Editorial
Expanding, Opening and Pluralizing

New Diplomatic History as a Comprehensive Approach[1]

In recent decades, diplomatic history has undergone a significant evolution, marked by a turn towards more inclusive methodologies and interdisciplinary approaches. This shift, often referred to as New Diplomatic History (NDH), seeks to explore not only the outcomes but also the intricate processes and practices of diplomatic interactions. It goes beyond the traditional focus on government actors and formal negotiations to investigate the activities of further agents, cultural dynamics, and transnational networks, thus encompassing less-researched sites of diplomacy. As scholars increasingly recognize the complexities of international relations, this burgeoning field offers a rich tapestry of narratives that challenge previous diplomatic histories and offer fresh insights. All of this is intended to help achieve an understanding of diplomacy that is less essentialist and more functional.

The methodologies of NDH epitomize the foremost advancements in diplomatic studies over recent decades, offering a promising avenue for bridging the traditionally segmented realms of scholarship on early modern and modern diplomacy. Overcoming this segmentation is not only the aim of *Diplomatica: A Journal of Diplomacy and Society* (edited by Giles Scott-Smith and Kenneth Weisbrode, founded in 2019),

DOI: https://doi.org/10.25365/oezg-2024-35-2-1

Falko Schnicke, Department of Modern and Contemporary History, University of Linz, Altenberger Straße 69, 4040 Linz, Austria; falko.schnicke@jku.at

1 I wish to express my gratitude to Jane Freeland (London), Levke Harders (Innsbruck), and Regina Thumser-Wöhs (Linz) for their crucial comments on earlier drafts of this introduction. My thanks also go to the contributors and interviewee for their seamless cooperation in preparing this special issue, as well as to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive suggestions. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Alexandra Preitschopf (Klagenfurt), whose prudent, unfailingly kind and competent support was essential to the compilation of this issue. Similarly, I am grateful to Christine Brocks (Sheffield) for her meticulous copy-editing of the English contributions. Furthermore, I extend my appreciation to the advisory board of the OeZG for accepting this special issue and its topic. Last but certainly not least, I am delighted to thank my esteemed colleagues Regina Thumser-Wöhs for her constant encouragement and Johanna Gehmacher (Vienna) for suggesting the present issue in the first place.

which is supported by a network of modern historians.[2] At the same time, however, more recent approaches to the study of early modern actors in foreign relations[3] or diplomatic cultures and practices[4] offer connectable concepts for achieving what the NDH has set out to do across epochs, namely "transforming our understanding of 'diplomacy' and the identity of 'the diplomat'".[5] Moreover, the emphasis on transnational diplomacy, which includes both international and regional interactions, facilitates research that extends "beyond the horizons of national histories",[6] thereby fostering connections among diverse branches of historical inquiry. Eventually, adopting a perspective that views diplomacy not in isolation but rather as closely intertwined with broader social negotiations enables a holistic understanding that spans epochs. Such an approach is illustrated by the *SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy*, published in 2016, which encompasses articles on ethics, language, religion, the environment, and pariah diplomacy, to name but a few selected examples.[7] John Waltkins succinctly captured this approach by asserting that the history of diplomacy "is inseparable from the histories of the visual arts, dramatic and nondramatic literature, education, race, the state, marriage, and manners".[8] This list would need to be supplemented with the history of social values and economic history or the history of technology, the history of social movements, the history of forms of knowledge and knowledge production and many others.[9]

This introduction to the special issue in hand provides a brief overview of the genealogy of the NDH and subsequently presents its three primary focal points. Through this, the contributions of the special issue will be introduced and put into context. The third section addresses critiques of the NDH, followed by a short outline of auspicious directions for further study.

---

2 Diplomatica, https://brill.com/view/journals/dipl/dipl-overview.xml (3 May 2024).

3 Hillard von Thiessen/Christian Windler (eds.), Akteure der Außenbeziehungen: Netzwerke und Interkulturalität im historischen Wandel, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2010.

4 Tracey A. Sowerby/Joanna Craigwood (eds.), Cultures of Diplomacy and Literary Writing in the Early Modern World, Oxford 2019; Tracey A. Sowerby/Jan Hennings (eds.), Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World, c. 1410–1800, London/New York 2017.

5 About, in: New Diplomatic History, https://newdiplomatichistory.org/about/ (3 May 2024).

6 John Watkins, Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medial and Early Modern Europe, in: Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies 38/1 (2008), 1–14, 13.

7 Cornelia Bjola, Diplomatic Ethics, in: Costas M. Constantinou/Pauline Keer/Paul Sharp (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy, Los Angeles et al. 2016, 123–132; Donna Marie Oglesby, Diplomatic Language, in: Constantinou/Keer/Sharp (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy, 2016, 242–254; David Joseph Wellmann, Religion and Diplomacy, in: Constantinou/Keer/Sharp (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy, 2016, 577–590; Saleem H. Ali/Helena Voinov Vladich, Environmental Diplomacy, in: Constantinou/Keer/Sharp (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy, 2016, 601–616; Hussein Banai, Pariah Diplomacy, in: Constantinou/Keer/Sharp (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy, 2016, 645–665.

8 Watkins, New Diplomatic History, (2008), 13.

9 See the articles by Güttler/Liebisch, Brigkos and Prior/Schnicke in this issue.

Exploring frontiers: roots of the NDH

Certainly, the NDH is older than its name suggests. Houssine Alloul and Michael Auwers' criticism of the term is therefore justified.[10] In the interview featured in this issue, Susanna Erlandsson further underscores that the NDH label has not been a catalyst for research; but rather has served to increase its visibility. Historically, the collection *Unofficial Diplomats*, edited by Maureen R. Berman and Joseph E. Johnson in 1978, stands as a foundational text in the field. This volume aims to investigate the activities of "private citizens acting alone or attached to nongovernmental organizations" who "become involved in the conduct of interstate relations".[11] This line of inquiry has been deemed imperative by the editors due to the "growing role of unofficial diplomacy", as outlined in the volume's introduction.[12] It is worth noting that the genesis of the NDH stemmed from the experience of practitioners: Berman served as the Executive Director of the International League for Human Rights, while Johnson was a history professor and negotiator for the US State Department and the United Nations. The essays in their volume addressed facets that were not yet prominent in contemporary academic discourse, such as the International Press Institute or the diplomatic roles of churches and the International Committee of the Red Cross.[13] Critics found the work to be a "fascinating collection"[14] and underlined that the subject was "very important".[15] At the same time, John Richardson, Jr., former US Assistant Secretary of State for Education and Cultural Affairs and then President of Youth for Understanding, drew attention to "transnational and international relations beyond the traditional realm of diplomacy".[16] He published an anthology titled *The Human Dimension of Foreign Policy*, which discussed subjects such as international political parties or the global dimensions of the American education system.[17]

10 Houssine Alloul/Michel Auwers, What is (New in) New Diplomatic History, in: Journal of Belgian History 48/4 (2018), 112–122, 114.

11 Maureen R. Berman/Joseph E. Johnson, The Growing Role of Unofficial Diplomacy, in: ibid. (eds.), Unofficial Diplomats, New York 1977, 1–33, 3.

12 Ibid., 1.

13 Ernst Meyer, The Bilateral and Multilateral Meetings of the International Press Institute, in: Maureen R. Berman/Joseph E. Johnson (eds.), Unofficial Diplomats, New York 1977, 56–65; C.H. Mike Yarrow, Quaker Efforts Toward Conciliation in the India-Pakistan War of 1956, in: Berman/Johnson (eds.), Unofficial Diplomats, 1977, 89–110; Jacques Freymond, The International Committee of the Red Cross As a Neutral Intermediary, in: Berman/Johnson (eds.), Unofficial Diplomats, 1977, 142–151.

14 Sydney D. Bailey, [Rev.] Unofficial Diplomats, in: International Affairs 54/2 (1978), 298–299, 298.

15 David P. Forsythe, [Rev.] Unofficial Diplomats, in: The American Political Science Review 73/1 (1979), 331–332, 332.

16 John Richardson, Jr., Preface, in: ibid. (ed.), The Human Dimension of Foreign Policy. An American Perspective, Philadelphia 1977, vii–viii, vii.

17 Donald M. Fraser/John P. Salzberg, International Political Parties as a Vehicle for Human Rights, in: Richardson, Jr. (ed.), The Human Dimension, 1977, 63–68; Clark Kerr, Education for Global Perspectives, in: ibid., 109–116.

These publications are of considerable significance due to the unprecedented nature of their topics within professional historiography, even if it was a deliberate exaggeration to speak, as Hans-Ulrich Wehler did, of a pure history of the "grand politics of the cabinets".[18] An exception to this trend was the 1969 publication by Cambridge historian Zara Steiner, which dealt with the history of the British Foreign Office. Steiner's work not only concentrated on the outcomes but also emphasized the institutional and social processes that shaped foreign policy. She aimed to dissect "the actual work and underlying stance" that guided foreign policy actions,[19] focusing on the structures and "anatomy of decision".[20] In doing so and in line with current research, Steiner scrutinized the social backgrounds of the individuals' decisions, the Foreign Office's interactions with the media, and parliamentary influences. Moreover, her book partly explored the history of the creation and dissemination of diplomatic knowledge. This is still a desideratum today, even though the general history of knowledge is on the rise.[21] One of the many positive reviews went so far as to suggest that this "book is, in fact, so good that it deserves not to be praised but systematically attacked as a methodological approach to the study of the decision-making process".[22] However, despite this brief mention in the review, the idea was not taken up in any significant way, and it was not until the 2010s that John Young explicitly made the day-to-day operations of foreign policy-making, and thus its bureaucratic, technical, and infrastructural conditions, the subject of several works.[23] In the meantime, referred to as a "critical period" for the discipline, diplomatic history has sustained itself primarily through substantial institutional backing from specialist societies and established journals, according to Dominic Eggel.[24]

Without entering into all the ramifications of the debate here, it is apparent that since the 1990s, there has been a growing general interest among historians in reorienting diplomatic history. The convergence of this era with the ascent of cultural his-

18 Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Moderne Politikgeschichte oder ‚Große Politik der Kabinette'?, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 1/2–3 (1975), 344–369, 364.

19 Zara S. Steiner, The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898–1914, London/New Jersey 1969, ix.

20 Ibid., x.

21 Noé Cornago, Diplomatic Knowledge, in: Constantinou/Keer/Sharp (eds.), The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy, 2016, 133–146.

22 John W. Cell, [Rev.] Bourne, The Foreign Office; Platt, The Cinderella Service; Jones, The Nineteenth-Century Foreign Office; Steiner, The Foreign Office, in: Victorian Studies 15/4 (1972), 481–483, 482.

23 John Young, Twentieth-Century Diplomacy. A Case Study of British Practice, 1963–1976, Cambridge 2008; John Young, David Bruce and Diplomatic Practice. An American Ambassador in London, 1961–1969, London 2014.

24 Dominic Eggel, Quo Vadis Diplomatic History? Reflections on the Past and Present of Writing the History of International Relations, in: Barbara Haider-Wilson/William D. Godsey/Wolfgang Mueller (eds.), Internationale Geschichte in Theorie und Praxis – International History in Theory and Practice, Vienna 2017, 209–229, 222.

tory following the linguistic turn is no mere coincidence. The fundamental modernization of historical research as a whole also profoundly impacted the subdiscipline of diplomatic history.[25] Additionally, the transformations within the political landscape during this period had consequences. The cessation of the Cold War facilitated access to previously closed archives across Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.[26] Simultaneously, the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001 in New York injected a renewed urgency into the study of international alliances, transnational agents, and global security concerns.[27] In response, historical scholarship experienced a revival, especially in the field of diplomacy, which had previously languished in a metaphorical "Sleeping Beauty sleep".[28]

Under the banner of international history or the history of international relations, scholars have renewed their focus on what was formerly known as diplomatic history. "German historians have rarely thought systematically about 'international history'", noted Wilfried Loth, for instance.[29] This trend was to change when Loth and Jürgen Osterhammel presented a volume on international history that addressed, among other things, mentalities, spatial relations, and international environmental history.[30] At the time, the editors were unable to find any authors on the topics of foreign policy elites or migration,[31] shedding light on the nascent stage of these investigations. Not long afterwards, other projects also set out to 'renew' the history of international relations,[32] leading Eckart Conze to conclude in the mid-2000s that the subject had returned to the canon of modern history research.[33] The term international history does thereby not exclude transnational or global perspec-

25 Julia Gebke, New Diplomatic History and the Multi-Layered Diversity of Early Modern Diplomacy, in: Dorothée Goetze/Lena Oetzel (eds.), Early Modern European Diplomacy. A Handbook, Berlin/Boston 2024, 27–47, 30–32.

26 Wolfgang Mueller/Michael Gehler/Arnold Suppan (eds.), The Revolutions of 1989. A Handbook, Vienna 2015.

27 Eggel, Diplomatic History, 2017, 222; Barbara Haider-Wilson, Humpty Dumpty, die Geschichtswissenschaft und der Pluralismus. Einlassung auf die historische Subdiziplin „Internationale Geschichte, in: ibid./Godsey/Mueller (eds.), Internationale Geschichte, 2017, 9–61, 14.

28 Ibid., 27 (my translation).

29 Wilfried Loth, Einleitung, in: ibid./Jürgen Osterhammel (eds.), Internationale Geschichte. Themen – Ergebnisse – Aussichten, Munich 2000, vii–xiv, vii (my translation).

30 Robert Frank, Mentalitäten, Vorstellungen und internationale Beziehungen, in: Loth/Osterhammel (eds.), Internationale Geschichte, 2000, 159–185; Jürgen Osterhammel, Raumbeziehungen. Internationale Geschichte, Geopolitik und historische Geographie, in: Loth/Osterhammel (eds.), Internationale Geschichte, 2000, 287–308; Franz-Josef Brüggemeier, Internationale Umweltgeschichte, in: ibid., 371–386.

31 Loth, Einleitung, 2000, xiii.

32 Eckart Conze/Ulrich Lappenküper/Guido Müller (eds.), Geschichte der Internationalen Beziehungen: Erneuerung und Erweiterung einer historischen Disziplin, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2004.

33 Eckart Conze, Jenseits von Männern und Mächten: Geschichte der internationalen Politik als Systemgeschichte, in: Hans-Christof Kraus/Thomas Nicklas (eds.), Geschichte der Politik. Alte und neue Wege, Munich 2007, 41–64, 41.

tives; rather, it has established itself as the title of a broad field characterized by thematic and methodological openness.[34] To be sure, this does not exclude individual dissenting voices that claim a gap between international and global history.[35]

At the same time, the field of cultural history of diplomacy or cultural studies of international affairs was burgeoning. Akira Iriye had long advocated the inclusion of cultural aspects in diplomatic history.[36] By 2004, reflecting on American research, he noted that while the relevance of culture was becoming apparent, "less clear is the extent to which these two themes, culture and internationalisation, may be further integrated".[37] The certainty surrounding this integration grew rapidly due to significant contributions. Just before this, Jessica Gienow-Hecht emphasized the necessity of making culture a central focus of research, stating that "culture affects nations and global systems as much as, if not more than, power and economic interests".[38] Her anthology on the subject, edited with Frank Schumann, included essays on the representation of states at world exhibitions and the significance of the future in international relations,[39] and Gienow-Hecht later published further studies on music in modern diplomacy.[40] Andrew Rotter echoed her sentiments, noting that "[l]ike housework or an unbidden weekend guest, the culture concept in international history tends to expand to fill every available space".[41] Yet, he emphasized that "[c]ulture is power".[42] David Reynolds also recognized the transformative impact of these new culturalist approaches, highlighting how they have prompted a reconceptualization

34 Haider-Wilson, Humpty Dumpty, 2017, 20–24; Elisabeth Röhrlich, Zeitgeschichte und Internationale Geschichte, in: Marcus Gräser/Dirk Rupnow (eds.), Österreichische Zeitgeschichte – Zeitgeschichte in Österreich. Eine Standortbestimmung in Zeiten des Umbruchs, Vienna/Cologne 2021, 783–797, 787 f.

35 Joseph Anthony Maiolo, Systems and Boundaries in International History, in: The International History Review 40/3 (2018), 576–591; Leopoldo Nuti, The Making of the Nuclear Order and the Historiography on the 1970s, in: The International History Review 40/5 (2018), 965–974.

36 Akira Iriye, Culture and Power. International Relations as Intercultural Relations, in: Diplomatic History 3/2 (1979), 115–128; Akira Iriye, Culture, in: Journal of American History 77/1 (1990), 99–107.

37 Akira Iriye, Culture and International History, in: Michael J. Hogan/Thomas G. Paterson (eds.), Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations, 2nd ed., New York 2004, 241–256, 241.

38 Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, Introduction: On the Division of Knowledge and the Community of Thought. Culture and International History, in: ibid./Frank Schumacher (eds.), Culture and International History, New York/Oxford 2003, 3–26, 6.

39 Wolfram Kaiser, The Great Derby Race. Strategies of Cultural Representation at Nineteenth-Century World Exhibitions, in: Gienow-Hecht/Schumacher (eds.), Culture and International History, 2003, 45–59; Alexander Schmidt-Gernig, Forecasting the Future: Future Studies as International Networks of Social Analysis in the 1960s and 1970s in Western Europe and the United States, in: ibid., 157–171.

40 Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht (ed.), Sound Diplomacy. Music and Emotions in Transatlantic Relations, 1850–1920, Chicago/London 2009; Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht (ed.), Music and International History in the Twentieth Century, New York/Oxford 2015.

41 Andrew J. Ratter, Culture, in: Patrick Finney (ed.), Palgrave Advances in International History, Basingstoke/New York 2005, 267–299, 268.

42 Ibid., 280.

of the discipline by shedding light on neglected aspects such as gender, memory, and otherness in foreign policy.[43] As a result, shortly after Iriye's observations, it was noted elsewhere that "'soft' elements in diplomacy proved to be just as vital to power politics as many of the so-called 'hard facts'".[44]

Recent years have witnessed rapid developments, as evidenced by these voices. This trend also extends to the self-characterization within the field of diplomatic history. At the dawn of the new millennium, emerging scholars were warned not to identify themselves as diplomatic historians when looking for a job.[45] It has also been observed that diplomatic history has long been considered outdated and often relegated to a backwater status in the competition for research funding.[46] Moreover, as late as 2006, Reynolds explicitly resisted recognizing a 'diplomatic turn'.[47] However, by 2013, Peter Burschel and Birte Kundrus argued that such a shift was now discernible.[48] What all these different approaches working in this direction, which can be described as the roots of the NDH, have in common is that they expand and deepen the nuances of the concept of diplomacy, of the diplomatic, and of the diplomatic agent. Their aim is to use new perspectives to analyse the complexity of diplomacy and international relations as well as their impact on societies in the past and present. In the same vein, Dorothée Goetze and Lena Oetzel warn against the homogenization of historical heterogeneities, a trend they identify in certain new studies.[49] In their recent landmark publication *Early Modern European Diplomacy: A Handbook*, they argue: "Instead, research should acknowledge the wide variety of diplomacy as manifestations of early modern diplomacy in their own right."[50] Broadly construed, this maxim could aptly represent the guiding philosophy of the NDH as a whole. In this sense, the notion NDH serves as an umbrella term, as Weisbrode has explained,[51] which aims to combine different perspectives of this expan-

43 David Reynolds, International History, the Cultural Turn and the Diplomatic Twitch, in: Cultural and Social History 3/1 (2006), 76–91, 79–86.

44 Markus Mösslang/Torsten Riotte, Introduction: The Diplomats's World, in: ibid. (eds.), The Diplomats' World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815–1914, Oxford 2008, 1–20, 10.

45 Toby Osborne, Whither Diplomatic History? An Early-Modern Historian's Perspective, in: Diplomatica 1 (2019), 40–45, 40.

46 Röhrlich, Zeitgeschichte, 2021, 791.

47 Reynolds, International History, 2006, 91.

48 Birthe Kundrus/Peter Burschel, Editorial: Diplomatiegeschichte, in: Historische Anthropologie 21/2 (2013), 155–157, 155.

49 Dorothée Goetze/Lena Oetzel, A Diplomat Is a Diplomat Is a Diplomat? On How to Approach Early Modern European Diplomacy in Its Diversity: An Introduction, in: ibid. (eds.), Early Modern European Diplomacy, 2024, 1–24, 9–11.

50 Ibid., 12.

51 Kenneth Weisbrode, The Task Ahead (20 Sept. 2012), in: New Diplomatic History, https://newdiplomatichistory.org/the-task-ahead/ (3 May 2024).

sion, opening, and pluralization. The "terminological muddle"[52] surrounding these terms therefore appears less dramatic on closer examination.

New actors, other venues, further practices: core aspects of the NDH

While approaches within the NDH vary, there are discernible commonalities. In seeking a broad definition, three overarching focal points encapsulate the concept: the diversification of diplomatic actors, the diversification of diplomatic venues, and the emphasis on processes and practices. Historical scholarship, as astutely observed by Reinhart Koselleck, is guided by the "veto power of the sources". This principle holds that sources do not dictate what historians may say about them, but rather what historians may not say.[53] The NDH presents a new perspective on this question of sources: the nature of diplomacy and its practitioners is not predetermined by a concept established prior to analysis, but rather emerges in response to the examination of the historical sources. This is particularly pertinent because diplomatic sources often preclude the use of only those definitions of diplomacy and diplomats that are traditionally applied in diplomatic history: this does not signify the cessation of consideration of national government diplomacy conducted by professional diplomats in official exchanges. Rather, it indicates that such focus should no longer stand as the sole perspective when striving for historiographical comprehensiveness in the study of diplomacy. These three focal points are not exhaustive or exclusive; instead, they are approximations to the NDH. Works associated with the NDH do not need to pursue all three simultaneously, though most engage with at least one of them.

First, by diversifying diplomatic actors, the NDH seeks to broaden the spectrum of individuals engaged in diplomatic activities to an extent that captures the historical diversity of diplomatic interactions. The objective is to transcend "the elite-based focus of traditional diplomatic history"[54] and to reveal "the extensive network of ties between state and non-state diplomatic actors".[55] As early modern diplomacy features a "long and diverse" catalogue of participants,[56] this issue has been of particular interest to research focused on this period[57] and is assuming an increasingly significant role in the study of modern history. This is not to deny the pivotal role of state

52 Alloul/Auwers, New Diplomatic History, (2018), 114.
53 Reinhart Koselleck, Standortbindung und Zeitlichkeit. Ein Beitrag zur historiographischen Erschließung der geschichtlichen Welt, in: ibid., Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten, Frankfurt am Main 1979, 176–207, 206 (my translation).
54 Giles Scott-Smith/Kenneth Weisbrode, Editorial, in: Diplomatica 1 (2019), 1–4, 1.
55 Ibid., 2.
56 Gebke, New Diplomatic History, (2024), 34.
57 Goetze/Oetzel, Diplomat, (2024), 11–13.

actors in diplomacy,[58] as such a stance would be preposterous. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of acknowledging that state actors are not the sole participants in diplomatic engagements. This approach aims to illuminate private or unofficial diplomatic figures such as representatives from pressure groups, churches or artists "who cannot be bound by orthodox understandings of the 'national interest' or national identity".[59] This perspective offers fresh insights into familiar structures, such as highlighting the proto-diplomatic roles of wives as the foundation for the endeavours of male career diplomats.[60] Simultaneously, it reveals novel diplomatic practices, as scholars, business representatives, or even animals operated differently within transnational contexts compared to professional diplomats at intergovernmental conferences. Thus, examining the roles of alternative actors also draws attention to novel performances, rituals, and ceremonies within the field of diplomacy. The inclusion of these additional actors and further styles of diplomacy seeks to dismantle the state as a monolithic entity[61] and foster an understanding of "diplomacy as a multitude of identities and behaviours".[62]

The contributions to this special issue similarly deepen and broaden the understanding of the diplomatic actor, analysing diplomatic agents from diverse perspectives: Nina Hechenblaikner's article on the CSCE follow-up meetings in the mid- to late 1980s explores the diplomatic functions of civil society. She investigates the advocacy work of human rights activists and journalists during these events, establishing that they promoted different agendas and thus exerted both direct and indirect influence on state negotiators. Another focal point of the collected contributions is to promote a more nuanced understanding of government diplomacy. In his examination of mid-nineteenth-century diplomacy, Lukas Fallwickl analyses the sphere of action of British ambassadors in Austria, portraying them not merely as recipients of Foreign Office instructions. Instead, Fallwickl portrays them as autonomous agents with their own interests, whose (dis)obedience influenced their diplomatic missions and thereby shaped British-Austrian relations during this period. Christopher Prior and Falko Schnicke also re-examine bilateral relations by

58 Alberine Bloemendal, Reframing the Diplomat: Ernst van der Beugel and the Cold War Atlantic Community, Leiden/Boston 2018, 11, 319–327.

59 Giles Scott-Smith, Introduction: Private Diplomacy, Making the Citizen Visible, in: New Global Studies 8/1 (2014), 1–7, 2.

60 Alloul/Auwers, New Diplomatic History, (2018), 112.

61 Nevra Biltekin, The Diplomatic Partnership: Gender, Materiality and Performance in the Case of Sweden c. 1960s–1980s, in: Genesis 11/1–2 (2012), 253–265; Raffaella Baritono, Eleanor Roosevelt at the United Nations: 'Diplomacy from Below' and the Search for a New Transatlantic Dialogue, in: European Journal of American Studies 12/1 (2017), https://journals.openedition.org/ejas/11920; Susanna Erlandsson, Personal Politics in the Postwar World: Western Diplomacy Behind the Scenes, London 2022.

62 Scott-Smith, Introduction, (2014), 5.

studying diplomatic exchanges between the UK and countries in the Global South during the early post-colonial era, with a specific focus on Africa and India. They highlight the nuanced roles of academics, journalistic influencers, and expatriates in Africa, as well as Indian princes and local elites in India. These actors leveraged their positions to significantly influence Global South-UK relations. The analysis reveals the challenges posed by knowledge asymmetries, strategies of knowledge production, and their substantial impact on the shaping of diplomatic strategies and outcomes. In the interview discussing her research and teaching, Susanna Erlandsson similarly underscores the complexity of state diplomacy, revealing a broader array of actors than commonly acknowledged: she focuses on the service personnel at contemporary embassies and their pivotal practical and symbolic contributions to diplomatic functions. Such research seeks to illuminate how class, gender, and race influence diplomacy, thereby facilitating critical reflection on the conditions and prerequisites of state representation.

Second, the NDH aims to diversify the venues of diplomacy, a pursuit integral to doing historiographical justice to the historical range of diplomatic activities. This objective is closely tied to the broader focus on a more diverse array of diplomatic actors. For instance, if scholars or feminists are regarded as unofficial diplomatic agents, it is only consistent to consider scholarly gatherings or public demonstrations as diplomatic arenas. Conceptually, this is in line with the NDH's challenge to the notion of the state as the sole diplomatic subject (and locus),[63] which seeks to emphasize the "hybridity of diplomacy".[64] Accordingly, the diplomatic spaces examined by the NDH are transnational rather than international.[65] Citizen diplomacy or Track Two diplomacy, for example, denotes an analytical approach that explores diplomatic initiatives outside established state or intergovernmental frameworks.[66] This widening of scope is further propelled by the dynamization of the concept of politics in historiography in general, which is increasingly moving towards replacing politics as an institution with the political as a flexible discursive domain.[67]

Despite this spatial expansion, diplomacy remains a distinct form of action that, with James Der Derian, is the "mediation between estranged individuals, groups, or

63 Alloul/Auwers, New Diplomatic History, (2018), 113.

64 Scott-Smith/Weisbrode, Editorial, (2019), 3.

65 Scott-Smith, Introduction, (2014), 2.

66 Allen Pietrobon, Humanitarian Aid or Private Diplomacy? Norman Cousins and the Treatment of Atomic Bomb Victims, in: New Global Studies 8/1 (2014), 121–140; Samir Ahmad, Track Two Diplomacy between India and Pakistan: Peace Negotiations and Initiates, London 2024.

67 Frank Bösch/Dominik Geppert (eds.), Journalists as Political Actors: Transfers and Interactions between Britain and Germany Since the Late 19th Century, Augsburg 2008; Willibald Steinmetz/Heinz-Gerhard Haupt, The Political as Communicative Space in History: The Bielefeld Approach, in: ibid./Ingrid Gilcher-Holtey (eds.), Writing Political History Today, Frankfurt am Main/New York 2013, 11–33.

entities",[68] yet now sought out in locations beyond the confines of government headquarters and the United Nations building in New York. "Diplomacy", as described by Scott-Smith and Weisbrode, "thus relates to any action, setting, or phenomenon that represents the interests, status, actions, or behavior of a polity vis-à-vis another".[69] Summit meetings or state visits, too, have long been discussed not merely as occasions for substantive dialogue but also as arenas for the representation, symbolic gestures, and enactment of politics.[70] Moreover, this extends to the diplomacy of cities, diplomatic engagements over dinner tables, through unofficial channels of communication, in newspapers, and within academic publications.[71]

In this issue, Jonathan Voges delves into this dimension with an analysis of the media policy of the League of Nations during the interwar period. This reveals a new realm of diplomacy involving the international public, as well as diplomacy through films and informational campaigns. Necessitated by its unique organizational nature, the League of Nations transitioned traditional secret diplomacy into what can be termed as media diplomacy. Directed towards the public and designed to influence public opinion, media diplomacy emerges not as a mere supplement to diplomatic efforts but as their fundamental essence. In addition, Nils Güttler and Carolin Liebisch-Gümüş focus on Frankfurt am Main Airport as a diplomatic site after 1945. They examine the diplomacy entwined within transport hubs to elucidate the phenomenon of facilitating specific connections while noting the absence of others. Their study centres on mobility infrastructures and the shifting dynamics, both positive and negative, of diplomatic engagements intertwined with these systems. The concept of aviation diplomacy sheds light on emerging stakeholders beyond traditional foreign ministries, including airlines, interior ministries, airport authorities, and local politicians, highlighting new arenas of diplomatic activity within the airport's border area, deep within a nation's territory.

---

68 James Der Derian, Mediating Estrangement: A Theory for Diplomacy, in: Review of International Studies 13/2 (1987), 91–110, 93.

69 Scott-Smith/Weisbrode, Editorial, (2019), 3.

70 Naoko Shimazu, Performing 'Freedom': The Bandung Conference as Symbolic Postcolonial Diplomacy, in: Jason Dittmer/Fiona McConnell (eds.), Diplomatic Cultures and International Politics: Translations, Spaces and Alternatives, London/New York 2016, 59–76; Falko Schnicke, Adapting to the Post-Colonial World: The Commonwealth and British Cold War Royal Diplomacy in the 1961 State Visits to India and Pakistan, in: ibid./Levke Harders (eds.), Belonging Across Borders: Transnational Practices in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Oxford 2022, 229–259.

71 Alberine Bloemendal, Between Dinner Table and Formal Diplomacy: Ernst van der Beugel as an Unofficial Diplomat for an Atlantic Community, in: New Global studies 8/1 (2014), 103–119; Angus Mitchell/Caoilfhionn Ní Bheacháin, Scholar-diplomats, Protodiplomacy and the Communication of History: Alice Stopford Green and Jean Jules Jusserand, in: Women's History Review 31/2 (2022), 198–229; Erlandsson, Personal Politics, 2022, 93–127; Alexander Gerber, Spheres of Diplomatic Interactions: Towns, in: Goetze/Lena Oetzel, Early Modern European Diplomacy, 2024, 447–464.

Third, the NDH places the processes and practices of diplomacy at the centre. The idea behind this is that it is not only the results of diplomacy that are important but also the ways and methods by which they were achieved. Historical research characterized by this interest transcends the abstract macro-perspective of states or other collective entities and instead focuses closely on the actions of individual agents along with their specific diplomatic activities, behaviours, and techniques.[72] These micro-analyses do not overlook macro-perspectives; rather, they aim to spell out these broader views with greater precision from below. Such an approach undoubtedly benefits from the broader shift in historical research towards practices that aim to elucidate the functioning of societies.[73] Studying practices, understood with Andreas Reckwitz as "a routinised type of behaviour",[74] can shed new light on power relations, reveal implicit priorities, and uncover problems of the actors involved. Analysing the "day-to-day level of concrete diplomatic interaction"[75] or the way in which networks or backchannels were used[76] helps to move away from the isolated consideration of individual events. The latter is sensible as diplomatic negotiation "is better characterized by discreet continuity or 'process' than by a standard chronology of tangible achievements", as Scott-Smith and Weisbrode emphasize.[77]

Comprehending processes and routines is instrumental in decoding the significance of diplomatic ceremonies and rituals. Far from being unambiguous or uniform, these must be interpreted as specific performances and symbolic actions within distinct historical contexts.[78] A focus on practices can also serve as a means of uncovering the unexpected, such as limited knowledge and ignorance in diplomatic action,[79] or, in the post-colonial setting of the Cold War, the intertwining of

72 Jan Hennings/Tracy A. Sowerby, Introduction: Practices of Diplomacy, in: ibid. (eds.), Practices of Diplomacy in the Early Modern World c. 1410–1800, London/New York 2017, 1–21, 2.

73 Michael Polyakov, Practice Theories: The Latest Turn in Historiography?, in: Journal of the Philosophy of History 6/2 (2012), 218–235; Levke Harders/Falko Schnicke, Practices of Borders and Belonging: Historical Perspectives, in: Harders/Schnicke (eds.), Belonging across Borders, 2022, 1–29.

74 Andreas Reckwitz, Toward a Theory of Social Practices: A Development in Culturalist Theorizing, in: European Journal of Social Theory 5/2 (2002), 243–263, 249.

75 Alloul/Auwers, New Diplomatic History, (2018), 118.

76 Louis Clerc, A Renewal of Diplomatic History or the Continuation of Old Trends? Selected Readings from the French-speaking Field of International History, in: Diplomatica 1 (2019), 291–298, 295.

77 Scott-Smith/Weisbrode, Editorial, (2019), 3.

78 Naoko Shimazu, Diplomacy As Theatre: Staging the Bandung Conference of 1955, in: Modern Asian Studies 48/1 (2014), 225–252; Christian Goeschel, Staging Friendship: Mussolini and Hitler in Germany in 1937, in: The Historical Journal 60/1 (2017), 149–172.

79 Matthias Pohlig, Marlboroughs Geheimnis: Strukturen und Funktionen der Informationsgewinnung im Spanischen Erbfolgekrieg, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2016; Falko Schnicke, "It is Dangerous to Generalise About State Visits": Praktiken des Wissens in der britischen Außenpolitik des 20. Jahrhunderts, in: Anna Margaretha Horatschek (ed.), Competing Knowledges – Wissen im Widerstreit, Berlin/Boston 2020, 189–207; Stefanie Freyer/Siegrid Westphal (eds.), Wissen und Strategien frühneuzeitlicher Diplomatie, Berlin/Boston 2020.

state and royal representation in former colonies, now independent states in the Global South.[80] It can also shed light on the cultural impact of state diplomacy on society, such as the adoption of French as the diplomatic lingua franca by international social movements around 1900, even in the absence of French participants.[81] Looking at routines further leads to the discovery of new sources, such as the diaries and letters of unofficial diplomatic agents, or to their active creation, as seen in the British Diplomatic Oral History Programme. Here, volunteers conduct interviews with former Foreign Office career diplomats from the late twentieth century, focusing specifically on the personal and implicit perspectives not accessible in government files,[82] and delving into the "lived experiences" of diplomacy.[83] Furthermore, an examination of processes and practices can illuminate preliminary steps, render the course or failure of negotiations understandable, or clarify unspoken assumptions underlying diplomatic processes. Importantly, it can contribute to a renewed dialogue between early modern and modern history, as the focus on practices allows for inter-epochal comparisons, which remain relatively scarce.[84] This is particularly relevant when considering forms of intercultural encounters or modes of diplomatic negotiation.

Examining discursive practices, Rieke Becker's article in this issue centres on the nuances of diplomatic communication by analysing a formal plea for assistance issued by Christine Charlotte of East Frisia to Emperor Leopold I in 1682. Using an actor-centred approach, Becker investigates the distinctive rhetorical strategies and the deliberate portrayal of vulnerability as a form of strength, navigating around the constraints of formal conventions. As a result, her exploration of early modern techniques of persuasion emphasizes the (female) individual's role as a diplomatic agent. Ioannis Brigkos' contribution investigates practices that shaped the bilateral relations between Austria and the Greek military junta during the 1960s and 1970s. He describes the protests and demonstrations of Greek students in Austria and the subsequent infiltration of student groups by the Greek authorities. Brigkos also highlights the efforts of the Socialist International, a transnational NGO, which sought

80 Falko Schnicke, Visiting the Republic or Meeting the Princes? The Ambiguous Categories of Royal Diplomacy in Elizabeth II's 1961 State Visit to India, in: ibid./Robert Aldrich/Cindy McCreery (eds.), Global Royal Families: Cultures of Transnational Monarchy in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Oxford 2024, 167–191.

81 Johanna Gehmacher, Feminist Activism, Travel and Translation Around 1900: Transnational Practices of Mediation and the Case of Käthe Schirmacher, Cham 2024, 213.

82 The British Diplomatic Oral History Programme, in: https://bdohp.chu.cam.ac.uk/ (3 May 2024).

83 Alloul/Auwers, New Diplomatic History, (2018), 120.

84 Nina Breitsprecher, Die Ankunft des Anderen im interepochalen Vergleich: Heinrich III. von Frankreich und Adolf Hitler in Venedig, in: Susanne Baller/Ruth Schilling/Ines Stolpe/Michael Pesek (eds.), Die Ankunft des Anderen: Repräsentationen sozialer und politischer Ordnungen in Empfangszeremonien, Frankfurt am Main/New York 2008, 82–105.

to support politically persecuted individuals through humanitarian interventions, both publicly and in private.

Through the three approaches of the NDH – new actors, other venues, and further practices of diplomacy – the articles in this special issue enhance our understanding of diplomacy spanning from the early modern era to the present. Arranged chronologically, they illustrate, among other things, the rhetorical utilization of weakness as a diplomatic instrument and the multidimensional nature of diplomatic discourse (Becker); the substantial autonomy ambassadors can possess, including their capacity to contravene the directives of their dispatching states (Fallwickl); the ways in which transnational diplomacy was conducted in the public eye and how the public sphere could serve as a mechanism for diplomatic engagement (Voges); and the knowledge diplomatic actors had of their counterparts and the strategies they employed to manage their uncertainties (Prior/Schnicke). The articles show how non-state actors have the potential to challenge state-led diplomacy and the methods used by political authorities to regulate such disruptions (Brigkos); the dynamics of modern conference diplomacy, outlining the opportunities and constraints faced by unofficial diplomatic actors (Hechenblaikner); and the diverse locales of diplomatic interactions, highlighting the regional interests linked to these venues (Güttler/Liebisch).

Too broad, too vague, and misdirected? Critiques of the NDH

Alongside the opportunities, there are also challenges associated with the NDH, touching on various conceptual and methodological difficulties of varying degrees. Three of the most significant issues, relevant to the articles gathered in this issue, will be briefly discussed.

For instance, early modern historian Toby Osborne has pointed out that the categorizations used by the NDH are sometimes vague, largely due to the practice of classifying a broad array of diplomatic participants as diplomats. Osborne noted: "there is […] a danger that in doing so, 'diplomacy' becomes so varied and multifarious that it begins to lose definable meaning".[85] This concern is especially pertinent from the viewpoint of modern history, where the late but increasing professionalization of state training for diplomatic personnel[86] contrasts with unofficial, non-state diplomatic actors. Thus, it is necessary to distinguish two distinct cate-

85 Osborne, Whither Diplomatic History, (2019), 43.

86 Robert D. Schulzinger, The Making of the Diplomatic Mind: The Training, Outlook, and Style of United States Foreign Service Officers 1908–1931, Middletown 1975, 40–51 and 81–100; Oliver Rathkolb (ed.), 250 Jahre: Von der Orientalischen zur Diplomatischen Akademie in Wien, Innsbruck et al. 2004; Jeremy Black, A History of Diplomacy, London 2010, 100–102.

gories of agents: those who have received formal training and those who have not. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that not only formally trained individuals have been involved in state diplomacy. For example, members of royal families in European constitutional monarchies, despite lacking formal diplomatic training, carried out official diplomatic duties on behalf of their governments.[87] In contrast, non-state actors, such as business representatives, journalists, or NGO activists, typically also without diplomatic training, constitute a separate category. The group of untrained individuals must be further divided into state and non-state actors. These distinctions, already included analytically in the NDH, must also be acknowledged terminologically, as the following articles will show. Recognizing these nuances is essential for accurately portraying the different diplomatic roles of each group, along with their respective capabilities and constraints.

Furthermore, Reynolds cautioned against overestimating the novel insights afforded by the NDH, articulating in a well-considered critique that there was often a disconnect from the decision-making process. He cited, among others, the work of Frank Costigliola, whom he described as an "imaginative analyst",[88] for revealing gendered and sexual metaphors in Cold War discourse.[89] Reynolds posed the question of "how exactly do we connect the masculine self-images of policy-makers, their historical memories or their sense of national identity to the actual policies they choose, advocate and execute?"[90] If Reynolds' critique implies that decisions are the sole legitimate focus of historical inquiry, such a viewpoint need not be universally accepted. Decision-making is a crucial facet of diplomatic activity, but it is not its only dimension:[91] some matters remain unresolved, others are addressed belatedly, and the reasons for these phenomena deserve to be examined. Different countries may have different stakeholders, approaches, and methods for reaching the same conclusions. Furthermore, some decisions achieve recognition and longevity whereas others do not. These variances cannot be elucidated by concentrating on outcomes alone. A deeper investigation into the historical cultures of diplomacy, individual personalities, societal contexts, and practices is indispensable. Reynolds acknowledges this "[u]p to a point",[92] but argues that historians should primar-

87 Robert Hazell/Bob Morris (ed.), The Role of Monarchy in Modern Democracy: European Monarchies Compared, Oxford 2020, 63–92.

88 Reynolds, International History, (2006), 82.

89 Frank Costigliola, The Nuclear Family: Tropes of Gender and Pathology in the Western Alliance, in: Diplomatic History 21/2 (1997), 163–183; Frank Costigliola, 'Unceasing Pressure for Penetration': Gender, Pathology, and Emotion in George Kennan's Formation of the Cold War, in: The Journal of American History 83/4 (1997), 1309–1339.

90 Reynolds, International History, (2006), 87.

91 Falko Schnicke, 'Output matters more than process'? Writing the History of Twentieth-Century British Foreign Policy, in: English Historical Review 135/2 (2020), 417–434.

92 Reynolds, International History, (2006), 89.

ily focus on causes, policies, and power.[93] By contrast, basic research, such as Costigliola's compelling analyses, warrants advocacy. It is not obliged to explain the specifics of decision-making directly; rather, its value lies in the generation of standalone insights. While not obligatory, basic diplomatic research can underpin arguments in subsequent studies, including moments of decision.

The NDH has also been criticized for its perceived overemphasis on non-state actors and cultural dimensions, which some argue leads to an undue decentralization of the role of the state. For instance, Thomas Zeiler lauded the exploration of the cultural history of diplomacy, including its mentalities, gender, or race, before asserting that "a focus on the state does distinguish the field" of diplomatic history.[94] From this perspective, the state's primacy in the annals of diplomatic history is undeniable. Similarly, Osborne has articulated the importance of the state, albeit less categorically: "we should […] not lose sight of the fact that from the sixteenth century onwards, accredited ambassadors were categorially distant – official diplomacy mattered".[95] For Osborne, this stance did not negate the value of studying non-official, sub-state diplomatic efforts, but served as a reminder not to overlook the role of the state in diplomatic history amidst such interests. "The point is that a balance is needed", he suggested.[96] These viewpoints counter arguments that either over-marginalize the state or consider it entirely superfluous. Scott-Smith and Weisbrode, for instance, advocated that the NDH should focus "less on 'bringing the state back in' than to seeing and understanding the extensive network of ties between state and non-state diplomatic actors in historical and social context",[97] with Scott-Smith even proposing in a 2014 article the "possibility of a New Diplomatic History without the state".[98] However, this special issue takes a different stance, asserting that the NDH's exploration of state diplomacy and the examination of non-state actors are not incompatible. As has been noted on numerous occasions, the international, transnational, or global cannot operate effectively without the institutional or legal frameworks provided by the state.[99] The contributions of this issue also argue that expanding the diplomatic realm and generating new inquiries and perspectives on state diplomacy are crucial, and they serve as evidence that integrating NDH research with state-centric analysis can yield compelling insights.

93 Ibid., 89–90.
94 Thomas W. Zeiler, The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field, in: The Journal of American History 95/4 (2009), 1053–1073, 1072.
95 Osborne, Whither Diplomatic History, (2019), 43–44.
96 Ibid., 44.
97 Scott-Smith/Weisbrode, Editorial, (2019), 2.
98 Scott-Smith, Introduction, (2014), 6.
99 Haider-Wilson, Humpty Dumpty, (2017), 28–34.

Promising avenues for further research (and teaching)

Despite the plethora of insightful studies already published and the dimensions brought together in this special issue, numerous promising avenues remain to be explored to further realize the potential of NDH. The following enumeration highlights some suggestions. While these topics are of overarching relevance, given the recent delineation of desiderata for the early modern era,[100] they are primarily applicable to the study of modern history. The aim here is not to formulate detailed research agendas but to present preliminary reflections on these topics and to stimulate further scholarly engagement.

State actors: Despite the NDH initiative to include non-state actors, it is essential, as already argued, to redirect the impulse to identify diplomatic agency beyond conventional views back towards state actors and to engage in a more nuanced differentiation among them. In this context, two different directions warrant attention. First, it is imperative to recognize state and government actors as separate entities. For instance, British governments have historically used members of the royal family in their foreign policy endeavours. Although both categories fall under the umbrella of state actors, the monarchy is not an integral part of the government, sometimes held different foreign policy views, and has had (limited) means to assert its distinct perspectives occasionally. The context of constitutional monarchies in particular highlights the necessity of distinguishing between formal and unofficial diplomatic actors, despite the challenges this may pose in certain instances.[101] Furthermore, this distinction reveals the existence of various forms of formal diplomats. Enhancing our understanding of such internal distinctions among state actors could contribute significantly to comparative analyses of governance systems, facilitating insights into how republican, monarchical, and theocratic diplomatic practices diverge. The second direction pertains to the coordination between state authorities. Exploring this aspect of internal diplomacy in relation to external diplomacy is instrumental in deciphering various diplomatic cultures. The study of internal diplomacy, defined as the potentially contentious coordination between foreign-policy-related state authorities, is crucial for appreciating the contested nature of specific foreign policy components. It illuminates competing internal power centres, highlights contested policy alternatives, and elucidates the pivotal arguments in these debates. While

100 Goetze/Oetzel, Diplomat, (2024), 19–21.

101 Matthias Pohlig, Formalität und Informalität: Zur Bedeutung und Reichweite einer diplomatiehistorischen Unterscheidung, in: Florian Kühnel/Christine Vogel (eds.), Zwischen Domestik und Staatsdiener: Botschaftssekretäre in den frühneuzeitlichen Außenbeziehungen, Cologne/Weimar/Vienna 2021, 29–46; Matthias Pohlig, Gender and the Formalisation of Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe, in: The International History Review 44/5 (2022), 1062–1076.

"internal diplomacy" has been referred to in scholarship, as noted by John Young or Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne,[102] its potential as an analytical framework remains largely untapped and ripe for further academic exploration.

Knowledge: In the realms of diplomatic bureaucracies and interactions between diplomatic actors, knowledge is in a constant flux, underpinning their actions and decisions. At the same time, the process of diplomatic engagement generates a myriad of knowledge forms. Nevertheless, information is often lacking, delayed, or found to be inaccurate. Knowledge is central to both foreign policy and diplomacy, ranging from intelligence operations towards allies and adversaries to the understanding of intercultural nuances and historical precedents used to argue for exceptions to seemingly stringent regulations. There is a need to explore this complexity in more detail, given the current lack of insight into what constituted relevant knowledge, who considered it to be so, and the mechanisms of its creation, dissemination, and protection. Critical questions include: through what channels was specific diplomatic knowledge transmitted? How was diplomatic knowledge transformed through its circulation?[103] How did diplomatic actors address and manage the absence of knowledge? In what instances was deliberate ambiguity used to preserve the essential flexibility in foreign policy, and by what means was this achieved? Investigating these questions could significantly enrich our understanding of the intricate interplay between knowledge and diplomacy.

Temporalities: Deadlines, periods of validity, projections of the future, to name but a few, represent a central yet understudied organizing principle across the spectrum of foreign policy. A focused investigation into these aspects would not only uncover a pivotal motivating force for numerous actors, but would also help distinguish between the diverse temporal cultures inherent in diplomatic practice. Accordingly, it is prudent to recognize that actors operate within varying temporal frameworks. The interrogation of temporal perceptions should be directed at diplomatic sources, positing time awareness as a critical inquiry. This approach necessitates a scholarly examination of how time was conceptualized, experienced, and recorded, thereby uncovering the temporal frameworks that underpin diplomatic thought and action. Such an approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of several questions: What significance was ascribed to time pressure, whether passively endured or strategically invoked? When did planning for specific initiatives commence? How were delays and conflicting time management strategies navigated? For how long are

102 Young, Twentieth-Century Diplomacy, 2008, 24; Keith Hamilton/Richard Langhorne, The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory, and Administration, 2nd ed., Abingdon 2011, 247.

103 James A. Secord, Knowledge in Transit, in: Isis 95 (2004), 654–672; Johan Östling/Erling Sandmo/David Larsson Heidenblad/Anna Nilsson Hammar/Kari H. Nordberg (eds.), Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge, Lund 2018.

diplomatic outcomes perceived as relevant? In addition to these practical aspects of diplomatic timekeeping, cultural attitudes towards temporality are significant. This is because time also functions as a metaphorical toolkit: to what extent were traditions of friendship and former alliances emphasized in diplomatic rhetoric? How is history used to foster a sense of belonging, and what time-bound concepts and practices of togetherness can be observed? What role did visions of the future play in diplomatic exchanges?

Practices: Despite multiple analyses of diplomatic practices, their conceptual essence remains largely undefined: what specifically distinguishes diplomatic practices and how do they diverge from non-diplomatic practices? Are certain practices used exclusively in the realm of foreign policy? If so, what are their defining characteristics, and how have these categorizations evolved historically? These questions deserve to be systematically explored in future research. Addressing them would not only enhance our comprehension of diplomatic practices themselves but also help further distinguish between different diplomatic actors. Cross-era and cross-cultural comparisons stand out as especially valuable methodologies for addressing these questions.

Masculinities: Research into the gender dynamics of diplomacy has yielded insightful findings and warrants further investigation. There is a pressing need for additional studies focusing on women in diplomatic settings and the use of femininity as a strategic element of foreign policy. At the same time, and without detracting from these studies, examining the concept of diplomatic masculinities deserves particular attention. Key questions include identifying the various forms of diplomatic masculinities across different historical periods, understanding the contexts in which they have been negotiated, and exploring the processes of their valorization and devaluation. It is crucial to examine how diplomatic actors themselves perceived and reflected upon their masculine identities. Further research is also needed into the implications of addressing allies through metaphors associated with non-normative masculinities.[104] Additionally, the strategic use of masculinities in diplomacy, such as the deliberate inclusion of specific messages in programmes for the spouses of heterosexual diplomats or the targeted deployment of queer diplomats towards queer interlocutors in order to exploit personal connections for political ends, merits exploration. Investigating the interplay of diplomatic masculinities with other social categories, including class, race, or religion, is also essential. Such a multifaceted analysis could illuminate the complex ways in which gender and other identity markers intersect in diplomatic practice.

104 Costigliola, Nuclear Family, (1997).

Emotions: Diplomacy, like all human behaviour, is imbued with emotion. Far from being emotion-free, historical sources are replete with evidence that diplomatic actors frequently experienced frustration over protracted negotiations, felt insecure or indecisive, or saw themselves as weary and overburdened. Yet such emotions were rarely explicitly acknowledged in diplomatic discourse. Emotions typically surface in diplomatic sources as belonging to others; for instance, jubilant crowds lining the streets during state visits are interpreted as markers of successful diplomacy, or the presumed fear of nuclear annihilation in an adversary serves as a rationale for decision-making. Historical scholarship has often reflected this tendency to externalize emotions, but it is imperative for future research to explore the emotions experienced by diplomats themselves. As Dominik Geppert argues, "emotional drivers and affective realities carry great weight in decision-making"[105] – and their impact extends beyond. Shifting the focus to exploring the emotional landscapes in which diplomats operate would significantly advance the NDH's mission to interpret diplomatic sources not merely for their factual content but as reflections of social contexts and milieux.[106] Investigating when, how, and to whom diplomats expressed their emotions – and why – is essential. Which emotions were communicated openly and strategically, and which were concealed? What rhetorical methods were used in these expressions, and how have they evolved? Which actors had the leeway to express emotions, and what were the implications of various emotions? This line of inquiry promises to enrich our understanding of diplomacy by illuminating the complex interplay between emotion and diplomatic action.

This list is by no means exhaustive, as other promising areas for further research may be identified. All of the topics listed combine diplomatic history with neighbouring fields of historical study, such as royal studies, gender, administrative, economic or emotional history, which illustrates NDH's connectivity and flexibility. NDH is general history based on the example of diplomacy and has no need for its sometimes glaring "sense of academic defensiveness".[107] At the same time, there is always the question as to what exactly is foreign policy and what is genuinely diplomatic about its topics.[108] Clarifying where diplomacy functioned like the societies that produced it, and where it deviated from them, thus remains one of the main tasks.

105 Dominik Geppert, Emotions and Gender in Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl's Cold War, in: Diplomacy & Statecraft 32/4 (2022), 766–788, 768.
106 Osborne, Whither Diplomatic History, (2019), 42.
107 Ibid., 41.
108 Eggel, Diplomatic History, (2017), 209.

Incorporating these themes into the academic curriculum, as Elisabeth Röhrlich urges,[109] can provide students with invaluable practical and theoretical insights. Educators can leverage these emerging topics to design interactive modules and assignments that encourage students at both undergraduate and graduate level to engage with NDH. For instance, courses could include research-based learning components *(forschendes Lernen)*[110] where students analyse specific case studies or simulate diplomatic negotiations based on historical contexts and current geopolitical situations. Finding meaningful sources for this can be demanding; however, as Susanna Erlandsson explains in the interview in this issue, such challenges are surmountable: by highlighting omissions in the classroom, an analytical awareness can be significantly enhanced. Furthermore, incorporating interdisciplinary approaches that link NDH to fields like gender or economic issues can enhance students' understanding of the multifaceted nature and agents of diplomacy. This not only prepares students for a more comprehensive understanding of historical and contemporary international relations but also equips them with the critical thinking and analytical skills necessary in the complex world of today's global diplomacy.

***

Finally, this issue aligns with the new focal point of OeZG, examining recent developments and debates in Austria's museum and exhibition landscape. In their essay, Remigio Gazzari, Christian Rabl, and Johanna Zechner explore the planned but ultimately unrealized redesign of the birthplace of Austrofascist chancellor Engelbert Dollfuß in Texingtal, Lower Austria. They offer direct insights into the political controversies surrounding the former museum and its abrupt closure.

Falko Schnicke, Linz

109 Röhrlich, Zeitgeschichte, (2021), 796.

110 Ludwig Huber/Gabi Reinmann, Vom forschungsnahen Lernen zum forschenden Lernen an Hochschulen. Wege der Bildung durch Wissenschaft, Wiesbaden 2019; Carmen Wulf/Susanne Haberstroh/Maren Petersen (eds.), Forschendes Lernen. Theorie, Empirie, Praxis, Wiesbaden 2020.