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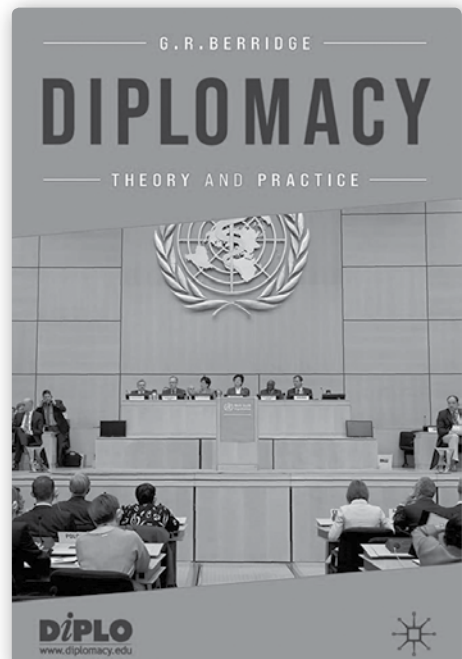
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**Geoff R. Berridge**  
**DIPLOMACY: THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Palgrave-Macmillan and Diplo, London and Geneva, 2022, sixth edition,  
302 pages, ISBN 987-3-030-85930-5

The end of the Cold War, along with the consequent eruption of globalization, provided i.a., circumstances for the emergence of diplomatic studies as a separate, independent academic discipline focusing only on diplomacy. After a bit more than two millennia, when Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War* for the first time dwelled on diplomacy, this break-even point was reached. In the meantime, diplomacy was a research field of political sciences (Machiavelli), international law (Grotius), followed by a series of works by practitioners (Satow and Nicholson as monumental classics) and academics as well. Names like Watson, Anderson, Barston, Sen, Mahalgaes to name but few were paving the way during the previous century towards a clear intersection between science of international relations and political sciences, where in that narrow point diplomatic studies started to emerge.

It was Geoff R. Berridge, Professor Emeritus of Politics and International Relations at the University of Leicester, who in 1995 with his ground-



breaking volume *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice* initiated that process. Almost three decades later, already the sixth edition (2022) of this book was published by Palgrave-Macmillan, this time in cooperation with *Diplo*. Here one should add that it is exactly *Diplo* (where the respected author is a senior fellow) that with its theoret-

ical production (like Language and Diplomacy, 2001; Intercultural Communication and Diplomacy, 2004, Multistakeholder Diplomacy, 2006; Persuasion, 2013) and practical expertise (numerous on-line innovative courses on diplomacy) marks these break-even trends towards fixing of the diplomatic studies. Within this context one should at least add two more outstanding works, cementing the new academic discipline, namely *The Essence of Diplomacy* (2005) by Christen Jönsson and Martin Hall and *The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Ambassador: Plenipotentiary to Chief Executive* (2008) by Kishan Rana (the latter, also as this reviewer, a senior Diplo fellow).

As this reviewer put it in his paper *The Evolution of Diplomacy and Social Sciences*<sup>1</sup>, the structural complexity of the international community at the turn of the millennium as well as its radical difference in comparison with any previous period provided circumstances for a new view on diplomacy, this “the most important institution of our society of states” (Berridge, 2015, p.1 and 2022: xxvii). The quoted author offered basic parameters for this new stream of thought.

His text (1995/2002/2005/2010/2015/2022)<sup>2</sup> on diplomacy pointed out, along with the so far typical views on diplomacy and its understanding

(diplomatic relations, mission, consular affairs, international organizations, legal background, protocol), rephrased topics like Diplomatic Momentum, and Mediation as well as their different understanding.<sup>3</sup> This is being cemented also later on: Diplomatic Momentum, Embassies (The normal embassy, The fortress embassy, The mini-embassy, The multilateral embassy – a highly unconventional and innovative categorization), Public Diplomacy (Rebranding propaganda, The importance of public diplomacy, The role of the foreign ministry, The role of the embassy), and Diplomacy without Diplomatic Relations.<sup>4</sup> This illustrates the main shift towards diplomatic studies: from mainly practitioners’ handbooks to (innovative) theorizing diplomacy. Here, one should quote Sharp’s in-depth and particular theorizing and dwelling, like “quite what diplomacy is remains mystery” (2009, p.1)<sup>5</sup>.

The core structure of the sixth edition of the Berridge’s *Diplomacy* remains the same: dwelling on the Foreign Ministry as the introductory warming up, followed by three parts, namely The Art of Negotiation (see Diplomatic Momentum, and Packaging Agreements), Diplomacy with Diplomatic Relations (see Telecommunications), and Diplomacy Without Diplomatic Relations (see Embassy Substitutes).

1 Journal of Law and Politics, Vol. 2, Issue 2, June 2021, pp. 1-17.

2 Six expanded and updated editions in almost three decades, including online updating, in particular for recent developments (<http://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/>).

3 Content of the third edition, 2005: viii-ix.

4 Content of the fifth edition, 2015: vii-ix.

5 Sharp, Paul. 2009. *Diplomatic Theory of International Relations*. Cambridge University Press.

Altogether, his view on diplomacy is refreshed, if not renewed already back then: “Diplomacy is an essential political activity” (2005, p.1), he claims. Henceforth, “[I]ts chief purpose is to enable states to secure the objectives of their foreign policies without resort to force, propaganda, or law” (ibid.). Next: “Diplomacy is not merely what professional diplomatic agents do” (ibid.), it is more: “It is also carried through many different channels besides the traditional resident mission” (ibid.).<sup>6</sup> While Berridge is expressing throughout his writing negotiation as the most important function of diplomacy and firm optimism in the future of diplomacy, two points have to be explicitly noted. Firstly, “the communication revolution has made the resident mission both more responsive and more able to make inputs into policy-making at home” (ibid., p.215), and secondly, diplomacy “can produce advantages obtainable from the cooperative pursuit of common interests and prevent violence from being employed to settle remaining arguments over the conflicting ones” (ibid., p.217).

In the sum-up of the updated volume, he clearly states that the embassy “support[s] if not lead[s] in the execution of the key functions of diplomacy” (2022, p.277) as well as praises the role of consular posts and honorary consuls. He “signifies further recognition of the value of continuous contact between states

– a cardinal principle” (ibid., p.278). Further on, “intelligent application of new technology and new devices to support tried and tested methods” (ibid.). And, finally: “Only professional diplomacy can continuously foster the pursuit of interests held in common and settle remaining arguments over interests that conflict.” (ibid., p.279).

All these marks a specific importance of this volume that is not merely a book on diplomacy, it is a project, through which the respected author is developing his structural and eloquent view on diplomacy from various points of view – and is doing this through a time continuing approach. But it is not only this project that is of a continuous nature, it is also this author’s sustained production of books on diplomacy, like *Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger* (et al., 2001), *A Dictionary of Diplomacy* (with Alan James, 2003) and *Diplomatic Classics* (2004) as well as *The Diplomacy of Ancient Greece* (2018) and *Diplomacy and Secret Service* (2019), both at *Diplo* in a *Short Introductions* series. It goes all the way towards his latest book in the pipeline *Outposts of Diplomacy: A History of the Embassy*.<sup>7</sup>

The early initiating character of this volume for diplomatic studies has been illustratively proven throughout three decades and complemented with a number of supporting ones. Approximately a century af-

<sup>6</sup> Neuhold qualifies it as “demonopolization of foreign ministries” (1992). Comp. also Rana (2008,p.9).

<sup>7</sup> <https://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/publications/>

ter Satow and Nicholson we arrived to another author, whose works on diplomacy have been continuously produced and reprinted. And it goes for diplomatic studies as it goes for any other scientific field: original and constant production makes its foundation. Additionally, it is also important that works of other authors, however not in such numbers, have been adding to this discipline.

The above presented, though in a rather limited space of a book review, serves more as only initial understanding of the influence that the discussed author has had on the emergence of the diplomatic studies. This process has been supported and enriched with many additional works, some of them directly inspired by the here elaborated ideas and views, some of them being their logical and substantial, direct or indirect and complementary follow up. What is important for the reviewed volume is that it forms – together with its five predecessors – an evolutionary stream of thought pointing out the diplomatic profession in its vibrant and flexible, ever adaptable nature. During this almost three decades there is more than one edition for each generation what enables each of them to have a comprehensive view on the way this vocation was developing and was going along with the stream of a changing historical situation.

And as for this reviewer, it was only when having an opportunity to thoroughly study the third edition, what

happened at the Paris CDG Airport on an April day of 2008, while waiting for half a dozen hours for the connection flight, that he fully realized the outstanding quality of the volume. That belief was additionally deepened and strengthened, when the reviewer had a rare opportunity and privilege to be in a certain point included in the drafting of the fifth edition. The point of bringing out these facts is obvious and simple: *Diplomacy – Theory and Practice* has to be studied, contemplated and thought over as well as being implemented in daily practice across diplomatic meridians. Only then its value comes on the surface with its full richness.

Part of the latter is a continuously innovative view upon what is this traditional profession, which is able to permanently adapt to new circumstances, to reach out to new topics, combining old methods with new approaches in fulfilling an ancient mission: observing and reporting, while constantly developing and deepening friendly relations with the receiving authority. Permanent diplomatic, i.e., personal presence on the spot is what makes diplomacy an indispensable tool of international conduct, be it either in times of the Italian city states or in the digitalized world of the maturing 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The reviewed monograph and its author vibrate this importance and mission. Diplomacy, although already well in its new period and phase, remains to be – for what we can foresee and imagine – everlast.