as well as departments increasingly involved in international business. This process generates two challenges: i) problems of institutional rivalry and national coordination with respect to the responsibility for the direction of non-traditional areas of foreign policy that are now considered as foreign policy (R.P. Barston 1988:25) and, ii) problems in the field of education and training of the diplomat, since it is argued that "general knowledge" should give way to the "technical and specialized knowledge" needed to handle an increasingly complex agenda. Considering that today it is "specialist" diplomats rather than "generalists" who negotiate international issues, it is said that even the function of simple coordination is increasingly difficult to

keep under the responsibility of diplomats. In this regard, Louis Einstein, a retired American career diplomat, has suggested that travel agents could "carry out most of the routine work of diplomacy."

Third, since the demands generated by the competitive state affect the traditional conception of diplomacy, it has been argued that "foreign policy should now take second place to industrial policy or, perhaps, to the successful management of society and the efficient administration of the economy" in order to attract foreign direct investment (S. Strange 1994: 108). In short, this means that "industrial policy and trade policy are becoming increasingly more important than foreign and defense policy" (S. Strange 1995: 56).

In short, diplomats reduced to the role of traveling agents, the obsolescence of embassies and representative missions, the knowledge of professional diplomats becoming less and less useful, and foreign policy giving way to industrial policies within the new priorities of the State involved in global competition, are the elements that make up the scenario for a "transcended diplomacy" or the "end of diplomacy".

In order to evaluate the arguments of the "pessimistic thesis", we can group them into three approaches.

"There is a declining role for embassies as a result of the impact of modern communications and the intensified role of summit diplomacy."

Technological progress in the means of transportation and communication is "shrinking" the world to the point where it is now commonly referred to as a "global village." Moreover, it is claimed that "information technology" is the driving force behind the structural changes underway. Although the practical effects of information technology on diplomacy generally involve improved coordination between the home government and its foreign diplomatic missions, information technology has been seen by some authors as a factor that diminishes the influence of diplomacy and, specifically, a factor that will make diplomats and resident embassies obsolete institutions (Derian 1987:1).

This interpretation is hardly surprising, since information, together with

representation and negotiation, constitute the essence of diplomatic activities. Thus, the easily formulated conclusion seems to follow this line: "since it is now possible to obtain rapid and reliable information through information networks, resident embassies and diplomats become an obsolete and perhaps costly source of information?".

We consider this logical conclusion to be incorrect because it does not distinguish between diplomatic information and general information. Furthermore, it downplays the role of resident embassies in the conceptual framework of general statecraft.

Although the international flow of information is not new, its intensity is. However, much of the information has a wording similar to that of a newspaper report. As a general rule, this type of information is related to the effect it can have on public opinion and the importance of events that need to be published; it is written under time pressure and is generally based on much scarcer information than is generally available in embassies; moreover, it only covers countries that are important or momentarily making news. As a result, the overall presentation is "deficient and uneven" (A. Watson 1986:141).

On the other hand, diplomatic information is developed in two fields. First, diplomats elaborate information seeking to explain to their own governments the policies of the host government, as well as the characteristics of the national reality of the host country, thus contributing to the planning of the policies of the country they represent. Thus, tasks such as: i) forecasting key issues and external or internal patterns that are emerging, as well as their consequences, in order to inform or warn the sending government; ii) reporting on political, economic and social conditions in the host country; and iii) providing timely warning of adverse developments to national interests, are those that characterize diplomatic information. This particular type of information demands "considerable specialized knowledge, judgment and political courage" (R.P. Barston 1988:2). It is, in short, information ad hoc to the national interest.

Second, diplomatic information provided by diplomats helps to ensure

that other state and non-state actors have an adequate understanding of the objectives and policies of the government being represented. Explaining and advocating the policies of the represented government constitutes the major part of this work. This is critical work, since inadequate communication can trigger international conflicts (B. Hughes 1994:180).

Likewise, taking into account the supplementary relationship between politics and diplomacy, the importance of the latter should not be easily underestimated. Rather, the current processes of intensified interdependence, globalization and the internationalization of the state further underscore the importance of the information provided by diplomats from abroad, for it is necessary for the maintenance of the conceptual framework of the country's development, as is that of politicians, their advisors and theorists within the country (R. Moore 1985:51).

On the other hand, the pessimistic theory seems to consider the relationship between summit diplomacy -meetings of heads of government-, and the traditional diplomatic service -ministries of foreign affairs and resident embassies-, as a "zero or zero-sum game". Thus, it is believed that the increasingly direct involvement of presidents in foreign policy means that the prestige and importance of the diplomatic service is declining (R.P. Barston 1988:119-120). We contradict this interpretation by asserting that there is not necessarily a "zero-sum" relationship but a complementarity between summit diplomacy and that carried out by the diplomatic service, both combining roles in a reciprocally complementary manner toward common goals.

In what way? It has been argued that the visit of a head of state to the capital of another state is hardly the essence of a policy, nor is it the process by which the government formulates a policy (W. Olson 1994:163). Obviously, this type of political management can influence foreign policy. This fact sets the stage for explaining and illustrating the "complementarity relationship" that we suggest as an alternative interpretation of the links between summit diplomacy and the general work of the diplomatic service.

On the one hand, as a result of the trend toward the convergence of foreign and domestic policies, presidents are increasingly involved in international business seeking to consolidate the source of national legitimacy: national social welfare now demands greater international coordination, cooperation and collaboration. In addition, progress in transportation and communications technology makes *jet* diplomacy, favored by presidents and senior officials, possible. On the other hand, the three traditional functions of diplomacy (representation, information and negotiation) can be enhanced through the direct participation of the head of state or government. In this context, the emergence of summit, presidential or direct diplomacy represents a reinforcing factor for the work of the diplomatic service and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

For this reason, presidential diplomacy tends to support and complement, rather than replace, the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Thus, eminent public figures often conduct direct personal meetings for specific negotiations only in order to initiate courses of action, or when a certain stage in the negotiation has been reached that requires their decision. Moreover, summit diplomacy has recently proven to be an important factor in rescuing failed negotiations or in pushing and accelerating negotiations that were making little progress. Moreover, "summitry encourages and permit a co-ordination of policy and a linkage in international bargaining which may otherwise be difficult to achieve in an era of specialist diplomacy and bureaucratic rivalry" (Hamilton and Langhorne 1995:224).

However, this is not a risk-free type of diplomacy. Because the participants in summit diplomacy are the highest-ranking national authorities, some of their actions and statements may commit their States to a situation considered "inappropriate or disadvantageous" from the professional perspective of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this case, the diplomatic service will be obliged to apply its best skills to reverse a situation considered unfavorable to the national interest. This is the symbiotic or supplementary relationship between summit diplomacy and Foreign Ministry diplomacy.

Finally, summit diplomacy and presidential meetings require a great deal of preparation on both sides if they are to succeed; and this task inevitably falls to professional diplomats. In general, diplomatic negotiations are almost always too complicated and specialized, and too time-consuming to be conducted only in face-to-face meetings of heads of government. Thus, most negotiation must be left to diplomats "only because no high-level political figure could devote sufficient time to it" (A. Watson 1986: 142-143).

We consider the arguments of the pessimistic thesis to be highly debatable and unsustainable. On the contrary, in a world of electronic communication, the idea of establishing diplomatic missions representing multiple, compatible states has been proposed in response to the wishes of new and small states that are unable to finance embassies on their own (T. Shaw 1994:142). This proposal represents the current importance of national embassies which, far from being interpreted as an "antiquated symbol of sovereignty," are seen as an essential part of the continuing status of the state. After all, "diplomatic influence and power, defined through negotiating and organizational reputation at the international level, are far removed from other elements of power" (R.P. Barston 1988:5).

"The expanding agenda of diplomacy, as well as a growing number of diplomatic agents, pose major problems for diplomacy that are difficult to solve, such as national coordination and the training of professional diplomats".- As we have already identified above, as a result of the process called "internationalization of the state", the nature of diplomatic objectives is changing from an earlier stream of "high level politics" to the emergence of a diplomacy in pursuit of social welfare.

In this framework, it is not only the scope of diplomacy that is expanding, but also the range of actors involved in diplomatic affairs. The pessimistic thesis predicts that diplomacy will be transcended because it considers that diplomacy cannot adequately meet either the challenge of national coordination in foreign policy or the challenge of managing an expanding and increasingly complex agenda that demands "specialists". On the contrary, we identify two trends that support the idea that diplomacy, in its own way, will meet these major challenges: coordination led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the professionalization of the diplomatic service.

In relation to the challenge of national coordination, the current dilemma can be put in the following terms: "if the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regulates the external work of other ministries, it is considered too powerful. But if it had no say in what other ministries do outside the country, then contradictions would arise in the country's foreign policy" (R. Moore 1985: 51). It appears that the dilemma is being resolved in favor of Foreign Office-led coordination as a means of lessening or avoiding critical contradictions in foreign policy matters. This trend is based on a renewed awareness of the traditional role played by the Foreign Ministry within the governmental system, as well as of the particular role of diplomats.

Thus, in the United States, the centralization in the State Department of the responsibility for non-military affairs has been considered a solution (R. Pranger 1979:77). In Brazil, a legal provision mandates that any Brazilian delegation going abroad on international transactions must be composed - if not chaired - by members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

From this perspective, therefore, it is not that the influence of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in designing foreign policies and setting national objectives in the international arena is declining, but rather that other government departments and entities are now involved in this work. However, the responsibility for coordinating foreign policy still rests with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This decision recognizes that diplomats play an important role since they introduce perspectives on the local situation achieved by the objectivity of distance. This is what R. Moore calls "intimacy at a distance". In doing so, diplomats are able to analyze the contradictory effects of ministerial actions on the societies to which they are directed (R. Moore 1985:51). Furthermore, the idea that the interdisciplinary and holistic training that professional diplomats receive enables them to develop broad perspectives in which the work of any government office finds its rationality, also serves as a basis for this decision.

In sum, the trend of Foreign Ministry-led coordination is hardly surprising as a response to the current challenge posed by both the growing complexity of global relations and the increasing involvement in inter-national and transnational business of those ministries that were traditionally considered

to be internal ministries. Both factors, "intimacy at a distance" and the holistic training of professional diplomats, emerge as the pillars that maintain and encourage this trend towards foreign policy coordination by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

However, this trend is not without its challenges. Should the specialized and technical concerns of various agencies become the province of diplomats, the traditional methods of training future envoys will have to adapt to these new challenges (Pranger 1979:77). At this point we turn to discuss the other argument advanced by the pessimistic thesis.

Should technical and specialized learning replace the general knowledge that characterizes average diplomatic wisdom? In short, should a diplomat be a "generalist" or an "expert"? Since "generalist" knowledge is an essential need for playing the role of national coordination, we second Pranger's view: "while diplomacy may become more technocratic, the role of the generalist will remain essential, and indeed, may take on a new meaning" (Pranger 1979: 83). The redefinition of "generalist" knowledge poses a new challenge to the current way in which a diplomat is trained. In this sense, it has already been argued that "wholeness" is the kind of wisdom that today's diplomats require: "wholeness means being generalist enough to speak with authority and specialist enough to be an instrument of particular effectiveness" (R. Moore 1985:172).

This trend is illustrated by the recent growing attention given to the training of diplomats and other officials engaged in foreign policies. Thus, by the late 1980s, more than 50 states had some form of training academy for the national diplomatic service (R.P. Barston 1988:251). Among these are established continental European academies such as the one in Vienna, or prestigious academies in Latin America such as the Rio Branco Institute in Brazil and the Diplomatic Academy in Peru.

"Industrial policy becomes a first priority for those governments involved in 'global competition' with a subsequently diminishing importance of foreign policy".- The starting point for this argument lies in

the changing nature of competition between states. It is said that states are now increasingly competing for market shares in the world economy; that the nature of competition between states has changed, as has its form and behavior towards each other. In this sense, "industrial policy and trade policy are becoming more important than foreign and defense policy" (S. Strange 1995:56). Accordingly, it is argued that, in relation to foreign policy decision-making, this implies that "its locus has moved away from presidential and foreign offices and towards central banks and technical ministries" (T. Shaw 1994:141).

We believe that this argument represents a particular interpretation of the trend we have identified as "the growing importance of low-politics and the rise of state-firm diplomacy". Implicitly, the pessimistic thesis holds that there is a hierarchical relationship between industrial policy and foreign policy, a subordinate relationship in which the latter is subservient to the dictates of the former, which would lead one to argue that diplomacy is now simply economic diplomacy or international economic policy.

On the contrary, we believe that, given the challenges and needs faced by the State in the current globalization process, it is possible to sustain the existence of a complementary relationship between industrial policy and foreign policy, a relationship that heralds a "global diplomacy". We will develop this idea within the conditional thesis.

The conditional thesis

The "conditional thesis" suggests that the future and viability of diplomacy is linked to the way in which diplomacy is conducted and the type of activities and responsibilities attributed to it. The idea of diplomacy undergoing processes of change triggered by the interactions of actors and structures is the foundation for this thesis.

Within this approach, there is a tendency towards the elaboration of a broad conception of diplomacy, taking into account the structural changes taking place in the international arena. Thus, it is argued that what constitutes diplomacy today goes beyond the restricted. Rather, it is said that today's diplomats must be prepared to deal with issues encompassing almost every

aspect of human life, since virtually every fact of contemporary existence reflects some international dimension (Plischke 1979:61). Moreover, it is argued that due to the process of globalization and the intensification of interdependencies, the world as a whole has never been so closely knit. Consequently, "there is today more diplomacy, and it is more complex than ever before" (A. Watson 1986:34). From this point of view, then, it can be argued that diplomacy in times of globalization will not disappear, but will be transformed into global diplomacy.

Global diplomacy

What is the basis for the emergence of global diplomacy?

Firstly, due to the globalization process, states and non-state actors cannot isolate their strategies and pursue them only in national contexts, but the relevance of the international dimension is growing. In this contextual framework, the role of diplomacy as the governmental sector traditionally related to international issues is strengthened.

Second, the general transformation in domestic societies - especially the so-called "revolution of rising expectations" - generates an increase in state intervention that seeks massive economic and social benefit as a main source of state legitimization. Thus, the improvement through state intervention of the material well-being of its citizens has become one of the central functions of the state. What characterizes the present era is that such State action takes place in a context of "growing importance of low-politics and the emergence of State-firm diplomacy," which allows for a convergence of domestic and foreign policy in the field of social welfare distribution. In this sense, while diplomacy and foreign policy constitute the external action of the State in pursuit of the realization of the national interest, their importance increases, while their scope of action expands to new areas; likewise, other national agencies - traditionally domestic-, are incorporated into international management. Today's diplomatic agenda presents - to the same degree of importance - the so-called "global issues" (e.g. the environment), "social issues" (e.g. the protection of human rights, poverty alleviation, humanitarian affairs), new issues that have an impact on "security" (e.g. the fight against drug

trafficking, against corruption), as well as economic issues.

Thirdly, events such as a) the end of the Cold War, especially because it led to a consensus around the market economy as the organizing principle of the economic sphere; b) the process of globalization in its economic field, fueled by technological progress and competition for participation in the world market; and c) the neoliberal transnational revolution, explain these two points: i) the shift in the development paradigm away from the political mechanism for allocating resources towards the market mechanism; and ii) the emergence of the "competition State". This leads to a redefinition of state activities and, consequently, to a redefinition of diplomacy. Within this framework, foreign policy interacts with industrial policy, trade policy and domestic macroeconomic management.

In short, the policy objectives of the State are changing from a traditional diplomacy that prioritized the balance of power and the pursuit of international peace to a diplomacy that resolutely incorporates the pursuit of social welfare among its objectives. This is what we call "global diplomacy". Global diplomacy encapsulates the idea of a diplomacy where the elements and actions in pursuit of national security as well as collective welfare are balanced. In the international scenario characterized by globalization and the end of the Cold War, there is no longer room for distinctions between high and low politics in diplomacy.

Considering the amount of literature and academic works on "high diplomacy" and realism since Morgenthau, it would be redundant to elaborate on it. We prefer here to outline certain ideas regarding the other major component of global diplomacy. Finally, what are the objectives and activities that characterize "welfare-seeking diplomacy"? Since diplomacy is a state activity, "welfare-seeking diplomacy" is logically affected by the way in which the state now aspires to the creation of social welfare. Due to the redefinition of the role of the state in this sphere, it is possible to recognize two trends: the increasing involvement of the state in creating national competitive advantages, and the model of a competitive state that encourages foreign direct investment.

Today, governments are turning private interests into national interests by promoting and supporting domestic industries in order to ensure their success in global competition. In doing so, foreign policy is closely linked to trade policy, industrial policy and national macroeconomic management. In this conceptual framework, diplomacy can maintain its importance in the machinery of state to the extent that it includes the international tasks encompassed by any current industrial policy, trade policy, or national macroeconomic administration aimed at overcoming domestic problems of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

In this case, tasks such as trade promotion, promotion of foreign direct investment, negotiation of international regulations to facilitate and protect economic interests, technology transfer, international development cooperation, negotiations oriented towards the solution of foreign debt, and so on, become an essential part of diplomacy.

Is there any feasibility for welfare-seeking diplomacy? Of course there is. Let us talk, for example, about industrial policy. What is an "active industrial policy"? It can be broadly defined as a conscious attempt by government to influence the size, composition and activities of the industrial sector. The most important general areas in designing an industrial policy are: i) foreign trade; ii) industrial investment; iii) industry structure and behavior; iv) technology; v) dealing with foreign investors; (J. Weiss 1988:307).

Three of these areas of industrial policy offer sufficient direct scope for an appropriate complementary relationship between diplomacy and industrial policy: foreign trade, technology and dealing with foreign investors. Today, diplomacy is increasingly developing these tasks. This is well illustrated not only at the level of traditional state-state diplomacy in the "international regulation" of trade in the Uruguay Round that created the World Trade Organization (WTO), on issues such as *trade-related investment measures* (TRIMs) and *trade-related intellectual property rights* (TRIPs), and the creation at the Singapore Ministerial Conference of the Working Groups on Trade and Investment, as well as Trade and Competition Policy in December 1996, but also at the level of state-firm diplomacy, on a "transnational" scale, because of the role played by the diplomatic

missions of developing countries in the process of privatization and promotion of foreign investment and trade.

In this sense, it has been suggested that foreign ministries should be considered as support mechanisms "for the development processes of their respective countries through the implementation and formulation of policies that tend to maximize the external articulation of the State and the various sectors of their national societies. This is especially important in a period in which the development process increasingly depends on the quality of the external articulation of the countries" (ECLAC 1996:4).

In conclusion

The process of globalization affects the nature and content of diplomacy understood as a state activity. In this context, the arguments for sustaining "the end of diplomacy" are quite debatable. On the contrary, while recognizing the challenges generated by the globalization process, it is possible to foresee the validity of diplomacy, understood as a global diplomacy that seeks security and welfare.

Global diplomacy emerged from the new international scenario following the end of the Cold War. It appears as a response to the needs of the "competition State" model in the international arena, supporting the competitiveness of national companies and seeking foreign influence. It is based on the new conception of the State's role in the economy and its new action in search of social welfare as a source of internal political legitimacy.

Here it is worth emphasizing that we are talking about the *content* of welfare-oriented diplomacy as an element of global diplomacy. That is to say, on the basis of the invitation formulated by the conditional thesis, we have established the terms in which the concept of diplomacy is redefined by the process of globalization, a redefinition that allows us to foresee the validity of diplomacy as a state activity and a fundamental part of the machinery of the state.

After all, diplomacy cannot be divorced from the state, its institutions,

responsibilities and social, economic and political dogmas. As Hamilton and Langhorne assert, the context, content and forms of diplomacy "have changed and in all probability will continue to change. But in the absence of world government or world revolutions, it is difficult to conceive of any form of order without intermediaries between political entities, be they states, international organizations or even non-state actors" (K. Hamilton and R. Langhorne 1995: 245).

We second this assertion insofar as it preserves the idea of diplomacy as a permanent state institution, whose content goes beyond economic issues, as some authors would seem to claim as the nature of diplomacy today. It is true that, at present, economic issues are emphasized, but this should not lead one to say that "low-politics is now above high-politics". If there is a challenge generated by globalization for the future and the validity of diplomacy, it is that of making diplomacy a global diplomacy, within which the elements of security and welfare finally find a balanced relationship.

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