

Book Review

G. R. Berridge, The Counter-Revolution in Diplomacy and Other Essays, (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 220 pages (with index), ISBN 978-0-230-29185-0

G. R. Berridge is Emeritus Professor of International Relations at University of Leicester, UK. He has written many pieces on both the theory and practice of diplomacy, as author of *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, and as co-author of *A Dictionary of Diplomacy* (with Alan James), *Diplomatic Theory from Machiavelli to Kissinger* (with Maurice Keens-Soper and T. G. Otte). Berridge edited *Diplomatic Classic: Selected Texts from Comynes to Vattel*, and co-edited *Diplomacy at the UN* (with A. Jennings). He has also written books about specific historical cases, especially about British diplomacy in Turkey and South Africa.

The Counter-Revolution in Diplomacy consists of ten separate essays. When looking at the issues in the essays, the titles are as follows: “The Counter-Revolution in Diplomacy”, “The Origins of the Diplomatic Corps: Rome to Constantinople”, “Diplomatic Education and Training: The British Tradition”, “A Political Consul in Nineteenth-Century Armenia”, “Specific Reciprocity and the 105 Soviet Spies”, “Home or Away?”, “Diplomacy after Death”, “British Ambassadors and their Families in Constantinople”, “Communicating with the Orient before the Twentieth Century” and “Wartime Embassies”. One of the essays was published in 1996 before this collection. All the others were written in the second half of 2000s. Berridge, who is an experienced expert on diplomacy, uses cases and topics as a vehicle to reach wider theorizations and generalizations. Therefore, this collection can be seen not only a book on the history of diplomacy, but also as a strong contribution to the theory of diplomacy.

The first essay, *The Counter-Revolution in Diplomacy* which is the title essay, identifies three different types and periods of diplomacy. The first understanding of diplomacy, in other words the old diplomacy, is characterized by “a secretive world of negotiations between embassies and foreign ministries”. The second period, the revolution in diplomacy can be identified with the name of the US president Woodrow Wilson. Diplomacy according to this new understanding was underlined by the principles of multilateralism, openness, popular control of foreign policy, and direct communication between domestic ministries through bypassing foreign ministries. These principles were enhanced by advances in transportation and telecommunications, especially during and after the WWI. The third type, the so-called “counter-revolution” in diplomatic practice becomes gradually more apparent since the 1960s. In this period, the value of principles, procedures and institutions which had been used during the period of “old diplomacy” was rediscovered. The

author advocates that this change has gone almost completely unnoticed because it has been obscured by the attachment of new labels to old procedures. In this new type of diplomacy, certain practices have been revived, such as secret negotiations at the expense of voting in multilateral diplomacy, the reinvigoration of the resident mission, the rallying of the ministry of foreign affairs, and the realignment of summitry as an ally rather than as an enemy. According to Berridge, this resulted in a more comprehensive diplomatic system, more responsive to different circumstances than ever before. This became necessary for times of great uncertainty in an era where even the most powerful states felt vulnerable.

The second essay addresses the questions where, when and why the diplomatic corps have taken on a corporate form. The essay demonstrates the need for a full and detailed study of Rome and Constantinople's diplomatic history. The essay, which uses a comparative method, reminds the future historians of diplomacy that this kind of research requires the study of French, Venetian, Dutch, Austrian and Ottoman archives. The third essay focuses on the British tradition of diplomatic education and training. The author looks at the period from the middle of the 19th century onwards, and illustrates the changing weight of *formal* and *informal* education and training mechanisms in British diplomacy. From the 16th until early 20th century, young diplomats have been trained for diplomacy by learning on the job. Diplomacy finally became a true profession in Britain in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The fourth essay is about a British consul, a "field diplomat" called Gerald Fitzmaurice who was sent to eastern Anatolia at the end of 1891. He first arrived in December 1891 in Van, the principle town of the *vilayet* of the same name which extended along the Persian border. Fitzmaurice remained in the town for more than six months. Vilayet had an Armenian majority led by an educated elite, described later by another Levant consul, Robert Graves, as "probably the most important centre of Armenian nationalist feeling in the Turkish Empire" (p. 53). Fitzmaurice's letters, in addition to memoirs and reports, demonstrate his observations whilst in Anatolia during the 1890s. He records the Armenian political prisoners in the Erzeroum *vilayet*, where a considerable number of Armenians were killed by Kurds, and Armenians immigrating to Russia etc.

The fifth essay in the book discusses "specific reciprocity" meaning "a condition in which two parties give to each other at least roughly equivalent treatment in respect to some specific aspect of their relations" (p. 71). This is illustrated by tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats in Anglo-Soviet relations, especially based on the case whereby 105 Soviet diplomats were expelled from London on spying charges in September 1971, from which counter-expulsions ensued. The essay focuses on the difficulties faced by specific reciprocity as a basis for the exchange of diplomatic representatives between Britain and the Soviet Union.

The sixth essay seeks to answer the question whether negotiating at home or away is more advantageous for a foreign ministry or other government departments. The author makes the point that major powers generally place more reliance on their

own better-provided, more trusted embassies and sometimes make exceptions in the case of the embassy of a *demandeur*, or one headed by an outstanding personality. Weaker states usually have little alternative but to accept this situation. The essay deals with an interesting topic, i.e. funeral diplomacy. By listing many examples of funeral summits and pointing out the drawbacks of funeral diplomacy, the author says that the working funeral became an institution of the world diplomatic system in the 1960s, at a time when conventional channels of diplomacy were at a discount in many places. Another point is that the funeral summits are often as important for allies looking for reassurance as they are for enemies seeking to find a way out of an impasse.

The eighth essay is a historical and descriptive one about British ambassadors and their families in Constantinople, again pointing out certain exemplifying cases throughout history. This essay also gives detailed data about staff and their positions within the British embassy and Consulate-General in Constantinople. The next essay deals with the West's diplomatic communication with the Orient before the 20th century, in other words, in an age of "poor communications". Poor communication was usually regarded as an irritant in peace time and a serious handicap in a crisis or when a major diplomatic development was in prospect or already under way. The author describes historical instances in detail illustrating how diplomatic communications between the British embassy in Constantinople and London occurred before and after the use of telegraph and telephone. The importance of these technological improvements can be understood better when it is known that even in 1909, under the improved conditions of ordinary posts, the approximate time taken for a letter to be carried from London to Constantinople was 3 days and 18 hours.

The closing essay of the book entitled "Wartime Embassies" discusses different situations and functions (i.e. military intelligence, political work including propaganda, and consular work) which resident embassies can turn to in wartime. Accordingly, embassies in wartime can be classified as follows: belligerent embassies in allied front-line states (e.g. US embassies in Seoul during the Korean War), belligerent embassies in neutral states (e.g. Sweden, Ireland, Turkey and Portugal during the WWII), neutral embassies in belligerent states (US embassy in Berlin in the opening phase of the WWII), belligerent embassies in enemy states (The German ambassador in Moscow at the time of Hitler's 'surprise' attack on the Soviet Union), and embassies in allied front-line states (British embassy in Paris during the WWI). As seen, an embassy can find itself in a number of varying situations. In all cases embassies are required to give a high priority to military and political intelligence and consular work. The conclusion of the author is that embassies are never as important as in times of war which is "a rich irony of the history of diplomacy" (p. 192).

Looking at the sum of essays published in this collection, it can be stated that the author uses historical and comparative methods while dealing with the concepts and theories of diplomacy. The wide knowledge base and background of the author

about both the history and theory of diplomacy provide a panoramic demonstration throughout world history, of the concepts underpinning diplomacy. Therefore, the collection is useful for both advanced experts of diplomatic theory and average readers interested in diplomatic history.

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