



TWEET

Aileen Cassinetta

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Introduction

TOOLS OF THE TRADE, DIPLOMACY AND POETRY IN FOREIGN POLICY

Foreign policy has been the rhyme and meter of our ever changing relations – from Washington’s isolationist stance, Truman’s containment doctrine and FDR’s internationalist vision, to JFK’s crisis management strategies and Bush Sr.’s Weinbergerian approach. Of all the tools of the trade, most leaders would choose to engage with diplomacy to its greatest extent. And the practice of diplomacy, in large part, relies on the use of language.

Diplomatic language, simply put, can be quite... poetic. Consider the formula for most diplomatic speeches and communication. It begins with a salutation (i.e., “Your Excellencies, Distinguished guests...” etc), followed by formal greetings (i.e., “The [sending government department or mission] presents its compliments to the [receiving government department or mission]...”). It then segues into the main agenda (i.e., to summon cooperation), and proceeds with the conclusion

(i.e., “The [sending government department or mission] avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the [receiving government department or mission] the assurances of its highest consideration.”)

A study of the evolution of Diplomacy illustrates instances where the art and practice of poetry played a vital role. In Heian-era Japan, for example, the waka poetic form flourished and contributed to the development of community and a singular Japanese identity. And in the 4th century BCE, zuozhuan (Chinese statesmen) often delivered lines of fushi (odes) to express their political stance.

A more manifest example of poetry’s direct influence on policy occurred during Austria’s War of Succession in the 18th century where the popularity of Willem Van Haren’s poems virtually raised an army of 20,000 Dutch soldiers in support of the House of Habsburg.

More recently, poetry as an act of diplomacy has fallen under the purview of soft power politics, such as cultural diplomacy activities and exchanges. Having said that, a significant

number of diplomats and statesmen wield(ed)
the ubiquitous pen to partake in some wheel and
wordplay. Among these poet-diplomats are:

44th US President (and de facto chief
diplomat) Barack Obama,
Sitting in his seat, a seat broad and
broken /In, sprinkled with ashes /Pop
switches channels, takes another /Shot
of Seagrams, neat, and asks /What to do
with me, a green young man...

the UN's 2nd Secretary-General Dag
Hammarskjöld,
Let them keep / All the petty
secrets /They have guarded so anxiously.

Belgium's former Prime Minister and the
European Council's First President Herman
Van Rompuy,
Brussels: / Different colours, / tongues,
towers and gods. / I search my way.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov,
And they served the country, feeling its
nerves as their own...

Indian Ambassador Amandeep Gill,
May be it was the Maria in the middle / or
the soft sensibility of his verse / I always
thought Rilke was a woman...

Philippine Ambassador Neal Imperial,
Night is nomad. / Its hourglass, full / of
sand. / But you are the certainty / that
quenches its thirst.

and the late Chilean Consul Gabriela Mistral,
Where there is a mistake to undo, let it be
you. / You be the one to remove the rock
from the field, / the hate from human
hearts, / And the difficulties from the
problem.

"Poetry is not a luxury," stressed African
American poet and activist Audre Lorde; rather, it
is "an act of peace," according to the Chilean
diplomat and poet Pablo Neruda. Because it
employs language that is layered, rhythmic,
nuanced, evocative, compressed and symbolic,
poetry's structure has been favored in the
practice of public diplomacy. For who

understands the weight of words better than a diplomat?

A relevant question, perhaps, is how do we utilize the language of diplomacy to foster better relations?

Diplomatic language is, first and foremost, peace-building. Which means, it avoids everything that is offensive. A diplomat chooses each word with tact and skill so that every line of every speech or paragraph is distilled and intentional. Being a pro at this requires cultural sensitivity and the constant rephrasing of ideas mentally. Everyday speech, for instance, freely incorporates adverbs of degree, qualifiers, hedges, and/or contracted negative questions.

In other words, a little “confident uncertainty” will go a long way. Why does diplomacy matter, anyway? It keeps boots off the ground, for one. For isn't peace in our time, our children's and theirs, worthy of all our endeavors? But if not peace, then legacy. Because our relationships, more than anything, will ultimately define us.

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Aren't you curious how a seemingly underrated reporter found my tax returns in his mailbox?
#fakenews

@tweeterinchief

David Cay Boyle won the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Beat Reporting. #notfakenews

It doesn't seem logical to release 122 dangerous prisoners from Guantanamo into the battlefield, does it?

@tweeterinchief

"Bush freed 113 of the 122 who re-engaged —it also omits the fact detainees freed from Guantanamo show recidivism rates far lower than those released by the the U.S. prison system"@theatlantic

It looks like some disreputable members of the mainstream media are going to extremes with groundless allegations and blind hate. Sad!
#fakenews

@tweeterinchief

Journalists and news organizations that do not share @tweeterinchief's view are not automatically disreputable. #notfake

Public opinion polls that are disparaging should not be treated as accurate news, wouldn't you agree? May I refer you to a CNN poll on border security and extreme vetting? 47% of the respondents were supportive of the campaign.

@tweeterinchief

Last part is correct.

It is apparent that all claims against me are unfounded. My staff will have a full report on hacking within 90 days.

@tweeterinchief
Holding our breath.

I regret extremely that a previous engagement prevents me from accepting the invitation to attend the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner this year. Please accept my best wishes for a successful celebration.

@tweeterinchief
How to RSVP.
#rsvpdoesnotneedanaddedplease

Isn't it surprising that season 1 of Celebrity Apprentice with Arnold Schwarzenegger had an average of 4.9 million viewers compared to my season 14's 6.5 million? But it doesn't really matter, does it?

@tweeterinchief

No, it doesn't.

"Isn't it better if Robert Pattinson didn't take back Kristen Stewart? She hasn't been very devoted (not like dogs), and seems to be a little inclined to not restore trust. He deserves someone who sparkles... with loyalty." #twilight

@tweeterinchief

Let it go.

Reference:

"The Trump Tweet Tracker." [https://
www.theatlantic.com/liveblogs/2016/12/donald-
trump-twitter/511619/](https://www.theatlantic.com/liveblogs/2016/12/donald-trump-twitter/511619/)

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Aileen Cassinetto works as a foreign service national.

Locofo Chaps

2017

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mIEKAL aND – *Manifesto of the Moment*

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Iars palm – *case*

Reijo Valta – *Truth and Truthmp*

Andrew Peterson – *The Big Game is Every Night*

Romeo Alcala Cruz – *Archaeoteryx*

John Lowther – *18 of 555*

Jorge Sánchez – *Now Sing*

Alex Gildzen – *Disco Naps & Odd Nods*

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Luisa A. Igloria – *Puñeta: Political Pilipinx Poetry, vol. 3*

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Melinda Luisa de Jesús – *Humpty Drumpfty and Other Poems*

Allen Bramhall – *Bleak Like Me*

Kristian Carlsson – *The United World of War*

Roy Bentley – *Men, Death, Lies*

Travis Macdonald – *How to Zing the Government*

Kristian Carlsson – *Dhaka Poems*

Barbara Jane Reyes – *Nevertheless, #She Persisted*

Martha Deed – *We Should Have Seen This Coming*

Matt Hill – *Yet Another Blunted Ascent*

Patricia Roth Schwartz – *Know Better*

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Freke Rähä – *Explanation model for 'Virus'*

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Dan Ryan – *Swamp Tales*
Sheri Reda – *Stubborn*
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Mark Young – *The Waitstaff of Mar-a-Largo*
Howard Yosha – *Stop Armageddon*
Andrew and Donora Rihn – *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*
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