

**МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ЦЕНТР НАУЧНОГО СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА
«НАУКА И ПРОСВЕЩЕНИЕ»**



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МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ЦЕНТР НАУЧНОГО СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА

АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ СОВРЕМЕННОЙ НАУКИ И ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

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АРМИИ США ПРОВОДИТ УСПЕШНЫЕ ИСПЫТАНИЯ ГИПЕРЗВУКОВОГО ОРУЖИЯ С РАЗЛИЧНЫХ ПЛАТФОРМ РАКЕТОНОСИТЕЛЕЙ ИВАНОВ РОМАН ВАЛЕРЬЕВИЧ	209
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УДК 320

THE USE OF “SOFT POWER” AND DIGITAL DIPLOMACY AS MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN IRAN’S FOREIGN POLICY

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Аннотация: Современный мир использует в политических процессах широкий набор устоявшихся политических технологий. В данной статье рассматриваются «мягкая сила» и цифровая дипломатия во внешней политике Ирана как политические технологии, используемые руководством Тегерана. Таким образом, формируя положительный имидж Ирана в регионе и мировом сообществе, он демонстрирует усилия по расширению сферы своего влияния.

Ключевые слова: «Мягкая сила», цифровая дипломатия, Исламская Республика Иран, внешняя политика, технологии.

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ «МЯГКОЙ СИЛЫ» И ЦИФРОВОЙ ДИПЛОМАТИИ КАК СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ ВО ВНЕШНЕЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ ИРАНА

Ходжимуратова Дилшода

Abstract: Modern world uses a wide set of established political technologies in political processes. This article discusses “soft power” and digital diplomacy in Iran’s foreign policy as political technologies used by Tehran’s leadership. Thus, by forming a positive image of Iran in the region and the world community, it demonstrates efforts to expand its sphere of influence.

Keywords: “Soft power”, digital diplomacy, Islamic Republic of Iran, foreign policy, technology.

The dynamics of international relations, including the participation of new transnational actors in international relations, the search for alternative forms of communication and new forms of transnational politics, have a great impact on diplomacy as an instrument of foreign policy. Diplomacy and diplomatic institutions face new challenges, and at the same time they must adapt to new conditions in order to remain relevant. In this case, the concept of “soft power” was created as a political technology to change the existing situation in accordance with their interests. The practical side of this technology attracts not only scientists, but also politicians. Currently, the main areas of “soft power” technology are:

- “soft power” as a force of attraction;
- “soft power” as a sociocultural influence;
- “soft power” as a psychological and ideological influence.

These qualities can be found individually or together and in various combinations. Combining “soft power” with passive attractiveness requires analyzing existing conditions and developing the necessary measures to achieve the desired attractiveness. These measures can be long-term or short-term. Attractiveness is often related to the objective conditions of life in the country. To improve socio-economic indicators, political reforms, and the development of science and culture, long-term policy follow-up is required. Also, no country achieves prestige overnight, but it is achieved through the consistent implementation of its

foreign policy. One side of this activity consists of real social and economic indicators, and the other side consists of broadly communicating the successes achieved to the world public and thereby shaping the country's attractiveness to foreign audiences. Therefore, in this case, all methods and techniques used in the formation of the image and branding are useful. The importance of this concept is that it does not ignore the material basis of "soft power", which often plays an important role in relation to communication and image technologies.

The second approach focuses on the humanitarian potential of "soft power", which allows us to solve the urgent problems facing a particular state, region, or all of humanity. For example, "soft power" is an important phenomenon of "social life", and it is understood as the ability to achieve the desired results through the development of education and culture, the use of social technologies to change the meaning of human life, civilization, not violence, but the spiritual maturity of man.

In this approach, "soft power" is often determined by a combination of social technologies (cultural, educational, political, ideological), a consensus of political actors and social groups. Through such a consensus, international and domestic political problems can be solved. The shared values underlying soft power help address global warming, poverty, hunger, epidemics, and more.

The method of psychological and ideological influence of "soft power" attracts particular attention. The understanding of "soft power" as a method of psychological and ideological influence ranges from subtle methods of changing the imagination to very crude methods, all the way down to propaganda. According to political technologists, "soft power" should not be associated with propaganda, based not on moral standards, but on pragmatic considerations. It has been argued that soft power relies on trust, and when governments use methods of manipulation and propaganda, trust is lost, so it is important to avoid the suspicion of manipulating the state. Today, propaganda is quickly noticed and negatively perceived by the public.

Through "soft power", it is possible to influence the minds of other societies in two steps:

- 1) external influences, represented by behavior, clothing, and nutrition;
- 2) a profound effect on consciousness and stereotypes, transforming them.

The peculiarity of external influence is that it is easily assimilated, but it does not form a new mentality and culture, does not change the behavior of individuals and does not affect the direction of foreign policy. So you can listen to Persian music, wear Iranian clothing, and still be true to your own nation and culture. Under the influence of "soft power" changes the worldview, consciousness and thinking. Targeting such influence on a particular country leads to the gradual formation of a "fifth column" in society. Although it is not easy to achieve profound influence, modern mechanisms aimed at the implementation of "soft power" are focused on this.

Western countries assess "soft power" as a new strategy for implementing foreign policy and widely use its resources in the formation of civil society institutions, nongovernmental organizations, political elites, the use of information technology, as well as in the replacement of political power. Therefore, some Iranian scholars assess it as a threat to the country and call for the mobilization of local resources against the "soft power" technologies of foreign countries. At the same time, they propose to use this technology in the realization of Iran's strategic goals.

In such circumstances, digital diplomacy is an effective way to promote political interests as a new method of diplomacy. Digital diplomacy is becoming a new mechanism of diplomacy that involves the extensive use of cyberspace to achieve or support diplomatic goals. When studied through the lens of "soft power", digital diplomacy refers to the ability to set the agenda in world politics by persuading and engaging others with its beliefs, values and ideas. In this context, information technology is considered a major factor that has had a major impact on diplomats and diplomatic work in general in the 21st century.

For its part, Iran is actively developing digital diplomacy mechanisms. Specifically, it creates various websites, opens government-affiliated social media accounts such as Twitter and Facebook, and monitors the activities of local and foreign bloggers. Iran's digital diplomacy is a way of promoting its political position by widely disseminating information in foreign languages on social media.

Iran's digital diplomacy aims to adapt to the development and innovation of new information technologies. The emergence of digital diplomacy and the popularization of social media are changing the operation of the international information field and prompting policy professionals to develop new priorities and

liberalize the diplomatic process. Although traditional methods of diplomacy still dominate, in the last decade digital diplomacy has become an innovative way of achieving goals.

In recent years, it can be seen that the importance of social networks around the world is increasing. Iran today is well aware of the importance of using digital diplomacy. Iranian leaders actively use social networks. Twitter and Facebook are used by political fanatics not only to communicate with like-minded people and supporters, but also as a platform for public statements. The results of Iran's digital diplomacy can be seen in the activities of Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, which has many subscribers in social networks. Former Iranian President Rouhani is often criticized for his statements on social networks.

Iran's political leaders now also use social media for promotional purposes, seeking followers on Twitter. Mostly, social media can be used for strategic purposes, in particular to support the policies pursued by the Iranian leader, but also for the main tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as negotiating, gathering information and providing consular assistance to citizens abroad.

After years of conflict, a telephone conversation between U.S. President Barack Obama and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in 2013 was the first public step toward improving Iranian-American relations.

Between 2013 and 2015, Iran and the U.S. used Twitter to promote the positive aspects of these countries and each country's compliance with the Joint Plan of Action for Cooperation. Tweets between officials such as former Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry were a small but key indicator of trust between the two countries and helped seal the deal.

In conclusion, we can say that Iran has mastered the potential of social media and has effectively integrated it into its traditional public diplomacy focused on cultural diplomacy. In recent years, Iran has demonstrated a high level of utilization of the unique capabilities of social media. Due to the active efforts of Iran's diplomatic missions to introduce individual digital diplomacy to the foreign public since 2019, it has gained the attention of foreign audiences (China, India, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Oman), which demonstrates the success of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's digital diplomacy.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry is actively promoting the idea of using soft power technologies in implementing Tehran's strategic goals. Western countries are evaluating "soft power" as a new strategy for implementing foreign policy and are widely using its resources. Some Iranian scholars see this as a threat to the country and call for the mobilization of local resources against foreign "soft power" technologies.

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