

LANGUAGE AND DIPLOMACY

*Edited by
Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik*

*Prepared by
Academic Training Institute*

Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik

The history of our interest in language and diplomacy is paradigmatic of our activities in the field of information technology and diplomacy. Eight years ago we started research and practical exercises on the influence of information technology in diplomacy. The more involved we became with the Internet and IT, the more we realised the crucial importance of many classical issues in diplomacy. One of these is language. While technology is replacing or at least changing the nature of many functions and methods of traditional diplomacy such as routine consular activities, communications, and information gathering, at the same time it is leading us to re-assert the importance of other core issues and techniques, including language use, negotiation, and such elements where human creativity can be assisted but not replaced by machines.

We have recently noticed a convergence between the centrality of texts in Internet-based communication and diplomacy. The Internet has reinforced the importance of texts as the key medium of modern human communication, in a variety of forms such as e-mail, websites, and hypertext-based documents. And for diplomacy texts have always been crucial: the richness and complexity of diplomatic activities, including negotiations, representation, social activities and media coverage is crystallised in texts - diplomatic documents. Technology is already aiding with the use of texts in diplomacy in a number of ways, contributing to the sharing, storing and preservation of documents. IT assisted methods of analysis such as DiploAnalytica can reveal the layers of information and knowledge, both focal and tacit, contained in diplomatic documents. IT also offers possibilities for the creation of more adequate documents, both in working and final phases. Diplomatic negotiations conducted via the Internet remove the trappings of direct communication such as body language and eye-contact, allowing negotiators to focus on the document text.

From the side of technology, given current trends, it seems likely that the upcoming phase of Internet development will focus on management of unstructured information - texts and documents - as was the initial intention of conceptual fathers of the Internet Vannevar Bush, Ted Nelson and the Internet creator Tim Berners-Lee. Key Internet jargon will shift from bandwidth, servers, and such technical terms to syntax, semantics, analogies and other linguistics-related terms. Techniques and methodologies will focus on extracting relevant information and knowledge from the vast amount of textual resources available.

On a human level, IT has increased opportunities for direct communication between people, making awareness and understanding of cultural differences in communication more and more important. People from different cultures and backgrounds are more often than at any time in the past in direct contact, via e-mail, chat, and other Internet-based communication tools. At the same time, IT is changing the way we use language to communicate: indirectly, as fast and personal communication leads to less formality; and directly, as we begin to explore new possibilities for enriching our communication with IT-based tools. Again, these new communication methods bring us back to text: e-mail and chat are text-based.

Our experience in diplomacy has shown that the Internet can enrich language use: it is not a question of either/or. We believe that this applies also to other language-related fields such as linguistics and literary theory. Linguistics circles are currently debating changes IT will bring to the function and destiny of language and text. While postmodernists are burying narrative altogether, traditionalists are crusading against technology. As in many other situations in the history of technology, time and use will even the playing field and through the interplay between old and new, between old dusty manuscripts and new hypertexts, a new paradigm will develop which won't be either/or but both.

This volume is a collection of papers presented in Malta at two conferences: the Second International Conference on Knowledge and Diplomacy (February 2000), and the International Conference on Language and Diplomacy (January 2001). The papers are ordered roughly by topic, however, the wide range of subjects and approaches make any strict organisation impossible.

The first paper, presented by Professor Peter Serracino-Inglott as the keynote address at the 2001 conference, examines the serious issue of diplomatic communication in a playful manner, through one of the most paradigmatic and creative examples of language use: joking. Inglott takes us through a history and inter-cultural survey of joking, finishing with the proposal that a new type of joke, which he refers to as the "serious joke," may aid the diplomatic practice of the 21st century, inspiring creative approaches to problem solving through new perspectives and shifting frames of reference.

The next several papers introduce language and diplomacy in general terms, each author drawing on his own experience through years of diplomatic practice. Ambassador Stanko Nick takes a practical approach, examining issues such as the choice of language in bilateral and multilateral meetings, the messages conveyed by language choice, difficulties posed by interpretation, and aspects of diplomatic language including nuance, extra-linguistic signalling, and understatement. Language, according to Nick, is not a simple tool but "often the very essence of the diplomatic vocation."

Dr Abu Jaber brings a cross-cultural element to the discussion of language and diplomacy, surveying the historical development of diplomatic language particularly in the Arab world. However, he points out that the very idea of a language of diplomacy "is that it should not be culture-bound but an attempt at transcending such boundaries to create a quasi neutral vehicle of exchange." Abu Jaber notes that the language of diplomacy has to this date not been successful in resolving violence between nations and peoples. Yet he believes that solutions to violent conflict are to be found in diplomacy, and that now more than ever before, the formalised language of diplomacy is necessary.

With examples from a detailed case study of the historical New Zealand Treaty of Waitangi, Aldo Matteucci shows us that the diplomat's job is to decode language. Matteucci writes that all language comes with "hidden baggage": hidden meanings and intentions, historical and political context, legal precedents, etc. In order to find these hidden meanings the diplomat needs a broad understanding of the context of a situation. Diplomats should start with the context rather than the words themselves, because "for all our fascination for the subtlety and suppleness of words, words are but very flexible tools."

The next two papers both address the language of negotiation, each concentrating on a specific cultural setting. Professor Raymond Cohen writes that "when negotiation takes place across languages and cultures the scope for misunderstanding increases. So much of negotiation involves arguments about words and concepts that it cannot be assumed that language is secondary." With numerous examples of the culturally-grounded references, associations and nuances of certain words and phrases in English and the Middle Eastern languages (Arabic, Turkish, Farsi and Hebrew), Cohen introduces his project of developing a negotiating lexicon of the Middle East as a guide for conducting or following negotiations in those languages.

Professor Paul Sharp discusses negotiation with American mediators. He notes that most literature on negotiation is written to advise Americans and other Westerners about negotiating with foreigners. However, "for the diplomatic profession...how to talk to Americans is a much larger shared problem than how the Americans talk to everybody else." Sharp points out that many of the problems other nations encounter when dealing with Americans are not cultural at all, but common problems any nation faces when dealing with a richer and more powerful nation. As advice, he suggests the same rules that are given to American diplomats for dealing with others: show respect for other cultures and make necessary adjustments to avoid offence.

Ambassador Kishan Rana introduces the dimension of diplomatic signalling. Beginning with a reference to the Bhagwad Gita, one of the sacred texts of the Hindus, Rana outlines the qualities of good diplomatic dialogue: not causing distress to the listener, precision and good use of language, and truthfulness. With support from a number of case studies based on his vast and varied experience, Rana suggests that diplomacy today calls for directness rather than the traditional subtle signalling which may be unclear and lead to misunderstandings in the current multi-cultural environment. He concludes that the context and setting of today's diplomacy needs to guide our practices and in particular our methods of diplomatic training.

Two papers address the topic of rhetoric and diplomacy. Drazen Pehar writes about historical rhetoric; specifically the historical analogies used by diplomats and politicians to strengthen their arguments and convince others of their views. Using numerous historical and current examples, especially from the Balkans region, Pehar explains why historical analogies are used. He examines the role historical analogies often play in worsening relations between nations and bringing about conflict. To counter these negative effects, he proposes several tactics for enlightened and intelligent diplomats to use when employing rhetoric, involving the "ambiguation" of analogies. Pehar advises that "when it comes to the use of language and its many styles, diplomats must bear in mind that they have a choice."

Benoit Girardin takes a philosophical approach to rhetoric - along with the issues of interpretation and ethics. He examines each of these three fields and its relation to diplomatic practice and negotiations, showing with examples how diplomatic language exhibiting either a lack or an excess of any of these qualities may lead to problems. Girardin pays special attention to the Mediterranean region and the monotheistic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam that have featured in its history and culture. He proposes a set of basic principles for diplomats: methods for maintaining or attempting to create a situation in which interpretation, rhetoric and ethics are all balanced and productive negotiation is possible.

Of central concern in the field of negotiation is the use of ambiguity to find formulations acceptable to all parties. Professor Norman Scott looks at the contrasting roles of ambiguity and precision in conference diplomacy. He explains that while documents drafters usually try to avoid ambiguity, weaker parties to an agreement may have an interest in inserting ambiguous provisions, while those with a stronger position or more to gain will push for precision. Scott provides examples from a variety of trade and agricultural negotiations, stressing the different roles played by developing and developed countries, and the evolution of special terminology which has entrenched ambiguous concepts in this sort of negotiations.

Drazen Pehar looks specifically at the use of ambiguities in peace agreements. Pehar explains why ambiguities are so often used and why diplomats and others involved in international relations may think it best to eliminate ambiguities from peace agreements altogether. He goes on to demonstrate, however, with numerous examples, that while ambiguities have led to a continuation or re-starting of hostilities in some cases, in many other cases they have provided the only bridge between conflicting parties and allowed for a cessation of violence. Pehar presents and discusses in detail pros and cons for the use of ambiguities in peace agreements, providing a number of guidelines and considerations for their successful use.

The examination of written documents in diplomacy brings us to the next two papers, both of which deal with documents or texts. Professor Dietrich Kappeler provides an overview of the various types of formal written documents used in diplomacy, pointing out where the practices surrounding these documents have changed in recent years. He also discusses multi-language treaties, including the difficulties of translation and interpretation. Kappeler concludes with an examination of the impact of information technology: its use in the preparation and preservation of documents, its effect on the form of documents, and the problems it brings for guaranteeing the authenticity of texts.

Rather than individual documents, Dr Keith Hamilton looks at the process and purpose of compiling collections of documents. He focuses on his own experience as the editor of Documents on British Policy Overseas, and particularly on his work publishing a collection of documents concerning the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe from 1972

until 1975. He warns: "Published collections of diplomatic documents have, however, to be approached with caution. They are by their nature selections. Not only do their compilers, the editors, exercise choice in deciding which individual documents should make up the collection; they may also decide on the issues to be so documented, and the periods and geographical areas to be covered."

The next several papers each take a fresh approach to the issue of language and diplomacy. Edmond Pascual interprets diplomatic communication with the linguistic tools of pragmatics. He begins by reminding us that while the diplomat is a "man of action," the particular nature of the diplomat's action is that it consists of speech. Pascual applies three concepts of pragmatics to diplomatic discourse: speech as an intentional act; the effects of the act of speech; and the role of the unsaid in the act of speech. He attempts to answer the question, posed by the French linguist Ducrot, "Why is it possible to use words to exert influence, why are certain words, in certain circumstances, so effective?"

Ivan Callus and Ruben Borg apply a very different set of tools to the analysis of diplomatic discourse. Their paper applies the discourse of deconstruction, a form of literary criticism, to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. They seek not to provide a case study, but rather "to offer some suggestions on how deconstructionist perspectives on language can compel diplomats to look more penetratingly at the language they produce and work with." The purpose and function of deconstruction, and its potential contribution to diplomatic language, is "to force the discipline to which it applies itself to look at its own language and to develop an almost pathological awareness of its own linguistic strategies."

In his examination of the languages used by the Knights of St John in Rhodes and Malta during the 14th to 16th centuries, Professor Joseph Brincat applies the methodology of historical linguistics. As an international and multi-lingual entity, the Order faced difficulties with its administrative methods intimately linked to linguistic issues. Brincat follows the transition in the official written language of the knights through French, Latin and Italian, examining the social, political and linguistic reasons for these changes. He points out that the problems faced by the Knights in choosing and adopting a common language are relevant in our times: they are similar to problems faced in present-day Brussels.

A final group of papers presents different practical applications of language in diplomacy. Dr Francisco Gomes de Matos applies what he calls the "Pedagogy of Positiveness" to diplomatic communication. He proposes a checklist of tips for diplomats to make their communication more positive, emphasising respect and understanding of the other side, and keeping in mind the ultimate goal of avoiding conflict. Gomes de Matos finishes with a number of pleas, including one for the adoption of the study of human linguistic rights and the pedagogy of positiveness into the education of diplomats.

Dr Donald Sola asks whether software innovation can make a contribution to the needs of those learning the world "languages of wider communication". He presents his work in developing computer-assisted language learning software, a multi-disciplinary activity not based simply on technology but also on the theory and practice of education and linguistics. Excellent software development tools, the far-reaching distribution potential of the Internet, and growing understanding of relevant sociolinguistic and learning-environment considerations allow for successful language software development.

Conference interpreters Vicky Cremona and Helena Mallia begin their paper with the statement: "Interpretation is in itself a diplomatic endeavour." The authors outline the different types of conference interpretation, difficulties in interpretation, preparation and techniques, and team work. On the topic of diplomatic conferences they point out that "confidence in the interpreters is essential. The underlying tensions which may arise between delegates or country representatives can worsen if the interpreters are not trusted..." Cremona and Mallia finish with the observation that diplomatic skills are not only the realm of the diplomat or the interpreter in diplomatic conferences, but also necessary for the interpreter of other types of discussions including religion, culture, heritage, sales, and marketing.

The final paper in this volume, by Jovan Kurbalija, is based on the experience of ten years of research and development work in the field of information technology and diplomacy. Kurbalija explains the relevance and potential of hypertext software tools for the field of diplomacy. With a number of case studies drawn from the hypertext system developed by Diplo and illustrated with screen shots, Kurbalija illustrates exactly why diplomatic activities are so well suited to hypertext. He concludes with a question: "why, with all of its potential in diplomacy and other fields, has hypertext not yet been adopted on a large scale?"

While it is difficult to pull common threads out of this widely varied group of papers, several themes emerge. One is a consensus that in more ways than one, language is central to diplomacy, as a tool or a medium, both in theory and in practice. Authors agree that a closer examination of the use of language in diplomacy - historical or current, and with any of a number of linguistic tools - can lead to better communication, better cross-cultural understanding, better negotiation and document drafting skills; in short, to better and more effective diplomacy. Several authors highlight the traditional role of diplomatic language in helping us to avoid direct confrontation or conflict. Pehar says that "diplomacy is primarily words that prevent us from reaching for our swords." Pascual writes that diplomacy is a "a space wherein the power of the spirit is shown through the word." And Gomes de Matos advises us to "think of the language you use as a peace-building, peace-making, peace-promoting force."

Before concluding, we would like to thank the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation for their support of Diplo activities, including this publication. In particular, we appreciate the continuing interest and involvement of Ambassador Walter Fust, Dr Andri Bisaz, and Floriane Leuzinger. We would also like to thank EFTA, the Commonwealth Secretariat and Maltese Ministry of Foreign Affairs for supporting the inclusion of our online learning course participants in these conferences. Finally, we would like to thank all of the members of the DiploTeam for their hard work and dedication during the conferences and the post-conference publication process.

In conclusion, while this volume presents a number of significant first ventures into a variety of aspects of the vast field of language and diplomacy, this is a relatively uncharted topic with significant scope for future research and discussion.

■ TO JOKE OR NOT TO JOKE: A DIPLOMATIC DILEMMA IN THE AGE OF INTERNET

Peter Serracino-Inglott

During an interfaith banquet, a Catholic priest told a Rabbi: "When are you going to give up your antiquated customs and eat some of this delicious ham?" The Rabbi replied: "At your wedding, Father."

I will later argue that it might equally well have been an Imam or even an Ayatollah to have made that gagging retort, instead of a Rabbi. Indeed, in a short while, I will refer to the Arabic comic strip *Mâjid* and its jokeful verbal and visual narrative of the travels to the East and to the West of a boy from Abu Dhabi, called *Kaslân Jiddan*. There is in it a quite amusing exchange between the Arab boy and an American boy travelling on the same plane about the eating of pork.¹

However, I will leave further acquaintance with the delightful *Kaslân* to a bit later and stick for the moment to the Rabbi. This is because so-called "Jewish jokes" happen to be the most discussed sub-species of so-called "ethnic jokes". Soon I shall try to persuade you that neither ethnic humour, in general, nor Jewish humour, in particular, exists; but both these nonentities, or false figments of the nineteenth-century ultra-nationalist imagination (as I believe them to be) are essential, basic ingredients of the first part of my talk.

However, before I get more entangled in the ambush filled approaches to the beginning of my talk, allow me to present you as briefly as possible with an apologia for the topic signified by the title I have given the talk. I guessed, rightly or wrongly, that the reason why I was invited to give this talk is because, some years ago, I committed the minor crime of publishing a small book on the philosophy of language. It is called *Peopled Silence*,² and begins with a joke. Somebody says: "Time flies" - to which somebody else replies: "I can't. They're too fast." Unfortunately, most students fail to get the point of the joke; and so they always ask me, "Why on earth did you begin your book with this joke?"

I reply: "It's not *this* joke that was important, but *a* joke; any joke really would have done. It's simply that I think that jokes are the paradigmatic example of language. The playful use of language is the most illuminating of all its many and various uses, because the most singular aspect of language - namely its creativity - is most manifest in wit and humour - in jokes."

Following that same line of thought, I want to suggest that the paradigmatic instance of diplomatic language is the diplomatic joke. Hence, a contribution towards its definition, however sketchy, seemed to be an apt opening gambit, if not the aptest at least for a philosopher trespassing on this semi-foreign domain, with which to spark off a seminar on language and diplomacy.

Since I cannot allow myself to develop the argument with the full panoply of my favourite baroque style, I will syncopate it into three inevitably abrupt specifications of the diplomatic joke.

In the first instance, I want to describe and denounce the type of joke that is inspired by the belief that humour is national in character and hence that the authentic diplomatic joke will be a flaunting of the national temperament and genius as a sort of emblem of superiority.

For contrast with this first type of joke, I will present a second type inspired by the contrary belief that the better kind of joke is always an implicit acknowledgement of the common

humanity of the others; hence that the specific linguistic skill which the diplomat has to master is that of cross-cultural communication, on the ground that humour is universal and jokes are translatable (except for the admittedly important purely verbal ones) into any of the world's five thousand languages.

I will argue however that this second kind of joke was effective only before the age of the Internet. That kind of joke could do its work in the past because it played against a background of seriousness as Gilles Lipovetski has said.³ A ceaseless patter of joking has become the first requisite demanded not only of journalists, disk-jockeys, talk show stars and all those whose profession involves chattering and gossiping, but also of smart politicians and humble preachers, of severe academics and Nobel prize-winning authors. In this context a third kind of joking pattern is, I suggest, slowly but necessarily emerging; it is not joking of the flippant kind which, as has also been aptly said by Lipovetski's ilk, paved the way for the death of the twentieth century in the midst and out of a surfeit of regurgitated laughter.

The third type of diplomatic joke I propose to look at is the joke that is the expression of what a compatriot has called "lateral thinking".

Historians of joking - such as Georges Minois⁴ or Keith Cameron⁵ are almost all agreed that the idea that there are national brands of humour is hardly any older than the nineteenth century. In fact, the idea is probably a parasite of the nineteenth century brand of nationalism.

Take, for instance, so-called English humour. Before the nineteenth century, there certainly does not appear to be anything very peculiar about it. Even as late as the eighteenth century, the humour of Dryden or Swift is the same biting politico-social satire of their continental counterparts.

It is really only in the first issue of *Punch*, in 1841, that the claim is made by this prototypical English humorous review that it will not seek to provoke rude and vulgar laughter as by implication similar reviews did on the continent, but only gentle smiles. Indeed, for over more than a century, it supplied only jokes suitable to polite and plush Victorian salons and to the reading rooms of exclusive London clubs. The butt of its jokes was never the British government or the British aristocracy but for the most part the Pope and Bismarck - as well as inevitably Albert, the Prince Consort; alas he always struck Englishman as very un-English. Yet the very name, *Punch*, is derived from the Italian *Commedia dell'Arte* and refers to a funny character who has transcended all national frontiers.

The amusingly eccentric style, both quaint and quietly analytic, which later came to be identified as typically English, did not exist before Charles Dickens: he was its unique creator. But, at the very same time that Dickens was concocting the new brew, Lord Byron was producing comic poetry with the same verve and broadsword swipe, as well as rapier-like wit, as his French and other continental European contemporary counterparts.

In fact, English humour is omni-comprehensive. Any kind of joke corresponding to any of the established national stereotypes - the impertinent, ribald digs of the French, the ponderous noisy jibes of the Germans and so on, any example whatsoever of these clichés can be easily illustrated from the repertoire of the great English writers who wrote in the long century from Charles Lamb to Aubrey Beardsley.

Likewise, the so-called "rire gaulois", the Gallic jeer, is a typically modern myth, also created in the middle of the nineteenth century. It was only then that the great art historian Viollet Le-Duc projected it back, in his *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture Française*, of 1844, onto the gothic gargoyles of the thirteenth century; and it was only later that others took it further back onto the Gallic tribes who opposed the Roman Legions of Julius Caesar. These late nineteenth century French humorists comically pictured the Roman military on the model of the plodding Teutonic soldiers who had actually defeated the French in 1870. The Gallic jokes are evidently a kind of avenging compensation. They are not entirely self-flattering but they

serve precisely to mark out differences between one nation and all others in the climate and spirit of nineteenth century nationalism.

At a recent party (as no doubt at many others before) one guest approached another.

"Are you Jewish?" he asked in as polite a tone as he could manage.

"No," the other replied, "I just *look* cunning."

Several Jewish theorists of humour - just to mention the names of a few, Shelley Berman, Milton Berle, Dan Ben-Amos and Elliot Oring⁶ have denied before me that there is any such thing as the Jewish joke. There exists a plethora of books, both collections and critical analysis, of the genre; but in fact, whenever I examined a proposed definition of it, I invariably found: it did not work. It is indeed difficult to find any trait or set of traits that applies to the Marx Brothers, Jerry Lewis, Danny Kaye, Woody Allen, Roberto Benigni and all other Jewish film comedians, and only to them - let alone if the circle is extended beyond the cinema to cover all species of Jewish jesters.

I think, however, that the debate about Jewish humour is particularly relevant to my topic precisely because of its general applicability to humour in general. For instance, it has been claimed by Henry D. Spalding that a characteristic of Jewish humour is that it is primarily self-derogatory, almost masochistic, and because of this highly visible self-bashing no compunction is then felt by Jews about joking about adversaries.⁷

In reply to this claim, Martin Grotjahn has argued that the self-derogation is merely an instance of the general rule that attack is the best defence. Grotjahn wrote: "One can almost see how a witty Jewish man carefully and cautiously takes a sharp dagger out of his enemy's hands, sharpens it so that it can split a hair in mid-air, polishes it until it shines brightly, stabs himself with it, then returns it gallantly to the anti-Semite with the silent reproach: Now see whether you can do it half as well."⁸

To which Christie Davies replied: Grotjahn's "is a vivid but misleading image, for the point of getting hold of the dagger is not only to demonstrate superior dexterity but to switch daggers, so that an innocuous rather than a potentially envenomed weapon is used. This is a tactic that both frustrated and infuriated anti-semites, who see Jewish humour as humanising those whom they wish to demonise and as making a people whom they seek to represent as a malign threat appear comically harmless."⁹

I think that Spalding, Grotjahn and Davies have here provided us with some insights into the strategy of diplomatic joking in general, but with nothing specific about Jewish joking. Indeed, Ofia Nevo in 1991 conducted an empirical comparative research study which led him to the conclusion that: "there is no evidence that Jews in Israel laugh at themselves more than Arabs do, and there is some evidence to the contrary."¹⁰

There is certainly a great deal of evidence about the power of jokes in Arab countries. But is there a specifically Arab type of joke? In the nineteen nineties in Algeria, at the height of the Fundamentalist period, satirical journals such as *El Manchur* and *Baroud* continued to appear, with jokes which are not only admirably courageous but which also survive well in translation. For instance, Aziz Chouaki published a funny short story; in it a State is depicted in which anything funny is forbidden and the spirit of laughter is shut up in a sort of Pandora's box. But a group of jokers form a kind of holy Order and dedicate their lives to rescue the spirit of laughter from its encapsulation. This goal is achieved in a funnier manner than the salvation of the book in *Fahrenheit 451*. The point of the short story is not just that the right to joke is worth being defended but also that it can only be defended by joking. For this popular Arab writer at least, it is both end and means.¹¹

It is, however, the Arab comic strips that raise in its intricate complexity but also with most clarity the question: do we have here a strain of humour that is specifically Arab and is this

merely the expression of Arab nationalism? Or are jokes universal in significance and the expression of the common humanity of the human species?

The joint authors of a comprehensive book on the subject published in 1994 wrote: "Arab comic strips! To most in the West their reality is so unsuspected that the phrase itself almost rings like an oxymoron. Yet Arab comic strips are a flourishing genre with an enormous readership and a political and ideological range extending from Leftist and other secular modernist to Islamic religious perspectives."¹²

No doubt, from the point of view of the Maltese reader, the most fascinating are the Juhâ anecdotes, since Juhâ is none other than our Gahan, the philosopher-fool. He first appeared in the pages of the *Mâjid* magazine in 1987, in a modernised form: his donkey replaced by a motorcycle and his turban by a motorcycle helmet.

But perhaps the most interesting to look at from our present point of view are the travels of Kaslân Jiddan also published in the *Mâjid* magazine.¹³ Kaslân is represented as a naughty boy who gets into comic scrapes by trying to play the adult but the scrapes are different in kind when Kaslân travels in Asia (India and Japan) on the one hand, and when he travels in the Western world (the United Kingdom and the United States) on the other. In Asia, everything is exotic and foreign; it is mainly the differences in dress and cuisine that land him often in farcical trouble. In the West, on the contrary, he regularly discovers an Arab presence hidden within the alien looking exterior. At the very beginning he meets an American boy on the plane, who asks him whether everyone in Abu Dhabi, where Kaslân comes from, rides camels; to which Kaslân replies that camels in his home country are only used for racing. Yes there are stereotypes which first have to be punctured; but after that the two boys soon find that their cultural heritage is sufficiently common for deep reciprocal understanding to be possible.

This discovery of reciprocity is rendered with brilliant visual wit. The speech balloons are placed not above the child who speaks the words in the balloon, but above the other child, so that the tails of the balloons are forced to cross over the heads of the speakers. It is a subtle, visual sign of the relationship, which is going to develop between the two children.

In Asia, which Kaslân sees as totally foreign, the comedy is only physical and farcical, since it seems possible for an Arab boy to communicate in Asian ways of life only at that level; but, in the West, the humorous exchanges are subtle and sophisticated - it is wit rather than tumbledown play. The authors of the survey consider that Kaslân, as depicted in *Mâjid*, has not yet attained a universal perspective; his point of view is specifically Arab. They do not note that the comic strip at the same time implies that the level of the shareable joking not only reveals the level of possible life sharing, but can itself serve as a pivot for rising from a lower to a higher level.

It was only fairly recently that anthropologists began to take a professional interest both in the diversity and in the universality of joking practices, focussing naturally on the description and analysis of institutionalised or ceremonial joking occasions.¹⁴

Not being an anthropologist myself, but having had an early vocation to become a circus clown, I have read widely in this literature and I am bold enough to hazard a summary of the result in about one hundred words.

It is clear that the institutionalised joking is programmed to take place in connection with some critical transaction that is likely to require - before, during or after - a cooling of tempers and a bolstering of spirits.

The occasions with which the bringing into play of deliberate laughter provoking devices is associated most frequently are the generation or loss of life. Thus, on the one hand, quasi-joking has polysemic relations with eroticism and sexuality, as very notably registered by Claude Levi-Strauss with regard to the Nambikwaras of Brazil and also by hordes of other

anthropologists all over the world. On the other hand, joking has been found associated with the practices accompanying death, to my knowledge, in Sardinia, Madagascar and Mexico, among the Eskimos and elsewhere. Of course, marriage and death are both occasions very prone to give rise to negotiations and conflicts concerning both property and power. The need of pacifying spirits by means of jokes is precisely most compelling on such occasions.

Secondly, anthropological fieldwork has established that in small scale, isolated communities in remote pockets of Indonesia, Indochina, China, Amazonia, and Tunisia, institutionalised joking accompanies the accomplishment of some central, everyday but symbolically and conflictually pregnant tasks, like fishing for men and weaving for women. In more complex and easily accessible societies, ceremonial joking is rather the mark reserved for extraordinary circumstances. In such contexts, there are codes, sometimes very elaborate, to be followed. In a few extreme cases, joking is only allowed in secret, as seems to have been the case in the Heian period in Japan.

Thirdly, in Japan and China and other Far Eastern cultures, joking can be part of a religious or philosophic discipline, as in *tch'an* or *zen* Buddhism.¹⁵ Logically, because of the rule of the conjunction of opposites, joking has also been used to signify the contrary of supreme detachment from earthly affairs; for instance, extreme jocularity is said to have been used ceremoniously to express hostile, occasionally cannibalistic, intent towards the different/others in some islands of Melanesia. Although the national practices which social anthropologists have analysed may look very different from each other, it is quite plain that institutionalised joking generally arises out of the combination of two features in a consequential human situation: first, it is conflict saturated; secondly, there is something which has actually or potentially gone awry and it is deemed both possible and necessary to prevent the effects from becoming excessively painful. Cultural anthropologists have focussed most attention on the role of ritual clowns.¹⁶ These enigmatic figures are often linked with the tragi-comic deity generically referred to as "the Trickster". The ritual clown clearly has the function of reducing the tension generated by encounters with the divine in sacred ceremonies, but more than that he is expected to break taboos and flout conventional wisdom under cover of joking. Sacred ceremonies are normally held on the occasion of the most problematic transactions of human life precisely to palliate their conflictual or destructive dimensions and to enhance their creative and fulfilling potentiality. Obviously, modern man, both before and after the advent of the global village, has remained just as much in need of liberating humour as the so-called "primitive" tribesman. Probably, the disappearance of the Trickster from Western society created the vacuum that the retailers of the national or ethnic joke sought to fill. Thus, the mantle of the ritual clown may have fallen, in the age of the Nation-State, often upon the perhaps unsuspecting shoulders of the serious, professional diplomat in the field of international negotiation.

The second archetype of the diplomatic joke inevitably arose as the converse form of the national or ethnic jest. Joking has an obvious role in the art of conversation and achieves a high degree of importance especially at times and places when and where conversation is highly valued and formalised as for instance in 18th century Europe or present day Arab coffee-shops. The joke is the most adroit manner to get conversation flowing if, per chance, it has been blocked by some breach of etiquette.

Even more importantly, for the diplomat, a certain kind of joke was rightly perceived to be the best, if not the only way, to generate an awareness of the intimate bonds uniting all members of the human species beyond the barriers of all culturally-generated divisions.

Any joke, as is well-known, works on the basis of shared assumptions and shared presuppositions. For example, when I was a philosophy student at Oxford, I was president of the Voltaire Society, (that was, in itself, a kind of joke, given my vocation as a Catholic priest). Its motto was if Voltaire had not existed it would have been necessary to invent him. The humour of that statement is obviously enhanced if you know that Voltaire had said: "If God did not exist, it would have been necessary to invent him." Much has to go unsaid if a joke is to work. That is why, when jokes work, they give rise to a feeling of complicity between the teller

and the listener. Both become aware of the huge amount of shared beliefs and understanding that there is, rather inexplicably, more or less, between all human beings.

The second type of diplomatic joke is essentially conceived as a device for inducing awareness of the deep unity, beneath the more apparent diversity of the human race. Because of this diversity, it is not surprising that there are as many as five thousand languages in use in the world today. Each of them by virtue of its peculiar differences from every other enables humankind to express some nuance of human existence or thought that would otherwise be inexpressible. That is why when any language dies out - and alas the rate of mortality among languages is rising - it is a loss to the whole of humanity.

But it is surprising that the five thousand extant languages all have the same basic grammatical structure. This deep similarity is perhaps the clearest proof of the unity of the human race as emerges from the work of the Italo-American geneticist, Cavalli-Sforza.¹⁷ It is because of this structural similarity between all languages that most jokes are translatable. It is only those jokes - such as puns - which depend on the oddities of a particular language (and admittedly they are not few) which are not easily translated.

The strength of the structural similarity between all languages can today be more easily illustrated than in the past by the very mistakes committed by computers when they are used for translation. The mistakes are the unintended jokes which human beings extract from their machines. For instance, a computer gave - the whisky is good but the meat is bad - as its English rendering of the original Greek of the gospel phrase "the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." Thus the computer acknowledges the universality which the second type of diplomatic joke was supposed to uniquely augment. Thus the more optimistic among the diplomats addicted to the second type of joke could nourish a dream which, after the coming of the computer, perhaps a little paradoxically, we now tend to regard as utopian. When all mankind becomes able to share a joke together, they surmised, it will be the fulfilment of humankind's most desperate hope. It will be tangible proof that we are all sufficiently alike to be able to live in peace together.

Even if it is just two people who laugh at the same joke, it is a sure sign that they have established contact with each other at a deep level. That is, in any case, a most difficult and important human achievement. The fact that they have both been tickled within by the same joke re-assures them that they share a common humanity. Had they not so been, they would have had some reason for concern.¹⁸

Unfortunately, even before the coming of the computer, developments had begun to occur which generated a cynical attitude towards this dream and second type jokes.

It has been said that joking - from the dadaists to Monty Python - became the opium of the twentieth century. Compulsive joking began as a kind of occasional nervous tick with the First World War and developed into a chronic and uncontrollable mania in the Second. It was at first the soft drug that enabled the Western World to survive the shame and ignominy of its history in the first half of those hundred agonising years. Then joking spread like an epidemic and soon had penetrated everywhere. After 1945, following the experience of genocide and nuclear bombing, the existentialist philosophers succeeded in convincing most of us that existence was absurd; their adversaries, the logical positivists, told us that metaphysics especially of the existentialist kind, was nonsense; and, finally, there came the post-modernists. With the ironic voice of Umberto Eco's William of Baskerville, they assured us that: "Perhaps the mission of those who love mankind is to make people laugh at the truth, to make truth laughable, because the only truth lies in learning to free ourselves from insane passion for the truth."¹⁹ The twentieth century - let me say it again for repetition's sake - died of an overdose of laughter.

Now in the twenty-first century a human being jokes as he/she breathes. Joking has been injected into the lifeblood of what could be called the farcical society as it has been called the electronic age. On all occasions dress is optional, but to wear a smile is compulsory. Whether you are attending a session of parliament or a lecture at the university of the third age, you

are expected to participate in a universally standardised, mass media modelled, utterly inane joke-exchange encounter. It is a planetary phenomenon. The all-pervasiveness of would be jocularity has become one of the most conspicuous aspects of the globalisation that climaxed after the unexpected fall of the Berlin wall.

Could it be otherwise, once both philosophers and men and women in the street have come to believe that there is nothing, absolutely nothing that deserves to be taken seriously?

Jokes are needed to camouflage the total take over of life by Insignificance. In the empire of meaninglessness, no one knows where one is going; so what can be done except laugh about it? One covers it up as best one can by joyless, forced jokes, like those of children in the dark.

We have lost hold of every certainty. We can only pretend to be cool and soft and adepts with Vattimo of *il pensiero debole*. We can only giggle and snigger at anything and everything, just to hear the click and cluck of our own voice, to exorcise our fears and our inner emptiness with a chuckle. But that is the end of genuine joking since if nothing is to be taken seriously then equally nothing can be taken jokingly.

Even irony ceased to be a suitable garb for diplomatic joking. As Minois has written: "the problem is that at the end of the twentieth century, there occurred a generalisation and a democratisation of the ironic spirit. Now irony has splendid qualities when it is handled by a sceptical elite who watch the world turn on its axis with finicky eyes in their ample hours of leisure. The elite can afford to be ironical as long as the masses continue to work at the machines. But disaster comes if the masses abandon long-cherished values and wax ironic as well. That is what is beginning to happen today and no doubt what will happen increasingly, as the boundary between the real and the virtual becomes increasingly fudged. The ironic spirit becomes all the more necessary, all the more virtual our environment becomes. He who is not ironic vis-à-vis Internet will be devoured by Internet."²⁰

"The twentieth century was killed by a spasm of joking. The twenty-first century will kill joking by its spasms."

Is this a joke, or a serious prediction? I want to suggest as the third step in my argument that this question is badly formulated. It presupposes that something is either a joke or it is serious, with no other alternative.

On the contrary, the great Renaissance thinker, Nicholas of Cusa spoke of "serious joking", not as of a contradiction in terms, as the decadent logic of the Cartesian age held, but on the contrary as the key to creative thought.

"The serious joke" is, I think, the form which the diplomatic joke will take in the twenty-first century if it is not only to survive but also to proudly contribute to the birth of a surprising, new and sustainable world for future generations.

If I am anywhere near right, the serious joke has three identification marks.

In the first place, it shows things in a new perspective, it shifts frames of reference and places things in a new gestalt. As Edward de Bono puts it, it causes perceptions and conceptions which were set up in one pattern to be reconfigured into another different pattern. That is its inbuilt goal.

Secondly, in order to accomplish this goal, it uses as a rule a characteristic means. It takes you to an apparently unreasonable point from which the main road along which you have been travelling does not appear to be the only one. A joke is the best device to get you on the side track from where you can see that there are other ways of getting about than just the contraries forward or backward, or right and left. Joking involves glimpsing the improbable and using upside down logic.

Thirdly, the serious diplomatic joke will sound on first hearing as if it were a mistake. In fact, the laughter produced by it will only be, *because from the established, conventional standpoint*, it sounds mistaken. But, on allowing its echo to reverberate in the mind, it will turn out to be not a real mistake and its pain just that which always accompanies any defamiliarisation process just as it always accompanies childbirth, and quickly turns into sudden pleasures and excitement. Of course, even genuine mistakes, or involuntary jokes, have often been a usual source of creative solutions to problems long believed to be intractable or even the existence of which had long remained unsuspected.

There is just one further point I wish to make about serious joking - the sustainable form of diplomatic joking calling for development in the age of the Internet. The point is to stress the difference between argument and joking or between the dialectic and the creative approaches to discussion and negotiation.

The structure of an argument is the confrontation of contraries aimed at making a choice between opposite ways. A serious joke, on the other hand, is a provocation to both parties displaying the possibility of adapting an as yet unexplored angle of approach. It aims not at the victory or defeat of either side, not a compromise, which means some sacrifice by both sides, not consensus, which is only agreement at the low level of the highest common ground, but at a situation where something is gained by both sides. Serious joking is the prime tool of the mediator who does not conceive of his role as neutral or passive, but as a promoter of win-win conclusions.

Actually, serious joking is most effective not so much when it is used as a problem-solving technique, as when it has become so much of an ingrained style that it works preventively. Most conflicts in whatever sphere of life arise out of over sharp divisions and rigid polarisations which our habitual ways of thinking generate. Thinking in the binary system - yes or no, one or zero - which has been admirably used to produce computers - needs the constant corrective of the authentic diplomatic joke.

Another aspect of the contrast between dialectic and creativity, or between standard arguing and serious joking is that when a serious joke falls flat (as I told you at the beginning of this talk, the joke with which I began *Peopled Silence* habitually did) the consequences are not as bad as when an argument fails to convince. For instance, if you have not been convinced by my arguments today, it follows that either you or I are not as clever as our hosts thought that we were, and that is a dismal and very discouraging conclusion but if you just did not find my quoted or coined jokes to be amusing, it is sad, but nevertheless we have manifested at least the desire to share a laterally angled point of view. You would still be smiling as a result, although with a different meaning perhaps than the kind of smiling which I had intended to provoke.

By this time, I can sense your uneasiness about my getting to the end of the track along which I have been steadily jogging and I will end by trying to anticipate question-time. Can I exemplify what I have been presenting in a manner which may have sounded too much like an obscure and exotic recipe? I think the best I can do now is to quote a favourite example of Edward de Bono's - which is, in fact, a narrative of a practical joke in illustration of lateral thinking: "The ticket inspector came into the train compartment. The young man began to search frantically for his ticket: top pockets, trouser pockets, coat on the rack, brief case and everywhere. After a while the inspector took pity on him and extracted the ticket from the young man's mouth where it had been all along. When the inspector had left, another passenger asked the young man if he felt foolish. 'Not at all,' said the young man 'I was chewing the date off the ticket'."²¹

That, I suggest, is the joking path to be followed by any diplomat who wants to escape from the tidal wave of pseudo-jocularly which has inundated us: the fate of the media showmen adequately represented by Edward de Bono's ticket inspector.

ENDNOTES

1. Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas, *Arab Comic Strips, Politics of an Emerging Mass Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 171; Cfr. Erwin Rosenthal, *Humor in Early Islam* (Philadelphia: 1956).
2. P. Serracino-Inglott, *Peopled Silence* (Malta: Malta University Press, 1995).
3. Gilles Lipovetski, *L'Ere du vide. Essais sur l'individualisme contemporain* (Paris: Folio, 1993).
4. George Minois, *Histoire du Rire et de la Derision* (Paris: Fayard, 2000).
5. Keith Cameron (ed.), *Humour and History* (Oxford: 1993).
6. Berman and Berle quoted by Charles Gruer, *The Game of Humor* (New Brunswick (USA): Transaction, 1997), 92-3; Dan Ben-Amos, "The Myth of Jewish Humor," *Western Folklore* 32, 2, 112-131; Elliot Oring, *Jokes and their Relations* (Lexington KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1992).
7. Henry D. Spalding, *Encyclopaedia of Jewish Humor* (New York: Jonathan David, 1967), xv-xvi.
8. Martin Grotjahn has written *Beyond Laughter* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1957); but the quotation is from William Novak and Moshe Waldoks, *The Big Book of Jewish Humor* (New York: Harper, 1981), 85.
9. Christie Davies, "Exploring the Thesis of the Self-Deprecating Jewish Sense of Humor," *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research* 4 (1991), 189-209.
10. Ofra Nevo, "What's in a Jewish Joke?" *Humor: International Journal of Humor Research* (1991), 251-260.
11. Cfr. C. Chaulet-Achour, "Humour et societe dans l'Algerie actuelle," *Humoresques* 7 (Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 1996), 141-2.
12. Op. cit., 1.
13. Ibid., 169-173.
14. Cfr. M.L. Apte, *Humor and Laughter: An Anthropological Approach* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985). Precursors include: A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, "On Joking Relationships," *Africa* 13 (1940), 195-210; R.E. Moreau, "Joking Relations in Tanganyika," *Africa* 14 (1944), 386-400; G. Bateson, "The Position of Humour in Human Communication," *Cybernetics* (New York: 1953), 1-47; Mary Douglas, "Jokes," *Implicit Meanings* (London: 1975), 94-114; F. Ceccarelli, *Sorriso e riso. Saggio di antropologia biosociale* (Torino: 1988).
15. Cfr. R.B. Finnstad, "The Smile of the Buddha," *The Eclipse of Symbolism* (New York: Columbia, 1970), 52-66; C. Hyers, *Zen and the Comic Spirit* (London: 1974); A. Theodoridis, P. Noster and J. Ries (eds.), *Humour, Travail et science en Orient* (Louvain: 1988).
16. Cfr. Laura Makarius, "Le mythe du Trickster," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 175 (1969); J. Cazeneuve, *Les Dieux dansent a Cibola* (Paris: 1957); J. Westcott, "The Yoruba Trickster," *Africa* 32, 336-65; L. Hieb, *The Hopi Clown Ritual* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: 1979); G. Mazzoleni, *I Buffoni sacri d'America e il ridere secondo cultura* (Rome: 1979); D. Handelman, "The Ritual Clown," *Anthropos* 76, 321 ff.
17. Luca and Francesco Cavalli-Sforza, *Qui Sommes Nous? Une histoire de la diversite humaine* (Paris: Flammarion, 1997).
18. This argument is mainly derived from Ted Cohen, *Jokes: Philosophical Thoughts on Joking Matters* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). Cohen is one of the very few theorists of joking who without going very deep devotes a chapter of his book to discuss, when and by-whom-to-whom it is appropriate to tell jokes. His first conclusion is that "joking is almost always out of place when it is a kind of avoidance" (e.g. joking about death or racism in order to avoid taking them seriously). He next observes: "When Mark Twain said 'Against the assault of laughter, nothing can stand,' he neglected to note that some things should remain standing." Finally, about ethnic jokes, he dismisses those in which the characters are Poles or Irish or Sikhs or lowans just as an alternative way of saying that they are generically inept, in favour of those in which it really matters that the character is Polish (i.e. he is addicted to marvellously intricate subtleness and indirections of logic) or Irish (i.e. he is exceedingly addicted to literature). The latter kind of joke, unlike the former requires genuine knowledge for their approach.
19. Umberto Eco, *The Name of the Rose* (London: 1980), 491; also id., *Reflections on the Name of the Rose* (London: 1985); id., "Pirandello Ridens," *The Limits of Interpretation* (Bloomington, Indiana: 1990), 163-173 (for Eco's comments on the

- philosophy of laughter); and Karl-Joseph Huschel, *Laughter* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1994) for an excellent discussion of postmodernist theories of humour.
20. Op. cit., 525; Cfr W. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (London: 1974); V. Jaankelévitch, *L'ironie* (Paris: Champs-Flammarion, 1964); C. Lemert, "General Social Theory, Irony and Postmodernism," *Postmodernism and Social Theory*, eds. S. Seidman and D.G. Wagner (Oxford: 1992); C.I. Glikberg, *The Ironic Vision in Modern Literature* (The Hague: 1969).
 21. Edward de Bono, *DeBono's Thinking Course Revised* (London: BBC Books, 1997), 52-3.

An old and funny catchphrase says that one should use many languages to be properly understood: speaking to God, Latin; to the military, German; to the merchants, Greek and Arabic; to the musicians, Italian; to his cook, Chinese; to the sailors and engineers, English; to the artists, Russian; to friends, Spanish; to enemies Dutch or Hungarian; to his girl-friend, French; to his wife, Japanese...

What language should one use when speaking to diplomats, or what language should diplomats use? Or, to be more precise, what language/languages should a (young) diplomat try to learn to be more successful in his profession?

The term "language in diplomacy" obviously can be interpreted in several ways. First, as tongue ("mother" tongue or an acquired one), the speech "used by one nation, tribe, or other similar large group of people";¹ in this sense we can say, for example, that *French used to be the predominant diplomatic language in the first half of the 20th century*. Second, as a special way of expressing the subtle needs of the diplomatic profession; in this way it can be said, for example, that *the delegate of such-and-such a country spoke of the given subject in totally non-diplomatic language*. Also, the term can refer to the particular form, style, manner or tone of expression; such as *the minister formulated his conditions in unusually strong language*. It may mean as well the verbal or non-verbal expression of thoughts or feelings: *sending the gunships is a language that everybody understands*.

All of these meanings - and probably several others - can be utilised in both oral and written practice. In any of these senses, the use of language in diplomacy is of major importance, since language is not a simple tool, vehicle for transmission of thoughts, or instrument of communication, but very often the very essence of the diplomatic vocation, and that has been so from the early beginnings of our profession. That is why from early times the first envoys of the Egyptian pharaohs, Roman *legates*, mediaeval Dubrovnik consuls, etc., had to be educated and trained people, well-spoken and polyglots.

1. Let us first look into different aspects of diplomatic language in its basic meaning - that of a tongue. Obviously, the first problem to solve is finding a common tongue. Diplomats only exceptionally find themselves in the situation to be able to communicate in one language, common to all participants. This may be done between, for example, Germans and Austrians, or Portuguese and Brazilians, or representatives of different Arab countries, or British and Americans, etc. Not only are such occasions rare, but very often there is a serious difference between the same language used in one country and another.²

There are several ways to overcome the problem of communication between people who speak different mother tongues. None of these ways is ideal. One solution, obviously, is that one of the interlocutors speaks the language of the other. Problems may arise: the knowledge of the language may not be adequate, one side is making a concession and the other has an immediate and significant advantage, there are possible political implications, it may be difficult to apply in multilateral diplomacy, etc. A second possibility is that both sides use a third, neutral, language. A potential problem may be that neither side possesses full linguistic knowledge and control, leading to possible bad misunderstandings. Nevertheless, this method is frequently applied in international practice because of its political advantages. A third formula, using interpreters, is also very widely used, particularly in multilateral diplomacy or for negotiations at a very high political level - not only for reasons of equity, but because

politicians and statesmen often do not speak foreign languages. This method also has disadvantages: it is time consuming, costly, and sometimes inadequate or straightforwardly incorrect (even if the translator has a good knowledge of both languages, he/she may not be familiar with the particular subject which can be extremely specific - from the protection of the ozone layer to the homologisation of sports records; it was not without reason that the slogan *traduttore-traditore*, translator = traitor, could be found in mediaeval Italy). Finally, there is the possibility of using one international synthetic, artificial language, such as Esperanto; this solution would have many advantages, but unfortunately is not likely to be implemented soon, mostly because of the opposition of factors that dominate in the international political - and therefore also cultural and linguistic - scene.

So, which language is *the* diplomatic one? The answer is not simple at all. To start with, there is no single diplomatic *lingua franca* that could be inscribed in the above-mentioned catchphrase. In the past there were periods when one language or another served as a common, widely-used means of inter-state communication, although usually limited to certain geographic areas or political groups of countries. Such a role was played by Acadian (Asyrian-Babylonian), by literary Chinese, by Greek "koin`e" (a mixture of dialects, based mainly on Ionic and Attic), and later by mediaeval Greek, then Latin, Arabic, Turkish, and yet later by Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Italian, Dutch, German, French, and recently, more and more, by English. Very often attempts have been made to impose one language or another, with the argumentation that it is "clearer", "more flexible", "more expressive", "more eloquent, subtle or refined", "most suitable for international negotiations", etc. The mere fact that historically such a role has been taken in turns by so many languages proves that linguistic or semantic reasons are not decisive.³ On the contrary, it can be said that the dominant role of one language or another in diplomacy has resulted from the political, strategic, economic, cultural or other domination of one power or another in international relations.

Let's take a very precise example; the linguistic requirements of a counsellor in the embassy of a small European country in Vienna. Obviously, his/her first need is a good knowledge of German, particularly if his professional activity is oriented towards business circles, press, consular work or cultural life. (In the Austrian Foreign Ministry at Ballhausplatz everybody speaks English and many also speak French, but they like very much to hear foreign representatives speaking good German - particularly if it is not the harsh German of northern Germany, but the soft and melodious Austrian German!) However, many diplomats in Vienna have not read my paper and many of them do not speak German. If our colleague wishes to mix freely with other diplomats he will first need English, and possibly also French and Russian as well (depending on the sections of the diplomatic corps he/she is primarily interested in contacting). If his work includes covering the activities of international organisations in Vienna (more than a dozen!), he will definitely need English, while some knowledge of French, Russian, Spanish, and perhaps also Arabic (specifically for the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) would be very useful...not a very simple answer to the first question, is it?!

Let's suppose our colleague is a well-trained and experienced diplomat, speaking several languages more or less fluently. Which language out of his repertoire should he use in a particular situation? Mechanically, the answer is the language he can speak best. It is logical choice, of course, but professionally not always the wisest one. There are some tactics, even politics, involved in making that decision. Sometime it might be reasonable to use a language which one speaks less perfectly - be it to avoid the maternal tongue of the interlocutor and put him on a more equitable foot, or to avoid a language which might have an undesirable political connotation (for example to speak Hebrew to an Arab - although this language might be your best spoken one!); or to make a gesture of goodwill, courtesy, or a sign of special respect for your partner in conversation or for his country. This is very often done by statesmen arriving on an official visit to a foreign country or by delegates at international conferences saluting the chairman and paying tribute to the host country, when even a few words pronounced in the local language may break the ice and create a positive atmosphere. The "colleague" from whom we can learn the most in this respect is His Holiness the pope John Paul II, one of the very best polyglots in the entire diplomatic history.

2. The use of language in *written* diplomatic communication is usually explicitly determined (most often by bilateral agreement). Generally speaking, it is based upon one of the fundamental principles of contemporary international law - the principle of sovereign equality of states. In application of this principle to the linguistic ground there are several formulas - each implemented in a symmetric way: a) each side writes its communications (notes, letters, etc.) in *its own language* (e.g., the Croatian Ministry in Zagreb, as well as the Croatian Embassy in Budapest, write in Croatian, while the Hungarian Ministry and their Embassy in Zagreb write in Hungarian); b) each side writes in the language of the other side (opposite from practice a); c) the correspondence *in each country is conducted in the local language* (e.g. both sides in Zagreb correspond in Croatian, while in Budapest they do so in Hungarian); d) both sides use a third, mutually agreed, language - e.g., Russian, French or other. Again, each of these formulas has its advantages, but also its deficiencies.

3. Communication in multilateral diplomacy, of course, is even more complicated, inadequate and costly. Various international organisations and numerous diplomatic conferences try - more or less successfully - to solve the linguistic problem by reducing the innumerable possibilities of intercommunication to a relatively small number of selected languages - so called *official* or *working* languages.⁴ It is obvious that the growing democratisation of international relations results - among other things - in an ever growing number of languages used in multilateral diplomacy. While the idea of the sovereign equality of nations and states, small and large, rich and poor, cannot be questioned, the astronomical cost⁵ of interpretation at conferences and translation of an enormous amount of written material for international organisations speaks very much against this aspect of its implementation in practical life. Besides, the use of interpretation is slow, impersonal, very often incorrect, and sometimes grossly wrong. As an illustration, an almost unbelievable example could be mentioned which concerns nothing less than the very name of the United Nations in different linguistic versions of the world organisation's "bible" - its charter. In English, French, and Spanish it is called the "United Nations". In Russian, however, it is named "Organisation of the United Nations". The same has been transferred - probably from Russian - to Bulgarian as well.⁶ Another phenomenon is well known to all diplomats with experience in the work of international organisations or various other multilateral conferences: delegates who do not speak one of the official or working languages well (or who are simply too self-critical about it) hesitate to take the floor at all, or miss the best moment to do so. Thus, they considerably reduce their own delegation's input and probably also reduce the potential value of the final result of the meeting.

4. Leaving the question of the choice of language aside, we can examine a more substantial aspect of language and diplomacy - the aspect of the *message itself*, the message contained in every diplomatic communication, oral or written.

Oral communication is the quintessence of personal contact, which - in turn - remains the very substance, even the *raison d'être* of diplomatic work. Written communications, telegraph, telephone, fax, and recently various interactive IT systems (Minitel, Internet, electronic mail, etc.) are undoubtedly extremely useful and often much faster and more efficient than personal contacts, but they can not and probably for a long time shall not be able to substitute for a friendly, confidential chat over a cup of coffee.

Every verbal discourse, be it a simple chat, conversation, exchange of views, formal diplomatic *démarche*, official negotiation or any other form, basically is a *dialogue*, and therefore consists of *speaking* and *listening* to the other person. Speaking is the use of words, linking them into sentences, and then arranging the sentences in a logical order; in addition, it includes accentuation of some words or emphasis of particular parts of a sentence. Oral communication also includes a number of "side effects", such as tone of voice (friendly, solemn, confidential, menacing, nonchalant, etc.), pauses between words or sentences, order in which different parts of the message are presented, gesticulation, face mimic, smiling and so on.⁷

The choice of the right words is extremely important in diplomacy. Through the centuries a very carefully balanced, restrained, moderate vocabulary has been developed, ensuring a particular way of refined control over nuances in the meaning of words - both when agreeing with one's interlocutor (but taking care not to give the impression of undue enthusiasm!) as well as in rejecting his views (again with fitting concern to avoid undesired offence).

When a diplomat interprets his interlocutor's language and even single words used in a dialogue or correspondence, he always starts from the presumption that the choice of words and phrasing has been conscientious and deliberate. Nobody should nor indeed does assume that the words used are the result of insufficient knowledge of a language, inadequate translation or even less - a momentary bad mood! Knowing that the text will be scrutinised in such a way, the speaker or writer has to be accordingly careful about the formulations he uses. This is more sensitive when preparing a written text since it cannot be softened or corrected once it has been sent out⁸, while in conversation - if the reaction of the other side is negative - one can always say "Let me explain..." or "In other words..." and then declare something completely different from the original version.

Words are bricks from which sentences are made. Each sentence should be a wound-up thought. If one wants to be clear, and particularly when using a language which he does not master perfectly, it is better to use short, simple sentences. On the contrary, if one wishes to camouflage his thoughts or even not say anything specific, it can be well achieved by using a more complicated style, complex sentences, digressions, interrupting one's own flow of thought and introducing new topics. One may leave the impression of being a little confused, but the basic purpose of withholding the real answer can be accomplished.

One of the typical characteristics of "diplomatic" language is a certain subdued tone, some kind of understatement. It is correct to say that the real weight of words and terms in diplomatic professional jargon is *much stronger* than those same words in "normal" everyday speech. Just a few examples: the assistant minister of foreign affairs invites the ambassador of a neighbouring country late in the afternoon to his office and expresses the "concern of his government over reporting in the ambassador's country's press which is not in harmony with the existing friendly relations between the two countries." Translated to standard language this means "we believe that your government is encouraging unfriendly, even hostile, press against our country, and in doing so you have passed the limits and I must warn you that we shall not tolerate it any more." The fact that the ambassador has been summoned to the ministry after office hours indicates that the local authorities consider the matter to be urgent and even beyond the regular framework of bilateral relations. If the minister adds that "he is afraid that the continuation of such practices might reflect negatively on relations between the two countries", it means that these relations are already disrupted (quite evidently, otherwise there would be neither unfriendly press nor sharp reactions on the other side), so that one could expect the postponement of an already agreed bilateral visit or signing of a bilateral cooperation agreement. If the minister even says he is afraid that "his government will not be able to control outbursts of anger in the media or restrain the feeling in the parliament any more" the ambassador would not make a mistake in interpreting it as an announcement of a broad hostile campaign against his country, probably even of a fierce parliamentary debate with an utmost unfriendly charge.

There are several specialised types of diplomatic language in various fields of diplomatic activity - for the redaction of *communiqués* ("atmosphere of friendliness", "closeness of views", "complete openness", etc.), for negotiations (hence the difference between so-called *soft* and *hard* negotiators - although I recognise only the distinction between *good* and *bad* ones!), for unofficial contacts outside of official premises and for informal occasions, for participation in international conferences, for the conclusion of international treaties, etc.

There are many other aspects - both linguistic or semantic and also metaphoric - of the use of language in diplomacy. Too many, actually, for a relatively short lecture - *ars longa, vita brevis!*⁹ In conclusion, it can be said that all of the aforementioned elements serve the purpose of maximising the effect of spoken or written text in diplomatic practice, better

transmitting a message, achieving more convincing results, "talking the interlocutor in", convincing him or dissuading him

In this sense the knowledge of language or languages and its (or their) optimal, even masterly use, is not simply a *l'art-pour-l'artistic* skill; they are an absolute must, a *conditio sine qua non* of a successful, professional, complete diplomat and his responsible approach to his demanding job.

ENDNOTES

1. Definition from *The World Book Dictionary* (Chicago: World Book Inc., 1995).
2. So, for example, the differences between spoken Arabic used in Maghreb and Mashrek countries; or British and American English (it is said that Britain and America are two friendly nations *divided* by the same language...).
3. A similar conclusion is drawn by Dr Ivo Lapenna in his very interesting report "The Language Problem in International Relations", presented at the First International Conference on the Problem of Language in Science and Education, Rotterdam, 1972.
4. Official languages of the UN, for example, are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish; working languages are English and French. The EU and the Council of Europe use English and French; the Danube Commission - French, German and Russian; OPEC - Arabic, English and Spanish; high-level meetings of the non-aligned movement - Arabic, English, French and Spanish; etc.
5. Several years ago it was calculated that the translation of *one single page* to all official languages of the UN amounted to the value necessary to cover the cost of living for one person in India for a whole year! When one takes into account the number of international organisations, and the thousands of pages translated almost daily it is easy to subscribe to the proposal of introducing Esperanto as the language for international communication.
6. The author was not able to check the Arabic and Chinese texts.
7. These effects sometimes take quite bizarre forms - for example, when Nikita Hruscov took off his shoe and banged the rostrum with it, during his speech to the UN General Assembly.
8. The ancient Romans used the expression *scripta manent* - the written text remains.
9. Latin: art is huge and life is short.

Following the peace of Westphalia in Europe in the seventeenth century, it was around language, the vernacular, that the modern state system arose. Language, which was always an important component of the personality of men and nations, became yet more important: an essential, indeed very vital component in the identity of individuals, groups and nations. In Moslem culture and civilization the centrality of the Arabic language cannot be over-emphasised. The miracle of the Holy Quran is associated with the very essence, structure, nuances and rendition of the Arabic language itself. It is significant that the first word in it is a command to the faithful that says *Iqra', Read*.

Why man, of all God's creatures, was able to articulate a sophisticated language as a medium of communication, beyond mere sounds or gestures, is one of the most puzzling mysteries of creation. The language of diplomacy is yet a further refinement of language as a medium of communication. For words, however innocent or neutral they may look on paper or when standing alone, can be quite explosive, emotive, calming, agitating or even revolutionary. Words, which can mean different things to different people, or even change from place to place, or from time to time, carry not only sound but intention. They can please, cajole or wound. The preamble to the Communist Manifesto of 1848 begins by saying: "...a spectre is haunting Europe - the spectre of Communism." In the first chapter it declares that the history of all hitherto existing society is "the history of class struggles".

The words and the verses of the Holy Qur'an conveying the message of God, like the words of the Lord Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, powerfully stir the soul, the mind and the emotions of the faithful. Words carry ideas that, in the thinking of Plato, are more permanent than objects, for only words can accomplish that powerful mixture between myth and reality that sometimes moves men to noble sacrifice, even martyrdom or the abyss of meanness.

Not only by language but also by gestures, body language, smiles, frowns or grimaces is man distinguished from other creatures by his ways of communication. Some people sometimes speak with their face! Often, no answer is an answer, or perhaps a smile, a frown, a sneer or merely turning one's back on the speaker is a powerful way to communicate. Even the tone of how a thing is said is declamatory. Yet with all this sophistication in communication, language is often a cause for misunderstanding and conflict. The selection of words or phrases, their structure, indeed how these are rendered, is sometimes a communication within a communication. The range of how things are said is wide in almost every language and is much wider in some like Arabic which leaves much room for choice. This eclecticism in many respects contains the essence of communication. Ambiguity, sometimes by choice, sometimes constructive, and yet sometimes deliberately obfuscating and confusing is a characteristic of human beings.

Gestures among other creatures are straightforward, leaving little room for misunderstanding though none may have been intended. Sometimes what is not said or communicated is just as devastating or eloquent. Just ponder the Western conspiracy of silence regarding what Israel is doing in its disregard of international law and United Nations resolutions in dealing with its conflict with the Palestinians. Diplomatically speaking, such silence is infinitely more eloquent than words. According to an Arabic saying, "If words are sometimes silver, silence is made of gold."

Diplomatic language is the child of the language of communication. Its formalisation into special patterns, with a chosen cadence and sometimes repetitive pattern is, and has been designed to oil the joints of relationships between people and nations.

Couching it in a formalised pattern is designed convey several messages at once. Among these messages is to soften their negative impact when such is intended; leaving a face saving room for the opposing party to respond in kind, while protecting the deliverer, the messenger, the ambassador from the responsibility of their impact. Ideally they are intended to protect the messenger from being killed. This mixture between form and content wrapped in certain ceremony is designed to add weight to the message while protecting the messenger.

This ceremonial language between different parties has its roots in traditions within nations and states. The patterns of the Arab culture for example can be found not only in dress, music, dance, party, but more importantly in speech patterns too. Such patterns are not only in the exchange of greetings at various occasions of the day or life, but in the popular extensive reliance on the quotation of proverbs which while conveying a particular message exonerate the speaker from any responsibility for whatever judgment or impact these may make. The ordinary speech of every day life is peppered and often salted with traditional forms and patterns that govern behaviour while at the same time laying out the parameters of exchange. At times it appears that saying the right thing at the right time is just as important as telling the truth whatever that may be. Again the Arab emphasis is not only to convey the message but more importantly to keep the dialogue alive. Such an approach adheres to the dictum laid down by the Omayyad Caliph Mu'awiyyah Ibn Sufian, who said, "I will never allow the hair between me and my adversary to be severed: for, should he pull I will relent and should he relent, I will pull." Such an approach to diplomacy leaves much room for possibilities.

The idea of a language of diplomacy however is that it should not be culture-bound but an attempt at transcending such boundaries to create a quasi neutral vehicle of exchange; a vehicle of exchange that conveys the message while appearing least ego damaging. This is as important today as it was in earlier times when the exchange of letters took weeks and sometimes months to be delivered. The changing nature of diplomacy in the modern age as a consequence of means of mass communication and transportation has not lessened the need for language to be "diplomatic", polite. Diplomatic language has to be diplomatically "correct". Somehow it becomes more acceptable.

Today's head of state need not deliver his message via foreign minister or ambassador "extraordinary and plenipotentiary" which may take much time. He can telephone, fax or e-mail his message. The frequency of the meetings of heads of states in a binational fashion, in Summit, or at international fora are changing the content, the form and the language of diplomacy in ways whose end results are yet unseen and unfathomed. Whether it will be necessary, in the future, to have ambassadors or even foreign ministers is a question worth thinking about. Today in most countries of the world, it is the head of state who lays down the parameters of foreign policy in both content and form.

*

The most ancient example of diplomatic language can be found in the treaty of peace and friendship concluded around 2400 BC found in the Royal Library of Ebla, and now in the Archaeological Museum of Damascus. The treaty was between the two kingdoms of Ebla and Hamazi. In its opening statement, engraved in clay it says "Irkab-Damu, King of Ebla, (is the) brother of Zizi, King of Hamazi; Zizi King of Hamazi, (is the) brother of Irkab-Damu, King of Ebla."¹ The form may be different though the message has not changed since the passage of all that time.

The language of diplomacy, as one form of what Arabs call *adab al-hiwar*, the proper etiquette of dialogue, has not been successful in resolving problems nor indeed in oiling the points of contact of human intercourse. This is obvious not only when considering the violent human

history over the past few millennia, but in the fact that even today erudite intellectuals continue to speak in terms of clash rather than a dialogue of civilizations. Thus far the art of noble dialogue remains that for poets, litterateurs and intellectuals.

Neither religious belief, nor holy texts, nor indeed the belief in the rationality of man, seem to change man's behaviour no matter how powerful the message. That is perhaps due to the strange primeval strain in human nature that causes people to take more seriously the language of hatred and conflict than that of civility and ideals. In fact, those who emphasise harmonious relations or adherence to humanitarian principles in the political sphere are dismissed as "idealists" and are taken less seriously than the so-called "realists". Machiavelli preached that "A prince should therefore have no other aim or thought, nor take up any other thing for his study, but war and its organisation and discipline, for that is the only art that is necessary to one who commands."² This powerful negation of ideals as well as man's reason to bring about a better world can also be attributed to the power of language.

Our entire age is of uncertainty and violence. The belief in rationality and man's capacity to govern his life, always tenuous and weak, was further weakened in this and the last few centuries by the works of Darwin, Freud, Marx and Einstein. Each in his field further shrunk the parameters of reason, they shook to the core the certainty propagated by the Age of Enlightenment emphasising the role of reason. Their conclusion was that man, after all, was governed by forces beyond his control. Violence and war can thus be rationalised as if they were outside the pale of the will of man. What makes the matter the more pertinent is the fact that entire cultures throughout the world are undergoing a process of transition, with one foot firmly planted in the past, and the other tentatively and fearfully exploring the future. This dialectic between tradition and modernity is more acute and at times more violent in certain civilisations than others. Yet in all, physical and verbal violence is a fact of living. Also of relevance to this global upheaval is the paucity of vision of leadership. Few are those in our age that are able to step outside their prejudices and intellectual climate, or that have the courage to accept differences in humane terms. That is why the formalised language of diplomacy is more needed now than ever before. Where power remains the coin of international relations and where in the words of the British political philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1558-1629) that for most of humanity, life remains in setting closer to that of a jungle in a state of nature and where everyman is against everyman, there must be more emphasis on the resort to the language of diplomacy. And now with a single giant, super power that makes all other nations seem diminutive by comparison, that need is greater. In fact it would appear that for the medium size or small powers, the need to rely on diplomacy is much greater than that of the great powers. This appears to be the most important tool to protect the interests of the smaller nations.

The *Oxford Learner's Dictionary* defines diplomacy as "...the management of relations between countries...art of or skill in dealing with people; tact..."³ Indeed it is the art of convincing others to perceive things your way, or at least to have second thoughts about theirs. It is the combination of logic and science on the one hand with the gift of proper language packaging and presentation necessary to convince others.

The power of language rests on the fact that it contains ideas: and ideas are, according to Plato, more enduring, indeed more permanent than matter. Ideas can be suppressed, or go underground but unlike a statue or any other material things they cannot be shattered. They can only be met and dealt with by other ideas. Historically it is the magic of words that bewitched, enthralled and sometimes intoxicated people and led them to great or mean deeds. The language of diplomacy, often like poetry, has the ability to move people from mood to mood. Whether demagoguery or whether giving expression to noble ideologies, theories, or even religious creeds, ordinary language or that of diplomacy has a momentum and an inner driving force that is ageless.

ENDNOTES

1. Carlo Schaerf, *Opening Remarks*, First Isodarco Seminar in the Middle East, Amman, March 15-20, 1997.
2. Contemporary Civilization Staff of Columbia College, *Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947), 273.
3. *Oxford Learner's Dictionary*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 338.

Aldo Matteucci

Powers speak to one another through the language of diplomacy. Diplomatic language should thus lead to better understanding between them.

Language yields an incomplete sense of the speaker's meaning as well as of his intent. It is thus legitimate for a diplomat to seek ways to decode the partner's conscious and subconscious meanings and intentions, or unmask his attempts at deceit - the latter being partly the purview of intelligence gathering. Language also comes with hidden baggage, baggage of many shapes and forms: historical and political context, legal precedent, whatever, that shape the words' content. Understanding the words' context is thus a second task of a diplomat.

A sedulous diplomat might achieve understanding of both worlds, if he has enough resources and time. This hardly ever being the case, he must somehow allocate his scarce resources in a sensible manner. The diplomat must decide which analytical tools yield the highest information return to his resource investment. He acts then as an economist, and I, as an economist, can thus stake a claim to being a diplomat who has something to say at this conference - a typical economist's *non sequitur*.

Actually, my claim to speak rests on twenty odd years of experience in economic negotiations. The word "experience" is underlined. I was once addicted to all-encompassing and axiomatic theories and constructs - I have since reformed and reconstructed myself as an iconoclast. Such freedom feels wonderful - and rewarding. Let's thus share this sense of freedom - in a conversation. The British historian Theodore Zeldin defines conversation "as one in which one starts with a willingness to emerge a slightly different person. It is always an experiment, whose results are never guaranteed. It involves risk. It's an adventure in which we agree to cook the world together and make it taste less bitter."¹ Should I manage to make you emerge a few minutes from now a slightly different person, with a different insight, I'll claim success.

But let's revert to the issues at hand. I'll give away my point of view at the outset. Strategy comes before tactics, context before text. Agreement on what we want to achieve precedes formulation of the negotiated compromise. Thus understanding the broader - i.e. the historical and factual, or political - context should precede the search for specific words' hidden meaning. For all our fascination for the subtlety and suppleness of words, words are but very flexible tools. And while tools cannot be dissociated from ends, tools should never usurp the end's place: if you grasp the substance, the words will follow.

*

Having moved recently to the southern hemisphere, I have been exposed to the ongoing discussion on the relationship between the Maori population in New Zealand and the state. At the core of this discussion is the meaning of the Treaty of Waitangi, which was signed on 6th February 1840 by William Hobson, representing the British Crown, and over 500 Maori chiefs.

I am certainly not an expert in this treaty. The experience with it is sufficiently rich, however, that even I, a simple amateur in this area, may end up providing you with useful reflections on it, thus allowing you to draw your own conclusions.

Let me begin by quoting the operative parts of the agreement:

Article the First: The Chiefs of the Confederation of the United Tribes of New Zealand, and the separate and independent Chiefs who have not become members of the Confederation, cede to Her Majesty the Queen of England, absolutely, and without reservation, all the rights and powers of sovereignty which the said Confederation or individual Chiefs respectively exercise or possess, or may be supposed to exercise or to possess, over their respective territories as the sole Sovereigns thereof.

Article the Second: Her Majesty the Queen of England confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand, and to the respective families and individuals thereof, the full, exclusive, and undisturbed possession of their lands and estates, forests, fisheries, and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess, so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession; but the Chiefs of the United Tribes and the individual Chiefs yield to Her Majesty the exclusive right of pre-emption over such lands as the proprietors thereof may be disposed to alienate, at such prices as may be agreed upon between the respective proprietors and persons appointed by Her Majesty to treat with them in that behalf.

Article the Third: In consideration thereof, Her Majesty the Queen of England extends to the Natives of New Zealand Her royal protection, and imparts to them all the rights and privileges of British subjects.

The chiefs and the British Resident signed this treaty in the two languages, English and Maori.

In its brevity, the Waitangi Treaty is a beauty, for it highlights the many pitfalls of diplomacy and its context, as set out in language. As I said before, **all language comes with hidden baggage**. Let's now look at this text and identify together some of the more lumbering and bulky pieces we have to watch for.

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA

The first element of the "baggage" is undoubtedly the relative power of those who were about to sign the treaty. Every treaty reflects the relative power of the parties. The queen of an empire spanning the world on the one side, the Maori chiefs on the other - we can readily predict the outcome.

Were the Maori aware of Britain's might? The Maori were certainly aware of the military power of the West, having a vivid if horrified memory of a French naval bombardment and subsequent slaughter 50 years before in retaliation for the killing of Marion du Fresne. Since then, Maori chiefs had visited King George IV in London and Maori sailors had travelled extensively in the Pacific. They thus knew the relative strength of the various naval fleets in the Pacific. They feared the French and sought the protection of the British, who had brought them weapons, luxuries like blankets and tobacco, and education.

Great Britain certainly was the more powerful partner. He who has power has the options, and where there are options there is room for dissent. Was there a British unity of purpose to wield the fullness of its military power in New Zealand? In fact, Whitehall was of two minds about what to do. In 1833 Great Britain had abolished slavery throughout its possessions, and the humanitarian movement held sway in Whitehall. On the other side, so much already British labour and capital had been invested in fisheries in New Zealand that British intervention was called for to exclude other powers. Additionally, the treaty was intended to

protect settlers and speculators from the forays of the Maori, while restraining *pakeha* aggression against Maori land and people.

The introduction to the written instructions to Hobson amounted to an apology for British intervention. Maori independence was recognised, even a sovereignty of sorts, but it was also negated; British colonisation and investment was allowed for, yet its inevitability was regretted. It attempted to show that justice was being done to the Maori people even while admitting that the intervention was nevertheless unjust.² To conclude, yes, Britain wielded power, but reluctantly and, had it been challenged, it might have altered its attitude.

Of these internal British conflicts the Maori were ignorant and, had they known about it, they would have been unable to profit from it. They lacked an indigenous political foundation. The country was too large, clan settlement too scattered and tribal divisions still too strong. At most, a territorial concept called *Nui Tirenī* had emerged by then, so too had a sense of "Maoriness".

What practical lessons can we draw for the diplomat? Between the extremes of thinking that a treaty can overcome the imbalance in power, and that of assuming that a treaty enshrines the imbalance, giving the stronger the right to dictate the terms as well as to enforce them, there is a world of possibilities for a skilful diplomat.

The greater the imbalance, the more the "weaker" side needs to know its counterpart's aims and attitudes, internal difficulties, and objective strengths. I've seen far too many negotiations fail because the diplomats knew their own positions too well, and never reconnoitred the counterpart's positions and arguments. They were literally entrenched behind their own briefs. My advice thus would be: know the other! Many negotiating disappointments I put down to a failure to understand the broader and specific context from which the opponent starts.

The "stronger" side, on the other hand, has a tendency to make a negotiation easy for itself by resorting to the use of power. President Clinton informed the UN in 1993 that the US would act "multilaterally when possible, but unilaterally when necessary".³ This in my view is a prescription for blindness⁴ of the situation and of the counterpart's possibilities to influence the negotiations and a surprising statement from the president of a country that had sensed the limits of power in the marshes of Vietnam.

And finally, let me point out that there are different kinds of power. There is the power to conquer and achieve. The Romans, and the British had it, the US wields it today, albeit reluctantly - or so it says. Then there is the power to obstruct or to deny, and circumstances can give this power to any group or country. Power to conquer usually bests power to obstruct, but not always. The Greeks resorted to it at the Thermopyles. Switzerland had the power to deny transit through the Alps, once it was proven feasible. The country was born from this power. When the Swiss tried to parlay this power into achieving dominance in Europe, they failed before the French guns at Marignano. And finally, remember Vietnam?

Diplomats, forever looking for the felicitous expression, describe this state of affairs as *être demandeur* - a term which is imperfectly rendered in English as being "the seeker" or "the buyer". There can be a tension between the overall power balance and the specifics of a situation, and a good diplomat will always seek to use this tension to his country's advantage. The fact that Britain sought Maori assent to colonisation - contrary to Australia, where it maintained the fiction that the country was empty - is in part the reflection of this tension.

THE CONFEDERATION OF THE UNITED CHIEFS OF NEW ZEALAND

In 1835 the British Resident had persuaded the Maori chiefs to sign a Declaration of Independence, creating the Independent State of the United Tribes of New Zealand. I take this declaration as a symbol for the over 65 years of contact between the West and the Maori.

James Cook, following up on Tasman's discovery in 1642, had arrived in New Zealand in 1769 and returned two more times. The Maori dealt with intrusion lethally at first. They soon learned to fear the overwhelming western firepower. Each side modified its behaviour to get what it wanted. Westerners needed food and water, and wood to refit the whaling and sealing fleets. The Maori were attracted to iron tools, potatoes and other food crops to increase food security, weapons, tobacco, and education. They sensed that the West had upset the balance of power among the islanders and sought to take advantage of it. The period before 1840 was a period of extensive internecine warfare as the different clans vied for predominance, exploiting *pakeha* presence. The West also brought disease, however, and unruly characters whom the Maori could not control.

Reluctant to assume colonial responsibility, Britain at first tried to establish a confederation of Maori chiefs on the way to a protectorate. The Declaration of 1835 calls upon George IV "to be the parent of the infant state...its protector from all attempts upon its independence." This declaration was acknowledged from London, and the Maori thought that it set the basis for a stable relationship with Great Britain. It formed the legal basis on which ships built in New Zealand could fly the Confederation flag, avoid seizure and enter the Australian harbours duty free.

By 1840 the British government came under pressure from potential settlers to New Zealand to scuttle the concept of indirect rule and to make the country a colony. In order to win the Maori chiefs' agreement to the treaty, the confederation was upheld at the same time as it was emptied of its significance. This is but the first of a series of deceptions, which were carried out at the chiefs' expense.

If I mention the antecedents of the treaty here it is because too often history is forgotten, particularly by the stronger side, or misused as spin. A Canadian philosopher or gadfly argues, "history is a seamless web linking past, present and future. Contemporary Western society attempts to limit history to the past, as if it were the refuse of civilisation."⁵

History is complexity, different strands of thought and passions. We feel uncomfortable with this messy, even amorphous mass. We long for the simple and grand design, or the simplistic explanation, which of course true history never provides. We feel then that we are prisoners of history - the ancient sources of our current behaviour - and we fail to see the richness that a historical approach can provide for shaping our future. There are a thousand ways to make things better, while only one to make things right. If this road is closed, why not go for second best?

History is not just a source of understanding of why we are what we are today, and where we are or can be heading. By artificially limiting the available choices a theoretical approach impoverishes the diplomatic and negotiatory discourse. And this is the most elementary error a diplomat can make. If history constrains certain options, it also opens up a myriad of subtle possibilities. Had Britain built on the history of its relationship with the Maori, the evolution of the partnership between the two groups would have been fairer.

POWERS OF SOVEREIGNTY

Power imposes the negotiatory process, and often its result. This is a well-known fact. Fascinated as we are by the interplay and complexity of power relations we tend to forget or at least fade out another effect. Power imposes the very choice of the language which is used in a diplomatic negotiation and in an agreement. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century French was the language of diplomacy. It was also the period of French ascendancy.

The choice of the language implies both the meaning of the words used - their conceptual baggage - and, as in the current case, the choice of the treaty language, which was English, translated by British people into Maori without independent verification by the latter.

Sovereignty - the willingness and readiness to exercise absolute control over a bounded territory - is a Western category. It reflects our cartographic and dichotomous way of thinking.⁶ Among the Maori sovereignty was the result of *mana* - power based on hereditary rank and personal achievement.⁷ *Manas* could coexist and overlap, as they did in the medieval times in Europe. The Maori, by the way, were not alone in finding such Western categories strange: in the desert world of the Arabs or Mongolia, a frontier has little meaning.

The word *kawanatanga* translates sovereignty into Maori. The missionaries had used it first to define the functions of Pontius Pilate, and meant governorship and rather administrative authority. *Rangatiratanga*, a term used by the same missionaries to express God's Kingdom in the translation of the Lord's Prayer, described over lordship. This latter term was belatedly smuggled into the new official translation of the treaty established in 1865. The second article of the Waitangi Treaty guarantees this power to the Maori signatories, not the crown. As a consequence, the Maori might well have assumed that their sovereign rights were actually being confirmed in turn for a limited concession of administrative power.

The very first article of the treaty thus contains a conceptual construct foreign to the Maori. In the eyes of the British it was loaded with the baggage of the then emerging **international law**. We encounter here possibly one of the most intractable problems of language in diplomacy. We have hardly any word left, which has not been used in a previous diplomatic context and is thus free of hidden reference to preceding negotiatory contexts or treaties.

When I participated in negotiations on free trade agreements one had to steer a narrow course between using "WTO language" and "EU treaty language" in describing certain rights and obligations linked to a term like "measure with equivalent effect". The treaties from which the term is taken differ in their scope and finality, and must be interpreted in different ways. This reflects itself in the jurisprudence, which differs. In addition, the Vienna Convention on Treaties sets some general parameters for interpretation. No wonder we take international lawyers to the negotiations.

Next to the historical context then, we also need to consider the legal context of the language to be used. This problem is becoming more and more complex, and ironically, is being compounded by information technology. Our enhanced capacity to retrieve precedents quickly from databases by the use of search engines and the feasibility to establish hypertext links to these precedents pushes us to the very limits of our capacity to act while remaining coherent. And this applies both to the negotiation *and* to the interpretation of the treaty, given our novel capacity to record in every detail every aspect of the negotiatory process and to retrieve it at will when interpreting the text.

Business, forever practical, has found a way out of this quandary: the increasing use of arbitration in settling legal disputes over contracts. This tool provides for quick and ready *ad hoc* justice, justice with little or no precedent or legal consequences. It is anecdotal law if you wish - and do I see wry smiles among you remembering the passion of Chinese scholars for collecting anecdotes rather than constructing theories?

In fact, even the refutation of an argument on the grounds of contradiction is a mental construct, arising out of the Platonic view that reality can be whittled down to an essential and permanent core, safely discarding superstructures. Who knows, maybe Walt Whitman was right after all, when he proclaimed, in the *Song of Myself*:

Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself.
(I am large, I contain multitudes).

In a less frivolous tone, I would like to submit that Isaiah Berlin's insight applies here. It is the idea that the ultimate human values are objective but irreducibly diverse, that they are conflicting and often uncombinable, and that when they come into conflict with one another they are often incommensurable, that is they are not comparable by any rational measure. Its

implication for political philosophy is that the idea of a perfect society in which all genuine ideals and goods are achieved is not merely utopian, it is incoherent. Political life, like moral life, abounds in choices between rival goods and evils, where reason leaves us in the lurch and whatever is done involves loss and sometimes tragedy.⁸

RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF BRITISH SUBJECTS

The trade-off the British offered the Maori for giving up independence was to partake of the rights and privileges of being British subjects. Here we have another concept with baggage. The baggage here is that of **common law**. By becoming British subjects the Maori had accepted Britain's common law. The states wishing to adhere to the EU know how heavy this baggage is. They have to scrutinise the *acquis communautaire*, a process that lasts months and years, and prove to the EU Commission's satisfaction that their legislation is compatible with EU law. The first translation of the laws of England into Maori was carried out in 1865.

Was this a prevarication of the Maori? Of course it was. Not so much that they were not told what their obligations were, as many as they were. But that they were not clearly told what their rights were - and they were very significant.

In particular, it has been held that the acceptance of British sovereignty and common law extinguished prior rights. In Britain, however, common law emerged as a means to preserve prior rights - rights dating back to times immemorial - even when they contradicted general principles. Thus, by becoming subject to common law, the Maori should have achieved an additional degree of protection for their existing rights.

I am not going to venture into this politically highly charged field. The Treaty of Waitangi, however, as imperfect a document and as a process it was, is now the basis for a belated review of what the rights of the Maori are. The Tribunal of Waitangi has been established and has restored, among other things, extensive fishing rights on the South Island to the Maori.

*

The organiser of this conference expounded to me recently a difficulty his students encounter - in a world of hypertext links - namely to know when a paper is complete. For one can always add another link or another argument. My first reaction was a shrug. An analysis is never more than work in progress, so the search for boundaries or completeness is hardly fruitful.

Then I remembered an article by the biologist Stephen J. Gould⁹ about the "scale dependency of laws". No two species can occupy the same ecological niche - this is a well-known law of ecology. Man and lion may not lie next to one another - except in Paradise. But this law is not true in an "absolute sense". For bacteria and man have lived in the same ecological niche, maybe somewhat uncomfortably, but they have lived. The ecological law applies only at the same scale. The same applies to arguments. What I have assembled in this *causerie* on language and diplomacy in the context of the Treaty of Waitangi are arguments and considerations, which apply - in my view at least - to the same level of generality and importance. At different or more specific levels, other considerations apply.

The issue of hidden baggage in diplomatic language - power, concepts and constructs, international and national law - is the landscape in which the diplomat then exercises his skill.

Diplomacy then is an act of recognition first. It is an acknowledgement of the realities that surround the process, in particular the hidden baggage. Even more, though, diplomacy is an act of intuition. It is finding one's way in a landscape often stark, often forbidding. For this you have no patent process or medicine, and you never have a certainty of success. Changes in the weather, or changes in the temperature, a hail of stone, or an avalanche can do you great harm or bring your efforts to nought. But that's the fun of the challenge, and of diplomacy.

ENDNOTES

1. Theodore Zeldin, *Conversation: How Talk Can Change Your Life* (London: Harvill Press, 1998), vii, 103.
2. Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books Ltd., 1987), x, 312.
3. As cited in Noam Chomsky, *Rogue States: The Rule of Force in World Affairs* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press, 2000).
4. Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire* (New York: Little Brown, 2000), xix, 268.
5. John Ralston Saul, *The Doubter's Companion: A Dictionary of Aggressive Common Sense* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995), 342.
6. This attitude may be the result of the western civilisations having evolved from an agricultural base. Hunting and gathering societies or those living from fish had a different view of what defines a territory. See T. Flannery, *The Eternal Frontier* (Melbourne: 2001), 404.
7. Keith Sinclair, *The Oxford Illustrated History of New Zealand* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997), viii, 408.
8. John Gray, *Berlin* (London: Fontana, 1995), viii, 189.
9. Stephen J. Gould, *The Lying Stones of Marrakech* (London: J. Cape, 2000), 372.

Raymond Cohen

Looking back on the abortive Israeli-Syrian peace negotiations of 1995-96, chief Israeli negotiator and distinguished Arabist Itamar Rabinovich pondered the language gap between the two sides that prevented their reaching agreement despite a clear convergence of interests: "The Israeli-Syrian dialogue", he remarked, "was a striking example of the ability of the two old foes, who were trying to reach agreement, to speak in the same terms - but in a different language."² Why did Syria vigorously object to Israeli insistence on "normalization", only eventually to agree on "normal peaceful relations"? What did Syrian spokesmen mean when they bitterly criticized Israel for "bargaining" about peace? By definition, negotiation is an exercise in language and communication, an attempt to create shared understanding where previously there have been contested understandings. When negotiation takes place across languages and cultures the scope for misunderstanding increases. So much of negotiation involves arguments about words and concepts that it cannot be assumed that language is secondary and all that "really" counts is the "objective" issues at stake. Can one ever speak of purely objective issues? When those issues include emotive, intangible concepts such as "honor", "standing", "national identity", "security", and "justice" can we really take it for granted that the parties understand each other perfectly? And if not, what can be done to overcome language barriers?

The *Middle East Negotiating Lexicon* is an interpretive dictionary of key negotiating words in Arabic, Farsi, Hebrew, and Turkish. It is intended as a reference facility for English-speaking observers and practitioners of negotiation interested in clarifying language and resolving linguistic discrepancies. For those wondering just what Syrians understand by "normalization" and "bargaining" the lexicon provides an analysis of the equivalent Arabic terms. Alongside difficult, contested concepts such as "rights", "disagreement", and "peace", ordinary day-to-day negotiating words like "argument", "instructions", and "document" are also interpreted. It emerges that ostensibly simple ideas may be as prone to cross-cultural variation as obviously complex notions. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the lexicon is a guide to meaning rather than behavior. How we negotiate is influenced by our understanding of what "concession", "compromise" and other key terms imply; yet there is no linear cause-and-effect relationship between conception and action. Our actions depend on a range of other factors including circumstances, issues, personalities, power, and, crucially, the feedback received from our opponent. What the lexicon does is to suggest what Middle Easterners mean when they refer to notions such as "principle", "commitment", and "interest." It does not purport to be a simplistic do-it-yourself manual of negotiating or a crystal ball, but a guide through a linguistic maze.

Besides the usual dictionary-type definition, each entry seeks to give the range of possible meanings of words, drawing attention to special features of use, describing possible religious and historical connotations, and analyzing the social and cultural associations evoked by the word for the native speaker. Examples of use are taken from the daily press and accounts of negotiators. In effect, each entry consists of a brief interpretive and illustrated discussion. Entries for each language were prepared by two mother-tongue researchers working separately to permit cross-checking and to control for blatantly subjective interpretations. Draft versions were verified by a third senior academic who was also a native speaker. Overall guidance and supervision was exercised by the author, who also edited the final product.

Behind the preparation of the lexicon lay the conviction that differences between languages matter deeply. Living and working in two languages, English and Hebrew, I was struck by how

each language seemed to manifest a different outlook on the world. Things that could be said easily and elegantly in one tongue lent themselves to laborious expression in the other. Where one called for understatement, the other required hyperbole. Ostensibly slight nuances of tone and nice distinctions evoked quite far-reaching differences of association and meaning. Similar observations have been made by many authors, nomads across cultures and languages.³ Indeed, "the impossibility of translation" lies at the heart of cultural and linguistic distinctiveness (which does not mean that one should not try to bridge the gap). Personally, I had always been particularly impressed by the dramatically different sensibilities, ways of thinking, feeling, and perceiving, reflected in the English Bible and the Hebrew Bible or *Tanach*, for instance, in the Book of Psalms.

One day a friend interested in the Jewish roots of Christianity asked me if the Christological term "the lamb of God" (*agnus dei*) might not be an allusion to the Passover sacrifice in the Temple of Jerusalem. Assuming that the first Christians would be fully conversant with the Hebrew Bible, I embarked on a small investigation. In Biblical Hebrew the precise term for a sheep is of great importance: The society was a pastoral one and religious tradition was meticulous about the species, age, and gender of Temple sacrifices. If lamb or *agnus* refers to a young sheep (Hebrew: *seh*) then the reference could not be to the Temple sacrifice discussed in *Leviticus* (4:32, 35; 5:6, 7). Although translated as "lamb", the original Hebrew is *keves*, not *seh*. The more likely reference of *agnus dei* is to two other Hebrew Biblical references: One is the Exodus sacrifice of a yearling lamb (*seh*), whose blood was smeared on the lintels of the homes of the departing Israelites (*Exodus* 12:3-5). The other is the *Akedah*, Abraham's journey to Mount Moriah to sacrifice Isaac, his only son. Isaac asks: "behold the fire and the wood, but where is the sacrificial lamb (*seh*)?" Abraham answers: "God will provide the sacrificial *seh*" (*Genesis* 22:7-8). As a political scientist and student of negotiation I concluded that if slight nuances of interpretation can be of such theological significance, then perhaps differences in conceptualizing negotiation and conflict resolution might also have important consequences.

SEMANTIC ANTINOMIES

The case for the importance of language and culture rests on the view that semantic distinctions reflect different interpretations of reality and normative modes of behavior. Words and their translations are not just interchangeable labels denoting some given, immutable feature of the world but keys opening the door onto different configurations of the world. A stone is an object that speakers of all languages can recognize and respond to at a non-linguistic level. They can kick it, throw it in a pond, or use it to crack a nut. The moment language is used and the object is named, culture enters the picture. As opposed to the thing itself, the word "stone" or its equivalents is a cultural notion. As such it is steeped in the culturally-grounded meanings of the given language community in the light of its history, religion, customs, and environment. The word is therefore a shorthand symbol capable of evoking a unique range of specialized references, uses, and associations. Words are *polysemic*, that is, they have multiple clusters of meaning and usage. Across languages these spreads of meaning occupy different *semantic fields*, though they may well coincide and overlap in certain places. Speakers of Hebrew and English may talk of "peace", using the word in appropriate contexts, and referring to the same legal precedents. But what they mean by peace are subtly different phenomena. "Peace" refers in English to a relationship established by treaty between states concluding war, an ideal prophetic vision of harmony, and tranquility. *Shalom* shares in the Biblical vision of universal accord but lacks the legal features that "peace" acquired in the European state system from centuries of diplomatic practice. Moreover, deriving from an ancient Semitic root referring to wholeness or completeness, *shalom* importantly connotes "health, welfare, greetings, and safety". Hence the common Israeli army bulletin broadcast after a military operation: "All our planes returned *b'shalom* to base." Here *b'shalom* means "safe and sound", not "in peace".

Drawing on the *Middle East Negotiating Lexicon* it is possible to distinguish between various categories of linguistic dissonance. The following very selective register of themes is not meant to be definitive but to clarify and exemplify the basic message of this entire exercise:

that languages are programmes for interpreting reality and mapping the boundaries of possible behavior, and that they do this in diverse ways. If we have a guide to the difficult terrain, we will be better equipped to avoid pitfalls.

Here are some basic antinomies:

1. Different Distinctions Drawn

English, for reasons doubtless connected with the Anglo-Saxon regard for democracy and the rule of law, and suspicion of untrammelled authority, is not very interested in drawing fine distinctions about the nature of leadership. Significantly, apart from the pejorative term "dictator", and loan words also referring to anti-democratic tendencies, such as *führer* and *duce*, "leader" covers all. Indeed, even "leader" can carry ironic connotations of a bossy boots. Where distinctions are made it is by the use of specialist role words such as president, prime minister, secretary of state, governor, chairman of the board, and so on. These role words are largely devoid of extra-functional associations. In fact, the word "president" is used in the United States to mean the head of any business corporation, however minor, and sometimes self-appointed. Unlike English, Turkish evokes fine shades of meaning in the granting of leadership titles. Of course, were English speakers interested in doing this they could quite easily invent appropriate terms or borrow them from other languages. There is no suggestion - as George Orwell mistakenly claimed in *1984* - that the absence of a word prevents one from thinking the thought. If this were the case human beings would never develop new ideas. Among the Turkish words for leader are: *Baskan*, derived from *bas* meaning "head", is used in the sense of "leader" in English, implying political leader. Arabic uses *ras* in the same way. *Cumhurbaskani* designates specifically the president of a state. Turks constantly use it for Rauf Denktas, the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, generally using the full form "the President of the North Turkish Cypriot Republic", while denying it to the Greek Cypriot leader, whom they designate with the title of community leader only. The use of the term *cumhurbaskani* signifies, in other words, political recognition, the grant of legitimacy. *Basbug* is a term with strong racist connotations. Though occasionally used for Mustapha Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, it is usually used by the extreme Turkish right for their leaders, or for great Turkish conquerors of the past. The title evokes great reverence and is denied to non-Turks. *Sef*, from the French *chef*, was very much in use during the 1940s. The President at that time, Ismet İnönü, had the official title of *Milli Sef*, meaning National Chief. Atatürk, who died in 1938, was called *Ebedi Sef* meaning Eternal Chief. *Lider*, which is a loan word from English, is widely used as the equivalent of the unemotive, technical English term. *Önder*, derived from *ön*, meaning front, is a neologism invented as a Turkish equivalent of the English word "leader". Even so, it cannot escape the status associations of a strongly patriarchal, hierarchical society. It therefore still conveys an aura of greater importance, respect and reverence than "leader" and is used particularly to refer to great figures of Turkish history such as Atatürk. It is also a prestigious personal name for boys.

2. Historical Associations

Languages are not only vehicles of current meaning but also serve as the living archives of a civilization, the repository of past customs and attitudes. Words carry evocations of historical usage down through the generations. Where a central theme of social and national life is concerned, such as negotiation or conflict resolution, historical reverberations are inevitable. "Appeasement", once a word with favorable resonances of peace and reconciliation in English, can no longer be used without evoking Neville Chamberlain's discredited policy of buying time at Czech expense. "War" evokes the numbing horror of the great world wars.

The same principle can apply to technical negotiating terms. "Delegation" is a neutral word in English denoting a group of people authorized to represent their country in a diplomatic or cultural capacity. In contrast, its Arabic equivalent, *wafd*, is bound up with the Arab tradition of communal visiting. A *wafd* can be a delegation of reparation and conciliation following a domestic feud, or a group bringing condolences or congratulations on some family occasion. The historic associations of the term become clearer if we note that the ninth year of the

Islamic calendar was known as the year of *wufud* (plural of *wafd*). It was at this time that Islam began to spread throughout the Arabian Peninsula, with delegations coming to the Prophet Mohammed, swearing allegiance, and accepting Islam. *Wafd*, in other words, goes back to the very origins of Islam and the building of bridges between Moslem co-religionists. One can still observe this phenomenon today, delegations from all over the Arab world traveling from one place to another to express allegiance or request support. Delegations from the poorer Arab countries visit the wealthy countries of the Persian Gulf to pledge loyalty and ask for assistance. President Sadat of Egypt traveled on a *wafd* to Saudi Arabia for help in the peace process with Israel and for financial aid. The custom is even maintained by delegations of Israeli Arabs who visit Arab countries such as Syria in order to show their affiliation to the Arab world, and to maintain their Arab character. *Wafd* is a term redolent of Arab solidarity. In Egyptian history the *Wafd Party* emerged in the Egyptian Parliament after the first world war and is associated with the struggle to free Egypt of the British protectorate that had existed since 1882. "The appellation *Wafd* originated in a demand by Sa'd Zaghlul [its leader]...to be allowed to proceed in a delegation to Great Britain to discuss Egypt's relations with the Protecting Power and her constitutional future".⁴

From all these references it can be seen that *wafd* combines the sense of mission (with some of the religious connotations of the English term) with that of delegation. It evokes familial Arab cohesion and sympathy as much as business. *Wafd* implies something going beyond narrow national interests and appeals to wider bonds of solidarity. At the same time a hierarchical dimension undeniably enters the use of the word, as there remains a hint of inequality between the supplicant, visiting delegation and the receiving host. Who visits whom is a question to which governments in the status-conscious Middle East are never oblivious. The choreography and protocol of visiting have loomed particularly large in Western relations with the states of the region.

3. Contrasting Values

One of the unusual features of language brought out by the lexicon is that words that are value-free in one language imply value judgements in another. Since words reflect cultural and religious prejudices this is perhaps not surprising. To give a concrete example, pork is a simple culinary item in Europe, but is the forbidden meat of a despised animal in the Middle East. By the same token, words reverse their ethical charges across languages. "Normalization" was a seemingly neutral word originally suggested by United States diplomats in the 1970s to characterize the transition in Arab-Israeli relations from hostility and war to normal, peaceful relations. Words for war and peace existed but nothing for the process by which nations moved from one state to the other. What could be more normal than the word "normal" and its derivation "normalization"? Unexpectedly, the word itself became a bitter subject of contention between Israel and Syria, though substantively Syria grasped that there could be no peaceful settlement with Israel without the paraphernalia of regular ties that mark the relations between states at peace.

Since there is no indigenous Hebrew word for the idea of normalization, *normalizatzia* soon caught on in Israel. *Normali* - "normal" - is a foreign loan word in everyday use in Modern Hebrew, so *normalizatzia* had a familiar ring to it, suggesting itself as a self-evident characterization of the prevailing, "normal" state of relations between nations that Israel, for long isolated in the Middle East, aimed for. Since Israel had never had normal relations the term acquired self-evident, positive associations. Equally, its absence, a continuation of abnormality, possessed strongly negative associations, being connected with a term - *lo normali* - suggesting irregularity and in some contexts mental deficiency.

The Arabic term for normalization has exactly the reverse valency. *Tatbi'* is connected with the word for "nature", *tabi'a*. *Tatbi'* has its origins in the ancient, nomadic Arab way of life, when animals - donkeys, horses, camels, buffalo - played a central role, and were raised and broken in, especially for riding. This dimension of *tatbi'* still exists in pastoral and rural communities, such as those of the Bedouin or *fellahin* (peasant farmers), where animals continue to be domesticated and trained for service as beasts of burden, whether as pack animals or for plowing. *Tatbi'*, originally applied to the domestication of animals, now refers to

the normalization or naturalization of relations between individuals or countries. Although the metaphor is a strange one for the English speaker, the logic is clear: As an undomesticated animal can only be of service and enter the household when it has been broken in, "pressed into service", so can states only live together side by side after they have been "trained" and "domesticated." In the context of Israeli-Syrian negotiations these connotations of the word are highly unfortunate: With its perennial fear of Israeli hegemony and acute sensitivity to hierarchical relationships, the last thing the Syrian government wanted was to be "broken in" and "tamed" by Israel as *tatbi'* intimates. However, if *tatbi'* was considered offensive, *tabi'i*, meaning "normal, ordinary, regular, usual, natural" was acceptable as not implying subjugation and submission. Thus after difficult negotiations at Shepherdstown in January 2000 the Israeli and Syrian delegations were finally able to agree on the establishment of a committee on Normal Peaceful Relations.⁵ Here was one semantic dispute, rooted in dissonant linguistic-cultural associations, that had contributed to years of delay and ill will in a process that had started way back in Madrid in 1991.

4. Difference of Emphasis

Negotiating concepts are firmly lodged within traditions of social organization and leadership - political culture. In democratic societies negotiation between equals is the primary mechanism for handling conflict. Instead of being left to fester, disagreements are thrashed out in open debate. Decisions are in effect made by negotiation, even between a president or prime minister and his nominal subordinates and other elected officials. Government agencies in the West do not order about economic and social groups but negotiate with them. Information is supposed to flow downwards and upwards, so that when decisions are made it is with full knowledge of their impact on concerned sectors of society. In contrast, the flow of information in highly hierarchical societies is downwards, not upwards. The free exchange of ideas is discouraged. Open dispute is often unwelcome and opposition parties lead an uncomfortable existence, since disagreement is perceived as disloyalty to the father-figure leader. Middlemen are needed to bridge the yawning gap between ordinary citizens and the authorities. As a highly individualist, democratic society in a hierarchical neighborhood, Israel reveals a very different approach to the internal organization of negotiation than do its neighbors. Here, language faithfully depicts culture.

A revealing case in point is the Hebrew word *hanchayot*, the technical Hebrew term for "negotiating instructions". What, one might think, could be more straightforward and neutral than the word used to refer to the instructions given by a negotiating principal to his or her representatives? However, the connotations of *hanchayot* are considerably less rigid and inflexible even than the English word "instructions". If instructions are mandatory and constraining, *hanchayot* are looser and more discretionary. It is no accident that *hanchayot* mean, besides "negotiating instructions", "directions, guidelines, and terms of reference". Thus, *hanchayot* would be the word used if one were asked by someone how to get to the supermarket, or that one would leave for a house guest to inform her when to water the plants. Significantly, the word *hanchayot* is related to the word *manche*, meaning master of ceremonies, chair of a discussion, or a TV host - that is, someone who guides rather than someone who commands.

Hebrew speakers use the word *hanchayot* not for lack of an alternative. The everyday language does in fact possess a word that captures the essence of "instructions". The term *hora'ot* means "orders, commands, directives, and instructions". It has its origin in a root related to instruction in the sense of teaching. In some contexts teacher, *moreh*, is synonymous with rabbi. The implication is that *hora'ot* are more authoritative and obligatory than *hanchayot*. *Hora'ot* are the instructions that a superior gives to a subordinate and that are not open to discussion or debate. The term appears in such usages as "safety *hora'ot*" and "*hora'ot* for use", where the procedure or appliance will not work unless the instructions are strictly adhered to. In military terminology yet another word, *p'kudot*, orders, is used.

The fact that the word adopted for negotiating instructions, *hanchayot*, has looser connotations than the readily available term *hora'ot*, implies that in an Israeli cultural context members of a negotiating team are given some leeway to exercise their own judgment. They

do, indeed, receive *hanchayot* from the political echelon, but to a lesser or greater extent they would be expected to display some initiative and possibly even independence of mind. This reflects greater individualism, a looser hierarchical set-up, a more open decision making process, and a less structured approach to negotiation than is found either in other ME societies or even Britain and the United States.

The semantic picture suggested by the preference for the flexible word *hanchayot* to the inflexible word *hora'ot* is faithfully reproduced in the practical Israeli conduct of negotiations. Veteran negotiator and international lawyer Joel Singer, one of the architects of the two Oslo agreements between Israel and the Palestinians, noted that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin did not provide him with "exact *hanchayot* where to go." How then did he know what to negotiate? By piecing together the contents of remarks, speeches, and answers to questions made by the prime minister and foreign minister. "From the combination of all these words we built up a map of *hanchayot*."⁶ The pattern repeated itself in the June 1999 domestic negotiations to set up a governing coalition under Ehud Barak. David Liba'i, who headed the negotiating team on behalf of the Labor party, describes a process in which instructions were not handed down from on high, but in which *hanchayot* emerged from a "joint analysis of changing situations."⁷ His colleague Gilead Sherr described "a dynamic and fluid process of receiving *hanchayot*, discussions, then going back to Barak for decisions...work was carried on through consultations and *hanchayot*, sometimes a certain issue was dealt with at the level of the team, while another issue went up to be decided at the prime ministerial level."⁸ Almost exactly the same procedure characterized the Israeli conduct of the September 1999 negotiations with the Palestinians for the framework Sharm el-Sheikh accord: *hanchayot* crystallized out of a back-and-forth, up-and down continuous stream of consultations between the political and diplomatic echelons. "In contrast to the Israeli team, that enjoyed substantial freedom of maneuver, the Palestinian negotiating team...stayed close to Arafat's *hanchayot* and lacked authority to depart from them."⁹

A key negotiating term such as *hanchayot* can be seen to be a microcosm of an entire culture of governance, linking up with all sorts of other equally indicative concepts like leadership, consultations, decision making, representative, negotiating team, and so on. The fact that the Palestinians drew on very different culturally-grounded understandings of these concepts did affect the conduct of negotiations (although, for reasons already explained, not necessarily the outcome). It is certainly arguable that the less rigid Israeli style provided for a more flexible approach to the negotiations. This may not always be tactically advantageous, though. It may also lead to a miscalculation of the interlocutor's freedom of maneuver. From a linguistic point of view the example corroborates the point that words and meanings shape expectations and influence - without determining - behavior.

ENGLISH AND ME LANGUAGES CONTRASTED

The *Middle East Negotiating Lexicon* provides the researcher with a wealth of information for comparing and contrasting English and ME negotiating terms, and therefore the alternative understandings of negotiation underlying them. Important common features link Arabic, Farsi, and Turkish notions, setting them collectively apart from English-language (and Hebrew) interpretations. Shared Islamic values and the presence of numerous Arabic words in Farsi and Turkish create in some respects a distinct, though not uniform, ME negotiating heritage and discourse. Having noted this, one hastens to add that the adoption by Farsi and Turkish of English loan words and the deliberate replacement, particularly in Turkey, of traditional Arabic and Persian terms by new Turkish words, may change this picture in the future.¹⁰ Three features of ME discourse set it apart from English: 1. A very clear distinction between pragmatic commercial and principled political negotiation; 2. The absence of concepts that are pivotal to English negotiating discourse, especially "compromise" and "concession"; 3. The prominence of central Islamic and Arabic concepts embodying a very characteristic ethical outlook.

1. Meanings of Negotiation

"Negotiation" derives from the Latin *negotiare* meaning "to do business, trade, deal" and this original commercial sense is retained in modern Latin languages so that, for instance, *negozio* in Italian is a shop. "Negotiate", meaning "to traffic in goods", is found in seventeenth and eighteenth century texts. In contemporary English "negotiate" evokes a can-do, commercial world in which pragmatic individuals exchange views in order to arrive at a mutually satisfactory arrangement. The ideas of discussion, business, and adroit management are present in equal proportions: Thus the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the following definitions of the word: 1. "To hold communication or conference (with another) for the purpose of arranging some matter by mutual agreement; to discuss a matter with a view to some settlement or compromise." 2. "To deal with, manage, or conduct (a matter or affair, etc., requiring some skill or consideration)." 3. "To convert into cash or notes." 4. "To deal with, carry out, as a business or monetary transaction." 5. "To succeed in crossing, getting over, round, or through (an obstacle etc.) by skill or dexterity." ¹¹

The fact that "negotiate" covers a semantic field that includes bargaining, debate, and overcoming difficulties is extremely significant. It is taken for granted by the English speaker that in a negotiation there will be mutual give and take, that the outcome will involve compromise, and that it is highly desirable for the interlocutors to cooperate in the joint search for a solution to problems arising. "This is negotiable" in English means that there is flexibility in a negotiating position and that compromise is possible. It is also taken for granted that the sort of preconditions and qualities that are essential for the efficient conduct of business, such as trust, reliability, a sense of fairness, and honesty, are generally suited for negotiation in its various forms, whether commercial, legal, personal, or political. Indeed, as anyone conversant with the theoretical literature on negotiation can observe, negotiation is thought of as a generic activity subsuming an entire range of issues and activities.

Such assumptions do not underpin the ME negotiating paradigm. Rather, a clear distinction is drawn between weighty discussions between authorized representatives, in which one set of rules and expectations apply, and bargaining in the market over quantifiable commodities, in which other groundrules are valid. This is reflected in Arabic by the use of two separate terms, *mufawadat* and *musawama*. The most common meanings of *mufawadat* are "negotiations", "debate", and "conference". The word is derived from a root possessing the sense of commissioning, authorizing, delegating, and entrusting. This is the term used for political negotiations, a situation in which representatives of states or organizations come together as equals in a formal setting to discuss an issue of mutual concern in a dignified way. This is not to deny that *mufawadat* has connotations of vigorous debate and expressions of disagreement. However, it does imply that the overt expression of anger is ruled out.

Musawama, in contrast, can only mean bargaining over the price of goods. This is the meaning current in spoken Arabic. Something is on sale and the buyer and seller disagree over the terms of the transaction. They engage in *musawama* to reach a mutually acceptable deal. *Musawama* is not used to characterize formal negotiations over important political matters, the realm of *mufawadat*. Where *musawama* is used it suggests undignified and not very edifying market trading, something that dignitaries avoid. The sense of huckstering leads on to another negative connotation, namely, that the bargainers are trying to trick or outsmart each other. If *mufawadat* suggests the dignified and high-minded discussions by statesmen of matters of principle, *musawama* suggests petty-minded haggling. In Arab-Israeli negotiations the representatives of Arab states, bitterly resenting having to negotiate over issues that they consider to concern national honor - land, justice, the rights of the Palestinians - often claim that while they engage in *mufawadat*, it is the Israelis who insist on *musawama*. Thus Kamal Hasan Ali, former Egyptian minister of war and foreign affairs, could write in his memoirs on the 1978 Camp David talks: "The Israeli position at all stages of discussions was characterized by trickery and *musawama*, employing a variety of methods for that purpose."¹² It is against this background that Syrian unwillingness even to discuss the question of its borders with Israel is to be understood. On this matter of supreme national dignity Syria would demand the restoration of its rights and all negotiation-as-bargaining was to be rejected with contempt.

The *mufawadat-musawama* dichotomy also applies to Persian and Turkish. In both languages negotiation in the sense of the courtly exchange of views is denoted by the same term *mozukereh/müzakere* (from a root meaning mention, recite, praise). Implied are discussions conducted in a serious, positive, and sociable atmosphere, with interlocutors consulting each other in an amicable way, putting forward constructive suggestions. Equally, Persian and Turkish words connected to commercial bargaining are redolent of the bazaar and low status. It should be remembered that the market is a central institution in both Iran and Turkey and that there is very little that you cannot buy there. The main bazaars of Teheran and Istanbul are gigantic emporiums, sprawling over entire quarters of their respective cities. Bargaining is a way of life. Thus, the Farsi *cane zadan* and *mo'male-ye bazari* suggest both haggling and vulgar chatter; the Turkish *pazarlik*, derived from the Persian word bazaar, also implies petty haggling.

Traditionally, bargaining, commercial style, was viewed in Turkey as quite unsuitable for the conduct of international relations. *Pazarlik* reminded people right away of the bazaar and money, and they felt that affairs of state should be conducted in terms of national interests, of rights and principles, rather than of nickles and dimes. At the same time, diplomatic negotiation in conflict situations was viewed in stark black and white terms. The Turkish approach to the Cyprus dispute with Greece was presented as a choice between "partition or death!" In recent years, a more pragmatic approach has made its appearance, connected with Turkish modernization and westernization, the purposive abandonment since the time of Atatürk of Arabic influences in society and language. Nowadays, the Turkish elite think of Turkey as an organic part of Europe and Turkey was accepted in 1999 as a candidate for membership of the European Union. Significantly, the term *pazarlik* is increasingly used in foreign affairs. Speaking to Parliament in 1983 Prime Minister Turgut *özal* spoke of his government's aspirations to become a full member of the Common Market: "We have said that very clearly; but we also added that: 'We don't want to humiliate ourselves by being reduced to a nation determined to join no matter what, because we want to *pazarlik*...If you say 'No, we still want to enter it at any cost', like people used to say, then you don't have the chance to bargain...I know this for sure: European countries love *pazarlik* and they really appreciate those who make serious *pazarlik*'.¹³

2. The Absence of Key English Concepts

Compromise and concession are inseparable from negotiating in the English-speaking world. As we have seen, one of the very definitions of "negotiate" is "to discuss a matter with a view to some settlement or compromise", where "compromise" is synonymous with agreement. Other closely connected notions are give and take and reciprocity. All of these ideas are thought of as natural features of negotiation, without which a successful result is considered unlikely. According to the Anglo-Saxon philosophy of negotiation it is the very process of give and take, of mutual concession, that legitimizes the outcome. One often hears it said that "if neither side is entirely satisfied then clearly the agreement must be a fair one". Obviously, individual instances of concession and compromise might be ill-advised and one-sided but there is no doubt that they are generally assumed to be indispensable as principles of conduct. That they are viewed with favor is demonstrated by the tendency in English to elevate "compromise", "give and take", and "reciprocity" into reified virtues in their own right. "What is needed," we hear from Western mediators active in some Middle Eastern dispute, "is a spirit of Compromise and Give and Take."

None of these fundamental assumptions are present in the ME paradigm of negotiation. Neither Arabic, Farsi, nor Turkish possesses a special term for "compromise". It is true that the functional equivalent of this is implicit in the words for arrangement, agreement, settlement, reconciliation, and others. Middle Easterners are aware that a dispute can only be settled when both sides are willing to make sacrifices, and that agreements come about only when neither side can claim total victory over the other. The point is that mutual sacrifice is not seen as something desirable in and of itself. Quite the reverse: who is enthusiastic about making a sacrifice? Thus an appeal to the Spirit of Compromise, as one might appeal to truth and justice, is literally meaningless in ME languages. Another way to grasp the difference between the paradigms is through the word "concession". In the English-speaking world

negotiators are thought of as making progress by moderating their initial demands on converging paths to agreement. Both sides give something up in an alternating and incremental choreography of concession until they finally meet "somewhere in the middle". However, the functional equivalents of concession in ME languages are synonymous, not with moderation or equity, but with surrender and relinquishment.

The Arabic term *tanazul*, and the Turkish terms *taviz* and *dün*, have one dominant meaning in current usage: giving up something one possesses as of right. This might be the result of persuasion or force but the implication of unfortunate loss is the same. *Tanazul* is actually derived from a root meaning "coming down" or "dismounting from a horse". There is no denying the potential for a humiliating climb-down implicit in the term. In some circumstances there are some things that can be surrendered on a basis of mutual exchange, *tabadul*, in order to obtain benefit. But deeply cherished values are given up with only the very greatest reluctance as implying grave loss of face, for example, matters touching on personal, family, or national honor, land, and status. *Tanazul* has especially strong connotations of surrender and defeat in cases where the concession was imposed by one side on a weak and unwilling partner. This sense of the term, it should be emphasized, is the commonest one. There are some cases, where concessions are equal and reciprocal on both sides - and seen by all to be so - and *tanazul* would be defensible. But this would be the exception rather than the rule. Writing of a change in Egypt's position on a matter concerning Arab League representation at a conference of the Organization of African Unity, Butrus Ghali describes his care to avoid the impression that the shift was in fact a concession: "I had to wait a day or two for the change in my position not to be interpreted as a *tanazul* that the Egyptian delegation was making so the conference would succeed".¹⁴

3. Characteristic Islamic Concepts

Lacking the concepts of compromise, give and take, and reciprocity, ME languages nevertheless share a distinct set of powerful ideas, derived from a common Islamic-Arabic heritage. These key values are reified and appealed to as legitimate arguments and justifications for action. They, too, set ME discourse apart from the Anglo-Saxon tradition.

At the head of the list I would put the Arabic word *haqq* (*haqq* in Persian, *hak* in Turkish) covering an extensive semantic field including "duty", "right", "correctness", "righteousness", "justice", and "truth". Derived from a root meaning "cut, engrave, inscribe" *haqq* came to denote an "established fact", hence, "reality". In classical Arabic *haqq* referred to "permanently valid laws expanded to cover the ethical ideals of right and real, just and trust, and developed further to include Divine Spiritual Reality." *Haqq* frequently appears in the Koran as one of the ninety-nine names of Allah. In legal terms it meant "claim" and "right" in the sense of a legal entitlement.¹⁵ *Haqq* is still acknowledged without debate to epitomize the highest good, something that it is impossible to call into question. Since *Haqq* is one of the names of God it also has religious connotations familiar to all Moslems. It is used in the oath taken by witnesses before testifying in court. The noteworthy point about the semantic field of *haqq* is that truth, justice, virtue, and human rights are seen as different facets of a single, perfect concept. In English these various notions are separate. Equally, the absolutist vision of justice embodied in *haqq* "though the heavens fall" is very different from the pragmatic, contextual assumption underlying the case-oriented approach of the English Common Law. The idea that a jury of twelve "good men and true" using their common sense could arrive at a fair verdict, a notion at the heart of Anglo-Saxon justice, is alien to the Islamic tradition embodied in *haqq*. Justice is from God, not ordinary citizens. Given the sacrosanct connotations of the term it is perhaps not surprising that speakers of ME languages find it as natural to evoke *haqq* as a justification for a position as it is repugnant to compromise it.

In the Arab world *haqq* is frequently used in the context of the Palestinian question. Thus for President Sadat's Foreign Minister Isma'il Fahmi a crucial principle to take into account in dealing with Israel was "recognizing the *haqq* of the Palestinian people to freely fulfill their *haqq* to determine their fate, thereby to establish a Palestinian state".¹⁶ In Farsi, alongside *haqq* as a supreme value, the term is also used to refer to the sacred national rights and resources of the Iranian people expropriated by the imperialist powers. Past wrongs

manifestly remain a source of great resentment. In Modern Turkish *hak* similarly refers to patriotic rights, particularly in the context of the historical dispute with Greece. As part of Turkey's modernizing and secularizing trend the word has also acquired important connotations of individual rights. Hence *İnsan hakları* is human rights; *temel haklar* is basic rights; *yasamak hakkı* is the right to life.

In their conception of conflict and its resolution ME languages share other significant common features. These include: the crucial lubricative role of the mediator/middle man (Arabic *wasit*, Farsi *vesāyat*); the treaty as a covental exchange of oaths (Arabic *mu'ahada*, Turkish *muahede*, Farsi *'ahd-nāmah*); and good faith as purity of heart, "good intention", as in a state of mind conducive to sincere prayer (Arabic *niyya hasana*, Farsi *hosne niyyat*, Turkish *iyiniyet*). Particularly noteworthy is the distinction found in both Arabic and Farsi (but not Modern Turkish), between peace as non-aggression (*salam*, *mosālemat āmiz*) and peace as reconciliation (*sulh*, *solh*). Completely absent from Western conceptions of peace as a seamless web of good will and amity, grasp of the *salam-sulh* distinction is vital to an understanding of international affairs in the Middle East.

The dictionaries translate both *salam* and *sulh* as "peace". *Salam* has numerous meanings and covers the semantic field of "peace", "safety", "security", "health", and "wellbeing". It is in constant everyday use as a common term of greeting. Like *shalom*, the underlying idea running through many of its senses is of something whole and without blemish. *Salam* also has Moslem religious connotations as one of the names of God and appears in a variety of pious expressions. In political and international contexts *salam* denotes a formal state of contractual peace. Speakers of Arabic tend to use it when referring to peace between non-Arab nations. *Sulh*, like *salam*, evokes a vision of harmony, tranquillity, and prosperity. It results from the termination of conflict and reconciliation between formerly disputing parties. In Islamic history *sulh* was used to refer expressly to the condition of peace resulting from the expansion of Islam and the extension of Arab hegemony achieved without bloodshed by treaties of submission rather than by war.

There is some debate about the precise difference between *sulh* and *salam* today, since the two terms are used interchangeably and imprecisely in everyday speech. *Salam* tends to refer to formal peace between governments, peaceful coexistence, while *sulh* is used to mark a situation of true reconciliation between peoples following the conclusion of *salam*. *Salam* might not remove all underlying sources of contention; *sulh* would finally and conclusively resolve the conflict by addressing the underlying causes and resentments. During the cold war the superpowers lived in a state of *salam* but not *sulh*. In domestic contexts *sulh* refers specifically to the reconciliation achieved as a result of elaborate procedures of conflict resolution laid down by custom between clans or individuals. In negotiating with Israel President Sadat distinguished carefully between the two terms, using *salam* in the sense of non-belligerency, *sulh* as the final end to the Arab-Israeli conflict, when all issues had been resolved and reconciliation achieved. The declaration *la musālihuhum*, meaning "we shall not make *sulh* with them" was made by President Sadat before his mission of *salam* to Jerusalem in November 1977.

If anything, Farsi sharpens the *salam-sulh* distinction. The best translation of *mosālemat āmiz* is "peaceful coexistence" or "cold peace". It implies the mere negative absence of war and the formal existence of diplomatic relations, without the economic benefits and cordial relations that true peace with a neighbor should yield. *Solh*, in contrast, refers to peace in its most general sense. Thus it can be used to characterize relations within the family, between communities, or between states. The absence of war, whether inside the country or with a foreign power, can be characterized as a state of *solh*, provided that it is understood that the termination of hostilities has paved the way for full reconciliation and good neighborly relations. If *mosālemat āmiz* is negative, cool peace, *solh* is positive, warm peace. An example of the latter would be the profound national reconciliation that took place between Japan and the United States after World War II. When two nations are in a state of *solh*, peace is not limited to stiff and restricted government-to-government ties in a purely political sense, but also involves economic and trade relations, and goodwill between peoples. *Solh* is therefore more than minimal peaceful coexistence, since that suggests that the peoples have

little to do with each other, living in a state of mutual sufferance. *Solh* means living side-by-side in active cooperation, friendship, and harmony.

CONCLUSIONS

A close reading of the *Middle East Negotiating Lexicon* makes it clear that English and ME languages agree on how negotiation writ large is to be depicted. There is concurrence that in a negotiation there are contacts, delegations, envoys, meetings, conferences, talks, proposals, conditions, initiatives, arguments, demands, persuasion, deadlocks, solutions, commitments, guarantees, understandings, documents, agreements, treaties, signings, and ratifications. This demonstrates the existence of a universal model of the basic procedures, the nuts and bolts, of negotiation. It is no less than what one would expect from a global diplomatic system based on the United Nations and other international agencies, the Vienna Conventions, and common diplomatic instruments and institutions.

At the same time this impressive consensus on the mechanics of negotiating conceals subtle, yet far-reaching differences in the way basic concepts and moves are interpreted, evaluated, and actualized. Different cultures concur on the big picture of negotiation just as they agree on the big picture of governance, art, family, cuisine, and leisure. We are, after all, one human family. But the devil is in the detail. First and foremost, there is disagreement on the ethos or philosophy of negotiation. This can be understood at the level of metaphor. In English there are two prevailing metaphors shaping how negotiation is conceived, one sporting, the other commercial. The sporting metaphor emerges in such terms as "level playing field", "opening bid", "fair offer", "hold strong cards", "call your bluff", "rules of the game", "end game", and so on. This vocabulary reflects a tendency to think of negotiation as a sporting contest governed by set rules. After a hard fought, but fair game, there is a result and the teams go home. This metaphor makes it difficult to conceive of a negotiation as a life or death confrontation between possibly unscrupulous opponents willing to try every (dirty) trick in the book, and not played by the Queensberry Rules. The commercial metaphor is inherent in the very term "negotiation" and the emphasis on the mercantile virtues of "confidence", "give and take", "reciprocity", "hard bargaining", and a "good deal". In the Middle East negotiation is not configured in terms of either metaphor. Games are for children, not sober political leaders, and commercial bargaining is for the market. The prevailing metaphors of negotiation in Arabic are taken from the Koran and the life of the Prophet Mohammed, Islamic law, and rural life. *Aqaba*, "obstacle" or "steep mountain road" in Arabic, recalls delicate negotiations on a mountain path between Mohammed and emissaries from Medina at a critical point in the Prophet's career. *Mab'uth*, "envoy", also means "one who is resurrected from the dead". Taken altogether the Arabic language of negotiation evokes a deeply serious, principled activity infused with moral purpose.

The core ideas and values enshrined in negotiation are also very different in English and ME languages. English chooses to apotheosize Compromise, Reciprocity, and Give and Take. These are ideals to be appealed to and goals to be pursued as axiomatically desirable. Arabic, Farsi, and Turkish, for their part, reify *Haqq* and can only with some difficulty find synonyms for the English terms. Hebrew has *Bitachon* as its highest good, a word meaning "security", but also covering a semantic field that includes "certainty" and "confidence". English, Hebrew, and Arabic lend equal weight to the abstract ideal of peace, but mean different things by the word. If Arabic distinguishes between formal peace, *salam*, and reconciliation, *sulh*, the Hebrew term shalom means *salam-with-sulh*. Thus language reflects which concepts are thought of as sacred cows, which minimized, which overlooked.

It is at the detailed lexical level that semantic differences are as subtle as they are elusive. Equivalents can invariably be found for negotiating terms. But literal translation does not capture discrepancies of meaning, dissonant resonances, and divergent associations. Languages draw boundaries in different places. Where one language chooses to assimilate separate concepts into a single word, another chooses separate words for what seems to be the same idea. English distinguishes "trust" from "confidence". No ME tongue does so, implying that no distinction is drawn between trust as a high ethical, religious concept as in "In God We Trust" and confidence as the ability to rely on a business partner. Farsi differentiates

between two concepts of "interests", *manʿfe* and *maslahat*, the first referring to advantage in a competitive, zero-sum situation, the second to benefit achieved without harming anyone else. Equivalent words have very different ethical associations: "Crisis" denotes opportunity as much as emergency. *Bohrūh* (Farsi), *azma* (Arabic), *kriz* or *bunalim* (Turkish) refer to abnormal and undesirable states of emergency, to be avoided if possible. Very different evaluations of conflict and disputation also divide Arabic, Farsi, and Turkish from English (and Hebrew). The sense that dispute, debate, polemic, and so on are thoroughly good things is displayed by a rich and varied Hebrew vocabulary of argumentation. Even *machloket*, the term for disagreement, has positive connotations. *Pilpul* refers to a very specific and untranslatable style of legal discussion. Thus vocabulary can reflect the desirability or undesirability of features of negotiating, while identifying and drawing attention to concepts not demarcated in other languages.

Without determining behavior, semantic differences are bound to affect the range of negotiating choices and order of preferences among given options. One cannot engage in *pilpul* without knowing what *pilpul* is. When "argument" is a word with bad connotations for you, then you are inclined to shy away from arguing things out. Similarly, the attraction of "risk", "pressure", and "threat" is influenced by the positive or negative valency of the concept in the context of negotiating. Lacking indigenous words for risk (as opposed to danger) Farsi and Persian adopted a foreign loan word for the probability of losses in gambling or trading, hence *reesk* and *risk* or *riziko*. But it would be unusual to find the term used in diplomatic contexts because *risk/danger* is deprecated in international affairs. On the other hand, if "deal" has a good sound in your language then you will go for it. If you possess just one or two synonymous terms, as Hebrew does, *hitakshut/akshanut*, for "perseverance, insistence, persistence, doggedness, tenacity, obstinacy, intransigence, recalcitrance, and obduracy" it becomes more difficult than otherwise to gauge and calibrate determined negotiating. On the other hand, if "agreement" and "compromise" mean the same thing, as they do in Hebrew (*pshara*), then you are conditioned to identify agreement with compromise, and tend to act accordingly.

Many more examples of linguistic diversity could be drawn from the *Middle East Negotiating Lexicon* but by now the general point should be clear. Language is not a neutral, transparent medium, like water, but more like a set of operating instructions, a computer programme. When it comes to negotiation, the mechanics across cultures are common; differences lie in the linguistic software, of which there are up to six thousand packages on offer. This has several very clear implications: one is that language cannot simply be factored out of the negotiating equation. If this is accepted then it follows that close attention has to be paid to the negotiating vocabularies and dominant metaphors of languages other than English. Another implication is that English, for its part, is not a meta-language above and beyond culture, able to convey the "reality" of negotiation in an objective way. Its outlook can be as odd as that of any supposedly exotic ME language. To perceive negotiation in sporting terms is fairly idiosyncratic. Nor let us forget that at different times Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and Aramaic (if not Hebrew) have all been international *linguae francae* thought to express culturally privileged views of the world, just like English today. Finally, semantic diversity requires the construction of various kinds of educational tools and information aids to facilitate communication across otherwise incompatible software programmes.

As long as negotiation is written or thought about only in English, as though it were the exclusive language of the human race, cultural and semantic divergences across peoples are bound to be obscured because there is no basis of comparison. To reveal unusual features of any language, English included, requires the Archimedean leverage that only another language can supply. The singularity of the English-language concepts of "fair offer" or "confidence-building" only becomes clear when one considers their ME equivalents.

In objection to my case it may be maintained that native languages are no longer particularly relevant because only English really counts today: According to this argument, diplomats are fluent in English, the modern global language, and most international negotiations are carried on in that tongue. Treaties and other important documents are very often drafted in English. International organizations conduct most of their operations in English. For instance, the

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) transacts its business in English, not Malay or Chinese. Even French diplomats privately acknowledge that they have lost the battle for linguistic supremacy.

Let there be no mistake: the use of an international language such as English is indispensable for the efficient handling of international affairs, broadly defined. In the past, historical international languages such as Akkadian, Latin, and French played this same essential role. Moreover, the very possibility of a *lingua franca* strongly suggests that different cultures share a great deal of common ground in their understanding of what negotiation writ large entails. The institution of negotiation, alongside other instruments of international contact, may well go back to the third millennium BCE, if not earlier. However, it seems to me that the infallibility of English as a universal panacea to problems of cross-cultural communication and international negotiation has been greatly exaggerated. The reasons why the capacity of English to deliver is limited are to be found in features of globalisation and the mechanics of negotiating.

Paradoxically, at the very moment that it greatly expands the scope of international contact, globalization diminishes the exclusive role of polyglot professional diplomats. Nowadays many non-diplomats, who are not necessarily fluent in English or another second language, are involved in international negotiations. Much international negotiating, covering a bewildering and ever-increasing range of activities, is conducted with very few diplomats present. Political figures, officials from domestic agencies, and private citizens often dominate delegations to international conferences. Nor do all leaders by any means know English well. Moreover, even when face-to-face talks between delegations take place in English this does not neutralize the influence of the mother tongue. To speak in English is not necessarily to think in English. Consultations within delegations and between the delegations and home are invariably in the mother tongue. Instructions, reports, original drafts, speeches to domestic audiences, and press stories will also be expressed in the vernacular and not English. Doubtless, when negotiations concern technical matters linguistic nuances are unlikely to loom large. Professionals indeed share a common language. But the more politicized, contentious, public, and complex the issue under negotiation, the greater the potential impact of linguistic differences. This is particularly the case with topics touching on the national patrimony, honor, cherished national assets, human rights, ideology and religion, and protracted historical disputes.

An Italian friend, reasonably proficient in English, asked me at a recent conference if it was true that English was a very precise language and therefore well suited to play the role of a *lingua franca*. I was surprised by the question because I had always thought of English as ambiguous and imprecise compared to the translucent, razor-sharp French of received truth. The fact is that foreign languages often appear precise to non-native speakers because they only know them one-dimensionally and are therefore often unconscious of the rich, underlying layers of meaning and nuance. My Italian friend was comparing his "thin" school-learned "international" English with his "thick", nuanced, mother tongue Italian of hearth and home, with its wealth of literary and cultural resonances. As long as the *lingua franca* is used in a mechanical (and culturally impoverished) way, with a limited vocabulary, narrowly defined according to clearly understood conventions, then international business - commercial, scientific, technical - can be efficiently conducted. Air traffic controllers and airline pilots, importers and exporters, scientists and engineers, need little more than a bare-bones technical language. But as international cooperation thrives, as relationships and communities flourish, as cultures intertwine, the limitations of a thin international language are bound to become increasingly apparent. Multilateral negotiation may have reached a high water mark.

For rich and intimate communication on complex, important issues something more is needed. Obviously, English has an essential role as a common denominator in negotiation. At the same time, the reality of linguistic diversity with its potential for confusion and asynchrony should be fully recognized. The solution to it is not just the imposition of a single language necessarily possessing a monocultural view of the world. It is the acquisition of several foreign languages, indeed the celebration of multilingualism. In addition, the comparative study of language and the elucidation of lexical differences can help overcome

misunderstanding grounded in the illusion of semantic uniformity. The *Middle East Negotiating Lexicon* is meant as a step in that direction.

ENDNOTES

1. The project reported on here was generously funded by the Washington-based United States Institute of Peace as part of its long-standing commitment to investigating national negotiating styles.
2. Itamar Rabinovich, "Damascus's Version," *Ma'ariv*, 28 February 1997.
3. For instance, George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Eva Hoffman, *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language* (London: Minerva, 1991).
4. *Encyclopedia of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1965-), vol. 3, 516.
5. For a revealing glimpse into the tortured deliberations on the term see James F. Rubin, State Department Press Briefing, January 5, 2000.
6. Interview, *Ma'ariv*, 7 July 1995.
7. Interview, *Ha'aretz*, 5 July 1999.
8. Interview, *Ma'ariv*, 2 July 1999.
9. Uzi Benziman, "Dangerous Currents," *Ha'aretz*, 10 September 1999.
10. See Geoffrey Lewis, *The Turkish Language Reform* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).
11. *Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), vol. X, 3. I have abridged the long dictionary entry.
12. Kamal Hasan Ali, *Mashawir al 'Umr* (Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 1994), 401.
13. İlayhan Esra, *Dünden Bugüne Türkiye-Avrupa Birliği İlişkileri ve Siyasal Partilerin Konuya Bakışı* (İstanbul: Boyut Kitapları, 1997), 255-256.
14. Butrus Butrus Ghali, *Tariq Misr ila al-Quds* (Cairo: Al-Ahram, 1997), 246.
15. *Encyclopedia of Islam*, vol. 3, 82-3.
16. Isma'il Fahmi, *Al-Tafawud min ajl al-Salam fi al-Sharq al-Awsat* (Cairo: Madbuli, 1985), 288.

Paul Sharp

TALKING TO AMERICANS: THE GENERAL PROBLEM

In her speech at the Chiefs of Diplomatic Missions Ball two weeks ago today, the now-former US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright made the following remarks to her assembled colleagues from other services:

Our purpose here this evening is truly just to relax and enjoy the company of this truly diverse group that has worked together so very, very, well. Because gathered here are the representatives of the entire family of humankind. We are all of different colors and races and creeds and backgrounds, and in our lives we have all traveled very different roads. But we *share a certain basic understanding*.² (My italics)

Perhaps so, but the premise of this conference is that a "basic understanding" is not easily accessible through the medium of language for, in Raymond Cohen's words, "...every language conveys a unique representation of the world."³ The ways in which we speak and think are deeply rooted in our particular cultures, themselves the results of long processes of production and reproduction which evolve only slowly if, indeed, they evolve at all.

This is scarcely a novel observation. Indeed, the separateness of cultures has been historically presented as a *raison d'être* for diplomacy as a cosmopolitan caste of privileged professionals. They served their Princes and Peace, not only by pursuing interests, but also by keeping affairs of state properly insulated from passions, morals, and cultural peculiarities of those whom they were increasingly forced to represent, the peoples of their respective countries. A shared diplomatic culture distinguished by a common language and acquired by similar patterns of socialisation, it was argued by writers on diplomacy from de Callières and de Wiquefort to Satow and Nicolson, was the key to preserving this insulation.

However, the historical record of classical diplomacy provides grounds for treating these writers' confidence in this regard with scepticism. Either the diplomats of 1914 did not share a common understanding of what was happening, or they were unable to get their respective leaders to accept that understanding. Clearly, the professionals were not as good at finessing the culture problem as their defenders thought they were simply because they could not. As libraries of philological, philosophical, and sociological inquiry in the twentieth century made clear, a direct correspondence between language and the material reality it purported to describe could not be taken for granted. The *lingua franca* of the day, be it Latin, French or English, was steeped in its own peculiarities of understanding and ways of seeing the world, and even professionals who acquired fluency in it did so with their habits of thought and understanding firmly structured by their own cultures mediated by their own languages.

If one adds to this the great irony of globalisation as far as diplomacy is concerned, namely that it is bringing together more and more people steeped in their own cultures and languages (politicians, business people, advocates and lobbyists for public transnational causes, and individuals),⁴ one begins to sense the scale of the contemporary problems posed to diplomacy by questions of language and culture. The contribution to international affairs by professional cosmopolitans who were probably never as effective at finessing culture as we had hoped, is being diluted by the onset of an army of hyphenated (for example, field, track two, and citizen), and even more culture-bound, small "d" diplomats.⁵

If the problem posed by language and culture for contemporary diplomacy is large, what are the dimensions of it which practitioners and scholars alike must address? I identify three: the central question; the operational dimension; and the political dimension.

1. The Central Question

The central question which must occur to anyone once they are told that their way of apprehending the world and expressing themselves about it through language is shaped by culture is, how much? At one end of the continuum we can identify a simple correspondence theory, namely that we all pretty much see the same thing but have different but equivalent words for it (and anyone who says otherwise is mucking about). At the other end, we see claims that, for all practical purposes, in social life at least there is no objective "out there", only subjective renditions which may or may not correspond with one another. Much diversity scholarship, for example, emphasises how racial, ethnic, class, gender and sexual (but rarely national) identities give rise to different ways of seeing the world. Any unity of vision between them can only be achieved by a process of oppression in which the views of subordinate identities are silenced by dominant ones. A better alternative is the creation and maintenance of much more limited and less ambitious areas of inter-subjective agreement by a process of ongoing negotiation (I hope that strikes a chord) between agents whose way of seeing the world differs not only from each other's but also by whatever context they happen to be in.

2. The Operational Dimension

Most diplomats and students of diplomacy necessarily find themselves adopting an intermediary position on this continuum. Experience soon teaches that a simple correspondence theory of language works no better for diplomats than it does for husbands and wives, parents and children or indeed human beings in any sort of relationship of some depth or complexity. Nevertheless, faith (or so it must seem at times) leads them to believe that some shared understanding is, in principle, always attainable for if it were not, there would be no point in having diplomats trying to find what it was. This being so, the operational dimension is concerned with how to proceed when one is conscious that the way in which one speaks to others and they speak to you is culturally-inscribed with meanings and significance which are not shared and, indeed, of which one may be unaware. There are few more dangerous situations in diplomacy than negotiations where the participants believe themselves to be in agreement with one another when, in fact, they are not. How, then, are such situations to be avoided?

3. The Political Dimension

The answer to this question is complicated by the fact that diplomacy is not only a means of communication but also an instrument of policy and, as such, has a political dimension to it. Official pronouncements and protestations notwithstanding, there are circumstances in which states still strive for advantage *vis à vis* one another, and diplomats have a moral and professional obligation to their masters and those whom they represent in this regard. Certainly another key element of the moral ethos of professional diplomats is that they should strive to ensure that their own activities and communications do not become a source of unwanted tension and conflict between those they represent. When conflict is judged acceptable, however, and advantage is actively sought, then language and terminology become instruments in the contest. If setting the agenda and framing the questions for a negotiation can become vital matters for negotiation in themselves, then there is no reason to suppose that diplomats conscious of the differences between languages and the significance applied to key ideas within them will not seek advantage from this knowledge. A diplomat may not insist that his or her own conception of what it means, for example, to negotiate, make concessions, or work for peace is adopted as the sole measure of what these terms suggest, but will at least resist the adoption of the other fellows' conception if it is not to his or her advantage.

TALKING TO AMERICANS: TWO PARTICULAR PROBLEMS

Applying the observations above to the question of dealing with the Americans raises two problems which are related to one another. The first is that most of the literature on diplomacy, language and culture is written as advice for how Americans and, to a lesser extent, other Westerners should deal with foreigners, principally non-Westerners. This is unfortunate because for the diplomatic profession, as opposed to the academic profession, how to talk to Americans is a much larger shared problem than how the Americans talk to everybody else.

It is also unfortunate in that the emphasis of the literature on the Americans structures the problem of language and diplomacy in a particular way. The Western way of thinking and speaking, we are reminded, is only *a* way of thinking and speaking, not the *only* way of thinking and speaking. Whatever its intrinsic merits or, indeed, its universal merits, in diplomacy, the fact that it is only one among several ways of so doing is more important. By implication, this warning contains an injunction to Western negotiators not only to be aware of these differences, but to adjust their own approach accordingly. If face and honour are important to the fellow with whom you are talking then this is a factor which must receive serious consideration if success is to be achieved.

This is sound advice, certainly, and there are plausible arguments for why the burden of cultural accommodation should be put on Western and principally American diplomats, rather than their non-Western counterparts. There is, of course, considerable, although incomplete, overlap between these two categories and two others, the rich, powerful and hegemonic, in aspiration at least, on the one hand, and the poor, weak, and more tolerant of diversity, in presentation at least, on the other. It may be claimed, therefore, that the weak and poor have already made, willy nilly, vast cultural concessions (after all, living in a sovereign state system may be plausibly claimed to be living under someone else's arrangements for the majority of the world), or argued that from those to whom much has been given much is expected. The rich and powerful not only have the ability to accommodate others, they also have the moral obligation to do so.

However, the argument about where the responsibility to adjust and accommodate resides also rests on the claim that Western countries in general, and the United States in particular, stand in great need of cultural and linguistic sensitising. This, in its turn, is part of a more general argument to the effect that, the fact that it is the richest and most powerful country in the world notwithstanding, the United States does not actually handle itself very well or helpfully in day-to-day negotiations.

A recent conference of scholars and diplomats on "How the United States Negotiates," for example, reached a number of conclusions along these lines.⁶ Among them were: the sense that the US plays the role of hegemon, acting dictatorially at times, and negotiating on the principle "...what's mine is mine. What's yours is negotiable"; the perception of "...an intrusive United States" arising from increased salience of economic, human rights and governance issues in international affairs; concerns about "...US unilateralism and indifference to local circumstances and the domestic requirements of other countries"; and worries about the extent to which the US is internally constrained by its constitutional arrangements and electoral cycles, resulting in certain issues being manipulated for domestic gain "...without much consideration of the international context or impact" and American negotiators using domestic circumstances as "a convenient excuse" for not co-operating with others or to impose their own timetable on negotiations.⁷

These are important observations to be sure. However, I would argue that none of them are particular to the United States and none of them are manifestations of a particular culture. Rather, they are manifestations of the distribution of power and wealth in the world.⁸ Specifically, they capture the experience of dealing with someone who is richer and more powerful than oneself, an experience which reoccurs in multiple settings on a daily basis in diplomacy. I would venture that there is more than a family resemblance between the experience of the Canadians dealing with Washington, the Jamaicans dealing with Ottawa and our own hosts talking to Rome.

I appear to be on the brink of disavowing the importance of language and culture to diplomacy at this point. I am not. The point I wish to make before proceeding is just how difficult it is to separate culture and language from other causal factors in diplomacy. The conference noted above was part of an ongoing project on cross-cultural negotiation, yet its findings, as reported, about how Americans negotiate addressed factors whose relationship to American culture and language were indistinct while their relationship to other factors, more easily identified, was clear. However, wealth and power, and the behaviour they engender in those who possess them (not to mention the reactions they may engender in those who do not) are not, in themselves, manifestations of culture. In making an assessment of the importance of culture as mediated by language to the conduct of diplomacy, it is necessary to begin, at least, by treating them separately from wealth and power.

TALKING TO AMERICANS: THE FRAMEWORK

A useful starting point is the continuum which Cohen offers for making an analysis of negotiating styles in terms of the importance which negotiators attach to the broad cultural context in which they see themselves operating, this importance itself being a manifestation of culture of which the bearers may or may not be aware.⁹ For these purposes, he suggests that cultures can be arranged along a continuum from high context to low context. Thus, the culture of the Middle East is presented in high context terms. Arab diplomats are said, by Cohen, to attach great importance to context in several dimensions. They bring to any negotiation a strong and particular sense of the history which has brought the participants together, and it is important that this general sense informs the contributions of all parties to the negotiation. They also operate with a sharp distinction between the way in which they believe matters of state ought to be considered between princes and matters of commerce be negotiated between traders. The former is the realm of principle and justice in which the participants should seek to achieve what is right, and an unwillingness to approach matters of state in this manner is seen as a serious obstacle to any real progress. The latter is the realm of the market where goods may be haggled over and where no great moral principles are at stake. Finally, Arab diplomats attach a great importance to the development of a thick interpersonal context between negotiators in which personal friendship and trust may be established and in which, above all, a concern for the personal honour and dignity of each participant may be affirmed.

In Cohen's analysis, Arab diplomats and Middle Eastern societies are presented to illustrate a particular type, but also to serve as a clear example of what may be regarded as traditional societies or, at least, developing societies within which the traditional element remains strong. Although great differences can exist between and within such societies which are manifested in linguistic confusions and pitfalls, what we are offered, at least as a starting point, is a global bifurcation between the more-or-less developing world in which traditional values give rise to a high context negotiating culture, and the more-or-less developed world in which context and the problem at hand are more likely to merge.

If Arab diplomacy archetypically demonstrates the negotiating style born of a high context culture, then American diplomacy, in Cohen's view, serves as a powerful example of the negotiating style to which the low context cultures of the developed world give rise. American diplomats regard diplomacy as an exercise in collective problem-solving. Problem-solving can be of two sorts: technical, arrived at by the application of knowledge and expertise to achieve a solution consistent with the interests of the parties involved; or political, involving give-and-take in accordance with some rough-and-ready conception of fairness modified by the balance of power, commitment, and perceptions of both. Establishing the fundamental principles of an environmental or trade treaty would serve as an example of the first kind of negotiation. Working out the terms upon which individual countries might become parties to the broad agreement would be an example of the second type. Critical to low context negotiating cultures is the subordination of history, personal honour, an ongoing relationship, and just about everything else, to the achievement of an agreement, or at least an outcome, for the matter in hand. The problem is the thing, all else is clutter and undergrowth to be

cleared away by the diplomatic equivalent of Lockean philosophers, at least it is such to all people of goodwill who seriously want to accomplish something in a negotiation.

Cohen's point is that very serious misunderstandings can arise for cultural and linguistic reasons. They do not give rise to conflict where otherwise there would have been none so much as exacerbate conflicts of interest and make them harder to resolve. Language differences can give rise to difficulties even between diplomats from similar backgrounds on the high context/low context continuum, but between diplomats from cultures which are wide apart, fundamental differences can occur regarding not only what is at stake, but also about what it means to conduct a diplomatic negotiation.

Thus, it is argued, negotiations between Americans and others can run into trouble because the Americans appear too direct both in their use of language and in their whole approach to what is at stake. In so doing, they offend the sensibilities of their negotiating partners before even getting to the real business. The most famous, but flawed, example of this might be Tariq Aziz's rejection of the message brought by James Baker from President Bush for Saddam Hussein just before the Gulf War, rejected because of its undiplomatic language. Americans, in contrast become frustrated by what they see as evasiveness and stalling which results, in their view, from their counterparts, in Satow's term, "...having to contend for a bad cause".¹⁰

Useful though Cohen's distinction between high context and low context cultures is as a point of departure, overly relied upon it leads to trouble. It does so in two ways. First, by oversimplifying, it misses the extent to which there exist variations within cultures which are themselves brought forth by different contexts. I lack the expertise to speak for high context societies, but I can speak with some experience of US culture(s), and I can say there are times and circumstances in which US negotiations are very high context, even on the proverbial second hand car lot. In Minnesota alone books have been written (and, more importantly, money has been made) providing outsiders with the context they need to make sense of what is, or may be, being communicated in the sparse conversations and non-verbal exchanges which participants in the culture instantly recognise.

In everyday life at least, Americans sometimes negotiate in a low context manner and sometimes they do not. The question to be asked is what kind of contexts give rise to which kinds of approaches to negotiating, and I have already suggested that an analysis of the balance of resources between those involved might be a starting point for an answer to this question. Syrians in their dealings with Americans and Israelis may take a high context approach, but Syrians in their dealings with the Lebanese or the Kurds, one suspects, may take a low context approach.

The second problem with the high context-low context approach resides in its characterisation of what is meant by low context. While Cohen and others are at pains to suggest that the low-context, American approach involves only one way of looking at the world which is not necessarily superior to others, they do tend to accept it on its own terms, namely that it is sparse or thin not only in its presentation but also in fact. By so doing, an opportunity is missed to put the use of language by Americans under the microscope. A closer examination reveals, of course, an implied universe of assumptions about what is important, how the world works, and America's proper place within it, not to mention the place of others.

Consider again Albright's remarks at the Chiefs of Missions Ball. We all share, she claimed, "...a basic understanding".¹¹ An earlier commentator, de Callières, made a similar sounding remark when he suggested that diplomacy could be viewed as a freemasonry united by the common need to know what was going on. However, Albright's conception of "...the common understanding" was far more extensive. "Diplomacy", she maintained, "...is about building and nourishing partnerships for cooperative action towards common goals" and foreign policy (which, incidentally, she called "...the best subject in the world") is "...the way people work to reach peace".

While her speech provided plenty of evidence to support the collaborative problem-solving problematic suggested by Cohen and others, however, what receives very little acknowledgment in it is the idea that others have their own conceptions about the nature of the problems needing solutions and, indeed, that others have interests. Insofar as these are recognised, Albright identifies them as "our goals" which need explaining and "...each other's needs" which require understanding if we are all to work together successfully.

The significance of these remarks is given a context in other speeches she made during her final round of the Washington and national circuits. In her farewell address at the State Department, for example, she concluded by saying:

Our country, like any, is composed of humans and therefore flawed. We are not always right in our actions and our judgements, but I know from the experience of my own life the importance and rightness of America's ideals.¹²

Two days before, in a speech to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations in which she explicitly rejected seeing US foreign policy in terms of a debate between "...Wilsonian idealists and geo-political realists", she provided her own formula for the seamless relationship between ideals and self-interest in US foreign policy under the Clinton administration. The administration had, she claimed, been "...determined to do the right thing in a pragmatic way".¹³

One has to be careful in the way one selects and uses this kind of text. The professionals among us, and those who study what they say, will be quick to recognise the formulaic quality of the selections above and sense the way in which they are generated by the demands of the occasion. In the Chicago speech, for example, Albright began by saying that for her final trip as Secretary of State:

...it is no accident that I didn't choose to go to the capital of a foreign country, but rather to the capital of America's heartland.

She also provided a different definition of diplomacy or, at least, American diplomacy. "The job of our diplomats..." she maintained "...is to protect and advance the interests of our citizens."¹⁴ In the immediate context she was flattering her audience and boosting the State Department with a hard nose sell to those sceptics who believe that its job is to represent the interests of foreigners in Washington and at unnecessary expense.

And yet, when coupled with my own experience of working with Americans, there is something more implied by what Albright chooses, or has chosen for her, to say on such occasions and the way in which it is expressed. First, I would maintain, there is a confident grasp on what life is all about, and by this I do not just mean a strong sense of American identity. It is a grasp of what life, in general, for everybody is, or ought to be, about. I wish I could say that this was just a presentational requirement for elite membership and advancement, but it is not. It seems to be manifested at all levels of society, if not uniformly among all races and ethnic groups. Nor is this a phenomenon associated with one end of the political spectrum. Members of the right and left or, more accurately, conservatives and liberals, all tend to manifest this confidence about their own conception of America as an embodiment of the way in which real people everywhere, if only free of the burden of lazy state bureaucrats or cranky neo-Marxian intellectuals would really like to live.

Secondly, this confident grasp of life in general has a place for those who simply do not conform to its requirements. Paradoxically, for a society which is founded upon an 18th century philosophy preserved in aspic, as it were, which took interests very seriously, it has little tolerance not so much for those who are different, but for those who will not "play ball". Demonisation is a term which has perhaps been over-used, but this is effectively what can happen to those who are uncooperative. They must be wicked or, at least, led by the wicked.

Some of the targets of this process of demonisation in recent years have certainly deserved it, but I think what makes this indulgence so difficult for others to accept is its selective character. "Their" sons-of-bitches or, these days, free standing sons-of-bitches get the full treatment whereas "our" sons-of-bitches barely figure as such on the radar screens. And of course, the whole concept of demonisation, fairly or selectively employed, is a nightmare for effective diplomacy which is premised in great part on the need to talk with those for whom we do not feel responsible, may not trust, or do not like, but with whom we must, nevertheless, have relations.

How then do we talk to such people? I will conclude with some brief talking points. Sometimes, there can be no talking to them at all. Sometimes they are rich enough and strong enough to have their way. Nearly always, they are rich enough and strong enough to go home if they do not like what is happening, with losses to everybody but asymmetrically distributed. However, more often than not, and for bad reasons as well as good ones (consider Clinton's recent efforts on the Middle East peace process, like a cardiologist applying the paddles when everyone else in the room, including the patient, is telling him he's dead for now) they want to talk.

On the big question of the relationship between language and the "out there" which is variously posited not to exist, to be constructed by language, or accessed by it directly, I would suggest showing respect for American claims to a privileged access. Respect here can mean several things. As a Briton who has lived in the US for fifteen years and before that was congenitally disposed against even visiting the place, let alone living there, I am happy to concede that, as civilizational models go, they, the Americans, have got a lot of things right and, more importantly, they have got a lot of things right in the judgement of many less privileged than ourselves around the world. Respect can also mean simply taking them seriously in their claims. Americans are frequently presented as gauche, naive, incapable of irony (watch the Simpsons) or ambiguity and understatement (watch Frazier), that they somehow don't get what life is really all about for those who are fully human. These are, in my judgement, mistakes. Taking Americans seriously, however, can also mean simply acknowledging their power and wealth (those of you who saw Jurassic Park may remember the expert's mini lesson to the bored and unimpressed child about how 'raptors hunt and kill, which culminates in his dragging the claw across the boy's belly and enjoining him to "...show a little respect").

On the operational question of how diplomats should deal with the problem of language and culture once they become aware of it, the advice is the same as that given by the literature to Americans about how to deal with foreigners. Make adjustments to avoid unnecessary offence (Americans have a highly peculiar habit of resenting what they see as the importation of irrelevant data or arguments into a negotiation; a tale of five hundred years of oppression may win you a fifth down, they may even spot you three points, but a touch down remains a touch down, especially after they have scored it) and make such adjustments where mutual or unilateral gains are possible as a result (I was recently engaged in a negotiation with a British university where everybody was incredibly uncomfortable talking about money, including their money man, to the point that the negotiation possibly failed prematurely). Stepping out of one's own culture to deal with foreigners is no dishonour, indeed I am sure it is ranked as one of the attributes of a successful diplomat.

Finally regarding the political dimension to language, culture and the practice of diplomacy, it is reasonably easy to imagine a number of techniques for exploiting the particularities of culture of which we are all, to a point prisoners. On this matter, however, I will take my cue from the professionals among us, acknowledge that diplomacy is, indeed, a political business, smile, and fall silent.

ENDNOTES

1. My title echoes Monteagle Stearne's *Talking With Strangers: Improving American Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad* (Princeton, 1999).

2. Madeleine Albright, *Remarks at Chief of Diplomatic Missions Ball*, January 13, 2001, State Department website, <http://www.state.gov/index.cfm>.
3. Raymond Cohen, "Negotiating Across Languages," paper prepared for the British International Studies Annual Conference, Bradford, December, 2000, 1.
4. Raymond Cohen, "International Negotiations: A Semantic Analysis," *Columbia Online*, <http://www.cc.columbia.edu/sec/dlc/ciao/isa/cor01/> February 1999.
5. To distinguish between big, or capital, "D" Diplomats and small "d" diplomats appears to be one way of finessing another problem, whether the term may be used for the representatives of anything other than sovereign states and the international organisations created by them.
6. "How the United States Negotiates," conference organised by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), 24-26 July, 2000, reported in *Peace Watch*, VI, 6, October 2000.
7. *Ibid.*, 2-3.
8. Note, however, that none of the characteristics observed are a manifestation of different interests, at least not directly. Wealth and power may be isolated from culture up to a point, but interests take their shape from, and may even be rooted in culture.
9. Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures: International Communication in an Interdependent World*, revised ed. (Washington DC: USIP Press, 1997), 25-43.
10. Satow's phrase about the essentially tragic circumstances in which even the very best diplomats, both in moral and practical terms, may find themselves.
11. Albright, *Remarks*.
12. Farewell Address to the State Department, January 19, 2001.
13. Address to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, January 17, 2001.
14. *Ibid.*

Kishan S. Rana

The Bhagwad Gita, one of the sacred texts of the Hindus, consists entirely of the battlefield dialogue between Arjun, the noble warrior, and Krishna who has taken on the role of his chariot driver. An epic battle is about to commence and Arjun is torn by doubt, whether he should engage in the fight. He wonders if it is not better to let the adversaries, who are his half-brothers, take over the kingdom. Krishna then guides him in an extended discourse on righteous action, the choice of which must come from within each individual, in the exercise of the full faculties of the individual's own "mind" or intellect. Krishna tells him that this method will lead the individual to the correct choice of action, which he describes as "action without attachment". During the long dialogue, Krishna narrates to Arjun the qualities of an "ideal person" and in one notable verse,¹ he describes the attributes of good speech.

In two terse lines, heavily laden with meaning as typical with the Bhagwad Gita, Krishna offers timeless advice on how one should speak, advice that also seems well-suited to diplomacy. Good speech should be marked by the following qualities, in ordered priority: it should not disturb the mind of the listener; it should be precise, with correct use of language; it should be truthful; if possible, it should be pleasing to the listener; and again if possible, it should be of utility to the listener.

Truthfulness is not presented as the highest virtue, over-riding other qualities. Rather, premier place goes to the requirement of not causing distress to the listener. Precision and good linguistic craftsmanship are rated as another high quality. Then comes truth. Are these not features that qualify as a good diplomatic dialogue method?

The ancient Indian sage Manu transcribed the above advice in a few pithy words that a good diplomat might easily accept to his advantage. Manu declared: "Speak the pleasant, but not the untruth; speak the truth, but not the unpleasant."

I propose to look at the subject of language, and particularly signaling, from the perspective of the ordinary pursuit of diplomacy, including the kind of situations commonly faced by diplomats in real life conditions. Compared with the high drama of major international events that may subsequently become case studies and objects of research by historians, some of the situations I describe are banal, perhaps even boring. My excuse for dwelling on this dimension of the subject is that these constitute the vast majority of circumstances that make up the work of diplomats. They provide a setting in which we may observe the interconnections between language and diplomacy, from the particular perspective of signaling.

1. SOME PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

Language is the common, and one may say the dominant, medium of diplomacy, while signaling may be verbal or non-verbal. How do they figure in the practical work of diplomacy? Some examples are offered.

A) There is a frequent tendency to shade meanings, to avoid or overlook the word or phrase that the diplomat reporting back to his headquarters knows will be ill-received. Taken by itself, the action seems minor, hardly worth any mention. But when many such actions of avoidance and dishonesty in feedback are taken together, they multiply in significance and can occasionally add up to a devastating distortion, one that no one may have anticipated.

I offer an Indian example, only because of personal familiarity. In reality most of us can recall similar instances from our own memory banks. In 1995 India decided to contest for one of the elected seats to the Security Council, and while there was a change of government early next year, the new government maintained that decision, for the election that was to be held towards the end of the UN General Assembly session of 1996. The only problem was that Japan was also in the contest for the same seat. The entire diplomatic machine was mobilised to lobby for support and special emissaries were sent out around the world. Having retired in mid-1995, I was not directly involved, but I recall well a conversation in early 1996 with a senior colleague directly handling the issue. I urged graceful withdrawal, since it seemed inconceivable that we could win this particular global contest against a determined Japan. On the other hand withdrawal would win huge credit and "face" from this major Asian partner. Of course, mine was a complete minority view at the time, since most colleagues were stimulated by the fray and committed, perhaps excessively so, to winning. That particular colleague replied that their "objective" assessment of support indicated 80 firm votes, plus a good handful as "probable" and leaning in our favor. And if we could block Japan in the first round, many more votes would swing to us in support. In the event, when the election took place in November 1996, India lost overwhelmingly, by 142 votes to 40.

How could assessment go so completely wrong? Perhaps because some diplomats, those at the Permanent Mission in New York, plus some on post in our 115 missions, and the others sent as emissaries, had shaded their reports. Some had evidently not fully conveyed replies given by different countries to their demarches seeking support. And probably, partial selection of the language used by others was further distorted by wishful thinking.

Dispassionate, objective reportage is not easy, the more so when one's own expectations are tied into the issue. When we analyse major miscalculations that nations have made on much bigger issues of war and peace, similar misinterpretation of language has often been one of the distorting factors. This makes the dictum "honesty in reportage" so valuable in real diplomacy.

B) Another instance relates to the way sometimes the spoken word is sufficient, and at other times it has to be backed up with written communication. I was once involved in a delicate request advanced as a matter of urgency by a friendly government. The issue was such that there was no time to await a written communication, and while on our side we acted very promptly and delivered on the request, the evolution of the ground situation in the foreign country made our help unnecessary. At that point the friendly government developed selective amnesia, and left me wondering at my un-wisdom in not demanding a written communication, at least as a follow-up to the oral request.

In contrast, a senior colleague described once the way in which in the late 1970's the entire India-US negotiation on the use of the very large "PL 480" funds was handled. These funds had accumulated in India, as local Rupee "counterpart" or payment for the several million tons of wheat and other food-grain that the US had supplied to India during the severe drought years of 1966-68. The entire negotiation was conducted orally, spread over several months. Once agreement was in sight, a written document was prepared for the first time, for smooth mutual acceptance, and signature. That is not a standard prescription for negotiation, but it can work if there is considerable mutual trust and the issue is one where there is strong convergence of interest.

C) In glaring contrast, dealings between the same two partners in the lead up to, and during the 1971 Bangladesh War, were marked by a glaring lack of rapport. It would be recalled that in early 1971, brutal repression in what was then East Pakistan led to an exodus of about nine million refugees into the neighbouring areas of India. India's efforts to get the major powers to get Pakistan to end the repression and to take back the refugees produced little result, and the situation escalated. The crisis was compounded by the liberation movement of the Bangladeshis, and culminated in war in December 1971. The limited Indian objective was freedom for Bangladesh and return of the refugees. After barely two weeks of conflict, events drew towards a surrender of the Pakistan troops in the East, and the declaration of an

independent Bangladesh. As events were moving to this climax, the US sent the aircraft carrier "Enterprise" into the Bay of Bengal, as an overt signal to India to end the hostilities.²

The threat symbolised a huge failure in understanding between two major democracies. From an Indian perspective, not only had the US not grasped the gravity and nature of the crisis in the region, but also it had also failed to comprehend, or distrusted, the limited objective that India was pursuing. In the event, India declared a unilateral ceasefire with Pakistan and ended all hostilities, within 24 hours of the surrender of the opposing troops in East Pakistan, which then went on to become Bangladesh. Many Indians have felt that the language of the threatening gesture was singularly inappropriate, even gratuitous.

D) During these Bangladesh events, serving as First Secretary (Political) in the Indian Embassy at Beijing, I had opportunity to witness first hand the way in which astute communications, and precise signals, were used to manage well our complex relationship with China. Notwithstanding a situation of bilateral tension that had continued since our Border War of 1962, and China's support to Pakistan, with clarity of language and of intent, we conveyed to China the limited objectives that India was pursuing. While there was no lack of pyrotechnics in the reaction in the Chinese media, and in official statements as the situation escalated, China scrupulously avoided direct entanglement. From our perspective that episode served as a good instance of diplomatic management in difficult times. It also demonstrated that strong language unmatched by action conveys its own message.

E) Language is the medium of negotiation. It conveys ones own ideas and concepts, and offers the means of understanding the thoughts and expectations of the other side. Precision is of obvious importance. It is not an abstract concept, but judged by the yardstick of being understood in real situations. So comprehension also enters into the equation, in both directions.

2. THE PRESENT CONTEXT

Let us now turn to some aspects of language and signaling in today's diplomatic world. The setting in which foreign policy and diplomacy operate in countries has changed drastically, first, through the entry of multiple state entities into the diplomatic process in each country, overcoming the former exclusive role of the foreign ministry, and second, by the entry of non-state actors into the external relationships of each country.³ There are other changes as well, all of which can perhaps be summed up in a single word, "democratisation" of the process and its actors. This means that there are many new players, who do not know the old syntax or style, using less subtlety and more direct language than before.

A) Unlike the classic age of diplomacy, the period up to and immediately after World War II, when the number of nation states was barely one fourth of today, and most of the players had similar upbringing and mindsets, there is infinitely greater diversity now. Even while a single vehicular language dominates as the medium of discourse, the levels of language competence, both in the spoken word and comprehension, vary greatly. There is no certitude that direct communication will always be understood as intended, much less a subtle signal. This demands greater care over how one uses language, and greater sensitivity on how one is perceived by the other side. It is not at all clear that this point is truly addressed in diplomatic training.

B) Increasingly complex economic, environmental and other technical issues emerge in the international dialogue. Often code words summarise such issues, and phrases like "fair trade" and "social standards" are used to mean things that are far removed from the literal meaning of the words. Those who are sharper at shaping these words, and in capturing the deeper concepts behind them, seize the high ground in the debates, and have the capacity to dominate. In practice these are mainly the Western powers. This demands from other countries much alacrity and an ability to come up with equally persuasive word-formulas. This is not an easy task when the leading global media organs, which give currency to code words, are also predominantly from the same set of countries.

C) From the days of Woodrow Wilson, the notion of open diplomacy has been a chimera. We offer openness as an absolute and desirable value, one that is equated with democracy, but ignore the reality that complex issues are usually impossible to resolve without confidentiality. We learn repeatedly that openness becomes a serious obstacle to accord.

There are situations where the declared public position becomes the negotiating position, because flexibility is lost, and combative internal politics makes it impossible to carve out concession or compromise from hard public stance. Example: former Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban has narrated how a private initiative by a Norwegian sociologist in 1992 led to the Oslo Agreement between Israel and Palestine, when the US locked itself into a "no contacts" stance vis-à-vis the Palestinians.⁴ In my own country we have repeatedly seen that hard line public stance on external issues, tends to become the negotiation position as well. In effect, "feedback" from the hard stance, and compulsions of domestic politics, lead to harder language and a foreclosing of options.

D) Language also affects the dialogue in a completely different way. It produces sometimes in diplomacy an infatuation with words that becomes a substitute for action. This is visible in its most acute form in the UN General Assembly, where vast effort is expended on multitudes of resolutions that have little import or prospect of action. The Non-Aligned Movement and G-77 in defending the position of the South in the debates with the North display the same tendency. Much time is taken up at some conferences over drafting of documents that unfortunately have little intrinsic value. And as someone from a developing country, I would suggest that this preoccupation and mindset has prevented us from stronger engagement with the North on the do-able tasks and on real issues that affect us, individually and collectively.

3. DIPLOMACY & CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

It may have been the influence of classic diplomacy, which in some ways is perhaps still practiced among Western powers, that precluded a stronger role for cross-cultural studies in diplomatic training. It was assumed that the rules of discourse, the language and the signals were sufficiently homogenous, to make such adaptation to one another unnecessary. But the reality today is very different, and the meaning of words and gestures is not the same the world over, even among the charmed circle of diplomacy practitioners, to say nothing of the general public at large. A simple example: when an Indian shakes his head from side-to-side in a slightly rolling motion, he is expressing emphatic agreement, not dissonance. For disagreement he has a sharper side-to-side headshake! Some of the wider consequences are:

A) Sometimes signals are too subtle to be picked up by interlocutors. Diversity of cultures and languages suggests for diplomacy practitioners more directness and less resort to indirect signaling in dealing with non-homogenous interlocutors.

B) It can happen that signals are distorted by other cultures, when the signal comes across differently in another setting. Example: at the May Day parade at Tienanmen Square in 1970, Chairman Mao conveyed a conciliatory signal to the Indian Charge d'Affaires, shaking hands with him and remarking that the two countries should not go on quarrelling. It was the first personal bilateral gesture from Mao in over a decade. Barely days later, while the move was under evaluation, someone in Delhi, perhaps with pro-Soviet tendencies, leaked the news to the media where it was trivialised in headlines as a "Mao smile", and the value of the signal was lost. It took some years of quiet effort by both sides to move even to the first step to normalisation, through the return of ambassadors in the two capitals in 1976.

C) In different environments, body language, signals and even the mode of conversation are different. Is the classic diplomatic style adequate to deal with such situations, or should some adaptation be carried out? There is no clear answer. For instance, during dialogue the Japanese distinguish between outward appearance, or "surface communication" and the inner meaning or true intent of the interlocutor. No one would suggest that foreigners adopt

the Japanese style when they negotiate in that country. But Japan's method deserves study, first to comprehend what the Japanese partner on the other side is doing and thinking, and second because some of the concepts can encourage one to revisit one's own notions and attitudes. One such is the notion conveyed in the word "honne" which stands for inner meaning, as distinct from the surface appearance. Is it not worthwhile to seek out the "honne" in all exchanges?

A decade back, when integration in the European Union forged ahead, management specialists advanced the notion of a "Euro-manager", someone who would be personally familiar with the cultures of the major countries and integrate smoothly into the local scene, wherever he might be implanted by the transnational enterprise. It soon became clear that the notion was a myth, because the diversity was too vast to be mastered by the manager, in the sense of knowledge of the particularities of each nation and region. Nor did it make sense for him to become a master of cultural systems to be found in Europe. What he needed to function effectively across different cultures was an open mind, acceptance of diversity and a non-judgmental attitude towards the people he encountered. These are the same qualities that make good diplomats. The difference is that greater diversity today demands formal, and structured cross-cultural training.

CONCLUSION

As the Gita would say, let the language of the diplomat be non-abrasive, precise and truthful. And if possible, let it also be pleasing and beneficial to the interlocutor. Further:

- The way language and signals in diplomacy are used needs empirical study to draw conclusions on usage and improved practices. It is useful to look beyond the West, at examples from around the world.
- The contemporary context and setting of diplomacy need to be taken into account, to guide practitioners in improving their methods.
- Cross-cultural skills cannot be taken for granted, as qualities that diplomats master intuitively. Formal training is essential.

ENDNOTES

1. Chapter 17, Verse 9. Most translations give a bare-bone version, and one needs to read a good commentary to get to all the nuances of meaning.
2. Henry Kissinger, then National Security Adviser to President Richard Nixon, who had a ringside view of these developments, has written an account that is fascinating, even if a bit sanitised in coverage of all the details!
3. A fine survey of the changed context within which diplomacy functions today is to be found in the book *Foreign Ministries: Change & Adaptation*, ed. Brian Hocking (London: Macmillan, 1999).
4. Abba Eban, *Diplomacy for the Next Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

*Eloquentiam esse,...cuius fraude damnentur interim boni, consilia ducantur in peius, nec seditiones modo turbaeque populares sed bella etiam inexpiabilia excitentur...Quo quidem modo, nec duces erunt utiles nec magistratus nec medicina nec denique ipsa sapientia.*¹

M.F. Quintilianus, *Institutio Oratoria*, Book II, XVI, 2-5

Today I would like to talk about the simplest but the most important kind of historical rhetoric. I will talk about historical analogies that diplomats, decision-makers in foreign policy and executives frequently use to strengthen their arguments or make their views broadly acceptable. I will talk about the relation between diplomacy and the use of historical analogies and I will also talk about the attitudes that enlightened and intelligent diplomats should take towards this kind of rhetoric.

Historical analogies are a variety of metaphorical expressions that use an image of the past to shed some light on present or future affairs of mostly political concern. As metaphor represents an overlap between a source-analogue (is the sun) and its target-analogue (Juliet), historical analogies represent an overlap between an image of the past (source) and an image of the present or future (target).

1. For instance, Hitler looked at the ways the British ruled over their Indian colonies to gain a better understanding of the ways he hoped he could rule over Europe.² He thus created an overlap between a historical image of a past historical experience (the source of this piece of Hitler's historical rhetoric) and an image of the future (the target of this piece of Hitler's historical rhetoric).

Let me provide you with a few more recent examples to demonstrate that the use of this type of rhetoric is of relevance to contemporary international affairs and diplomacy as well. 2. In early 1997 US President Clinton compared the destiny of China's economy with the fall of the Berlin wall. Clinton said that liberalisation of China would happen as inevitably as the Berlin wall fell.³ 3. After the November 1999 OSCE conference, US President Clinton commented on Russian resistance to the international community's attempts to interfere in the issue of Chechnya. "Clinton recalled the 'thrilling experience' of watching Mr. Yeltzin defy the junta that seized power in Moscow in August 1991 and then courteously asked would the West have been wrong to 'interfere' in Russian affairs and stand up for Mr. Yeltzin if the coup leaders have jailed him?"⁴ 4. Again, on the Russian offensive in Chechnya, the *International Herald Tribune* commented: "Grigori Yavlinsky, one of the few Russian politicians with the courage to criticise the war, has used the analogy of Israel whose crushing military victories and territorial occupations led to decades of terrorism before it finally faced reality and struck deals with its enemies."⁵ 5. As the aforementioned analogy refers to Israel, here is a quote from former Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's 1998 interview with *Newsweek*. Asked to comment on his then strained relationship with the Clinton administration, Netanyahu said: "Over the years we have had divided views between US presidents and Israeli prime ministers on Israel's security needs. We had Eisenhower and Ben-Gurion differing on the Sinai; Ford differing with Rabin during the reassessment in 1975; Ronald Reagan and Begin clashing over Lebanon...In comparison to those disagreements, this is...a milder case."⁶

6. Iranian President Khatami, in his famous CNN interview in early 1998, delivered several historical analogies. At the very beginning of this interview he delivered his key analogy of Puritan Mayflower immigrants coming to America. He said that the Puritan immigrants

reconciled the idea of liberty with their religion, something many US governments have fallen short of, and added that Iranian post-revolution society has also been working towards such reconciliation. 7. Or let us take a few examples from the area of former Yugoslavia. While speaking about Bosnia, late Croatian President Tudjman frequently used the image of former Yugoslavia, which disintegrated after 1992. Tudjman drew an analogy between the destiny that, on one hand, befell the multi-ethnic state of Yugoslavia due to its multi-ethnic character, and the destiny that, on the other, he expected would befall the multi-ethnic state of Bosnia. 8. Prior to his departure from the post of Austrian Ambassador to Bosnia, Ambassador Valentin Inzko compared today's Bosnia with post-World War II Austria, which he said was, like Bosnia, divided into several internationally managed sectors.

Well, I could keep expanding the list of examples forever, but I believe that the eight examples I mentioned above give a sufficiently clear idea of what I am going to talk about.

I owe you a few words about the detail that motivated me to focus more intensely on the issue of the use of historical rhetoric in diplomacy. Back in September 1995 US Ambassador Holbrooke started his diplomatic mission in and around Bosnia by negotiating an end to the Bosnian Serb army siege of Sarajevo. In Belgrade, on 13 September, Holbrooke met Milosevic, who told him that he could negotiate an end to the Sarajevo siege directly with Radovan Karadzic, the then president of the Bosnian Serbs. As Holbrooke recounts, he told Milosevic that he would accept meeting Karadzic together with a few other Bosnian Serb negotiators under two conditions: first for the Bosnian Serb negotiators to be under Milosevic's tight control throughout negotiations, and second, for them to stop giving the US negotiating team "a lot of historical bullshit, as they have with everyone else".⁷

In contrast with this 13 September 1995 episode involving Karadzic, in 1999 we find Holbrooke delivering an address to the national press club on his concept of "new realism" in US relations with the UN.⁸ Holbrooke opened his address with a reference to history; to the original vision of the founders of the UN, Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, who Holbrooke says provided clear guidelines for future US relations with the UN. So in one instance Holbrooke expressly condemned thinking in historical terms and called it "historical bullshit", while in another he himself heavily relied on historical rhetoric to make his case more convincing. This is a paradox of sorts and it opens a number of dilemmas. How is it possible to endure dealing with negotiators who are so completely obsessed with history that their negotiating partners feel relief after their departure from the negotiating table? Is historical rhetoric just a repository of irrationalities that impede negotiations and lead to misunderstandings? If yes, then is it possible to get rid of historical rhetoric altogether? Does Holbrooke's "double standard" in his successive judgments on a historical kind of diplomatic arguments stem from the fact that in the first instance he had to deal with selected chapters of Bosnian Serb history, while in the other he simply picked from a selected menu of his own national history? Was Holbrooke's application of this double standard an example of a contradictory and self-defeating attitude towards historical rhetoric? If yes, does this reveal a kind of deeper logic in the use of historical rhetoric in diplomacy and negotiations? All of these questions are very inspiring and in my talk I will try to provide, if not straight answers, then at least a sense of the direction in which we should search for them.

Let me then start by explaining the reasons why historical analogies are used in the first place. This will give us a broad idea of the position that historical analogy occupies in psychological dynamics of both nations and individuals and, consequently, an equally broad idea of the roles that it plays in the world of diplomacy and international relations.

MEANING AND PURPOSE OF HISTORICAL ANALOGIES

First, historical analogising is an essential part of national narrative and national identity. Nations tend to group around their most central and deeply rooted memories. Over time many of those memories acquire the status of lasting symbols that nations use to describe their contemporary concerns or fears as well. A sound explanation of the domination of such symbols (i.e. historical analogies) in a nation's self-understanding says that they help people

symbolically transcend the limitations of time and space.⁹ Application of such analogies to a plethora of past and present conditions stretching over many centuries shows their symbolic ability to transcend temporal limits. In the same way many members of a nation probably feel that by embracing these symbols, they too can cross the boundaries of time and space and enjoy "secular" immortality. Now the illusion of immortality may be just that - an illusion, but few people are strong enough to resist its emotional appeal. That is why the need for spiritual transcendence is one of the main sources of motivation for the use of historical analogies in dealing with international affairs.¹⁰

The *second* function, which is directly linked to the aforementioned one, is the function of identity maintenance. Historical rhetoric not only provides nations with the sense of worldly immortality; a surrogate of religion, but also with an answer to the question "Who are we?" Historical rhetoric explains the lasting origins of a nation. Typically, when a crisis occurs in the life of nation, responses to it are couched in a language of past models, of past dealings with a crisis similar in shape if not in essence. When a president says that the nation must look to its past for a vision and inspiration to guide its present choice, he actually says that if applied to the present, models from the past will help the nation maintain its spirit and sense of specific identity. Not only does this process preserve the identity of a nation, but it also makes that identity more persistent. Russian child psychologists found long ago that a child provided with an imaginative stage to perform his/her role in experiments performed better than a child not provided with one. For instance, a child asked to stand still for a period of time will perform better if he/she understands his standing as playing the role of guard. The same applies to nations, which probably perform better if and when their actions are surrounded with the flavour of an imagined narrative-scenario; if their actions represent parts of a grander historical narrative and are built on models from their past.¹¹ So historical analogies also originate from the need to maintain a group sense of identity.

A *third* function of historical analogy is simply to provide a sense of cognitive orientation in international affairs. The future is always open and undetermined, and the number of international actors and the complexity of their relations are too high to give a straight clue about future developments. And here is where historical analogies play a crucial role. They indicate a direction for actions in this world, which would otherwise remain too complex to allow for an intellectual grasp. Historical analogy simply projects an image of past developments into the future and thus makes the future cognitively manageable. For instance, when former Yugoslavia entered into the period of crisis and increased turbulence, its future was easier to grasp for those who had, or thought they had, a historical analogy to rely on; a precedent to guide their understanding of Yugoslavia's future course. Making a choice or prediction is easier when one is in possession of a recipe, and historical analogies provide such a recipe.¹²

Finally, historical analogies could be used as a kind of anti-depressant; a colourful imagery which neutralises a boring and non-dramatic kind of political reality. Historical analogies make international relations intriguing, interesting, worth watching and participating in, which without such a drama-producing imagery would not be the case. They put things and relations, as it is said, into perspective and make them tastier, less boring and more purposeful. Historical rhetoric sets a scenery or stage linking the past with the present and the future into the chapters of a single drama to offset the bad feeling that nothing important or big is happening.¹³

So far so good. Historical analogy makes sense, as it performs several important functions and occupies an important place in the mental dynamics of individuals as well as of nations. Diplomats are not only expected but also welcome to use it. History is like a big bag from which a diplomat may grab an analogy whenever a recipe to provide cognitive orientation is needed. History is like a grand story, which will endow a diplomat with a sense of national identity, a sense of the coherence of the events that shape the course of a nation's development; something to remind a diplomat of the universality and endurance of the nation's interests. History is also like a rich set of colours which help diplomats recover the meaning and purposefulness of the field of international affairs with which they deal.

Something that allows them to paint that field in more attractive colours, to refresh their jobs and provoke the interest of others. But...

CAVEAT FOR DIPLOMATS

Historical rhetoric has undeniably played an important causal role in the etiology of many conflicts that have brought immense suffering and misery to many nations. Let me give you a few examples:

1. One of the causes of World War I was the Agadir crisis, which made the German Kaiser less flexible and readier to fight than would have been the case had the crisis not taken place. The reason the crisis made the Kaiser more rigid and bellicose is that the German public quickly compared the outcome of the Agadir crisis with the "Olmuetz 1850" crisis, which resulted in Prussia backing down from a confrontation with Austria; regarded as a devastating humiliation for Prussia. So, the two crises merged into a single historical symbol of a blow to Germany's sense of honour, imposed a historical analogy, and, it is generally believed, made Germany readier to push Austria-Hungary to declare war against Serbia.¹⁴
2. One of the key causes of World War II was the historical analogy of World War I, which made both French and British leaders reluctant to take a more aggressive stance towards Hitler. When Hitler decided to remilitarise the Rhineland the French reacted in an astonishingly mild way, because their thinking was dominated by the analogy of disastrous World War I French offensives, which inflicted too heavy losses on the French army. The then British Prime Minister Chamberlain himself treated Hitler as if he was a replica of the German Kaiser. Thus, the famous "appeasement" strategy was an effect of Chamberlain's historical analogising.¹⁵
3. Prior to launching an action in Vietnam, US President Johnson's thinking was guided by the analogy of the failed Munich "appeasement" strategy as well as by the analogy of the Korean War, in which the US, with some setbacks, finally achieved success.¹⁶
4. When Clinton presented his reasons for the NATO military action on Kosovo in March last year, he described them in terms of World War II and drew an analogy between Hitler and Milosevic. He pointed out that Milosevic would like to have a mono-ethnic Kosovo cleansed of Albanians, just as Hitler wanted to create a mono-ethnic Germany cleansed of Jewish, Polish and other "inferior" nations. So, Clinton's historical rhetoric helped him link American past engagements with his own latest decision to wage a military action and provide it with a deeper purpose.¹⁷
5. I also believe that another seemingly innocent analogy indirectly led to the NATO action. This was the analogy drawn between the Dayton peace negotiations and the Rambouillet negotiations.¹⁸ This analogy probably made international mediators in the conflict between Kosovars and Serbs too optimistic and hasty.
6. The 1980s war between Iran and Iraq as well had important historical analogies in the cluster of causes leading to its outbreak. Iraq used the analogy of the 636 battle of Qadisiya in which the Arabs stopped a Persian invasion. Iran used the analogy of Sunni military commander Yazid, whose troops ambushed and killed Mohammad's grandson Hussein in 680. That is why the Iraqis called one of their offensives the "second battle of Qadisiya", and called the war against Iran "Saddam's Qadisiya", while Iranians called both Iraqis and Americans in general "successors of Yazid".¹⁹
7. Historical analogies played an essential role in the events leading to the series of wars in former Yugoslavia. Parties to those conflicts frequently used analogies of World War II and compared successor states' leadership with either Ustasha leaders from World War II or Chetnick leaders from World War II. During the recent Bosnian war, the myth and the analogy of the Kosovo-field battle at which the Ottoman Empire opened the door to its further conquest of Serbia and Bosnia, was frequently relied on to justify Bosnian Serb political

objectives. Of course many other examples could be mentioned, but I selected those few from the wars that we are all very familiar with.

The examples I enlisted reveal several patterns by which historical analogies partake in the chain of causes leading to lethal conflicts.

First, a contemporary state or leader may be directly compared to a belligerent leader; a thug who played a key role in a past crisis or conflict. Then those using such an analogy usually take the role of a defensive alliance, or the leaders or states that opposed the past aggression.

Second, historical analogy may exert an indirect influence and simply bring a nation or a leader closer to making the decision to wage a war. For instance, the "Olmuetz" analogy made it near to impossible for the Kaiser to tolerate challenges to Germany's sense of honour any longer. And then when Duke Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary was assassinated, Germany interpreted this as another blow to Germany's sense of honour, decided to punish Serbia, and thus directly instigated World War I. Here historical analogy played the role of a factor that in fact accelerated the accumulation of background causes of the war.

Third, historical analogy may convince a leader to take a too defensive posture and to fail to act at times when action is the only means to deter aggressors and prevent a bigger crisis from erupting.

In other words, historical analogising sometimes leads to an overly offensive, self-confident posture. It sometimes leads to a significant lowering of the threshold of tolerance as it negatively affects self-image, i.e. sense of honour. And last but not least it sometimes plays the role of a deterrent to deterrence and makes leaders too restrained, too cautious in acting, which then gives an opportunity to belligerent leaders of this world to pursue their own policies. For instance, French leaders were reluctant to make an offensive move against Hitler because a) their image of World War I implied that offensive equals disaster; and b) because they did nothing to question the applicability of that source-analogue to the future developments they expected in their relations with Hitler.

It is also interesting to note that, following Dessler's typology of causes of wars, historical analogy may be found playing the role of any of Dessler's four types of causes. Historical analogy may act as *trigger* of war, as a *channel* of division which sets background conditions for the outbreak of war, as a *target* defining objectives of the parties to a conflict, and also as a *catalyst* which determines the intensity and duration of a conflict.²⁰

There is yet another factor worth mentioning. The historical analogies that the very parties to a conflict use are not the sole and exclusive determinant in the conflict's etiology. The historical analogies that third parties use are as well of extreme relevance and importance for both origins and dynamics of conflicts. For example, during the war in Bosnia the historical analogies that the US decision-makers employed in the period of 1993 to 1995 definitely had an impact on the very parties to the war as well as on the course of the war.

It is thus clear that relations between nations may worsen considerably because developments are prejudged by the use of historical analogies. Instead of reducing the complexity of periods of crisis, historical analogies make complexity even higher. It is to an extent ironic that historical analogies, which are supposed to bring more order and simplicity into our images of international developments, instead lead to an increase in complexity. They turn relations into a powder keg, as the famous metaphor has it.

Another half-ironic or paradoxical side effect is the fact that although at the beginning of this presentation I referred to four functions that historical analogies perform which seem to make our use of them very meaningful, we seem now to have reached the very opposite conclusion. Historical analogies are among the key causes of war and that is why one could rightly argue that they cannot provide a sense of transcendence or of worldly immortality. How

can they, when they lead to the very concrete extinction of many individuals supposed to enjoy the sense of transcendence and hover above distant periods of history by means of historical analogy? They cannot provide a sense of identity either. How can they, when they have so often led to clashes between identities? They cannot provide a sense of cognitive orientation either. How can they, when instead of bringing more simplicity and order into our minds, all they bring is actually disorder and chaos in the times of war?

My first reaction to this paradox was as extreme as anyone's reaction is likely to be. "Let us dismiss historical rhetoric completely!" "Let us ban it!" "Let us tell leaders and/or diplomats to resist the temptation of thinking in terms of historical imagery!" They must not look backwards but forwards. They must not compare new crises with past sections of their or anybody else's history. *Diplomats must not use the language of historical analogies. They should do their best to resist temptation to describe current crises in terms of the past.* Instead, diplomats should maintain the good old tradition of ambiguous language; of polite language which gives equal consideration to the interests of all the parties concerned with, and involved in, a critical process. Such an argument for a ban on the use of historical rhetoric would further add that diplomacy is an art of making compromises that by definition provide ambiguous resolutions to conflicts. And such an argument would further add that the art of diplomacy requires a creative individual capable of transcending established and standardised patterns of thought and action, including historical ones. That is why diplomats, who serve as balancing communicators between groups or nations, are to be advised to use ambiguous expressions and language, which allows room for satisfaction of several interests at once and suggests no clear direction in which one should move. Ambiguous language prepares one for accommodation, creates distance from *a priori* defined commitments/interests, and thus by implication reduces the potential for conflict.²¹ Simple but suggestive and dangerous historical metaphors create a risk of increasing the complexity in the relations between actors in a diplomatic process. Complicated but flexible and polite ambiguities tend to reduce such complexity. This seems to be a paradox but it actually should be considered the number one rule for language that diplomats use in times of crisis or stress. So, the argument runs, diplomats should cross out historical metaphors from their dictionary and take ambiguities as their main tool for coping with potentially explosive situations in which their nations may feel tempted to release ancient ghosts.

I must admit this is a great argument. And it seems to be a natural reaction to the fact that the use of suggestive historical metaphors is *de facto* one of the causes of conflicts. But...

CAVEAT GONE WRONG

Despite the argument, and the unmistakably clear recipe it provides, historical rhetoric and description of the present in terms of the historical past are not so easy to dismiss. *Two reasons, combined, cast tremendous doubt on the belief that diplomats may simply do without the use of historical analogies in dealing with international affairs.*

First, the human mind has a biological inclination to reason inductively; that is, to reason about future happenings through the prism of past experiences. We reason via analogies. By instinct we set expectations on the basis of our past experience and nothing may be changed with that. So if we have a certain historical experience, as we all have, then images of our future are bound to have their roots in that experience.²² That is why historical rhetoric is not just an occasional propaganda tool for politicians, or a specialty of those who are obsessed with the past, but an ever-present and persistently recurring phenomenon.

The *second* reason holds that the world community is divided into nations with each nation measuring the time of its existence along the historical line of its evolution. And each nation considers its historical traumas and recoveries especially important; something like milestones on the path leading from its past to its present. Nations thus treat their particular histories as stores of their collective memory, which serve both the purpose of maintaining their particular identities and the purpose of providing answers to challenges of the present time. Diplomats are still their nations' humble servants and therefore cannot avoid using

historical analogies in presenting their nation's views or interests. Look at what happened to Holbrooke!

That is why a total ban on the use of historical rhetoric has no chance to hold. Despite our suggestion to diplomats not to reach into the bag of historical metaphors while selecting the style of their wording and language, their hands will instinctively go there. This means that we must discover more cunning ways of dealing with this instinct.

A common-sense view would suggest that diplomats should choose a "golden mean", and try to balance and combine certain aspects of both historical rhetoric and ambiguous language in order to satisfy their instincts but also to make this satisfaction less dangerous, less capable of generating first mental and then armed conflict. In other words, *diplomats may continue using historical analogies but they should be made more ambiguous and less suggestive.* This would imply taking a different approach to history as well as to the historical rhetoric that diplomats cannot escape using. Since, as we saw, historical rhetoric takes the form of suggestive historical metaphors, this means that diplomats should try reshaping the ways in which they map the source-analogue of a metaphor (an image of the past) onto its target (an image of the present or the future). For a diplomat, selection of language and style is extremely important, and the goal should be the creation of a new kind of *historical "Diplomatese" language* combining both narrowly historical and narrowly diplomatic considerations, and borrowing from both "make it ambiguous" and "make it historical" schools of thought.

"DIPLOMATESE" STYLES OF AMBIGUATION AND MODERATION OF HISTORICAL RHETORIC

My firm belief therefore is that a diplomat has the freedom of choice. I do not believe that diplomats must rely exclusively on suggestive historical rhetoric, or, on the other hand, ban it completely. They are free to choose a more refined language of their own making; a language which would meet the demands of identity and continue to perform the four functions that historical analogies perform, but which would at the same time open some doors to ambiguities and help diplomats communicate more efficiently and less stressfully in times of crises.

The idea is very simple. *All we have to do is to loosen the link between a source of historical metaphor and its target.* In that way a diplomat could still retain a historic image, an idea of historic precedents, using language which would also retain the flavour of national identity or national narrative. By using *ambiguated* historical analogies, though, diplomats could, with the same stroke, raise their awareness of the fact that the final decision is theirs to make, as the "loose" historical analogising would leave enough elbow room for them to act as individual and adaptable thinkers or decision-makers. Namely, ambiguated historical analogies do not deduce from the past a straightforward or rigid image of the future.

I will present here *six different methods of ambiguation of historical rhetoric* but I believe that one could and should think of more.

First, one could do what *General Semantics* advises us to do.²³ Instead of using an image of trends, periods, or any suchlike generalities, the diplomat should use an image of a particular moment in history as a source-analogue of historical rhetoric. So, instead of saying simply that Saddam is like Hitler, the diplomat should focus on a particular moment of Hitler's political biography, comparing that very moment with the current moment in dealing with Saddam. I call this method *"the method of particularised rhetoric"*. Its effects are indeed incredible. The first thing you will notice is that historical analogy becomes much more complicated, much more demanding, but at the same time it opens numerous cognitive possibilities in detailed thinking on one's future choice vis-à-vis Saddam.

Second, instead of using clean and straight images of the past, diplomats should try making them more blurred and grey. For instance, while comparing China with the former Soviet Union, an American diplomat should think of the USSR not only as a former ideological enemy but also as a challenge, which may have caused or helped the US to achieve several breakthroughs in science, economics or technology. Or the diplomat could think of the USSR as a state which the US indirectly drained during the cold war period and is therefore partly to blame for the poverty plaguing today's Russia. I call this method "*the method of blurring rhetoric*".

Third, instead of using an image of past actualities as the source of historical analogy one could use an image of past potentialities. This usually goes under the heading of history of missed or lost opportunities, but it should include a history of the risks that states or leaders were lucky to escape as well. So a diplomat should not use only actual achievements or happenings as a paradigm, but rather all the things that were either luckily escaped or nearly achieved but missed, due to short-sightedness, unexpected occurrences, or misleading information. Instead of comparing Yeltsin with Hitler, we may better start thinking of the opportunities that pre-World War II European governments missed in their dealings with Hitler, of the potential past in which Hitler may have taken a different path had the governments acted in a way they did not.²⁴ Again, you see that the link between potential past and the actual present becomes somewhat ambiguous and that the rhetoric thus generated places all responsibility for future actions on the diplomat using it. Such imagery linking potentialities and actualities requires an active effort on part of the diplomat and makes it impossible for the diplomat to hide behind a suggestive comparison which may lead decisions in a predetermined direction. I call this method "*the method of fictional realism in rhetoric*".²⁵

Fourth, in some periods of history actions taken led not to the preferable or desired objectives but to their very opposites. It seems as if the action produced an accumulated net-side-effect, which reversed the very action, undid it and delivered the least rather than the most desired thing. In theories of tragedy this is called "tragic irony" but the message is, I believe, sufficiently clear: humans sometimes take actions blindly believing they will deliver a happy outcome. Humans though are too ignorant to accurately predict all the factors playing an important role in the actual course of their actions and that is why their actions sometimes return to them like a boomerang. Every nation has probably experienced history's tragic ironies and the story of an age when success was almost achieved but then a disaster followed is a typical chapter in national narratives. Now, my idea is to use those bits of tragically ironic history as sources of historical analogies. This would remind both decision-makers and diplomats of the shortcomings of any grand design; of the fundamental inability of human beings to predict all the factors determining the outcome of an action. Instead of using plain historical analogies predicting more or less clear outcomes, let us use those analogies that speak about unpredicted and unpredictable details that have reversed the course of history and may reverse it once again. I call this method of ambiguation of historical rhetoric "*the method of ironic rhetoric*". And if the diplomat ever decides to play the role of *advocatus diaboli* (devil's advocate) to improve the quality of group decision-making considerably, this is the best way to look at history as a fount of historical rhetoric.²⁶

Next comes method *five*. While all previous methods focus on the quality of the source and the target of historical metaphors and the link between the two, this method focuses on quantity. Instead of using a single image of the past as the source of metaphorical representation of the present or future, we may better use many images. That means that instead of swaying under the temptation to compare today's China with the former Soviet Union, we may better compare China to many other historical paradigms as well. In that way we will loosen the link between the target (China) and the source (former Soviet Union and others), make it more ambiguous, while at the same time we will enrich our base of decision-making and better prepare ourselves for several distinct possibilities. The likelihood that the future will literally quote the past is infinitely low, however unambiguous suggestive historical metaphors lead one to believe that the future will reproduce the past fully. Using a multitude of sources in historical analogy runs counter to that tendency and, like the aforementioned methods, secures adaptability of thought to unexpected circumstances. I call this method "*the method of multiplied rhetoric*".²⁷

The *sixth* method itself concerns the quantity of targets and sources. Instead of a simple focus on the source, this method focuses on both source and target and proposes the use of dual sources and dual targets. That means that instead of drawing a parallel between, for instance, Saddam and Hitler, one should draw a more complicated parallel between two relations; between the relation holding between Saddam and the US of today, on the one hand, and the relation holding between Hitler and the US in, let us say, 1940, on the other. The first thing one would notice is that this latter parallel does not sound very convincing. The reason for this is that analogies drawn between simple entities may be based on superficial similarities, but those between relations are more demanding because relations themselves are abstract concepts and thereby more difficult to discern. So again, a historical rhetoric playing with relations is intellectually much more demanding and much richer in nuances than one playing with a single historical object as a source and a single contemporary object as a target. And this again is likely to make one more cautious in the choice of historical analogies.

Besides, relations are, so to say, floating above entities and no entity has full control over the relations that hold between it and another entity. And no relation is deterministically defined by the actions of a single entity. This is in itself a positive message on the use of relations as both source and target of historical rhetoric. I would call this method "*the method of relational rhetoric*".

A sharp and sceptical eye would quickly identify seemingly weak spots in the methods I proposed.

For instance, the method of fictional realism would probably meet a suspicious critic arguing that potentialities are unfortunately only that - potentialities! That means that their status among mental entities (concepts, stories, stores of knowledge and alike) is bound to be somewhat insecure. Potentialities do not strike the way realities strike and that is why our memories do not adopt them easily as their most valuable treasures. Potentialities are floating and easy to forget and are difficult to transmit in the form of socially relevant and usable knowledge. For all those reasons the concept of fictional realism in rhetoric is, a suspicious critic would say, unlikely to take firm root among diplomats or historians. Besides, it seems that whatever positive diplomatic aspect the concept has it would evaporate once diplomats start asking the question "*Who* lost the opportunity?" too emphatically.

Or let us take the method of ironic rhetoric. A suspicious critic would probably counter-argue that the philosophy standing behind the concept of ironic rhetoric is too tragic to be given serious consideration. The concept of tragic irony seems to load too heavy a burden on human shoulders, both intellectual and emotional. It is deeply unsettling when one considers human history as a series of self-annihilating actions. It is too pessimistic, too hopeless for any thinker to endure for any length of time. People like toying with the idea of progress, of something that endows their lives with meaning and purpose. Since the concept of ironic rhetoric runs against that deeply human sympathy for an evolutionary world-view it would not generate enough resonance among diplomats of this world.

And, finally, the critic may say something like "Your methods of ambiguation are too elitist an endeavour! Leaders and foreign ministers need popular support and that is why they need to address the minds of common people, the common people's needs, memories, concerns, fears, etc. Do you believe that a leader or state secretary would go and address his populace with such a tricky and intellectually too demanding version of historical rhetoric? Do you really believe that an ambiguated historical analogy would resonate in the minds of ordinary citizens?"

I could not fail to acknowledge the objections of the fictional critic. They are all in perfect order except that they may shatter my proposal only to a very limited degree. For instance, to use ironic rhetoric here and there does not imply subscribing to a radically pessimistic philosophy of history with no meaning and purpose. I mean to use it as an occasional reminder to avoid future tragedies and help others avoid self-defeating actions.

As regards potentialities and their insecure ontological position, I must admit that such an objection sometimes holds, but sometimes it does not. There certainly may be potentialities that we sometimes just fancy and that then swiftly go away. Some potentialities though are different; they do not go away and we think of them most of the time. For instance, the potentiality of me being hit by a car while crossing a street is not just a fictional one. And I believe that relevant historical potentialities belong to the latter category. If history has taken different and disastrous paths because a diplomat has missed an opportunity or did not timely recognise a potentiality, then someone should be thinking a lot about that opportunity. Concerning the question "who has lost an opportunity?" I believe that in this case unilateral assignment of responsibility is neither fair nor possible. It may be that, for example, the French failed to respond in time to the remilitarisation of the Rhineland, but those who directly or indirectly "helped" them fail should be held responsible as well.

As regards the critic's concern with popular support I must admit that diplomacy is an elitist activity. My intention however was not to propose the six methods as a set of tools to help presidents in drafting public speeches. My intention was to propose them to enrich and better the decision-making process among the elite, primarily. As for presidents or foreign ministers, they themselves should find ways to build the methods into the messages they would like to deliver through public speeches. So I leave that to their skill and intelligence. Finally, the boundary between the elite and the populace is constantly shifting and the distance between the two depends on one sole factor; education, of which the populace should and does take care itself.

As a general point, the objections mentioned teach the lesson that one must not become a slave to a recipe. Once methods get fixed and stop evolving they turn into rigid tricks that an acute observer will quickly recognise as such. (A typical example of this is the famous rule of the use of "I-sentences" instead of "You-sentences" in negotiations.) Once our partner party to negotiations realises that we do nothing but read from a menu, from a closed list of methods and recipes, our stated positions are bound to lose half of their strength. The requirement of creativity, which says that we must constantly expand and keep innovating in our use of language, applies here as well.

Let me then at the end summarise the main points of my talk. *First, when it comes to the use of language and its many styles, diplomats must bear in mind that they have a choice.* They may choose one or more among many styles of language. This freedom of choice of an instrument of expression is particularly important because plurality of such instruments makes diplomats aware of their own *responsibility* in verbally expressing their attitudes towards international developments. Lack of awareness of plurality of such instruments makes an expressed attitude appear too natural and disables diplomats from making a reflective and conscious choice; from taking full responsibility for the effects of their choices. For instance, I demonstrated that historical analogising appears couched in at least two different styles of linguistic expression (pure analogies and ambiguous analogies), while awareness of its likely negative effects may give rise to another one, the style of an ambiguous use of language. And I also pointed to various motivational factors that may move a diplomat to opt for one or the other or any combination of these styles. *This is highly likely to endow diplomats with the sense of control over what they may otherwise believe to be a spontaneous verbal expression of their natural psychic attitudes.* It is pointless to advise diplomats that their verbal style should be polite or moderate unless they have been taught about plurality of possible verbal styles and about their advantages as well as disadvantages. Politeness or moderation in use of language is not a natural fruit growing on every tree.

Second, when it comes to the issue of conflicts, historical analogies play a causal role in the etiology of conflicts. However, I failed to say how important the role is and under what conditions the negative effects of historical analogising may be neutralised by other factors. One thing however needs to be taken for certain: *it is better to be beforehand alerted to a factor that may play an important role in the etiology of conflicts.* History has delivered many lessons on this and it is better for us not to rely on the vicissitudes of chance. Historical analogies come under the heading of psychological causes of war and I believe that they are indeed the underlying ones.

Third and finally, diplomats must be aware that they have freedom not only of choice but also of making a brand new language of their own liking. As I tried to sketch the basic elements of a new kind of *historical "Diplomatese"*, so every diplomat should try making a better and more expressive kind of Diplomatese. As Noam Chomsky repeated time and again, language consists of finite number of items (phonemes, dictionary entries, rules of grammar, etc.), but the number of possible combinations of those items is virtually infinite. Every day human beings produce novel metaphors never heard before. The diplomat must give serious consideration to this fact of creativity in language, to the ability of language to expand and adapt to all kinds of conditions.

Paraphrasing Hobbes, Josef Joffe on one occasion said that diplomacy without a sword is but a word. The way I understand this metaphor, it implies that diplomats on all sides must be aware of their power to materialise their aims, and that without such awareness diplomacy would be just an empty and aimless exchange of words. The way I see things, diplomacy is primarily *words that prevent us from reaching for our swords*. That is why there must be no end to our attempts to improve the ability of our language to simulate real acting and thus to make swords dispensable. Making our words independent of swords, of which moderation or ambiguation of historical rhetoric is just one aspect, is one among many steps that diplomats must take to create through language a different and healthier atmosphere in international relations.

ENDNOTES:

1. (They argue that) eloquence/rhetoric from time to time secures the condemnation of the innocent, that it leads deliberations astray, that it causes not merely sedition and popular turmoil, but also wars beyond all expiation...But, following the same modus of thinking, not only orators but also magistrates and medicine and science itself would all be useless. (Quintilian, refuting the critics of rhetoric who, starting from the valid premise that rhetoric has been occasionally used to evil ends, wrongly concluded that rhetoric should be banished from Rome as it was banished from Sparta. Quintilian died in the year 96 AD).
2. Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1998), 150.
3. *International Herald Tribune*, 30 January 1997, 1.
4. *The Economist*, 27 November 1999, 35.
5. *International Herald Tribune*, 1 December 1999, 8.
6. *Newsweek*, 20 April 1998, 38.
7. Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War* (New York: Random House, 1998), 148.
8. Richard Holbrooke, *A New Realism for a New Era: The U.S. and the UN in the 21st Century* [website]; available at http://www.un.int/usa/99_103.htm.
9. See, for instance, Anthony D. Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 160.
10. Though all historical analogies simultaneously perform all four functions I am talking about, some of them lay more and some less emphasis on specific functions. For instance, example number 6 on page 6 below is an analogy which lays emphasis on the function of "spiritual transcendence".
11. Example number 5 from page 1 above is a good example of a historical analogy which emphasises the function of identity maintenance.
12. Examples number 4 from page 1 above and number 8 from page 2 above are good examples of historical analogies which emphasise the cognitive or predictive function.
13. For instance, the "Greece to their Rome" analogy in which Great Britain plays the role of Greece to the twentieth century's Rome, i.e. the USA, was used by many influential policy and opinion makers in post-imperial Britain to offset bad feelings following the decline in Britain's global influence. For an excellent study of the history of the analogy and its ironies, see Christopher Hitchens, *Blood, Class and Nostalgia* (London: Vintage, 1990).
14. Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War and the Preservation of Peace* (New York: Anchor Books, 1995), 173-174.
15. *Ibid.*, 376 and 414.

16. Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time* (New York: Free Press, 1986), 87.
17. See President Clinton's statement in *Washington Post*, 24 March 1999, A1. See also an article on Clinton's analogy: Jonathan Alter, "The Trouble with History," *Newsweek*, 12 April 1999; and Henry Kissinger, "Doing Injury to History," *Newsweek International*, 5 April 1999.
18. Wolfgang Petritsch, Karl Kaser, Robert Pichler, *Kosovo-Kosova* (Klagenfurt-Wien: Wieser Verlag, 1999), 278.
19. I owe thanks to Russian Ambassador Alexander Zotov from the Sarajevo Office of the High Representative for helping me better understand this analogy as well as for preventing me from committing at least one factual error.
20. David Dessler, "How to Sort Causes in the Study of Environmental Change and Violent Conflict," in *Environment, Poverty, Conflict*, ed. Nina Graeger and Dan Smith (Oslo: International Peace Research Institute, 1994), 91-112.
21. Applied to the 1995 episode involving US Ambassador Holbrooke and then Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic, it seems that what annoyed Holbrooke most was the fact that the historical rhetoric that Karadzic frequently used to support his arguments tended to commit him to a too rigid bargaining position. In contrast to ambiguous language, historical analogies are very suggestive of the direction that one should take and do define one's commitments too tightly.
22. See the excellent case-study by David Patrick Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign-Policy Situations," *British Journal of Political Science* 26/4 (October 1996): 523-552. Houghton shows that foreign policy decision-makers, though aware of the fact that the situation they face is novel, i.e. unprecedented, cannot escape relying on historical analogies throughout the decision-making process.
23. For a comprehensive overview of Korzybski's *General Semantics*, see Frank J. Bruno, *Adjustment and Personal Growth: Seven Pathways* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1983), 167-176. For a method of the use of history similar to the method of particularised rhetoric, see Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, 105-107, on the "Goldberg rule".
24. Actually, in December 1993 the president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, came very close to comparing Yeltsin with Hitler. For details, see *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 1994), 109.
25. For an example related to the issue of Palestinian history, see Anders Sandvig, *A Joint Nordic Centre for Peace in Jerusalem*, (Oslo: Courage, 1993), 46-54. Kagan, *On the Origins of War*, is itself written under the mark of the concept of lost opportunities. For an excellent example of a historical analogy using "the method of fictional realism" and setting an ideal, see the third example on page 1 above.
26. As regards "ironic rhetoric", Henry Kissinger seems to have a lot of sympathy for this kind of historical narration; almost all of his writings on history include many examples of tragically ironic episodes. Furthermore, a wonderful example of tragic irony resulting from the use of historical analogy is found in Edward H. Carr, *What is History?* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 71. As the story goes, "The Bolsheviks knew that the French revolution ended in a Napoleon and were afraid that their own revolution might end in the same way. They therefore mistrusted Trotsky, who among their leaders looked most like a Napoleon, and trusted Stalin, who looked least like a Napoleon".
27. This method was proposed in K. J. Holyoak and P. Thagard, *Mental Leaps* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 163.

■ LANGUAGE SETTING THE STAGE FOR DIPLOMACY;
DIPLOMACY BASED ON INTERPRETATION, RHETORIC AND ETHICS;
PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Benoit Girardin

The purpose of this paper is to open up one field of inquiry, to set some cornerstones, to stir your curiosity and to propose some food for thought. In nature, this paper belongs to the realm of philosophical inquiry. Language will hereafter be treated under a threefold perspective, considered in its three dimensions of:

- interpretation,
- persuasion, and
- respect,

in other words: falling within the fields of hermeneutics, rhetoric and ethics. Under each perspective I shall work out some implications for diplomacy. Then, I would like to sort out how language could run into a pitfall in each of these three dimensions, while skidding into two extremes: either by its lack of or by its excess. Subsequently, I would like to highlight what kind of challenges and pitfalls diplomacy may have to face and should then handle, depending on each respective failure or excess.

Two short preliminary remarks: while developing those thoughts, some Mediterranean specificity will be paid attention to, with a peculiar reference to the monotheistic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, that have featured in its history and its culture.

The term "diplomacy" is hereafter mainly equated with structured approaches made by ruling bodies to manage conflicts of interests and avoid or end wars, mainly between states, without excluding international agencies. The situation referred to is overwhelmingly one of negotiation.

1. DIPLOMACY AS LANGUAGE

1.1 Language and Hermeneutics (Interpretation)¹

Language is much more than just a tool or just an instrument, which we would then make use of, apply or mould to fit our meanings and express those in words. Language is indeed what sets the fundamental framework, what moulds us, what gives us to the world. When we talk of a mother tongue, that expression highlights that language, in the particular case of a specific tongue, is actually delivering us to the world. Language to that extent is man-making, society-making, culture-making. Language is of course prior to any diplomacy, shaping its world, setting the rules of the game: it is in short a "**frame setter**".

It is also true that language is a tool, an instrument that presupposes a craftsman able to use it properly and even to adjust the instrument to its goal and purpose. The speaker uses a language, looks for a proper wording, shapes the proper expression. The diplomat aims at finding an expression that may be endorsed by both parties. In that sense, language is man-made, society-made, culture-made: a real **arte-fact**.

This is why different tongues may find some common meaning in what they refer to. They are like fingers pointing to the moon; keep in mind the Chinese expression: when my finger points to the moon, only the fool looks at my finger. That very situation makes it possible to reach an

agreement between two parties speaking different languages. **Translation** is therefore not an impossible task, even if it always remains blended with treachery or inaccuracy - see the well-known Italian saying *tradutor traditor* - because ambiguities or connotation can never be fully sorted out and removed. The word "crisis" will always mean judgement and manifestation for a ancient Greek; danger as well as opportunity for a Chinese; catastrophe for a broker on Wall Street.

One single meaning is not encapsulated in one word for ever. There is no absolute stability in a given language. And even if some stability may be settled through professional expressions, the background belongs to culture, is ingrained with values, even prejudices. Writing, reading, speaking always means interpreting. There is no absolute meaning that would lay beyond **interpretation**.

That perception should not be unfamiliar to the Mediterranean cultures referring to one of the three monotheistic faiths, each of those religions rooted in a written text, a holy scripture that is constantly read and understood through interpretation. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are constantly referring to their holy scriptures, trying to capture their "true" meaning, starting with the translation from an older form of their own language to the contemporary form of it (as far as Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic are concerned) or from one original language to the one targeted by the translation. Those three cultures cannot get rid of interpretation as a constant task. Interpretation is the due process through which the meaning of the text becomes owned, articulated, the word made sense.

Implications for diplomacy:

- Diplomacy is constantly involved in the business of interpretation; diplomacy indeed overlaps with interpretation. Interpretation is ingrained in any diplomacy, encompassing interpretation of earlier agreements, of present wording, of technical expression, of diplomatic jargon.
- Diplomacy, to the extent that it provides building blocks for bridges between parties speaking more than one language, cannot be separated from translation.
- One should accept it positively and not dream of an absolute language beyond interpretation. Interpretation is not an avatar of language, it is the very nature of language.

1.2 Language and Rhetoric (Persuasion)²

Language goes much beyond its function of expressing meanings, beyond its role as mirroring or dressing reality in rosy colours. The intention or will of charming, captivating, of winning over the addressee is ingrained in language.

We all know that power, strength and attempts to dominate are like drivers acting throughout languages. Within the whole Mediterranean philosophical tradition, or traditions, rhetoric, along with logic, forms an integral subject of philosophy (just to mention here Aristotle, Saint Paul, the Stoics, Cicero, Averroes). Whereas logic is considered as the way to raise persuasion through the necessity of the argumentation itself, rhetoric is deemed as a way to reach persuasion through a mix of intellectual, logical and emotional considerations. Logic is mainly used by scientists and teachers, whereas rhetoric is a proper vehicle when politicians and lawyers are developing their views and arguments. Actually the English word "argument" truly encompasses those two different but neighbouring meanings of disputation and reasoning.

Even if logic and rhetoric have undergone ups and downs in the last twenty five centuries, they have never vanished from the stage. Rhetoric made an impressive comeback in the Renaissance and is far from being weakened today. To the contrary: the media culture calls indeed for a full-fledged rhetoric, and the recent American electoral show provides clear

evidence of the importance of rhetoric in today's politics. The advertising business is today completely full of rhetoric.³

Rhetoric is all-encompassing when it comes to negotiation: it comes before negotiation, exists during negotiation, and follows negotiation. Negotiation and diplomacy as a whole cannot preserve themselves from rhetoric, which is overwhelmingly active around negotiations as well as inside them.

Implications for diplomacy:

- Diplomacy means also trying to persuade, to charm, to move the other party to come to terms with us, and the other way round. One should not hold it in contempt or consider it as an unavoidable evil. It is quite a positive feature.
- There is no diplomacy without an attempt to demonstrate the advantages of an agreement and the disadvantages of a lack of agreement.
- A negotiator must feel him or herself as an attorney or a prosecutor, advocating in the same go his own country's interests as well as the other's interests.
- But he or she has also to take into account the competitive bidding of rhetoric in the domestic political arena as well as the political mileage sought from any domestic nationalist or even chauvinist rhetoric; he or she should also assess its bearing in the long run.

1.3 Language and Ethics⁴

Language is not only meaning but also word: word spoken to somebody, word given to somebody. There is no language without speaker and addressee, the addressee then in his/her turn is answering as well. No language can exist without acknowledging the face of somebody else, individual or community. Language and desire may well go hand in hand.

More importantly, language is only possible when the other is perceived and acknowledged as other, different, through a bond of responsibility. Globalisation does not start with economic interests but with ethical respect for each other.

Taking now into account the Mediterranean cultural legacy originating in the three monotheistic faiths, one may say that monotheism is (should be) as such a school of antiracism and "xenophilia", in other words of respect and ethical standards through cultural and ethnical diversity.

Going even one step further, one could assume that those faiths might have given root to that perception that language invites the other to reply, offers to the other the status of responder. In each of those faiths, one notes that a word is set out, a word that cannot be not heard, nor replied to. That original word lays the foundation of human life. In that sense, language exceeds the sole dimension of "meaning" and "sense" and implies forced interaction and answer, ultimately inviting mankind to respect and equity.

Implications for diplomacy:

- Diplomacy as such aims to prevent war; to manage conflict of interests in a way that makes war improbable or that can postpone its outburst, to make possible a way out of actual war. But it may sometimes also pave the avenue towards war or provide fuel for never-ending conflicts. However, diplomacy relies indeed on the assumption that the other party is worth being talked to, is a peer, an equal partner with whom a fair deal may be reached.
- Even if diplomacy may take its inspiration from the Machiavellian approach, the importance of being bound to the other or of nurturing the feeling of a linkage with the other party, remains very high.

- No negotiation, no diplomacy is developed as long as the other party is viewed as a "non entity". Diplomacy in its very nature is driven by the acknowledgement of the other party and by a deep concern for (sense of) equity.

2. FAILURES DUE TO LACK OR EXCESS

When diplomatic efforts do not pay due or sufficient attention to each of those three dimensions, then the risk may occur of over-emphasis or under-emphasis. The hereafter mentioned traps, pitfalls or failures originate in a total lack or excess: absence on one side, non-limitation on the other side, in other words, too little or too much of a positive dimension. This may ruin diplomacy, or in other words, fuel the risk of wasting negotiations, and even driving negotiations to a point of no return.

2.1 Lack or Excess of Interpretation

When interpretation is not given its due acknowledgement or when interpretation is considered as not necessary, superfluous, or a futile intellectual exercise, then the lead is taken by **fundamentalism**. In its original meaning, fundamentalism signifies considering any interpretation of the scripture as a treachery, a trickery or an intellectual superfluous exercise, because the meaning is obvious, thoroughly readable. Fundamentalism in fact is moved by the assumption that one can own the truth, that the truth is something that can be possessed, an object. To my mind one is here at a crossroads: to what extent is truth a possessed object, something that is owned or resembles a legacy, something we are indebted to, which we cannot possess? It is amazing to see fundamentalism flourishing all over the world, and not confined to religions. Look at present, hot debates turning around ultra-liberalism, globalisation and the WTO, the greenhouse effect and pollution, genetics and gene manipulation.

It may be enlightening here to recall the traditional Biblical tale of the Tower of Babel that points clearly towards the narrow proximity between singleness of language and pretension of full-power. In other terms, the deadly dream of a situation where mankind could get rid of any translation and any interpretation is indeed nurturing the totalitarian purpose.

When there is overemphasis on interpretation, the risk is of falling into **absolute relativism**, or endless reconsideration, far from any stable meanings, caught in a mirror walled room, where each statement is mirrored ad infinitum. Any statement is considered entirely subjective and therefore not able to provide some lasting ground for any agreement or any memorandum of understanding.

Implications for diplomacy:

- Negotiating with a party sharing a fundamentalist approach is not an easy job. Pre-set values and ready made judgements of the other impede any flexibility, but more deeply, there is no acknowledged otherness. There is a fixed image of the other's interests and perception as well as one's own interests and self-image.
- Negotiation proceeds similarly, but differently, with a party sharing an absolute relativism: this is the kind of feeling felt while handling Russian dolls, when each meaning is hiding the next one, in an endless structure of slices; the perspective of permanently reopening the case and revisiting the draft agreement. Or as it sometimes occurs: starting negotiations after the signing of an agreement!
- Negotiation definitely looks easier when a middle point is reached where interpretation is considered as part of the game by both parties.

2.2 Lack or Excess of Rhetoric

When rhetoric is not considered as important and necessary, then the risk is that no interests, ours as well as the other's are acknowledged. The pitfall is **neutrality** in the sense of flat profile, anorexia, lifelessness, faintness, or a self-defeating attitude. Nobody to persuade, no cause to advocate, no alliance to build and strengthen, no enthusiasm to raise. Flat land!

To a certain extent, it may also originate in a culture-bound impossibility of setting out a clear "no" to the other party. As "no" cannot be said, what is the value of a "yes"? How can a negotiator guess the breaking point of a partner who cannot express it in crude terms? Sensible interpretation is strongly required in such a case.

On the contrary, when rhetoric is overrated, goes beyond its limits, then persuasion becomes an end in itself and the other is used as an auditor bound to keep silent, not treated as equal. A kind of fascination develops that no achieved persuasion endeavour can satisfy oneself. Overbidding is followed by manipulating and **demagoguery**, sustained through systematic lying. Cold blooded **manipulation** tends to become usual: persuasion for the sake of persuading; lying as the vehicle of power, influence, demagoguery and domination. The emotional part of the reasoning offsets the logical part of it. The danger, of course, is that lying is never a long-term investment. Sooner or later, but for sure, it is revealed as a sort of quicksand foundation for any mutual agreement.

The policy of adopting the worst line could be linked to rhetoric and considered the result of negative rhetoric; the virtue of a no-agreement solution is then rhetorically enhanced and good marks are switched from a reasonable, reachable consensus to a new, ideal situation created through a temporary worsening of the present.

Implications for diplomacy:

- Negotiating with a party sharing a low-key approach is not an easy job. You may not assess the true cost of any concession on one side, and may feel floating as to the solidity of any consensus reached after due negotiations.
- Equally with a party that cannot express its disagreement by expressing a clear "no", "not negotiable", a skilled negotiator has to guess where the limit is implicitly set, at the risk of seeing the case re-opened or never closed
- Negotiating with a party resorting to endless manipulation and demagoguery - not to say to lying - requires a lot of know-how, strong values, wisdom and perspicacity. Short-term demagogical manipulations need to be identified and distinguished from long-term endeavours based on shared interest. Even if rhetoric is part of the game, one should be able to handle the heart of the matter rather than grasp at shadows. An attempt to counter manipulation with manipulation, may well end up, through escalation, in sheer power games and disregard for the substance of negotiation.
- Negotiating with a party speculating on a worsening of the present situation to attain an ideal arrangement is hard to achieve through reasoning and submitting objective or plausible considerations, because the driver is more on the emotional than on the logical side; it requires from a negotiator the capacity to re-frame the situation and start from a completely different square one. A balanced mix of logic and rhetoric makes negotiation easy and even pleasant.

2.3 Lack or Excess of Ethics

Basically ethical standards are not complied with, as soon as the "otherness" (the other as compared to myself) is felt as negative, disparaging, a lack of, or when "other" can not rhyme with "equal". What distinguishes the other from me, his/her position from mine, is then ignored, taken as of no importance. There is eventually no "other", no "partner". Paternalistic attitudes are not far away, then: despise and - further away - cynicism and totalitarianism.

It is not uncommon today to see states resorting to "demonisation" of other states or organisations; such behaviour clearly indicates that the room for negotiations is becoming tiny and that interaction on an equal footing is losing ground.

When ethics is over emphasised, then a kind of suffocation or paralysis could result because of several reasons:

- i. the importance given to specific values or behaviour offsetting the joint achievements and postponing the confidence building experience of joint successes, even small. That may be found when a partner, based on ethical consideration, is overly stressing attitudinal aspects, cultural differences, be it rooted in social classes, values, worldviews (the well-known German expression "Weltanschau"), making the gaps unbridgeable or overemphasising the moral commitment;
- ii. interpersonal direct relationships may be substituted for mediated social relationships, giving love an edge over justice, playing down the collective, social mediations and overlooking the fact that the relationship between and among societies or corporate entities does always materialise through third parties in a triangular set up;
- iii. neglecting the element of tragedy in human history and playing down the fascination exerted by violence, in the name of moral standards.

Implications for diplomacy:

- Diplomatic negotiation where one party is denied the quality of human being or human society may be bound to fail because the minimal requirement of respect and due consideration is missing. Demonisation is bound to fail, to the extent that it acts as a rhetorical denial of the other party.
- When a party is moralising about the behaviour of the other one or when terms under negotiation are put under a moralist perspective, talks may become paralysed - high standards cannot be met - or may be distorted, set on a wrong footing in a sense that individual ethics are always running short when one comes to societal problems.
- Once again, proper conditions for sound negotiations are the ones of mutual respect and due consideration for "otherness".

To summarise it in key words:

Dimension of language	By lack	By excess
interpretation	fundamentalism	relativism
rhetoric	neutrality	manipulation
ethics	paternalism, totalitarianism	moralising, perfectionism

The context of negotiations may differ quite a lot. In each of the three dimensions, the point of gravity or poise may be set in the middle equilibrium or in one of the extremes.

2.4 Typology

As an aide to typify profiles or patterns of diplomatic language and to visualise them, the following table is submitted for your appraisal, at the risk of being sketchy and superficial:

Patterns	pattern 1	pattern 2	pattern 3	pattern 4	pattern 5	pattern 6	pattern x
Dimensions	L B E	L B E	L B E	L B E	L B E	L B E	L B E
Interpretation	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
Rhetoric	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦	
Ethics	♦	♦	<♦>	♦	♦	♦	
Examples	Standard	Israeli-Palestinian relation ships in 2000	Hijacker/ hostage taker with police authorities	"Big brother" with....	Low key policy in a "second class" area/ country	WTO with anti-WTO	X

Legend: L=lack; B=balance in between these variables; E=excess

Patterns 2, 3, and possibly 4, may represent the most frequent pitfalls in our present era.

Such a typology is useful not because it fully matches with reality, always fluid, mixed up and moving, but because it provides a frame of analysis and reminds us that the remedy has to fit to the specifications of each pattern. The diplomat who handles a case 2 like a case 5, may shorten his/her own career!

In order to negotiate a fair and lasting deal, when the starting situation is at an extreme position, the aim is to make it possible to move towards the "middle". A skilled negotiator should be able to make it.

2.5 Critical Thresholds

Remedial measures presuppose that there exists a specific **level** beyond which a slippage into fundamentalism, manipulation or denial is taking place, or to the contrary a move from an extreme to a more balanced situation. **Measuring** as such is hardly possible because cultural ingredients as well as interpersonal chemistry are brought into play, and also because the continuum is not of a "quantitative" nature. Nevertheless there are qualitative criteria that may help the diplomat to guess and feel where the critical thresholds are placed, such as:

- rebuke of any interpretation by the other party, or attempt to play on ambiguities and meanings;
- endless reopening of negotiations, postponement of any initialling of draft agreements;
- manipulation for the sake of manipulation, without any attempt at convincing the other;
- absence of any real interaction between negotiating parties;
- demonisation or even denial of any diverging opinions;
- overuse of moral qualifications or considerations;
- absence of any acceptable, realistic and concrete proposal.

These features may provide a clear signal that something is set on a wrong footing in the negotiation.

3. WAYS OUT OR THE BALANCED TRADE-OFF

Full-fledged, professional diplomatic language with substance and future means that a sufficient and balanced importance is given to each of the three dimensions: interpretation, persuasion and ethics, and within each that a reasonable equilibrium is reached, far from the extremes. Pattern 1 is the standard that should be arrived at if required even through a long

and arduous endeavour. It allows effective negotiations that may really focus on divergences, risks, costs and mutual concessions.

Basically, diplomats are the ones who have to find a practical way out of dead-ends and can feel what strategy works, and what tactics do not work in a given situation.

Nevertheless, I will not quit too early and give up the crux of the matter. Without resorting to quick-fix or blue-print solutions, the following guiding principles should be borne in mind.

- It is not within a diplomat's reach to set in advance a proper balance and decide about optimal requirements. How the balance is set depends mainly on the surrounding reality, the nature of the interaction, and on past experiences. Any situation is specific to itself, given as well as evolving. It does not help to blame reality for not matching the books. The key is to work it through.
- Interpretation being a must, inter-subjectivity is the proper path between subjectivity and objectivity that are both unattainable (E. Husserl). Inter-subjectivity needs patience, constant effort, permanent dialogue, tracking the perception developed by the other party and building up a common future.
- The diplomat has to be particularly alert about thresholds, when a "negotiation game", so far overwhelmingly framed by a sound openness to interpretation or a normal use of rhetoric, is suddenly or imperceptibly sliding into, let us say, fundamentalism or relativism, sheer manipulation or despise. Awareness and perspicacity are definitely critical assets in such situations.
- Countering manipulation with manipulation or fundamentalism with fundamentalism will lead only into a deeper dead-end, that will only catch and jam the process in a symmetrical escalation of a "more of the same" kind! Similarly a deep relativism, the opposite of fundamentalism, does not help. Like in judo, the way out does not consist in counterpoises but in moving the centre of gravity. When in one dimension the situation has moved to one extreme, a solution might be to concentrate on another dimension in order to reach or consolidate a balanced position there.
- Ethics are critical. When "otherness" is no longer acknowledged, war is not far away. Then a move towards extremes may start in the other two dimensions: mainly manipulation and fundamentalism. Ethics require getting rid of contempt, of negating but also being free from any fear in front of the other party and from any complacency. An effective way of redistributing the cards may be human authenticity and moral quality.
- Experience of negotiating with hijackers shows the vital importance of keeping or developing a bond, in particular through the process of naming, as well as of disclosing that some concerns of the violent party have been interpreted and understood - that does not mean accepted or agreed upon.
- While facing heavy pressure, even violent pressure, a diplomatic way out may be to make it explicit and display it, and ask openly whether the other party intends to persist. In other words, balanced rhetoric, balanced ethics, and a frank question about interpretation. Soft power may well win over hard power.

Now it is up to diplomats to illustrate these reflections with case studies and to come up with their practical experience of the aforementioned theoretical framework. They are the ones who can check whether these theoretical considerations stand up to the test of reality or not.

ENDNOTES

1. See the school of thought inspired in Germany by Hansgeorg Gadamer and in France by Paul Ricoeur.
2. See the contemporary school of new rhetorics emphasising action on the minds of the hearers: Kenneth Burke, Edwin Black, Chaïm Perelman and others.
3. Two instances gathered from recent ads: "Why should the UBS bank become your partner?" Because of its symbol: the conductor was skilled enough to manage

together harmony and diversity (*United Bank of Switzerland*, TV spot in January, 2001). "Why should a Peugeot car be worth purchasing?" Because you should "stop liking and start loving." (*Peugeot* TV spot in January, 2001).

4. See the whole work of Emmanuel Levinas, but in particular: *Totalité et Infini* (1965) and *Difficile Liberté* (1963).

■ AMBIGUITY VERSUS PRECISION: THE CHANGING ROLE OF TERMINOLOGY IN CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY

Norman Scott

*"The question is" said Alice "whether you can make words mean different things."
"The question is" said Humpty Dumpty "which is to be the master - that's all."
Lewis Carroll, Through the Looking Glass*

In the classic inventory of the prerequisites of the ideal diplomat as set out by Harold Nicolson,¹ precision ranks second only to truthfulness. Yet further down the list the virtues of diplomatic ambiguity or diplomatic understatement are also extolled. How are these two seeming opposites to be reconciled? In common parlance the skill of finding formulations which avoid giving offence and are at the same time acceptable to all sides is treated with justifiable respect and often referred to as a "diplomatic" form of expression. This usage probably reflects an accurate perception of language and diplomacy down the years. In conference diplomacy, the successful diplomat engaged in the negotiation of texts will often strive to persuade his interlocutors to reach agreement on a form of words which combines precision with ambiguity. The two can be brought together in the same paragraph or longer text, more rarely in the same sentence. The precision will as a rule serve the purposes of his own side in stipulating claims or limits to commitments; the sought-for ambiguity will serve to allay anxieties on either side or to secure a margin for subsequent interpretation. As conference diplomacy has steadily gained in importance, the terminology that it employs has evolved, sometimes reflecting the simultaneous pursuit of both precision and ambiguity. The reflections which follow represent a preliminary discussion of why this may be so. A full examination of the question would benefit from the extensive analysis of the texts of selected agreements by means, *inter alia*, of such innovative tools of textual and contextual analysis as DiploAnalytica.²

SOME DEFINITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Observing a time-honoured tradition it may be well to go back to the beginning and define our terms - unambiguously if possible!

Precision: the condition of being precise, where (according to the Oxford English Dictionary) "precise" means:

1. accurately expressed;
2. punctilious, scrupulous in being exact, observing rules, etc.³

Ambiguity:

1. Doubtful or uncertain (Webster);
2. Capable of being understood in two or more possible senses.

This dual definition of ambiguity arises in turn from the two possible meanings of the prefix "ambi", signifying either:

- bothness (being on two sides at once: thus, ambidextrous; ambivalent), this sense implies **duality**;

- aroundness (being on all sides at once: thus, ambience; ambit), this sense implies **vagueness**.

In linguistics, the duality reading is associated with syntax, as well as with homophones and homonyms, where what is called a duck/rabbit effect is achieved in that you have either one reading or the other in mind, but *not* some hybrid of the two.

Some examples:

Syntactic ambiguity

- Flying planes can be dangerous. (Either you are doing the flying or someone else is.)
- The president could not ratify the treaty. (He couldn't ratify it *versus* he could "not-ratify" it, as an option.)

Lexical ambiguity

- bank (financial *versus* river);
- pear *versus* pair *versus* pare.

From what one gathers of linguistic theory, the scope for semantic vagueness is an inherent part of all living languages and is caused by the influence of **context** (both linguistic and extra-linguistic) on meaning. An essential property of languages is considered by specialists to be that they underspecify the intended meaning of speakers. This underspecification invites inference on the part of the listener (or reader) in order to retrieve the most likely intended message, given one's knowledge of the language, the author and the context.

Examples of influence of linguistic context on meaning:

- I am going to Malta to attend a conference (physical movement, two verbs separated).
- I am going to attend a conference in Malta (ambiguous between physical movement, intention and futurity).
- I am going to enjoy the conference (futurity and intentionality only, since the first verb modifies the second verb).

Examples of world knowledge on meaning:

- headache pill (gets rid of headaches) *versus* longevity pill (prolongs life);
- I like to eat pizza *with* my parents/ *with* my fingers/ *with* red wine/ *with* capers.

The foregoing considerations of a linguistic nature throw some light on the scope and diversity of ambiguity as defined by one of the earliest and most influential of modern students of the subject (although his interest was almost exclusively confined to the forms of ambiguity used in literature) as being: "any verbal nuance, however slight, which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language."⁴

When reflecting on the narrower subject of the uses to which diplomacy may put ambiguity, the following points would seem to emerge from what we have seen so far:

- Ambiguity occurs spontaneously or naturally (i.e. unintentionally) in languages because, in order to be flexible, they do not spell everything out and thus leave scope for alternative interpretations induced by contextual factors.
- It is possible (even probable) that different languages, emerging from and reflecting distinct cultures, offer varying scope for ambiguity, intended or unintended. Some maintain, for example, that the Chinese are predisposed to under specification and

ambiguity as a culture-conditioned stance in interpersonal communications;⁵ while the opposite holds true of United States citizens (President George W. Bush may be the exception who proves the rule).⁶

- If this is true, differences in the grasp of the language used in negotiations could conceivably confer a distinct advantage on diplomats seeking to introduce ambiguities in negotiated texts in order to serve their own purposes. (The use of Latin in drafting diplomatic documents until supplanted by French in the eighteenth century would at least have avoided the advantages subsequently enjoyed by native French speakers, and, since the early twentieth century, by those diplomats and other negotiators for whom English is their mother tongue.)

We may note in passing that precision is often avoided with having recourse to ambiguity, simply because precision can give hostages to fortune, or give offence. The Treaty of Breda, concluded in 1667 between the United Kingdom and the Netherlands after protracted negotiations, and couched in Latin, nowhere makes any explicit reference to the central cession it embodies - that of the island of Manhattan from the latter country to the former in exchange for a group of spice islands in the East Indies. Contemporary examples of avoidance of potentially risky precision are the advice given by the legal department of the World Bank to its president, Mr Wolfenson, to avoid any explicit reference to the term "corruption". Here, precision could give offence. In Northern Ireland, tactical manoeuvres surrounding the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement have included the claim by the deputy leader of one side (Sinn Féin) that the future of the peace process would depend on a "leap of imagination" on the part of the British government (in respect of policing and arms decommissioning arrangements). That is a circumlocution for what was really meant - namely, a "major concession", for use of so precise a term would have provoked an outcry amongst those opposed to any concessions at all, and would thus have been self-defeating.⁷

Before turning explicitly to the matter of ambiguity in the terminology of conference diplomacy, the following extract from a lecture given at Harvard University in 1973 by the celebrated conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein demonstrates how the concept can be perceived by an outsider to that process.

When I first wrote down the title of this lecture "*The Delights and Dangers of Ambiguity*" I had no idea that the word *dangers* would itself acquire an ambiguous meaning by the time the lecture was delivered. ...a few days ago...a formidable new danger was thrust upon us when our Secretary of State announced that the armed forces of the United States had been put on world-wide alert in response to what he called "the ambiguity of some of the actions and communications" regarding respectively movements of Soviet troops and statements of Russian diplomats. Now that is a dangerous ambiguity, dramatising the dangers that accompany a lack of clarity in human communications. Those are clear and present dangers: failure of communications can lead to a complete breakdown and to disastrous consequences. Then why (you may ask) do I place this persistent emphasis on "the beauty of ambiguity"? The answer must be obvious: ambiguity *may* be a useful tool in diplomacy, as it is in art; but it can be catastrophic when diplomacy turns into hard fact, just as it can be glorious in an actual work of art. Aesthetics *si*, politics, *no*!⁸

AMBIGUITY IN CONFERENCE DIPLOMACY

In the drafting of legal documents such as contracts strenuous efforts are usually made to eschew ambiguity because their survival in the document improves the chances of one or other of the parties raising a successful challenge in court and thereby escaping fulfilment of

ambiguous provisions. Hence, the ingenious anti-ambiguity drafting efforts just mentioned often result in documents whose prose is all but impenetrable.

Conference diplomacy implies virtually constant exposure to legal texts, either those containing the mandates or precedents governing the conduct of the conference or those which have to be drafted containing its results (which may take many forms ranging from recommendations possessing no legal force to those involving binding commitments). The interpretation and negotiation of such documents is thus a major part of conference diplomacy. The work of drafting committees or groups of "friends of the Rapporteur" occupies what is often a central role in which the conciliation of the views of those delegations seeking precision in definitions and commitments with those who prefer ambiguity is pivotal.

This is so because it is easier to hold a party to an agreement to a specific commitment than to a vague or ambiguous one. Hence, those which may have to give something up have an interest in obfuscating their potential obligation, and those which stand to gain have an interest in clarity and precision. The eleven years during which the Uruguay Round (UR) of multilateral trade negotiations took place, culminating in the establishment of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1994, abound in examples of these opposing interests, mainly between developed and developing countries, but sometimes within the former group (especially between the United States and the European Union).⁹

One striking example of this opposition of interests regarding precision versus ambiguity occurred when the UR negotiations ran into stalemate in November 1999, and were on the brink of collapse, because of a failure to agree on the drafting of new multilateral rules for the conduct of international trade. Thirty countries, representing virtually all of the countries most actively engaged in the Round, with the exception of the Quad,¹⁰ then issued a statement expressing their "deep preoccupation about the state of the UR negotiations on rules" and insisted on a concerted additional effort toward "clearer and more precise rules" providing a sound legal basis which they held to be the "cornerstone of the multilateral trading system".¹¹ Their appeal was heard, but it was to take another two and a half years before the negotiation culminated in the Final Act¹² ready for signature in Marrakesh.

Understandably, one of the constant bones of contention between developing and developed countries throughout the negotiations was the question of the concessions (essentially, lighter commitments or longer periods of adaptation to the new rules) which the former could secure from the latter. This they called "special and differential treatment" which has subsequently entered into the terminology of WTO ongoing negotiations under the acronym "SPD". Thus, a new term was introduced to describe the constant preoccupation of a numerous group of countries. It is too vague (although rendered more specific in certain contexts) to represent any firm commitments, but is nonetheless used as a constant reminder from the developing members to the developed members that the latter should not expect full reciprocity of commercial policy concessions from the former.

Conversely, on issues where developed countries are *demandeurs*, as they are in respect of market access for financial services, or intellectual property rights, or trade and the environment, they strive within the WTO (the main duel is between the United States and India) to extract precise concessions from vaguely or ambiguously formulated provisions of the Final Act. It is, in a sense, the reverse side of the SDT medal. The claimant has an interest in precision, the granting country has an interest in vagueness or ambiguity.

Agricultural protectionism furnishes an interesting example of an issue where those countries (developing and developed alike) which protect domestic producers and are therefore at variance with the UR accords providing for the gradual liberalisation of the sector (notably, Japan, the EU, Norway, Switzerland) have joined forces to defend these policies on the grounds of the "multi-functionality" of agriculture. The term is vague, perhaps ambiguous, and signifies that farming is part of a national life-style or culture serving as a vehicle for traditional and social values which exempt it from merely commercial considerations. A great irritant to the net food-exporting countries which constitute the Cairns Group (a pressure and

negotiating coalition), this term has now become firmly entrenched in the terminology of multilateral commercial diplomacy.

Examples can also be found in the domain of peace-keeping as the relevant concepts and terminology have evolved over the past decade - with the significant difference that here ambiguity is seldom sought, since it could have serious operational consequences if, for example, the term "rules of engagement" were to be assigned different meanings by different national contingents in multinational peace-keeping forces. That has happened, more by accident than by design, and partly because of ambiguities arising from problems of translation - but that is another virtually self-contained subject.

In lieu of a conclusion, let us glance back at what Alice in Wonderland had to say on our central topic:

*"You should say what you mean" the March Hare went on.
"I do" Alice hastily replied "at least, I mean what I say - that's the same thing, you know."
"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter.
Lewis Carroll, Alice in Wonderland*

ENDNOTES

1. Harold Nicolson, *Diplomacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), and revised edition of 1951.
2. DiploAnalytica was devised by Alex Sceberras Trigona and Jovan Kurbalija, at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, organisers of the conference at which this communication was made.
3. This entire section, including the citation from Bernstein, owes much to the helpful advice of Dr Biljana Scott, tutor in linguistics and semiotics, University of Oxford.
4. William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (London: Hogarth Press, 1927).
5. Examples attracting much diplomatic attention, and creating some political excitement, occurred in the early months of the presidency of George W. Bush. As it happens, both concerned the interpretation of ambiguities in English and Chinese. At the beginning of April 2001 an American "surveillance" (sc. "spy") aircraft collided with a Chinese military jet off China's southern coast in the vicinity of Hainan Island. China demanded an apology from the United States as a prerequisite for discussing the release of the crew of the aircraft. The United States took the view that they had nothing to apologise for, arguing that the collision had occurred in international airspace, and solely because of the dangerous interceptionary flight path of the Chinese military air craft. These opposing views gave rise to a linguistic-diplomatic challenge to both "sides to come up with sentences in English and Chinese that [were] close enough to be considered a single statement...yet distant enough to allow subtly different interpretations in each country" (*International Herald Tribune*, 10 April 2001, 5).
"The sticking point [was] China's public demand for an apology - *dao qian* in Chinese...a legalistic and formal kowtow that both harks back to the country's grand imperialist past and...reflects psychic thin skin...so that any slight to...national dignity is acutely felt...Washington stuck mainly to expressions of "regret"...translated as *yihan* in Chinese, a term that carries no acknowledgement of guilt...So...the two sides have drawn their semantic lines in the sand, leaving a gap that diplomatic wordsmiths are now trying to bridge. But just as nuances in translation can create misunderstandings, they can create opportunities, too, allowing diplomats to leave a fuzzy middle between words that is palatable to both sides." (Ibid.)
6. This lighthearted reference to the verbal infelicities termed "Bushisms" should not deflect attention from the underlying point regarding the two different culture-determined approaches to ambiguity, in respect of which President Bush made a signal contribution when commenting in April 2001 on United States policy towards

the security of Taiwan. For many years the basic texts governing Sino-American relations had been characterised by their inherent ambiguities, and in particular by what came to be termed the "strategic ambiguity" of how far the United States would be prepared to go in defence of Taiwan if the latter were to be attacked. By affirming that the United States "would do what it takes" in such an eventuality, President George W. Bush abandoned ambiguity for precision.

7. The desire to eschew precision can lead to a *reductio ad absurdum* such as the practice of the Chief Economic Advisor under the Carter Presidency, Mr Alfred Kahn, who had triggered serious market turbulence by referring in a speech to the risk of a "recession". There after Mr Kahn referred to a recession as a "banana". Thus, he spoke of "the major banana experienced by the United States in the 1930s".
8. Leonard Bernstein, *The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard* (Harvard University Press, 1976).
9. The WTO created, as one of the most important provisions of the Final Act of the Uruguay Round, a dispute settlement mechanism which has to adjudicate on complaints that member states have failed to respect their contractual commitments. This task involves, *inter alia*, meticulous interpretation of possible ambiguities.
10. The name given to the four largest trading nations/entities - namely, the European Union, the United States, Japan and Canada.
11. Cf. John Croome, *Reshaping the World Trading System: A History of the Uruguay Round* (WTO, 1995).
12. 26,000 pages (just short of 200 kilos - now, fortunately, available on CD-rom) of agreements and promises/commitments.

■ USE OF AMBIGUITIES IN PEACE AGREEMENTS

Drazen Pehar

In this paper I will talk about ambiguous language as it is used in peace agreements. I use the term "peace agreement" somewhat broadly to refer to agreements that resolve conflicts of interest of any kind, not only those that put a close to war.

I will start with a definition and classification of ambiguities and then say a few words about the theoretical explanation of their origin. Next I will explain the basic rationale behind the choice of ambiguous language in a setting such as a peace agreement and the basic reason for dislike of that choice as well. Third, I will present a number of cases from the real world of diplomacy. Fourth, I will try to assess the relative weight and plausibility of a number of arguments both in support of and against the use of ambiguities in peace agreements. Finally, I will add a few reflections on implications that I believe should be drawn from my analysis of "peace-making", constructive, or, as some have called them, creative ambiguities.

DEFINITION, TYPOLOGY AND THEORY

Considered per se, ambiguities represent an obstacle to any reflection on language. While the primary aim of language consists of transmitting information, in conveying a piece of knowledge from human being A to human being B, ambiguities seem to run contrary to that aim as they leave a message recipient with a less transparent and less usable kind of data. However, language does not perform only an informative function, but, as Karl Buehler pointed out long ago, at least two more functions.¹ Language performs expressive and vocative functions, in addition to informative functions. The expressive function rests on the human need to express feelings, interests, and preferences, while the vocative function rests on the need to influence the feelings, interests or preferences of others. So, although it may not be informative, ambiguous language may thus play an important role, especially when it comes to those subjects where human beings are a central topic of discussion. We often, predictably, find ambiguities playing an essential part in the phenomena of linguistic politeness that combines two conflicting desires: the desire to convey a clear message that, in its authentic form, would insult a human being, and the desire to soften the message to avoid making that human being feel offended or humiliated.²

What is, then, an ambiguous expression, and how does an ambiguous word, sentence or text differ from one that is not ambiguous? Unfortunately, ambiguities are difficult to define precisely because of their ambiguous nature.

R. Munson defined ambiguity in the following way: "An expression is ambiguous when it has more than one meaning and it is used in a situation or context in which it can be understood in at least two different ways."³

I believe that one could and should amend this definition to make it more precise. In order to qualify as an ambiguity an expression must generate not only "at least two different meanings", but also two incompatible and unrelated meanings. It is only then that an expression is truly ambiguous. Metaphors and visual models are often the best way to present difficult intuitions in a more graspable form: the picture that most clearly depicts the common-sense understanding of an ambiguous expression is the optical illusion picture of the "duck-rabbit".⁴ The "duck-rabbit" picture can be seen as a duck as well as a rabbit, though a normal picture of a rabbit is incompatible with a normal picture of a duck. In the same way, one can read an ambiguity in two incompatible ways. Note that this picture can be interpreted

both as a duck and as a rabbit, but, also, with some difficulty, as a third neutral image, which stands equally far from, or close to, both rabbithood and duckhood. The same applies to ambiguities; ambiguities are pieces of language that 1. can be interpreted as meaning A, 2. can be interpreted as meaning B, and 3. cannot be interpreted as A and B simultaneously, but, eventually, as a neutral (re)source, from which, under specific focuses of vision/interpretation, both A and B might at separate times spring. And that is what makes ambiguities a sort of amazement to common sense, just like the "duck-rabbit" picture generates an optical unease.

I have to admit that my definition begs many questions. For instance, if ambiguity carries two different, incompatible and unrelated, meanings, why do we then not consider it sheer contradiction? An ambiguity does not say both "A is B" and "A is non-B". Actually it somehow says both "A is B" and "A is C", but under different angles. It may be interpreted as "A is B" in one light, but then, in exactly the same light, it cannot be interpreted as "A is C". Taken as a whole, as "A is B" and "A is C" combined, an ambiguity is just a possibility of a sentence, not a real sentence. And that is probably the reason we do not consider it a sheer contradiction. But what is this mysterious thing called "a possibility of a sentence"? I do not know. I believe ambiguity is a sort of phenomenon which presents a serious challenge to any theory of mind and language and which demands that we face the outermost limits of our language in the very medium of the language. That is exactly why it is so difficult to grasp the true definition of this linguistic phenomenon.

Let me now propose a typology of ambiguous expressions, which I will close with a few words about a theoretical explanation of their origin.

Ambiguity can emerge at any level of discourse - in words, in a sentence, or in a set of sentences. One can thus distinguish between referential, syntactical, and cross-textual ambiguities, depending on whether they occur in a single word, a sentence, or a set of sentences; a text. I will provide a definition and examples for each.

Referential Ambiguity

Croesus, an ancient king of Lydia, asked the oracle at Delphi to foresee the outcome of his attempt to conquer the Persian Empire. The oracle, as clever as always, issued the following prophesy: "If you attack the Persians, you will destroy a mighty empire."⁵ In this sentence, the expression "mighty empire" was used in an ambiguous way. The way Croesus understood the expression was not even close to the way the oracle of Delphi intended it. What the oracle meant by "mighty empire" was the empire of Lydia whose king was Croesus himself, not the empire of Persia, as Croesus understood. So, Croesus, acting on his mistaken understanding of the expression "a mighty empire", did destroy a mighty empire, but it was his own. I also believe that Croesus understood the term "destroy" from the prophetic message too narrowly, because the oracle intended it to mean both "destroy" and "self-destroy".

This is a referential type of ambiguity, as the meaning of the expression "mighty empire" in the context of the above sentence does not allow the hearer to refer to, or to pick out correctly, the object which the oracle intended. This is the simplest kind of ambiguity, an ambiguity based on a word. A word usually has many meanings, and some words mean more than others. "A mighty empire" can refer to any one of all mighty empires: it does not specify which one.⁶

Syntactical Ambiguity

Munson calls a second type of ambiguity "grammatical", while K. Bach calls it "structural".⁷ I myself prefer the term "syntactical", because this type of ambiguity actually rests on the vagaries of syntactical relations within a sentence.

Sometimes a sentence contains a number of specifications, but their direction - what they specify - is multiple, opening the sentence to several different and incompatible interpretations, making it ambiguous. While referential ambiguity is ambiguous due to an intrinsic quality of the parts of a sentence, syntactical ambiguity is ambiguous due to a relation between the parts of a sentence. For instance, if a sentence has the form "A B C" where C should retroactively specify A or B, and if furthermore C could be understood as specifying both A and B, but not both of them simultaneously, then such a sentence is the classical case of syntactical ambiguity. For instance, the sentence "I am prepared to give the sum of one million US dollars to you and your husband" may be understood in two different ways: 1. I am prepared to give the sum of (1 million \$) (to you) and (your husband), or 2. I am prepared to give the sum of (1 million \$) to (you and your husband). Another example is as follows: If one says "I hate him more than you", this could mean "I hate him more than you hate him", or "I hate him more than I hate you."

The oracle of Delphi was a mastermind in creating syntactical ambiguities as well. A famous Latin translation of one of its prophecies reads "Ibis, redibis numquam peribis in bello." Two different translations and interpretations may be provided for this sentence. 1. "You'll leave, and you shall never return as you will perish in the war." 2. "You'll leave and return, and you shall not perish in the war." "Numquam" here specifies in too many directions; *prima facie* it can specify both "redibis" and "peribis", but it cannot specify both simultaneously. However, nothing in the sentence indicates to which verbal phrase the "numquam" qualifier should be allocated.

This kind of ambiguity is what one of the most prominent modern linguists had in mind when he wrote: "ambiguity is a one-many relation between syntax and sense."⁸

Cross-Textual Ambiguity

Theorists of ambiguity tend to forget that there is another type of ambiguity, which I call "cross-textual". This type of ambiguity rests not on a discrete phrase or sentence, but on a larger body of a text comprising many sentences. This type is thus more complicated than the previous two, involving not only semantics of phrases or semantics of propositions and sentences, but also semantics of texts; semantics of sets of inter-related sentences.

We saw that the syntactical type of ambiguity depends on specifications that have multiple directions, that may be interpreted as specifying several parts of a sentence but not at the same time. Such specifications, however, do not have to be contained within a single sentence, but may be dispersed across a text. Such cross-dispersion may become another source of ambiguity. For instance, if we refer to a "special relationship between two men" by using a number of specifications in a text and refer to it again in later parts of the same text by using a number of new specifications, this may result in the type of ambiguity I call "cross-textual". However, friction between the two sets of specifications is a key precondition for the creation of a cross-textual ambiguity and without it cross-textual ambiguity would not occur at all.

This kind of ambiguity is best exemplified with so-called "open-ended sentences" which can be found in legal texts. For example, a chapter in a peace treaty may begin with a precise enumeration of the powers that one entity, for example, a central federal authority, may exercise. But at the end of the chapter an open-ended provision is inserted, which may, for instance, state that "the central federal authority may exercise some other duties as well". This clearly introduces an ambiguity into the list of the powers vested to that authority, as the open-ended provision in a way conflicts with the clear starting provision enumerating the authority's basic powers. If basic powers are clearly spelled out, then why would one need an additional open-ended clause to leave room for the expansion of the powers? Furthermore, does such an open-ended provision imply that the parties to the document already consented to an extension of the list of basic powers? Or have they merely indicated that they would be willing to enter into negotiations dealing with such a possibility without any predetermination as to their final outcome?

It is thus clear that ambiguity is not limited to the realm of phrases, of basic semantic units or sentences, but that it may also be brought into being in a wider context and through an interplay between sentences or sets of sentences. In this case ambiguity must be interpreted as an attribute of a set of sentences or of an entire text, which does not imply any radical departure from already existing practice. In principle we do not hesitate to call a text or a story ambiguous, if we believe that we have reasons to do so.

Now, as to the issue of theoretical explanations of the origins of ambiguity, the most rudimentary theory was proposed long ago by the Greek philosopher and scientist Aristotle.⁹ His theory says that the number of items that form the vocabulary of any human language is much smaller than the number of realities that the vocabulary-items are supposed to refer to, to make the human language meaningful and functional. In modern terminology, we say that the world is a continuum while the words we use to describe it are discrete. In other words, reality is much more complex than language, its demand is, so to speak, always higher than the supply of words that we use to denote it. It is exactly for this reason that we are bound to draw imperfect and vague boundaries in our language, relative to the realities rich in nuance and distinction that our language refers to. That is why entries, or items, of a vocabulary by necessity fail to perfectly match the items that are the subjects of their reference, and that is also why we use a single language-item to refer to many dissimilar and incompatible world-items. In other words, supply shortage in words makes their average value higher, but it also leaves the consumer needs and demands to an extent unmet. It was through this simple theory of disproportion that Aristotle explained the phenomenon of homonyms, words that have the same sound and spelling but different meanings, and by which he also set the tenets to explain the origins of ambiguous expressions. You will notice that this theory does not apply to syntactical and cross-textual kinds of ambiguity. However, I do not think that Aristotle would find it difficult to broaden the scope of his theory to cover all three types. For instance, he would probably say that the world is paratactic, while language itself is syntactic, and that explains the origin of the syntactical type of ambiguity. In other words, words come in succession, one after another, which may lead to confusion as to which phrase should be coupled with which. The world comes in totality; its items are co-present simultaneously, which leaves us, in principal, no doubt as to which item flows from which. Syntactical ambiguities offer at least two versions of the paratactic world, two equally possible paratactic worlds.

However, this theory also begs many questions. First, its focus is entirely on representational aspects of language. It derives ambiguity from the fact that language represents reality in a less-than-perfect way. Language, however, serves not only the function of representing reality, but many other functions as well. For instance, it establishes relations between people and sometimes is even used to mislead and confuse others, which obviously involves a misrepresentation of reality. Language is thus subject to not only representational pressure, but to other, social and psychological pressures as well. Remember, we often use ambiguity to mould a message in a polite form. So why not include both representational and social-psychological demands on language into an etiology of ambiguous language? Secondly, Aristotelian theory presents the ambiguous aspect of language as a symptom of its insufficiency, of its disability to portray the world as it really is, in short, as a flaw. Contrary to that view, perhaps we should look at ambiguity not as a symptom of the representational insufficiency of language, but as a normal and recurring phenomenon, which we all individually and occasionally produce by adding new meanings to the words we adopt from our linguistic community. Perhaps ambiguity should more aptly be understood as a manifestation of the irreducibly individual character of all language, of our individual capacity to use the shared word pool for novel purposes. In other words, a number of factors, including representational, social and individual ones, may explain the origins of this interesting linguistic phenomenon. I believe that a comprehensive and working theoretical explanation of the origins of ambiguity should incorporate all of them.¹⁰

AMBIGUITIES IN PEACE AGREEMENTS - BASIC RATIONALE AND DISLIKE

Now, why would one put ambiguous wording in a peace agreement?

Well, mediators, or those drafting such texts, reason approximately in the following way. If two parties have strong and contradictory interests, and if it seems that neither side is ready to concede a part of its maximum demand, and/or if the negotiations are running short of time and the parties can not discuss such concessions in more detail, then the issue of conflicting interests can be resolved by, so to speak, simulating a compromise in a very rudimentary form. The mediators may come up with a formula which is open to at least two different interpretations; which can carry at least two meanings, A and B, one to gratify the interests of party A and another to gratify the interests of party B. Meaning A will thus stand in harmony with the interests, or preferences, of party A, while meaning B will stand in harmony with the interests, or preferences, of party B. Thus, the mediators maintain the integrity and comprehensiveness of the draft, and, at the same time, make a small step towards elaborating, at a later stage, a compromise between the maximum demands by erstwhile conflicting, now negotiating, parties. In other words, ambiguities make sure that, on the one hand, the parties retain their own individual perceptions as to "how things should proceed" and that, on the other, one common language is adopted, which both parties may later equally use. To illustrate this with an example, the Rambouillet mediators started with the premise that interests of Serb and Kosovar-Albanian delegations to the Rambouillet negotiations contradicted one another. The Serb delegation, for instance, wanted to maintain the status of Kosovo as a province with very little, or no, competence in foreign relations, among other things. The Kosovar-Albanian delegation had different interests; to turn Kosovo into at least a fully-fledged republic on equal footing with the other two republics of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Serbia and Montenegro. This status, of course, entails the capacity to run certain aspects of foreign relations independently from the central federal authority. Secondly, the Serb delegation wanted the Rambouillet draft agreement, such as it was presented in Rambouillet, to remain binding in the foreseeable future. The Kosovar delegation had an opposing interest which was not envisaged by the Rambouillet draft: to turn Kosovo one day into a fully independent entity. They therefore wanted to see a revision of the agreement as soon as possible as well as to organise a referendum to check the will of the people of Kosovo vis-à-vis the status of Kosovo within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Mediators to the Rambouillet process decided to use an ambiguous wording to bridge the gap between the aforementioned interests. The constitution, as the key part of the Rambouillet Draft agreement, stipulated that "Kosovo shall have authority to conduct foreign relations within its areas of responsibility equivalent to the power provided to Republics under Article 7 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia." So, the mediators made use of a referentially ambiguous adjective "equivalent", which is not the same as equal, but could be. As to the interim character of the agreement, the mediators used both referential and cross-textual ambiguities to meet the demands of both delegations. First, the draft agreement itself was called "Interim-agreement", to the liking of the Albanian delegation. However, Chapter 8, Article I, 1-3, stipulated that amendments to this agreement should be adopted by agreement of all parties. That meant that without Serb consent the interim agreement could not be changed; and that thereby it would turn into a permanent arrangement. However, in Article I, 3, mediators emphasised that "three years after the entry into force of this Agreement, an international meeting shall be convened to determine a mechanism for a final settlement for Kosovo" which seemed to tilt the balance of the wording again in favor of the Albanian demands. Austrian Ambassador Petritsch, one of the three mediators, did not hide the fact that this paragraph was left open to two contradictory interpretations. At his March 8, 1999, meeting with Serbian President Milutinovic, he clearly stated that "die Interpretierbarkeit einiger wichtiger Textstellen bewusst gewaehlt worden war, um beiden einander ausschliessenden Positionen gerecht zu werden."¹¹

To remind readers, the Serb delegation did not accept the Rambouillet draft agreement, whereas the Albanian delegation accepted it in such an ambiguous fashion that its acceptance was just a bit better than the Serb refusal. Those who dislike ambiguous provisions and ambiguities as a peace-making mechanism would have found this a predictable failure. There is something in ambiguous language that its opponents find difficult to digest and upon which their dislike of ambiguity rests. They say that ambiguities actually do nothing but "paper over" important differences between the parties to an agreement.

Ambiguities are a kind of Machiavellian manipulative device that brings but temporary satisfaction to the parties as it deceptively, but not really, meets their demands in full. Such satisfaction is deceptive because both parties have the right to interpret ambiguities in their own irreconcilable ways and that is a right they will certainly, sooner or later, start exploiting. That is also why ambiguous agreements may quickly lead to arguments, and turn into disagreements, as, precisely due to ambiguities, conflicts in interpretation will necessarily break out. Speaking metaphorically, the inclusion of ambiguous expressions in a peace agreement is comparable to reopening a repository of arms to the parties and inviting them to rearm themselves with a kind of intellectual weaponry. This intellectual weaponry, i.e. ambiguity, is highly likely to be employed by both parties as soon as the first step in implementation is taken. For that reason implementation of an ambiguous agreement is very likely to fail.

A critic of the use of ambiguities in peace agreements would also add that their use is an interruption of communication between the parties to a conflict that usually precedes an outbreak of armed conflict between the parties. The parties' inclination to interpret some of the key expressions of their political relationship in a radically different fashion is one of the main causes of such interruption of communication. For instance, interpretative disagreements over the meaning of the key terms of their political relationship preceded the war between Croatian authorities and the Croatian Serb minority, supported by Serbia proper, and probably contributed to its eruption in 1991. For Croatian authorities, for instance, the term "Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" meant an association of free and basically independent republics, whereas for the Serb minority the term meant much more than that. The same applies to ambiguous peace agreements. Just as, prior to an outbreak of war, the crucial terms of political vocabulary become ambiguous and generate misunderstandings and disagreements that then lead to war, an ambiguous peace agreement will itself generate new misunderstandings and add more heat to the parties' already hostile feelings. Ambiguities thus, in all probability, prompt the parties to set in motion a new spiral of physical violence, or at the least put between them a barrier to firmly keep their positions far apart. Under the most optimistic expectations ambiguous "peace" agreements unleash a psychological war of words and perceptions.

BACK TO DIPLOMACY'S REAL LIFE

Diplomats, negotiators, mediators and decision-makers seem to be blind and deaf to the aforementioned worries. They rely on ambiguities quite often and do so with no concern about the negative effects that, according to the aforementioned critique of ambiguities, an ambiguous peace agreement is likely to produce.

Here is a list of famous texts that contain ambiguous provisions in their key places, with an obvious intent to bridge the differences between major interests of certain parties through an ambiguous formula.

Athenian Constitution

In the sixth century B.C. the Greek poet and statesman Solon wrote a constitution for Athens that was considered a revolutionary turn in organisation of both Athenian social and political life. As Aristotle explains in his book "Athenian Constitution", Solon provided a framework for the resolution of the inter-group conflicts inherent in sixth century Athenian society, leaving an important part of his constitution deliberately ambiguous; open to free interpretation.¹² As Aristotle says, some have interpreted Solon's strange decision to do this as implying that Solon primarily wanted to extend the powers of Athenian courts and by implication to strengthen the political position of the "demos"; of the common people of the middle strata of Athenian society. Namely, Solon had opened the possibility for the "demos" to play a larger role at the Athenian courts than they played before. Unfortunately, today it is very difficult to reconstruct the precise differences in interpretation of the ambiguous parts of the constitution by the different strata of Athenian society of that time. Nonetheless, it is clear that there was a

conflict of interests and that Solon intended to strike a balance between those interests by including provisions in his constitution that were open to several equally valid interpretations.

Homoousia and the First Nicean Council

The second example comes from the First Nicean Ecumenical Council that concluded with the adoption of the Nicean Creed.¹³ Deliberations of the Council aimed first at refutation of the Aryan heresy and then at bridging the gaps between various interpretations of the Holy Scripture, and thus at reconciling the differences between various Christian schools and doctrines. So, in a way, the First Nicean Council was an arena of negotiations aimed at producing a mechanism for resolution of an intellectual conflict. One of the most controversial issues that the Council discussed was the issue of interpretation of the relationship between Jesus Christ and his Father, God. The Aryan heresy taught that their relation was one of *heterousia*, of difference in substance. The Council decided by an intellectual fiat that their relationship was in fact one of *homoousia*. Now, interpretation of this Greek formula is not an easy matter, since it can be understood in two different ways. *Homoousia* can mean "identity of substance", but it also means "similarity of substance". The fathers of the Nicean Council deliberately avoided the stronger version of *synousia*, which means full and complete identity of substance. So, they actually selected a weaker version of the word describing the relationship between the Father and his Son Jesus, to leave the door of their creed open to those who had certain difficulties with the belief in total identity between the divine and the human substance.

W. Wilson's "14 Points"

In 1918 US President Woodrow Wilson presented to the US Congress an American list of basic principles for an international settlement to end World War I. Walter Lippmann delivered an authoritative study of this document in his book *Public Opinion* and I will in the following mainly adhere to Lippmann's views.¹⁴

Lippmann said that the "14 Points" were subject to an infinite number of different interpretations from all corners of the globe. Each group saw in the document what it wanted to see and that is why for the majority of the states involved in World War I the document seemed to be perfectly acceptable. This is also the reason the document succeeded in pulling together a majority of states and channeling their efforts in the direction of a search for terms for a comprehensive peace settlement. It is interesting to note that the US refrained from explaining to its allies its own interpretation of the document until shortly before the allies accepted the truce.

For instance, point 4 on "arms reduction to the levels consistent with domestic safety" is clearly ambiguous, as is point 10 on "autonomy for the peoples of Austria-Hungary". Lippmann pays special attention to the ambiguities of Wilson's point 8, which speaks about the issues that plagued the then Franco-German relations. This point stipulates that "all French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted." As Lippmann sharply notes, Wilson did not say that the Alsace-Lorraine region would be simply returned to France. He did not say that because at that time it was unclear whether the French would have continued to fight had they been offered a plebiscite in this matter. The purpose of the sensitive wording of this point however was to leave the possibility of such an interpretation open. Besides, Wilson has loaded this point with another meaning. Approximately at the same time France had made a secret agreement with Russia to demand that Germany return Alsace-Lorraine under the wider 1814 concept of the region. Wilson happened to know about this secret arrangement, and he did not agree with it. In other words, Wilson left the methods of exact implementation of the "rectification" provision to be worked out in more detail later in the process, leaving enough elbowroom for French interpretation of the methods as well as for its secret ambitions. However, he also clearly pointed out that rectification should aim at the injustice done to France in 1871 and not in 1814. He thus opened quite enough room for his own reading to eventually oppose the wider

French interpretation of "Alsace-Lorraine" following from France's secret agreement with Russia.

Yalta Declaration

The Yalta Declaration contains a number of ambiguous formulas that served to bridge the gap between the positions of the US, Britain, and the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the post-World War II global order.¹⁵ Its chapter dealing with the Polish question is notorious for ambiguities that Stalin later put to his advantage, for which he was strongly criticised by Churchill, who accused him of violating the Yalta spirit. However, all Stalin later did in regard to Poland was simply to implement the Soviet interpretation of the ambiguously worded Yalta Declaration chapter on Poland. While the British and American interest was to see a free Poland with a democratically elected government, truly representative of the will of its people, Stalin wanted to see an obedient and controllable Poland, which could not be used by another great power as a corridor against the Soviet Union. As the two interests were obviously incompatible, the Big Three were unable to agree on anything but an ambiguous text which allowed for a number of interpretations. For instance, as to the issue of reorganisation of the then Polish "Lublin" government, which was Moscow's puppet, the Three agreed that it would be reorganised "on a broader democratic basis", and include both democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. The text did not literally state that the Polish leaders from abroad should come from the Polish government in exile in London, but Churchill's reading of the text probably assumed that would be the case. As to the holding of free elections in Poland, the Yalta declaration stated that the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity "shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible". It seems that Roosevelt and Churchill missed one important thing: the text assigned the responsibility for the holding of free elections not to any of the Big Three, but to a yet to be established Provisional Government. This left enough room for Stalin to evade this provision without having to take any blame. Finally, the Poland chapter stipulated that in "these elections all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part". "Democratic and anti-Nazi parties" is a term vague enough to generate considerable argument over the parties eligible to run in elections. Ambassador Harriman later emphasised that President Roosevelt never bothered too much about wording of provisions, though he, Harriman, often drew the president's attention to loopholes, or vagueness, in various provisions of the Yalta package. Harriman explained this by saying that Roosevelt did not care about other people's interpretations as long as he was able to provide his own. This may be a sound attitude, but what if the authoritative "interpreter" has an untimely death, as with President Roosevelt?

UN SC Resolution 242

After the crushing defeat that Israel inflicted on joint Arab forces during the Six Day War in 1967, the UN Security Council agreed on the text of the famous resolution 242. What should be emphasised is that the resolution was a result of bargaining between the powers sitting in the Security Council and that it reflected the deeply polarised political opinion at the United Nations in the period following the war.¹⁶

The provision of the resolution which prompted different and incompatible interpretations was the one immediately following the preamble of the text, reading: "establishment of just and lasting peace in the Middle East should include the application of both the following principles:

- withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied in recent conflict;
- termination of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for...territorial integrity...of every State in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries."

This resolution uses a somewhat strange English construction "territories occupied in recent conflict", from which the definite article "the" has been omitted. That is why it was possible to raise the question as to whether Israel was actually asked to withdraw from all the territories occupied in the recent conflict, or to withdraw from some, but not all, territories. Another controversy that followed this resolution was due to the French translation of the document,

which unlike the English original used the definite article: "Retrait...des territoires occupés lors du récent conflit". So the French version, which together with the English version is an official UN version of the document, suggested that Israel must withdraw from exactly those territories that it occupied during the Six Day War. It is clear that such an interpretation was in harmony with the demands of Arab countries and they did their best to prove its validity. Israel, of course, opposed such an interpretation and it seems that the sponsor of the resolution, Lord Caradon, had no intention of inserting the definite article either. Caradon also emphasised that the fact that the second part of the first provision sheds additional and clarifying light on the first part must be given uppermost consideration. Actually, the second part generates what I called a "cross-textual ambiguity", as it says that all states have the right to live within secure and recognised boundaries, which the boundary before the Six Day War was not, according to Lord Caradon. By implication Israel did not have to withdraw to its pre-Six Day War borders. It seems that the second part of the first provision opened even more room for Israel to interpret UN SC Resolution 242 to its own advantage.

6-Point Agreement

After the Yom Kippur War between Israel and Egypt the very first problem both negotiators and parties to the war encountered was the issue of the status of the Egyptian Third Army, surrounded by the Israeli Defense Force on the eastern side of Suez. After the first phase of peace talks held in October, almost no progress was achieved. The talks continued in Washington in November, while in parallel the UN Security Council issued Resolution 340, which demanded that the Israeli Force withdraw to the lines occupied on October 22, 1973, at 1650 GMT. In that way encirclement of the Egyptian Third Army would end. However, Israel refused to comply with the UN SC Resolution 340. Thereafter negotiations fortunately continued and resulted in an agreement called the "6-Point Agreement", signed on November 11 at Kilometer 101 of the Cairo-Suez road. One of the chief mediators to the agreement was Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, who during the negotiations frequently used the term "constructive ambiguity" to explain his negotiating strategy as well as the key purpose of the 6-Point Agreement. For instance, provision B of the agreement contains an ambiguity which served the purpose of making it easier for Israeli negotiators to engage in further talks leading to Israel's compliance with SC Resolution 340. The ambiguous provision was thus the only possible way to ensure that talks continue and arrive at a solution that would save the face of one of the two parties, which would not have been possible if the solution had been arrived at by a quick jump or a fiat.

Provision B says: "Both sides agree that discussions between them will begin immediately to settle the question of the return to the October 22 positions in the framework of agreement on the disengagement and separation of forces under the auspices of the UN." This provision is a shining example of a "syntactical ambiguity" that Egyptian and Israeli negotiators could interpret in diametrically opposite ways, depending on which syntactical links between the parts of the provision they saw fit. Egyptian negotiators interpreted this provision as a clear demand that Israel withdraw its armed force in accordance with UN SC Resolution 340. The syntactical link they saw fit was the one between "return to the October 22 positions" and "under the auspices of the UN". Israeli negotiators however understood the provision simply as calling on the parties to negotiate a "separation of forces" agreement without any specific request to return to the October 22 lines. The syntactical link they saw fit was the one between "discussions...to settle the question" and "under the auspices of the UN".

Note that the 6-Point Agreement is the first agreement that Israel signed with an Arab country after the outbreak of hostilities between Arabs and Israelis in 1949.¹⁷

Shanghai Communiqué

During Nixon's February 1972 visit to China, President Nixon and Chairman Mao adopted the Shanghai Communiqué, 2/3 of which consists of unilateral expressions of each country's specific views of international relations, and the remaining 1/3 of which consists of a number of jointly accepted provisions.¹⁸ Within those joint declarations, the part implicitly addressing the issue of the Soviet Union is ambiguously worded. First, the Communiqué says: "each

(referring to the US and the PRC) is opposed to efforts by any other country...to establish such hegemony (meaning "a hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region")." It further says "neither is prepared...to enter into agreements or understandings with the other directed at other states." Here we have a piece of cross-textual ambiguity as the first sentence says that both China and the US agree to resist possible Soviet attempts to establish a hegemony in the region. The pronoun "each", however, expresses this in an ambiguous way, as if China and the US have their own individual views that accidentally coincided. The second sentence says that neither the US nor China are willing to agree on an action directed at other states, including certainly the Soviet Union, which implies that they did not agree on any concrete preventive measure to counter possible Soviet attempts at establishing hegemony. In other words, the first sentence conveys a soft kind of threat to the Soviet Union, while the second sentence weakens the threat by dismissing the possibility of joint US-China action directed at other states. In this way, the Shanghai Communiqué delivered an ambiguous threat to the Soviet Union, a threat in a sort of embryonic form. Both China and the US are likely to have adopted this kind of language to leave enough diplomatic room for their own unilateral build-up or improvement of relations with the Soviet Union.

The Shanghai Communiqué contains an ambiguous provision in its unilateral parts as well. The US inserted into the document the following sentence: "The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a province of China." This sentence has been interpreted as the very first expression of American support for the "one-China" policy; for a reintegration of Taiwan into the PRC, although that is not how it should be interpreted in its original context. Actually, the inherent ambiguity of the term "one" was fully exploited. The fact that the PRC and Taiwan agree that there is "but one China" does not imply that they agreed on internal arrangements for the "one China". Actually they disagreed on this. From the very opening of the Taiwan issue until well into modern times, China and the US have been unable to find a formula to ensure that the reintegration of Taiwan takes place. The term "one China", however, helped the US itself express a proper balance between its relations with China and its relations with Taiwan without jeopardising either. The term was a clever tactic that the US employed to both maintain its policy of protecting Taiwan, on the one hand, and to promote its new policy of opening to China, on the other. It was probably the only way for the US to symbolically gratify both its own and China's interests in relation to Taiwan.

Oslo Peace Accords

The Oslo Peace Accords that Israeli and PLO representatives signed in Oslo in 1993 contain many ambiguities as well. Instead of enumerating them in detail, I will simply quote a part of a Financial Times interview with Madeleine Albright and suggest that readers try to identify the ambiguous expressions in the accords themselves. "'Instead of glue it's been sandpaper', she (Madeleine Albright) says of the 1993 Oslo peace accords, a deliberately ambiguous framework for a partnership between Israel and Palestinians."¹⁹

Dayton Peace Accords

The Dayton Peace Accords (DPA) ended the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, redrawing and decentralising its internal structure²⁰.

The Dayton Constitution of BiH (Annex 4) is the annex of the DPA in which one finds the most interesting examples of ambiguities. For instance, in article III, provision 1, the Constitution clearly defines responsibilities of BiH institutions by the method of enumeration (foreign policy, foreign trade policy, customs policy, monetary policy, finances of the institutions of BiH, immigration, refugee and asylum policy and regulation, international and inter-entity criminal law enforcement, establishment and operation of common and international communication facilities). All responsibilities not expressly assigned to the central institutions were placed on the entity level. But article III, provision 5.a, introduced a cross-textual ambiguity into this annex. It reads that "Bosnia and Herzegovina shall assume responsibility for such other matters as are agreed by the entities...or are necessary to preserve the

sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, and international personality of BiH, in accordance with the division of responsibilities between the institutions of BiH."

Provisions 1 and 5.a together result in an ambiguous text; a cross-textual ambiguity which may be interpreted in two different ways: first, as providing entities with powers that cannot be delegated to the state level unless entities expressly agree to it; and, second, as providing the state with vaguely defined powers that have not been mentioned in the list from article III, provision 1, and for which no express consent by the entities is needed. In other words, while article III, provision 1, seems to reduce the powers of central authorities, provision 5.a seems to open room for a reverse procedure, for the extension of powers in an admittedly less determinate way.

"Good Friday" Agreement

The "Good Friday" Agreement adopted on April 10, 1998, set an institutional framework for resolution of the political conflict in Northern Ireland.²¹ Prior to the agreement Northern Ireland was torn between two contradictory political ambitions. Unionists favoured maintenance of links between Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom whereas the Irish nationalists favoured integration of Northern Ireland into the Republic of Ireland. A relative compromise that negotiators achieved on Good Friday 1998 brought partial satisfaction to both political ambitions. The "Good Friday" compromise rests on three key institutions: 1. a Northern Ireland Assembly with an executive composed of "up to 12 members"; 2. a North-South Ministerial Council: an all-Irish body which confirms the link between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland; and finally, 3. a British-Irish Council, including Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, as well as Britain.

The Good Friday Agreement left certain relations vague, which was the main factor that allowed the parties to put incompatible constructions on the deal. For instance, it is clear that nationalists would welcome an extremely strong, or, even better, a dominant North-South Ministerial Council. On the other hand, unionists would prefer that it be washed off the earth altogether. That is why the Good Friday Agreement left the details of the Council deliberately underdetermined, i.e. ambiguous, and both parties were given enough room to project their own interpretation of the details into the ambiguously worded parts of the deal. Now, the details of the North-South Council are described in "Strand Two" of the agreement, while key ambiguities in the Strand can be identified in provisions 8 and 9, including an annex to the Strand.

Namely, the Good Friday Agreement defines two channels through which the North and the South may cooperate. First, through establishment of "implementation bodies" under direct jurisdiction of the North-South Ministerial Council, and, second, through assignment of "areas of cooperation" in which the North and the South would cooperate through existing separate bodies under their separate jurisdictions, rather than through newly established "cross-border" institutions. The agreement furthermore says that there should be *at least* twelve "subject-areas" of cooperation between North and South; six in each category, meaning six to be covered by "implementation bodies" and six others to be treated as "areas of cooperation". The agreement also provides an annex containing a list of items that *may* be included in the twelve "subject-areas". It is thus quite clear that the Good Friday Agreement left open the possibility of more than twelve "subject areas" and more than six items in each of the two categories. Furthermore, the list from the annex could be interpreted as a compulsory list, but also as a noncompulsory one, depending on the way one reads the meaning of the auxiliary verb "may" in this context.

Conflicting interpretations of these provisions placed a considerable burden on the negotiation that in December 1998 resulted in a new and precise agreement on "implementation bodies".²² Starting from the same Good Friday framework, unionists demanded that the number of bodies be limited to the original six, while nationalists logically demanded that there be at least a few more. On December 18, 1998, on the basis of the aforementioned provisions of Strand Two, the new agreement determined that there would be six implementation bodies to cover the matters of language, trade, EU programs, food-safety, aquaculture and marine,

and inland waterways. But one of the most interesting details of the December 1998 deal was the fact that while nationalists gave up their interpretation of the Strand Two provisions 8 and 9, unionists gave up their interpretation of the Strand One provision 14. In that way unionists conceded to the nationalist demand that there be ten ministerial departments in the Northern Ireland executive. This was a perfect case of a balanced trade of interpretations in which unionists let nationalists decide on interpretation of the ambiguous provision 14 of Strand One, while nationalists in turn let unionists decide on interpretation of ambiguous provisions 8 and 9 of Strand Two.

Hence it was through a fair trade that the parties to the Northern Ireland peace process cleared up several key ambiguities of the Good Friday Agreement. However, one must not forget that original ambiguities in the Good Friday framework actually made it easier for both parties to embrace the deal, launch the peace process and, as some have put it, take the gun out of Irish politics.²³

PROS AND CONS

Thomas Franck, one of today's leading theoreticians of international law, subscribes to the aforementioned argument against the use of ambiguities in peace agreements. Both in his book *Power of Legitimacy among Nations* and in his *Fairness in International Law and Institutions* Franck proposes a critique of ambiguities the substance of which amounts to the basic argument I mentioned in the second part of this paper.²⁴

Franck stands for the idea of transparent, clear, and determinate meaning of the key norms, rules and provisions in any kind of written, legally binding agreement. He writes: "Textual determinacy is the ability of a text to convey a clear message, to appear transparent in the sense that one can see through the language of a law to its essential meaning."²⁵ In his opinion, ambiguities are harmful because it is hard "to know what conformity is expected" in the condition when a treaty or an agreement contains ambiguous provisions.²⁶ In Franck's opinion, this lack of knowledge of what conformity consists of automatically leads to non-compliance with the ambiguous agreement as it is nearly impossible to justify compliance if parties to an agreement lack a clear idea about the requirements of conformity. Therefore implementation of an indeterminate or ambiguous normative standard is very likely to take the wrong direction. In other words, Franck says that an ambiguous treaty is unable to pull the parties to the treaty towards compliance or towards implementation of that treaty in good faith.

Franck has proposed another argument against the use of vague terms, provisions or norms, in peace agreements. He says that vague norms cannot be considered fair. Fairness of a norm implies that such a norm is understandable to those expected to abide by it. If those who should abide by a vague norm do not fully understand its consequences, including the intricate process of its legal interpretation, then one could not characterise such a norm as fair. That is why semantic and linguistic determinacy can make a norm fair in the eyes of those who should comply with it, while linguistic ambiguities make a norm opaque, difficult to understand and, ultimately, unfair in the eyes of those expected to comply with it.²⁷

There are basically two ways to check the validity of Franck's position vis-à-vis the use of ambiguities in peace agreements. First, we could test it empirically. Such a test would run approximately as follows. One would put on one side all agreements in which ambiguities were used in key provisions. Then one should simply determine the relative percentage of those ambiguous agreements whose implementation failed. We put that target-category on the other side. This however would not suffice. One should also pinpoint those ambiguous agreements whose implementation failed for the exact reason of their ambiguousness. This means that one should form another sub-category including all those ambiguous agreements that failed due to insurmountable obstacles that the successive process of interpretation placed on their implementation. If the percentage of ambiguous agreements that failed due to a failure of interpretation exceeds the percentage of ambiguous agreements whose interpretation delivered satisfactory results and thus helped their implementation, then Franck's position would be acceptable. That would certainly mean that ambiguously worded

agreements are likely to generate incurable troubles during their implementation. In other words, select the category of "ambiguous agreements". Then among those select the subcategory of "ambiguous agreements that failed". And then, finally, among those select both sub-subcategories of "ambiguous agreements that failed due to interpretation failure" and of "ambiguous agreements that failed for reasons other than interpretation failure". If the number of members of the former category exceeds the number of members of the latter category, then Franck would be right for purely empirical reasons.

This is how one would envisage a method to check the merits of Franck's position, but I do not believe that such a method is applicable. Even if one could categorise all the ambiguous agreements the implementation of which failed due to insurmountable difficulties in interpretation, the process of interpretation itself might fail for hundreds of reasons. Furthermore, what we usually see in reality are not pure instances of an agreement which failed, or an agreement which was easily, consistently and completely implemented. The majority of cases lay somewhere in between. How would one, for instance, categorise Wilson's "14 Points"? They performed an extremely important function, pulling together many nations and providing them with a source of motivation for a search for peace terms. However, they have not been implemented in full. The 14 Points was thus a semi-successful kind of ambiguous agreement. What can we say about the implementation of Dayton? I believe that the only convenient way to describe the obstacles to the process of its implementation should not include its ambiguous nature, because, properly speaking, those supposed to comply with the Dayton Agreement have not yet recognised its ambiguousness, let alone embraced it. They instead tend to abuse the agreement's ambiguous provisions, to insist on their one-sided interpretation to justify promotion of their outdated policies that brought misery and suffering to the peoples of Bosnia in the recent past.

What I mean to say is that it is nearly impossible to distinguish between pure categories of "ambiguous agreements whose implementation failed because of their ambiguous nature" and "ambiguous agreements both successfully interpreted and implemented despite their ambiguous nature". Additionally, there is always the factor of will and readiness for a compromise. I believe that if and when an ambiguous agreement fails due to an interpretation failure, this may be better explained by the parties' weak desire to strike a compromise; to arrive at a third, mutually acceptable interpretation, than with the inherent ambiguousness of the agreement they originally adopted. When there is a will to both take and give, and to do it in a fair manner, then the process of interpretation is unlikely to fail. The December 1998 negotiation between the Irish unionists and nationalists, who both started from an ambiguous scratch but succeeded to cut a fair and more precise deal, provides the best positive evidence in that regard.

So, that is why the method of empirical testing of Franck's argument is not an absolutely reliable method to discuss and resolve the issue of the use of ambiguities in peace agreements. There is another, purely deductive, method to help one debate this issue. I will present more elaborated views along the lines of this method in the text that follows. I will start with a discussion of Franck's cons in the format of a deductive argument, in which he framed his own view.

The reader should remember that Franck's first argument says that ambiguousness leads to an easy justification of non-compliance and that is why one should use only precise and transparent language in legal documents, including peace agreements. This argument, as it stands, is not conclusive because non-compliance could be justified only if it is absolutely unclear what the provision with which one party wants to justify non-compliance means. However, ambiguous provisions generally mean two things, and in principle carry two meanings: one, which one party finds more convenient, and another, which the other party finds more convenient. That is why it is impossible to claim that ambiguous provisions carry an absolutely unclear meaning.

When it comes to ambiguously worded provisions, if party A opts for implementing an ambiguous provision X in the way they find more suitable (Xa), then this does not imply their non-compliance with the provision. The party actually complies with the agreement, but does

so under the interpretation they deem logical. If, however, the party opts for implementing provision X in the way that the other party finds more suitable (Xb), then this does not imply non-compliance with the provision either, as they are complying with the provision in the sense that the other party prefers. Finally, if A opts to refrain from implementation until the process of interpretation has been complete, then this would certainly represent the most rational and fair strategy, and should not be considered a case of non-compliance either. This is why the situation which Franck envisaged and in which parties allegedly avoid compliance and justify their non-compliance with reference to the vagueness of a provision of the agreement they adopted, is a logical impossibility. This is why Franck's first argument does not apply.

Franck's second argument says that a party must understand a norm fully in order for the norm to be characterised as fair. Otherwise, and in the case when a norm is vaguely worded, one could not characterise it as fair. This argument itself suffers from several weak spots. First, Franck seems to forget that we, in general, understand very well the consequences of ambiguous provisions as well as their possible readings. Those adopting such provisions are, as a rule, fully aware of all legal means, arenas and authorities through and by which it is possible to defend one's own interpretation. That is why again this situation, which Franck counts on, applies rarely if ever.

Secondly, since an ambiguous provision X is open to basically two incompatible readings, a consequence which party A would possibly deem unfair is one in which implementation of provision X would run along the reading Xb, not Xa. But what if the implementation of another ambiguous provision Y runs along the reading Ya and not Yb, compensating for party A's feeling of injustice and restoring the balance between parties A and B? This situation thus strongly suggests that a possible sense of unfairness has nothing to do with an ambiguous provision taken per se. A proper description of the first situation would say that party A considers implementation of X unfair because the ambiguousness of X is replaced with a strict and disambiguated meaning favorable to the other party's interests. The feeling of unfairness thus has something to do with the disambiguation of ambiguities, or otherwise with a disparity, or unfairness, in the process of parallel interpretation of several ambiguous provisions of an agreement. It has nothing to do with ambiguities taken per se.

That is why both Franck's arguments against the use of ambiguities in peace agreements are inconclusive. Franck perhaps had in mind norms opaque to such an extent that one could not discern any logical or possible meaning in them. It is only then that he could claim a certain validity for his argument. In real life, however, we are unlikely to meet norms of this kind. Both parties and mediators to an agreement are usually aware of the main interpretations opened by a relatively vague provision as much as they are aware of their consequences. They are also well aware of the conduct of the parties that would stand in harmony with those interpretations, which implies that they are also aware of the fact that it would not be possible to justify non-compliance merely by referring to allegedly total opacity of an agreement's terms.

We may now conclude that Franck's arguments against the use of ambiguities in legal norms and documents, including peace treaties and draft agreements, do not hold.

Now I will turn to the general con against the use of ambiguities that I formulated in the section on basic rationale and dislike, and explore it in more detail. As the argument says, an ambiguous agreement is very likely to generate severe intellectual conflict between its parties, as each party will interpret the agreement to their own benefit, contradicting the interpretation by the other party. That is why one should resist temptation to "paper over" differences between parties by drafting an ambiguous formula. This argument against the use of ambiguities is valid, but only under one additional condition. Namely, ambiguous agreements are likely to generate hermeneutic conflict if and only if their parties insist on their own, unilateral interpretation of an ambiguous provision and do not recognise ambiguity qua ambiguity. If they recognise an ambiguous provision for what it actually is, a sentence or a text open to several incompatible interpretations, the argument over interpretations would in

all likelihood give way to the relationship of a joint cooperative effort in the search for a third impartial reading of the provision. Recognition of ambiguity qua ambiguity would imply recognition of the other party's right to interpret it in its own way, and would thereby automatically reduce potential for severe hermeneutic conflict. This conditioning of the above general argument against the use of ambiguities provides two extremely important lessons. First, the general argument as such is not valid, because it is only under the condition of the parties' unilateral insistence on their partial interpretation of ambiguities that such an argument, only imperfectly, applies. In such a case the argument against ambiguities targets only those ambiguities that are not recognised as such. This is why the general con, the reason for a basic dislike of ambiguous peace agreements, does not at all represent a conclusive argument against the use of ambiguities in peace agreements, and all those keen to represent it as such are deeply mistaken. However, one must admit that there is a risk in the use of ambiguities. Parties may initiate an argument over interpretation, which then may cause a serious rupture in their relations. It is true that such an argument would not occur without the use of ambiguities, but it is also true that the risks they entail lend very limited and weak support to the general conclusion that we should not use them at all. In other words, if a usage of a form entails possible risks, but at the same time opens a more promising path, then the fact that there may be a risk in the usage cannot not be taken as a springboard to bury the form itself tout a fait. It is a pure case of non sequitur. True, there is a risk that the use of ambiguities may lead parties down the wrong path. But there is also the possibility that the parties to an ambiguous agreement may engage in a joint search for a third, creative and constructive interpretation, which would reconcile their contradictory readings of the peace provision. Both possibilities are equally open and they both spring from the same language.

The negative attitude towards ambiguous agreements may have its source in particular historical experiences. If one focuses on the Yalta Declaration, for instance, or if a Palestinian diplomat focuses on UN SC Resolution 242, he or she will probably emerge with a very negative view of ambiguous agreements in general. If one focuses on the Good Friday Agreement, however, then he or she will probably take a generally positive view of ambiguous agreements. Whichever position one takes, it must not be based solely on a particular historical case, but on a rational and argumentative debate of pros and cons. To demonstrate how such a debate ought to look, I will present a few more pros and discuss them in more detail.

First, if an ambiguity makes it easier for negotiating parties to accept an agreement and therewith put a close to a war, or to a situation of increased friction or hostility, this should be taken as an argument supporting the use of ambiguities. Even if an ambiguous provision may later generate a conflict in opinion, the fact that the relationship of physical hostility gave way to the relationship of merely verbal conflict must be taken as a sign of progress. In terms of empirical evidence, this argument rests on cases such as Wilson's 14-Points, which established a broad consensus to end World War I by defining a number of points on which the majority of states vaguely agreed. This also applies to both the Dayton Peace Accords and the Good Friday Agreement. However, one must not forget that there are inherent risks in the use of ambiguous wording and that a number of additional criteria must be met before the parties can take full advantage of an ambiguous provision. Such criteria include the parties' readiness to accept tradeoffs in interpretation, to make further concessions and to engage in a common search for a third interpretation.

Second, one could compare the use of ambiguities with the practice of reservation in international treaties, and say that both somehow depend on the imperfect nature of international actors. Both the practice of reservation and the use of ambiguities rest on the purely pragmatic idea of using whatever means are available to ensure that a text of a treaty is accepted. This, again, is not a perfect pro for the use of ambiguities, because one could perhaps rightly argue that neither reservation nor ambiguity contributes to making truly significant progress in inter-state relations. Let us take Yalta as an example. There was no progress after Yalta, a critic of ambiguities would say, because the Big Three adopted an ambiguous document and one of them, Stalin, decided to unilaterally implement his own reading of the text. However, this does not accurately reflect the historic record of post-Yalta tensions in international relations. In addition to ambiguous language, many other factors played an active role in the emergence of the cold war. They include the death of the chief

interpreter of the document from the US side, a newly-emerging disagreement over the issue of German reparations, and an obvious lack of will on the American part to take more tangible action as a response to Stalin's treatment of the Polish question.

Third, I would say that ambiguous provisions perform another useful function. They make the conflict of interpretation predictable. In other words, start from the premise that the parties to an agreement will continue fighting politically even after they sign a treaty. However, this process of political fight will be more channelled, more orderly and predictable if one knows in advance which provisions of the jointly adopted text will give rise to a conflict in opinion or interpretation. I am ready to admit that this does not imply that the very process of "post-conflict" conflict will be absolutely predictable, because the post-conflict relations between erstwhile enemies do not depend solely on the text of their agreement. However, to the extent that they do depend on the text, they, paradoxically, will be more predictable, and better channelled, when the text is ambiguous than when it is not. Again, reliance on the text may be minimal by both parties, if they took the text as a fig leaf to provide them with a respite; a cease-fire, after which they intend to gather forces and resume fighting. This, however, has nothing to do with the use of ambiguities itself. In other words, I believe that the post-conflict situation is not a situation of perfect peace and friendship; that a traumatic energy remains to aggravate relations between the signatories. Ambiguous provisions may be thought of as channels to direct this energy and to allow it to be acted out in a more or less predictable fashion. That is why their use may serve an outstandingly important function. That is also why the oft-repeated argument by Palestinian representatives against the Israeli insistence on vagueness and ambiguousness of treaties they sign, which the former view as a mere nitpicking, may be too short-sighted. The fight over interpretation is infinitely better than physical violence and, combined with other, more popular methods of relief such as punishment of war criminals, or truth-finding, may considerably help relieve the burden of traumatic energies accumulated through the past violence.

This leads me to the fourth and final argument in partial support of the use of ambiguous language in peace agreements. Speaking strictly, there is no such a thing as a peace agreement, which, as it is usually defined, resolves a conflict and turns hostile relations between former adversaries into a straightforward relationship of peace, cooperation and understanding. Instead there are shades of grey and the process of conflict transformation slowly takes root. The erstwhile enemies gradually learn to cope with their differences, and how to prevent them from jeopardising the areas of overlapping interests, including interest in peace. For this reason verbal conflict over interpretation of an ambiguous provision may teach erstwhile enemies two important lessons. First, verbal conflict, a free expression of one's own interest, which contradicts somebody else's interest, is no wrong as long as it takes place in a polite manner and with due regard to the codes of civility. Second, the best way to move away from the state of war is through a slow accumulation of pros and cons, in the form of logical, well-founded arguments, aiming at a third reading, a third interpretation, to which an ambiguous provision may have, however indirectly, already pointed. "Peace is what we have when creative conflict transformation can take place non-violently".²⁸ such a concept of peace leaves more than enough room for the concept of constructive ambiguity.

REFLECTIONS

I will draw a number of implications from the arguments and examples that I thus far provided. First, there are fine differences between types of ambiguous expressions which have direct bearing on the issue of their interpretation. For purely pragmatic reasons, referential ambiguities do not seem to cause too many troubles in the process of interpretation. The parties read two different interpretations into a word or a phrase, but all they need to do to resolve such an ambiguity is to couple and cross-fertilize their readings. The language they originally adopted is the same for both. Cross-textual ambiguity may be much more difficult to tame. Each party identifies with a part of the text and tends to dismiss the other parts, i.e. textual components of a cross-textual ambiguity, as an aberration from the original intention of the text. Besides, it is truly intrinsically more difficult to clear up an ambiguous text than it is to clear up an ambiguous word or phrase. That is why it was probably easier for the parties to

the Good Friday Agreement to disambiguate their text than it is for the parties to the Dayton Peace Accords. Furthermore, the ambiguities in the former treaty were presented in a quantified form; they have the shape of numerical values that are relatively easy to manage or to mentally manipulate. So, the first conclusion from this brief reflection reads that a) one ought to prefer the use of referential over syntactical, and the use of either over the cross-textual kind of ambiguity; and b) one ought to quantify ambiguities as much as possible. For instance, do not speak only about the competence of certain layers of government, but try as well to express them in a numerical, metrical fashion; try to define an approximate number of bodies to represent certain interests, for example.

My second reflection is epistemological. The subject of "peace-making" ambiguities offers an extremely fertile intersection for two disciplines: linguistics and the theory of diplomacy. I believe there is a lot of opportunity here for mutual borrowing and mutual inspiration. For instance, the Vienna Law of Treaties contains an explicit chapter on methods of interpretation. Unfortunately, the means of interpretation it proposes are, in terms of linguistics, poor, vague and completely outdated. No serious linguist would accept that the process of disambiguation runs exactly along the four methods this highly important convention proposes: *travaux préparatoires*, inter-related texts, true intentions, and common sense-interpretation. What methods would modern linguistics propose? This is one idea, one, so to say, project proposal. Second, in my opinion, a theory of diplomatic ambiguity should place emphasis on methods of ambiguity, as well as on the process of disambiguation, an emphasis which could give new impetus to studies in non-applied linguistics as well. Let us start with the premise that ambiguous provisions provide some benefits in the particular context of treaty making. We should then try to better understand the processes whereby a mediator or a negotiator generates ambiguities. We should try to better understand the mental processes that produce and facilitate an ambiguous verbal outcome. Third, the processes of disambiguation have been extensively studied by means of computer simulation and automatic computing, and I believe that here one has an opportunity to blend not only two, but three disciplines: information sciences, linguistics, and the theory of diplomacy (or the theory of treaty making).

Now, a third set of reflections. Measured by the use of ambiguities in peace agreements, there is no significant difference between so-called "low-context" and "high-context" cultures. Both low- and high-context cultures use ambiguous language to bridge the gap between negotiating parties. We have Wilson's 14 Points side by side with the Oslo Accords; Chinese cross-textual ambiguities in the Shanghai Communiqué together with American referential ambiguities in the very same document. We have both the Dayton Accords and the Rambouillet draft agreement drafted by American negotiators. We have the Yalta Declaration drafted jointly by representatives of high- and low-context cultures, under the assumption that Russian culture is low-context, with which I do not quite agree. In other words, there is no direct and positive correlation between the use of ambiguous provisions, on the one hand, and types, or kinds of culture, on the other. For me, this is good news for diplomacy. Negotiators from different cultures rely on similar means to arrive at the text of an agreement. This means that, at least when it comes to the use of ambiguities, there may be a common diplomatic culture, a common culture of drafting an agreement. In other words, there is no pre-determined cultural barrier to hugely affect one's attitude towards an ambiguous proposal.²⁹

My fourth set of reflections concerns the role of the mediator offering an ambiguous formula to two parties involved in a conflict. I believe that a mediator should explain to the parties the meaning and purpose of ambiguous wording: this does not mean that the mediator must disclose his or her own interpretation but rather that the mediator should explain why the ambiguous provision was proposed. The mediator must clearly point out, first, that an ambiguous provision is ambiguous; second, that both parties have an equal right to provide their own interpretation; third, that when it comes to the process of interpretation, both parties will enjoy an equal status and have the opportunity to present their arguments in favor of a specific interpretation; and fourth, finally, that the issue concerned was deliberately left open, but that the preferable course of interpretation should aim at a middle ground between the two incompatible interpretations that the parties take with the view of safeguarding their specific interests. I believe that a mediator must provide this explanation, because unless he does he runs the risk of losing both parties. If parties realise that an ambiguous formula has been

proposed and that the chief negotiator has been silent about it, and if they have not had time to develop a relationship of trust with the mediator, then what would stop them from suspecting that the ambiguous formula may be a secret safe-guard for the other party's interest and a disguised killer of their own interests? This also implies that unless the parties sufficiently trust a mediator, no explanation will be of help. This however has general validity and does not apply solely to the situation of an ambiguous offer.

Fifth, ambiguity certainly serves the important function of setting a very rudimentary basis for future relations between erstwhile adversaries. However, its effectiveness depends to a high degree on the adversaries' attitudes and behavior during the process of interpretation. Disambiguation of ambiguity can take place only in one of the following two ways: 1. If the parties themselves arrive at a third formula, a third reading, through an exchange of arguments and additional post-peace agreement talks. This is the ideal case. 2. If there is a third party, arbitrator or mediator sufficiently trusted and respected by both parties to the peace process, to deliver a third, fair, and well-measured interpretation. Sometimes neither way is open. For instance, many of the problems that beset the process of implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords have been caused, in my opinion, not only by the local parties' unwillingness to strike another deal or to give up their narrow interpretations of the agreement. The cause of these problems lies also in the polarised opinion of the international community vis-à-vis the appropriate ways to disambiguate the ambiguities of Dayton. It is too often the case that the US and EU member countries have different, sometimes even contradictory, ideas on the direction which the Dayton implementation should ideally take. This may prove fatal to the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, because the international community plays a decisive role there.

Finally, tolerance of ambiguity occupies an important seat among social virtues. It is widely, and justifiably, believed that societies whose members display an ability to tolerate an ambiguous state of affairs fare both economically and psychologically much better than societies whose members are lacking in such ability. Individuals tolerating ambiguity also tend to tolerate risks, to cope more easily with emotional or intellectual friction and conflict, and to refrain from jumping to premature conclusions when evidence is inconclusive. They need no general, all-embracing theories to achieve certain objectives; they are able to achieve them through a "slow and gradual accumulation of almost imperceptible nuances",³⁰ adhering to pragmatism as their philosophy.³¹ Those tolerant of ambiguity do not believe in a black and white image of human affairs, but find shades of grey more attractive and enjoyable. That is why one will hardly ever find them caught in the dangerous logic of "zero-sum" games. If tolerance of ambiguity represents a value worth striving for, then why would one oppose the use of ambiguous wording in peace agreements? And yet both theoreticians and practitioners of diplomacy should understand that, though the use of ambiguous language is supported by many plausible arguments, such language nonetheless entails considerable risks and produces a desirable outcome only if a number of additional criteria have been met. One should avoid laying too much emphasis on these risks, but should not discount the factors affecting the atmospherics of the process of disambiguation either.

Hence, ambiguous peace agreements are to be treated in the very same way that those tolerant of ambiguities treat ambiguities themselves. They are to be tolerated in an ambiguous fashion, used as a last resort and employed to the best of their capacity, with all the caution they deserve. Bearing in mind that the human being is a born decipherer, with an innate tendency to reduce a complex structure to a simpler token, two seemingly contradictory stands are to be reconciled: the stand that ambiguity may play an important role in versatile settings and the stand that our innate reductionism does not cohere well with such open-ended structures. As a stubborn advocate of both compromises and ambiguities, I would suggest silencing our reductionist instinct for a while to let ambiguities play out their part to gratify our reductionism in a smooth, controlled, and truly creative manner.

ENDNOTES

1. Buehler's theory in: Karl Buehler, *Sprachtheorie: die Darstellungsfunktion der Sprache* (Jena: Fischer, 1934). As to the link between ambiguous messaging and international relations, and diplomacy, one should start with Robert Jervis, *The Logic of Images in International Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 113-138.
2. See Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, "Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena," in *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction*, ed. Esther N. Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 56-310. For psychotherapeutic effects of ambiguous language, see Paul Watzlawick, *The Language of Change* (New York/London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), 78-90.
3. Ronald Munson, *The Way of Words* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1976), 74. Munson, on page 73, offers another definition of ambiguity: "An expression is ambiguous when it can be understood in more than one way, and we aren't certain which way is intended." This confirms my point concerning the intrinsic vagueness of the concept.
4. The "duck-rabbit" has been reprinted in thousands of books on the elementary psychology of perception. For those who have not yet seen it, see, for instance, C. J. Adcock, *Fundamentals of Psychology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1964), 131.
5. *The History of Herodotus* (Chicago/London/Toronto: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 1952), 11.
6. For a sub-division into contrastive and complementary ambiguity, see U. Weinreich, "Webster's Third: A Critique of its Semantics," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 30 (1964), 405-409. However, I am not sure that complementary ambiguity is real ambiguity.
7. See Kent Bach, *Ambiguity*, Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy website; available at <http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kbach/ambiguity.html>. (Accessed on September 15, 1999).
8. Geoffrey Leech, *Semantics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), 79; See also G.W. Turner, *Stylistics* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1973), 100-102; and a discussion about the syntactical kind of ambiguity in Steven Pinker, *The Language Instinct* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1994), 192-230.
9. Aristotle, "Peri ton sophistikon elenkhon, 165a 10-20," in *Aristotelis Topica et Sophistici Elenchi, recensuit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit*, ed. Sir D. Ross (Oxford: Oxonii, 1958). For a more comprehensive and complex interpretation of Aristotle's view of ambiguities, see Robert Wardy, *The Birth of Rhetoric* (London/New York: Routledge, 1998), 130-132.
10. For more details, see *Lexical Semantics: The Problem of Polysemy*, ed. James Pustejovsky and Branimir Boguraev (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
11. "Interpretability of some important parts of the text was introduced (chosen) deliberately in order to do justice to both, mutually exclusive, positions." For Kosovo, Petritsch and Rambouillet, see Wolfgang Petritsch, Karl Kaser, and Robert Pichler, *Kosovo-Kosova* (Klagenfurt- Wien: WieserVerlag, 1999), esp. 327-328.
12. Aristotle, "Athenaion Politeia, 9 2, p. VIII," in *Aristotelis Atheniensium Respublica, recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit*, ed. F.G. Kenyon (Oxford: Oxonii, 1958). Kenyon's English translation of the Athenian Constitution is also available on the Internet at <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/athemain.htm>.
13. My thanks to Jovan Kurbalija for drawing my attention to the case of the 1st Nicean Council through one of his issues of *DiploNews*, available at <http://diplo.diplomacy.edu/Knowledge/diplonews/diplonews-54.htm>.
14. See Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1997), 133-138; 1st edition published in 1922 in New York by Macmillan.
15. My account is based on the following books: Winston Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1953); Arthur Conte, *Yalta ou le partage de monde* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1966); W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin, 1941-1946* (New York: Random House, 1975).
16. See a number of reference documents at the website of the Foreign Ministry of Israel: <http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il/mfa/>, especially *Statements Clarifying the Meaning of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242*.
17. This account is based on James O.C. Jonah, "The United Nations and International Conflict: The Military Talks at Kilometer Marker-101," in *Mediation in International*

- Relations*, ed. Jacob Bercovitch and Jeffrey Z. Rubin (London: Macmillan, 1992), 176-205.
18. See Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), 783-784. See also Paul Wolfowitz, "Remembering the Future," *The National Interest*, Spring 2000, 44-45.
 19. *Financial Times*, 7 May 1998, 14: Interview with Madeleine Albright.
 20. For the text of the Dayton Accords, which awaits official translation into a language common to all Bosnians, see <http://www.ohr.int>. Robert Hayden considers the part of the Dayton constitution I discussed here "confusing", which implies that he did not recognise its ambiguous nature. For details, see Robert M. Hayden, *Blueprints for a House Divided: The Constitutional Logic of the Yugoslav Conflicts* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 123-139.
 21. See "Goodbye to all that," *The Economist*, 18 April 1998, 11, and "From process to procession," *The Economist*, 18 April 1998, 15-18.
 22. See Dominic Cunningham, "Peace process gets kiss of life in new deal," *Irish Independent-Online*, 18 December 1998, <http://www.independent.ie/1998>; and William Graham, "Assembly deal breakthrough," *Irish News*, 18 December 1998, <http://www.irishnews.com>.
 23. See also John Loyd, "Ireland's Uncertain Peace," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 1998, 109-122.
 24. In the following argument, I will focus on Thomas M. Franck, *Fairness in International Law and Institutions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 30-34.
 25. *Ibid.*, 30.
 26. *Ibid.*, 31.
 27. *Ibid.*, 33.
 28. Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means* (Oslo/London: PRIO/ Sage, 1996), 265. For the concept of conflict transformation, see also Peter Wallensteen, "The Resolution and Transformation of International Conflicts: A Structural Perspective," in *New Directions in Conflict Theory*, ed. Raimo Vaeyrynen (London: Sage, 1991), 129-151.
 29. This is a highly specific assessment, and perhaps should not be treated as a critique of the school of cultural relativism in the theory of negotiations, as formulated by one of its prominent advocates, Raymond Cohen. See Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991).
 30. This is a paraphrase of Henry Kissinger's sentence that "Japanese leaders will make adjustment by the accumulation of apparently imperceptible nuances", from *Diplomacy* (London: Simon & Schuster Ltd., 1994), 827.
 31. Or Bart Kosko's philosophy of "fuzzy thinking".

Written texts are an essential element of diplomacy. Texts provide powers and accreditation for the diplomat. Texts contain his instructions and negotiating briefs. Texts are the main outcome of negotiations. For certain texts - or parts of texts - there exist stereotyped formulas: letters of accreditation, full powers, opening and final clauses of treaties, even diplomatic notes. For all texts that are meant to be shared with another party or other parties, there are traditional requirements of polite formulations. On the other hand, internal documents only follow the rules of the entity which employs them. For countries long active in international diplomacy, there used to be all sorts of regulations regarding the writing of dispatches, instructions, briefs, reports, etc. New forms and means of communicating have affected the manner in which documents of diplomacy are written today, be they internal or addressed to one or more external entities.

Documents exchanged between countries in the past were written in the single vehicular language then in use in Europe: Latin. In the 18th century French had become the generally accepted diplomatic language, so much so that even diplomatic notes addressed to the British Foreign Office by the Legation of the USA were written in that language. The 20th century saw a gradual emergence of English as a second and later even dominant diplomatic language. At the same time, a growing number of countries insisted on the use of their own language in diplomatic correspondence and joint diplomatic documents. As a result the United Nations admitted to five languages at its inception (Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), to which Arabic has later been added by informal agreement. In the European Union, all twelve languages of the members are currently in use and their number is bound to grow as new members will be admitted. Translation and interpretation have therefore become a major element in present-day diplomatic life.

In this presentation, we will consider the issues of formal diplomatic documents, multi-language diplomatic texts, and the impact of information technology on diplomatic texts.

FORMAL DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS

Full powers were traditionally given by a proclamation addressed to no one in particular. Until recently at least, even the foreign secretary of the British government was provided with such powers by the queen, although practice and the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 have long admitted that a foreign minister, by virtue of his position, had all powers necessary to deal with foreign governments and to represent his government in international fora.

Letters of accreditation are always addressed to a specific destinatory, head of state or government, foreign minister, secretary-general of an international institution, etc. Their content is stereotyped, stating the full confidence of the accrediting actor in the accredited person and expressing the hope that the actor of accreditation will accord full credence to that accredited person. Full powers for specific purposes may be written in the same manner.

Diplomatic notes addressed by one entity to another had stereotyped beginnings and endings: XXX presents its compliments to YYY and has the honour to... XXX avails itself of this opportunity to renew to YYY the expression of its highest consideration. Each entity had to be presented with its full name, e.g. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of". In the operative text, shorter mentions, in particular "the Ministry", would be used. Courtesy of language had to be respected even if the subject-matter was a strong protest or the

notification of a rupture. Today, in most notes much of the formality is omitted and the style used is more reminiscent of the Aide-Mémoire of yore. Even where an agreement is embodied in an exchange of notes, it is no longer required that each side fully reproduces the content. It is considered sufficient if the note containing the offer states all relevant clauses whereas the note expressing acceptance simply refers to the offer and then states the terms of acceptance.

Treaties used to be written with much formality as regards the opening and the final clauses. The title mentioned the parties (two or more) in full and this was followed by an introductory statement again mentioning the parties in full as well as their representatives by name and title. This was mostly followed by a preamble and only then came the substantive clauses. The content of the final clauses varied but the style remained formal. For bilateral treaties there were two originals; each mentioning one of the parties first and being initialled and signed by the representative of that party on the left side. These originals were exchanged. Today, many treaties use simplified titles and mention of parties and omit the names of representatives altogether except at the bottom of the last page where the signatures have to be affixed.

Consent to be bound by a treaty other than by signature used to be expressed in a very formal document, known as an instrument of ratification or of accession (in the case of participation in a multilateral treaty by a non-signatory). Instruments of ratification of a bilateral treaty contained the full text of the national version followed by the statement of ratification. In the case of multilateral treaties the instrument was a proclamation of ratification or accession in stereotyped terms. It was handed over to the depository of the treaty in a formal ceremony. More recently, expression of consent to be bound has also been expressed by notification using the form of a diplomatic note. This possibility must be indicated in the final clauses of the treaty. The advantage of this approach is particularly evident in bilateral treaties, where it replaces the exchange of instruments of ratification by duly empowered representatives, an exchange that has to be minuted. Notification of consent to be bound can be forwarded by a diplomatic mission or even by mail.

MULTI-LANGUAGE DOCUMENTS

Except between countries using the same national or vehicular language, diplomatic documents, these days, tend to be written in two or more languages. In bilateral relations a difference is made between authentic languages and unofficial translations. If two languages are both authentic, the interpretation problems have to be solved by reference to both. Unofficial translations on the other hand have no value of authenticity. Sometimes, the unofficial translation is in the language of one party which is not used in international relations. Thus Israel used to insist that an unofficial translation in Hebrew be attached to bilateral agreements for which English would be used for the Israeli version. China on the other hand insists that all diplomatic documents emanating from it be written in Chinese, but accepts that an unofficial translation into English be attached to them.

The writing of treaties in several languages is a complex task, especially if one or more of these languages are not used during the actual negotiation. Versions in working languages are based on the records of simultaneous interpretation. Versions in other languages have to be prepared separately. All have to go before the drafting committee which therefore needs at least one member for each language. Preferably however members of a drafting committee should master two or more of the languages used so as to ensure proper concordance of texts. The drafts submitted to the committee are prepared by the secretariat of the negotiating body, which must check recordings of simultaneous interpretation and produce versions in languages which were not used as working languages. The complexity of the task of a drafting committee explains why, in some cases, it will re-convene after the treaty has already been authenticated, with the express competence of making linguistic adjustments between the various versions.

Problems akin to those encountered with multilingual texts may arise with diplomatic texts negotiated and written in a single language when two or more countries are involved. For German speakers from Austria, Germany and Switzerland the same word may not have exactly the same meaning. This is even more pronounced among countries using English as a vehicular language, or Spanish, whereas in the case of French the meaning attributed by France tends to be generally accepted.

THE IMPACT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information technology allows for working on a text which is displayed on computer screens or projected on a wall screen from a computer if the negotiation takes place in a conference room. This text can be directly amended, including by inserting versions in brackets on the display, or proposed amendments can be written into hypertext links. This last approach is particularly useful in multilateral negotiations conducted on the Internet, either in real time encounters or, even more, when negotiators can make their input in their own time and the secretariat from time to time sums up the situation.

The recourse to information technology is probably going to modify the presentation of bilateral agreements. These are likely to be written in a single version and no longer put down in two original documents. The lengthy mention of parties with their full names and the names of negotiators is likely to disappear. Consent to be bound may be expressed by notification over the Internet.

Multilateral treaties are always written in a single original, so recourse to information technology will not change anything in this regard. But ratification and accession can be notified over the Internet just as in the case of bilateral treaties.

Information technology is also likely to help with multilingual texts. There already exists software for translation, although this can at best produce a very rough draft that will have to be carefully edited. By working on texts accessible over the Internet, translators from various countries will be able to compare notes and thus help to produce better adjusted versions in the various languages of the treaty.

Information technology however also presents potential problems regarding the finalisation of an agreed text, in particular if this takes place over the Internet. Safeguards will have to be found to prevent a party from tampering with a finally agreed version.

SOME FINAL REMARKS REGARDING THE GENERAL IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE

We are living in a time when attention to good use of language tends to lapse. Media often use deplorable language, both spoken and written, and there is a definite danger that future diplomats will no longer master properly even their own mother tongue, let alone vehicular languages like English, French or Spanish. This will create additional difficulties in the implementation of existing agreements. As is well known, unclear language is often used to mask divergencies under the appearance of agreement. When these divergencies re-appear as a result of differing interpretation by the parties concerned, it is essential that those who may be entrusted with proposing solutions to such disputes fully master the language(s) concerned.

Information technology could provide help in solving insufficient mastery of languages. Interactive teaching can force the student to really grapple with the language he is learning and thus to achieve more than just superficial fluency. New texts negotiated with recourse to information technology can be better understood because all successive versions and the reactions to them remain documented. Hopefully this will lead to a newly enhanced linguistic culture in diplomacy.

Keith Hamilton

Louis Decazes, duc de Glücksberg, is not a name with which either students or practitioners of contemporary diplomacy might be expected to be familiar. Even in his day, when foreign minister of France in the mid-1870s, he was overshadowed by his more able and colourful contemporaries - figures such as the Prince Gorchakov and the Prince von Bismarck. Nevertheless, Decazes is worth recalling because of his early recognition of the importance of knowledge management for the making and conduct of an effective foreign policy. In February 1874, just three years after France's catastrophic defeat in its war with Prussia, Decazes, probably under the influence of his private secretary, the historian Albert Sorel, instituted a commission to oversee the administration of France's diplomatic archives. The *Commission des Archives Diplomatiques*, a body composed of academics, archivists and former and serving diplomats, was required to ensure that the information contained in France's diplomatic records was put to the proper service of the French state in its hour of need. To this end Decazes insisted that they seek out documents for publication. His concern, he stressed, was neither with satisfying the curiosity of historians, nor with meeting the propaganda requirements of politicians, but with providing publications which would encompass a "real diplomatic education". He concluded:

In thus furnishing the servants of France with the means to fathom the details and processes of that policy which has created and consolidated our greatness, we shall give them, not only models to follow, but also the possibility of taking up again a task which has for too long been abandoned, or, at least, a tradition for too long interrupted.²

What Decazes wanted was volumes of documents - despatches, letters and memoranda - which would in effect serve in the first instance as manuals for the education of diplomats, and secondly as works for the enlightenment of the French public in the ways of diplomacy. France would regain its former position in Europe by learning from its past.

France was not, of course, the first country to begin the publication of selections of its diplomatic correspondence. Nor was Decazes the first Frenchman to believe that the examination and interpretation of documents should be fundamental to an education in diplomacy. Alexandre d'Hauterive, an early nineteenth-century French diplomat, who, as keeper of the foreign ministry archives, helped organise a diplomatic school within the archives, argued that new entrants to the service should learn their craft by attempting to construct from documentary sources brief histories of developments in France's foreign relations.³ Elsewhere in Europe, where no provision was made for the formal schooling of diplomats, it was generally assumed that junior attachés would acquire the art of drafting and imbibe the wisdom of their elders through their long engagement in the drudgery of copying, cyphering, decyphering, docketing and registering of despatches and telegrams. The reading of such correspondence was expected to introduce them to the practice and principles of diplomacy, and enable them to grasp the economic and political interests of the states they served.⁴ Practice may not have made perfect diplomats. But it may have made for better diplomatic practice.

Whether the documents which the Quai d'Orsay began publishing in the 1880s, French diplomatic correspondence of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, had any significant influence on the foreign policy of the Third Republic is not easy to assess. The political

geography of Europe had changed, but the methods employed by de Lionne, de la Motte Goulas and Choiseul, may not have been wholly irrelevant to the problems faced by their Gambettist successors. It is also worth remembering that Gabriel Hanotaux, who was foreign minister in the mid-1890s, was biographer of Richelieu, and both he and Raymond Poincaré, who presided over France's entry into the First World War, were active members of the *Commission des Archives Diplomatiques*. Yet, few editors of modern series of diplomatic documents, whatever their association with their respective foreign ministries, seem to see their work as primarily aimed at assisting the formation and instruction of aspiring ambassadors. Quite apart from any personal satisfaction that my colleagues and I may derive from editing *Documents on British Policy Overseas* (DBPO), we are not nearly so concerned with the education of diplomats as with contributing to the promotion of an informed public debate on British foreign policy. That is not to say that our publications could not serve as useful introductions to modern diplomatic methods and practices. Our two latest volumes, one documenting Anglo-Soviet relations in the period 1968-72, and the other covering the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe from 1972 until 1975, could well prove especially useful in this respect.⁵ The subject matter of the volumes still retains a certain relevance for contemporary international relations, and many of the documents afford valuable insights into diplomatic practices and procedures and offer models for the formulation of arguments. Certainly the CSCE volume provides much information on how the technique of multilateral diplomacy can be adapted to serve national ends. And, on a more general note, the teaching of international politics or relations can become a barren activity when totally divorced from material evidence in the form of documents.

Published collections of diplomatic documents have, however, to be approached with caution. They are by their nature selections. Not only do their compilers, the editors, exercise choice in deciding which individual documents should make up the collection; they may also decide on the issues to be so documented, and the periods and geographical areas to be covered. Editors may have complete freedom of access to archival sources. They may also, as I do, have considerable freedom in deciding which documents to publish.⁶ Yet, while they may be free from official influences and wedded to objectivity, they are unlikely to be able to put aside their own peculiar academic interests, their presumptions and even sometimes their prejudices. Their selection is almost certainly bound to reflect their current perspectives. The first major published series of British diplomatic documents were produced very largely in response to the post-1919 debate on the origins of the First World War, and since that war was perceived in Britain mainly as an Anglo-German conflict whose immediate origins were primarily European, the editors, G.P. Gooch and H.V. Temperley, tended to focus in their selection very much upon those developments affecting the deterioration of relations between Britain and Germany in the pre-war era. Yet in so doing they may well stand accused of having failed to give sufficient weight in their documentation to the extra-European rivalries that continued to beset Britain's relations with France and Russia and which might, had war not broken out in 1914, have led to increased tensions between Britain and Russia in Asia and possibly an Anglo-Russian war. In this and other respects, the editors were guided in their choice of documents more by what had happened than by what might have happened, and in so doing they assisted in defining the period and setting the agenda for historians of British foreign policy.

Our two latest volumes of British documents and another to be published this year, covering the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) talks in Vienna and other aspects of détente in the mid-1970s, owe their existence neither to any perceived need to defend British policy, nor to any public demand for documents relating to a particular crisis or international conflict. The decision was taken in 1994 to recommence publishing Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) records from the closed period, i.e. those documents which would, under our thirty-year rule, otherwise be unavailable to the public. It had, in fact, always been within the remit of the editors of DBPO to publish documents less than thirty years old. That had been expected of the original editorial team. But the series had fallen behind in its publishing program, and since the end of the Cold War seemed to make more recent issues less sensitive than they might once have been, the opportunity presented itself to carry the series into the 1970s and possibly the 1980s. The government was committed to more "open government", and we felt that if we were going to carry the series into the next century it would make sense to jump into the deep-end of the archival pool and make a splash. Yet, in

choosing what subjects to cover we were also influenced by a desire to look at a period of political change, and in the case of the CSCE volume at an aspect of multilateral diplomacy which would permit the further exploration of Britain's relations with its allies and partners in Europe and North America and its attitudes towards the Soviet Union in an era of détente. The CSCE seemed to represent a watershed in the Cold War in Europe. Indeed, in 1975 the Helsinki Final Act was regarded by many as symbolising the end of the Cold War. Some doubted this: one British diplomat described the negotiations as "Cold War by other means". And although détente now looks more like a stage of cold war, rather than a break between two separate cold wars, it did, particularly in the form of CSCE, afford opportunities for transcending long-established divisions in Europe.

There are other parallel volumes in preparation. In addition to MBFR, we are working on a volume covering British policy in the Mediterranean and southern Europe during the mid-1970s, an era when conflict and radical political change seemed to expose NATO's vulnerable southern flank, and we are preparing other new volumes on the Far East, southern Africa, and Berlin. But quite apart from the decisions editors may take with regard to the choice of themes, readers have also to reckon with those relating to the selection of particular documents for inclusion in volumes. The CSCE volume contains some 143 documents printed in full, with footnote references to five or six hundred more. This, however, is only a fraction of the files consulted. The volume covers three and a half years of multilateral diplomacy which dealt with issues ranging from divided families to divided nations, and the FCO records of the negotiations are vast. As editor, I sought after documents which would best tell the story, and documents which were particularly significant, either because they accurately reflected official thinking on the negotiations, or because the advice and analysis they offered affected the decision-making process. Yet, I was also bound to ask myself whose story I was telling. Any selection of documents is, after all, bound to be in some respects an interpretation. Then too, there is the question of whether or not to include a document because it offers contrary advice, or an opinion not generally shared by other ministers or officials. To omit is in one sense to suppress, but to include such a paper in a volume may involve giving excessive weight to views which were of little consequence.

These, of course, are all essentially editorial problems, of interest to historians, but probably only of marginal concern to diplomatic readers of the published record. But the diplomat, no less than the historian, must be mindful of the various interpretations that can be placed on individual documents. The papers published in our CSCE volume consist of correspondence between the FCO and missions abroad (i.e. despatches, letters and telegrams) and internal Office briefing papers, memoranda, minutes and submissions. They contain instructions to diplomats, reports on conversations and particular developments, and analysis and advice on policy matters. Yet, however accurate the reporting, however clear the analysis, and however sound the arguments a document deploys, the reader has to ask several pertinent questions about it before he can appreciate its value. What, for instance, were the document's origins? Who drafted it? Who sent it? Who received it? Who read it? And what action did it inspire? In the case of the documents contained in our CSCE volume, we have usually been able to identify those responsible for drafting internal FCO papers and outgoing despatches and telegrams. It has been less easy to do this in the case of correspondence sent from posts abroad since telegrams and despatches are usually signed off by ambassadors or other heads of mission. But, in any event, it is always necessary to bear in mind not just what has been reported, but what may not have been reported, and the extent to which a paper may have been drafted with the express purpose of influencing particular recipients. A diplomat might, for example, offer radical advice more with a view to stimulating debate than provoking action. Arguments deployed in conference and recorded in despatches may be only a partial reflection of policy. They may, after all, have been deliberately designed with a view to learning more about the negotiating strategy and tactics of the other side.

Context has also to be taken into account. No diplomatic document can be fully understood or evaluated without consideration being given to the economic, political and social circumstances prevailing at the time of drafting. The British historian, G.M. Young, once dismissed diplomatic history as, the story of "what one clerk said to another clerk".⁷ There was an element of truth in this. The sheer quantity of diplomatic documentation available can make for dull history - history which simply reproduces or summarises exchanges amongst

ministers and officials. Such works once gave diplomatic history a bad name. But, in truth, few diplomatic historians have failed to recognise that a proper appreciation of the past conduct of international relations is impossible without an awareness of those developments in domestic politics, which may be only briefly touched upon in foreign ministry records. The problem from the historian's point of view is that diplomats very often omit from their correspondence that which is obvious to the recipients of their communications. They may report in detail on the conditions in the countries in which they are resident. There is, however, rarely need for them to comment upon domestic developments in the country they represent. Thus only occasionally do the documents in our CSCE volume even hint at that sense of relative economic and political decline that was so prevalent in Britain throughout much of the 1970s. Indeed, the two British general elections of 1974 and the transition from the Conservative government of Edward Heath to the Labour government of Harold Wilson seemed to require no more than an explanatory footnote. There are hardly any references in these documents to the industrial and inflationary problems that beset the British economy in this period, and only rarely do they make any mention of the energy crisis of 1973/4 which ended more than a quarter of a century of steady economic growth in Western Europe and North America. Only in one document is there a hint of the doubts evidently felt by some British diplomats about their country's future international role. In a round-up despatch dealing with the multilateral preparatory talks at Helsinki, which preceded the opening of Stage I of the CSCE negotiations, Anthony Elliott, the UK Head of Delegation, observed almost in Achesonian terms: "If Britain is not to be a major European Power in the context of the CSCE, she can hardly hope to be a Power anywhere."⁸

Elliott's words were particularly pertinent since, despite initial fears on the part of British diplomats that the conference could all too easily help consolidate the Soviet hold upon East/Central Europe, impede the further economic and political integration of Western Europe, and weaken the Atlantic alliance, they soon found in the CSCE a vehicle by which to achieve a closer working relationship with their new found partners in the European Community in the framing of a common foreign policy. They also discovered in the mechanisms of the conference a means of broadening the agenda of East/West détente beyond the notion of easing tension between rival blocs, and of compelling the Russians to discuss such hitherto taboo issues as human contacts and the freer dissemination of information. And in this context there are perhaps three aspects of this volume which should be of especial interest to any newcomer to diplomacy. All three relate to multilateral diplomacy and might most conveniently be designated: procedures, method and form.

Diplomats have long known that before any international conference can assemble four things have first to be settled: (1) who are to be the participants; (2) where it is to meet; (3) when it is to meet; and (4) what is to be discussed. But, as has become increasingly apparent during the twentieth century, successful multilateral diplomacy also depends on prior agreement on how what is to be discussed is to be discussed, i.e. there has to be an understanding on the conference agenda and procedures. For all 35 participants in the CSCE procedure was important. That is why it took more than six months to settle on the agenda and the committee structure of what became Stage II, the negotiating stage, of the CSCE. Indeed, the multilateral preparatory talks, which began in November 1972 and ended in June 1973, became a conference in their own right - one reason for devoting an entire chapter of the CSCE volume to the subject. As these documents reveal, the British, along with their allies and partners, feared that unless there was a prior understanding on a detailed agenda, and on how that agenda was to be tackled, the CSCE could easily become a talking shop. It might then provide the Soviet Union with what it desired - an international endorsement of the political and territorial *status quo* in Europe - but leave the West with no more than a few general declarations on pan-European cooperation. Western public opinion might then be encouraged to believe that since the Cold War was over defence budgets could be slashed and alliances dismantled. And if Western governments were to gain anything from the conference then it must be in the form of provisions which would allow for greater contact between individuals on both sides of the European divide and for the freer exchange of ideas and information. Détente would have to be about relations between peoples as well as between states. The West therefore looked towards the preparation of an agenda which would allow their delegates the opportunity to raise points of detail relating to such matters as

rights of Western journalists to travel and report in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the rights of individuals to travel abroad, and their right of access to foreign books and newspapers. This meant having not just an agenda, but detailed mandates for each of the committees and sub-committees into which the conference would be divided for working purposes.⁹

In seeking terms of reference for the committees and sub-committees Western delegates met with considerable resistance from their Warsaw Pact counterparts. And the story told in the documents contained in Chapter I of our CSCE volume is that of how essentially procedural decisions were taken to overcome Soviet opposition to the kind of negotiating program the West desired. The crucial breakthrough came in January 1973, when two neutral delegations, those of Austria and Switzerland, took the initiative. The Austrians recommended the grouping of agenda items in four baskets, and, with Western encouragement, the Swiss prepared a catalogue of proposed elements of negotiation and grouped these in separate, but unnamed baskets. One of these, Basket III, included all those items relating to human contacts, culture and information which Western governments wished to see subject to negotiation.¹⁰ Meanwhile, the Russians, apparently with a view to increasing the momentum of the talks, signalled their readiness to discuss draft assignments for Stage II committees (or commissions), and then proceeded to table these for committees on each of the four baskets. They nonetheless continued to oppose the drafting of terms of reference for individual sub-committees, although they did indicate that they might eventually acquiesce in the subdivision of assignments according to subject matter.¹¹

This, in effect led to another procedural innovation - what might best be termed "bottom-up diplomacy". It had long been recognised that the West, once faced with even a provisionally agreed agenda and brief descriptions of committees' tasks, would be in a weak bargaining position to seek agreement on terms of reference and the establishment of sub-committees for an effective Stage II. Elliott therefore recommended that they start the drafting process "from the bottom up", considering individual subjects in each basket, seeking agreed formulations for each of them, and building up a number of smaller subject areas corresponding to sub-committees and finally complete agenda items.¹² In time this was accepted by all the delegations at Helsinki, and following the establishment of working and mini-groups the talks acquired a flexible organisational structure which Western representatives, very often supported by neutral and non-aligned delegations, were able to turn to their advantage in the preparation of the Final Recommendations which would serve as the basis for Stage II negotiations.¹³

The negotiating tactics, or diplomatic method, adopted by Western delegations at Helsinki also played a large part in helping them to secure their objectives. The close cooperation which developed between the delegations representing the nine EC countries, and the newly-established mechanisms of European Political Cooperation, were particularly important in this respect. The maintenance of both allied unity and the sympathy and support of neutral and non-aligned delegations was vital in resisting Soviet pressure for the drafting of more restrictive texts covering future negotiations on Basket III issues. The Soviet delegation only began to show signs of movement when it became apparent that, if they were to have a conference at all, they would first have to agree to negotiate on the human contacts issues the West wanted to debate. And for Western delegates to Stage II of the CSCE, which began in Geneva in the autumn of 1973 and continued until the summer of 1975, it was equally important to ensure that nothing was conceded in Committee I, the committee charged with examining principles guiding relations amongst participants, before progress had been made on Basket III issues in Committee III. It was initially assumed in the West that it would be far easier to draft a set of principles - principles which would include a declaration on the inviolability of frontiers, a notion much favoured by the East - than it would be to prepare texts on such complex human rights issues as family reunification. Hence Western diplomats were very much aware of the fact that they might have to slow-up progress in Committee I in order to ensure that they were in a stronger bargaining position to secure what they wanted in Committee III.¹⁴

What emerged, and what we have tried to document in this volume, was a method of diplomacy that might best be described as competing procrastination. And one of the chief characteristics of the CSCE negotiating marathon was long periods of deadlock when little or no progress was made - and, from an editor's point of view, documenting deadlock can be a very deadly business. Sir John Killick, Britain's ambassador in Moscow until the autumn of 1973, nicely summarised British and Western negotiating strategy when he wrote: "we must play it as long and as hard in the Commissions as necessary, and I only hope the Americans...will not join the Russians in pressing for speed. It is we who must exploit Brezhnev's sense of urgency and desire for a concluding 'summit' in order to drive hard bargains."¹⁵ Killick's reference to the Americans was far from irrelevant. In the early 1970s British diplomats were more than a little apprehensive about super-power "bilateralism" in the search for East/West détente and what some regarded as the emergence of a Washington/Moscow axis. Along with the representatives of other Western European governments they feared that President Nixon and his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, might well be prepared to sacrifice European interests for the sake of a broader understanding with the Russians. They had some reason to be concerned, especially when, during a visit by President Nixon to Moscow in July 1974, he and Brezhnev announced that they favoured the early conclusion of the CSCE, and a Stage III of the conference at summit level.¹⁶ This ran completely counter to Western strategy, which had so far aimed at delaying Stage III until the West had achieved what they wanted, and at making Brezhnev pay for a summit with concessions in Basket III.

Kissinger, in fact, never seems to have taken CSCE particularly seriously, at least until he got down to writing his monograph on diplomacy and the last volume of his memoirs.¹⁷ But as these works demonstrate, perspective can have a devastating impact upon even the most academic of diplomatic memories. It seemed to British diplomats that Kissinger believed that more liberal practices in the eastern bloc countries could not be induced by direct pressure, but would come about as a natural concomitant of détente in inter-governmental relations. He appeared in their eyes not to understand the genuinely idealistic element in the Western European approach to CSCE, and that like "his hero Metternich, [he wanted] stability and détente...for their own sake".¹⁸ In the end, however, the Western Europeans withstood American pressure for the early tabulation of a list of their minimum objectives in Basket III, and taking advantage both of waning public interest in the West in détente in general and the CSCE in particular, and Brezhnev's evident desire to wind-up the conference with a summit meeting in the spring/summer of 1975, they were able to go some way towards achieving their objectives in Basket III without making too many sacrifices elsewhere. Their gains were limited, but they had at least achieved a *locus standi* for future involvement in the internal affairs of Eastern Europe.

But the Western Europeans were not alone in adopting methods appropriate to the multilateral marathon that the CSCE proved to be. The British documents also demonstrate that some of the smaller powers were able to use (or misuse) the consensus rule that applied in the CSCE to their advantage. On one memorable occasion during the preparatory talks the delegates of Liechtenstein were instrumental in compelling the Soviet Union and its allies to provide a detailed defence of their policy towards human and cultural contacts.¹⁹ And Malta, a small country which figures large in some pages of this volume, was capable of bringing all progress towards the conclusion of the conference to a standstill when in the summer of 1975 its prime minister, Dom Mintoff, made a successful bid to secure reference in a CSCE Mediterranean Declaration to a lessening of tensions in the area and a reduction of armed forces in the region. Indeed on the evening of 10 July 1975, when Stage II was drawing to its close, all the delegates at the conference were left to sit round in rage and humiliation before learning that Mintoff was "in bed with a slight fever, and could not discuss the question until he had held further consultations".²⁰ The disruptive capacity of small states in multilateral diplomacy can never be ignored.

Alex Sceberras Trigona remarked in his paper published in the proceedings of last year's conference on Knowledge and Diplomacy that the traditional method of assessment of diplomatic documents as, for example, *procès-verbaux*, protocols and treaties did not really contribute much to knowledge. "It is", he observed, "superficial as it only treats diplomatic documents at face value. Students emerge all the poorer for it, obsessed with form for form's

sake."²¹ Yes, of course, but! In one important sense Dr Sceberras Trigona is right. The contents of a document, its substance, is usually far more important than the form it takes. And where a document is an internal communication - a record of a meeting, a message from one official to another or to a minister - it would hardly seem to matter whether it is called a memorandum, a minute, a note or a submission. Yet where international agreements are concerned it would hardly do to equate an exchange of notes with a memorandum of understanding, or a declaration with a treaty. Form matters in these cases because form frequently establishes, or at any rate reflects, the nature of the obligation entered into and the degree of commitment involved, whether the engagement be moral, political or ultimately legal.

Throughout the CSCE the form of the documents the participants would finally adhere to was a key issue. The British were from the start determined that the documents comprised in what became the Helsinki Final Act should not have a legal status (i.e. that they should not constitute a treaty). The reasoning behind this was fairly straightforward: (1) they did not want to set up what could amount to a regional system of international law peculiarly applicable to Europe; (2) the matters dealt with in the CSCE went beyond the competence of individual Western governments and would in some cases have required secondary legislation if the document signed were a treaty; and (3) if the Final Act were to have legal status it would probably have required many more years negotiation. It was also important to Western governments that the documents covered by the Final Act should have an internal balance, and that they should be regarded as having equal value. The Soviet leadership appeared to want to give the Declaration of Principles pride of place. For their part, the Western countries and the neutrals and non-aligned insisted that the contents of documents dealing with confidence building measures, economic cooperation and humanitarian, information, cultural and education matters had equal significance.²²

It was also important for Western delegations that the Declaration of Principles should not be seen as consecrating the political and territorial *status quo* in Europe. They were especially concerned about Soviet pressure for the inclusion in the Declaration of Principles of a provision recognising the "inviolability of frontiers" which might be interpreted as meaning the "immutability of frontiers". This was, of course, a matter of particular concern to the West Germans, who were anxious that the declaration should also allow for the peaceful change of frontiers. Differences between East and West over this issue resulted in a long and acrimonious debate, conducted very largely in Committee I, and the eventual inclusion in the principle dealing with the sovereign rights of states of a phrase to the effect that frontiers could be changed "in accordance with international law, by peaceful means, and by agreement".²³ The British played a prominent, though far from decisive, role in this debate. This may seem surprising. But the British were reluctant to accept any provision which might seem to imply that frontiers were set in concrete. They were also opposed to any phraseology which might seem to inhibit closer union and the eventual abolition of frontiers within the European Community. But tactics were probably more important. Western delegates had initially sought to maintain a close link between the notion of the inviolability of frontiers and provision for their peaceful change, and Soviet opposition to the close juxtaposition of these two concepts soon brought the work of Committee I to a standstill. The British recognised that this was the one real "bargaining counter" that the West possessed in their dealings with the East, and the decision of their allies in March 1974 to accept the possible textual separation of the two concepts - a decision taken in the misplaced hope that it would encourage Soviet concessions on Basket III - was regarded by the British as a negotiating error of the first order.²⁴

Even then, however, the exact position and formulation of the phrases relating to the inviolability of frontiers and their peaceful change continued to divide East and West. When in February 1975 the British prime minister, Harold Wilson, paid an official visit to Moscow the issue came up in discussions with the Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko. Wilson told Gromyko that so far as he knew "there was no difference between us on the form of words, only on where the phrase [on peaceful change] should go in the Declaration". He then went on to ask "why we could not include the phrase both in the place where the Soviet Union wanted it and where others wanted it also"? Poor Gromyko then thought it necessary to reply at great length and in detail, explaining the Soviet position that had been repeated on

numerous occasions before. Ah, replied Wilson, "he was an amateur on these matters, and...the discussions had been very educational for him".²⁵ One wonders who was fooling whom? But the message was clear: form mattered.

It was of no less significance in the drafting of Basket III provisions. From the beginning the idea of freer movement of people, ideas and information between East and West was of first importance to the West's approach to the CSCE. So far as Western (and neutral) governments were concerned, it was the point on which the success or failure of the conference could turn. Yet from the opening of the Geneva talks in the autumn of 1973 the Russians and their allies seemed determined to avoid both detail and commitment on the points of most interest to the West.²⁶ The Russians resisted negotiation on a subject by subject basis, taking the line that the results of Committee III should be governed by a preamble, in which they evidently wanted to include wording designed to provide them with an excuse for maintaining restrictive practices and with a pretext for insisting that Western governments should control the activities of their broadcasting authorities, publishers and the like.²⁷ In the Soviet view the more detailed the substantive provisions on human contacts and information, the more explicit must be the restrictive references in the preamble. The latter must therefore contain references to "non-interference" and to "respect for the sovereignty laws and customs" of participating states.²⁸

Western and neutral delegations successfully resisted Soviet demands that the preamble should be drafted first. But they had to accept that there should be a preamble covering the results in Committee III, and that drafting work on the preamble, and on the substantive provisions should proceed in parallel.²⁹ By the summer of 1974 it was also apparent that this would probably mean the West's accepting a neutral "package deal" involving reference in the Basket III preamble to respect for the Declaration of Principles which would in turn be so formulated as to reassure the Eastern countries that the West would respect their internal order.³⁰ Ultimately, the preamble to Basket III recognised that the broad aims of cooperation, contacts and the broader dissemination of information were important elements in the process of strengthening security and developing cooperation, and should be put into effect in full respect for the principles set out in the Declaration of Principles. In effect, this meant that while cooperation in these fields should not damage the sovereign rights of individual states or constitute intervention in the internal affairs of other states, it must take place in full respect for the principles of self-determination, human rights and fundamental freedoms. References to human rights, together with the more detailed provisions of Basket III, meant that these issues, however qualified by preambular references, were now accepted as legitimate matters for international concern. In these instances then, as in the case of the drafting of the Declaration of Principles and the negotiation of the various accords that made up Basket III, form (i.e. the structure and balance of the Final Act) was hardly less important than substance.

If, indeed, this CSCE volume has any lessons to offer about the nature of contemporary diplomacy they are ones which relate to structure and process - to the structure of the conference committee system and the documents it produced, and the processes and mechanisms through which both sides sought to achieve their ends. But the documents have also to be understood in their context. Although the neutrals and the non-aligned had a very significant role to play in the CSCE negotiations, the conference was in many respects about relations between two major power blocs, separated by an ideological divide. Bloc to bloc negotiations are still a significant feature of economic diplomacy, but the ideological divisions of 1972-75 are now very much part of history. As with the archives which d'Hauterive wanted his diplomatic apprentices to study and the documents which Decazes hoped would assist in restoring France to its proper place in Europe, the British records on the CSCE require critical analysis and evaluation if their message is to be properly understood. Diplomatic archives remain the raw material of international history. They are a source of knowledge whose effective management no foreign ministry can afford to neglect, and in so far as they offer the aspiring diplomat enlightenment on past and sometimes current conduct they may provide guidance on the methods most appropriate to achieving specific ends. Yet studied in isolation,

they are, in a rapidly changing world, rarely likely to provide a full or real education in diplomacy.

ENDNOTES

1. The opinions expressed in this paper are the author's own and should not be taken as an expression of official Government policy.
2. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (Paris), Archives des Archives, Procès-verbaux de la Commission des Archives Diplomatiques, vol. i, 4 April 1874.
3. Alain Meininger, "D'Hauterive et la formation des diplomates," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (January - June, 1975), 25-67.
4. Sir Francis Bertie who, after a career of forty years in the British Foreign Office, was appointed British ambassador to Rome in 1903, held views typical of his generation on the proper education of young diplomats. He was convinced that it "ought to be the duty of every Secretary & Attaché to read all the [Foreign Office] print so far as more pressing duties permitted", and he was highly critical of his junior staff for wasting their time driving about "to pay visits & attend tea fights to the detriment of their imbibing knowledge of diplomatic correspondence". Keith Hamilton, *Bertie of Thame: Edwardian Ambassador* (Woodbridge: Royal Historical Society, 1990), 54.
5. *Documents on British Policy Overseas* (hereafter cited as *DBPO*), Series III, Vol. I, *Britain and the Soviet Union, 1968-1972*, and Vol. II, *The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1972-1975*, eds. G.Bennett and K.A. Hamilton (London: TSO, 1997).
6. Cf. R. Bullen and M. Pelly, "Documents on British Policy Overseas: Editorial Principles and Practice" in *Fonti diplomatiche in età moderna e contemporanea* (Rome: Ministero per beni culturali e ambientali, 1995), 128-45.
7. Cited in Z. Steiner (ed.), *The Times Survey of Foreign Ministries of the World* (London: Times Books, 1982), 10.
8. *DBPO*, Series III, Vol II, No. 37.
9. *Ibid.*, Nos. 16 and 17. British policy towards the CSCE is considered in more detail in Keith Hamilton, *The Last Cold Warriors: Britain, Détente and the CSCE, 1972-1975* (Oxford: St Antony's College, EIRU, 1999).
10. *DBPO*, Series III, Vol. II, No. 20.
11. *Ibid.*, No. 21.
12. *Ibid.*, No. 22.
13. *Ibid.*, Nos. 23 and 26.
14. *Ibid.*, No. 43.
15. *Ibid.*, No. 38.
16. *Ibid.*, No. 89.
17. Cf. H. Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (London: Simon and Shuster, 1994), 758- 59; *Years of Renewal* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1999), 635-63.
18. *DBPO*, Series III, Vol. II, No. 94.
19. *Ibid.*, No. 37.
20. *Ibid.*, Nos. 75, 81, 90, 129, 130 and 132.
21. Alex Sceberas Trigona, "Knowledge and Diplomacy," in *Knowledge and Diplomacy*, ed. Jovan Kurbalija (Malta: DiploProjects, 1999), 95-101.
22. *DBPO*, Series III, Vol. II, No. 137.
23. *Selected Documents Relating to Problems of Security and Cooperation in Europe, 1954-77*, Cmnd 6932 (London: HMSO), 225-82.
24. *DBPO*, Series III, Vol. II, Nos. 70, 71, 72 and 76.
25. *Ibid.*, No. 112.
26. *Ibid.*, Nos. 61 and 63.
27. *Ibid.*, No. 68.
28. *Ibid.*, Nos. 93 and 94.
29. *Ibid.*, Nos. 63 and 65.
30. *Ibid.*, Nos. 93 and 94.

Edmond Pascual
(Translation from French by Helena Mallia)

A superficial debate often places speech and action in opposition. This is, of course, an artificial debate and one which tends to lead to simplistic caricatures. The great spirits who enlightened humanity exercised an action, deep and long-lasting, through the power of their Verb. In contrast, the great men of action were, more often than not, transported by the power of their thoughts and speech. All thoughts are actions and there is no action without thought.

The diplomat - now more than ever - is a man of action: he seeks, establishes and fixes rules which will enable men to live better together in the future once barbarism has been overcome; barbarism - the negation both of action and of thought. How does he act? Through the Verb, through speech.

Contemporary linguistics, in its own manner and without planning to enter the debate, took a stand. In 1962, John Austin published in Oxford *How To Do Things With Words* translated by G. Lan and published in France in 1970 under the title *Quand dire c'est faire*. In 1969, John Searle published *Speech Acts*, translated and published in France under the title *Les actes du langage*. The titles of these two publications, in themselves, highlight this fact: word and action are one.

These two researchers laid the basis for what has since been called "semantic pragmatics" or "linguistic pragmatics". This discipline has developed to the extent that it is beginning to be independent of linguistics.

The aim of this presentation is to apply some of the data in this field of research to diplomatic exchange. It will be based on three points:

1. speech as an intentional act;
2. the effects of the act of speech;
3. the role of the unsaid in the act of speech.

One amongst various researchers, a Frenchman, Oswald Ducrot, in his book *Le Dire et le Dit*, asks a few simple and enlightening questions which all diplomats would be justified in asking: "Why is it possible to use words to exert influence, why are certain words, in certain circumstances, so effective?" and again "Why did the speaker say what he said?"

We may observe that from a linguistic viewpoint, such analytical perspectives on speech (whether diplomatic or otherwise) give prominence to the distinction, already made by scholasticism, between the *Dictus*, what is said, and the *Dictum*, the intention behind what is said.

SPEECH AS AN ACT

We will deliberately set aside anything linked to the subconscious or unconscious expression as this does not concern the field of the present study. All speech constitutes a deliberate act. Even when not followed by an act, a word, just by the very fact of having been spoken, has acted. Promises (whether electoral or not), commitments, affirmations, information, *petitio principii*, lies, threats, orders, professions of friendship or declarations of love - there exists no

speech which does not leave an immediate trace, without prejudice to its possible consequences.

Linguists propose four basic modalities for the act of speech:

1) **The assertive modality:** an *assertion* is a proposal which is put forward as true, conforming to facts. An assertion affirms truth. It does not prove it.

The diplomatic document offers frequent examples of this modality as it is based on what is real, on facts. These facts actually shape the document (when it is possible to have a clear idea): the way in which the document takes these facts into consideration, how it presents them and qualifies them. The instruments for linguistic analysis should enable us to better place the gap between each text, to highlight its subjectivity as, in many cases, this is skilfully calculated and partly to the speaker's intention.

2) **The interrogative modality:** the original idea is based on the speaker's intention to obtain a reply from the recipient (except, in rhetoric, in the case of the *oratorical question*, the art of forcefully revealing an idea, a conclusion, a fact). This primary intention often hides other inexplicit intentions.

3) **The exclamatory modality:** the emotion which it expresses and which it betrays is quite incompatible with the impassiveness which should be the rule in diplomacy. On the contrary, political discussion, often violent, ironic, cordial, emphatic, etc., contains many examples. It clearly expresses the subjectivity of the speaker and, as such, it somewhat escapes from the criterion of intention - except if the speaker plays on a supposed emotion so as to impress the recipients through his message - this happens frequently in politics. The exclamatory modality belongs to the field of expressive language, "language of life, of feelings" which linguists oppose to that of thought, indicated as representation, assertion being an example.

4) **The imperative (or jussive) modality:** that which expresses the speaker's intention to induce the recipient to act in a specific manner, e.g. "Come here." UN resolutions, ministers' orders to the chanceries, EU directives, just to take a few random examples, clearly illustrate this point. The imperative modality which characterises the word as an act (in a linguistic reflection) only makes sense, in a diplomatic or international context, when in accordance to the speaker's real authority over the recipient, which takes us beyond the linguistic field towards sociological, legal and political spheres.

THE EFFECTS OF THE ACT OF SPEECH

The above-mentioned quotation from Ducrot fixes three chronological divisions of the act of speech. The central part (during) is called the *locutary*. It is simply the fact of saying something, of pronouncing a statement in a coherent manner using the common code.

The speaker's intention (before) and the effects of his words (after) are more subtle if we differentiate between what is apparent, immediate and what is effective but implicit, replying to the speaker's deep and true intentions.

Ducrot writes, in the same book (*Le Dire et le Dit*): "In my opinion, the fact of saying that a statement possesses, according to the terms of the philosophy of language, an illocutary strength, means to say that a 'legal' power is being attributed to the statement - inducing an action (in the case of a promise or an order), inducing speech (in the case of an interrogation), rendering an illegal action lawful (in the case of a permit), etc." Elsewhere, the author of this quotation adds to this "legal" change in status: it is immediate. It must be said that the interlocutors are fully aware of this change in their relations and that it concerns them both even if the inducement to act is not followed by an effect (disobedience, unkept promises, no reply, revocation of an authorisation, etc...these are strong actions, albeit negative).

The quotation marks used by Ducrot for the word "legal" highlight the intended metaphor. It, however, lands us fair and square in the field of international law and, in particular, in one of its issues, which is to know to what extent a text creates an obligation (for both the speaker and the recipient) to create a new legal (without quotation marks) situation.

In taking up the modalities described above, *the assertion*, *the interrogation*, and *the order* instantly place communication on a level from which the interlocutors will escape with difficulty. These are *illocutary acts*.

Amongst the *illocutary acts*, we should highlight the *argumentative approach* which installs a particular type of communication constraining each interlocutor in turn to defensive phases (of refutation) and offensive phases (counter-arguments). It is not a law, strictly speaking, as it exists in and by texts, but its elaboration and its implementation. Negotiations, and consequently, the *argumentative approach* are at the core of diplomatic life.

The *perlocutary act* is more difficult to detect. R. Escarpit, in *L'Ecrit et la communication*, characterises it thus: "the locutor's more or less secret intention - and more or less conscious intention - is accomplished by the very fact of addressing a word to the listener."

Other authors, when contrasting it with the "mostly explicit" *illocutary act*, underline that "it must always be interpreted" and add: "The update of a perlocutary act means to discern the innuendos through which the statement is lengthened." (D. Bergez, V. Géraud and J.J. Robrieux. *Vocabulaire de l'analyse littéraire*. Dunod, 1994).

It is placed, therefore, prior to the word (before) and composes the speaker's real intention, his strategy - the rest simply relate to tactics and implementation. It is within these characterisations that one can find that which current or familiar language calls a metaphor, "the wooden language", and what the language of psychologists calls "manipulation". An assessment must still be undertaken of the distance between the *perlocutary* intention (before) and its real effects (after) which evidently do not form part of it but which measure its effectiveness.

These three concepts (locutary - illocutary - perlocutary) do not cover the entire field of semantic pragmatics. We still have to deal with the *performative* act in which what is said tallies with what is done. "The locutor carries out the action which he said he would carry out."

Here is a simple example: if someone tells a listener "I order you to be quiet" what he says (I order you) is exactly what he does (to give an order). It is a performative act, however this does not stop us from analysing this statement as an *illocutary* and *perlocutary act*.

THE ROLE OF THE UNSAID IN THE ACT OF SPEECH: SENSE AND MEANING

Another approach to the act of speech consists in questioning not only what is said, the manner in which it is said, but also what is left unsaid, and which is sometimes as effective as what is said.

A primary element, indispensable in rendering effective the act of speech in a communication, is the notion of *presupposition*. Presuppositions are all those facts, notions, and realities which the speaker and the recipient of the message have in common and which do not need to be repeated or recalled for the communication to take place.

Innuendo, on the contrary, is the result of an interpretation of what has just been said. We may consider that it is linked to the perlocutary act as it expresses an intention which is not clearly shown. One may understand that this necessary interpretation of innuendo will always be more or less uncertain. It forms part of the problems or subjectivity of all communications. As it is not based on the analysis of any observable objective feature of what has just been said, it must always be substantiated. It is not abusive to say that the decoding of diplomatic

wording requires, more than in other cases, an interpretation of innuendos. The danger appears in the process of intention as it attributes intentions to the interlocutor which he did not entertain.

A simple example will help clarify these notions and propose a summary of the aforesaid: person A asks person B "Can you close the window?"

a) At first glance, it is an illocutary act (interrogative modality). B must answer and he could do so by simply saying "yes" or "no". (I can, or I can not).

b) But this is not at all what is being asked of him. A's real intention is to make B close the window. Here lies the perlocutary act. It is a question, an order which is disguised, mitigated and misleading.

c) The presuppositions: there is a window in this room; it is open. (If the contrary were true, neither the illocutary act nor the perlocutary act would make any sense). A and B can not ignore it, of course.

d) The innuendos: we may imagine that it is too cold or too hot, that there are draughts which bother A, that there is too much noise and that A is disturbed during his work, etc., etc. It is possible to sustain any such hypothesis only if the scenario of the communication is well known.

The first reading of the message furnished an immediate content, carried by the language and clearly accessible for those who know it well. This is what Ducrot calls *the meaning*. Beyond this, the recipients must discover the *sense* of the message. *Meaning* and *sense* are used here in a specific, technical manner and not as they exist in current language. The work of interpretation, of decoding a message so as to discover the *sense* beyond the *meaning*, must comprise all that was said above about the *intention*, the *modalities*, the *unsaid*, but also the *polyphony*, the *communication scenario*, the *statement*, the *connotation*, the *rhetoric*, etc., notions and fields which have not been tackled because of the limited nature of this presentation.

Presupposition and *innuendo* refer to the notion of the *awaiting horizon*, which covers the knowledge, culture and opinions even of the recipient, without which the message would remain, for the most part, unintelligible.

Most diplomatic texts lend themselves to such an analysis. They must be read as carefully as they were drawn up.

CONCLUSIONS

Diplomatic communication stands out as there are few other oral or written communications which are so deliberate, masterful and pregnant with reflection and meaning. There are few other messages which are so carefully and prudently drawn up, read, interpreted and analysed than those it provokes.

Perhaps above all else, the words of a diplomat constitute an act. Indeed: his action is his very word.

It is, however, a misleading, coded word which hides thought as much as it reveals it and always requires a second reading. Why? Simple courtesy? Here, courtesy alone may be effective. The function of diplomatic wording is to avoid direct, brutal, primary and unproductive confrontation. A conflict is not solved by another conflict. This, of course, does not impede firmness. Here lies the art of the diplomat.

During a council of ministers on 24 February 1982, F. Mitterand said on the subject of France's position with regard to the problems in the Middle East : "I recall the importance of coded language in diplomacy, this is why any change in wording, any change in a comma is considered as a fundamental change....It is a delicate matter which demands that one does not speak, that one speaks as little as possible. Our interlocutors must appreciate our policy because of its facts and our acts, and not because of what we say." This is a paradoxical declaration, which asserts the importance and the effects of the act of speech while concurrently pretending to deny them. Which other (concrete?) action, besides speech, could France have availed itself of with regard to a solution to the difficulties in the Middle East?

Napoleon said to Fontanes, the great master of the university: "There are only two powers in the world: the sword and the spirit. In the long term, the sword is always vanquished by the spirit." This could be the motto of diplomacy, a space wherein the power of the spirit is shown through the word.

REFERENCES

Austin, J.L. *How To Do Things With Words*. Oxford, 1962. (French translation: G. Lan. *Quand dire c'est faire*. Le Seuil, 1970.)

Ducrot, O. *Le Dire et le Dit*. De Minuit, 1984.

Jaubert, A. *La lecture pragmatique*. Hachette, 1990.

Recanati, F. *Les énoncés performatifs*. De Minuit, 1981.

Searle, J. *Speech Acts*. Cambridge University Press, 1969. (French translation: *Les acts du langage*. Hermann, 1972.)

■ DECONSTRUCTION AND THE UNDOING OF DIPLOMACY:
A CASE STUDY INVOLVING THE VIENNA CONVENTION ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

Ivan Callus and Ruben Borg

We are here to speak about language.

The statement just uttered should be inoffensive. It is, after all, a truism. All of the participants during this session of the conference are here to speak about language. If *diplomacy* in that statement is elided, it is in reflection of the fact that we can all agree, without the need for any diplomatic effort whatsoever, that language will today provide a focus for us. This initial moment of agreement will have been precious, for we suspect that what we shall proceed to argue from it may prove sufficiently contentious to compel the re-inscription of diplomacy.

Let us, however, relish this moment of agreement a little longer, in order to make a few points which are uncontroversial but which will nevertheless instigate a need, later, for the re-citation of diplomacy:

We can expect that some of us at this conference will be pragmatic, and will offer ideas on how to manage, package, and massage language until the idiom of diplomatic documents is rendered judiciously transparent wherever the interests of diplomatic negotiation demand that it be so, and judiciously opaque wherever the achievement and survivability of diplomatic consensus - however uneasily that consensus is securable - is at stake.

Some of us will look at how contemporary developments in information technology can facilitate the processing of language and assist particularly in the linguistic analysis of diplomatic documents. This is a *forte* and a speciality of the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, and that which is so pioneeringly and uniquely its own should rightly be on display on an occasion like the present one.

Some of us will conduct linguistic analysis of diplomatic documents, and attempt to lay bare the fastidious subtlety of the strategies behind the composition of treatises and the multivalent considerations and political sensitivities which often impinge upon the drafting and redrafting of key clauses.

Some of us will offer historical and anecdotal accounts of how an attention to the scripting of diplomatic language has helped to determine the course of international events.

The conference will see all this happening, and more.

These points are as inoffensive as our opening statement. More to the point: where do we fit in?

Neither of us is a professional diplomat, nor have we ever studied diplomacy. Both of us are specialists, instead, in the analysis of literary language and of the kind of cultural discourse which interests the humanities. This may hardly seem like a qualification which sets us up naturally to address an assembly of diplomats. It may be as well to explain how we fit in therefore, by first explaining what we shall *not* be doing.

We shall definitely not be considering anything on the lines, for instance, of reflecting that the events in even that most ethereal of William Shakespeare's plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, stem from the intrusion upon the spirit world of the implications of a most diplomatic wedding: that involving Theseus, Duke of Athens, and Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons, who

had earlier been at war with each other. This kind of reference, though significant in its suggestion of the irreducible role of diplomacy, is not quite appropriate to the terms of our invitation to this conference. That invitation originated on the basis of our presumed expertise in deconstruction, a critical discourse which has been applied to disciplines as diverse as law, architecture, and theology, but which in the minds of many remains associated with a very intense scrutiny of the language and assumptions sustaining literary and philosophical texts. If we fit in at this conference, then, it is on the basis of the assumption that deconstruction has something to contribute to the study of diplomacy and of diplomatic language, and on the strength of the expectation that we are able to point out what that contribution might be.

In the light of this, it should be made clear at the outset that there is no such thing as a "consultant deconstructionist". If there is a hole in the market for such a position we remain, much to the dismay of our respective bank managers, unaware of it. What will be offered here, therefore, is not an analysis of diplomatic language founded on a protocol of methods which would be identifiably "deconstructionist". We are here not to conduct a textbook deconstruction - although we do try to indicate, later in this presentation, how such a practice might proceed - but to offer some suggestions on how deconstructionist perspectives on language can compel diplomats to look more penetratingly at the language they produce and work with.

Those of you present who know something about deconstruction, and about the philosophy of language to which it is affiliated - poststructuralism - may look upon this program with some apprehension. They may fear for the integrity, after deconstruction, of diplomatic language. This is because they know that wherever the discourse of deconstruction irrupts, it does so parasitically. The discourse of deconstruction typically conducts itself by *inhabiting* the text it reads. One of the ways by which deconstruction works is by attaching itself to the analysed text so resiliently that there eventually arises a moment of near-symbiosis with the text analysed, until the discourse of deconstruction and the discourse of the analysed text are not easily separable. This is achieved by deconstruction working alongside the suppositions and the drift of the argument in the analysed text. It does so in order to tease out the occasionally disguised, occasionally self-evident strategies which underpin the argument. This teasing out of a text's foundational rhetorical strategies is of course not a unique feature of deconstruction. Such a work of interpretation is not foreclosed to other approaches borrowed from linguistic and literary analysis, like stylistics or discourse analysis. Deconstruction differs from these approaches, however, because it works best when it places under scrutiny the apparent naturalness of the constituting presuppositions in an argument. It forces the silence with which those presuppositions are assumed¹ into eloquent and self-critical self-exhibition:

Above all, deconstruction works to *undo* the idea that reason can somehow dispense with language and arrive at a pure, self-authenticating truth or method. Though philosophy strives to efface its textual or "written" character, the signs of that struggle are there to be read in its blind-spots of metaphor and other rhetorical strategies [emphasis added].²

Deconstruction tends, therefore, to force the discipline to which it applies itself to look at its own language and to develop an almost pathological awareness of its own linguistic strategies.

In congruence with this, a deconstruction of diplomatic language will tend to *undo* diplomatic language. There is a double sense of the word *undo* at work here. Diplomatic language is undone because it is unravelled until its strategies are loosened. It is also undone because by being so intensely scrutinised, diplomatic language ends up critiqued to the point of being made to stare - and this is undiplomatically over-emphatic - at the possibility of its own ruin.³

If that is the case, some of you may feel themselves wishing that we had, after all, stuck with Shakespeare. That would certainly have made us more popular on the conference floor. But we shall proceed with what we were commissioned to do, mindful that there is a point, later in this paper, where this presentation will demonstrate that it will not have been so undiplomatic after all. The integrity of diplomatic language will have been safeguarded.

While that is maturing, some of you will no doubt be thinking that all of the above has been a lengthy preamble to the task promised in this paper: a demonstration of what deconstruction can (un)do with diplomatic language. Deconstruction, indeed, typically set out by querying its *frame*, i.e. the context within which it finds itself.⁴ To that extent, this has thus far actually been a textbook opening to a deconstructionist analysis. By asking ourselves, in your presence, what justifies our participation here, we have foregrounded the fact that we are here almost parasitically, because we are about to explain how a particular discourse - deconstruction - can enter into a parasitic relation with the language to which it will here be applying itself: that of diplomacy.

We are therefore, to all intents and purposes, taking up the role of *agents provocateurs*. The *agent provocateur* is a figure who infiltrates a group in order to undo it from within. We too are acting like *agents provocateurs*: in our case by infiltrating deconstruction into this conference in order to undo the language of diplomacy. By applying deconstruction to the language of diplomacy, there will be insinuated into the event of this conference a doubled principle of parasitism, as we shall explain, and the relations of guest and host will thereby be transgressed.

Why do we so shamelessly and audaciously bring this to your notice? Could anything be more undiplomatic?

And yet: could anything be more diplomatic? Could we have done anything more compliant with the logic of the institution of diplomacy?

Let us remember that a host is somebody who welcomes, who offers hospitality, who holds the door of his dwelling open and bids the one outside to enter. The one who enters may comply with the rules of the house while inhabiting it, or may choose to make herself *persona non grata* by disregarding them. Is not this - by way of combining the protocols of deconstruction with the institution of diplomacy - *the great opportunity but also the great risk* run by a text subjected to deconstruction or by a country observing the rights of diplomatic personnel? Like a deconstructionist reading which can either reinforce or sap away at the text it inhabits, the practice of diplomacy can strengthen or undermine the country within which it conducts itself.⁵

To explain further: a diplomat resides in a host country conditionally. A diplomat is suffered to reside in a host country on condition that s/he respects the laws of that country and those governing the practices of diplomatic travel and exchange, and until such a time as that respect is no longer accorded or - for this can also happen - no longer reciprocated by the host. In this regard, there is an intriguing congruence between what the discourse of deconstruction sets out to do - i.e. inhabit the host text to work from within it, occasionally *with* it (in co-operation with it) and occasionally *against* it (in opposition to its foundational presumptions and idiom) - and what the diplomat resident in a host country does, i.e. liaise within the host country with its diplomatic and political class in the interest of securing further cordial exchanges between the respective countries, or as a privileged exponent of the discord which threatens to undermine mutuality between the two countries. It is almost as if the logic governing deconstruction is the logic governing diplomatic behaviour.

That is no doubt an overstatement.⁶ There is nevertheless enough of a resemblance in the two protocols to lend a certain piquancy to the fact that the particular application of deconstruction which will proceed over the rest of this paper will seek to undo the language of diplomacy, for squaring off one discourse against the other is bound to lead to a certain play of specularity and counter-identification.

Indeed: what does it mean to apply one bivalent discourse to another bivalent discourse? What happens when deconstruction, which when it inhabits a text can end up *non grata*,⁷ inhabits the language of a discipline - diplomacy - which when it breaks down can sometimes lead to those who speak it becoming *persona non grata*? And what happens particularly when deconstruction, which is wary of any recourse to the nomological - Derrida, for instance, speaks of his distaste for the phrase *il faut* (one must)⁸ - applies itself to a diplomatic text

which, in order to prevent the very possibility of those it binds becoming *persona non grata*, seeks to lay down *the law of the conduct of diplomacy*?

It is to examine these questions that we have chosen to analyse, as our primary text, one of the foundational texts of diplomacy. The text we have chosen seeks, precisely, to regulate the parasitism which potentially undermines diplomacy, and to force upon it a certain probity and a protocol of acceptable behaviour. We are going to read with you, and ponder deconstructively, certain expressions in the "Vienna Convention of Diplomatic Relations". The discourse of deconstruction, which is the discourse suffered to be parasitic on its host, will hereby seek to scrutinise a text which seeks to regulate diplomatic relations and to prevent them from becoming parasitic. There is, we think you will agree, a pleasing piquancy in this *mise en abîme* structure which takes the codified prevention of parasitism upon a host and embeds it within an approach which is parasitically made to inhabit that very codification.

*

The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations dates back to 1961. Manuals of diplomacy tend to speak of it as a watershed document whose "scope and success" are "impressive". It is, we are told, "almost universally regarded as embodying international legal rules on diplomatic intercourse between States". The document is all the more significant because "[i]ts gestation (1956-59)...was attended by considerable goodwill and co-operation and a good deal of hard work", and because it emerged from "an almost unique impetus towards international accord".⁹ There is here a repetition of *almost*, to the significance of which we will need to return. The Convention, we are assured in the meantime, "has been accepted by an overwhelming majority of the members of the United Nations as representing an internationally agreed codification of modern diplomatic law".¹⁰

We would like to read with you this Convention, this law of diplomacy. We are particularly interested in the *procedures* of the "internationally agreed codification" of this law. These procedures which *institute* the Convention as *law*, and arraign to themselves the legitimacy that finds its foundation in "international accord", inaugurate, in the moment of description of the practice of diplomacy which is also a moment of prescription, the forthcoming relations between the history and the law of diplomacy. The history of diplomacy should henceforth be circumscribed by the law of the Convention, at least to the extent that the practice of diplomacy after 1961 approximates to, rather than deviates from, the law.

Let us not underestimate the linguistic complexity that must convey the significance of this contract. By the rules of the language we speak, when two or more sides convene they come together. This happens even more fatefully when out of the coming together of States, a law is instituted which is itself a product of and a crowning achievement in the history of the diplomatic intercourse between the nations of the world. What else can we anticipate of the event save that it makes history and that it takes place under the roof of language?

The procedures which proclaim and seal this event foreground themselves in the Convention's beginning and end. We would like to read with you, therefore, the Convention's preamble and the last of its articles, Article 53, which both appear to us particularly aware that the *eventfulness* of the occasion needs to mark itself with its own momentousness and declare its own status as law. Indeed, it seems that we are looking at a text whose logic, born out of "international accord", is irreproachable. The portentousness of legalese - a portentousness to which "the States party to the present Convention" (and we have been reassured that they form the "overwhelming majority" of the United Nations) are in turn party - monumentalises the probity of that logic. The Convention, in its very beginning, feeds itself with its own authority, defines itself in its own terms, guarantees its own authenticity. It is a text that disqualifies but does not qualify what is external to it.

There is no higher law, no law more authentic than the one that is utterly closed to the outside. So it seems, but we would not really have you believe that.

The question of a text's authenticity is indissolubly linked with the problem of determining its limits, and it is almost superfluous to add that a text like the one under study, so neat, so self-possessed and self-contained, will have done the job for us in advance. There is no way we can hope to break in, and perhaps (prospect more hopeless still) we are in there already. But for one important complication. We come upon it, significantly, in the document's opening paragraph, in an intractable phrase situated at the text's margin, and presenting us with our very first gate of entry.

The first words of the opening sentence of the Convention reads: "The State parties to the present Convention have agreed as follows". Never mind that these words do not make up a complete sentence. What's more important, for the purpose of our investigation, is that the sentence comes with a parenthesis, and a long one for that matter, which splits its syntax in two, distancing further than we can take hold of in a single breath or in a single grasp of memory Subject ("The State parties to the present...") and Predicate ("have agreed"). It is a separation that will, among other things, perform an interesting game with time, freezing in a timeless present of memory ("Recalling..."), belief ("Believing...") and assertion ("Affirming") all the operations by which the present perfect of consensus ("the States...have agreed") will contract the future to that which is diplomatically legalised in the moment of the utterance of diplomacy's law.

But let us not stop on that for the moment, or not yet. Let us look, instead, at that part of the Convention's opening sentence (which does not wind to a full-stop until the end of Article 1, by which time definitions have been established) containing the parenthesis:

The States parties to the present Convention, / Recalling that peoples of all nations from ancient times have recognized the status of diplomatic agents, / Having in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United / Nations concerning the sovereign equality of States, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the promotion of friendly relations among nations, / Believing that an international convention on Diplomatic intercourse, privileges and immunities would contribute to the development of friendly relations among nations irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems, / Realizing that the purpose of such privileges and immunities is not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of diplomatic missions as representing States, / Affirming that the rules of customary international law should continue to govern questions not expressly regulated by the provision of the present Convention / Have agreed...

Perhaps what is most unbalancing about this parenthesis is the suggestion, propounded in the first few lines, that the States engage in an act of memory ("Recalling..."). They have, indeed, a memory in common, pertaining to what diplomacy has been "since ancient times" and one which makes it possible to say that the States are "of one mind". If we can say of this memory that it signs the text, if the one mind is seen to exist as the Convention's basis, frame and limit, then the identity of the text has been problematised already, and that in the very assurance of its self-possession.

It is surely not insignificant that for a long time the meaning of diplomacy was synonymous with archiving.¹¹ A diplomatic oneness of mind with a memory and a reading library would know in advance the nature of that which cannot be spoken of in the record of the coming together, at Vienna, of an "overwhelming majority" of States within the United Nations. That which refuses the invitation to convene to come together and commune, and to archive this moment of law as law, is that which in the accord (born from States being of one mind) establishes *discord* as that which refuses to sign the Convention (which is also an archive of a consensual convening). It is also that which must be repressed at the moment of the law's self-proclamation.

There is enough, here, for the text of the Convention to have had its self-confidence (a confidence, also, in the promise of its impenetrability and generalisability) shaken. A History and an identity that remembers and safeguards this History, among others archiving it in the text of the Convention, have appropriated the law.

But the law binds only those who sign. And it is indeed in the motif of the signature that this deconstructive reading will find its pre-text.

It is among the objectives of this deconstructive exercise to focus on the Convention's attempts to master and define its own identity. The mastery appears practically flawless, but it can be seen to belie itself. We will attempt a reflection on how the Convention's rhetorical strategies involve it, and its signatories, in an ideological paradox that it would probably shy away from, chary of the politics of property and appropriation that guarantees the law, and the law alone, an access to its own identity.

Yet the issue of property and appropriation is, of course, where it all coheres. We read, in the Convention:

Article 29.

The person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention. The receiving state shall treat him with due respect and shall take all appropriate steps to prevent any attack on his person, freedom or dignity.

Article 30.

1. The private residence of a diplomatic agent shall enjoy the same inviolability and protection as the premises of the mission.

2. His papers, correspondence and, except as provided in paragraph 3 of article 31, his property, shall likewise enjoy inviolability.

Dare we see this as an allegory of sorts?

Can we resist the temptation of assimilating it and its governing concepts into a reading practice, that promises in fact to betray it completely?

Contemporary myths of language, particularly those affiliated to the "linguistic turn" in the humanities, have accustomed us to suspect of concepts concerning mediation, the proper and the law. In particular the dream of a neutral language, a language *super partes* which would be untouched by other languages between which it is called to mediate, is one upon which incredulity falls. Such a neutral language, politically measured, corrected of all possible *double entendres*, neutered of any association that is foreign to the business of law, unvitiated by implication and which exists only in what it means to say, represents a challenge to Institutions of Diplomatic Science and what they might wish to prescribe and proscribe. The language of the diplomat, but not only his, must make up its mind on whether it can still be a language open to mediation - and let this word be qualified by its etymological kinship with healing - or whether it will affirm its unassailable neutrality, its being in between two sides, its being always mediated, that is to say always already immune.

While it tries to make up its mind, let it hear what the myths spell out:

As distinguished from a litigation, a differend [*différend*] would be a case of conflict, between at least two parties, that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of a rule of judgment applicable to both arguments. One side's legitimacy does not imply the other's lack of legitimacy. However, applying a single rule of judgment would wrong (at least) one of them (and both of them if neither side admits this rule).¹²

A myth, this, with a suggestive applicability to the impasses which diplomacy sometimes encounters. There is then, no language that is metalinguistic. That is a drama explored in the theory of poststructuralism, but it is also the drama lived by diplomacy. In practice, and however many languages the diplomat knows, the diplomat can only ever inhabit the

dimensions of language that are bound to the immediacy and the dictates of circumstances beyond which no other or higher propriety can be accessible, while yet pretending that the possibility of the *meta* plane, to which the moment of mediation would *properly* belong, exists. Is not this the fiction and the site in which the Convention is written? But if there is always, only, a differend, then what is it that is proper to the Convention, merely?

To explain otherwise: the language of the diplomat, the Convention appears to affirm, possesses a memory of its own, and consequent upon that property is a responsibility unto history. That responsibility is ideologically charged, at least in respect of the ideology of language which it silently embraces. It is an ideology which renders it possible for the Convention to speak as from a place where full possession of its own speech can be claimed, and where it is unproblematically authentic to itself. This allows the Convention to inaugurate, in an act of illocution, what it does. The act is tantamount to the inauguration of a metalanguage, or "a rule of judgment", to which supposedly no differend would be intractable. And yet, truthfully - for a text, as deconstruction holds, cannot lie about itself even while it dissembles and gambles with self-disclosure and self-concealment - the Vienna Convention raises the question of how authentic its speech can ever be in laying claim to the status of "a rule of judgment".

Authenticity, let us remember, is a matter which both concerns the law (and, more precisely, the law of property) and the issue of identity. The issue of property is what determines the Convention's memory and guarantees the identity of that memory, such that the Convention may always be identical to itself irrespective of who lays claim, in whatever language, to its letter.

The question of the Convention's authenticity may thus be rephrased:

Who owns the text, or whom does this text own? Who is supposed to own this text, or whom is it supposed to own?

And also, and not least, who will own to this text?

Let us, in an attempt at an answer, look for the word *authentic* in the text. We find it at the end of the Convention, there where the issue of language, and thereby that of property and identity, is uppermost:

The original of the present Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic,...

You will doubtless guess why this sequence was chosen. It is intuitive, is it not, that the "equally authentic" character of five different languages is a chimerical entity. Admittedly, there is a pragmatic and a political advantage to be gained by assuming that all five languages are equally authentic, not least the fact that sensitivities concerning the relative importance of the five languages are not hurt. We understand this. The problem, however, is that language tends to undo confidence in the equivalence of different tongues and in their ability to congruently express similar sentiments. Indeed, the use of *similar* in the previous sentence indicates the problem, for similar effects are not good or precise enough in contexts like those which the Convention, in its multilingual forms, tries to regulate. *Identical* - returning us to the issue of identity and its link with authenticity - would be the adjective required, and the absoluteness of the identity at stake is suggestive of the problem. All the versions of the text, in all five languages, must be absolutely identical to each other. In none of the squarings off between the five versions of the Convention can a remainder or a lacuna of meaning be tolerated. Such a remainder or lacuna could lead to diplomatic embarrassment or, in that well-known and fateful euphemism, to a "diplomatic incident".

Now to believe that avoidance of a remainder or a lacuna of meaning is possible is to believe in the interchangeability of languages and to ignore problems of translation and of what can be lost in translation. It is also to disregard the fact that effects of ambiguity, nuancing and

connotation, some of them perhaps unwitting, will indubitably take over to erode the integrity of the Convention's identity once it finds itself expressed in more than one language.

What can be said about this, except that it forces us to rethink the text's canonicity? When a text attempts to be canonical, when it is conceived to speak the law, it tries to disclose its own impregnability. Even if it were found to have errors and loopholes, the fault couldn't be hailed but as a hallowed guilt, itself enshrined in the law which the text speaks and is. Such a text cannot be disqualified even if it is disqualified by its own language. To challenge the authority of its word would be to challenge the law. That would also be to think the unthinkable: the unthinkable of the challenging of the law, from which the history that the law would bind could then ensue unregulatedly.

It follows almost logically, therefore, that the text must declare and legitimise its own authenticity. And it is singular indeed that it must do this in the very same breath as it affirms its status of equal authenticity in Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The possibility of equal authenticity is, subversively, also the possibility of unequal authenticity.

The text's greatest embarrassment lies here, in its language, and at that point where it declares its own authenticity - its self-possession and self-identity - in different languages, the multiplication of which speaks a plurality of histories as well as a plurality of tongues. Over those histories, and those languages, no metalanguage can mediate, either arbitrarily or healingly - at least if certain poststructuralist views of language are to be believed.

Why is it that the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, even to a reader unversed in deconstruction (for few readers would really take the claim of equal authenticity at face value) reveals a disconcertingly high confidence in the transparency of language, and in language's capacity to be unproblematically referential, perspicuous, and denotative? Why does it appear to affect a disingenuous innocence in language's capacity to possess and identify what it wants to say? Why is it that it seems to believe in language's own authenticity, upon which another authenticity - that of diplomacy - would rest?

Need we really ask, except to anticipate that the answer will say as much about the language of deconstruction - which tends to suspect the affectation of transparency and perspicuousness - as it does about the language of diplomacy - which often needs to contrive to be both affirmative and non-committal? This incommensurability between the ethos of the two discourses will, as we will explain, ensure that neither emerges unscathed from the encounter with the other.

Let us first, however, read on a little further, and see what follows the assurance in the Convention of equal authenticity. We read that the Convention "shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the United Nations, who shall send certified copies thereof to all States belonging to any of the four categories mentioned in article 48". This is taken from the sentence which concludes, just before the signatures which ratify the Convention and to whose problematic nature we will need to return,¹³ the Convention. And article 48, to which the above sentence refers and appeals, reads:

The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States Members of the United Nations or of any of the specialized agencies or Parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, and by any other State invited by the General Assembly of the United Nations to become a party to the Convention as follows: until 31 October 1961 at the Federal Ministry of Affairs for Austria and subsequently, until 31 March 1962, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

The law, then, circumscribes itself through the imperativeness of deadlines. "Sign me by such a time," it says, "and you will bind me to come into being, to bind you with the law of the past and future history of diplomacy"; "fail to sign me before the allotted time, and you will not be bound by me, nor will you bind me". The Convention at Vienna, then, or its text, will not have

been the last word. There is yet time, until 31 March 1962, in which one can sign in order to *submit to* but also to *birth* the letter of the law of diplomacy.

It was never going to be, simply, a matter of simply ratifying the Convention. There is also and necessarily time in which to refuse what the Convention attempts to lay down as law, and the time for that refusal is written into the text, which thereby inscribes within itself the possibility that unless it is signed it would be pregnant only with the *promise* of its lawfulness.

There is a strange temporality at work here. The Convention, written throughout in a play of tenses which appears to assert that it is already binding and settled (it is written, in the preamble, that "The States parties to the present Convention...*have agreed*", and in the conclusion that "the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being authorised thereto by their respective governments, *have signed* the present Convention") actually defers to the tyranny of a future of signatures: signatures which can be forthcoming or withheld.

Nor will the future unfold itself unstintingly. The Convention, when signed, will have been ratified by the States in whose name representing diplomats will have come to sign. There will have been a period of waiting, in the hope that more proxies - for self-presence was never on the cards, it was always going to be a game of deferrals and relays - would put their names to the document. And then, at the deadline, when it would have been clear that no one was going to come to sign any more, even if there remained space if not time, then the Convention would have been bound: bound into being; bound by those who signed and who it in turn binds to itself as to the law; but bound also, and perhaps above all, by those who chose not to turn up in time to sign, and who it therefore does not bind nor is bound by.

Thus will have been accepted, or refused, the time of an inauguration of a law of diplomacy which would also be the time of the remembrance, archiving, and contracting of a history of diplomacy.

And the temporality is all the stranger because it is forcing us, here, now, to speak of the Viennese past of March 1962 in tenses which seem inappropriate, which seem to merge past, present and future in a oneness of time which is unrealistic and is yet the realtime of diplomacy, at least since March 1962.

And what if one does not sign in time (we can indeed, keep to the tense of realtime, the present) or withholds the signature? Is not this, as well, written in the Convention? Is it not this, ultimately, that is the trouble? Have we not said above, already, that the text of the Convention disqualifies what it excludes, that the text is closed to its outside, that the play of *almost* in so many sentences extolling the near-unanimity of parties to the Convention is significant, that the law of diplomacy can henceforth be approximated to or deviated from? So many different ways of defining the inside and the outside of the Convention, or what is proper to it and what is not. So many different ways of approaching, to re-cite other questions we have asked, the issue of who owns the Convention, whom it owns, and, most of all, who owns to it.

In the event, we know that the majority of the United Nations' member states did sign. The majority of the peoples of the world owed to it, signing it through the proxies (or diplomats) of the proxies (or governments) of the people. Strange, indeed, that the law must be instituted by the proxy of the proxy of an authority which derives from the people, who are ultimately of little account, as is marked by their metonymic representation through the word *States*.

We do not want to know - or need to know - which States did not sign, and why. It is enough to know that unanimity was not absolute. One state would have been enough, according to the logic of exemplarity which deconstruction has shown to be the logic of universality,¹⁴ that it was always possible not to sign. We also need to remember that in the realtime of diplomacy one does not sign the convention once only, but recurrently. A state is always ratifying or not ratifying the Vienna Convention, through its adherence or non-adherence to the law of diplomacy.

A pariah state which does not sign, which places itself outside the practice of diplomatic law - like the country where the iconic figure of deconstruction was born: please allow us this allusion rather than an identification of what is, in any case, well known already¹⁵ - represents the outside of the law of diplomacy, over which the law can pronounce only its reproach. For the law in question can seek to bind only those who agree, recurrently, to be bound. Those who remain outside the jurisdiction of diplomacy are those who are excluded from the law of the Convention. And those who remain outside, who refuse to sign, are precisely those with whom a process of translation is most urgent.

Was there not always going to have to be a process of translation? Who is it that is not covered by Chinese, French, English, Russian and Spanish? All those who do not answer to those languages, who do not own to them and who yet would like to own to and answer to the Convention, must translate or be translated in binding themselves to the law of diplomacy. Yet is there not also a political violence in this privileging of five languages which, though they cover the majority of the world's population, commits all the others who do not speak one of them to a necessary exercise of translation? If there is going to have to be translation, is authenticity assured? Do we really believe that it is?

You will perhaps tell us that one need not be a deconstructionist to build up distrust in certain expressions of the Vienna Convention and in its deliberately disingenuous faith in language's perspicuity. That is true. We agree. But one perhaps does need deconstruction *to insist on making eloquent what the Convention silently suppresses*. Deconstruction can only uncover what is in the text already, what the law of diplomacy has written while writing itself and its knowledge of itself: a knowledge which disassembles. To us, indeed, the critical question is the following: if diplomacy knows about itself, already, what deconstruction reveals through a reading of a law of diplomacy, then what is it that hangs in the balance when deconstruction makes that knowledge explicit? Is it merely, and crassly, the exposure of a certain "bad faith" of diplomacy, which diplomats might in any case present as necessitated and as marking, in a strange paradox, the best of intentions? Should not the phrases we have already cited reassure us: "[The Convention's] gestation (1956-59)...was attended by considerable goodwill and co-operation and a good deal of hard work", and emerged from "an almost unique impetus towards international accord"?¹⁶

Let us not forget, as a preliminary to our attempt at a reply, that nurturing the stock idea of a diplomat is the perception of a person who is fluent in more than one language, and of one who is allowed to reside in and move between countries with a certain facility and in enjoyment of certain privileges. The diplomat, then, is a person who can move between languages and between states. S/he is, indeed, a person who by *definition* moves between different states of language. S/he is a figure who makes a dwelling in different political and linguistic states. Such a figure must be linguistically sophisticated, and quite as sophisticated as the language of deconstruction which, if it holds itself to any precept at all, binds itself to the imperative which derives from the emblematic French phrase *plus d'un langue*: "more than one language", but also "no more of one language".

Deconstructionist texts often work precisely through exploiting and deploying the connotative resources of more than one language. To a deconstructionist sensibility, indeed, there are probably few things quainter than the prospect of a multi-national assembly of diplomats twiddling their simultaneous translation sets to receive a flow of instantaneously translated languages. The assumption which makes simultaneous translation possible is that languages can unproblematically and totalisingly denote meaning in a one to one relationship with each other and with that which they purportedly designate. Coupled to this is a further assumption, namely that meaning is never compromised by being expressed in a language other to that within which it was originally uttered.

If diplomats are themselves so sophisticated, why is their sophistication so frequently suspended? The example we have just cited - diplomats' recourse to simultaneous translation - suggests to us a strategic suspension of their intuition of the complexity of language. For indeed, of diplomats' linguistic sophistication we have no doubt. We are sure that a number of participants at this conference will have anecdotal accounts of the trouble taken over the

drafting into a document of a single word or phrase. Diplomats know only too well, at first hand and very often in all too direct a knowledge of the stakes, what can hang on the political and diplomatic class securing agreement over a sticking point whose dimension can be verbal as much as political.

No greater indication of diplomats' sophistication can be given than was given to us by the members of the Academy organising this conference. We will not be embarrassing them if we say this. When we first read the text of the Vienna Convention it was in an electronic format, the existence of which they generously pointed out to us. The format can be downloaded from a website, where the text of the Convention is subjected to linguistic analysis by the staff and students at the academy. On this electronic text one can find at various points, in the form of question marks and open books (the icons chosen are not insignificant), cues to other web pages, where the ambiguity of diplomatic language - that same ambiguity whose presence "in 'international relations' is not to be imputed", according to Raymond Aron, "to the inadequacy of our concepts", but to "an integral part of reality itself"¹⁷ - is pursued.

The question therefore restates itself: if the language of diplomacy is so sophisticated, and if diplomats are so aware of ambiguity and of the way in which language undoes itself, why does it appear that diplomacy appears sometimes so blind to the complexly elusive nature of language? Or is it, as all of us here know (let us not be coy), that diplomacy necessarily has to engage on occasion in a *strategic suspension of its linguistic sophistication*? In this respect, is it not significant that while the rest of the electronic text is tagged with question marks and open books, there is no icon at all to be found in the space stretching between the fateful Article 48 and the end of the text?

To spell things out: is it not significant that the absence of glosses is most visible where the text's presumed blindness to its own vulnerably sustaining strategies is glossed over by the professional diplomat? If one answers in the affirmative, it is assumed that the analysis of the document's rhetorical strategies can provide the reader with the most attendable testimony to the ideologies that govern and purpose its History. The question we'd like to ask, we would naturally want to ask language; but language, in the game of self-disclosure it plays, could make only a parody of its true self in its response. It is a given of poststructuralist myth that language signs as its own ghost-writer. Let us then agree that in order to interrogate the text itself as to the truth of this same assumption it is advisable to attend to its unstrategic silences, rather than to the strategy of what it states. And would not this be the role of deconstruction: bringing forth to visibility what diplomacy finds most discomfitingly deconstituting about itself, and thereby making all the more important in the tension arising from that exposure (as we suspected, you will recall, in the beginning of the paper), the re-inscription of diplomacy?

It is all very well for you, you will probably tell us in response. We live in the real world, you will say, where decisions have to be taken, where diplomats' responsibility to language must be sacrificed to their responsibility to history. We understand, and we sympathise. The immediate pressures of a diplomatic crisis, away from the safety of conferences, have to be resolved through a use of language which is measured to the situation in hand. The law of the language of diplomacy, above all, has to regulate what in reality passes under the name of diplomacy. The difference between diplomacy and deconstruction, then, is the difference between practice and theory: between the constraints faced and smoothed by the pragmatist and the aporias agonised over by the philosopher (let us not forget that, among other things, deconstruction represents to some extent a philosophy of language).

Again, we agree. But that is not all. We are not so sure that the responsibilities to history and to language are so easily divorced. We shall give only one example in support of this view, and that will concern the issue of *persona non grata*, of the diplomatic personnel who, because they fail to abide by the law of diplomacy (or because the receiving State fails to), end up expelled or refused entry by the receiving State. Such people find themselves outside the law of the Convention. Here, in confirmation, is the Convention's Article 9:

The receiving State may at any time and without having to explain its decision, notify the sending State that the head of the mission or any member of the diplomatic staff of the mission is persona non grata or that any member of the staff of the mission is not acceptable. In any such case, the sending State shall, as appropriate, either recall the person concerned or terminate his functions with the mission. A person may be declared non grata or not acceptable before arriving in the territory of the receiving State.

This, of course, would spell the defeat of what the Convention seeks to regulate. By definition, it places itself outside the Convention. The Convention therefore internalises the possibility of its outside, and of the unpredictability and unaccountability of that outside: "at any time and without having to explain its decision".

The outside need not be explained then, nor need it be phrased within language.

But what of that instance of history - and language - which might seek cover under the roof of the diplomatic language of the Convention, *from the outside*, however exceptional that instance may be? Deconstruction, as the discourse of "the logic of parergonality" which is sceptical about the integrity of frames, of the integrity of the margins between inside and outside, will not be surprised that the Convention has no terms for what might seek to penetrate it. Here, in illustration, is a telling remark *by a diplomat* about the Convention's incapacity to come to terms with its outside:

The inviolability of the premises of a diplomatic mission has traditionally rendered them liable to be sought as a place of refuge. The question of the existence and validity of this right of asylum from political persecution (it is not normally applicable in ordinary criminal cases) remains dormant for long periods, only to be the subject of acrimonious discussion from time to time. In Europe the practice is nearly extinct. It is a situation that can, in the end, be resolved only by negotiation, *if only because the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, whilst ensuring the inviolability of the premises of a diplomatic mission (and thus of those within it) makes no provision for the departure under safe conduct of any person not covered by the Convention [emphasis added]*.¹⁸

The Convention (being that which preserves boundaries, which regulates the traversal of State upon State, but which paradoxically needs to believe that meaning is equivalent to itself and self-identical across languages) does not provide for what is outside it or for what might yet appeal to the law of diplomacy. The situation needs, in such a situation, another board of appeal - our source mentions, as a possibility, the Convention on Diplomatic Asylum drawn up by the Tenth Inter-American Conference of Caracas in 1954.¹⁹

This referral (which would also be a deferral) to a non-European situation is not accidental. Are we not told also, by our source, that a situation like the one above is "nearly extinct" in Europe: as if that were reassuring, as if that keeps us in Europe as in the home of a perfectly well-ordered diplomacy. Is such sanguinity not misplaced?

Let us explain why such sanguinity in the terms of the Convention, and in the primacy of Europe's ratification of those terms, is misplaced. We do that by enjoining you not to forget the determinism, in all this, which is exerted by the city of Vienna. Vienna is the city where the law of diplomacy under discussion was launched. It is, for diplomacy's law, a home. Vienna is also, however, even as we speak and as you will know much more fully than we would presume to do, the city which places itself outside the *oikos* of diplomacy. It is presently one of the homes of diplomacy which is estranged from itself, which is estranging others, and which is estranged by others. History - we couldn't agree with you more - always foists, unpredictably - for who could have seen this coming, or returning (is it not the prospect of a certain return of and from Europe's past which is most worrying about all this?) - the outside of the law of diplomacy upon itself. Vienna, by placing itself outside the fold of diplomacy - let us not bandy words, for the moment, over "who started it"²⁰ - forces the law of diplomacy, to which the city lends its name, to fold back upon itself and consider how the outside might irrupt on the apparently inviolable inside, and to do so in a manner which was always already possible, which was always already inscribed in the law of diplomacy and indeed in diplomacy

itself. For does not *diploun*, the Greek word from which diplomacy is derived, script this in advance? Listen to the past of diplomacy, which continues to dictate its present and future, and which predisposes it, as we shall show, to the counter-identification with deconstruction:

[*Diplomacy*] is derived from the Greek verb "diploun" meaning "to fold." In the days of the Roman Empire all passports, passes along imperial roads and way-bills were stamped on double metal plates, folded and sewn together in a particular manner. These metal passes were called "diplomas." At a later date this word "diploma" was extended to cover other and less metallic official documents, especially those conferring privileges or embodying arrangements with foreign communities or tribes.²¹

There is a strange fatedness in all this. For diplomacy, the discourse of the fold, is here being undone by deconstruction, a discourse which has always, in ways too complex to rehearse here, insisted on the *pli* within language.²² Diplomacy and deconstruction: both are languages of the fold, which return upon themselves to undo themselves and each other in the game of counter-identification we have been pursuing all along. If, as we think, diplomacy is undone by deconstruction (by a discourse which can become *non grata* because, like an agent provocateur, it sometimes takes up residence within the spaces of the other's discourse in order to subvert the poise of those spaces) it is because it is made to go back upon itself, and discover that what was its outside can always be made to turn upon the inside, that the outside - the unthinkable of diplomacy which the law seeks to expel or at least regulate - can always, as it has done at Vienna (the very home of diplomacy's law) penetrate what was seemingly impregnable. Diplomacy's undoing by deconstruction is therefore a folding of diplomacy upon itself, a forcing of diplomacy to understand that its greatest responsibility would lie in facing up, in the name of both practice *and* theory, to what it already knows when it affects not to know. Theory would, thereby, have shown practice what was in theory always possible: deconstruction, discounted as lacking in pragmatism because it is, by definition, theoretical, is always liable to return to haunt (diplomatic) practice with the threat of a possibility, hitherto thought merely theoretical, that suddenly becomes all too actual.

In the process, however, deconstruction is in no position to affect smugness, or an independence from diplomacy. Diplomacy is what once saved it in an all too pragmatic situation.²³ Diplomacy is what it has crossed (in all senses of that word) when considering the monolingualism of that diplomatic other from whom, after all this, it must expect a response.²⁴ Diplomacy, above all, is a discourse of folds and postal relays, of encounters with the alterity within language which threatens to compel the same moment of recognition and counter-recognition that deconstruction itself found in another discourse which found its home in Vienna: psychoanalysis.²⁵ For Vienna, it is as well to recall, also witnessed the inauguration of the discipline of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is based on the remembrance within speech of a past which continues to exert a dislocating influence upon the present: a discipline which discerns within the speaking subject's division from itself the unrealisable desire of a wholeness that would be both originary and promised.²⁶ It is fitting, we cannot help thinking, that diplomacy in its establishment of its law found itself at Vienna, and discovered in this geographical coincidence with psychoanalysis the illusion of a unitary and regulated wholeness. It forever discovers, there, that its being exceeds what the law foresees.

Psychoanalysis, like deconstruction, could have told it in advance that that might happen, and *avant la lettre*: before the letter of the law. The explanation of this relation of antecedence concerns time, and it is time which compels us to say that the explanation would need to be the subject of another conference, where in our consideration of these three discourses - diplomacy, deconstruction, and psychoanalysis, all uncannily centred on *la politique de l'autruche*²⁷ - we would not only have been speaking about language, diplomatically.

ENDNOTES

1. The ambiguity of the word *assumed* is significant. *Assumed* can mean to *take as read* and to *take on*; both meanings are in play here.
2. Christopher Norris, *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice*, rev. ed. (London: Routledge, 1991). To anticipate: what we will undertake to do in this paper is to indicate that the word *philosophy* in the quotation is substitutable by the word *diplomacy*. We would ask you, particularly, to attend in what follows to the echoes of "self-authenticating", "blind-spots" and "rhetorical strategies".
3. The sense of *ruin* is foregrounded in dictionary definitions of a second meaning of *undo*: see in particular the entry for *undo* in that definitive lexicographic arbiter, the *Oxford English Dictionary*.
4. Consider, as an extreme example of this, the following sentence in the first paragraph to a deconstructionist text: "I am addressing you, am I not?" - Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, trans. George Collins (London: Verso, 1997), 1.
5. It might be objected that any mode of literary criticism can inhabit a text in this way. There is, however, a qualitative difference in deconstruction: one too complex to develop here, but which has to do with a play of citation peculiar to deconstruction - and therefore of speaking the language of the text in a manner analogous to that whereby diplomats speak the language of the place they professionally inhabit. Concerning the importance of citation as a deconstructionist resource, see Claudine Sartillot, *Citation and Modernity: Derrida, Joyce and Brecht* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).
6. We shall not go so far, in imitation of a certain notorious statement within deconstruction which holds that "deconstruction is justice", as to say that "deconstruction is diplomacy".
7. For examples of how and why deconstruction is as much suspected as it is applauded, see Niall Lucy, *Debating Derrida* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1995).
8. Jacques Derrida, "Between Brackets I," in *Points....: Interviews, 1974- 1994*, ed. Elisabeth Weber, trans. Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 19.
9. Charles J. Lewis, *State and Diplomatic Immunity*, 3rd ed. (London: Lloyd's of London Press, 1990), 127.
10. R. G. Feltham, *Diplomatic Handbook*, 6th ed. (Longman: London, 1993), 41.
11. The links, vested within etymology, of diplomacy and archivisation are spelt out in Harold Nicholson, *Diplomacy*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 12: "The expression 'diplomacy' was thus for many years associated in men's minds with the preservation of archives, the analysis of past treaties and the study of the history of international negotiations."
12. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, trans. Georges van den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), xi.
13. There is much, within deconstruction, on the logic and politics of signatures which could be applied to the practice of ratification, but that would require another paper and will have to be deferred to another context. For an indication of what is at stake, see Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc*, ed. Gerald Graff, trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, 2nd ed. (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1989).
14. For a discussion of this, see Michael A. Naas, "Introduction: For Example," in Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael B. Naas (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), vii-lx.
15. For Derrida's account of his experiences in the country in which he was born, see the essay "Circumfession" in Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
16. Lewis, *State and Diplomatic Immunity*, 127.
17. Quoted in James der Derian, *On Diplomacy: A Genealogy of Western Estrangement* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), 14.
18. Feltham, *Diplomatic Handbook*, 130.

19. Ibid.
20. The question "who started it" is used in a double sense here, to refer to a gambit used (perhaps *over-used*) in diplomatic wrangles concerning the present crisis diplomatic and political involving Vienna, but also in allusion to the deployments of the phrase in a number of poststructuralist texts. See, particularly, Jean-Luc Nancy and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *The Title of the Letter: A Reading of Lacan*, trans. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992).
21. Nicolson, *Diplomacy*, 11.
22. See, in evidence, Jacques Derrida, "Unsealing ('the old new language')," *Points...: Interviews*, 115-31, and also Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge (London: Routledge, 1992), 221-52. The latter essay, in particular, speaks of a relation of "chiasmatic invagination" which we believe also implicates the discourses of diplomacy and deconstruction. Our essay, in the space available to it, can only hint at that relation, which we shall in future be exploring elsewhere.
23. We refer to the well-known occasion when diplomatic intervention helped to resolve an unpleasant situation in the former Czechoslovakia, in which deconstruction's iconic figure was framed (a word which embeds a suggestive irony) through the planting of drugs in his luggage.
24. *The Monolingualism of the Other; or, The Prosthesis of Origin* is the title of a book by Derrida (the English translation, by Patrick Mensah, was published by Stanford University Press in 1998) which speaks of the drama of being - always - outside, and above all of being exiled from a *propriety* of language such that one is compelled to say, in the most memorable and emblematic sentences in the book, "I only have one language; it is not mine" (1), and, also, to consider two propositions about language: "We only ever speak one language - or rather one idiom only"; "We never speak only one language - or rather there is no pure idiom." (8) The implications for our argument are too evident for us to need to spell them out.
25. The main text for deconstruction's exploration of its own problematised investment in a logic of self-replication, postal relays and folds is Jacques Derrida, *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987).
26. Might we not read, here, in an allegorical relation, the major biblical myths of language which between them spell out the originary and telic myths of language: the Babel myth of the confusion of tongues, and the Pentecostal myth whereby all languages become comprehensible - the one instigating the inaugural scene for diplomacy, the other, perhaps, marking its beyond?
27. *La politique de l'autruche* is a phrase employed by the French theorist of psychoanalysis, Jacques Lacan: see his "Seminar on the Purloined Letter," trans. Jeffrey Mehlman, *Yale French Studies* 48 (1973), 38-72. We use it here because it keys, emblematically and fatefully, but in ways whose demonstration would unfortunately require more space than is available to us, the connections between psychoanalysis, history, diplomacy and deconstruction.

■ THE LANGUAGES OF THE KNIGHTS:
LEGISLATION, ADMINISTRATION AND DIPLOMACY IN A MULTILINGUAL STATE
(14TH - 16TH CENTURIES)

Joseph M. Brincat

THE BACKGROUND

The particular structure of the Order of St. John is quite intriguing to linguists. As it progressed from its early function of a convent with a hospital to the status of a princely state, it had to tackle a number of administrative problems and these were intimately linked to linguistic issues. As we all know, the Order was an international institution, whose members came from all over Europe and therefore spoke different languages. We all know that here in Malta they were organised in separate units called "Langues", and that there were eight of them, namely France, Auvergne, Provence, Aragon, Castille and Leon, Italy, Germany, England, and that these subdivisions reflected the languages they spoke. In English the term "langue" clearly refers to the administrative unit while "language" carries the normal denotation. Thanks to the French loan-word (a misnomer which linguistic scholarship has not managed to substitute by a more precise and neutral term), English makes a distinction which is impossible in the Romance languages, but then, by using the same word for both (*lingua*, *langue*, *lengua*) the latter convey the full force of the semantic bond which identifies the institution with the speech of its members.

This is apparently a result of the identification between *nation* and *language*, a concept which is even older than the Classical age because the Romans and the Greeks called foreigners "barbarians", a term they adopted from the Sumerians who called foreigners "stammerers", people who speak in an incomprehensible way. However the linguistic situation in Europe was not as clear cut as the Order's set-up presents it. First of all the Convent's division into langues only came about after 1291 (Luttrell 1993: 260-261) and became more evident in Rhodes (1310-1522) where separate auberges were built for resident knights. This practice was maintained in Malta, first in Birgu and then in Valletta. However, when the langues were set up, they did not really reflect nationhood or linguistic custom. For example in the 15th century, French was already the standard language in Provence and Auvergne as well, with the result that actually there were three French-speaking langues. On the contrary Italy was unified only in Malta, for the priories which constituted it actually belonged to different states. The Portuguese were grouped with Castille and Leon while Aragon, comprising the regions of Catalonia and Navarre, was a second Spanish-speaking langue. Apparently the main aim was to organise the various priories (which were the Order's principal sources of income) into groupings for administrative and financial considerations. The set-up therefore ensured the supremacy of the French knights who were the most numerous and who provided the larger part of the Order's revenues (Blondy 1993: 660-661).

THE SPOKEN REGISTER

The linguistic issue was further complicated by the fact that in most regions the local dialects were still very much alive in everyday speech, and this must have created one of the most urgent problems ever since the Order's foundation. What was the Order's language of ordinary conversation? Obviously, knights of the same langue must have spoken their own language between themselves, but they also had to converse with the knights of the other langues. Information on this issue is lacking from the documents and one can generalise what Ann Williams points out with reference to the Chapters General, that "there are no notes on the debates of the Sixteen" because only their decisions were recorded (1993: 294). The predominance of the French knights could have ensured the adoption of French as the

medium for everyday conversation, especially during the first century when the Hospital was situated on the mainland, in Jerusalem, and then in Acre. Laura Minervini explains that the expansion of French in the Eastern Mediterranean was due to the rise of the Crusader states because these were led by a French-speaking aristocracy and colonised by Latins who came over from all parts of Europe, especially from the Gallo-Romance regions. French influence covered a vast area, from Cyprus to Constantinople, Thessalonika, Morea and the Aegean and, although French was spoken mostly by the upper classes it was also written for administrative and literary purposes, rivalling Latin. However, extant texts produced in the area show the formation of a koiné marked by increasing contacts with Venetian and North Italian, which reached hybrid proportions in works dated 1367, 1406 and 1423 (Minervini 1996, section 5). When the Order later moved to the islands of Cyprus (1291) and Rhodes (1306) and embarked on maritime activities by forming a small fleet, it could have adopted the *lingua franca*, which in the Eastern Mediterranean was Venetian-based, especially at the lower sociolinguistic levels.

THE WRITTEN REGISTER: FROM FRENCH TO LATIN

The above considerations help us to understand why the Order had, in its first centuries, adopted French as its official language rather than Latin, in spite of its religious and international character. This means that it did not follow the linguistic practice of the Church, which had picked up the linguistic legacy of Rome as early as the 4th century and maintained it in its liturgy and administration up to the middle of the 20th century. Delaville le Roulx (1904: 5) wrote that the rules and statutes and their comments were originally written in Latin but, since the knights were more familiar with the sword than with the pen (as he put it), their knowledge of Latin was rather limited, so much so that the Master Alphonse of Portugal (1203-1206) ordered the translation of the privileges and statutes into the vulgar languages. This practice continued for a long time and later attempts to return to Latin were unsuccessful. Roberto Valentini (1934: 78) pointed out that the original proceedings of the earliest chapters general that have been conserved at the Order's Archives in Malta (codex n. 280), held between 1330 and 1344, the first one in Montpellier and the other five in Rhodes, are written in French (the statutes) and Latin (the formalities). Another valuable collection is in codex Arch. 64, described by Zammit Gabarretta and Mizzi as "five original documents on parchment" (1964: 209), but defined by Valentini as "copie autentiche, in pergamena e munite della *bullæ plumbea*" (1934: 78). It records the statutes and ordinances enacted by the Chapters General held in 1335, 1344, 1347, 1353 and 1366 "gallico idiomate exarata".

In the late 14th century recourse to Latin became more frequent. The proceedings of the Chapter General of 1383 ab. inc. [=1384], held in Naples under the Grand Master Roberto Caracciolo, were written in Latin but this was a special case, because Caracciolo had been elected in the schism of Urban VI and Clement VII. He had been named by Urban VI and was not recognised by the Convent in Rhodes where Juan Fernandez de Heredia remained faithful to Clement VII. More importantly, a few years before that, in 1357, the need was felt for a Latin version of the statutes of the Order. Valentini revealed that this collection only included decisions which in some way or another concerned or were of interest to the priory of Lombardy, and he interpreted this as proof of the fact that the French language was giving rise to difficulties in interpretation and was therefore arousing controversy. He quoted the foreword:

Frater Rogerius de Pinibus dei gracia sacre domus hospitalis sancti Johannis Jerosolimitiani magister ... Nos itaque volentes tales incredulos de statutis eisdem reddere cerciores, regulam, statuta et consuetudines nostras et nostre religionis de galica lingua, in qua comuniter sunt redacta et continuo rediguntur, resecatis aliquibus ex eis que vobis non necessaria neque utilia videbamus, invicem deliberato consilio, de nostra certa sciencia transferri iussimus in latinum, que sub bulla nostra comuni plumbea vobis presencialiter destinamus.

It was therefore the Order's Grand Master himself who ordered the translation and guaranteed its contents by his seal. Valentini also dug up an authenticated contemporary

copy of the second part of the proceedings of the Chapter General held under Antonio Fluvian de la Rivière in 1433, written in the Sicilian bureaucratic koiné: "la secunda parti di stabilimenti et ordinanci facti et ordinati per lu reverendissimu patre in Christu frate Antoni Flaviani dignissimu Maestru di lu hospitali di Sanctu Joh." This version must have been meant for the priory of Messina. Similar versions must have existed for the use of the various priories, and Valentini mentions copies in Provençal, Catalan, French, Italian, Latin and German and underlines that the administration of justice in the provinces depended on them. Although a few can be found in the Order's Archives in Valletta, most of them would have been kept in the relative priories and may now be conserved in local libraries all over Europe. Such copies were still made during the 17th and the 18th centuries.

Anyway it is quite evident that towards the end of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th there was a return to the use of Latin. In fact the proceedings of the Chapters General held from 1454 onwards in Rhodes and in Malta are in Latin or in Latin and Italian, while French only reappeared in 1776 under Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan (Arch. 280-309). Before tackling the question why the Order abandoned French and turned to Latin and Italian, I wish to explain why I am taking the Chapters General as my point of reference. The Chapter General was the highest legislative authority of the Order and was convened by the Grand Master after its authorisation with a Papal Bull. It was composed of sixteen members, called the Venerable Sixteen, because the eight langues were represented by two delegates each. The laws and statutes approved during the Chapter General were submitted to the Pope for his approval and in this way they became perpetually binding, unless they were revoked in a later Chapter General. The language used in writing these proceedings was not chosen haphazardly, although it is logical to imagine that debates could have been held in different languages. I have already quoted Ann Williams' observation that there are no notes of the actual debates, and we therefore know nothing about the language used in their oral discussion.

It is very interesting to note that in the introductory pages of a collection of statutes compiled in the 15th century (Arch. 1698, c.14a), the prior of Hungary Giacomo de Soris explained that a simplified form of Latin was being used intentionally:

Nunc de Regula et Statutis apud urbem romanam in sancta congregatione ad ipsius augmentum et Religionis confirmationem factis verba faciemus in quo humili stilo et materno quasi sermone utimur ut, cum ipsi militis magis ferro quam litteris apti sint, ad interpretanda varia rerum vocabula laborare non cogantur.

The above statement, discovered by Valentini (1934: 84), may be a symptom of the difficulties that the Order had met and was trying to surmount when it decided to adopt Latin and abandon the use of French. In order to understand why this came about it is necessary to have a look at the contemporary linguistic scenario in France and in Italy. During the 14th and 15th centuries the French language was undergoing a traumatic experience due to radical phonological changes, while Humanism was spreading from Italy to all Europe, fostering the use of a better kind of Latin. The 12th and 13th centuries had witnessed the rise of Francien, the dialect of the Ile-de-France, above all the dialects of the Langue d'oïl as the language of power and of literary texts like the *chansons de geste* (Chanson de Roland etc.) and the *romans courtois* of Chrétien de Troyes. These gave it great prestige not only in France but all over Europe. Despite the difficulties, a relatively standardised and quasi-phonemic orthography was widely used. However, during the next three centuries that stability was thrown into turmoil by very rapid phonetic changes which produced many monosyllabic homophones (like *mère*, *mer*, *maire* and *cent*, *sent*, *sans*, *sang*) and transformed diphthongs like /oi/ into /we/ and then to /wa/ (as in *danois*) or to /e/ (as in *anglais*). Following the advent of Humanism and the reawakening of interest in Latin, the orthography became more complicated with quasi-etymological spellings. In this way letters present in the Latin etymon were reinserted in the corresponding French derivation, like the *g* in *doigt* from *digitum* and the *p* in *sept*, sometimes erroneously as in *poids*, *sçavoir*, *peult*. These letters were written but not pronounced and, together with the monosyllables mentioned above, created difficulties for French people and especially for foreigners. In fact a number of them were later abandoned: *oncques*, *soubz*, *doulx*, *sepmaine* (see Ayres-Bennett 1996: 7-12, 98-139). Not surprisingly a

historian of the French language summed up the situation with the words "jamais l'orthographe française n'a été aussi compliquée qu'à l'époque du moyen français" (Chaurand, 1972: 67).

Therefore, at the time of the passage from Old French to Middle French (and the language later necessitated another reform in the Classical period, which was accepted by the Académie in 1740 and remained stable since then), Latin enjoyed the advantage of high stability thanks to the fact that its teaching was based on literary models which were unchanged for 1500 years. Moreover it had been codified in grammars that continued to be studied throughout the Middle Ages, from Varrone, Quintilian, Donatus, and Priscianus to Isidorus of Seville and Alexandre de Villedieu in the late Middle Ages and then on to Guarino Veronese (1418) and the Humanists. On the other hand, the first French grammar did not appear before 1530, when John Palsgrave published his *Esclaircissement de la langue françoise*, because W. Bibbesworth's late 14th century handbook only gave a list of words and phrases for foreigners. This means that in the 14th and 15th centuries foreigners had no real aids to learn the language and consequently French lost much of its influence abroad, especially in southern Italy, Sicily and Cyprus.

ITALIAN

It is quite surprising to observe that Italian was increasingly used by the Order, considering that the Italian knights were a minority when compared to the French and the Spanish, especially when one keeps in mind that, while France and Spain were very strong monarchies, Italy had a fragmentary political situation which could not give any kind of backing to its language. However, one should not underestimate the influence of Venice, which had a number of colonies in the eastern Mediterranean, and of Florence through its banking and financial activities. Significantly, the use of Italian by the Order of St. John did not start in Malta but in Rhodes. Although there were only two Italian Grand Masters (Giovanni Battista Ursini 1464-96 and Fabrizio del Carretto 1513-1521), the presence of Italians in the Chancery may have been helpful. Due to the Latinisation of names, it is not always easy to determine the nationality of the Vice-Chancellor and other amanuenses employed there, especially if they were not knighted, but Melchiorre Bandini who became Vice-Chancellor in 1437 and Tommaso Bosio (locumtenens in 1529 then Vice-Chancellor until 1538, but often substituted by regents) were certainly Italian, and possibly also Heliseus de Lamanna (1451) and Bartolomeo Poliziano (1501). However, the inclusion of Italian texts in the proceedings of the Chapters General does not always coincide with the above names. Anyway the Order's Chancery employed persons of diverse nationality, who copied documents, wrote letters, drew up treaties and composed other works like histories of the Order. It is known, for instance, that Grand Master La Valette had Oliver Starkey, an Englishman, as his Latin secretary and he also had an Italian and a Spanish secretary (Luttrell 1968). This seems to indicate that these were the three languages most widely used in the Order's affairs, although one must add French.

The first important text in the Italian language was discovered by Valentini in ms. Arch. 358, which contains the proceedings of the Chapter General that was held in Rome in February 1445 ab. inc.[=1446]. One may be tempted to attribute its being written in Italian to the place where it was held, but I would expect a meeting convened by the Pope (Eugenio IV), "celebrato a Roma in la Vasilica del glorioso apostolo San Piero, de commando del sanctissimo padre" to be in Latin, especially since the three chairmen who were standing in for the Grand Master (Jean de Lastic) were not Italian but the priors of France, England and Portugal.

After that, one regularly finds Italian documents included in the proceedings of the Chapters General held in Rhodes. The first one is dated 1454. The Grand Master was Jacques de Milly and the Vice-Chancellor was Eliseo della Manna (who does not figure in the list of Italian Knights, either because he was not Italian or because he was not a knight). Nor does the topic of the passages in Italian concern exclusively Italian affairs. The passage in the Chapter General of 1454 deals with administrative matters (Arch. 282: VII v - IX v), one in the C.G. of

1501 presents general rules governing all the clergy connected with the Church of St. John (Arch. 284: cc.32 v - 34 v); in the C.G. of 1532 ab. inc. [1533], article 27 establishes regulations governing the galleys (Arch 286: cc. LIX v - LX r) and article 28 prescribes rules on dress (cc. LX r - LX v). In the proceedings of 21 March 1538 ab. inc. [1539] article 37 deals with the heritage of deceased knights (Arch. 286: cc. LXXXIX v - XC r), article 48 lays down rules on travelling on galleys (cc. XCI r - XCI v), article 64 concerns the guardian of the harbour, Bernardo d'Agosta (cc. XCIV r - XCV r), while a passage in the proceedings of the C. G. of 6 October 1539 is about general visits (CXXIII r - CXXIII v). The last document in this manuscript reproduces the instructions given on 21 March 1539 ab. inc. [1540] to two Knights, Henrico Pereyra and Ludovico de Vallée, who were not Italian, regarding their trip to England (cc. 130 v - 131 r). Besides the part about Bernardo d'Agosta, there are only two passages concerning the Langue of Italy in the Chapters General of 1475 and 1533, while another one reproduces the acceptance of the islands of Malta and Gozo, dated 23 May 1527. However these documents are found in a later copy, produced in the 17th century, where the spelling and the language of the original must have been modified.

The linguistic analysis of the Italian texts written in the Chapters General held between 1454 and 1539 show the heavy influence of Latin both in spelling and in terminology. The Humanists' pressure accounts for the conservation of etymological letters like *h* (*hora*, *honore*, *hospitalitate*, with occasional hypercorrect forms like *hogni* and *helemosina*), and *x* (*exempio*, *explicato*, *extraordinarii*), the unassimilated consonantal groups *cl*, *fl*, *pl*, *dm*, *gm*, *bs*, *ns*, *ct*, *pt* (*ecclesia*, *pleno*, *augmento*, *administrare*, *absolutamente*, *constituire*, *facta*, *scripti*); although there are also examples of assimilation like *ditto*, *ditta*, *ditte*, *sopraditto*, *fatto*, *lette*, *scritto*). Other features include keeping the *t* unvoiced in *hospital*, *patrone*, the lateral palatal rendered by *-li-*, instead of *-gli-*, in *filioli*, *melio*, *volia*, and the conservation of *-ti-* for *z* (*intentione*, *licentia*, *spetial*). Some etymological vowels or diphthongs are also maintained, like *u* (*capitulare*, *particular*) and *au* (*laude*).

Unmodified Latin terms and expressions are obviously due to the fact that traditionally these matters were always written about in Latin. We therefore often find grammatical words like *etiandio*, *cum*, *ultra de*, *multi*, *solum*, *etiam*, *non obstante*, etymological endings in *sanctitate*, *virtute*, *preponere*, *proponere*, high register nouns like *augmento*, *continentia*, *ecclesia*, *exemplo*, *hospital*, *inimico*, *iustitia*, *magistero*, *permissione*, as well as adjectives and adverbs: *antique*, *inscripti*, *licito*, *maiori*, *explicato*, *servato*, *spetial*. Formulas and expressions which are typical of the bureaucratic, administrative and legal domains are abundant: *in manu de*, *ipso facto*, *ex improviso*, *pro et contra*, *cum libero arbitrio*, *super et infra scripte*, while others may show slight adaptations: *per la dio gratia*, *li debiti nostri*.

The recourse to Latin was inevitable because its centuries-old stability guaranteed continuity in form and substance to the legal documents which were now being written in the modern languages. The models of all the authors of these deeds were the traditional Latin texts, and in this way the Latin model was a cohesive element in all the chanceries and gave rise to a common bureaucratic koiné which is still the common core of European legal jargon (Tavoni 1992: 54). Latin therefore provided all the terms and expressions that were necessary to speak of legal and administrative matters and was a rock-like point of reference to all writers.

However, when the need arose to write about practical things, Latin could not provide all the solutions, and the authors had to turn to the other pole on the linguistic axis. Practical things and activities used to be spoken of in the local dialect, because neither Latin nor the literary standard could provide the desired solutions. For this reason, while Latin was a unifying factor for all high-register writings, the dialects were a factor of fragmentation. Writers therefore felt the necessity to eliminate as much as possible those elements which marked them as belonging to a particular community. In this way regional koinés arose which, in spite of the authors' will to de-localise their language, still marked it as a diatopical (or local) variety. This was happening in the various Renaissance courts of Italy where a higher grade of the local vulgar speech was being written under the influence of Latin bureaucratic practice and literary Tuscan texts. The chancery of the Order was following suit, and in Rhodes the texts that were being written in Italian were showing features of the Venetian regional variety that was predominant in the area.

The Order may have entered the linguistic orbit of Venice like the Venetian colonies of the eastern Mediterranean, or perhaps the Knights may have acquired the habit of speaking the *lingua franca* which, in that region, had an Italo-Venetian stamp on it (Cortelazzo 1995: 321-322; Minervini 1996, section 5). At the upper social levels of the Order this would have been polished under the guidance of the Italian knights, among whom the Tuscans would have exerted the pressure of their literary prestige. The fact is that the texts incorporated in the Chapters General show unmistakable features of the northern Italian variety and particularly of the Veneto region. This was inevitable because the literary variety of Tuscan was not codified before the grammars of Fortunio (1516) and Bembo (1525). Among the peculiarities which mark the spelling of the Italian passages in the Rhodian Chapters General, *-ci-* for *-zi-* in *iusticia*, *officio*, *consciencia*, *devastacione*, *y* in *may*, *noy*, *voy*, *soy*, *poy*, *ch* before *a* or *o*: *chavalaria*, *anchora* and *k* in *karigi*, were common all over Italy. However, the following are sure markers of a Venetian substrate: a single consonant for a Tuscan double as in *alora*, *avenire*, *hano*, *improviso*, *mezo*, *nesuno*, *quatro*, *sapiamo*, *tuta*, *tuti*, and systematically *-ano* for *-anno* in the ending of the 3rd person plural of the future tense, *farano*, *serano*; the dropping of the final vowel after *-l*, *-n*, *-r* as in *capitol*, *general*, *hospital*, *mortal*, *qual*, *guardian*, *sian*, *proveder*, *signor*, *sustenir*; *ç* for palatal *c* or for *z* in *çascun*, *ço*, *faço*, *piça*, *driçamento*, *viçecança* and *z* for palatal *c* and *g* as in *a zo che*, *incomminzato*, *zorno*, *zorni*. The diphthong *uo* is always rendered by *o*: *bona*, *bono*, *bon*, *fora*. On the morphological level the most notable feature is that the Tuscan ending of the first person plural, present tense indicative, *-iamo* is never used. The normal endings here are *-amo* (*admonestamo*, *comandamo*, *confidamo*, *declaramo*) and *-emo* (*devemo*, *havemo*), while in the future tense the third person singular and plural forms are *-arà*, *-aràno* (*farano*, *se rasonarà*), *-erà*, *-eràno* (*haverà*, *serano*, *vegnerano*) and *-irà* (*contra venirà*). On the lexical level one notes *como* (which is constant for *come*), *inseme*, *insire de fora*, *mainera*, *neguna*, *oldete*, *rasone*, *rasonarà*, which are generally typical of the northern Italian dialects or of the Veneto region. A sample of the 1454 Chapter General held in Rhodes is reproduced in Appendix A.

In the proceedings of the Chapters General that were held in Malta in 1533 and 1539, some of the peculiarities in spelling disappear or almost: the graphemes *ç*, *x* and *y*; the etymological *h* is used less often, *-gli-* becomes constant: *baglii*, *saglieno*, *tagliare*, *tagliature*, *piglia*, *dispoglie*, *ricoglino*. Although the single consonants for the Tuscan double are still common (*barete*, "berrette", *dopie*, *fruti*, *pano*, *drapo*, *veluto*), the doubling of consonants which in Tuscan are single is more evident: *cossi*, *ditta* "dita", *gallere*, *gallioti*, *buffalli*, *candelle*, *potrette*, *pressa* "presa", *raggione*, *setta* "seta", *spessa* "spesa", *subbito*, *vienne*, *visitarete*. There are instances of unaccented middle vowels being dropped (syncope) as in *carchi*, *cargo*, *zafrani*) and *z* for voiced *s* as in *arnezi*, *borzaquini*. The verbs show a couple of endings in *-areti* (*informareti*, *visitareti*), the use of the conditional as *saria*, *potria*, *potriano* and of the past participle in *-uto* (*attuto*, *arrenduto*) and the gerund with the diphthong *faciendo*, which all point to southern Italian contacts, together with words like *mo* and *sevo*. A sample of the 1533 Chapter General held in Malta is reproduced in Appendix B.

These features can be taken as internal evidence of the fact that the Order, as a result of its move from Rhodes to Malta, just 90 km away from Sicily, shifted its linguistic position from the influence of the Venetian variety to that of the southern variety of Italian. However this new contact could not become very evident in the formal writings produced in Malta because during the first half of the 16th century the Tuscan variety became codified in Italy and was adopted as the written language of the whole peninsula. In 1516 Giovan Francesco Fortunio published the first Italian grammar and in 1525 Pietro Bembo published his *Prose della vulgar lingua*, dominated the literary scene and resolved the *Questione della Lingua*. Non-Tuscans now had the necessary instruments to guide them in writing in the manner of the great Tuscan models (Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio) and so Tuscan became Italian. The Order must have felt the influence of Bembo, because the Venetian Cardinal, although he had never set foot in Malta, had been knighted in 1514 and became commendatore of Bologna and prior of Hungary.

As a result of these innovations the situation in Italian chanceries was changing. In 1529 Bartolomeo Carli Piccolomini wrote in his *Trattato del perfetto cancelliere* that "in Italia si scrive parte latino e talora in vulgare" and noted that in every city the local vulgar language was used. He called writing in Latin "l'usanza antica" (the old custom) and he observed that

this practice was becoming less common among Italians and that it was used mainly in correspondence with "gli Oltramontani Signori" (with foreign powers). He therefore wrote:

Ne nostri tempi il Bembo veneziano, il Sanazaro napolitano hanno scritto co la lingua Toscana et non con quella de la lor patria et intendo hoggi che tutta Venetia n'è divenuta studiosa et che ancora è usata ne le cose pubbliche da alcuno [...]. In Italia dunque tutte le città deverebbeno scriver toscano et rare volte latino.

Carli Piccolomini's views were based on his personal experience because he was the Chancellor of the city of Siena between 1527 and 1529. He also insisted that the chancellor and the secretary should know Spanish and French in order to be able to read correspondence coming from those states and explain the contents to those who did not know those languages (Trovato 1992: 71-72).

In Malta the Order was proceeding in the same manner. In fact Piccolomini's views were echoed by Onofrio Acciaiuoli who commissioned the publication of the Order's Statutes "tradotti di latino in lingua Toscana dal R.F. Paolo Del Rosso" (Florence, 1567). In his preface he explained that this was necessary because few people knew Latin while Italian was well known, not only in Italy but also abroad, and especially in Malta, where it was known, understood and spoken more than any other language:

Essendo che la maggior parte delle persone de' nostri tempi hanno poca notizia della Latina, la quale ordinariamente non si usa, et che questa nostra non solamente in Italia, ma ancor in ogni altra Provincia è conosciuta, et s'intende, et si parla ancora più, che ogni altra lingua, in cotesta isola di Malta, dove è la nostra residenza...

In transferring its seat from Rhodes to Malta the Order of St. John came closer to Italy, and geographical proximity certainly contributed to increase contacts with Sicily and the peninsula. One could also presume that there could have been a diplomatic reason for its adoption, as a kind of compromise between the rivalry of the French and Spanish knights, but I believe that the main reasons were technical. As I have shown, intrinsic linguistic developments had undermined the position of French and strengthened that of Italian. Moreover the codification of the Tuscan variety made Italian an easier language to learn, especially if one had acquired the rudiments of Latin. Of all the Romance dialects, Tuscan had remained closest to the speech of the Classical age because the area between the Tiber and the Northern Apennines had remained protected from linguistic interference, unlike Rome itself which had been sacked many times, and witnessed drastic population movements which had "southernised" its speech. Moreover, during the early 16th century Rome itself was undergoing a process of linguistic Tuscanisation under the Medici popes. The Order's contacts with Rome could have influenced the adoption of Italian as the spoken medium among members of the different langues, but there was a significant difference because while the Vatican stuck to Latin, the Order increasingly adopted Italian as its written medium.

CORRESPONDENCE

On the diplomatic level the Chancery of the Order more or less maintained this shift towards an increasing use of the Italian language, but it had to adopt a more flexible multilingual approach. First of all incoming correspondence from European royalty could be in Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German or Russian, as one can see in the collections of letters in the manuscripts Arch. 57 (Liber Epistolarum 1523-1764), Arch. 58 (Lettere di Francia 1528-1764), Arch. 59 (Lettere di Castiglia, Portogallo ed Aragona 1522-1764), Arch. 60 (Corrispondenza 1528-1764), and Arch. 61 (Lettere d'Italia 1552-1762). Outgoing correspondence was usually in Latin when addressed to royalty but instructions to ambassadors were usually in Italian, even when the latter belonged to another nation. Examples can be read in Valentini 1935: 137-237, such as those addressed to the "priere de Castilla et Leone, fra don Diego de Toledos et Baglio de sancto Stephano, fra Gabriel Tadino de Martinengo, ambasciatori da nui et nostro venerando Consiglio delegati a la Cesarea

Maiestà", dated 8 October 1523 (pp. 181-182), and to "fra Pier-Johanne de Bidoux, priore di S. Egidio, de quello haverete a fare in Ingleterra, per dove havemo diputato imbasatore in compagnia vostra el religioso nostro fra Jacobo de Borbon, comandator de Saint Moris et Doysemont", dated 4 July 1527 (pp. 194-196). Section IX of the Order's Archives is dedicated to correspondence and contains exchanges with the major European powers and with the Order's ambassadors. It is significant to note that all the letters in the series "Lettere originali degli Ambasciatori dell'Ordine presso la Santa Sede ai Gran Maestri", a collection of 124 volumes covering the years from 1596 to 1790 are in Italian, letters addressed to the Procurators of the Langue of Auvergne covering the years 1650 to 1779 are in French (5 vols. 1244-1248), and that there are two parallel series: "Registro delle Lettere italiane spedite a vari sovrani, ambasciatori ed altri personaggi dagli infrascritti Gran Maestri" in 164 volumes (numbered 1376-1540) covering the years 1586-1790 and "Registro delle Lettere in francese" written by the various Grand Masters, in 44 volumes covering the years 1586 to 1787 (numbered 1542-1586). They show that in the diplomatic field, although Italian was predominant, French was still very much in use. The catalogues do not show similar collections of copies of outgoing mail in the Spanish language, but this could be due to the loss or transfer of the relevant manuscripts.

I have spoken about Rhodes and Malta in the 15th and 16th centuries, but we are all aware that similar problems are being faced in present-day Brussels, while on the informal level it is interesting to note the adoption of Italian for practical conversation in Switzerland between workers of various nationalities (including non-Europeans) and between these workers and the Swiss (Schmid, 1994: 26-35).

REFERENCES

Ayres-Bennett, Wendy. *A History of the French Language through Texts*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996.

Blondy, Alain. "Malta and France 1789-1798: The Art of Communicating a Crisis," in Mallia-Milanes. 1993, 659-685.

Brincat, Giuseppe, in print, "L'uso del volgare nei documenti ufficiali dei Cavalieri di San Giovanni a Rodi e a Malta tra Quattro e Cinquecento," in *Italiano anno mille. Italiano anno duemila*. Proceedings of the SLI congress, Florence, October 2000, 19-21.

Chaurand, Jacques. *Histoire de la langue française*. Paris: PUF (*Que sais-je?*), 1972.

Cortelazzo, Manlio. "Usi linguistici fuori d'Italia nel Medioevo: le Repubbliche marinare in Levante," in *La Lingua d'Italia. Usi pubblici e istituzionali, atti del XXIX Congresso SLI*, ed.G. Alfieri and A. Cassola. Roma: Bulzoni, 1995, 315-323.

Del Rosso, Paolo. *Statuti della Religione dei Cavalieri Gerosolimitani tradotti di latino in lingua Toscana*. Firenze: Giunti, 1567.

Luttrell, Anthony. "The Hospitallers' Historical Activities: 1530-1630," in *Annales de l'O.S.M. de Malte*, N. III, unpaginated offprint. 1968.

Luttrell, Anthony. "Malta and Rhodes: Hospitallers and Islanders," in Mallia-Milanes, 1993, 255-284.

Mallia-Milanes, Victor (ed.). *Hospitaller Malta 1530-1798*. Malta: Mireva, 1993.

Minervini, Laura. "La lingua franca mediterranea. Plurilinguismo, mistilinguismo, pidginizzazione sulle coste del Mediterraneo tra tardo medioevo e prima età moderna," in *Medioevo romanzo*, XX, 1996, 231-301.

Schmid, Stephan. *L'italiano degli spagnoli*. Milano: Franco Angeli, 1994.

Tavoni, Mirko. *Storia della lingua italiana. Il Quattrocento*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1992.

Trovato, Paolo. *Storia della lingua italiana. Il primo Cinquecento*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994.

Valentini, Roberto. "Redazioni italiane quattrocentesche di statuti della Religione Gioannita," in *Archivum Melitense*, vol. IX, n. 3, 1934, 73-90.

Valentini, Roberto. "I Cavalieri di S. Giovanni da Rodi a Malta. Trattative diplomatiche (1)," in *Archivum Melitense*, vol. IX, n. 4, 1935, 137-237.

Williams, Ann. "The Constitutional Development of the Order of St. John in Malta, 1530-1798," in Mallia-Milanes, 1993, 285-296.

Zammit Gabarretta, Anthony and Joseph Mizzi. *Catalogue of the Records of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in the Royal Malta Library, Vol. I*. Malta, 1964.

APPENDIX A

10 November 1454. Rhodes, G.M. Jacques De Milly.
Cod. Arch. 282, *Sacra Capitula Generalia 1454-1459. 1462*.
c. VII v.

Eodem met die x novembris anni prefati post prandium Congregati fuerunt in loco prelibato ad sonum campana ut mone et supra nominati domini incorporati in generali capituli. Ibiquem prelibatus R.mus. dominus noster magister. Iussit mihi vicecancellario prefato ut legere rotulum sive memoriale suum vulgariter scriptum. In cuius principio commemorat ordinem servandum in presenti generale capitulo. Quem rotulum legi publice alta et intelligibile voce ad omnium illic existencium bonam intelligentiam.

Sequitur tenor principii eiusdem rotuli et ordinis servande in presenti generali capitulo.

Questo presente Capitolo e tute cose che in esso diremo e faremo siano in sancta hora incommingate, al honor laude e gloria del omnipotente dio padre filio e spiritus sancto et de la gloriosissima vergine maria e del sanctissimo precursore sancto johanne Baptista, patrone capo e protectore nostra, et de tuta la corte celestiale, et a honor e stato de la sancta madre ecclesia Romana, et de lo clementissimo suo pastore padre superiore e signor nostro signore Nicolao, per la divina providentia papa Quinto, de cui licentia e permissione NOI FRAR JACOBO de mylly, per la dio gratia de la sancta casa [c. VIII recto] del hospital de sancte Johan de Jherusalem magistro humile e guardian deli poveri de Jhesu Cristo, insieme cum voy in questo nostro General Capitolo, questo zorno intitulado lo decimo del mese de Novembre l'anno de la Incarnatione de nostro Signore Mil quatrocento cinquanta quatro legitimamente congregati. Sia etiandio honore augmento de la nostra Religione in pace salute e riposo de tuti noy. Amen.

Venerabili e dilectissimi in Cristo fratelli e filioli, per melio intendere el principio, el mezo el fine de le cose in questo Capitolo devemo rasonare, trattare e finire, a noy pare necessario e anchora al nostro magistrale officio se appartene de preponere certo ordine da tenere e servare nel procedere nostro afin che sapiamo quanto e quale siano le parte e como prima e poy sian poste per non confundere le materie e azo che lo breve tempo in vano non se spenda.

Primo como vedete e oldete a noy e commandato da la sanctitate del nostro signor sopraditto che fa virtute de sancta obedientia debiamo tre cose avanti che altre se incomminciano diligentemente riguardare, finire, stabilire e bollare. [continued]

APPENDIX B

9 February 1532 ab. inc. [= 1533]. Malta, G.M. Philippe Villiers de l'Isle Adam. Cod. Arch. 286, *Sacra Capitula Generalia 1526, 1532, 1538*.
c. LIXv (De triremibus XXVII)

Item post varias confabulationes sine directione statu et armamento triremis seu Gallearum, Rev.di D. xvi Capitulares statuerunt et decreverunt in modum qui sequitur

E primo

Che 'l venerando Capitano e patroni de gallere se debiano costituire et ponere in l'officio per doi anni bene faciendo.

Item che sopra cadauna gallera non si debia portare più de ottanta scapuli boni et sufficienti et portandone davantagio che sia sopra el capitano et patroni, et cossì medemo che ogni gallera non possa portare più de sei gallioti ultra el numero delli remi.

Item che né lo capitano né li patroni possino imprestare denari tanto a scapuli como a gallioti che non sieno scriti per mano del scrivano, et che in ogni gallera non si possa portare più de quatro bombardieri.

Item senza preindicare le preminentie de Italia che sopra dette gallere non si possa portare da mo inante altre bandiere che a l'insegna et arme della religione et del Rev.mo gran Maestro presente et futuro, excetto che l capitano possa portare il stendardo grande cum le arme sue. Et li patroni alcune bandere di nostra bona o di sancto Joanne cum le arme sue in pede di epse bandere, et li dette bandere della Religione e del maestro sieno fatte belle et honeste a spese del comun thesoro.

Item che li comiti et scrivani non debiano né possino imprestare alli gallioti più de uno florino per homo il mese, et facendo il contrario, cioè prestandoli più de uno florino el mese, tanto el fugitivo como alli altri, che lo perdano.

Item che 'l comito non possa tagliare alcuna gomina che non sia in presentia del scrivano quale debia fare nota. [continued]

Francisco Gomes de Matos

INTRODUCTION: VIEWS OF COMMUNICATION

As one of the key-concepts in human linguistic life, "communication" has prompted several definitions for linguists, for example, that term can broadly refer to every kind of mutual transmission of information using signs or symbols between living beings (humans, animals), as well as between people and data-processing machines (Bussman, Hadumod, *Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*. London and New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 83).

In its narrowest sense, however, "communication" can be taken as meaning "the transmission and reception of information between a signaler and a receiver" (Crystal, David, *The Penguin Dictionary of Language*, 2nd ed. London: Penguin Books, 1999, p. 62).

If we look at perceptions of communication by communication theorists, we can come across characterisations such as these: "Communication is the generation of meaning" or that "communication is a ubiquitous and powerful source in society" (Bowers, John Waite and James J. Bradac, "Contemporary Problems in Human Communication Theory," in Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers, *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1984, p. 872, 874).

If we leave the language and communication sciences and turn to international relations, what interpretations of "communication" can we find? That it is a process of negotiation "between states seeking to arrive at a mutually acceptable outcome on some issue or issues of shared concern" (Cohen, Raymond, *Negotiating Across Cultures: International Communication in an Interdependent World*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, p. 9).

How about communication in diplomacy, or rather, among diplomats? Here is a definition taken from a dictionary for diplomats: "Communication among diplomats is a two-way street: one cannot expect to obtain much information unless one is able and willing to convey information" (Karl Gruber, 1983, quoted in Chas Freeman, Jr., *The Diplomat's Dictionary*, revised ed. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997, p. 49).

What is shared in such definitions/characterisations? The shared nature of the process: communication is first and foremost an act of sharing.

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE ORALLY?

By sharing the language used in a particular context at a specific time, by interacting, by co-constructing a dialogue or a multilogue, by expressing our attitudes, emotions, feelings in a friendly or in an unfriendly manner, by relying on many nonverbal signals (body language, facial expressions), by sometimes emphasising what is said - content - and sometimes emphasising how it is said - form, or we can communicate, more typically by integrating forms and meanings in contexts of use which can create different effects on our interlocutors. We can communicate by being explicit or by preferring implicit speech. We can communicate by hedging, by avoiding coming straight to the point, through purposely vague language. We can communicate by using not only words but terms (typical of different professional fields), as for instance in International Relations, lexical items used for talking about anti-globalisation: inhuman labour conditions, risky technology, abject poverty (cf. Varyrynen, Raimo, "Anti-

Globalization Movements at the Crossroads," in Policy Brief No.4. University of Notre Dame: Joan B. Kroc Institute, November 2000, p. 3).

As humans, we can communicate by expressing both positive and negative (or "questionable") perceptions, by delivering both good and bad news, or by leaving out the positive side. We can communicate in socially responsible or irresponsible ways; in other ways, to bring out communicative harmony or disharmony. These reflections would lead us to questions such as: how are diplomats perceived? Why does there seem to be a practice of presenting diplomacy/diplomats negatively in books of quotations, for example? What would be the ratio of positive and negative perceptions of diplomats in such books, if a world bibliographic survey were conducted? How about diplomatic communication? How has it been described and why? What misperceptions are there concerning such process? What positive features and questionable features are being associated to the way diplomats communicate in speaking (face-to-face or on the telephone, etc.) and in writing?

In a recent conference held in Maryland, US, in July last year, US negotiators were described as tending "to be explicit, legalistic, blunt, and optimistic" (*Peace Watch* Vol. VI, No. 6. United States Institute of Peace Press, October 2000, p.1). Note that one of the adjectives conveys a potential negative or questionable meaning: "blunt" (discourteous, abrupt, curt). What is it that sometimes leads negotiators to communicate in such questionable ways? What would seem to be missing in the linguistic/communicative preparation of diplomats?

When I was asked to share a little of the philosophy underlying my Pedagogy of Positiveness, it occurred to me that to make it transparent, I should state some of its principles. Here they are:

APPLYING THE PEDAGOGY OF POSITIVENESS TO DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATION: A CHECKLIST

1. Emphasise "what to say" constructively. Avoid "what not to say".
2. Implement diplomatic communication as a humanising form of interaction. Definitions of "diplomacy" of the type Art + Science or Science + Art leave out the humanising responsibility of diplomats' communication.
3. Communicate national and international values constructively. What "national" values do diplomats communicate? How?
4. Learn to identify and to avoid potentially aggressive, insensitive, offensive, destructive uses of languages. Do your best to offset dehumanising ways of communication, often the outcome of human communicative fallibility.
5. Think of the language you use as a peace-building, peace-making, peace-promoting force. Do you challenge yourself to transform your communicative competence into competence in communicative peace?
6. At all times, do your very best to view yourself positively, to view the diplomatic profession positively, to view life positively and to communicate such views as constructively as you can.
7. Learn to exercise your communicative rights and to fulfill your communicative responsibilities in a sensibly balanced way. Remember that you have the right to question and to criticise, but do so responsibly, in a human-dignifying manner.
8. Handle differences of opinion in a constructive way. Remember that "negative talk" tends to predominate or often dominate in face-to-face diplomatic interactions.
9. Treat others with respect by being as communicatively friendly as you can.

10. Choose your words on the basis of their Peace Power rather than on their strategic value alone. Communicate both tactfully and tactically.
11. Try to see and describe both sides of an issue. Challenge yourself to make balanced (rather than biased) statements. Don't be a polemicist.
12. Avoid hiding behind pompous language to question someone.
13. In reading diplomatic texts, look for fair comments. Try to reconstruct (infer) the method used by the authors. Learn to apply Discourse Analysis to your processing.
14. Avoid blurring the meanings of key words such as Politics. It is standard polemical practice to blur the meanings of Politics, etc.
15. It is a truism to state that no communication is neutral, so commit yourself to communicating as humanisingly as you can. Remember if language is definitional of what is human, constructive language use is definitional of what is humanising in communication.
16. Communicatively, aim at linguistic probity and integrity.
17. Conflict can be managed to some extent, and so can language use, especially if you adopt a constructive perspective, for expressing your attitudes, beliefs, and emotions. What parts of a diplomat's vocabulary (lexical repertoire) can be systematised for constructive communicative purposes? Educate yourself in identifying "positivisers" in spoken and written texts in your field and challenge yourself to make increasing use of such constructive, human-dignifying adjectives, verbs, and nouns.
18. Learn to monitor more confrontational sentence types by replacing them with listener/reader friendly sentences.

SOME PLEAS/RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Considering the apparently widespread misperceptions of diplomats and diplomacy in the media and in reference works (see especially books of quotations), in the light of our Pedagogy of Positiveness, a plea is made for (present/emerging/future) diplomats to launch an international movement which would help build an accurate, fairer image of the work (being/to be) done by those who commit themselves to helping bring about a truly interdependent world, through the international discourse of diplomacy. Having come across small but convincing evidence that a positive, public perception of diplomats and their activity is urgently needed - a plea is similarly made for organisations engaged in the education of diplomats to join in such cooperative effort.
2. Also considering that one of the most salient positive senses of "diplomatic" - to the public at large - is that of "being tactful" or displaying a friendly attitude toward other human beings - a plea is similarly made for that "positively marked sense of the term" to be capitalised on, through more research on the spoken/written vocabulary used in diplomatic communication as well as on the teaching of a constructive-human-dignifying use - and monitoring - of such lexicon to emerging/future diplomats so that they can be deeply aware of language using as a great humanising force in human interaction, especially in situations involving peace negotiation, mediation, and other challenging processes experienced by diplomats as true world citizens. One of the strategies suggested for the semantic preparation of diplomats would be their sensitisation to the functions of "positivisers" in diplomatic discourse (verbs, adjectives, and nouns which reflect/enhance inherently constructive actions and attributes or qualities in human beings). Another strategy would be that of learning how to read diplomatic texts constructively, by identifying "positivisers" in such texts: frequency of occurrence, potential impact, ratio of "positivisers" and "negativisers",

confrontational types of sentence structures, types of hedging and vague uses of language, among other features.

3. Considering the pioneering nature of this conference and the growing interest of linguists and other language-related interdisciplinarians in Political Discourse in general and the emerging interest of language-centred researchers on Diplomatic Discourse, a recommendation is made that that conference be sustained and broadened - through workshops, intensive seminars, and other pre-conference events which can enable participants to benefit from the expertise of specialists in the several language-focused domains of theoretical and practical relevance to the challenges of today's diplomacy.
4. Considering that diplomacy has its own distinctive repertoire of terms (cf. Chas. Freeman, Jr., *The Diplomat's Dictionary*, 2nd ed. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997) and that a profession's lexicon should realistically reflect collective decisions and choices - another plea is made for a project centered on a Dictionary of Diplomacy (as multilingual as possible) to be prioritised on the Agenda of Relevant Reference Works for the Preparation of Diplomats. What I have in mind is a collectively shared, international project which could very well be sponsored by this conference's host institution: the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies.
5. Last but not least, a final plea is made for the study of Human Linguistic Rights to become a required subject in the education of diplomats. As promoters of "communicative peace" among persons, groups, and nations, diplomats need to become knowledgeable in that new category of human rights. A visit to the site of the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (www.linguistic-declaration.org) may give an idea of the breadth and depth of the insights which can inspire needed research on the communicative rights and responsibilities of diplomats. In short, it is my conviction that a Pedagogy of Positiveness can contribute to the education of diplomats, especially in close interaction with International Relations, Linguistics, Communication Science, Peace Psychology, Peace Linguistics, and Human Linguistic Rights, to name but a few of the contributory domains.

We have made some progress since the mid-seventies, when researchers' attention was focused on **DoubleSpeak** (Cf. Daniel, Dieterich, ed., *Teaching about DoubleSpeak*. Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1976. See especially the chapter on Guidelines for the Analysis of Responsibility in Governmental Communication, by Dennis Gouran, pp.20-32) to the present-day investigation of **DiploDiscourse** (for an example, see Ray T. Donahue and Michael H. Prosser, *Diplomatic Discourse: International Conflict at the United Nations: Addresses and Analysis*. Greenwich, Connecticut and London: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1997) but much more should be accomplished if we are to start transforming Diplomatic Communication into **dignified and dignifying discourse**, thus contributing to harmonising and humanising an important domain within Political Discourse. For a suggested strategy on how to read a political text positively, see my article "Harmonizing and Humanizing Political Discourse: The Contribution of Peace Linguistics" (*Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology* Vol. 6, No. 4. 2000, pp. 339-344). In short, if I may adapt my characterisation of "communicating well" therein to the diplomatic context, I would say that "communicating well diplomatically means communicating for the well being of diplomatic interlocutors and, more broadly, for the well-being of humankind."

Donald F. Solá

With current available information technology each of us can now create our own system for practicing second-language writing skills in a supportive reference environment: a word processor using an international alphabet, with an online dictionary in a second window, makes this possible. Those of us working for some time in CALL, the emerging multi-disciplinary field of Computer-Assisted Language Learning, saw further promise in this simple combination. We might add "customising" features, allowing users of these tools to enrich the reference material with vocabulary, examples, and word families to suit their own personal, educational, or professional interests. We might further provide means for users to collaborate conveniently on such enrichment "modules" with others. In the IT context these were essentially database management issues that were being addressed successfully for broad areas of information and could obviously be applied to CALL. A few major hardware and software advances were still required, for example, the well-known move to the graphical environment to accommodate orthographic variety. Less apparent but far more significant for my own projects, the invention of the code "compiler", as a powerful substitute for the line-by-line code "interpreter", for the first time made it possible to handle, within a typical language-lab session, the hefty data management needs of truly effective CALL software.

I like to insist that we remember that we are all tool-makers - that is what accounts for *homo sapiens*' success and thus far continuity of our species. In my view, CALL research and development profits also from the theoretical arguments and practical proposals of at least two other major fields: education and linguistics. They are sources of inspiration and philosophical direction. They also invent and refine tools - for description, for analysis, and for instrumental change. The "InterLex Lab" design, a learner-centred "knowledge-base building" approach, is my example of this potential for integration. It is used here as a reference point to discuss some practical issues with respect to the "World Language" Initiative described in this paper and related evolving philosophical considerations. I welcome this opportunity to hear the views of those concerned with "Language and Diplomacy". What would your priorities be? What would you add to, subtract from, or substitute for this approach? At every stage alternatives present themselves. Resources, financial and intellectual, are never adequate to pursue all apparent options. For further progress, choices have to be weighed and commitments made.

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY

In a national competition the DOS implementation of the InterLex Lab was cited as one of "101 success stories" in educational software for higher education (Boettcher 1993). The most fully developed version, for Spanish, consisted of two pieces of software: "Salsa: Writing Assistant for Spanish" (Solá, Pet and Noblitt 1990) and "Salsera: Customizing Program for 'Salsa'" (Solá 1993). The programs were published in the DOS format, with accompanying printed manuals.

The Boettcher study reported as reasons for the success of the project the adoption of the following guidelines: 1) a well-defined educational focus on developing foreign-language writing skills, as separable from other foreign-language skills; 2) a theoretical focus on language as an expressive skill based on discourse and syntactic function; and 3) evaluating every aspect of software development for cost-effectiveness (Boettcher 1993, 131). The evaluation further remarked on the design as one of just a few among those selected with potential for generalisability (Boettcher 1993, 25). At the time, parallel InterLex projects were

underway for DOS software for Portuguese and for the Quechua language; these did not reach publication stage.

The manual for Salsera, the customising program, elaborated on this feature, claiming that the InterLex Lab design was "innovative in a venue beyond the classroom, as an intellectual meeting ground where language teachers, textbook authors, and publishers can interact with each other in practical fashion to produce more effective software" adding more vitality to "the traditional, rather glacial, dynamic by which these parties interact with and influence each other." The consequence for a particular language would be published database "modules" for various levels and diverse purposes, each with a companion customiser for further context-specific adaptation. The principal source of this potential for productivity lay in a new role for the core database, the point of departure for customising. This core was not basic in the sense of "introductory" for beginning learners; it proposed to be efficient, well-proportioned, and universal, with neither more nor less in it than might be needed for adaptation to specific curricular or non-curricular objectives. In the design, the content of the core, obviously negotiable, was under the control of the publisher, but susceptible to feedback from customisers, who had vigilant voting rights against any component they did not need. The expression, in running software, of that point of departure became the principal philosophical concern of the InterLex Lab project.

END OF THE DOS ERA

As with much pioneering software, the DOS environment proved to be awkward and limiting. Many early innovating DOS-based programs were successfully ported to the more flexible graphical environment of Microsoft Windows 3 or the Macintosh operating system. At the time these were not sufficiently tempting routes for further development of the InterLex Lab concept. The InterLex commitment to the development of expressive skill in writing, a primary concern for learner-centered knowledge-base building, that is to say, customising, and, finally, the desire to provide an explicit theoretical rationalisation for the design, did not find a congenial development environment until the advent of new hardware and software tools and some further exploration of the notion of "linguistic universals". The tools consisted of Microsoft Windows 95®, two accompanying Microsoft programs for that operating system: Visual FoxPro, Version 6®, and the Microsoft Help Workshop®, and the World Wide Web as a shareware distribution and online licensing medium. The result so far: two InterLex Lab shareware implementations with the same design: "WinSalsa: Building your Spanish Knowledge-Base" (Solá 1999) and "WinColega: Building your Portuguese Knowledge-Base" (Solá 2000), with English as L1, the user's language, for both. A third version, "WinFriends", with a modified design using English as L2, the target language, uses the InterLex Lab tools to demonstrate the feasibility of a "World Language" Initiative that might serve much broader communication objectives.

THE "WORLD LANGUAGE" INITIATIVE

The third program "WinFriends: Building your English Knowledge-Base" is a significant variant of the design, adding a new option, to build your knowledge-base in English with no help from any other language, or to freely gloss the English material - dictionary items, examples, word families - in any language whose orthography is supported in the Windows 95/98/NT International English keyboard layout. This newest design is proposed as a way to give speakers of many languages better access to skill-improvement in the LWCs (Languages of Wider Communication). If successful with English, the design could be relatively quickly implemented for other "World Languages", such as Spanish, French, Russian, Arabic. The diplomatic community, usually on-the-spot where those "vehicular" languages are being used to bridge communication gaps across national and linguistic boundaries, should be the most helpful in recommending directions and priorities here.

WHAT ARE LINGUISTIC UNIVERSALS?

What should be the point of departure for customising your personalised knowledge-base? Language teachers are not accustomed to addressing this question. Still, what is universal for all language cannot be excluded from what is "basic" for a particular language. And, without some agreement on what may be universal, we have no effective way of measuring the way languages and dialects differ from each other nor of dealing with legitimate practical concerns, such as, for example, developing software for different varieties of a language and for different languages of many types.

For several decades, specialists in "generative-transformational grammar" and various later derivative approaches to linguistic description have been concerned with the search for universals (Newmeyer 1996), as all science should be. Unfortunately, their search for logical elegance - many call it "mainstream" linguistics - has produced highly convoluted terminologies overly focussed on the sentence level, not readily interpreted for application to language pedagogy, and ultimately judged seriously deficient "given the current knowledge of the intimate relationship between sentence syntax and discourse organization" (Brown and Miller 1996). Recent reflections from the principal generator of this mainstream, Noam Chomsky, with proposals for a "minimalist program" (Atkinson 1996), seem to leave room for a theory of language universals based on simpler relationships, perhaps less opaque and more congenial to educational concerns.

In the meantime a theoretical countercurrent has argued for universals based on "information structure", with "pragmatic" considerations (Foley 1996), more responsive to the interactive and communicative uses of language. In WinSalsa, the Help volumes provided on "How Spanish Works", deal with Spanish syntax - with basic concepts such as *hierarchy*, *discourse*, *form*, *function*, *meaning* - in a fashion more attuned to this latter approach. If in this way we can contribute to narrowing the distance between linguistic theory and educational practice, it should be to the benefit of both.

MAXIMUM SEMANTIC GENERALISABILITY

I believe that the extract from WinSalsa Help (Solá 1999) given further on can be proposed as a template for the syntactic hierarchy of any language and its relationship to the discourse level. By applying a principle of *maximum semantic generalisability* (MSG, to appropriate an acronym); the template accommodates, for example, the differences between ergative and nominative-accusative case systems. Even broader semantic considerations were taken into account in constructing this template, with practical implications for the inevitable "interface" question in dealing with any particular language: how much of the language's complexity could or should be displayed at one time in any single window?

To explain: at Cornell I was responsible for instruction in Quechua, the major indigenous language of the Andes. With the arrival of the personal computer I looked forward to adding an InterLex Lab for Quechua to other available learning tools. Quechua is one of those languages famous for its "long words", of considerable internal complexity, presumably eligible for paradigmatic display on the computer screen. But along with the personal computer we had by this time also made advances in linguistic science: long words of this kind have some phonological legitimacy, something like "breath groups" with final emphasis in French, without which French does not sound like French, but internally may be grammatically complex. Judging by what we now know about Quechua and similar languages, their long words are similarly suspect. In Quechua, some of their substance consists of discourse markers, relevant above the word level, not within it. Some is stem-formative and specialised, consisting of compounds and other such substitutes for the simple word stem, the normal base to which inflectional material is added. Finally, relatively cursory comparative study of Quechua dialects, with the MSG hypothesis in one's back pocket, reveals that Quechua has always had and still has a "verb phrase", a so-called periphrastic construction with auxiliary and modal verbs. Again, it is to such grammatically structured

bases that the relatively simple remaining inflectional material is added, generally having to do with such familiar semantic markers as actor and time of action in verbs, pluralisation and case markers in nouns, though these are not universal (Solá 1986). In effect, the Quechua long word crumbles upon semantic analysis; its components reassemble in grammatical hierarchical levels that can be comfortably distributed to separate software windows. They are usually better understood there. In this paper then, I am claiming that Quechua grammar - with suitable adjustments for written forms - can be accommodated by the following scheme, as it accommodates also the various Romance languages, English and other Germanic languages, and so on. It is a proposal for a universal grammar. Like all generalisations it is subject to review and counter-argument. Others are welcome to propose alternatives. Be reminded however: in the context of this Malta Conference, where questions of semantic equivalence are transparently at issue, all universalist proposals formulated in the English language, such as this one, have to be translatable into all of the other languages.

With regard to syntactic hierarchy:

Grammar levels are related to each other functionally, in a hierarchy:

- The basic building blocks are Words.
- Words and Phrases describe "participants" in "events".
- Clauses specify "relationships" among the participants.
- Sentences are Words, Phrases, and Clauses marked by intonation; intonation patterns are represented in writing by punctuation.
- Conversations and Narratives are made up of strings of Sentences.

With regard to the "discourse" level:

- The term "discourse" refers to extended communication, as in a story, an essay, or a dialogue. The string of sentences can be produced by a single narrator, or, in conversation, by two or more persons exchanging information.
- Efficiency: A set of Deletion Rules improve communicative efficiency by reducing repetition and wordiness.
Words used to identify participants in an event are seldom repeated fully in later references. They may be deleted entirely or be represented by shorter forms, such as Pronouns.
- Strategy: A set of Focus Rules control communication strategy; they identify new information as it is introduced into established discourse context.
New information - the Focus - is located in a clause-level or phrase-level function slot. The new information concerns some Topic, which also has overt functional identity.
- A Communicative Ecology: Deletion and Focus together manage the grammatical and semantic resources of the language. Deletion Rules maintain an efficient safety net of required information about communication in progress, while Focus Rules highlight information newly introduced into the communication stream by a narrator or participant in a conversation.

WORDS AS PARTICIPANTS

At the word level also, in the interest of efficiency, we can seek MSG as we construct grammars. For example, the variety of "datives" mixed up with "indirect objects" that have persevered in the description of Romance languages are, in Spanish for example, all instances of actions or states affecting humans or human attributes. All classes of verbs participate in this behaviour: intransitive, transitive, and equative. The MSG guideline encourages us to locate this cognitive relationship, the relationship between the formal pattern and its meaning for the user, at its most inclusive formal level. Thus in the WinSalsa grammar all such affected "participants" in "events" are tagmemically Referents; the diverse

"dative" linguistic environments in which they occur are not forgotten; they are well exemplified in the reference material.

HOMO SAPIENS

In conclusion, I want to argue in defence of the unity of our species. However, with your indulgence I will begin with one or two pre-emptive warnings, having learned on other occasions that the words I've chosen to anchor my argument sometimes evoke strong negative reactions. This happens, I've decided, not in reaction to what I've said, but in reaction to what listeners think I mean by what I've said. This should not be surprising to any of us: viz. the subtitle of one of the papers here, "Same Words - Different Meaning"; neither can we exempt ourselves from hasty, potentially wasteful reactions.

In a concluding paragraph I will invoke a Darwinian argument, not an argument Charles Darwin made, but a documentable inference by someone else from Darwin's work. That inference explained, with great impact on the philosophical stream in the middle of the 19th century, the role of continuity in nature and in human behaviour. A quite different Darwinian argument, which came to bear the label "Social Darwinism", in its simplest formulation attempted to apply Darwin's biological hypothesis for natural selection "Survival of the Fittest" to human societies. By way of warning, I will not accept as a refutation of my own Darwinian claim the flat rejection: "Social Darwinism failed", which I've heard from more than one social scientist. Whether it failed or not, Social Darwinism has nothing to do with this discussion.

Similarly, but more dangerously, we do not easily find common semantic ground for discussing the nature of universals. Again, for some hearers, the suggestion that some behavioural attributes may be universally distributed among all members of our species evokes an almost immediate powerful rejection: "Forget it. I'm a dedicated relativist." This is not a friendly invitation to continue, to look for common ground in pursuit of our respective interests. A non-verbal reaction but with similar consequences: no response to my last email message.

We are all "relativists", I think, primarily occupied with making distinctions, describing differences, proposing remedies for particular inequities we may identify, and allocating resources where we perceive the need for priority. Our understanding of the almost unbelievable differentiation we perceive in nature, and in human behaviour as part of nature, has benefited enormously from the labours of the self-described relativists in cultural studies who insist that each culture, each language, each system of morality, etc., must be respected and evaluated in its own terms. This claim was fully justified as a counter-effort to the imposition of external preconceptions; it really says nothing about universals.

So-called relativism has been carried further by "nativist" trends. Members of such cultural groups then sometimes claim that only they can properly describe and deal with their reality. This assertion of territorial rights is also justified, in good part because others, even the presumably non-imperialist relativists, have abused them for so long. But it also releases talent and energy that helps to bring unperceived needs to the surface and gathers community energy behind proposals for recognition and change. Still, such nativists don't just talk to each other; they contribute to wider debate through well-established systems of discourse. Some of their successes are won in that wider debate.

So finally I am only claiming that we are all also "universalists". Every argument is relativist in the respect that it differentiates some phenomenon or area of behaviour for selective treatment. But every such argument carries with it some explicit or implicit general theory about such behaviour; without this we have no way to communicate with each other, to make comparative judgements. Engineers know that without general consensus on the nature of mechanics and materials, on ever-improving definition of "standards", they have no means of evaluation, of comparing their work with others. And where they perceive priorities they allocate resources, sometimes to the development of new instruments, sometimes to the improvement of standards.

In this paper I've tried to make the case for the existence and importance of linguistic universals for two reasons: I am sure that they exist. And, as we identify and use them - which would certainly be my priority - we will generalise solutions for communication problems far more efficiently, with or without the use of information technology.

Finally, to arguments for universals that have been made by others I want to add one more: I believe that the strongest argument for linguistic universals is biological; they must be extremely simple and directly relatable to the natural environment of *homo sapiens*; they must correlate with experiential phenomena, that is to say meaning. Darwin's hypothesis "survival of the fittest", to explain the evolution of new species in environmental niches, has an obvious Darwinian analogue "survival of the fit" to explain the continuity of a species from generation to generation. "Continuity was the key..." (Desmond and Moore 1991). The efficiency of the linguistic tools acquired by individual human beings by the time they reach puberty is the principal measure of their survival out in the real world. In the degree that linguistic tools remain efficient and of course adaptive, *homo sapiens* survives. The nature of surviving linguistic tools, that is, language, is perforce determined by surviving members of this species. I draw the conclusion that, by this self-regulating mechanism, grammar itself survives as the principal instrument for human survival, and must inevitably be simple and universal.

REFERENCES

Atkinson, Martin. "Generative Grammar: The Minimalist Program." In *Concise Encyclopedia of Syntactic Theories*, ed. Keith Brown and Jim Miller, 137-147. Pergamon, 1996.

Boettcher, Judith V. *101 Success Stories of Information Technology in Higher Education*. Primis, 1993.

Brown, Keith and Jim Miller. "Introduction." In *Concise Encyclopedia of Syntactic Theories*, ed. Keith Brown and Jim Miller, xxiii. Pergamon, 1996.

Desmond, Adrian and James Moore. *Darwin*, 536. W.W. Norton, 1991.

Foley, W.A. "Information Structure." In *Concise Encyclopedia of Syntactic Theories*, ed. Keith Brown and Jim Miller, 200-209. Pergamon, 1996.

Newmeyer, F.J. "Chomsky's Philosophy of Language." In *Concise Encyclopedia of Syntactic Theories*, ed. Keith Brown and Jim Miller, 45-50. Pergamon, 1996.

Solá, Donald F. "Where is the Quechua Verb Phrase?" In *Language in Global Perspective*, ed. B.F. Elson, 395-406. Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1986.

Solá, Donald F., Willem J.A. Pet, and James S. Noblitt. *Salsa: Writing Assistant for Spanish*. Ithica: InterLex Associates, Inc., 1990.

Solá, Donald F. *Salsera: Customizing Program for 'Salsa'*. Ithica: InterLex Associates, Inc., 1993.

Solá, Donald F. *WinSalsa: Building your Spanish Knowledge-Base*. Ithica: InterLex Associates, Inc., 1999.

Solá, Donald F. *WinColega: Building your Portuguese Knowledge-Base*. Ithica: InterLex Associates, Inc., 2000.

Solá, Donald F. *WinFriends: Building your English Knowledge-Base*. Ithica: InterLex Associates, Inc., 2000.

Vicky Ann Cremona and Helena Mallia

Interpretation is in itself a diplomatic endeavour. The interpreter's job is very different to that of a translator. Translators work alone, facing a white sheet of paper and a text. They recreate the text by becoming its second author, understanding and recreating the author's writing skills, possibly referring to other works by the author in order to better grasp his/her style and expression. The interpreter's work is not a solitary one. The interpreter works directly with an orator, who possibly elaborates his text as the topic unfolds, expressing his thoughts directly without any time for re-elaboration or rewording. The interpreter also works directly with a public, the floor, who is listening simultaneously to him and to the orator. The interpreter's work, therefore, calls for a different dynamic.

Translation can range from a simple phrase, to a brochure, to a manuscript of the past, to a speech. All translators aspire to have their names printed under that of the author on the front page of a prestigious book. Interpreters cannot aspire to the same, but can evaluate their worth through the quality and importance of the conferences they are asked to interpret. Interpreters are chameleons, they have to lend themselves to the topic under discussion, and blend themselves with the general decor. Topics may range from cosmetics to archaeology, from dentistry to car parts, from training seminars to ministerial meetings. Certain interpreters choose to specialise in particular areas, in order to be able to handle the language peculiarities of a particular field.

There are two main types of interpretation: simultaneous and consecutive. Consecutive interpreting relies more on the ability to synthesise; the interpreter is required to remember what is being said, and must have the ability to summarise the salient points raised in a discussion. A simultaneous interpreter is more adrenaline-driven. This type of interpreting requires fast reflexes, intense concentration, and a good working knowledge of the subject being tackled. Moreover, the interpreters must not only master the languages they are working with, but must be able to conjure up a word or expression at the very moment it is pronounced. They cannot afford to hesitate.

There are different styles of simultaneous interpretation. Some interpreters listen to a speaker and then, at intervals, render the general thrust of what has been said by summarising without delving into too much detail, others go as far as totally reformulating what the speaker has said. Other interpreters prefer to follow the speaker more closely, and endeavour to translate the speech as faithfully as possible, respecting not only the style, but also the tone, and expressing the gestures through the voice. We adopt the latter approach, as we feel that we wish to transmit the message just as the speaker intended it. This method, however, raises some immediate questions. How does one translate anger, humour, insult, confidence? Does one censor? Does one correct?

Whatever the method adopted, every interpreter has to focus on key words. Have you ever attended a conference without hearing words such as: sustainable development, globalisation, networking, framework, right of law, regulatory bodies? These are key words in diplomacy. They are always accompanied by acronyms. Generally, this type of word underpins the argumentation of the speaker. If you miss them, you have missed the point the speaker is trying to make, and as a result, the spectre of confusion looms large. It translates on the floor, by people frowning, grimacing, taking off their earphones, looking back at the interpreters' booths, and at times, realising that the interpreters are not automatons.

The interpreter's technique is to identify the key words as the speaker delivers the talk, and to link discourse from one key word to another. The key words help the interpreter remember what is being said, while concentrating on how to best translate the general theme. Consequently, the more familiar the interpreter is with the key words and their associated meanings, the more his/her confidence is boosted, and this can be immediately felt in the way the speech is rendered. The key words obviously change from one field to another. Even within the same field, such as diplomacy, there are different key words for different topics or situations. So how are interpreters to recognise these words as key words and to familiarise themselves with the general framework these words represent?

Generally, these expressions crop up frequently in a conference. But an interpreter must seek other sources of information beforehand. It is important for an interpreter working in the diplomatic field to follow closely world political, social and cultural events. Sources for these may include local and foreign newspapers, journals dealing with current affairs, news broadcasts, as well as a very good knowledge of history and geography. It is important to have backup material from the conference itself as it helps the interpreter focus better on the subjects under discussion. It is fundamental to have speeches that are to be delivered a few days in advance, in order to better anticipate the conference, and preempt any potential problems in vocabulary, expression and general attitudes. For example, if a hot issue is to be discussed, it is well to be aware that sparks may fly. Key words however are not static. They evolve with political events and developments. Nowadays, we do not often hear past catchwords such as: superpowers, polarisation, blocs, but other words such as ethnic cleansing, money laundering, free trade zone, have become practically common usage in conferences. It is helpful to know the origins and historical and social connotations of such terms, as this helps situate the discussion, and helps to avoid being led astray by mispronunciation, heavy accent, or at times, misuse of the word. For example, when discussions were under way regarding Poland joining the EU, one French speaker said "polynésien" instead of "polonaise" which changed not only the country, but even the continent.

What use however, is it, to learn pages of vocabulary and facts by heart, and then find oneself listening to an incoherent delivery? What determines incoherence? One main problem is accents and pronunciations. Even a native speaker may have a heavy regional accent. Non native speakers generally have problems not only with accent but also with sentence structure, especially when they are speaking off the cuff during a round table discussion or a workshop. Sentence construction varies from one language to another and forces the interpreter to pause, for example, in French and English the place of adjectives and nouns is inverted, in German the verb is placed at the end of a sentence. Certain speakers do not follow a single trend of thought and their speech is disjointed, with sentences ending in midair or the speaker suddenly going off at a tangent and just as suddenly coming back to a point made earlier. The task of every interpreter is first and foremost to render coherent ideas, and it has happened that the translator has tried to restore coherence to an original speech. For this to happen, the interpreters have to be fully conversant with what is being said. Fear of the microphone may lead speakers to mumbling and hesitation. These are as counterproductive as speakers who speak too fast, hardly pausing to think, as in both cases, the interpreter is so concerned with trying to make out what is being said that there is no room for fine tuning. The interpreter's nightmare are those who race through written speeches; this occurs very frequently in diplomacy where a written speech format is preferred as speeches receive prior approval. A tight agenda may also dictate a rush to read, and speakers will try to cram a fifteen minute speech into five, a fatal disaster for the interpreter, especially if figures and dates are quoted. Reading a text requires a different debit to speaking. Generally people reading speak faster, because they do not have to think about what they are going to say. Pauses are timed differently, and the quality of vocabulary and sentence structure is more formal and bureaucratic. Unless the interpreters are familiar with the text, or at least the argument, it is extremely arduous to translate this type of speech as the rhythm of a written speech is very different, and it becomes very difficult for the interpreter to keep up.

Generally, there is lack of attention just before lunch and a feeling of drowsiness just after. The sun shining outside does not help matters, either. Whatever the conditions of work, the interpreters cannot afford to let down their guard as slowing down would mean that they risk

leaving out essential parts of the speech. Their work is, however, facilitated when they realise already by the opening sentences that a speaker is experienced in public speaking or that he takes their presence into account. The greatest pleasure for an interpreter is not simply to render the ideas of the speaker faithfully, but to find the appropriate and elegant turn of phrase which also makes the translation more enjoyable for the listeners. In diplomacy, where the value of a word carries weight, it is particularly important to pay attention to idiom, innuendos, nuances of meaning. Occasionally, the interpreter serves as a scapegoat when in a moment of tension, a misunderstanding can be rightly or wrongly attributed to misinterpretation.

In our case, we strive to avoid mistakes in interpretation by working as a team. We try to ensure a constant presence of two interpreters in the booth so that even when one of us is "resting", her ears are still tuned in to the conference and she may be readily called on in case of need (names, dates, figures, technical terms, acronyms, etc.).

A good rapport between the interpreters contributes to a better spirit, and consequently, to better translation. This is further enhanced if a good working relationship is established with the conference organisers and participants. The interpreters would not feel inhibited from approaching the delegates in order to verify a term or to ask for a speech. The delegates should feel at ease in coming to the interpreters to discuss particular points in their speeches.

In diplomatic conferences, confidence in the interpreters is essential. The underlying tensions which may arise between delegates or country representatives can worsen if the interpreters are not trusted. In fact, in certain cases of great tension, delegates prefer to speak in or translate into a language they do not really master rather than passing through an interpreter. This is why it is important to ensure that the interpreters chosen are of the calibre and have experience in dealing with situations where tact and savoir-faire are an asset.

Diplomacy does not only pertain to diplomats nor is it characteristic only of diplomatic conferences. Other types of discussion such as religion, culture, heritage, sales, marketing may require such skills. Interpreters must know how to transmit a message using discretion without recurring to censorship, as it is not their role.

Interpreting in diplomacy can prove very rewarding as interpreters feel that they are giving their small contribution to history in the making.

This article presents some reflections based on almost ten years of research on the use of hypertext in diplomacy and international law.¹ As part of our attempt to validate theory through practice, we have developed a hypertext software application for use in online learning courses and information management. This article describes some aspects of our research and outlines potential uses for hypertext in diplomacy and international law. Case studies and illustrations in this paper are based on our hypertext application.

1. WHAT IS HYPERTEXT?

Hypertext is the concept which underlies the World Wide Web. Ted Nelson, who coined the term *hypertext*, describes it as "non sequential text fragments linked together with hot spots called hypertext links."² Basically, hypertext consists of a network of nodes and links.

Nodes are usually text fragments, but they can equally well consist of graphics, sound, film, or any other element that can be displayed on the Internet.³ A node is any integrated and self-sufficient unit of information, of a smaller size than the complete document. Janet Fiderio states that nodes "consist of a single concept or idea."⁴ A reader should be able to distinguish a node from the surrounding text. Developers of the *Oxford Electronic Dictionary* indicate that "a key characteristic of hypertext is the discrete nature of its components."⁵

Links connect nodes. The simple format of links on the World Wide Web (WWW) is familiar to Internet users: they usually appear as segments of blue, underlined text which the user can click on in order to go to some other document. Often when we follow these links we do not know where they will take us. More sophisticated links may offer the user two additional elements of information: a) the link destination (where the link will take the user); and b) the purpose or meaning of the link (a note that it presents further information, proof, counter-arguments, analogy, etc.). When following this type of link the user knows that the link points to a particular document or web page containing further resources, arguments, counter-arguments, an analogy, or other relevant materials.

While the simplest use of hypertext is to connect documents, other, more complex uses include:

- organising information; especially interlinked materials such as dictionaries and encyclopaedias;
- writing; especially collaborative writing;
- argumentative debate, discussion and negotiation;
- revolutionising the way we think and create.

Vannevar Bush, the conceptual father of hypertext, wrote that hypertext would introduce "a new relationship between thinking man and the sum of knowledge." Bush based the concept of hypertext on the following understanding of the functionality of the human mind: "It operates by association. With one item in its grasp, it snaps instantly to the next that is suggested by the association of thoughts, in accordance with some intricate web of trails carried by the cells of the brain."⁶ By nature hypertext both requires and stimulates the user to think in terms of the relationships and possible connections between various concepts and pieces of information.

2. HISTORY

Although the term *hypertext* is recent, the concept itself has roots in all attempts throughout history to develop associative thinking, facilitate continuous discussion around a text, and to present arguments in an efficient way. Holy texts, such as the Bible, Koran and Talmud, include a sort of non-technological hypertext aspect in the interplay between the basic text and on-going interpretation. In *The Talmud and the Internet*, Jonathan Rosen writes "I have often thought, contemplating a page of the Talmud, that it bears a certain uncanny resemblance to a home page on the Internet, on which nothing is whole in itself but where icons and text boxes are doorways through which visitors pass into an infinity of cross-referenced texts and conversations."⁷

Medieval codices represent an early attempt to include some hypertextual features in written text. In many codices you can find glosses in the margins, beside the main text. The central part of the page contains the primary, often ancient, text, while subsequent readers have added explanation and commentary in the margins. Thus, the codex becomes, over time, a network of text and interpretation.

With the introduction of Guttenberg's press the non-linear structure of the hand-copied medieval codex was gradually transformed into the linear structure of modern books. In order to improve access to information in books, authors introduced various techniques such as tables of contents, which present a hierarchical outline of the document structure; and indices, which allow the reader to see horizontal lines through the text, indicating the pages that contain listed words.⁸

A more recent key event in the human attempt to organise information and knowledge in the most efficient way was Vannevar Bush's conception of the Memex, which he wrote about in the early 1930s. Although Bush did not use the term *hypertext* he laid down the fundamentals for this concept. Bush used technology available at the time - microfilm - in order to simulate the associative linking of information.

Bush's concept was fully realised with the development of computer technology. In the 1960s Ted Nelson merged the concept introduced by Bush with computer technology to create hypertext. His creation inspired many scientists, linguists, and programmers, including Tim Berners-Lee, to attempt to build computer systems based on hypertext.

Until the introduction of the World Wide Web, most of those attempts were confined to limited, academic circles. Tim Berners-Lee implemented the hypertext concept on the Internet and created the World Wide Web, today a familiar tool for the millions of Internet users worldwide. Although the WWW has developed explosively, the use of hypertext has been limited so far to basic linking of information. The current use of hypertext is still far from the concept of hypertext as a tool that, according to Bush's prediction, will reinvent the way we think and create.

3. HYPERTEXT AND TYPES OF INFORMATION

Hypertext is a useful tool for managing particular types of information. Before examining some practical applications of hypertext we will make a brief survey of the various types of information: structured, semi-structured and non-structured. We will illustrate each explanation with two examples: general (library) and diplomacy-related (collection/database of international treaties).

Structured Information

Structured information can be logically described and completely classified. It is usually stored in a database, for example, an address book or a library database. In a library database, each

book is registered according to clearly defined fields such as: title, author, subject, publisher, and date of publication. Structured information stored in a database can be easily manipulated. For example, a library user can easily find a book written by a particular author, or all information about a particular topic.

In diplomacy, each convention in a database of international treaties will be specified by a logical information structure with fields such as title, keywords, date of signature, and date of ratification. Information can be easily retrieved from such a structured database. For example, a simple search produces a list of conventions meeting certain criteria: bilateral conventions, conventions signed in Paris, conventions signed in the last three years, or conventions signed by Malta. A more complex search could combine two or more criteria - for example: conventions signed in Paris in the last two years, or conventions signed by Malta on environmental issues. An even more complex search could be based on several criteria combined with Boolean operators, for example: conventions signed by Austria AND Italy BUT NOT Japan on environmental protection, or conventions signed by Austria, Italy and Japan BUT NOT ratified by Italy on environmental protection.

Semi-Structured Information

Semi-structured information consists of both logically structured elements and free text. Books, for example, are semi-structured information. They contain some structured elements which help us to access information. When we open a new book we have some expectations about its organisation and content, based on our previous experience with books. We expect, depending of the type of publication, an introduction, dedications, a table of content,⁹ chapters divisions, an index, etc. Similarly, if we read the newspaper frequently we read according to the organisational patterns to which we have become accustomed: we know, based on experience, in which parts of the paper we will find certain information (editorials, latest news, commentary, sports). The semi-structured nature of this type of information is in the content of structural elements: for example, we do not have prior expectations based on our experience about the text of the chapters in a book.

In diplomacy, most international treaties are semi-structured information. In any agreement we expect certain parts: a title, a preamble, articles and a closing. While these parts can be identified, their content cannot be standardised. The content is free text and depends on the particular circumstances (see Table 1). Most knowledge management projects focus on computerised management of semi-structured information.

Table 1: Example of Semi-Structured Information - The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

STRUCTURE	CONTENT
Title	Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations
Preamble	The States parties to the present Convention, Recalling that peoples of all nations from ancient times have recognized the status of diplomatic agents, Having in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the sovereign equality of States, the maintenance of international peace and security, and the promotion of friendly relations among nations, Believing that an international convention on diplomatic intercourse, privileges and immunities would contribute to the development of friendly relations among nations irrespective of their differing constitutional and social systems, Realizing that the purpose of such privileges and immunities is not to benefit individuals but to ensure the efficient performance of the functions of diplomatic missions as representing States, Affirming that the rules of customary international law should continue to govern questions not expressly regulated by the provisions of the present Convention, Have agreed as follows:
Operational Part	Article I For purpose of the present Convention, the following expressions shall have the meanings hereunder assigned to them:
Closing	IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective governments, have signed the present Convention. DONE AT VIENNA, this eighteenth day of April one thousand nine hundred and sixty-one.

Non-Structured Information

We cannot identify any regular logical structure in non-structured information. Essays, novels, poems and other free texts are examples of non-structured information.

Management of non-structured information is one of the biggest challenges of modern science. We often spend hours trying to find a specific sentence or paragraph in a book we once read, months or years later when we finally realise its significance. How can we more easily access the vast amount of information and knowledge stored in the millions of volumes written worldwide? Each of us has some tools to try to cope with this problem: bookmarks, notes, yellow stickers, etc. While most of us can easily find addresses in our structured address book or database, it is much more difficult to find particular parts of a text when we need them.

A first step in solving this problem technologically came with the development of free text search tools in text processors, and with powerful Internet search engines like Yahoo, AltaVista, and Google. Another more versatile and flexible tool is hypertext.

4. WHY IS DIPLOMACY HYPERTEXT-FRIENDLY?

For a number of reasons, diplomacy and international relations seem ideally suited as fields for the use of hypertext tools. First, **text is central to diplomacy**. Text is the immediate or ultimate result of most diplomatic activities. The richness and complexity of diplomatic activities found not only in negotiation and representation but also in social activities and media coverage is crystallised in diplomatic documents, the foremost of which are international legal agreements. The phrase *Verba Volant, Scripta Manent* applies very strongly to diplomacy. Sir Harold Nicolson said "...an agreement which is committed to writing is likely to prove more dependable in the future than any agreement which rests upon the variable interpretation of spoken assent."¹⁰

Second, **diplomatic documents are the result of complex, multi-layered activities**. The final diplomatic and international legal documents are only the top layer - the visible result of a wealth of reference materials, supporting documents, negotiations, collaborations, etc. Full understanding and interpretation of diplomatic documents requires reference to all supporting sources. This is difficult unless they are organised in a simple and manageable way, for example, through a hypertext presentation of layers of information. Unlike with print and paper, hypertext allows for the presentation of information in multiple layers. The first layer might contain a synthesis or summary of the argument, with links to the next layers. Each layer would progressively elaborate and support the argument, or particular facets of the argument. The reader could decide how far to delve into each particular topic. Ultimately, the entire Internet is a resource that can be accessed via such links. Bush described hypertext as a "computer glue" binding information from a wide variety of books, documents, communications and other artefacts to enhance its accessibility and usefulness.¹¹

Third, **modern diplomacy is faced with an information glut**. The information explosion in diplomacy can be seen in two principle areas. First, the number of documents produced within the framework of various international organisations and regimes is increasing to unmanageable amounts. Second, given the complexity of contemporary international relations, diplomatic documents are becoming unmanageable in size. For example, the Marrakesh Final Act establishing the WTO contains 26,000 pages of agreements, promises and commitments.¹² Information is available in quantities far beyond our capacity to process. Finnish author Jaako Lehtonen identifies an "information discrepancy" between the information flow and our processing capacities.¹³ Diplomats often fall victim to this discrepancy due to their need to quickly find relevant information and make important decisions. Hypertext tools cannot reduce complexity, but they can help harness it.¹⁴

Fourth, **diplomatic developments are multi-causal** - the result of a complex interplay of various national and international actors, factors, coincidences, and paradoxes. We can rarely determine exactly which events or factors led to any particular development. After the fact descriptions of diplomatic events tend to focus on the predominant line of events, which may not have been the only important one. Hypertext can represent multi-causality realistically, showing the complex networks of cause and effect.

Criteria for Analysis of Hypertext Suitability

Documents of diplomacy and international law are particularly suited to hypertext, as demonstrated by their fulfilment of the criteria listed below. The first several criteria are from Schneiderman's "Golden Rules of Hypertext".¹⁵

1. A large body of text is organised into numerous segments. Treaties, agreements, conventions, reports of international conferences, and other diplomatic documents are usually long texts fragmented into smaller, self-contained segments, modules or articles. For example, the *Millennium Report*¹⁶ of the Secretary General of the UN, prepared for the UN Millennium Summit and the resulting initiatives, is divided according to a hierarchical structure based on the following four agendas: development,¹⁷ security,¹⁸ environment¹⁹ and reform of the UN. This modular structure allows the reader non-linear access to information.

2. The fragments relate to each other. The segments of diplomatic documents have some cohesion to justify their inclusion in the same text. Even if cohesion is low, diplomatic documents are not simply collections of unrelated textual fragments. The cohesive "glue" may sometimes consist of either the subject or the purpose of the document. In the case of the *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* cohesion is provided by the subject: regulating diplomatic relations. The document includes a wide variety of issues, from personal immunities to the use of telegraphs and the status of families, but all are related to diplomatic relations. Alternately, a document such as the *UN Millennium Report* is held together by purpose: all parts of the document were prepared for a particular meeting, activity, or initiative.

3. The user refers to only fragments of the text at a time. Diplomatic documents are not often read from beginning to end. Users usually consult a particular chapter, section or article, depending on their needs. Articles in international legal documents like the *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* carry a high level of autonomy.²⁰ Equally, in the case of the *Millennium Report* it is unlikely, for example, that those interested in nuclear weapons would need to consult the section on youth employment.

The potential applications of hypertext and requirements of diplomacy suggest the introduction of two additional criteria for determining if a particular text is suitable for hypertext: transtextuality and the life-cycle or time dimension.

4. Documents should be *transtextual*. *Transtextuality* means that a text contains text-external references: pointers towards other texts and documents.²¹ Post-modern theoretician Michael Foucault considers a complete book to be a huge network of texts in which the frontiers "are never clear-cutbooks are caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences..."²² Transtextuality is a strong characteristic of diplomatic documents, which include a complex and visible net of references to other documents, conventions, reports, and texts.

5. Life-cycle (time aspect) may bring about a different interpretation of the document. Documents have a life-cycle: a document is created under a particular set of circumstances, which may later change, influencing both the function and meaning of the document. At least two phases can be distinguished in the life-cycle of any diplomatic document.

Pre-text (negotiation phase): International legal documents are the result of long negotiations, proposals and counter-proposals, and the interplay between actors. Consulting the *travaux préparatoires* of an agreement is useful not only for the sake of the historical record, but also for determining the initial intentions of the negotiating partners behind particular formulations. Such references become particularly important when the context surrounding the agreement changes. Each agreement is negotiated within a specific social, political and technological context; if that context changes, the application of norms changes as well.

Post-text: Once adopted, a text has life of its own. In the case of international legal documents, the post-text steps include ratification and implementation. Even with the most precise and carefully negotiated formulations, application in real life brings new implications and sheds new light on existing texts.

5. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF HYPERTEXT IN DIPLOMACY

Below are several scenarios demonstrating the use of hypertext in diplomacy, all based on our hypertext software platform. The examples are all fictitious, but as realistic as possible. The following scenarios are presented:

- Hypertext for Diplomatic Services (Consultation and Reporting)
- Management of International Regimes

- Negotiation
- Analysing Diplomatic and International Legal Documents

Hypertext for Diplomatic Services (Consultation and Reporting)

Background: Diplomatic services are organised as complex networks involving different level of interaction, including:

- within the ministry of foreign affairs;
- between the ministry and missions, and among missions;
- among governmental departments;
- with national society;
- with international partners.

By nature, diplomatic activity focuses on interaction with international partners, but it is often the case that national coordination of negotiation requires more energy and time. This has become even more the case with the greater openness of diplomatic services and the demand for more public diplomacy brought by the end of the Cold War.

Most diplomatic interaction is text-based. This example of one diplomatic initiative shows how hypertext may assist with the management of complex diplomatic interactions.

Scenario: The ministry of foreign affairs is developing a new strategy to deal with the "brain drain," with the intention of returning, or at least re-integrating, professional nationals abroad. To design an effective strategy the ministry needs to learn from the experience of other countries and to conduct a survey of available multilateral resources and initiatives. Figure 1 shows how hypertext is used for creating discussion around the topic of the "brain drain". Tables 2 and 3 compare traditional and hypertext-based methods for this initiative.

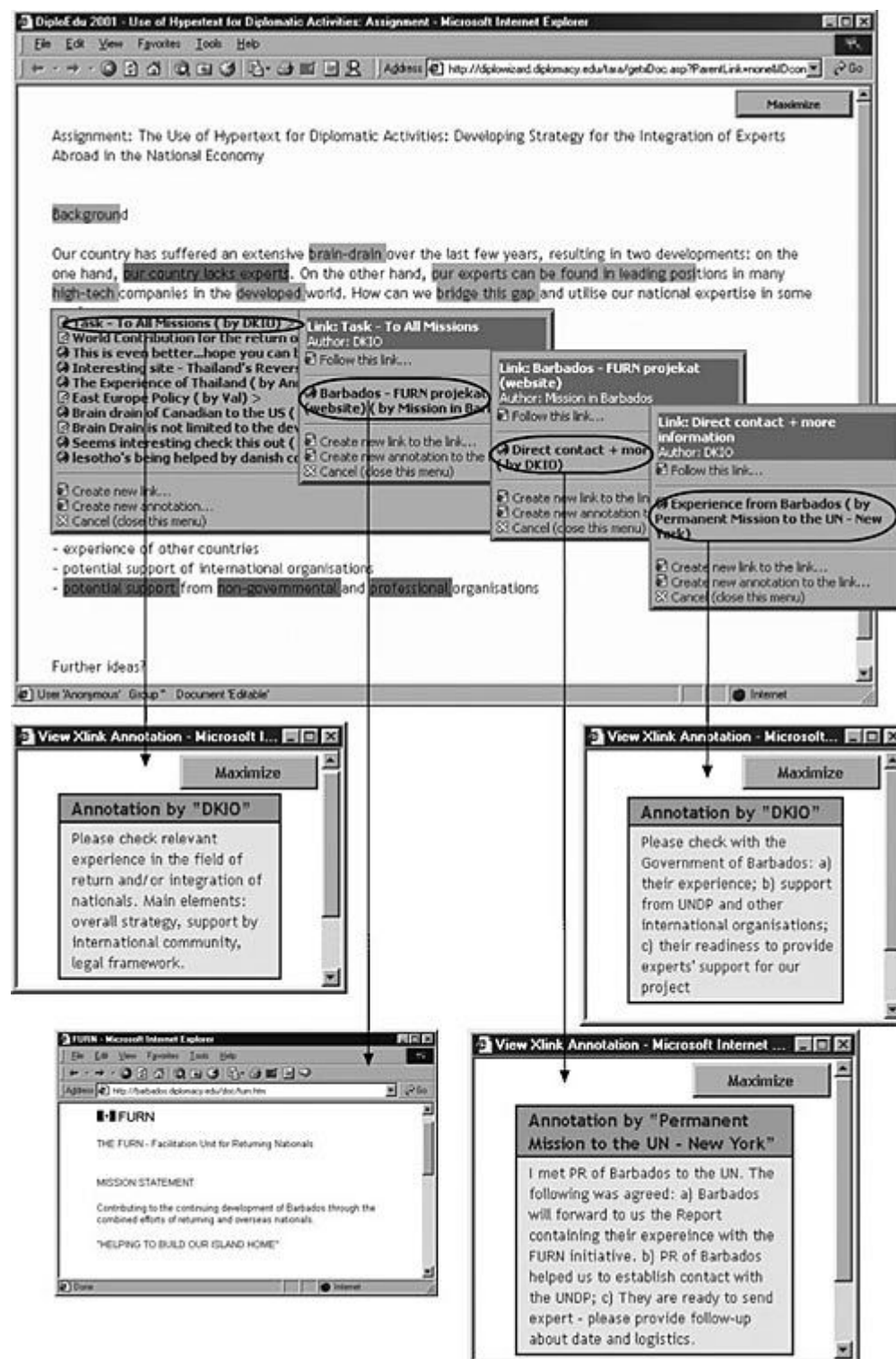
Table 2: Comparison of Methodologies

Traditional	Hypertext-based
1. Ministry writes letters to missions inviting their input.	1. Ministry posts text as hypertext-document on Internet and invites missions to add hypertext annotations (comments) or links.
2. Missions send ministry letters and reports in reply.	2. Missions make hypertext annotations or links to other hypertext resources.
3. Ministry compiles strategy document to guide implementation and on-going debate.	3. Text with annotations is used as basis for strategy document to guide implementation and on-going debate.

Table 3: Comparison of Advantages/Disadvantages

Criteria	Traditional	Hypertext-based
Speed	Slow.	Almost instant (all communication via the Internet).
Relevance	Low (each report will include the full range of "official documentation trappings").	High (hypertext encourages users to focus on relevant observations and comments).
Peer-to-peer exchange	Low (circulation of documents among missions is inefficient).	High (all contributions are immediately available for peer review by other missions; interaction among missions increases quality of output, stimulates additional ideas and avoids unnecessary duplication).
On-going discussion	Final document stored in passive format.	All through the process original document remains available for consultation and discussion.
Achievement	Passive: many modern institutions do not know what they know.	Active: knowledge and information remain available for future reference and use.

Figure 1: Hypertext for Diplomatic Activities - Scenario "brain drain"



Management of International Regimes

Background: Stephen Krasner defines international regimes as "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations."²³ The intensive development of international regimes in recent years coincides with two processes in international relations: globalisation (need to regulate issues on an international scale) and the increasing

importance of technical issues (e.g. environment, chemical weapons, technology). According to some estimations approximately 600 international regimes now exist.

Most international regimes are established by international conventions in order to implement the provisions of a particular convention, often in the field of the environmental, human rights, etc.²⁴ The establishment of an international regime includes setting up a secretariat, technical assistance, reporting, review processes, and other such elements. The whole process is text and document-intensive with frequent exchanges of reports and documents between the secretariat, parties and other entities. Implementation procedures are usually triggered by particular articles of the original convention. Hypertext provides a technical tool for easy management of this information (linking to particular articles).

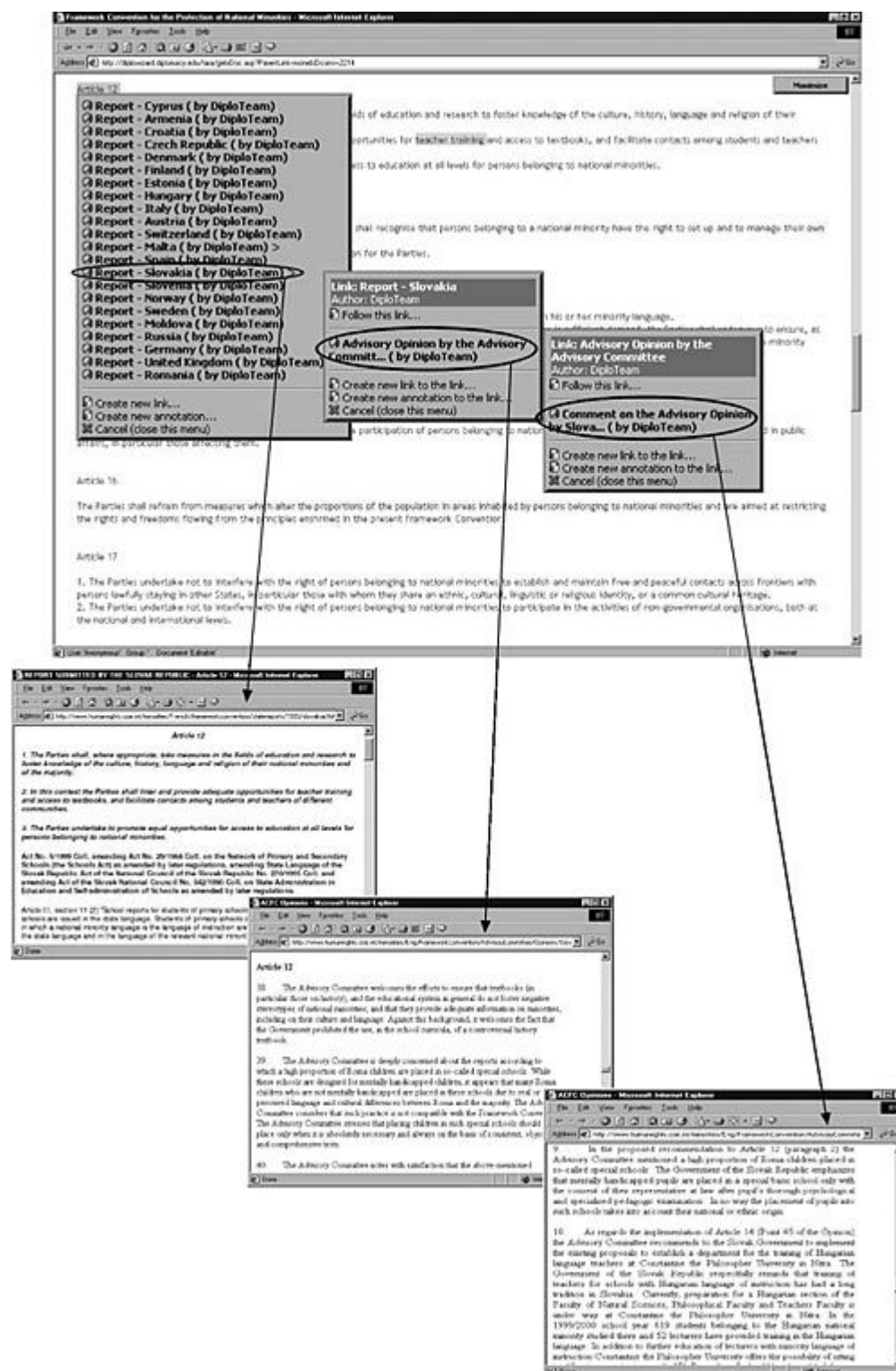
Following are some "hypertext-friendly" features of international regimes:

- a. Centrality of text: International regimes are usually established in order to implement international conventions. Implementation processes are triggered by particular articles of the text.
- b. Implementation - reporting: States and other actors party to an international regime are obliged to provide reports on the implementation process.²⁵ These documents are more easily consulted if they are linked directly to the relevant articles of the convention.
- c. Communication and information exchange: Regimes are usually established to increase communication and trust among states. The need for sharing, transparency and openness is built into the very fundamentals of international regimes, making them potential beneficiaries of IT, the Internet, and especially hypertext.
- d. Multi-actor environment: While regimes are usually founded by states, NGOs are increasingly important, especially in the fields of environment and human rights. The complexity of actors involved is increased by the fact that implementation of regimes often affects a variety of actors within a state (companies, banks, individuals, etc.).
- e. Epistemic community: As many international regimes deal with highly technical fields (environment, chemical weapons, etc.), the epistemic community has an important role in running regimes. The most successful example of the influence of the epistemic community on the development of a regime was the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP). MAP was created through the interaction of a variety of actors including academics, scientists, diplomats, and UN officials.²⁶

Using hypertext, the complete management of an international regime can be centred around the text of the initial international convention. Each article can be linked to relevant reports, academic resources, NGOs actions, or media coverage. Such an approach would anchor regime management to the basic nature of the regime, based on the initial international convention.

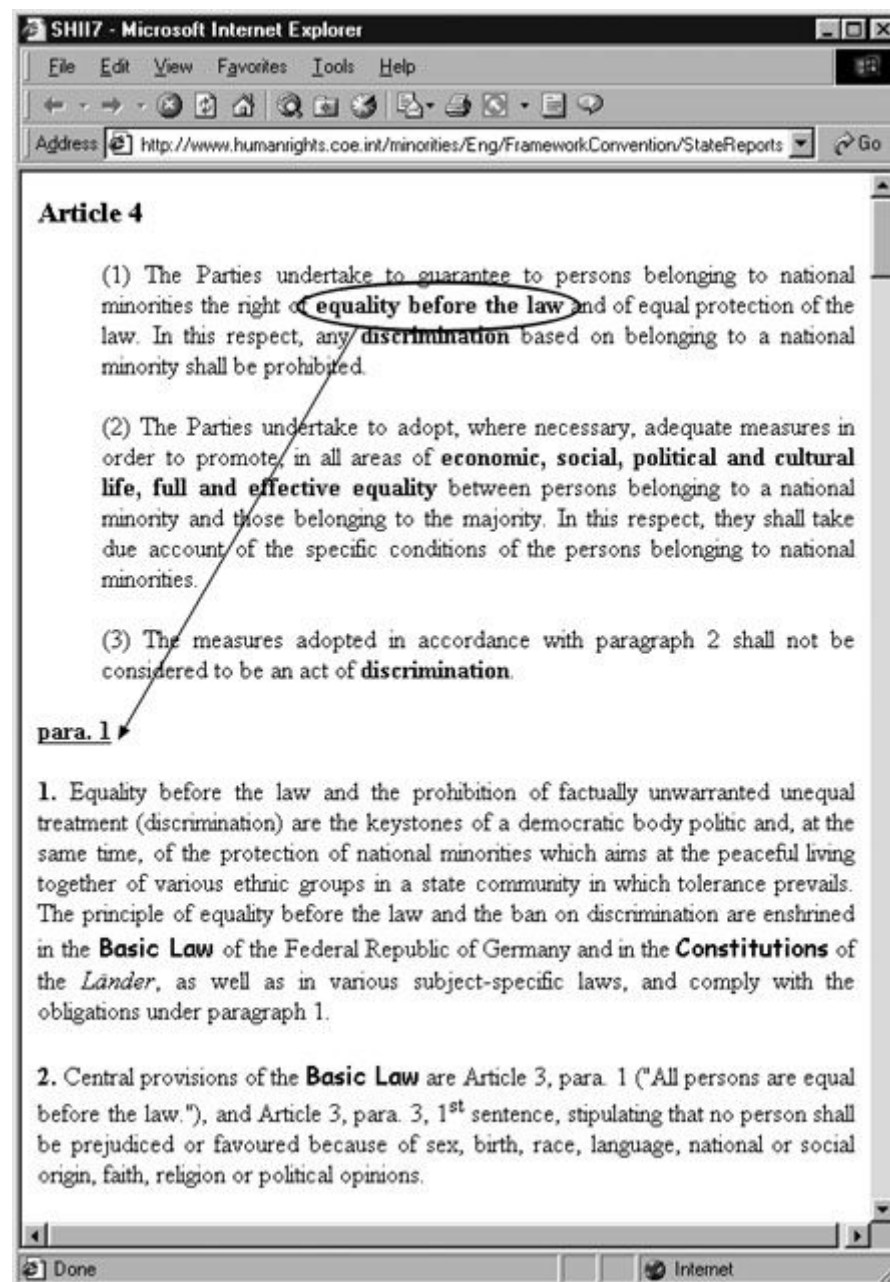
Scenario: The *Framework Convention on National Minorities*, adopted within the Council of Europe, established a regime which imposes several obligations on signatory states - including the obligation to provide regular reports on the implementation of the Convention.²⁷ Management of these reports can be done through hypertext, as shown in the figures below. Reports presented as hypertext documents can be directly linked to corresponding articles in the Convention. State Reports are analysed by the Advisory Committee which produces the Advisory Opinion (so far published for Finland and Slovakia). States have the option of commenting on the Advisory Opinion.

Figure 2: Reporting Via Hypertext



Hypertext suitability of Germany's Report: Germany's report is particularly suitable for hypertext, as the drafters comment on particular phrases within each article (see Figure 3). Germany's report shows how a "hypertext approach" can be used for the organisation of information even without technology. Obviously, technology provides convenience and additional features.

Figure 3: Germany's Report



Negotiation

Negotiation is as old as humanity; an essentially human activity which has not been substantially affected by technology at any point in the history of mankind. Will the Internet change negotiation? Or more concretely, can we negotiate via the Internet? The answer is yes: the Internet can be used for negotiation in certain situations. While face-to-face interaction will remain the primary form of negotiation, especially at the highest levels, negotiation via the Internet may be a more convenient method in the following situations:

1. **Problems with negotiation venue.** In some situations physical meetings are not possible or practical. For example, the most recent World Bank meeting, scheduled to take place in Barcelona, was held via the Internet due to the threats of protesters.

2. Need to reduce "emotional noise" of direct contact. Usually the lack of emotion associated with Internet-based communication is considered a negative aspect. Emotions are often an important element of negotiations, guaranteeing a certain solidarity to agreements reached. Sometimes, however, negotiations can be too emotionally charged, creating an obstacle to their successful outcome. For example, in Dayton and Rambouillet proximity talks were used to avoid the delegations coming in direct contact. In certain situations, what is usually considered a disadvantage of Internet-based communication (lack of direct contact) could, paradoxically, become an advantage.

3. Need for stronger focus on text. Through the use of group editing functions of hypertext tools, negotiating parties can concentrate specifically on the text of an agreement.

4. Highly technical and prolonged negotiations. When negotiations go on for a long period of time, for example, with the *Law of the Sea Convention*, the Internet can be used as medium for on-going communication between direct meetings of the negotiating parties.

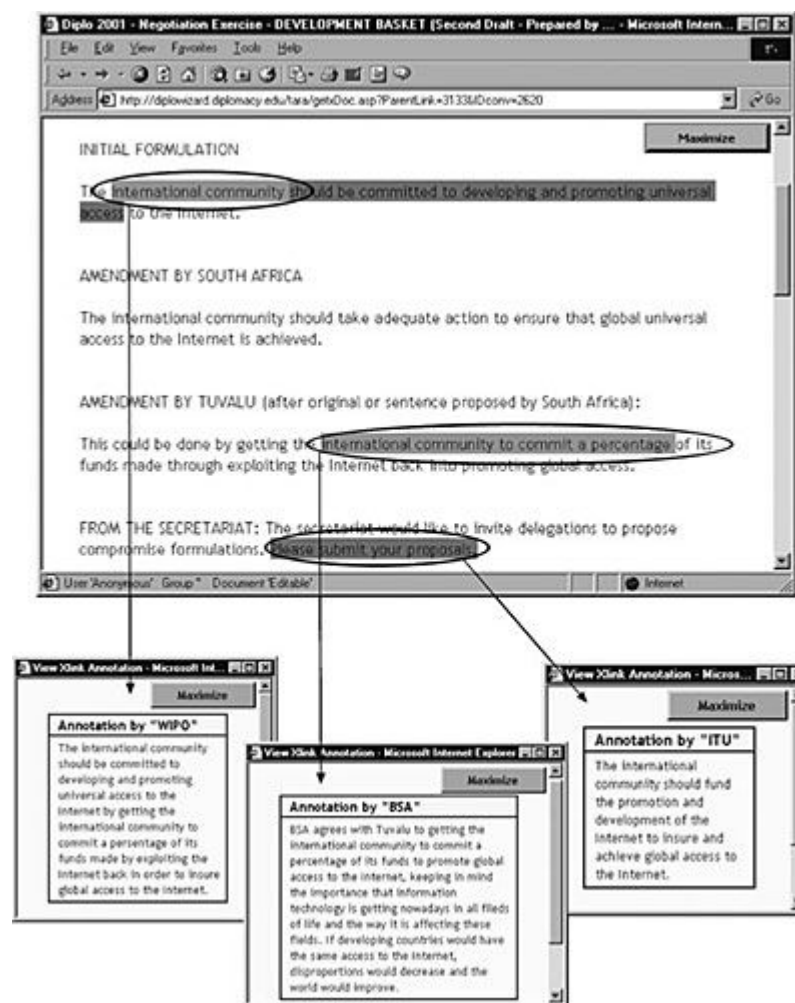
The screen shot in Figure 4 shows the final draft of the Development Basket of the International Declaration on the Internet part of a simulation exercise on Internet-based negotiation conducted during our post-graduate course on IT and diplomacy. Part of the negotiation process took place with hypertext tools for collaborative composition of document drafts. Highlighted sections of text include links to other documents or comments by the drafters of the text.

Figure 4: Hypertext Negotiation Tools



By clicking on the links or comments, the user can follow the process of how a particular text was negotiated and drafted. All phases of negotiations are presented as layers. Figure 5 shows several of the comments added by negotiators in the drafting process.

Figure 5: Hypertext Negotiation Tools

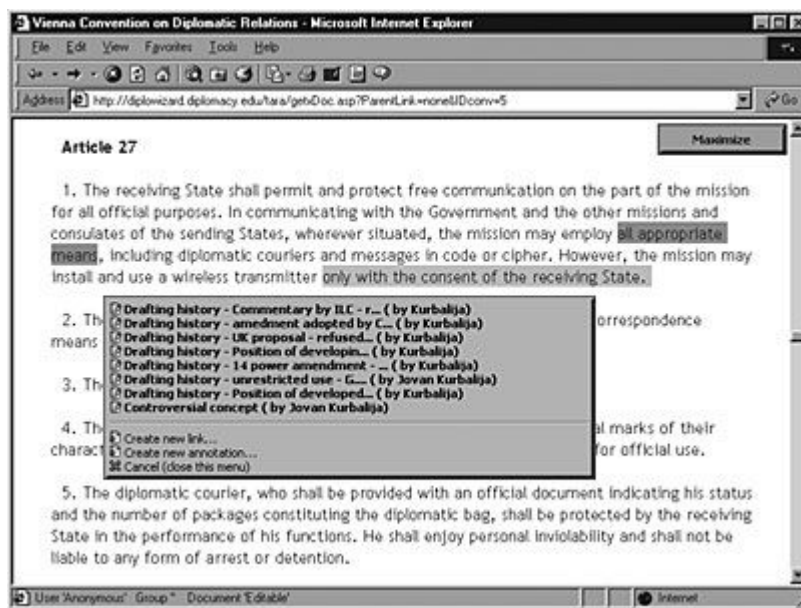


Analysing Diplomatic and International Legal Documents

The following examples present several hypertext techniques useful for the analysis and management of diplomatic and international legal documents.²⁸

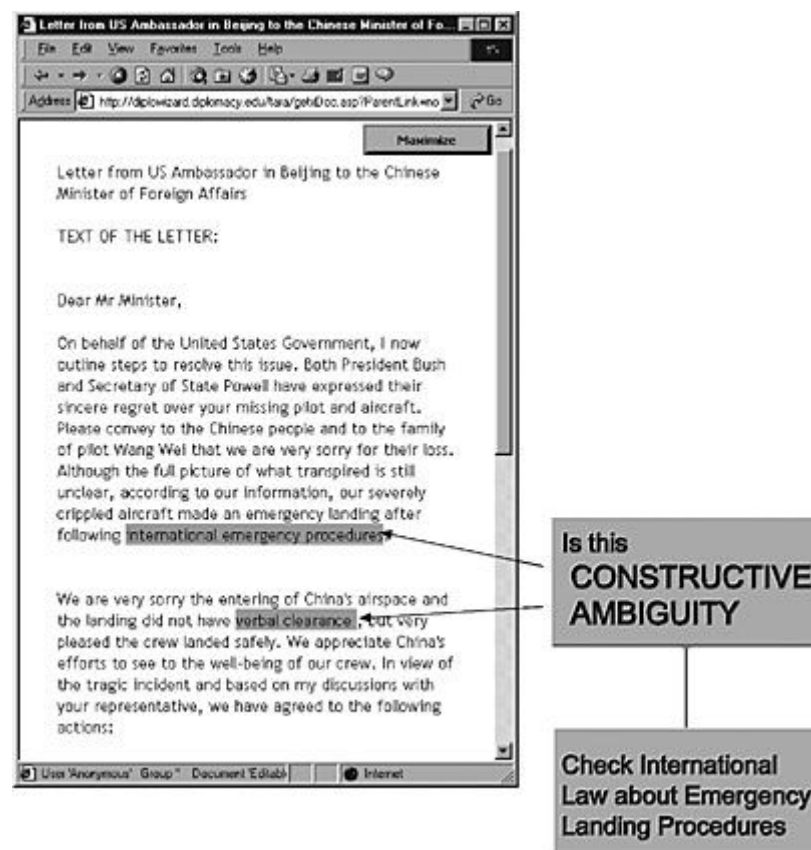
1. Diplomatic Trail and *Travaux Préparatoires*. Looking for the "diplomatic trail" means tracing the evolution of a particular article or phrase found in the final version of a diplomatic document, from the draft formulation through all of the intermediate versions. Similarly, in international law, the *travaux préparatoires* for a document present a temporal perspective; a history, linked mainly to the drafting of the agreement. The drafting history is important for the interpretation of documents, especially when it is necessary to identify the original intentions of negotiating parties. Figure 6 shows how hypertext can be used for the analysis of *travaux préparatoires*.

Figure 6: *Travaux Préparatoires*



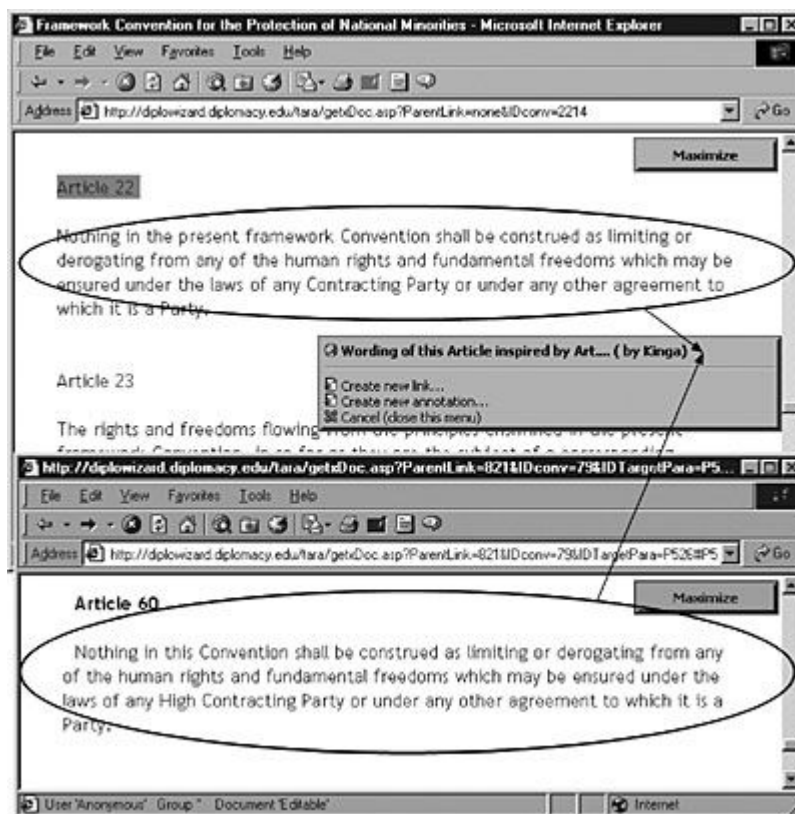
2. Constructive Ambiguities. Constructive ambiguities are frequently used to bridge differences between negotiating parties in order to produce diplomatic solutions.²⁹ The following example, Figure 7, uses hypertext to highlight the ambiguity in the letter sent by the US Ambassador to Chinese authorities during the "spy plane" incident. The letter first indicates that the US plane landed following international emergency procedures. However, in the next paragraph the US apologises for landing without verbal clearance from the Chinese side. The ambiguity lies in whether or not the US has disregarded international law - to clear up this ambiguity we would need to know if international emergency procedures require verbal clearance.

Figure 7: Constructive Ambiguity



3. Discovering Paternity of International Legal Documents. As more and more international conventions are drafted and adopted, certain templates for these documents are emerging. These templates are especially prevalent with bilateral agreements such as air-service, double taxation, health cooperation and investment protection. Figure 8 shows how hypertext can be used to highlight and link similar formulations in two multilateral agreements drafted by the Council of Europe (the *European Convention on Human Rights* and the *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*). This example also shows the evolution of diplomatic language: signatories of the ECHR in 1950 were considered "High Contracting Parties" while in the Framework Convention of 1995 they are referred to as "Contracting Parties".

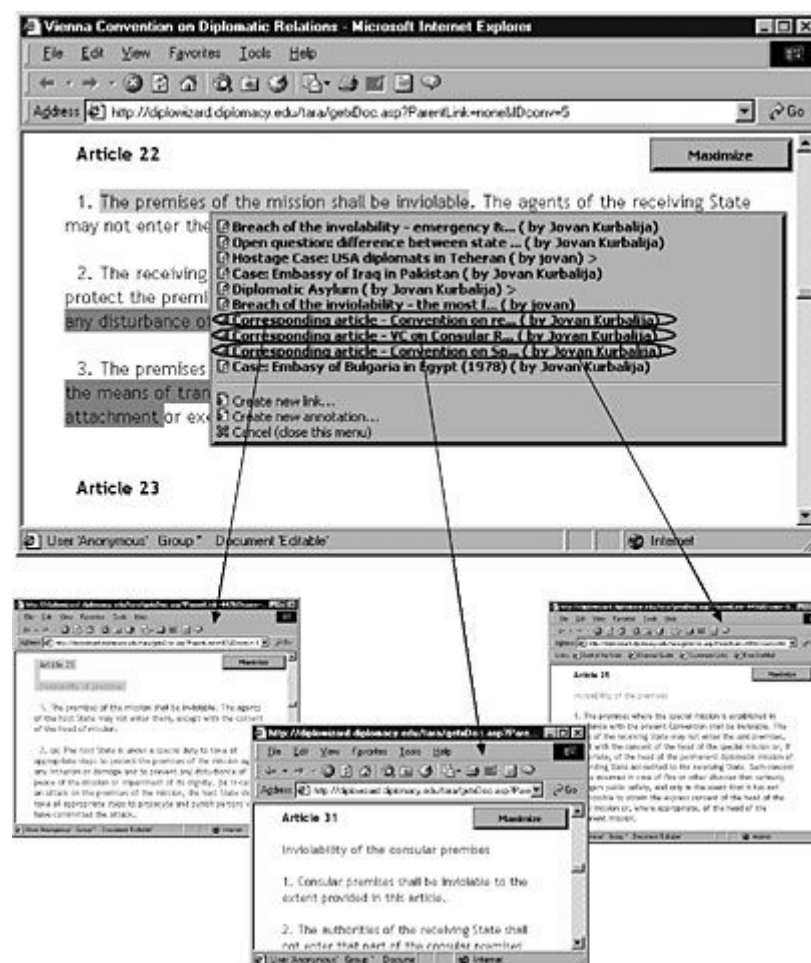
Figure 8: Paternity of Formulations in International Conventions



4. Following Application of Particular Rules in Practice. Once implemented, legal norms may not have the precise impact intended. In day-to-day practice the application of norms is usually more complex than the initial drafters envisaged. As shown in Figure 9, hypertext can be used to link information about the differences between particular norms and their implementation and eventual impact. Figure 9: The Implementation of Article 5 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

5. Comparative Analysis. Hypertext can be used to present a comparative analysis; in this case (Figure 10), of the regulation of the question of "inviolability of the premises of the missions" in the four main instruments of diplomatic law. The original article 22 is from the *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations*, while the other three articles are from the *Vienna Convention on the Representation of States in their Relations with International Organizations of a Universal Character*, the *Vienna Convention on Consular Relations*, and the *Convention on Special Missions*.

Figure 10: Comparative Analysis Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations



6. CONCLUSION

Hypertext made its initial impact through the World Wide Web. The explosive development of the Internet and the underlying importance of hypertext to connect pages on the Internet demonstrates its important function. However, the current use of hypertext lies far below its full potential and the initial expectations of Ted Nelson and Tim Berners-Lee. Hypertext is not yet in use as a means of organising and linking the vast amounts of available information and enhancing intellectual work. Why has hypertext not reached its full potential despite its obvious advantages?

The main reason is that at its current level of development human society is prepared to digest only a certain level of innovation and novelty. Wider use of hypertext would require substantive changes in the way we think. Moreover, a series of vested interests exist in the current organisation of intellectual and creative work, starting from individual interests linked to the formation of our intellectual profiles, extending to commercial investments (printing business, universities), and ultimately, to the very basis of the organisation and running of society. Certain paradoxical elements can be noted related to the application of hypertext. On the one hand it is simple and straightforward: on first encounter most people wonder why it is not in wider use, as it is so obvious and natural. On the other hand, difficulties arise when users try to develop hypertext materials or documents. Although non-linear reasoning guides us in everyday life, our cognitive development shaped by education and our text-centered culture leads us to think in a predominantly sequential way in intellectual exercises. Thus, while we can appreciate hypertext as an obvious method for presenting information, it is not so easy to use it as an intellectual tool for creating new information and knowledge. This gap

will likely be bridged with the arrival of a new generation cognitively shaped by multimedia and multi-sequential thinking.

Multi-disciplinarily, text-centrality and context-dependence make diplomacy highly suitable for the application of hypertext. Whether hypertext will eventually be used to its full potential in diplomacy depends on many aspects of the specific professional culture of diplomats. The importance of knowledge and information as key criteria for career success creates certain reservations among diplomats about the use of tools for information and knowledge sharing. As an optimistic scenario we can imagine that one day the promotion of diplomats will depend on the number and quality of links created, or on the use of a particular trail of links for successful diplomatic action.

ENDNOTES

1. This article is an abbreviated version of *Hypertext and Diplomacy*, an upcoming DiploProjects publication.
2. Theodor Holm Nelson, *Literary Machines* (Sausalito, CA: Mindful Press, 1990) 2-3.
3. In the literature on hypertext theory a variety of terms have been used for nodes, including: *lexia*, *windows*, *chunks*, *units of information*, *documents*, *cards*, *information items* and *frames*.
4. Janet Fiderio, "A Grand Vision," *Byte* (October 1988), 238.
5. Raymond R. Darrel and Frank Wm. Tompat, "Hypertext and the New Oxford English Dictionary," in *Hypertext '87 Papers* (Baltimore: ACM Press, 1987), 143.
6. Vannevar Bush, "As We May Think," originally published in 1945 in the *Atlantic Monthly*, currently available online at <http://www.isg.sfu.ca/~duchier/misc/vbush/vbush6.shtml>
7. Jonathan Rosen, *The Talmud and the Internet: A Journey between Worlds* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2000), 8.
8. Orientation techniques used in traditional print include title page, pagination, page headers and footers, references and footnotes, indices, chapters and sections, and the book jacket.
9. I experience difficulty in re-adjusting my expectations of book organisation when switching from books written in Serbian to those written in English, because in Serbian books the table of contents is usually at the end of the book, while in English books it is at the beginning.
10. Sir Harold Nicolson, speaking to new entrants in the British diplomatic service, quoted in Peter Marshall, *Positive Diplomacy* (London: Macmillan Press, 1997), 155.
11. Robert J. Glushko, "Design Issues for Multi-Document Hypertext," in *Hypertext '89 Proceedings* (Pittsburgh: ACM Press, 1989), 51.
12. Norman Scott, "Ambiguity Versus Precision: The Changing Role of Terminology in Conference Diplomacy," in *Language and Diplomacy*, ed. Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik (Malta: DiploProjects, 2001), 153.
13. Jaako Lehtonen, "The Information Society and the New Competence," *American Behavioral Scientist* (November/December 1988), 104-11.
14. The information explosion has raised new issues and dilemmas about the synthesis and simplification of information. Developments seem contradictory: on the one hand, more information is available than ever before. On the other, in order to process so much information we need it to be presented in a condensed and simple format. The British theologian William of Ockham argued that the simplest argument is the best. We use the so-called "Ockham razor" to trim complexity out of an argument. Interestingly, Ockham argued that simpler arguments are not only more elegant but also more correct.
15. Found in J. Nielsen, *Multimedia and Hypertext: The Internet and Beyond* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995).
16. Available at: <http://www.un.org/millennium/sg/report/>
17. The development agenda includes sections on the following topics: poverty, water, education, HIV/AIDS, clearing the slums, youth employment, building digital bridges, trade access, debt relief, ODA, Africa.

18. The security agenda includes sections on the following topics: international law, peace operations, targeting sanctions, small arms, nuclear weapons.
19. The environment agenda includes sections on the following topics: climate change, green accounting, ecosystem assessment, ten years after the earth summit.
20. However, contextual interpretation may require consultation of other parts of the document, particularly the preamble, which is relevant for interpretation of the entire document.
21. The term transtextual was introduced by G. Gennete, *The Architext: An Introduction*, trans. J. Lewin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 81. (Original 1979 title: *Introduction a L'architexste*.)
22. Michael Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse of Language* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 23.
23. Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," in *International Regimes*, ed. Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 2.
24. While the majority of international regimes are established by international conventions there are also self-generating or spontaneous regimes.
25. The main features of the implementation process are monitoring, sanctioning and dispute-resolution.
26. For more about epistemic communities and international regimes consult Peter M. Haas, "Do Regimes Matter? Epistemic Communities and Mediterranean Pollution Control," *International Organizations* 43, 3 (Summer 1989), 377-403.
27. See Articles 25 and 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.
28. These and other techniques are part of our DiploAnalytica methodology, a comprehensive hypertext-based approach to analysing diplomatic documents.
29. For more details on the use of ambiguities in diplomatic documents consult Norman Scott, "Ambiguity Versus Precision: The Changing Role of Terminology in Conference Diplomacy," in *Language and Diplomacy*, ed. Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik (Malta: DiploProjects, 2001), 153; and Drazen Pehar, "Use of Ambiguities in Peace Agreements," in *Language and Diplomacy*, ed. Jovan Kurbalija and Hannah Slavik (Malta: DiploProjects, 2001), 163.