

Araştırma Makalesi | Research Article

Network Approach in Public Diplomacy: A Critical Analysis in the Context of Mass Society Practices

Kamu Diplomasisinde Ağ Yaklaşımı: Kitle Toplumu Pratikleri Bağlamında Eleştirel Bir Yaklaşım

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Abstract

The concept of mass society is generally considered as an emphasis on the loss of the individual in society. Gustave Le Bon defines mass society as mindless, motivated masses. Today, it is assumed that the individual in the society can think independently, be rational and question. The network society approach is based on the idea of an independent and organized individual. According to Jan Van Dijk and Manuel Castells, with the help of technology and globalization, the way of production and communication has taken the form of a more organized and complex network. The network approach in public diplomacy (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010) is accepted as an effective approach of public diplomacy. The approach, which is planned around volunteerism, synergy and team belonging, is based on the production of messages and the continuous circulation of the message within the system. In this study, the activities regarding the network society approach in public diplomacy is discussed through a critical perspective. The concepts of 'volunteering', 'synergy', 'team belonging', 'flexibility' and 'horizontal participation', which constitute the basic principles of the network approach, were analyzed on the basis of the mass society approach. Purpose of the study: To critically consider the network-based public diplomacy approach and to analyze the concept of network society according to the principles of the mass society approach.

Keywords: Network Approach, Public Diplomacy, Mass Society, Synergy, Group Belonging.

Öz

Kitle toplumu kavramı genel olarak bireyin toplum içindeki yitimine bir vurgudur. Gustave Le Bon'un olumsuz yaklaşımı kitle toplumunu sürü psikolojisi ile hareket eden, güdülenmiş topluluklar olarak tanımlamaktadır. Günümüzde ise bireyin çeşitli açılardan evirilerek, aydınlanma ve demokrasiyle birlikte sorgulamayan ve düşünmeyen kitle insanından, eleştiren ve karşı çıkan bireye evirildiği varsayılmaktadır. Jan Van Dijk ve Manuel Castells'e göre; teknoloji ve küreselleşme ile birlikte üretim ve iletişim biçimi organize ve karmaşık bir ağ biçimine bürünmüştür. Ağ toplumu yaklaşımının kamu diplomasi faaliyetlerine uyarlanmış hali olan kamu diplomasisinde ağ yaklaşımı (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010) etkili bir kamu diplomasi yaklaşımı olarak ön plana çıkmaktadır. Gönüllük, sinerji, tamik aidiyeti, esneklik ve yatay katılım temeline dayanan bu yaklaşım mesaj üretimini ve mesajın sistem içinde sürekli dolaşımını esas almaktadır.

Bu çalışmada kamu diplomasisi faaliyetlerinde ağ yaklaşımı eleştirel bir bağlamda ele alınarak, ağ yaklaşımının temel esasları olan 'gönüllük', 'sinerji', 'takım aidiyeti', 'esneklik' ve 'yatay katılım' gibi kavramlar kitle toplumu yaklaşımının temelleri üzerinden karşılaştırılmalı olarak eleştirel bir analize tabi tutulmaktadır. Araştırmada ağ temelli kamu diplomasinin öncülleri kabul edilen (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010) çalışmaları temel alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ağ Yaklaşımı, Kamu Diplomasisi, Kitle Toplumu, Sinerji, Grup Aidiyeti.



Introduction

The concept of mass society is used to understand the movements and spheres of influence of the new social classes that emerged after the industrial revolution. Gustave Le Bon (2001) and Ortega Y Gasset (1957) important representatives of the mass society approach, emphasize the unconscious behavior of the masses as a new social actor. The new class, driven more by emotion than reason, owns no elitist approach, they have no concerns to seek reason and law. In this context, the movement pattern of the mass society can be interpreted as a reflection of an irrational and reactive attitude. According to sociologists, network society theorists such as Van Dijk (2018) and Manuel Castells (2013) technological developments and globalization have transformed the forms of production and communication into organized and multi-dimensional networks.

Today, the network approach is extensively discussed in different contexts by different branches of social sciences, one of which is public diplomacy. The concept of public diplomacy found itself a place in the literature of social sciences for the first time in the 1960s. In its most general definition, public diplomacy is the attempts of a country to influence the public opinion of another country in line with its own interests by using various tools (Günek, 2021, p. 770).

The essence of the public diplomacy approach is based on persuasion and informing. Being a dynamic field, public diplomacy is constantly updated depending on technological and global advances. The institutions, tools as well as the methods of public diplomacy are diverse. The network society approach includes a different reflection of the new public diplomacy approach. The basic principle of the approach is based on conducting an active and less costly public diplomacy activity that allows two-way communication through new communication technologies.

The main purpose of this study is to analyze the network-based public diplomacy approach through the perspective of mass society approach, as well as the contexts in which concepts such as motivation, suggestion, irrationality, emotionality, belonging, and propaganda are observed in network-based public diplomacy actions. The study rests on the approaches of Metzler (2001) Hocking (2005) and Zaharna (2007) considered to be the predecessors of network-based public diplomacy. The mass society approach is framed based on the approaches of Gustave Le Bon (2001) Ortega Y Gasset (1957) and Sigmund Freud (2019).

The study has been subjected to a critical content analysis of network-based public diplomacy in a comparative way. In the context of the study, the following hypotheses were formed.

H.1. In network public diplomacy, the technical features of the network allow network wide participation and mutual communication. However, despite this democratic structure, the source that constructs the system and determines the grand narrative is yet uncertain.

H.2. The network synergy aims to generate more energy than the sum of the energies of each of the participants through synergy by building relationships and cooperation between different participants of the communication process. This leads to the formation of a homogeneous structure. In this structure, it can cause loss of the individual within the group. This feature is compatible with the mass society approach.

H.3. Network-based public diplomacy claims to allow for horizontal and democratic participation. However, network-based public diplomacy has the characteristics of mass society rather than individualistic characteristics of network society.

Mass Society: Group Dynamics, Suggestion And Contagion

The concept of mass society can mainly be defined as the result of intellectual efforts to understand the impact of the great mass movements that took place in the late 18th and early 19th centuries on social and political conditions. The concept of mass society is an emphasis on the unconscious movement of the masses. In this context, it usually contains negativity according to Tasenkov A. (2019), scientific research on masses is dominated by two contingent theoretical schools regarding the nature and effects of masses.

“The first school regards the individual member of a crowd as an anthropological construct derived from the very human nature. It is based on the belief that the crowd, as a social phenomenon, is rooted in psychological factors arising from instincts, impulses, and unconscious mental processes. Therefore, this school is known as psychological or anthropological. Its most prominent proponents are Gustave Le Bon, Gabriel Tarde, Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, and Elias Canetti. The second school regards the crowd as a social phenomenon which owns the characteristics of a certain epoch and occurs under specific circumstances as a historical result and cultural phenomenon. Among the scholars who support this interpretation are Jose Ortega-y-Gasset, Hannah Arendt, Herbert Marcuse, and Theodor Adorno. This interpretation of the crowd can be defined as value-based or axiological” (Tesenkov, 2019, p. 237).

This study will include the opinions of scientists from both views. According to Le Bon, “The substitution of the unconscious action of crowds for the conscious activity of individuals is one of the principal characteristics of the present age” (Bon, 2001, p. 4). Gustave Le Bon describes the crowd, in its simplest term, as a gathering. For Le Bon, the crowd is a ‘random community of individuals’ “in its ordinary sense the word “crowd” means a gathering of individuals of whatever nationality, profession, or sex, and whatever be the chances that have brought them together” (Bon, 2001, p. 13). Le Bon’s approach to mass society is quite pessimistic. According to Le Bon, the crowd is essentially a pack that unconsciously, instinctively acts upon emotions that dominate their minds.

This group, (the crowd) formed almost randomly, has a destructive power and constitutes the core of the new social dynamic. The collective consciousness formed by the crowd sometimes leads the crowd to take on positive attitudes and goals. However, the actions of mass society often have devastating consequences (Bon, 2001). According to Le Bon, the collective mind of the mass is less than a normal person in total and does not act on logical motives. “The substitution of the unconscious action of crowds for the conscious activity of individuals is one of the principal characteristics of the present age” (Bon, 2001, p. 4). The main factor that mobilizes and motivates the mass is not reason, or reasoning, but “suggestion and contagion.” (Bon, 2001). In one context, the mass is an unconscious category that is open to propaganda and incapable of independent thought and action. Sigmund Freud (2019) analyzes Le Bon’s work on mass psychology, opposing the author’s wholesale approach from several perspectives. Freud substitutes the libidinal element for suggestion, playing the main factor that activates the masses. According to Freud, the essence of mass spirit lies beneath emotional attachments (Freud, 2019). In this context, there are two factors that keep the mass alive. The first of these is Eros, which endows all objects with vitality. The second is the need for compromise and the drive to love others. One’s giving up his/her freedom in the crowd and succumbing to suggestions of others can be explained as ‘the need to compromise with others’ and ‘loving them’ (Freud, 2019, p. 39). Unlike Le Bon, Freud emphasizes that masses do not act completely

irrationally. On the contrary the act voluntarily and consciously. As in Le Bon's analysis, Freud also states that masses have a heterogeneous structure. The heterogeneity is due to the differences of the individuals who make up the mass. However, when masses come together and start to rebel, they become groups that turn into a homogeneous structure (Özmen, 2015, p. 190).

Ortega Y Gasset (1957) has studied the social and political behavior of the rapidly developing masses of people in Spain and other European countries that make up the contemporary society. According to Gasset, the people of the mass society (the crowd) are mediocre (Gasset, 1957, p. 42). It does not have distinctive features like an individual. However, Gasset emphasizes the mass not only as a quantitative majority, but also as a qualitative and psychological state. "In the presence of one individual we can decide whether he is 'mass' or not. The mass is all that which sets no value on itself—good or ill—based on specific grounds, but which feels itself 'just like everybody', and nevertheless is not concerned about it; is, in fact, quite happy to feel itself as one with everybody else (Gasset, 1957, p. 42). Gasset, like his contemporary Le Bon, thinks that mass people are far from rational consciousness. According to Gasset, although the mass has many devices used through history by civilization, he is fundamentally unaware of the principles of civilization due to his nature (Gasset, 1957, p. 91). In the context of emotion and consciousness, as opposed to the underdeveloped mass-man, he positions the noble man, who, referring to Goethe, 'aspired to the search for order and law' (Gasset, 1957).

It is possible to say that the critique of mass society has turned into a critique of mass culture and culture industry within the framework of Frankfurt School thinkers. Horkheimer and Adorno, representatives of the Frankfurt School, who approach the concept of mass society in terms of production relations and ideological consciousness, emphasize that modernity transforms culture and art into an industry by synchronizing it.

Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) explain the concept of mass society within the conceptualization of 'mass culture' in their dialectic of enlightenment. In his later works, Adorno (2007) discusses the debate on the axis of mass society and modernity around the concept of 'culture industry'. According to Adorno, "the culture industry is the deliberate and top-down integration of customers" (Adorno, 2007, p. 111).

The essence of the mass society approach is based on the assumption that people act irrationally in their actions and place the element of emotion at the core of their actions, which may be considered as a reflection of the intensification of mass movements after the industrial revolution, the change in politics and political conditions and the struggle between classes.

Thinkers and psychologists such as Gustave Le Bon, Ortega Y Gasset and Sigmund Freud, who analyze mass movements from a negative perspective, emphasize the mental and cultural backwardness of the homogenized mass. They also complain about the loss of the distinguished person, the individual. In this context, it is possible to list the basic characteristics of the mass society: irrational action, suggestion, contagion, motivation due to group dynamics, libidinal drive (Freud, 2019), a form of movement brought about by extraordinary conditions, and not realizing their cultural development (Le Bon, 2001; Gasset, 1957).

Network Society: A New Way of Interaction

Different social conditions create new forms of relationships and communication practices. Depending on the developments in art and technique, the types of organization and relations in the social structure have been transformed. Today, definitions such as globalization, information society, and society 2.0 are carried out through the concept of network society.

The network society approach is basically a search for an explanation for the multi-dimensional effect of developing technologies on human life. According to the network society theorists Jan Van Dijk (2018) and Manuel Castells (2013), the way of production and communication has taken the form of a more organized and complex network together with technology and globalization.

This new communication and relationship system that transforms social dynamism takes place in a non-hierarchical, multi-dimensional and flexible structure. The new form of social structure has led to the emergence of different research methods that deal with human relations at the level of social action. In this context, analyses of human social networks have a long history in both the sociological and anthropological literature (Hill & Dunbar, 2005, p. 54). Another pioneer of the network society debate is Mark Granovetter. According to Granovetter (1973), weak ties based on secondary social relations produce more effective results due to the width and structure of the network. Granovetter mentioned that social network analysis reveals important data in terms of making sense of micro and macro level relations. "The analysis of processes in interpersonal networks provides the most fruitful micro-macro bridge in one way or another, it is through these networks that small-scale interaction becomes translated into large-scale patterns, and that these, in turn, feed back into small groups" (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1360).

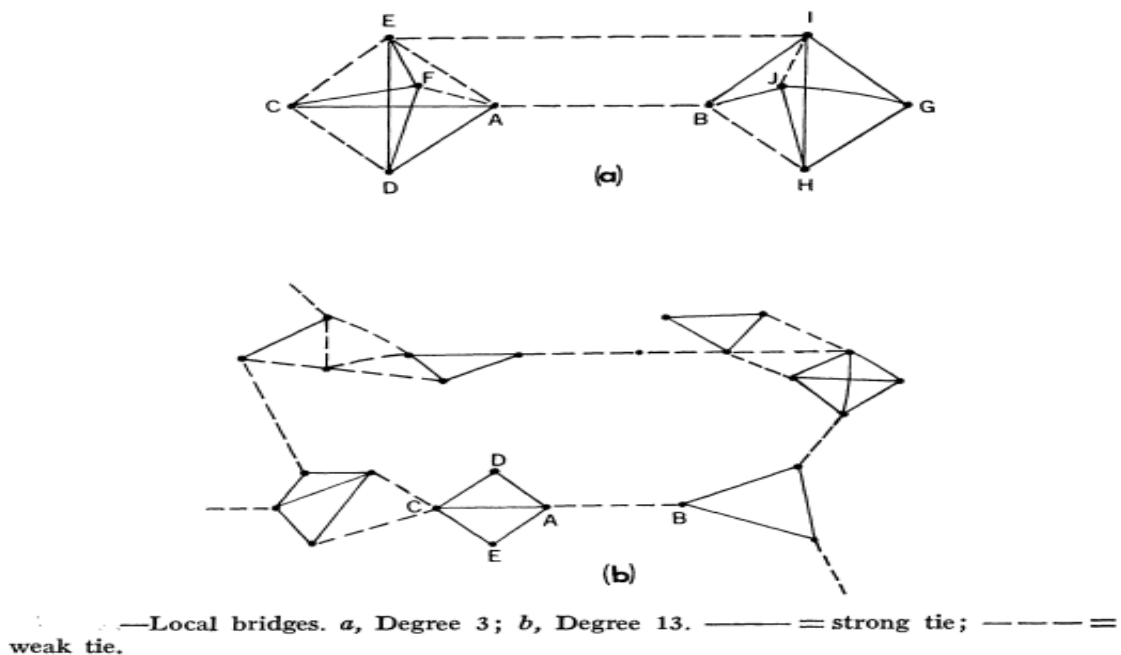


Figure 1. Strength of Weak Networks

Source: (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1365)

According to the figure 1, only weak ties are local bridges that allow too much interaction and communication. Granovetter explains it as follows: *the tie A-B is not strictly a bridge, since one can construct the path A-E-I-B (and others). Yet, A-B is the shortest route to B for F, D, and C. This function is clearer in figure 2b. Here, A-B is, for C, D, and others, not only a local bridge to B, but, in most real instances of diffusion, a much more likely and efficient path* (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1364).

The social network analysis approach is shaped around globalization debates and is also discussed in different contexts and fields. Discussions on globalization, which are based on the movement and access of goods and services on a global scale, have turned into an emphasis on deeper and different areas of togetherness. Handling the globalization debate in a broad context, Held and McGrew (2008) state that globalization, which creates a kind of dependency, also emphasizes the transformation of the established political order. According to Held and McGrew, “Today’s processes of globalization and regionalization create networks of power that cross and sometimes cross territorial boundaries. This gives way to a world order designed according to the Westphalian notion, based on absolute sovereignty over a piece of land, to be oppressed and disturbed” (Held & McGrew, 2008, p. 54). In this context, network society describes an alternative and brand-new structure apart from traditional organizational forms. All these definitions show that the transformation in technology and economy has necessarily brought about a new form of communication and action.

Network Perspective in Public Diplomacy: Multi-Dimensional Interaction And Communication

Network diplomacy is commonly theorized as a set of non-hierarchical and interdependent relationships implying a wide range of stakeholders who share common interests and exchange information and resources. The network model presupposes the presence of various international bodies and non-state actors in the international arena (Morozov & Shebalina, 2020).

Diplomatic networks have features such as flexibility, effectiveness, acting outside of traditional boundaries, and lower cost of common activities (Morozov & Shebalina, 2020). Three types of basic approaches based on the network model in diplomacy in general and public diplomacy in particular have been developed by (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R., 2007). Relevant approaches are based on the compatibility of public diplomacy actions with the network approach. The analysis of public diplomacy by Brian Hocking and R. S. Zaharna draw influence from the concepts of “boundary spanners” and “network weavers” developed by network analysts including Valdis Krebs, Everett Rogers, and Thomas Valente (Fisher, 2013, p. 1). Key within these concepts is in the meaning of the term “periphery.” Contrary to colloquial use, when applied to a network infers the potential of great influence and importance (Fisher, 2013, p. 1).

The network public diplomacy is the reflection of the network society approach in public diplomacy. Network perspective, unlike linear and one-way communication, includes non-hierarchical multi-directional communication and interaction practices. The network approach in public diplomacy aims to increase the effectiveness of the action by making use of the flexible, horizontal, and strategic structure of the network. Thanks to the structural and strategic features of the network, team spirit is formed among the group members. Likewise, the structure of the network reduces costs and enables strategic communication (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R., 2007; Zaharna R., *Battles to Bridges: U.S. Strategic Communication and Public After 9/11*, 2010). The network

approach has been present in research on foreign policy (Corbetta & Grant, 2012; Fleses & Ebert, 2017; Maoz, 2012) and diplomacy (Hocking et al., 2012; Zaharna, 2014) for some time (Ociepka & Arendarska, 2021, p. 2).

Current studies on network public diplomacy generally analyze the effectiveness of the activities of public diplomacy institutions or non-governmental organizations. These studies examine the grand narratives/ grand strategy of political organizations, leaders, countries, or non-governmental organizations. They discuss how the grand narrative was circulated, its implications, and its context. Some of these researches make network analysis in public diplomacy actions (Sarvestani, Ameli, & Izadi, 2019; Sejung, Dahoon, & Park, 2019; Huang & Wang, 2019; Park & Lim, 2014; Weidong, 2020), and some make structural analyzes (Flew & Hartig, 2014; Shi, 2015; Fisher, 2013).

Jemie F. Metzl (2001) states that a new global ecology has emerged, different from traditional structures and forms of action, generally in state institutions and political construction processes. This also applies to public diplomacy institutions and foreign policy-making processes. Countries that act with traditional methods are forced to adapt to the new order. Network-based communication and interaction system creates competition due to the flexible structure of the network and facilitates adaptation to new processes. This structure, which transcends traditional and physical borders, is a necessity for governments. According to Metzl (2001), who defines network participation as a two-way process, the classical intelligence structure has turned into a network-centered system. Similarly, the new political ecology has changed the functions and duties of public diplomats. Open dialogue, impartial and multi-faceted sharing of ideas should be supported for the solution of global problems. Metzl focuses on four key points for adaptation and transition to network-based diplomacy. First, because network diplomacy is by definition broader based than traditional diplomacy, efforts must be made to identify and reach out to a broader constituency than ever before. Second, conscious efforts must be made to shift government institutional culture from a focus on secrecy, information hoarding, and hierarchy to a system of openness, innovation, and information sharing. Third, knowledge management should become a central focus of government operation. Fourth, leaders of government institutions must be recognized and rewarded not only for responding to short-term crises but also for their contributions to the long term health and effectiveness of their organizations (Metzl, 2001, pp. 85-87).

Referring to the impact and necessity of the network-based approach in public diplomacy, Brain Hocking (2005) believes that network public diplomacy is now a necessity, which is the result of a series of innovations brought about by the global, economic, and technological transformation. According to Hocking (2005) classical diplomatic tools are insufficient to answer complex problems. Public diplomacy and foreign policy have taken on a competitive structure. In this context, the problems of the global age can be answered with a multilateral and multi-partner interaction and structuring. According to Hocking (2005) the internal and external public opinion of the countries have become integrated, and the difference has vanished. As an actor in foreign policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is insufficient to respond to problems of different dimensions and structures. This situation requires a new approach. This new approach is a network structuring system that increases communication, dialogue and trust, and requires non-hierarchical communication and cooperation with stakeholders. The foundations of network diplomacy in diplomacy and public diplomacy actions consist of increasing political capacity, cooperation with stakeholders, competition, network assignment, roles,

and norms. R. S Zaharna (2007; 2014; 2010) put the network approach in a different context, which (Hocking, 2005) and (Metzl, 2001) discussed in a general framework. It constructs it as an effective model for story/narrative creation, message sharing and circulation in public diplomacy actions.

Zaharna (2005; 2007; 2014) grounds the Network-based public diplomacy approach as a form of communication and a process of relationship building. It takes place in a non-hierarchical structure through communication practices. Participation in communication processes between members is democratic. In the network public diplomacy approach, the system consists of three dimensions: the structure of the network, the strategy of the network, and the synergy of the network, and they all influence one another (Zaharna R. , 2007, p. 220). The current study adds the next dimension, called "issue network" to Zaharna's taxonomy (Ociepka & Arendarska, 2021, p. 2). We see that Zaharna's network model has been studied in different contexts and applications. It demonstrates an approach that integrates public diplomacy with strategic communication and tries to theorize the network approach (Zaharna R. , *The Network Paradigm of Strategic Public Diplomacy*, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2014). The structure of the network is based on the multi-dimensional, real-time, and equal communication approach, making the basic approach of the network public diplomacy.

Communication between members takes place mutually and information flow is carried out in a non-hierarchical system. There are three types of networks: chain, star, and all channel, which symbolize communication and information flow (Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010). The second dimension of the approach is based on the synergy of the network. Network synergy aims to generate more energy than the sum of the energies of each of the participants, thanks to the synergy, by building relationships and cooperation between different participants of the communication process (Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010).

For synergy to occur, it is necessary for the participants in network communication to work towards a common goal and to establish a bridge between networks and ensure that communication and synergy are transferred to other groups (Zaharna R. , 2007). According to Ociepka and Arendaska network synergy is created by building internal and external relations while including internal, external and various collaborative relations (Ociepka & Arendarska, 2021, p. 2).

The synergy components in the network model include essential factors for any network of cultural diplomacy activities. However, these network components may have national and geopolitical boundaries (Ociepka & Arendarska, 2021). Network strategy focuses on how to use and circulate information in a way that aligns with and feeds into the story or identity. In classical communication, stories and discourses are determined by the source, independent of the target audience, in order to attract and protect the attention of network members. However, in network-based communication, stories and discourses are formed with the cooperation and participation of group members (Zaharna R. , 2014). The important thing in network strategy is to keep the message in circulation. According to this approach, the most circulated message is the one with the highest reliability (Zaharna R. , 2014).

In communication activities carried out through mass media, information production and circulation are carried out by the source. In network communication models, the production, circulation and reproduction of the message is done by the members of the network (Zaharna R. , 2014). For the circulated narrative to be sustainable and effective

for the group members, the narrative must be based on task-based, social-based, or identity-based narratives (Günek, 2017, p. 37).

Practical models that deal with the distribution and control of information and information based on the network approach are implemented by the foreign ministries of various countries. There are several practical models that distribute information and information based on the network approach. One of these is the Network Gatekeepers Model used by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The model is used by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs to block content related to hate speech and anti-Semitism. This model is designed to prevent and control the transmission of content and discourse to other networks through key structures and actors that provide network connections. The basic logic of the model is designed to control and distribute information through centralized networks. Network Gatekeepers are individuals that sit at the intersection between several networks. It is through these individuals that content passes from one network to another. For instance, in the illustration below, node number 5 is a Network Gatekeeper (Ilan Manor, 2018).

The mentality of countries' digital network organizations may vary. Some countries prefer participatory, transparent, and horizontal network models, while others adopt more hierarchical models. For example, South Korean public diplomacy organizations' network was more hierarchically structured, while the Japanese network was more symmetrical, and this leads to the result that Japan was more successful in forming an information network infrastructure in a diplomatic community (Jia & Li, 2020, p. 3). While analyzing the network public diplomacy approach Jia and Li (2020), focus on the structural features of Chinese public diplomacy using a combination of holistic, relational, and network-based approach, social network analysis and content analysis. The study reveals key participants' networking models, communication strategies, issue network, and the attitude homophily effect of participants with positive or negative attitudes towards China.

Jia and Li (2020) discuss the structure of the network in the context of network patterns, communication strategies, issue participation and attitude homophily.

In network public diplomacy approaches, Metzler (2001) and Hocking (2005) model is suitable for use in the field of international relations and diplomacy, and Zaharna's (2007; 2010) model is suitable for use in the field of non-governmental organizations and cultural diplomacy. The theory and practice on which the network approach is based are open to discussion and development. A basic evaluation will be made below without going into too much detail.

Evaluation of Network Public Diplomacy in The Context of Mass Society Practices: A Critical Analysis

The basic assumption of the network approach in public diplomacy is based on the reality that the traditional world order has undergone radical changes. Traditional public diplomacy institutions have difficulty in adapting to the new world order, which is affected by information and communication technologies and is surrounded by political uncertainties. In this context, flexible, technology-based, broad-based network public diplomacy that allows two-way communication is recommended as an effective model. This approach, which is glorified in terms of putting the individual at the core, being low in cost and enabling democratic participation (Metzler, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R. , The

Network Paradigm of Strategic Public Diplomacy, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2007; Zaharna R. , 2014) has various problems, which can be listed as singularization of the target audience, the control of information and the uncertainty of the source, and the anonymization of the individual within the group.

Structure of Network

In network public diplomacy, the technical features of the network allow network wide participation and mutual communication. However, despite this democratic structure, the source that constructs the system and determines the grand narrative is yet uncertain. In the model developed by Zaharna (2007; 2010) the message is produced and circulated by the members of the network. However, it is unclear who formed the grand narrative (Grand Strategy, who brought the members together and the structure of the network). In the Zaharna (2007; 2010) model, the principle of ‘volunteering’, centered on participation in the network, is based on the consent of the group member. The source of the main motivation in the production and distribution of messages is the sense of belonging. It is assumed that the individual who owns a sense of belonging to the group will be more motivated in the production and distribution of messages. The relevant approach can be applied in the activities of non-governmental bodies that have come together around a common goal. However, in state-sponsored activities, it may fail for actions aimed at foreign public opinions, for it is not possible for the citizens of foreign countries to come together around another country’s story and feel a sense of belonging to a foreign country. It is seen that concepts such as volunteerism, belonging, motivation, empathy, and group dynamics are also used to explain and understand the reasons for individual actions in mass society. In Le Bon’s approach, the equivalent of the above concepts is contagion. Freud, on the other hand, explains these concepts in the context of libidinal effect. In terms of production relations, ‘consent’ includes a kind of domination and ‘motivation’ indirectly encourages non-labor production. Freud (2019) states that the way a person acts in mass society is not entirely involuntary. “A person may renounce his freedom in the crowd and fall prey to the suggestions of others, because he needs to live in a compromise rather than reconciling with others, perhaps because he really “cares for them” (Freud, 2019, p. 39).

This approach shows that socialization, belonging, seeking reconciliation, advocacy and love are important factors in one’s actions. In this context, we can say that participation in the network in public diplomacy actions carried out by social organizations is based on consent. Therefore, we can say that the network approach is knitted in line with the consent of the individual, especially in civil society-centered public diplomacy actions. However, as in many public diplomacy activities carried out by China and the United States, the desired success cannot be achieved in state-supported activities.

Strategy and Synergy of Network

In Zaharna’s approach (2007; 2014; 2010) network synergy aims to generate more energy than the sum of the energies of each of the participants through synergy by building relationships and cooperation between different participants of the communication process. In Zaharna’s approach it is claimed that the communication process builds cooperation and interaction between different participants. Thanks to this interactive process, the energy created by each member turns into a total synergy. Structurally, the creation of synergy arises from unity. This may indirectly lead to the loss of group members within the group and their alienation from individuality.

The homogenization of the individual within the group is also seen in the mass society. As in Le Bon's analysis, Freud also states that masses have a heterogeneous structure, and this heterogeneity arises from the differences of individuals who make up the masses. However, when the masses come together and start to revolt, they become groups turning into a homogeneous structure (Özmen, 2015, p. 190).

Similarly, the foundation of the network strategy is based on the joint production of information and story. The target audience of the produced information and story is not clear. The target audience is actually composed of each of the group members included in the system on a non-hierarchical level (in an all-channel network system). In a way, there is a group that markets the product it produces to itself. It coincides with the new dimension of production relations. Although it is an innovative approach in terms of production and participation relations, it refers to the anonymity in the mass society in terms of the uncertainty of the target audience and source. In the network-based approach, synergy is based on teamwork and the understanding that strength comes from multiplicity. However, the reproduction and continuous transformation of the message anonymize users and transform them into immaterial labor, which is the new dimension of the labor and production relationship. The main goal is to continuously circulate the message in the network without being interrogated. There is an understanding that the message that is kept more in circulation is more reliable. The most reliable and acceptable message is the one that circulates the most (Zaharna R. , 2014, p. 22). Keeping the message in circulation without questioning, anonymization of the source, repetition and circulation coincide with propaganda, being the main motive of mass society. We can interpret the related approach as the convergence of the unconscious behavior in the mass society (involuntary, based on suggestion and contagion) in the network society.

Democratic Participation and Flexibility in the Network

The most important advantage of the network model is the flexible structure of the network. Unlike traditional structures, it has the capacity to provide instant response to crises. It also allows for broad participation. Formal bureaucracy and diplomacy are not flexible by nature. Network communication based on the infrastructure of new communication technologies is flexible and fast. It has a suitable structure for a fast and strategic action. However, this flexibility may not always lead to positive results. In particular, foreign policy messages and actions are actor centered. The design of messages and actions is determined by the actors. Participants and the target audience are always subjects. For example, Chinese public diplomacy guided by the central government has adopted the network model. However, China has not been able to obtain sufficient and effective returns in its public diplomacy actions. We can see this in the Confucius Institute actions (Zaharna R. , 2014).

Network public diplomacy does not always allow democratic and horizontal communication. It is seen that message production and circulation is controlled through central networks. unfavourable messages can be prevented in this way (Ilan Manor, 2018), it is possible to say that the foreign policy network approach is actor-centered (Ociepka & Arendarska, 2021, p. 3). For instance, the 'Network gatekeepers Model' used by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs is "designed to prevent and control the transmission of content and discourse to other networks through key structures and actors that provide network connections" (Ilan Manor, 2018). This structure is incompatible with the libertarian, equal participant structure of the network model and includes the control of information. In addition, it is not possible to ignore the existence of national and

geopolitical borders in the processes of building internal and external relations (Ociepka & Arendarska, 2021, p. 2).

The flexibility of the network positions the mass as a quantitative majority and unites the masses. Target-oriented public diplomacy actions are carried out through various technological algorithms. This approach, which forms the basis of computational public diplomacy, positions the person as a target. The approach is also in line with the mass approach in general. Because Gasset emphasizes the mass not only as a quantitative majority, but also as a qualitative and psychological state" (Gasset, 1957, p. 43).

Conclusion

Network approach in public diplomacy, which is the adaptation of the network society approach to public diplomacy activities (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010) stands out as an effective public diplomacy approach. The main advantages of the network can be listed as flexible structure, wide participation, low cost, competition, and adaptation to the new world order. Potential weaknesses are the ambiguity of the target audience, the homogeneity of group members, the lack of clarity of the founder and designer of the network, and problems in adopting the grand narrative.

In particular, R.S Zaharna's (2007; 2010; 2014) network model approach bases its strategy on the structural and technical characteristics of the network and makes use of the network's flexible, participatory, and non-hierarchical communication plane. Issues such as volunteerism, synergy and team belonging, centered on story and message production, are based on a democratic and participatory structure. However, it resembles the features such as suggestion, contagion, group dynamics, and irrational (without questioning) action, constituting principles of mass society.

Although the impact and competence of network-based public diplomacy are questioned, it is predicted that the approach in public diplomacy actions will have the opportunity to be applied more intensively in the future processes, considering the course of technological processes and global policies. The impact of the network model is open to question. However, technological developments and global policies lead public diplomacy to a network-based field.

In network-based public diplomacy approaches, we can say that Metzl (2001) and Hocking (2005) model is suitable for use in the field of international relations and diplomacy, and Zaharna's (2007; 2010) model is suitable for use in the field of non-governmental organizations and cultural diplomacy. In this context, for the network approach in public diplomacy to be effective and efficient, it should be evaluated in different contexts of practice.

In the context of research, the following are suggested for the effectiveness of network-based public diplomacy:

- Network approach represents an inevitable process in public diplomacy actions. It should have a multi-dimensional network structure rather than a central and one-dimensional network system.
- Human interaction should be allowed together with the technology-based network approach in public diplomacy actions. In this context, a hybrid system that predicts human and machine interaction is suggested.

- Network-based approach should be applied especially in civil society-based public diplomacy in order to produce effective results.

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Kamu Diplomasisinde Ağ Yaklaşımı: Kitle Toplumu Pratikleri Bağlamında Eleştirel Bir Analiz

Abdulsamet GÜNEK (Asst. Prof. Dr.)

Genişletilmiş Özet

Kitle toplumu kavramı genel olarak bireyin toplum içindeki yitimine bir vurgudur. Gustave Le Bon'un olumsuz yaklaşımı kitle toplumunu sürü psikolojisi ile hareket eden, güdülenmiş topluluklar olarak tanımlamaktadır. Günümüzde ise bireyin çeşitli açılardan evirilerek, aydınlanma ve demokrasiyle birlikte sorgulamayan ve düşünmeyen kitle insanından, eleştiren ve karşı çıkan bireye evirildiği varsayılmaktadır. Jan Van Dijk ve Manuel Castells'e göre; teknoloji ve küreselleşme ile birlikte üretim ve iletişim biçimi organize ve karmaşık bir ağ biçimine bürünmüştür. Ağ toplumu yaklaşımının kamu diplomasi faaliyetlerine uyarlanmış hali olan kamu diplomasisinde ağ yaklaşımı (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R., 2007; 2010) etkili bir kamu diplomasi yaklaşımı olarak ön plana çıkmaktadır. Gönüllük, sinerji, tamık aidiyeti, esneklik ve yatay katılım temeline dayanan bu yaklaşım mesaj üretimini ve mesajın sistem içinde sürekli dolaşımını esas almaktadır. Bu çalışmada kamu diplomasisi faaliyetlerinde ağ yaklaşımı eleştirel bir bağlamda ele alınarak, ağ yaklaşımının temel esasları olan 'gönüllük', 'sinerji', 'takım aidiyeti', 'esneklik' ve 'yatay katılım' gibi kavramlar kitle toplumu yaklaşımının temelleri üzerinden karşılaştırılmalı bir şekilde eleştirel bir analize tabi tutulmaktadır. Araştırmada ağ temelli kamu diplomasinin öncülleri olarak kabul edilen Metzl (2001), Hocking (2005) ve Zaharna'nın (2007; 2010) çalışmaları temel alınmıştır. Araştırma aşağıdaki hipotezler üzerine bina edilmiştir.

H.1: Ağ temelli kamu diplomasisi yaklaşımında ağın yapısı yeni iletişim teknolojilerinin sunduğu katılım ve karşılıklı iletişim ve etkileşime imkân tanımaya rağmen sistemi kurgulayan ve büyük anlatıyı belirleyen kaynak belirsizdir.

H.2: Ağ temelli yaklaşımda ağ sinerjisi, iletişim sürecinin farklı katılımcılar arasında ilişki ve işbirliği inşa ederek, sinerji sayesinde katılımcıların her birinin enerjilerinin toplamından daha fazla enerji elde etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu durum homojen bir yapının oluşmasına neden olarak bireyin grup içinde yitimine neden olabilir. Bu özellik bireyci ağ toplumu yaklaşımından daha çok kitle toplumu yaklaşımının özellikleriyle daha uyumludur.

H.3: Ağ temelli kamu diplomasisi yatay ve demokratik katılıma imkan verdiği iddiasındadır. Ancak ağ temelli kamu diplomasi ağ toplumunun bireyci özelliklerinden çok kitle toplumu özelliklerini taşımaktadır.

Çalışmada kamu diplomasinin temel yaklaşımlarından biri olan ağ yaklaşımı karşılaştırmalı bir yaklaşımla ele alınarak dayandığı temel esaslar kitle toplumu yaklaşımına göre analiz edilmiştir. Bu yaklaşımın temel amacı sosyal bilimlerde literatüründe görece geç bir dönemde girmiş kamu diplomasi kavramının literatürde bütün yönleriyle değerlendirilmesine katkı sunmaktır. Zira ilgili alana yönelik çalışmalar genellikle olumlu bir yaklaşımı esas almakta ve özellikle de teknoloji ve yeni iletişim araçlarıyla yürütülen kamu diplomasi faaliyetlerinin başarılı olacağını var saymaktadır. Bu çalışma ise toplumsal dinamizmin sonuçlarını ve ona etki eden nedenleri farklı bağlamlarda ele alan ve yorumlayan kitle toplumu ve ağ toplumu yaklaşımlarını kamu diplomasi nezdinde karşılaştırmakta ve ağ temelli kamu diplomasi açısından eleştirel bir

analize tabi tutmaktadır. Çalışma ağ temelli kamu diplomasisi yaklaşımı ağın yapısı, ağın stratejisi ve anlatısı, ağın demokratik yapısı ve demokratik katılım, bilgi ve hikayelerin kontrol ve denetimi bağlamında karşılaştırmalı bir eleştirel analize tabi tutmuştur.

Ağ toplumu yaklaşımının kamu diplomasi faaliyetlerine uyarlanmış hali olan kamu diplomasisinde ağ yaklaşımı (Metzl, 2001; Hocking, 2005; Zaharna R. , 2007; 2010) etkili bir kamu diplomasi yaklaşımı olarak ön plana çıkmaktadır. Sistem ağın esnek yapısı, geniş erişim ve katılıma imkân tanınması, eylemlerin yürütülmesi açısından maliyetin düşük olması, rekabete açık olması açısından yenedünya düzenine ve teknolojik ekosisteme uyumludur. Kamu diplomasisinde ağ yaklaşımının dezavantajları ve tartışmaya açık yönleri ise hedef kitlenin belirsizliği, grup üyelerinin homojenleşmesi, ağın kurucusu ve tasarımcısının net olmaması, hikaye ve büyük anlatıyı belirleyen ve sistemi inşa eden kişi yada kurucuların yeterince net olmamasıdır.

Özellikle de R.S Zaharna'nın (2007; 2014; 2010) ağ modeli yaklaşımı stratejisini ağın yapısal ve teknik özelliklerine dayandırmakta ağın esnek, katılımcı ve hiyerarşik olmayan iletişim düzleminden faydalanılmasını esas almaktadır. Hikaye ve mesaj üretiminde esas alınan gönüllük, sinerji ve takım aidiyeti gibi hususlar demokratik ve katılımcı bir yapıyı esas almakla birlikte kitle toplumunun esasları olan telkin, sirayet, grup dinamiği ve akla uygun olmayan (sorgulamadan) eylem gibi özellikleriyle uyumludur.

Zaharna'nın yaklaşımında (2007; 2010; 2014) ağ sinerjisi, iletişim sürecinin farklı katılımcılar arasında ilişki ve işbirliği inşa ederek, sinerji sayesinde katılımcıların her birinin enerjilerinin toplamından daha fazla enerji elde etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu durum homojen bir yapının oluşmasına neden olarak bireyin grup içinde yitimine neden olabilir. Le Bon'un analizinde olduğu gibi Freud da, kitlelerin heterojen bir yapıya sahip olduklarını, bu heterojenliğin kitleleri oluşturan bireylerin farklılıklarından kaynaklandığını ifade etmektedir. Ancak, kitleler bir araya gelip ayaklanmaya başladıklarında, homojen bir yapıya dönüşen gruplar haline gelmektedirler. (Özmen, 2015, p. 190) Benzer şekilde ağ stratejisinin temeli de enformasyon ve hikâyenin ortak üretimine dayanmaktadır. Üretilen bilgi ve hikâyenin hedef kitlesi ise belli değildir. Hedef kitle gerçekte hiyerarşik olmayan düzlemde (çok kanallı ağ sisteminde) sisteme dâhil olan grup üyelerinin her biridir. Bir nevi kendi ürettiği ürünü yine kendine pazarlayan bir grup vardır. Bu durum üretim ilişkilerinin yeni boyutuyla örtüşmektedir. Üretim ve katılım ilişkileri açısından yenilikçi bir yaklaşım olmasına rağmen hedef kitlenin ve kaynağın belirsizleşmesi açısından kitle toplumundaki anonimleşmeye gönderme yapmaktadır.

Ağ temelli kamu diplomasinin etki ve yetkinliği sorgulanmakla birlikte teknolojik süreçlerin seyri ve küresel politikalar göz önüne alındığında kamu diplomasisi eylemlerinde yaklaşımın gelecek süreçlerde daha yoğun bir şekilde uygulama imkânı bulacağı öngörülmektedir.

Ağ temelli kamu diplomasi yaklaşımlarında işlevsellik ve kullanım alanı olarak Metzl (2001) ve Hocking (2005) modelinin uluslararası ilişkiler ve diplomasi alanında Zaharna'nın (2007) modelinin ise sivil toplum örgütleri ve kültür diplomasisi alanında kullanıma uygun olduğunu söyleyebiliriz. Bu bağlamda kamu diplomasisinde ağ yaklaşımının etkili ve verimli olabilmesi için farklı uygulama bağlamları içinde değerlendirilmesi gerekmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ağ Yaklaşımı, Kamu Diplomasisi, Kitle Toplumu, Sinerji, Grup Aidiyeti.

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In this study, the rules stated in the “**Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive**” were followed.

Araştırma tek bir yazar tarafından yürütülmüştür.

The research was conducted by a single author.

Çalışma kapsamında herhangi bir kurum veya kişi ile **çıkar çatışması** bulunmamaktadır.

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