

The future of diplomacy? essay sample

[Economics](#), [Globalization](#)



In this article, Henrikson soundly projects five possible futures of diplomacy in the near future. These are shaped in a context characterised by globalising and unifying world comprising of nations at different phases of history – pre-modern, modern and post-modern. Thus no model of diplomacy's possible future is likely to fit all parts of the world the same way with equal perfectibility.

Disintermediation is characterised by a pattern of private withdrawal from the use of governmental services. Due to a number of inefficiencies and the effects of information technology, state run diplomacy could be largely bypassed. Nevertheless, state run diplomacy still remains indispensable especially after the 9/11 attacks which amplified the need for more state-run diplomacy to fight against terrorism.

Europeanisation entails the replacement of national diplomatic services with international ones. This is backed by the current reality in which EU bilateral diplomatic missions are already being eclipsed by the internal process of EU and by the effort to create a CFSP. Nevertheless Europeanisation will not completely replace bilateral relationships of European countries which remain important for several strategic, cultural, and political reasons.

Democratisation refers to international democracy premised on the sovereign equality of states, large and small and on the existence of multilateral structures such as the UN. The universality of the multilateral organisations, gives them strength as world public fora for the discussion of global matters. This opportunity could be wasted if more attention is placed more on popular resolutions than common dialogue and rational persuasion.

Opening these institutions to the civil society may promote pluralism and diversity.

Thematic diplomacy focuses on a specific theme, such as the US's "Global War on Terror" but which can also mean other threats such as disease, crime, and drugs. For diplomacy, such thematised efforts may require a willingness to improvise and may create chances for career advancement. Nevertheless, this may endanger institutions and standards. The "crisis management" orientation of this model may not address the more profound underlying causes of problems.

Americanisation model refers to approximation or assimilation of international politics to American domestic political system. This has intensified the need for foreign diplomats to lobby or even intervene internally within American politics in order to ensure that their own interests are considered. In situations of high interdependence such as between Canada and the US, domestic and foreign affairs are almost indistinguishable. In this context, diplomats have to become more directly interventionist. In this article, Henrikson provides a fairly realistic projection of the future of diplomacy.

Comments on Liva Rabarihoela's Analysis

Liva provides a captivating critique of Henrikson's article. Particularly striking is Liva's observation of the pitfalls of the privatisation of diplomacy through disintermediation – namely the decline of democratisation. Striking is also Liva's critique of the Europeanisation model particularly as it overlooks the

possible impact of some cultural and historical factors as well as political behaviours that fundamentally differentiate peoples and countries.

Nevertheless, I feel that Liva could have made his analysis more balanced with a closer look at both the merits and demerits of Henrikson's projections in relation to current and evolving global political trends.