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## **BETWEEN SOFT AND HARD POWER: THE ESSENCE OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AS A SECURITY TOOL**

**Abstract:** *The article presents a theoretical and conceptual analysis of public diplomacy as a tool for safeguarding state security interests. Employing an actor-centred approach, the paper proposes the operationalization of public diplomacy functions within the security dimension and analyses the applicant-actor's strategies in utilizing public diplomacy to address modern security challenges and protect its interests. The article structurally outlines the advantages and risks associated with various forms and practices of public diplomacy. It argues that in the context of the transformation of the global order and the intensification of hybrid warfare, public diplomacy should be regarded as a fully-fledged security tool used by actors to defend against external destructive influences and to engage in counteraction. This perspective provides grounds to view media diplomacy as an instrument of soft power and hard power.*

**Keywords:** *Public diplomacy, security, challenge, soft power, hybrid warfare, media, propaganda, culture diplomacy, information warfare, cognitive warfare, hard power.*

### **Introduction**

In the era of information and psychological, cognitive, discursive, and narrative wars, and at the same time, the transformation of the world order, studies of non- “hard” methods of state influence on other actors in the international arena are becoming increasingly relevant. Public diplomacy (hereinafter: PD) as one of the soft power instruments plays a crucial role in

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influencing allies and opposition and also acts as an important preventive tool in overcoming potential challenges and threats at the foreign and domestic level. For example, an interesting observation of Illya Havrylenko is that active US public diplomacy in certain regions was correlated primarily with the identification of certain threats to US national security<sup>2</sup>.

The tendency to use PD as a manifestation of soft power, or within the framework of smart power, when it plays a reinforcing function, is, on the one hand, a necessity for great powers to defend their legitimacy. For example, in the context of the current Cold War 2.0, this process is most noticeable, as it is accompanied by the build-up of China's soft power on the one hand, and the US intentions to contain its opposition on the other. These processes, which, of course, involve other actors, lead to the understanding of PD and soft power within the framework of “hard” influence, because, first, they are used as a means of confrontation, and second, as a means of protection.

This view leads to the idea that although PD and propaganda are incompatible both from an ontological and practical point of view, PD is manipulative because of its ability to influence the perception of certain political processes by wide audiences. However, unlike propaganda, PD is more invisible and has a more long-term effect. In one of her speeches in 2009, Deputy Secretary of State Judith McHale aptly noted: “This is not a propaganda contest – it is relationship race”<sup>3</sup>. Public diplomacy in all its diversity is aimed at interacting with the audience, understanding its needs and moods, and depends on its reaction. This interaction is the basis for building trusting relationships, which is the goal of PD, and increasing the attractiveness of the actor who channels soft power.

The same need arises for peripheral and semi-peripheral states that do not have enough resources and capabilities to fully broadcast their favourable narratives and messages to the world. Such actors are more vulnerable to foreign information and mass cultural influences, especially if they come from stronger states. Accordingly, PD becomes a necessary tool for protecting the domestic audience on the one hand, and on the other hand, it ensures the protection of their interests abroad. The most relevant example today is Ukraine, which, despite its low soft power potential, was able to secure the commitment of allies and partners at the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, including through public diplomacy practices that were applied at all levels of foreign audiences – from the political elites of Western partner countries and their societies, which have a direct impact on decision-making

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<sup>2</sup> I. I. Havrylenko, *Heopolitychnyi vymir publichnoi diplomatii SShA*, “Mizhnarodni vidnosyny” Seriiia “Politychni Nauky” 2014, No. 3, pp. 25-38.

<sup>3</sup> N. Snow, *Public Diplomacy in a National Security Context*, “The Routledge Handbook of Security Studies” 2017, 2nd edition, p. 410.

within the democratic system.

These observations, which indicate the contextual nature of the use of PD, necessitate a more detailed analysis of it as a security tool of the state. The deepening of the theoretical and conceptual understanding of PD leads not only to the improvement of the methodological tools of the study but is also important for practitioners, especially in the field of protecting the security of the state, society and the individual.

### **Public Diplomacy as a National Security Tool**

PD should be understood as a tool used by an actor (state, organization and non-state actors) “[...] to understand cultures, attitudes, and behaviours, build and manage relationships, and influence opinions”<sup>4</sup>. As a foreign policy practice, PD has a wide range of manifestations and actors involved, which makes it a difficult object for quantitative analysis, but given the tendency to use soft methods of influence on other actors, it requires considerable attention from both practitioners and scholars. Today, as noted by Nancy Snow, the PD is as essential as the military readiness of the state<sup>5</sup>.

The subjects of public diplomacy are as diverse as its forms and methods of implementation. For example, in 2016, the US Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy noted that the involvement of young people, civil society representatives, opinion leaders, and journalists is a critical factor in effective public diplomacy, especially in the context of global ideological conflict, which, in turn, challenges not only the national security of individual actors but also the liberal order as a whole<sup>6</sup>. The security context of the PD is growing, and even more so in the context of the unstable international world order.

If we talk about the normative aspects of the use of PD, we should pay attention to the heterogeneity of motives and intentions for its use. For example, Alan K. Henrikson identifies the following strategies of public diplomacy: 1. consolidation (interaction with partner countries); 2. deterrence (both tactical and strategic); 3. penetration (to the audiences needed by the applicant actor); 4. expansion (dissemination of cultural goods, values, messages, and ideas); 5. transformation (direct influence that leads to

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<sup>4</sup> R. Desai-Trilokekar, E. H. Masry, *The Nexus of Public Diplomacy, Soft Power, and National Security: A Comparative Study of International Education in the U.S. and Canada*, “Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education” 2022, Vol.14, Issue 5, p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> N. Snow, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Its History, Problems, and Promise*, “Readings in Propaganda and Persuasion: New and Classic Essays”, Pub. Sage 2006, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> S. MacDonald, *Soft Power Today Measuring the Influences and Effects*, The Institute for International Cultural Relations, October 2017, pp. 14-15.

qualitative changes in the behaviour of the recipient actor)<sup>7</sup>. Such a taxonomy of strategies is necessary to understand both the motives of the applicant actor in using soft power and to determine the necessary behaviour in solving the state's security problems. However, at the same time, it is a reason to consider PD not only as a reputational, image and branding tool but also as a full-fledged means of conducting information, cognitive and discursive wars of our time.

Accordingly, considering Artem Patalakh's aggregate analytical model, which considers the interaction of the applicant and recipient actor, as well as the behaviour of the competing actor<sup>8</sup>, the following functions of PD towards different audiences can be formulated (tab. 1):

*Tab. 1. Operationalization of public diplomacy functions within the framework of ensuring national security*

<b><i>Regarding allied and partner actors</i></b>	<b><i>Regarding competing actors</i></b>	<b><i>Regarding internal audience</i></b>
Consolidation function	Proactive function	The function of including non-state actors in the state's foreign policy activities
The function of deepening socio-cultural, economic, scientific (etc.) dependence	The function of establishing favourable relations	The function of mobilization of diplomatic missions and non-state actors abroad in influencing the formation of the state's perception
Explanatory function	The function of information and psychological influence on the enemy's population	The function of informing about foreign policy interests
The function of forming security agendas	Self-desecuritization function	The function of developing assertive abilities of the population in responding to external destructive influences

<sup>7</sup> K. A. Henrikson, *What Can Public Diplomacy Achieve?* "Discussion Papers in Diplomacy" 2006, No.104, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, p. 7, <[https://www.jura.fu-berlin.de/fachbereich/einrichtungen/oeffentliches-recht/lehrende/bolewskiw/dokumente/1\\_Creative-Diplomacy/Henrikson\\_what\\_can\\_public\\_diplomacy\\_achieve.pdf](https://www.jura.fu-berlin.de/fachbereich/einrichtungen/oeffentliches-recht/lehrende/bolewskiw/dokumente/1_Creative-Diplomacy/Henrikson_what_can_public_diplomacy_achieve.pdf)> (30.11.2024).

<sup>8</sup> A. Patalakh, *Assessment of Soft Power Strategies: Towards an Aggregative Analytical Model for Country-Focused Case Study Research*, "CIRR" 2016, Vol. 76, p. 87.

Securitization function	Deterrent function	The function of reflecting oneself in the positive experience of being seen by other actors
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Source: Own source

If we take into account the above-proposed functions of the PD in the context of interaction with partners and allies, its main task is partnership sustainability. While consolidation and deepening of interdependence is the basis of the common good of any sustainable and long-term partnership and can bring dividends to all its participants, the function of securitization, shaping the security discourse favourable to the applicant actor, and explaining the applicant actor's own foreign policy decisions can be manipulative. For example, during the active struggle against terrorism in the United States and the destabilization of the Middle East in the new century, their PD performed these functions, which was to legitimize US foreign policy decisions among its closest partners in the EU. However, attempts to unite the West against the threat of terrorism cannot be called successful, which points to the need to find more thoughtful and sophisticated approaches to shaping the strategy of the PD in cases of both collective and self-security.

Considering the functions of the PD concerning competing actors, it is worth emphasizing its offensive nature. The anticipatory function, for example, allows the applicant actor to gain primacy in interpreting and broadcasting its own, favourable vision of events and phenomena, as well as in assessing its own foreign and domestic policy decisions in the global media space. The content and context of the PD will depend on the recipient actor, but it may contain practices that harm the reputational security of the competing actor among its allies and neutral actors. Instead, the functions of self-desecuritization and deterrence are more likely to be a reaction of the applicant actor to the use of negative soft power by a competing actor and help to establish trusting relations with those actors that are in the zone of political interests of both competing or conflicting parties. At the same time, the ability to use stable information and mass-cultural influences on the competitor's population is important, especially for states claiming world leadership. Just as during the Cold War, especially in its final phase, US mass culture played the role of a Trojan horse in the competition for the sympathies of the Soviet population, so in Cold War 2.0 we can see attempts by competing parties to influence each other's audiences through the dissemination of cultural and informational goods. The practice of PD, whose normatively positive perception is often useful for certain actors to mask their intentions, becomes their guide.

The effects of the external orientation of the PD on the internal audience of the applicant actor are poorly researched. However, it is worth recognizing that

a positive experience of a state's PD abroad can have a positive domestic political effect. For example, civil society, opinion leaders, artists, and celebrities become actors of the PD and thus take on the task of informing, explaining, and promoting the interests of the state, including security interests, not only abroad but also at home. This, in turn, contributes to a better awareness of the domestic audience of the state's security priorities. This practice, accordingly, helps to maintain the population's resilience to hostile information and psychological influences and can contribute to greater trust in the government. In addition, a positive perception of the state by other actors gained through effective PD, is an important component of self-perception, as it contributes to a positive experience of identifying with one's country. For example, the heroic vision of partner countries and the support of allies for Ukraine at the beginning and throughout the Russian full-scale invasion had a direct impact on the resilience and consolidation of the Ukrainian people at a critical time.

Having formulated the main functions of the PD in the security dimension, it is worth paying attention to possible models of using the PD in the security interests of the state. The division into the following types of interrelationship between the SP and public diplomacy as its main instrument with national security, proposed by Roopa Desai-Trilokekar and Hani El Masry:

1. Conflicting: harsh and sharp instruments offset the efforts of public diplomacy, making it useless or ineffective;
2. Complementary: SP acts as a factor of reputational security;
3. Securitized: public diplomacy becomes a tool of defense;
4. Conditioned by “smart power”<sup>9</sup>: a balanced combination of soft power and hard forms of influence;
5. National security conditioned by the involvement/integration of soft power: attention of the claimant actor to both the projection of its soft power and the soft power of other actors that articulates in the space of the actor-claimant<sup>9</sup>.

Thus, based on the above operationalization, it can be concluded that PD becomes effective for security protection only when it is consciously used (directly or indirectly) as a security instrument. In case of failure to ensure a reasonable PD strategy, which is based on the foreign policy agenda of the applicant actor and takes into account the peculiarities of relations with a particular recipient actor, attempts to influence its perception may be futile or even undermine the latter's trust.

A well-known researcher of soft power and public diplomacy, as well as the author of the concept of “reputational security” Nicholas J. Cull, analyzing the practices of PD in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, identifies four strategies

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<sup>9</sup> R. Desai-Trilokekar, E. H. Masry, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115.

of public diplomacy of claimant actors:

1. self-praise (emphasis on successful experience in combating threats);
2. criticizing others (emphasizing the failures of other actors to promote one's (more) positive experience in dealing with threats);
3. engaging others through gifts/public diplomacy of actions (manifested in the provision of humanitarian, and financial assistance to the recipient actor, which signals increased cooperation);
4. multilateral cooperation (consolidation and unification of partners to address common challenges and problems)<sup>10</sup>.

It can be assumed that the theoretical differentiation of the “soft” behavior of the claimant actor to protect its security interests, presented above, is also relevant for the analysis of other security contexts. For example, the US public diplomacy of action, namely humanitarian aid, has worked effectively in predominantly Muslim Indonesia. Two years after the 2004 tsunami, a survey of Indonesian perceptions of the United States showed a threefold increase in sympathy for the United States and a significant decline in support for Osama bin Laden<sup>11</sup>. Another example of the success of the public diplomacy of action strategy is the U.S. military assistance to Japan after the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant accident, which included humanitarian support and assistance in restoring infrastructure. A 2011 poll of Japanese citizens showed a significant increase in favorability toward the United States (85%), which remains stable<sup>12</sup>.

### **Security aspects of public diplomacy practices and forms**

So, given the regularity of the importance of using public diplomacy in protecting the security interests of the state, the following table of potential benefits and risks of various manifestations of PD is offered for review (tab. 2):

*Tab. 2. Benefits, opportunities and risks of public diplomacy practices and manifestations*

	<b>Potential benefits and opportunities</b>	<b>Risks</b>
	1. Acts invisibly	1. Hostile perception of the

<sup>10</sup> N. J. Cull, *From Soft Power to Reputational Security: Rethinking Public Diplomacy and Cultural Diplomacy for a Dangerous Age*, “Place Branding and Public Diplomacy” 2022, Vol. 2018, pp.18-21.

<sup>11</sup> M. Wallin, *The New Public Diplomacy Imperative. America’s Vital Need to Communicate Strategically*, New York “American Security Project” 2012, p. 16.

<sup>12</sup> N. Snow, *Public Diplomacy in... , op. cit.*, p. 410.

<b><i>Cultural diplomacy</i></b>	2. Promotes a simplified perception of the norms, values, and socio-cultural characteristics of the state	cultural product (for example, the perception of the distribution of certain cultural goods as cultural imperialism by the recipient actor) 2. Inability to decode certain cultural goods in the cognitive space of the recipient actor
<b><i>Sport diplomacy</i></b>	1. Accessibility to wide audiences 2. Demonstration of mutual respect	1. Prohibition of participation in international sports competitions 2. Image and reputational losses
<b><i>Education and science diplomacy</i></b>	1. Ability to influence young people through educational exchanges 2. Creating a sense of belonging among allied actors 3. Demonstration of the actor's ability to solve security problems and formulate a security agenda 4. Significant image dividends 5. Reducing the radicalization of young people	1. The use of scientific achievements by other countries and theft of innovations 2. The need to limit exchange opportunities for representatives of hostile countries, which increases the conflict potential of relations
<b><i>Military and defense diplomacy</i></b>	1. Ensuring regional influence 2. Promoting consolidation of partners 3. Participation in training of partners to manage their security 4. Indirect participation in military operations (through consulting, military exercises) 5. Preventing crises and minimizing hostility	1. Perception by a competing actor of increased military diplomacy with partners as an immediate threat 2. Theft of the latest developments in military technology 3. Incompatibility of goals, objectives, and motives of interacting actors
	1. Formation of favourable narratives and an attractive	1. Rejection of content by the audience (apathy, criticism,



<p><b><i>Media diplomacy, cyber diplomacy and twiplomacy</i></b></p>	<p>image of the state as a tool for protection against hostile influences</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Rapid response to security challenges</li> <li>3. Proximity to the audience</li> <li>4. Creation of a security agenda and fixation on security problems</li> <li>5. Flexibility in formulating and adjusting the problematic discourse</li> </ol>	<p>resistance)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Information operations to destabilize the information space</li> </ol>
<p><b><i>Domestic public diplomacy</i></b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensures internal consolidation and assertiveness to foreign information and mass-cultural interventions</li> <li>2. Mobilization of the internal audience in the creation of the “SP”, including civil society</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poorly thought-out communication strategy, the unwillingness of opinion leaders to interact</li> <li>2. Misunderstanding/rejection of the existing security discourse by the population and lack of interest in mechanisms for solving security problems and challenges</li> <li>3. Lack of competencies in the field of media literacy in society</li> <li>4. Prevailing information, psychological and cultural activities of the competing actor in terms of effectiveness</li> <li>5. “Black swan” effects</li> </ol>

Source: Own source

Having analyzed the essence of public diplomacy as a national security tool, as well as having identified the main potential benefits and risks of using certain types of PD practices, it is necessary to consider their specific features in more detail.

Cultural diplomacy occupies a prominent place in both scholarly discourse and practice, as the dissemination and popularization of cultural goods involves

the widest possible audiences and can influence the recipient actor most imperceptibly. The ability to influence world views, political assessments and preferences, and even lifestyles has been the subject of many scholarly works, but even such a soft tool as cultural diplomacy requires its practitioner to understand the context of its use. Flexibility and the ability to manifest itself in the non-political sphere for the recipient are important for effective soft power. For example, Russia's PD before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which was certainly regionally differentiated, did not provide the results Russia expected. Victoria Hudson's 2015 study demonstrated an identical skeptical discourse among young people in eastern Ukraine that is characteristic of the Western regions<sup>13</sup>. As Olena Komar aptly notes, Russian soft power is “[...] a continuation of propaganda by attractive means”<sup>14</sup>. However, soft power, as noted earlier, although manipulative, has little to do with propaganda. That is why there is a view of cultural diplomacy as a set of practices that allows dominant countries to consolidate their norms and values abroad on an imperialist basis<sup>15</sup>. Accordingly, the main task of the applicant actor (especially those with a high soft power potential) is to neutralize this side effect in the recipient's perception.

The scientific sphere has also become a more tangible security tool, because in the context of the current confrontation between superpowers, the development of new technologies and leading research is “[...] an element of defence, or the achievement of the goal of becoming a world power”<sup>16</sup>. German scholars also emphasize that scientific and educational diplomacy play a key role in creating a sense of belonging to the liberal order among allies<sup>17</sup>. This is confirmed by the thesis that the United States has always approached international educational exchange as a factor that promotes mutual support and security interests<sup>18</sup>. An example is the Fulbright program during the Cold War.

In addition, educational and scientific exchanges are a potential factor in

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<sup>13</sup> V. Hudson, “Forced to Friendship”? *Russian (Mis-)Understandings of Soft Power and the Implications for Audience Attraction in Ukraine*, “POLITICS” 2015, Vol. 35, Issue 3-4, p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> O. Komar, *Soft Power i propahanda u Rosiisko- Ukrainskii viini: epistemolohichnyi analiz*, “Ukrainoznavchyi almanakh” 2022, Vyp. 30, p. 86.

<sup>15</sup> T. Mirrlees, *American Soft Power, or, American Cultural Imperialism?*, ed. C. Mooers, *The new imperialists: Ideologies of empire*, Oneworld Publications, Oxford 2006, p. 199.

<sup>16</sup> J. Mukherjee, *Die Wissenschaft muss sich ihrer Bedeutung für die nationale Sicherheit bewusst sein*, “49 Security: Impulse für die Nationale Sicherheitsstrategie”, <<https://fourinesecurity.de/2022/09/26/die-wissenschaft-muss-sich-ihrer-bedeutung-fuer-die-nationale-sicherheit-bewusst-sein>> (30.11.2024).

<sup>17</sup> H. K. Anheier, E. L. Knudsen, R. A. List, *Soft Power und die neue Geopolitik: Germany in vergleichender Perspektive*, „ifa ECP Monitor”, Stuttgart 2023, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> R. Desai-Trilokekar, E. H. Masry, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

reducing extremist views and improving the image<sup>19</sup>. For example, one of the Atlantic Council's 2018 reports recommends that the US government immediately establish educational and scientific exchanges with young people in Sudan who, in isolation, are committed to anti-Americanism, and thus prevent destructive consequences in further interstate cooperation<sup>20</sup>.

The notion of domestic public diplomacy emerged not so long ago, but the growing information and mass-cultural influence on the domestic audience of the applicant actor necessitates the development of tools to develop assertive abilities among the population and mobilize the audience in the creation of soft power. In addition, the low level of well-being and dissatisfaction with various aspects of the country's population can become an "Achilles' heel" in the state's attempts to magnetize attention. At the same time, according to German researchers, today people are increasingly affected by global actions or inaction, which necessitates the government to explain and discuss its foreign policy decisions to the public<sup>21</sup>. Another important aspect pointed out by Margaret Seymour is that the solution to the US domestic problems can reflect the goals of its foreign policy, which will result in protecting the American people from threatening operations and strengthening confidence abroad<sup>22</sup>. However, it can be assumed that domestic public diplomacy is more intensively used to consolidate society in non-democratic systems. For example, the "Chinese dream" is also primarily a tool for consolidating society in China, and only then a projection of itself to the world. No wonder Hu Jintao, in one of his speeches, defines the cultural development of soft power as a means of fighting for national power<sup>23</sup>. Indeed, it is quite clear that China's soft power is an essential component of regime stability and is used as a convincing argument in its favour in the context of avoiding public discontent. Nicholas J. Cull rightly points out: "Intense political divisions are another matter and constitute a much greater danger to the reputational security of the country than stories invented by enemies"<sup>24</sup>.

In addition to the above-mentioned aspects, public awareness of the state's

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 128.

<sup>20</sup> T. Carney, M. C. Yates, *Sudan: Soft Power, cultural engagement, and national security*, "Atlantic Council" March 8, 2018, p. 10.

<sup>21</sup> N. Renvert, M. Herkendell, J. Dahm, u.a., *Frieden, Sicherheit und Soziale Demokratie*, Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Dezember 2017, p. 76.

<sup>22</sup> M. Seymour, *Building Soft Power Back Better?* "Foreign Policy Research Institute", <<https://www.fpri.org/article/2021/03/building-soft-power-back-better/>> (30.11.2018)

<sup>23</sup> W. Zhang, *China's cultural future: from soft power to comprehensive national power*, "International Journal of Cultural Policy" 2010, Vol. 16, No. 4, p. 398.

<sup>24</sup> N. J. Cull, *Public Diplomacy and the Road to Reputational Security: Analogue Lessons from US History for a Digital Age*, Williamsburg, VA "AidData at William & Mary" 2022, p. 21.

security priorities is also important, as it determines the security orientation of society. Thus, strengthening institutions and civil society and ensuring economic development play an essential role for security, especially for fragile states<sup>25</sup>. Nancy Snow, in a work that focuses on public diplomacy as a security tool, points out that the threat of terrorism is a lesson that an informed and globally active, as well as a consolidated American public is a key component of US security<sup>26</sup>. This, in turn, is evidence that effective soft power should also be seen as a domestic political tool. The Concept of the State Targeted Program for the Formation of a Positive International Image of Ukraine for 2013-2015 states, in particular, that a positive vision of the state by the world community contributes to raising the level of self-awareness, strengthening social unity, and socio-economic transformations<sup>27</sup>, which, as it turned out for Ukraine on February 24, 2022, is a great resource in its ability to withstand large-scale threats. Ironically, Joseph Nye in his latest work refers to the following thesis: "Security is like oxygen: you do not tend to notice it until you begin to lose it"<sup>28</sup>. Another example of realizing the importance of positive foreign perceptions for domestic attitudes is the understanding of NATO's PD. For example, Article 2 of The North Atlantic Treaty refers not only to the development of peaceful and friendly international relations but also to the promotion of conditions for internal stability and prosperity<sup>29</sup>.

However, other actors' perceptions of the applicant may have more tangible effects than domestic actors' understanding of the attractiveness of the state and alliances and their subsequent identification with the subject of this attractiveness, namely, to influence domestic and foreign policy decisions. N. Cull, the author of the concept of "reputational security," provides an example of such an effect, which is the reverse of the applicant actor's reaction to other actors' perception of themselves: the key to solving racial problems and expanding civil rights for Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy administrations was concern about the construction of the state's international image<sup>30</sup>. Accordingly, the degree of reaction of the recipients of PD and soft power can influence domestic and foreign policy decisions of states, primarily in the name of image and reputational dividends.

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<sup>25</sup> A. N. Uste, U. S. Aydin, *New Dimensions of Soft Power in the 21st Century*, "Interdisciplinary Journal of Research and Development" May 2023, Vol. 10, No. 1, p. 201.

<sup>26</sup> N. Snow, *U.S. Public Diplomacy: Its History ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

<sup>27</sup> D. S. Korotkov, *Kontsepsiia «m'iakoi syly» v konteksti zovnishnopolitychnoi stratehii Ukrainy*, Naukovo-teoretychnyi almanakh "Hrani" 2018, Vol. 21, Issue 9, p. 135.

<sup>28</sup> J. S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power and Great-Power Competition. Shifting Sands in the Balance of Power Between the United States and China*, Springer 2023, p. 132.

<sup>29</sup> The North Atlantic Treaty, *NATO*, April, 4, 1949, <[https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm)> (30.11.2018).

<sup>30</sup> N. J. Cull, *Public Diplomacy ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Cyber diplomacy, as well as media diplomacy, play a crucial role in shaping favourable narratives and an attractive image of the state as a tool for protection against hostile influences, especially in the digital age<sup>31</sup>. In addition, cyber diplomacy makes it possible to create joint multilevel infospheres between allies, which ensures even greater interdependence. For example, the US Tor project, developed by the US Naval Research Laboratory, provides foreign users with software for anonymity in communication and data transmission, thus bypassing state censorship<sup>32</sup>. This practice should be attributed to the US soft power, as it provides concrete opportunities to realize benefits such as the freedom to seek, reproduce, and share information, which contrasts with the lack of such opportunities in authoritarian states. Media diplomacy is distinguished by the ability to broadcast the necessary messages and narratives to a wide audience, which requires a preliminary study of the specifics of the recipient. For example, in 2002, to improve the image of the United States, several videos were published (as part of the Common Values Initiative) to demonstrate respect for Islam by describing the positive experience of Muslims in the United States<sup>33</sup>. This material was broadcast in the Middle East and Asia but was doomed to failure because it did not meet the needs of the target audience<sup>34</sup>.

Defence and military diplomacy is also a significant component of a state's soft power. Here we should refer to the work of Kyle J. Wolfley, who argues that a state's military potential is a factor in attracting and persuading other actors and is important for understanding modern international competition<sup>35</sup>. The main ways of “soft power” that the researcher identifies are: 1. engaging allies; 2. influencing the values and roles of other states' militaries through socialization; 3. training other armies and delegating security tasks to other actors; 4. managing allies' behaviour through security guarantees<sup>36</sup>. Lech Drab defines defensive diplomacy as a significant mechanism for crisis prevention, international prevention and international security, as well as a tool for

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<sup>31</sup> U. Bergmane, *Public Diplomacy as a National Security Tool*, “Foreign Policy Research Institute” 2017, <<https://www.fpri.org/article/2017/05/public-diplomacy-national-security-tool/>> (30.11.2018)

<sup>32</sup> M. Wallin, *op.cit.*, p. 20.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 12.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> J. K. Wolfley, *The Shape of Things to Come: Why the Pentagon Must Embrace Soft Power to Compete with China*, “Modern War Institute” 2021, <<https://mwi.westpoint.edu/the-shape-of-things-to-come-why-the-pentagon-must-embrace-soft-power-to-compete-with-china/>> (30.11.2018).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*.

minimizing hostility<sup>37</sup>. However, given their non-normative nature, soft power and public diplomacy within the defence and military sphere should not be viewed as exclusively peacekeeping practices. For example, the US Office of Strategic Influence uses soft power as a strategic and tactical tool in confronting rival countries<sup>38</sup>.

Thus, having analysed different types of manifestations of PD, we can conclude that PD, in comparison with other types of non- “hard” influence, can take over the task of protecting national interests at all levels, having an impact on the perception of not only the political establishment of the recipient actor but also on the formation of the opinion of the applicant actor by the population. The multifaceted nature of its manifestations, as well as the number and diversity of PD agents and, accordingly, its recipients, demonstrate the high potential of this tool in protecting the state's security in both the short and long term. Thus, it can be argued that PD, in contrast to more aggressive forms of influence (such as propaganda, black PR, disinformation, etc.), is a safer means of winning minds and hearts around the world.

## Conclusion

Given the above considerations, we can conclude that in the time of transformation of the world order, characterized by tensions between superpowers, PD occupies a prominent place not only in foreign policy but also in the domestic security dimension. Although the multifaceted nature and diversity of the forms and manifestations of PD require the scientific community to develop a more accurate methodological map of its study, it is necessary to understand the behavior and motives of the actors that direct it. There is also a need to theoretically and practically improve its mechanisms and understand the criteria for its effectiveness in specific historical cases.

It should also be noted that although PD is the main instrument of soft power, it should be seen as a means of achieving the actor's goals in the security dimension without burdening PD with normative moral and ethical functions. In an era when the concept of propaganda is giving way to more subtle cognitive influences, and phenomena such as fake news and disinformation within the framework of information and cognitive wars do not play a decisive role in the long run, it is the practice of public diplomacy that operates discreetly that becomes both a tool for displacing the influence of rival actors and a means of strengthening relations with allies. In addition, within the framework of the actor's PD, the practice of public diplomacy, which in theory

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<sup>37</sup> L. Drab, *Defence diplomacy – an important tool for the implementation of foreign policy and security of the state*, “Security and Defence Quarterly” 2018, Vol. 20. No. 3, pp. 59-61.

<sup>38</sup> T. Mirllees, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

is aimed at an external recipient, brings significant dividends for the internal audience - both in the context of involving civil society and the population in participating in the practice of PD and in the context of positive experience in perceiving oneself at the normative, cognitive and affective levels.

At the same time, it should be noted that although PD is aimed at improving the recipient actor's perception of the applicant actor, the public diplomacy strategy should be balanced and formulated, as well as based on the context of relations with a particular recipient actor and its interests. Otherwise, if such data are not taken into account, both for large states and states with low soft power potential, the use of this tool to influence the perception of other actors may not bring the desired results or even have negative consequences in further forming relations.

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