New Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Communication and Corporate Diplomacy

Gregory Payne  
Emerson College (USA)

Enric Ordeix  
Josep Rom  
Universitat Ramon Llull (Spain)

This issue of Trípodos explores Cross-Cultural Communication and Corporate Diplomacy from a variety of perspectives that reflect theoretical and practical approaches to bridge-building and establishing meaningful relationships throughout our interconnected global village. Research presented here reflects insights and case studies from colleagues around the world, all utilizing strategic diplomacy efforts at the grass roots, consumer, media, corporate, university levels in the joint effort to further understanding through communication that, if construed and executed properly, can enhance individual, corporate, university, media ethos in terms of brand identity and value.

Cross cultural communication continues to be a topic of interest to academics and practitioneers. Since the foundation of the Cross-Cultural Communication Conference (CCCC) founded by Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok) and, the publication of the 2009 special issue of the American Behavioral Scientist on “Trends in Global Public Relations Grass Diplomacy,” there has been increased interest in exploring how public diplomacy —establishing meaningful relationships that further strategic communication— is understood and practiced within different cultural, political, religious and economic mosaics both locally and globally. Once thought to be solely a form traditional diplomacy in which a country engaged in activities to enhance its value and foreign policy, public diplomacy now is practiced by various entities throughout our globe. We now recognize sports diplomacy, gastrodiplomacy, corporate diplomacy as well as other bridges attempted to be built involving colleges, art, social media, among others.

Cross culture communication is a major focus of the CCCC partners - Chulalongkorn University (Thailand). Emerson College of Boston (USA), Zayed University (Abu Dhabi), Bournemouth University (UK), and the newly inaugurated Center for Global Communication, founded by Emerson College and Blanquerna School of Communication and International Relations. The focus of both entities is to support research, conferences, venues, workshops and curriculum that
further cross cultural communication, the very essence of strategic diplomacy. Moreover, Emerson and Blanquerna’s 4th annual Global Summit: Politics, Propaganda and Strategic Diplomacy in Washington D.C. in October, 2018 provided rich perspectives and fruitful dialogue on global research, practical experiential learning and immersive experiences on these topics.

The articles in the pages that follow provide rich viewpoints and research that engage the reader to understand more fully, not only the strategies and tactics within the articles and case studies, but also to ponder new avenues to apply this people-to-people approach in enhancing a more connected shared world we all call home.

In this volume, we invite you to explore this topics from diverse angles and perspectives. The first article presents a vision about the disruptive changes in communication in a global world. Within this context, cross-cultural communication can be an instrument of peace, cooperation and collaboration that empowers citizens, enhancing transparency and “accountability”. The second article raises ethical issues about the work process and products in global public relations. What happens if targeted audiences receive PR-materials that are not true, or even intentionally false, and the public is deceived and harmed by these false messages? Who bears the responsibility for harmful consequences? Who should be held guilty, and who adjudicates?

The third and fourth articles present studies focused on the university within the context of a global society. The first text addresses the value of training leaders within the public relations sector. How can we strengthen intercultural work teams in higher education? This three-year study of virtual team leadership provides a rewarding view into the inside workings of virtual teams, common in large PR consultancies, yet rarely addressed in academic and professional research. The second article text presents a study on corporate social responsibility in Spanish universities. It reviews the value of legitimacy in the management of the reputation of universities. The following article, the fifth, analyzes a current debate in the management of the branding of the large international corporations: what is the true point and value of view of brands as a product of co-creation with users. Do brands really value the importance of the culture of participation, or is this merely a marketing gimmick?

From this array of articles, this monograph presents a mosaic of perspectives and viewpoints on Cross-Cultural Communication and Corporate and Strategic Diplomacy. It outlines new strategic aspects in global communication, public relations, media, branding, and, public affairs. Our hope is that readers find such articles as provocative as did the authors of this special issue!