DIGITAL DIPLOMACY AS AN INSTRUMENT OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

Khalid Opaid Jazea¹, Hussein Mezher Khalaf²
¹Researcher, ²Supervisor
MA Student, University of Baghdad
khalidopaeed@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to define digital diplomacy as one of the new instruments of American foreign policy by identifying the most prominent definitions that have been given in connection with the definition of digital diplomacy, through the general characteristics that have met with agreement among those involved in this concept, and to deal with digital diplomacy and the history of its use in American foreign policy to the extent that it is considered a new soft power. The study concluded that the concept of digital diplomacy as any new concept in the humanities had not been agreed upon and guided by the contributions made by the researcher's introduction of a definition of its own, and that the United States of America, in the wake of the establishment of the new world order, had employed that instrument in its foreign policy, as well as being new soft power in the American interest.

I. INTRODUCTION:

First of all, it can be said that if the emergence of the Internet was primarily a reason for that change that affected all power structures, pushing them towards disintegration to the extent that some people during the nineties of the twentieth century spread the word: “Power Shift,” meaning shifting power, then this was not far from the pattern of changes that followed the international system and its political units, especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union (Khalifa, 2016, p. 9).

Countries have received these technological developments and employed them in their way of communicating with others, with the soul purpose of creating public opinion, changing people’s attitudes, and giving a positive political image towards their countries in light of the disappearance of the idea of traditional borders, through a “click of a button”, this is what specialists think - according to Their saying- that it has become closer to “Magic and Mystery”, (Bjola, Holmes, 2015, P. 16.).

In this regard, Digital Diplomacy came to represent one of the important results of the marriage between the world of politics, especially the international one, and the world of digital and technological information. The iPhone, YouTube, and Facebook came as a replacement of the diplomatic code, the diplomatic pouch, the diplomatic mail carrier, diplomatic representation and traditional negotiation, in order to take place behind digital screens, which are operated by digital diplomats, (Ismail, 2021, pp. 319-320).

In fact, the concept of digital diplomacy is not considered new in its meanings, but as a concept that is considered modern. Its development came mainly with the technological leap and information revolution that occurred at the level of communication processes that are one of the pillars of the diplomatic process in general. In addition to the fact that a researcher may find that the same concept has other presuppositions within other concepts; such as: the concept of soft power, cyber-power, and smart power, all of which are in the light of the theories of power within international relations.

Hence, there is no problem in saying that diplomacy in general refers to that operations' room of international relations, and the way in which countries aim at implementing their foreign policy, and digital diplomacy came to give a dynamic character to the essence of diplomacy without negating its traditional functions, (Al-Amoudi, 2018, p. 128).
Thus, based on the fact that the diplomatic instrument is one of the foreign policy utilizations of countries, the United States of America has been implementing it, along with its essential upgrade from traditional diplomacy into digital diplomacy in its foreign policy, seeking to achieve more hegemony over the international system. All of which is based upon the fact that digital diplomacy is one of the umbrellas of "Soft Power", which Joseph Nye referred to as: "exerting influence towards others", and without relying solely on Hard Power, (Rashid, 2016, p. 319-322).

In addition to the above, regarding the use of digital diplomacy by the United States of America in its foreign policy, whether at the political, economic, social, cultural, and security levels, it is not surprising that there is an extended history of employing the digital diplomacy instrument in American foreign policy, starting from the stage of its emergence. That is, the precursors that specialists trace back to the era of establishing Information and intelligence agencies, all the way through the Bush Jr administration, which saw the signs of shifting away from hard power, and the talks regarding the persuasive side, which embody the motives and origins of that instrument. In addition to the era of President Barack Obama that saw the intertwined utilizations within the concept of smart power, reaching to the Trump era, which witnessed a remarkable expansion in employing this instrument, and even the indoctrination of new traditions of digital diplomacy, most notably of which are: Selfie Diplomacy, as well as Twiplomacy.

Overall, digital diplomacy came to represent one of the means of American soft power, especially the prominent role it had in the US foreign policy, hand-in-hand with the traditional diplomacy tools, as well as the clear focus of US digital diplomacy on counter terrorism issues, exporting the American democracy model, and the issues of Human rights in accordance with the American vision.

Therefore, the research problem of this study revolves around an essential main question, which is: What is meant by the concept of digital diplomacy? Which is a question that carries many sub-questions in its sleeve, the most prominent of which are: What are the general characteristics of the concept of digital diplomacy? What are the main stages of the utilization of digital diplomacy in US foreign policy? And to what extent has digital diplomacy been implemented as a "Soft Force" in US foreign policy?

According to the aforementioned, this study aims at answering a number of basic and subsidiary questions that were included in the research problem, and then the purpose of the research is to identify the previous attempts to define the concept of digital diplomacy, and to review the most prominent general characteristics of digital diplomacy that have met an agreement between researchers and those who are concerned with this exact concept. Moreover, discussing the main stages of the history of the utilization of digital diplomacy in US foreign policy, and hence it was considered a soft power.

In light of this, the researcher relied in this study on the inductive reasoning approach, and then the researcher used the observation tool to be able to observe the overall contributions to the definition of the concept of digital diplomacy, as well as to track the most important milestones in terms of employing this concept in the US foreign policy, as well as considering it as "soft power".

In connection with the purpose of the study, the treatment of this study came in two main topics. The first topic discusses digital diplomacy: the concept and general characteristics. The second of which deals with digital diplomacy and US foreign policy. Then, the study ended with a conclusion with the most important results related to the purpose of the research.

II. THE FIRST TOPIC
DIGITAL DIPLOMACY: CONCEPT AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Defining the concepts of study is one of the primary steps that come at the forefront of any academic work, especially when it deals with a relatively modern concept such as the concept of "digital diplomacy", and also when some other concepts overlap with this concept, such as the concepts of people's diplomacy, public diplomacy, and soft power.

In this regard, this topic aims at identifying the previous attempts to define the concept of digital diplomacy, and tries to come with a proper definition of the concept of digital diplomacy, in addition to identifying the general features and characteristics of such concept.

FIRST: DEFINING THE CONCEPT OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY:
The starting point in this approach is that it has become agreed upon between researchers, and those who are concerned with the field of international relations, that diplomacy in general is a means of negotiation and representation between states during peace, in addition to being a set of international rules and norms, procedures, decrees, and formalities that are concerned with regulating relations between persons of international law. Therefore, diplomacy represents a science and art for the peaceful management of international relations, and an executive tool for the foreign policy of any country. This tool has followed tremendous developments in our current era, which is witnessing a tremendous revolution in the fields of communication and information technology. These changes affected all aspects of diplomatic work, whether at the level of the tools used or at the level of diplomatic actors or established objectives, which would have worked to push the pace of diplomatic work a step ahead, to allow the emergence of the concept of digital diplomacy, (Leitem, 2018, p: 116-118).

As is the case with any "new concept" in the humanities, there is still a difference in the precise definition of the concept of digital diplomacy, as each definition depends on the context in which the term is used.

In the following, we have a review of the most prominent definitions that were presented in connection with defining and introducing the concept of digital diplomacy, the most prominent of which are as follows:

- It generally refers to the way in which government agencies use information and technology to monitor and manage international changes, (Bjola, Holmes, 2015, P. 45).
- A new approach of managing foreign policy, serving as a tool to transmit the strategies of states which are linked to their national interests.
- It represents diplomatic platforms which aims at observing the balance of the people, like TV, radio, and newspapers are confined to youth groups, and the Internet has become the source of their information, which was the reason to move towards virtual platforms.
- It is nothing more than a form of public diplomacy with the integration of modern technology and its instruments within traditional diplomacy, (Rashica, 2018, P. 77).
- The increasing use of new media platforms by the government to achieve its foreign policy and manage its reputation and public-image.
- Using the Internet, communication and information technologies to help achieve diplomatic objectives.
- The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office defines it as the concept that is based upon solving foreign policy problems using the Internet, thus, it includes the art of governance and administration in the twenty-first century, (Bjola, Pamment, 2019, p.42).
- Melissen sees it as the blogs and platforms on the World Wide Web, (Melissen, 2005, P. 8).
- The Global Affairs Canada defines as a reflection of open policy.
- The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs sees digital diplomacy as an extension of actual diplomacy in its traditional sense, with its attribution to innovation and the use of technology in transferring information.
- Glassman argues that digital diplomacy is targeted towards the social fabric, given that social networks via the Internet have become a virtual place for individuals to obtain information and discuss current issues.

According to the above, the researcher discovers that digital diplomacy as a concept is not different from other concepts that do not reach an ultimate agreement between researchers and those who are concerned, respectively. Therefore, the researcher proposes a definition of the concept of digital diplomacy based upon, and guided through those treatments and previous definitions, which are based upon the fact that digital diplomacy is a public diplomacy with a new dimension regarding the management of foreign policy. Which aims at enhancing communication with new perpetrators from different virtual audiences using modern communication platforms, and relying upon traditional diplomatic functions of representation.
negotiation, and promotion of mutual interests, with the hope of achieving public balance, and serving the desired diplomatic goals of each country.

Thus, the concept of digital diplomacy, according to the definition coined by the researcher, which calls for several main characteristics and constituents, perhaps the most prominent of which is that there should be a foreign policy for the government, through which it aims at strengthening its contact with the virtual world public, which represents the recipient. In addition to the ultimate employment of modern means of communication, as well as strengthening the well-known diplomatic traditional functions.

In accordance with the aforementioned, the interest of those concerned with the concept of digital diplomacy has emerged, and many definitions of this concept were presented from several perspectives, in a way that serves everyone in their field, specialization, and focus of interest. However, what the concerned people and those working in diplomatic studies agree upon is that the concept of digital diplomacy was found to understand a new reality and new changes in the diplomatic profession, where the diplomatic job has undergone radical changes in the methods of communication, whether in regard to members of its diplomatic corps or with the public to whom it wants to present its positions and opinions regarding international issues. Let alone, the understanding of modern foreign policy, which has come to include the agencies and strategies of foreign countries' policies within the digital environment, passing through the need to know the multiplicity of new international agents. Because, in the shadow of traditional diplomacy, international non-governmental organizations were the most important agents of global civil society. Now, the digital realm of multinationals in the digital technology services have become organized groups, such as: "Amazon" and "Alibaba", and perhaps the Huawei dealer crisis between China and America manifests this pressure greatly, (Rugh, 2017, P.17).

In addition, the concept of digital diplomacy helps us understand the phenomenon of the revolution, as digital diplomacy has actually contributed in one way or another to moving some of the parties that used virtual platforms as an arena to announce revolutions against the policies of governments, or to demand better social conditions, and all what is related to the issues of democratization of some countries of the world, (Quwaidri , 2018, p.26).

SECOND: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY:

The researcher here discusses the general features and characteristics that distinguish this "digital diplomacy" from other similar types of diplomacy, like peoples and public diplomacy, and the attempt to disengage and potential overlap between previous definitions and the concept of digital diplomacy.

First of all, it should be noted that the issue of dealing with general characteristics witnessed a difference in viewpoints between those who are concerned with the phenomenon of digital diplomacy regarding the destination that researchers pay their attention towards. Accordingly, the researcher will try to present the most prominent general features that have been addressed by those concerned with that phenomenon, and according to several approaches.

A number of researchers have gone on to address the general features of digital diplomacy by identifying its implications on foreign policy-making, which stem from the four main areas as follows, (Westcott, 2008, P.16):

- **Service Providing Field:** where the Internet has provided ministries of foreign affairs and embassies of countries abundance of public services, such as (travel advice, visa applications, passports, etc.), without negating the necessity of physical documents and paper-works, but digital diplomacy has been reducing it as much as possible. Digital diplomacy also benefited from the Internet in simplifying the hierarchy, and undermining the centralization of diplomatic work, as it opened the opportunity to employ fewer people who can work faster in remote and multi-geographical locations, which would have contributed to the reluctance of bureaucracy and diplomatic routine, (Westcott, 2008, P.16).

- **The Field of Ideas:** It is agreed upon that ideas are of utmost importance in foreign policy, in terms of their planning and implementation, as it is not surprising that some researchers attribute the ongoing chaos in Iraq mainly to a set of misconceptions formed by the neoconservatives about the Islamic world, as well as the case with regard to the fundamentalists' view of the different other, and that is why digital diplomacy came not to settle those ideas and ideologies, but rather, to represent an active means of exchanging ideas that cannot be ignored or bypassed. This is something that the State of France took into account when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs allocated a monthly interactive session on the Twitter,
allowing the public to communicate with government officials, and promote their thoughts and opinions, (Abdel-Al, 2018, p.15).

- Networking Field: Perhaps, it has become evident in light of the technological developments, and the successive communication surge that foreign policy practitioners and those in charge of diplomacy realize the representation and negotiation of their countries, and became familiar with the websites in which the issues of their countries are discussed, and the attempt to find ways to participate in them. This pushed groups of people to call digital diplomacy that one of its dominant and prominent characteristics which are reflected in Wikipedia, which represents one of the largest global networks, and is entrusted with covering a wide range of contemporary international issues, and it is usually used by non-experts as an outlet for guidance, or obtaining primary information. So, digital diplomacy came to give access to countries to a more creative and intelligent approach in achieving a dynamic worldwide web presence, (Jiang, 2013, P. 66).

- Information Field: Highly trusted information represents the backbone of the foreign policy-making process, hence digital diplomacy has benefited from this matter in intensifying advice and doubling sources of information, as well as engaging more agencies that lead to an expansion of information exchange and analysis, (Westcott, op. Cit., P.18).

It is clear from the aforementioned that social media is more than just a tool of communication in regard to digital diplomats, but rather, there is no offence in saying that it is a powerful tool to achieve what seemed to be difficult in traditional diplomacy, especially, with regard to the role of information, ideas, services, and networking which have been previously covered.

While each of Bjola and Holmes resort to three basic components of digital diplomacy: Engagement, requirements, and Monitoring Information, in order to find out its general features, and the following is an explanation of those components, (Bjola, Holmes, op. Cit., P: 66).

With regard to Engagement, digital diplomacy came to emphasize the importance of participation or engagement in order to present a specific message, as new communication channels allow dialogue in recognition of the changes and transformations within the global community, which necessitated the obligation for governments to engage and interact instead of "communicating" with foreign audiences, including strengthening cooperative relationships, (Kathy, Fitzpatrick, 2011, P. 10).

In this regard, we notice the effectiveness of those questions and answers that are raised even on Twitter or Facebook events, which benefited from digital diplomacy as its features became clear in what the ministries of foreign affairs or diplomats received from interacting with the people in countries within which they do not have an actual presence, because the political context does not allow this, to the extent that some countries have been able to open virtual embassies in order to deliver their message, and start their talks, (Manor, 2016, P.1).

As previously emphasized, the concept of digital diplomacy remains a modern concept and represents an academic debate among researchers, which still opens the door to many questions that we have the right to ask regarding this matter: Who is the targeted audience involved in the new form of digital diplomacy? What is the position of ethical standards regarding the utilization of national resources for communicating with foreign audiences?

With regard to resources as one of the general features of digital diplomacy, most foreign governments and ministries have come to own some kind of social media network. However, this new digital environment is not without emerging challenges that those in charge of digital diplomacy must confront, which are represented by five main threats or challenges which are can be summarized as: First, the ability to adapt without being connected to the Internet. Second, the ability to create appropriate content for new media networks. Third, the ability to adapt to a large number of social networks, such as: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, or any other social network in the country. Fourth, the need for trained and experienced human resources, as well as dealing the ministries of foreign affairs and the risks of harmful cultures, (Manor, op.cit., P. 78).

With regard to Monitoring as one of the general features of digital diplomacy, it is imperative that the diplomat need to collect information about how the foreign public perceives the actions of a particular government, as well as their need to make an assessment of the nature of the relationships between the two countries, and to identify
opportunities or threats on their cooperation. In this context, social networks provide an excellent tool for monitoring the opinions and beliefs of the foreign audience, which was not provided by diplomacy in its traditional form, and the diplomat should address the main issues with a bilateral agenda, strengthen his positions, and urge the foreign public to be involved in a permanent dialogue regarding the goals of his government, which will be more efficient and more effective only through the support of social networks as an ideal platform for participation, (Coleman, 2016, P.22).

Based on the above, it should be noted that digital diplomacy is not just adding icing on the cake regarding popular images, but rather, a basic tool for the accomplishment of traditional diplomatic tasks, within an era which depends on technology and Internet. Hence, there has been a pursuit from groups of researchers towards conducting academic studies that tried to measure the effectiveness of digital diplomacy on social networks, and providing evaluation models of those various strategies for participating in social networks. https://www.diplomaticourier.com/diplomacy-must-embrace-digiculture

For his part, the researcher believes that we can feel the general characteristics of the concept of digital diplomacy, by reviewing the most prominent advantages and disadvantages of that phenomenon, which we will show in the two following axes:

THE ADVANTAGES OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY:

• Modern technology has positively reflected on foreign policy and diplomacy as one of its means, which has resulted in encouraging the exchange of ideas between policy makers, civil society, and the peoples.

• Digital diplomacy must strengthen the capabilities of diplomats to collect and analyze information, and then the aid ability to anticipate escalating issues and successive events, leading to rapid interaction and follow-up on events, (Leitem, previously mentioned reference, p. 125)

• Providing the diplomat with the opportunity to train remotely via the Internet, and working on raising his scientific and linguistic capabilities, and raising the competence of the human element, especially the one involved in managing the foreign policy of countries.

• Digital diplomacy sought to address the Infiltration Crisis that some countries may suffer from, which was reflected in the establishment of virtual embassies in areas that have weak or no diplomatic presence, by developing websites established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the concerned country with advanced and expanded services, and then, protecting the interests of the state, (Litim, previous reference He mentioned it, p. 127).

• Perhaps, one of the most prominent productions of digital diplomacy is enhancing decentralization in diplomatic work by reducing the bureaucracy, reducing costs, and providing easy communication channels, in a way that increases efficiency and effectiveness, (Abdel-Sadiq, 2015, https://www.diplomaticourier.com/diplomacy-must-embracedigiculture http://accronline.com/article_detail.aspx?id=28976#_ftn5

• In addition to what digital diplomacy has made possible for states from having full access to all conflict areas in the world, and approving joint security projects through Internet websites, and to communicate with the concerned parties, (Bjola, Pamment, op. Cit., P. 42).

However, the advantages of the phenomenon of digital diplomacy, like any phenomenon in the human sciences, is faced with a set of disadvantages or challenges, and in connection with that came the most prominent books in the field of digital diplomacy, the title of this book is: "Countering Online Propaganda and Extremism: The Dark Side of Digital Diplomacy", to indicate the dark side of digital diplomacy. Here are the main downsides or disadvantages of digital diplomacy.

THE DISADVANTAGES OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY:

• Digital diplomacy represents an open tool that both ordinary citizens and officials can access, which may open the door to being exposed to criticism and negative comments from the public, which may reduce the status of the diplomat, especially if he was a president, which leads to a Loss of Reputational Control.
As an example, everyone has heard of the conflict on Twitter, between Trump and Republican Senator Bob Corker, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee inside the Congress, which includes public, and heavy insults from a prominent political figure in Washington to the President of the United States, to the extent that The Republican senator said on Twitter, "The White House has become a disgrace for American politics because it has become a place to care for the elderly", (http://www.almodon.com/media/2017).

- Also, the overlap between personal opinions and official positions, especially those announced by the accounts of political officials and diplomats, is sometimes considered to lead to the risk of rushing to publish political opinions and comments, (Sandre, 2015, PP: 57-63).

Perhaps, those who are familiar and well-acquainted with the most recent American situation, it became clear to them that Trump, also, insulted close American allies in many of his tweets on "Twitter" in 2017, which led to sharp criticism from Britain, Germany, Sweden, and other countries, and perhaps there is no need to emphasize that such tweets would create diplomatic crises between countries in the light of the speed virality, and the great interaction that it might cause.

- It is also considered one of the disadvantages of digital diplomacy that the diplomatic and tactful language may sometimes be absent from this type of diplomacy as a result of the speed of interaction and direct confrontation, so as not to leave the room for consultants to think carefully and precisely formulate such posts, tweets, or comments, (Sandre, op. Cit., P. 71).

- In fact, the negatives of digital diplomacy culminate in the electronic threats it represents through the vulnerability of the accounts of diplomatic officials to piracy cyberattacks, and the publication of false statements or comments, which may create a diplomatic crisis. Perhaps, the Qatari-Gulf diplomatic crisis that came as a result of hacking into the account of the Prince of Qatar represents a live example of this.

- Needless to say, despite the general and distinctive features of digital diplomacy previously presented, in addition to the leaps provided by digital diplomacy in terms of managing foreign affairs and developing diplomatic work, many observers and diplomats see the limited effectiveness of this diplomacy in solving the current global crises and challenges, where some assert that diplomacy is not based on talking publicly and communicating with the peoples only, but rather it is based on working on relations one after the other, and the traditional communication tools of diplomacy will remain the heart and soul of this profession, as well as of all international interactions, (Christopher Hill, available at http://www.alghad.com/articles/803237-)

III. THE SECOND TOPIC

DIGITAL DIPLOMACY AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

First of all, it can be said that by the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, many realists asserted that we are in the era of unipolarity, and that the United States is the only polar power and that it has achieved global hegemony, a position that no other power in the world has achieved, and by that the, United States has not allowed any country in the international system - especially in its sphere of influence and interests - to make any foreign policy or implement any decisions that might threaten America's political and economic status, etc.

Digital diplomacy came to represent one of the tools that the United States of America employed in its foreign policy to promote and consolidate its desired hegemony. Digital diplomacy came to play a complementary role to those foundations established by the United States of America for the new world order (the growth of American military power, the proliferation of American military bases, the marketing of American values, taking-over global media, taking-over global energy resources, etc.).

Likewise, the United States realized the importance of soft power alongside hard power in achieving its security, and this was evident after the American war on Iraq, as the United States of America began employing all available means and tools aimed at achieving its foreign policy, especially digital diplomacy. Which came to represent the most important components and tools of soft power during the digital age, in line with the proposition presented by Joseph Nye, the pioneer of soft power, leading to the growing importance and increasing role of digital diplomacy in the age of globalized information, and the multiple means, tools, and levels of digital diplomacy that this led to.
In connection with this, the researcher in this topic reviews the history of utilizing digital diplomacy in the US foreign policy, as well as digital diplomacy as a soft power in the US foreign policy.

**FIRST: THE HISTORY OF UTILIZING DIGITAL DIPLOMACY IN US FOREIGN POLICY:**

Technological developments have reflected upon the concepts of international relations. The concept of diplomacy has become about digital diplomacy. However, this concept achieved popularity and virality during its employment in the foreign policies of countries, which was employed by the United States of America during successive periods of ruling, which can be dated after the events of September 11 through the employment associated with smart power under the Obama administration, up to President Trump, who is considered by those involved in the study of digital diplomacy, as one of the presidents with the most understanding of digital diplomacy, (Hamzawy, 2020, p. 467).

However, it should be noted here that the Internet, with its multiple networks, has been politically employed in the American political arena, as the early beginnings of the role of these networks and the media emanating from them in the United States of America can be traced back to the appearance of E-mail in 1992, especially in light of election campaigns, through the bulk of advertisements on the Internet, which began to appear since 1998, along with blogs in 2003, in addition to the remarkable growth since the political use of YouTube in 2006, Twitter in 2008 and Facebook, (Al-Samman, 2018, p.139).

In fact, the Internet with its social media played a clear role in the American case, especially with regard to the presidential elections, where the most popular sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube played an almost decisive role - according to a number of specialists. - In the victory of "Barack Obama" in the American presidential elections back in 2008, and also these tools and methods represented a strategic weapon that contributed tangibly to the success of the "Donald Trump" campaign and his presentation as the man of change that the United States of America is waiting for to "Make It Great Again", which made the new media tools (Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter) a major player and a major actor in the American political scene, especially with regard to the US presidential elections, (Lilleker, 2016, PP: 78-84).

Based on the role of the Internet, social media, or new media in the American political scene, especially with regard to the presidential elections, it was not recognized that the matter would differ much from the role of these new media in American foreign policy, which was clearly reflected in diplomacy as one of the means of the US foreign policy, including its effectiveness on such matter.

In light of the definition of digital diplomacy that we presented in the first topic, which is based on: A Public Diplomacy with a new dimension in managing foreign policy, which aims at enhancing communication with new agents from various virtual audiences, using modern means of communication, and which is based on traditional diplomatic functions of representing, negotiating, and promoting mutual interests, with the hope of Achieving public balance and serving the desired diplomatic goals of each country. The role of the American digital diplomacy came to truly express the management of communication, effectiveness, and even, interconnection with the public side, as well as, official representation and others.

Accordingly, you may notice that there are aspects of digital diplomacy in the foreign policy of the United States of America, which we can represent in the following, (Al-Yateem, previously mentioned reference, pp: 121-122):

- The US State Department has about 200 Twitter accounts in 7 different languages, along with more than 200 Facebook pages.
- According to the same estimates by the US State Department, its employees are in direct contact with more than 15 million people around the world.
- The US State Department launched a Virtual Program for students, which is: "Political Competence in the 21st Century", in which students work in cooperation with the US State Department and embassies on projects to help embassies, which reflects the extent of the United States' keenness to integrate modern technologies and develop diplomacy to serve the goals of US foreign policy.
- The United States established the so-called "Virtual Presence Offices", and its mission is to answer questions from the citizens of the receiving country, and provide information on specific topics and regarding specific areas.
• The United States establishment of "virtual embassies", to address the citizens of countries with which it does not have diplomatic relations. Example: Establishing a virtual embassy for the United States in Iran.

• The United States Establishment of "Digital Outreach Team" since 2006, which are blogs and forums in the Arabic language, to explain American policies and correct what it considers wrong information about them. The team members present themselves as employees of the US administration.

From the above, it is evident that the United States of America has employed digital diplomacy in an explicit manner through its official pages of the State Department. This is due to the fact that after the events of September 11, 2001, the United States of America was keen to completely restructure its foreign policy, (2017, p.92).

Nevertheless, the history of the utilization of digital diplomacy in US foreign policy can be addressed by summarizing it in major stations as follows:

IV. ORIGINS AND PRECURSORS:

Some argue that digital diplomacy can find its roots and motives in US foreign policy with information and intelligence agencies, so that the Committee of Public Information (CPI) was established during World War I, followed by the US Information Agency (USIA), due to its heavy reliance on information in managing its foreign policy, which increased with the end of the World War I and the beginning of the Cold War. After the events of September 11, 2001, came the establishment of the Office of Digital Diplomacy, which name is "E-DIPLOMACY Office", which has become, since then, a center for applied strategic thinking under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The office contains three branches: the Diplomatic Innovation Department, the Knowledge Leadership Department, and the Customer Communication Department, (Al-Amoudi, previously mentioned reference, Pp. 128-129).

The office has begun to operate within a plan divided into four main phases: The first phase, which was related to government foreign affairs agencies, aimed at facilitating the process of coordinating activities in embassies by providing digital capabilities within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (previous reference, page 129).

The second phase, which is the middle stage, in which diplomats and other employees inside the embassies felt the effects of internet access everywhere, which led to changes in the dynamics and the quality of tasks assigned to them.

With regard to the third stage, which came as a proof of citizens' interactions through the dissemination and consumption of information and communication technology tools. Finally, the fourth stage, which emphasized the possibility of an innovative platform that could provide collaborative digital diplomacy.

George W. Bush Era

The American administration of George W. Bush represents one of the most important periods in the history of the United States of America in general and American foreign policy in particular.

In light of that era, the events of September 11th and the American-Iraqi war occurred, in addition to that, and during that period, the new media such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, which are tributaries and components of digital diplomacy, have not yet been materialized.

However, it should be noted that the American foreign policy after September 11 has centered around major goals, perhaps the most prominent of which is marginalization of religious content, as the events of September 11 have drawn the American goal of separating religion from the state, exporting the American model to other societies, and giving legitimacy to fighting terrorism. In addition to encouraging the growth of a sense of common interests between the American people and the peoples of other countries and cultures, and in fact, these goals represent a breakthrough and a cornerstone of digital diplomacy, and what it targets in foreign policy, which will become clear with the upcoming US administrations, (Quwidry, previously mentioned reference, page 7).

Barack Obama Era
In addition, Barack Obama's overtaking the power was in large part due to the capabilities provided by the Internet and social networks, as is the case with regard to US foreign policy during his term and the role of digital diplomacy in that.

While some attribute the roots of digital diplomacy in US foreign policy under the Obama administration to the concept of smart power, behind which the Obama administration aimed at regaining the moral authority that it had lost during the Bush Jr. administration, the pursuit of creating multiple communication networks in order to strengthen its global structure as well as the desire of the United States of America to emerge as a global media and ideological center, (Hamzawy, previously mentioned reference, p. 471).

The Secretary of State during the Obama era, Hillary Clinton, established a cell within her office called Secretary Clinton's Innovation, where she worked on a project to develop American diplomatic work in light of the digital environment and the Internet, beginning in 2010, and the goals of this project were summarized in: Passing American foreign policy as well as influencing the popular awareness of other people’s towards certain interests, as well as the redirection of information according to the American vision, as well as the security goal after September 11th, 2001 events, (Bjola, Holmes, op. cit., P. 81).

In this regard, it is noteworthy that the former US President, Barack Obama, is the first President who created a Twitter account back in March 2007 in the beginning of his presidential campaign, to become known to those concerned with digital diplomacy that President Barack Obama is the digital president, because of his interest in that digital diplomacy and his ability through it to improve the image of the United States of America, in addition to its fight against terrorism to the extent that an entire administration was created in the White House during his rule whose main task is to achieve foreign policy goals, (Hallams, 2010, p. 533)

Donald Trump Era

US President Donald Trump is one of the most American presidents who uses social media platforms, especially Twitter (more than 45 million followers) to communicate with the American public and the outside world, whether to announce specific positions and policies or to direct diplomatic messages and threats to opponents and competitors, (Hamzawy, op. cit., p. 467).

In summary, the digital diplomacy of President Donald Trump came as one of the tools on which he relied mainly to support the general direction of American foreign policy during his rule, which is based on: America first, and the principle of the winning deal, (ibid., p. 475).

However, Donald Trump’s digital diplomacy has centered around Twitter, which has become a major platform behind which Trump aims at clarifying the parameters of his foreign policy and comment on international events, believing that Twitter is the one who brought him to power, in addition to the overall threats made by Trump towards other countries through his official Twitter account; Sometimes, he spreads more lies and half-truths to shape the opinion he wants as one of his digital diplomacy tactics, and at other times, he tweets threatening NATO member states and European Union member states, as well as his list of threats against Iran and Syria, etc. Which clearly revealed the dark side of digital diplomacy, especially the one that stems from political officials in the case of Trump and his role in fueling conflicts and strife, (Zachary, available at: https://cnn.it/2m07Y0X).

The same applies to electronic interference, which has been termed: Infringement on the Sovereignty of Digital Diplomacy. It is not possible to ignore the accusation of the United States of America and Russia of electronic interference to influence the results of the American elections that carried Donald Trump to the White House. Thus, cyberattacks constituted a double fear to the new president, who began taking a defensive role rather than strategic measures, (Quediri, op. cit., p. 13).

In summary, we do not mind stressing here that President Trump has found and created new traditions in digital diplomacy, which is taking pictures with presidents and personalities, and there has become what is known as Selfie-Diplomacy, despite the connotations that each picture may carry, and it is a topic that requires analysis and study. Is it the president’s spontaneity? or is he savvy in his digital images? In addition to the fact that Trump’s stage will remain for those concerned with digital diplomacy, which is the stage of Twiplomacy, where digital diplomacy has undergone a major transformation so that the world, literally, is waiting for Trump’s tweets more than any other sovereign decision.

SECOND: DIGITAL DIPLOMACY AS ONE OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF AMERICAN SOFT POWER

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In this topic, the researcher discusses digital diplomacy as one of the most important components and tools of American soft power during the digital age, starting with the proposal made by Joseph Nye, the pioneer of soft power, to the growing importance and increasing role of digital diplomacy in the age of globalized information, through new methods that rely on the findings of modern science in the field of communication and information transmission.

On the dawn of the establishment of the new world order, and through the American war on Iraq and Afghanistan, there was a remarkable development and a clear expansion in the international community, which would have crystallized a modern concept and new forms of diplomacy, including all methods of conducting foreign relations in its various aspects. This broad concept is the closest to the reality of contemporary life, including what is included in the digital environment, where communication and interaction methods take many forms, far beyond those that were limited in the past to bilateral dealings through diplomatic envoys, (Saed, aforementioned reference, p. 86).

Contrary to what the traditional world of power politics was in, which was usually about economic and military power, and about determining the power that will prevail among the different powers. Today we are in the midst of the information era, and then, each side's version of reality has become one of the most important elements of victory, and military force alone is no longer the only deciding factor in demonstrating the strength of governments.

Therefore, in line with the changes in the reality and patterns of power and the requirements of the complex digital environment, the American Advisory Committee on Public Diplomacy came and announced in 2003 in a report entitled “Changing Minds and Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for Digital Diplomacy in the Arab and Islamic World,” which clearly stated that Public diplomacy, as one of the soft power tributaries of US foreign policy, should aim at promoting national interests by informing and notifying citizens, as well as attracting and influencing them”. Which has become agreed upon as those programs launched by the state to direct public opinion in other countries, hence the digital diplomacy for managing perceptions, in order to achieve the goals of American foreign policy, (World, 2003, p. 13).

Based on the above, it is inevitable that digital diplomacy will become an open process aimed at reaching the masses and then working in one way or another to achieve the desired goal behind American soft power, in contrast to what used to be traditional diplomacy where relations between countries were limited to managing interactions that are primarily between governments and the State Department, and therefore, require some degree of privacy and confidentiality, (Tuch, 1990, PP: 2-4).

In details regarding this context, Joseph Nye, the pioneer of soft power, sees that military power and economic power together are two examples of hard power, which can be used to persuade others to change their positions. Hard power can be based on the policy of carrots and sticks (i.e. persuasion and threat). The strength of a solid state remains focused mainly on the following elements: the quality and quantity of the population, geographical location, natural resources, technical and industrial capabilities of the population, military capabilities, in addition to its system of governance and administration. The six are in the first consideration, which collectively represent the so-called hard or hard power of the state, or the basic physical strength of the state, (charity, available at: http://www.shura.gov.sa/magazine/majalah107/majpdf/mkal2.pdf).

However, Joseph Nye has gone back to asserting that soft power is in essence the ability of a particular nation to influence other nations and direct its public choices, based on the attractiveness of its social and cultural system, its value system and institutions, as an alternative to rely on force or threat. In this regard, there are three basic elements for any soft power of any country, which are: the general culture and whether that culture is attractive or repulsive to others, in addition to the basic values and the seriousness of commitment to them, whether at home or abroad, and whether in peace or war time. As well as the foreign policy which was pursued by the state and the extent of its legitimacy and enjoyment of general acceptance by other peoples and countries, (Nye, op. cit., P. 51-54).

In connection with the above, then soft power is the ability to reach the desired end by attracting others, not by resorting to threats or punishment. That power depends on culture, political principles, and policies, and if you can convince others to want what he wants, you won't have to spend a lot by applying carrots and sticks to move others in the direction of your interests. Unlike hard power, which depends on coercion, it derives from military and economic power (Abdul-Azim, 2004, p. 33).
In this context, Joseph Nye proceeded from comparing the behavior of parents in raising their children, as he differentiates between a father who raises his children according to correct values and beliefs, and one who relies on beatings in education. As a result, the strength of the former will continue because it is built on enticement, while the behavior of the second father generates aggressive reactions due to violence in the upbringing (Nye, available at: http://www.geocities.com/adelzeggagh/trans.html).

Therefore, the United States of America has realized that there is a change that it must pursue with regard to its foreign policy, as the economic interdependence, which made it difficult to use force in its coercive form, because of the danger that this poses to economic growth and financial interests, in addition to the fact that non-national actors, So have multinational corporations, international organizations whether governmental or non-governmental, and even terrorist groups are able to exercise the types of power previously limited to nation-states. In addition, the resurgence of nationalist tendencies has made it very difficult to use force, for example, the United States found it difficult to subdue the Somali clans or calm the situation in Iraq, as well as the spread of technology, especially in the field of developing nuclear weapons, and weapons that apply asymmetric tactics, in the power parity of the parties on the battlefield, and the use of military force has become very costly compared to what it was in the past centuries, all of which was a reason for the emergence of soft power as one of the main means in the foreign policy of the United States of America (Qabj, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321598022_astratyjyt_twzyf_a1qwt_alnamt_alamrykyt_fy_adart_a1sra_m_avran_2008_-_2012).

Hence, following the events of September 11th, the United States realized that there was a clear defect in its image in the Arab and Islamic world, which had a significant impact on its foreign policy and its objectives in the Arab world in a negative way and began to ask a major question: Why do they hate us? The answer to this pivotal question that formed a space within American foreign policy after September 11, however, is that the United States has decisively realized the importance of soft power alongside hard power in achieving its security. The lesson was clear from the American war on Iraq, where, according to the American narrative, the war succeeded in eliminating Saddam Hussein, but it did not succeed in making the United States immune to terrorism, in addition to the fact that the military tool or hard power is very expensive compared to other tools and methods, foremost of which is soft power (Saad, Reference previously mentioned, p. 92).

Inspired by the events of Mark LEONARD, Karen Hughes outlined three broad and urgent strategic imperatives, and then explained to the committee in detail the goals of US digital diplomacy, (Hughes, available at: http://usinfo.state.gov/ar/Archive/2005/Nov/14-408838.html).

To present a positive perception of opportunities and hope to the people of the world.

Isolating and marginalizing those who justify killing in the name of creed.

Encouraging the growth of a sense of common interests between the American people and peoples of other countries, cultures and religions.

Philip Taylor also sees public diplomacy and then digital diplomacy as one of its new forms. Its importance lies in the fact that it acts as a laxative for American foreign policy by preparing public acceptance in foreign countries for the activities of the United States of America, either by highlighting national culture and values or through Disseminating news and information that has become important in light of what is known as Big Data (helped, previously mentioned reference, p.95).

In the same context, Mark Leonard believes that digital diplomacy does not deviate from being a general diplomacy aimed at increasing the harmony of a country and thus making individuals themselves develop a positive image in them, in addition to increasing appreciation and building positive feelings towards foreign policy issues raised by the United States of America, As well as linking peoples and pushing them towards adopting the values of American foreign policy, and finally influencing the attitudes and preferences of individuals in general (Leonard, 2002, available at: http://ics.leeds).

Based on the prominent role of digital diplomacy as one of the tools of soft power, the American case comes to clearly reveal the reality of that role. The majority of American ambassadors, diplomats and representatives have decided to indulge in social media sites with an interactive dimension, seeking to present a good and positive image of the foreign policy of the United States of America in the first place, in addition to contributing in one
way or another to spreading American culture and principles unabated, taking into account. What these means and communication tools have an effective role in preparing world public opinion, which the American ambassadors and representatives were keen to attract and win from time to time.

It is not surprising that a report was issued by the American Institute of Peace, stressing the need for coordination, communication, and activities aimed at managing and settling international disputes and tensions using modern communication technologies and expanding towards new societies with new media, hoping to achieve more soft power that would ensure that of influence and Then, American hegemony in the light of the new world order, especially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union (the American Institute of Peace, available at: http//www.usip.org/files/resources/vd18_arabie.pdf).

To reflect on the role of digital diplomacy as an American soft power, the US State Department is launching its website on the Internet and translating its content into eight languages, most notably French, Chinese and Persian, in the hope that the studies, reports and articles provided by the US State Department will be made available to the majority of the world's people, in a way that contributes to spreading the American democratic model And the issue of human rights in its American version and the fight against terrorism (helped, previously mentioned reference, p. 101).

It is worth mentioning here that American soft power has mainly centered since the American war on Iraq to the extent that some describe with it that there are issues that went beyond the framework of soft power and became a matter subject to what is known as the political marketing of American values, and democracy is the most important issue on the agenda. The declared "American foreign policy," and hence that issue was the pretext for the United States of America to intervene in the Middle East region depending on the strategic importance of this region to the United States of America; As the geographical location that controls the main transportation routes around the world, in addition to the geopolitical importance, in addition to the main resource of energy represented by oil, and therefore the United States of America projects have varied depending on the idea of political marketing; At one point it was the big reform project (supporting democratization), and at other times it was the war on terror project (Afghanistan 2001), in addition to the Greater Middle East project, the human rights project, the peace project, etc. (Al-Rifai, 2017, pp. 4: 4) 7).

All in all, it is indisputable that the first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed a remarkable growth of American digital diplomacy as one of the tools of American soft power in its foreign policy until it became possible to communicate immediately with the "Internet communities" that constitute an increasingly important political force day after day, (Al-Rawaita, available at: https://aawsat.com/home/article/11373).

V. CONCLUSION
This study aims to define the concept of digital diplomacy as a new concept that has not met with agreement between researchers and stakeholders. Therefore, the researcher proposes a definition of the concept of digital diplomacy based on and guided by these previous treatments and definitions. It is based on: that digital diplomacy is public diplomacy with a new dimension in the management of foreign policy, which aims to enhance communication with New actors from different virtual audiences using modern means of communication and based on traditional diplomatic functions of representing, negotiating and promoting mutual interests in the hope of achieving public balance and serving the desired diplomatic goals of each country.

The study also concluded that the general characteristics of digital diplomacy have varied according to the research focus addressed by those concerned with the phenomenon of digital diplomacy, as well as that the researcher ultimately concluded that the general features of digital diplomacy can be clearly touched by monitoring the positives and negatives of that phenomenon.

In addition to that, the researcher also concluded that there is an extended history of employing the tool of digital diplomacy in US foreign policy, starting from the stage of emergence of prescriptions that were associated with the era of establishing information and intelligence agencies, through the Bush era, which witnessed the signs of a shift away from power on its solid side and talking about the persuasive side. To begin with the motives and origins of that tool, in addition to the Obama era, which witnessed the intertwining uses of the concept of smart power, leading to the Trump era, which witnessed a remarkable expansion in the use of this tool and even the emergence of new traditions of digital diplomacy.
In addition to the above, the researcher concluded that digital diplomacy is one of the means of American soft power, especially the prominent role it played in US foreign policy along with the traditional means of diplomacy, as well as the clear focus of US digital diplomacy on issues of combating terrorism and exporting the model. American Democrat, and the issue of human rights according to the American vision.

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