

COLLECTION DETAILS

1. Collection title

Challenges and Limits to Personal Diplomacy

2. Guest Editor

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3. Collection outline

Among the many roles played by political decision-makers, one of the most important is that of the personal relations between leaders, that is, the personal diplomacy performed by heads of state and heads of government. To date, the personal dynamics between leaders has mainly been researched in the context of the ‘special relationship’ between the UK and the USA that emerged after the Second World War and during the Cold War, and its further developments and fluctuations (eg. Dumbrell, 2001; Dumbrell and Schäfer, 2009; Dumbrell, 2013; Dobson and Marsh, 2017). Personal, leader-driven diplomacy has often been analysed in respect of summit diplomacy (summitry), and usually historically (eg. Larres, 2002; Spies, 2019), and so previous research – mainly within the discipline of International Relations – has mainly employed an approach of (neo-classical) realism (Mearsheimer, 2001), with the liberal perspective remaining under-represented.

This thematic collection explores all dimensions of personal diplomacy, from how leaders recognise the political needs of their counterparts, through the role of personal friendships and animosities and their impact on mutual interactions, to the strategies the leaders create in order to attain their goals. In particular, the collection focuses on examining the evolution of personal diplomacy, its limitations, and the challenges it involves today. All leaders, whatever type of state they represent, use a variety of methods, techniques and tools to obtain their desired outcomes. What are these methods, techniques and tools? Have they changed throughout history, and if so, in what way? What are the new areas of personal diplomacy, and who are the key actors in those areas? The collection seeks to find answers to these questions.

On the publishing market, there is a gap concerning studies on personal diplomacy, and, more specifically, on theoretical approaches to this problem. The majority of researchers either analyse particular case studies limited to a specific region (such as the Anglo-American ‘special relationship’) or take a historical view. They generally refer to (neo-)realism, focusing on the role of power in mutual relations between states and on the role of state leaders in this context. The collection, in contrast, offers a broader perspective in that it employs a liberal approach based on the assumption that states cooperate each other to mutual benefit and that their leaders enhance this process (Moravcsik, 1997). What is more, this approach implies that international organisations are also involved in this process, and that their leaders engage in personal diplomacy (Vogt, 2017). Personal diplomacy is an ongoing process in which the participants must respond to new challenges. These include the increasing importance of multinational corporations such as the technological giants of Silicon Valley and pharmaceutical concerns, which have gradually arisen as partners for state leaders and which practice *quasi*-diplomacy in their contacts with states. Another example is the increasingly important role female leaders play in the international forum (at the same time facing certain limitations); here the phenomenon of New Zealand’s Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern comes to mind. The collection seeks to address these and other challenges in the realm of modern personal diplomacy.

The collection’s papers will explore the following themes:

- evolving definitions of personal diplomacy and its limits
- methods, techniques and tools of personal diplomacy and their evolution, including the increasing role of IT and ‘new media’

- new areas of personal diplomacy (personal diplomacy in performing various types of diplomacy, e.g. cultural diplomacy, public diplomacy, sports diplomacy, etc.)
- new performers of personal diplomacy (e.g. multinational corporations)
- global problems and personal diplomacy (e.g. climate change)
- post-pandemic personal diplomacy (e.g. the role of personal relations with multinational pharmaceutical companies)
- ‘hybrid personal diplomacy’ as a result of pandemic restrictions – a new way of performing summit diplomacy?
- country- and region-specific case studies
- women in personal diplomacy – can we speak of a gender breakthrough?
- the future of personal diplomacy

The collection is interdisciplinary, and welcomes both theoretical and empirical or experimental submissions. Contributions to the collection are invited from a range of disciplines and perspectives, including but not restricted to: Political Science, Development Studies, International Relations, Public Administration, International Politics, Sociology and Anthropology.

Those scholars who may be eager to submit a paper represent a wide range of the social sciences. As the collection is intended to be eclectic, the contributing authors may include sociologists and scholars from other disciplines, as well as IR researchers or political scientists. Given the new and emerging challenges to personal diplomacy in the era of social media, they may also include communication studies researchers.

4. Proposed content

The proposed content of the collection is intended to cover **not only the specific issues set out above but also other topics proposed by the authors and agreed with the guest editor**. The papers will be either theoretical in nature or will concern empirical case studies presenting the results of using multiple methodologies (both quantitative and qualitative research). Particularly original research papers are welcome.

5. Collection information

This is a rolling collection and as such we welcome submissions until the end of December 2021. Authors who wish to discuss ideas for articles are asked to directly contact the [guest editor](#) before submission.

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Full papers must be submitted via the journal's submission system (<https://www.editorialmanager.com/snss/default.aspx>).

Submissions by email cannot be accepted.

Please note that the papers are single-blind peer review with at least two completed reports on each paper – publication is obviously not guaranteed.

SN SOCIAL SCIENCES Collection website:

<https://www.springer.com/journal/43545/updates/18798014>

Submission guidelines: <https://www.springer.com/journal/43545/submission-guidelines>

6. Promotion of the collection

I will consider setting up a website on Facebook devoted to the collection project, and possibly a Twitter account as well.

I will also consider launching an online seminar on the theme of the collection, and if Springer Nature is interested in becoming involved in any promotional activities I will be very happy.

If the authors can help promote the collection and the ongoing call for papers it will be great. Please make sure to follow the collection's FB/TT accounts when active. I'll keep you updated.

Please, CC me and/or the collection's FB/TT accounts (when active) when you promote online.