

# Study of the Role of Public Diplomacy in the Dialogue among Civilizations

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## Abstract

Public diplomacy has shown that it plays an important role in strengthening and achieving the national interests of countries as one of the tools for using soft power. Today, public diplomacy, as an alternative to traditional diplomacy, has found a central place in the foreign policy of countries, especially Iran due to the lasting impact and lower costs in achieving foreign policy goals, the main place in the foreign policy of countries. One of the most important tasks of public diplomacy is to establish dialogue and international relations. In this regard, Mohammad Khatami, one of the former presidents of the Islamic Republic, tried to advance the goals of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic and to show a peaceful approach to this political system with the model of ‘‘the dialogue among civilizations.’’ Findings show that public diplomacy as a valuable tool could play a relatively constructive but minor role in the dialogue of civilizations. Also lead to overcoming imposed isolation, have a relative increase in the interactions of the Islamic Republic at the level of nations and governments, draw a new mentality of the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran and a peaceful identity. Actually in general, due to the lack of knowledge of public diplomacy, its sources of power, mediocre performance and dependence on traditional diplomacy, it could not remain an effective and efficient tool for dialogue among civilizations. The present study is a descriptive-analytical research and the method of collecting information in the form of various data is through the use of library and virtual resources.

**Keywords:** Public Diplomacy, Dialogue among Civilizations, Peace, Khatami.

## **Introduction**

With the election of Seyed Mohammad Khatami as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran on June 2, 1997, a new era began in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic. During this period, which known as the reform era due to the president's reform plans, Iran's foreign policy had a behavioral change. Prioritizing domestic political development, pacifism, detente, confidence-building, dialogue, and discourse multilateralism were on the foreign policy agenda; In a way, a kind of foreign policy of cultural-political development was formed. Along with this foreign policy, the process of normalization of foreign relations based on peaceful coexistence and de-escalation, which was challenged at the end of the construction period (Hashemi Rafsanjani), was again pursued with more intensity and acceleration. In fact, the goal of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy was to oppose a unipolar system based on American unilateralism. For this purpose, the only means was dialogue to change the discourse of the ruling power in international relations. Which could have been effective peacefully and was accepted and endorsed by the reformist discourse. Because the reformist discourse believed that peace could be achieved only through dialogue and a change in the discourse governing international relations. Therefore, the theory of dialogue of civilizations was presented by the then president (Khatami) to change the conditions governing the international system based on it and with the participation of all countries, nations, cultures (Dehghani Firoozabadi: 1392: 449\_447). The idea and theory of the dialogue of civilizations, although it has been presented under different titles in the past, but clearly, in September 1998, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Seyed Mohammad Khatami, at the 53rd General Assembly officially proposed 2001 as the year of the dialogue of civilizations. It should be announced that it was met with public acclaim and was approved in the form of Resolution 22/53 (Ghasemi, 2004: 127). The theory of the dialogue among civilizations had a kind of security and peace in its essence. Because in the international arena, we can talk if, firstly, there is peace and security and, secondly, there is a platform to listen to it. As a result, the diplomacy used by the reformist discourse and the then president, indicated a shift from traditional diplomacy to public (modern) diplomacy. Because in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic before that, traditional diplomacy ruled the foreign policy, but by presenting the dialogue of civilizations as the policy governing Iran's foreign relations, the era of public diplomacy as an important tool in the process and advancing the foreign policy goals of the Islamic republic began. The question that comes to mind in this regard is about the role of public diplomacy in the dialogue among civilizations. In fact, what role did public diplomacy play in the dialogue of civilizations? In the following, first the theoretical framework of the research, then public diplomacy and finally the role of public diplomacy in the dialogue among civilizations will be examined.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Constructivism theory**

Over the last decade, one of the most important theories of international relations has been constructivism, which seems to be a good ground for theorizing about the dialogue of civilizations. Constructivist theory is rooted in social theory and trans-theoretical issues throughout the social

sciences. On the one hand, by emphasizing the constructed nature of international relations, the importance of rules, procedures and institutions in shaping the identities of actors, and the importance of identity in shaping interests and policies, the way to explain uniformities and continuities in It opens the international and foreign policy of countries. On the other hand, with its emphasis on the historical and constructive nature of the international system and the identity of actors, it potentially paves the way for theorizing about change and trying to find alternative interactions and relationships, and consequently alternative systems at the inter-level level. International opens based on changes in characteristics such as violence, self-centeredness, security, etc. as a result of normative and prescriptive theorizing in international relations (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 172).

Constructivists consider international relations as a society composed of social actors who interact with each other and their interaction is based on rules and norms that have been formed intersubjectively (Hadian, 2003: 920). According to John Raggi, just as there are intersubjective understandings in the relations between individuals, there are also understandings in the relations between governments (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 120). Constructivism states that actors are shaped by and influenced by the international environment, and is in fact part of the arena of actors' interactions (Orijinta, 2011: 27). In fact, constructivism is an attempt to harmonize internal and external conditions to create a kind of logical harmony in international performance, which is why Wood says that this approach is based on the interaction between international politics and domestic politics. Has created a country (Wood, 1997: 27).

The important issue here is identity. Identity is a set of beliefs about oneself, others, and the relationships between them (Fearon and Wendt, 2005: 64). Went sees identity as a trait in an intentional actor that evokes motivational and behavioral tendencies. That is, identity is rooted in the actor's understanding of himself, but the meaning of this understanding often depends on whether other actors retrieve the actor in the same way and have the same understanding, and this indicates the intersubjective dimension of identity (Vent , 1384: 326\_325). In fact, social interests and identities are always through interaction in the process.

Identity in international relations today can even have effects and changes in the concept of diplomacy and its function;

For example, in this context, it can be argued that the elements of identity and focus on them can create two types of methodological and content interpretation in the institution of diplomacy.

In a change of approach today, we can speak of a change of position-based approach in which all actors react similarly to specific situations to the actor-centered approach that actors with different cultural contexts also adopt a different negotiating strategy. In other words, today, identity and value factors have become very important in the perceptions, strategies and strategies of the negotiating parties. it should be considered in explaining international negotiations (Josson, 2005: 219-220).

In the field of content change, it can be said that changes in the identity of transnational, national and transnational actors can easily lead to changes in political and diplomatic discourses between

countries and the possibility of forming friendly or hostile diplomatic procedures between countries. Provide an international system (Neumann, 2002: 219\_220); Thus, not only identities have led to changes and complexities in diplomatic methods, but they have also been able to bring about content and discourse changes in relations between countries.

## **Constructivism and dialogue among civilizations**

The idea of a dialogue of civilizations, as put forward by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammad Khatami, is similar in some respects to the concept of conventional diplomatic negotiation, but it is much more than that and different from it. The dialogue of civilizations, like diplomatic negotiations, involves the use of dialogue tools instead of the use of force in the international arena. It also does not consider violence at the international level inevitable (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 171). This idea can inherently have a non-state-based approach; In the sense that in the international arena, actors other than governments have legitimacy (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 171). Another feature of this idea is the character of justice. In fact, it is assumed that dialogue can lead to a fairer world (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 171). Therefore, the dialogue of civilizations can be considered as a dialogue approach, multicultural and justice-oriented in international relations.

Civilizations can be a source of identity like governments, but they are different from governments in that they are not based on clear boundaries (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 184). According to Tajiks, civilizations imply certain identities, but the identities of civilizations are always gray and opaque. They usually include intertwined sets of identities that have no geography or fixed spaces (Tajik, 1379: 229\_227). Civilizations can also be thought of as areas in which identities are constantly being constructed and reconstructed, "us" and "the other" being defined and redefined. Since the most important identities in contemporary world politics, ie state identities, are formed in this field, it can be said that any kind of identity changes in the wider or more limited spaces in the context of civilization, also affect state identities. In the context that the field of identity politics replaces the field of ideological politics, the importance of this matter becomes even greater (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 185).

The dialogue among civilizations can affect the identity of actors from different levels. If we consider international institutions to be the embodiment of common causal and prescriptive meanings and areas of dialogue, relying on the systemic constructivist perspective (macro level), In which norms are applied, interpreted and changed, the institutionalization of the dialogue among civilization can take place either in the participation of governments belonging to different civilizations and cultures or with the participation of non-governmental actors with civilized identities. The source of change in the relationship between civilizations and their governments. In other words, if "civilizations" learn that they can talk to each other, if new procedures are formed during the conversation and, more importantly, the conversation itself develops as a procedure in the interactions between civilizations and Become part of normative and mental structures (Reus-smit, 2001: 217). It can also lead to the formation of new identities (ie new understandings of self and others) and consequently redefine interests, goals, etc. (Moshirzadeh, 1383: 186-185).

Khatami (2001 and 2000) in expressing the idea of dialogue of civilizations has always emphasized the critical dimension, justice, peace, and the emphasis on human freedom, which is considered by the normative theory of international relations. He has criticized what he sees as the unjust manifestations of the existing international system, namely domination, the growing gap between rich and poor, the legacy of the colonial era, and the lack of security for individuals and societies. According to Khatami, the root of conflicts and conflicts in the world, in addition to psychological and internal factors, are political and economic factors. According to Khatami, the root of conflicts and conflicts in the terrible gap between poverty and wealth between societies that if it is not adjusted, one can not naively and optimistically ask for peace, dialogue and communication (Khatami, 2001: 27). He seeks a world in which peace is the basis for dialogue and dialogue paves the way for the continuation of peace, justice and peace become the foundations of international behavior, democracy is realized in the international arena, human beings and their rights (liberation, Freedom, immunity and pride ... all human beings) to be respected. To form a civil society based on human rights in all countries and in the whole world, to recognize the sovereignty of man over his own destiny, and finally to establish a moral and sensitive society in which the use of violence and the use of force in national conflicts And be internationally condemned. A kind of international tax to be formed to achieve distributive justice, and different cultures and civilizations can form a single human world while maintaining their identities (Khatami 1379: 84-85). In other words, the dialogue among civilizations, although in a sense it can be an end in itself, is also a means to another end, universal justice. (Mushirzadeh, 1383: 187).

As can be seen, Khatami emphasizes both a critical critique of existing relations between states (a community-centered view that is close to the pluralists' perception of the international community as a whole) and value, respect, rights, and dignity. And ... human beings as human beings, which indicates his attention to the existence of a kind of transnational community and universal human values (which is in line with the views of cosmopolitanists and is also close to the solidarityist perceptions of the international community). His view of global civil society means accepting that. In addition, it seems that his reference to the creation and continuation of the United Nations can be considered as evidence of the evolutionary movement of the world and human society (Khatami, 2001: 5). His hope that a spiritual and human life can be created with freedom and progress for all humanity (Khatami, 2001, 74) and his emphasis on the need for a "global community" is the existence of a sensitive moral community (Khatami, 2001, p. 75). It shows that he also has a view of the world human community; A society in which, while forming a human world, differences are recognized and respected (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 188).

Khatami says that the dialogue of civilizations requires a study of the fields of war and conflict (Khatami, 2001, p. 46). In his view, "one should look critically at the past of international relations" (Khatami, 2001, p. 14) without learning from the world's political past and without exploring the causes of the great global catastrophes in the twentieth century and in short without exemplary criticism ( "Or the paradigm that governs international relations, which is based on the discourse of power and the sanctification and consolidation of power, we can not invite the governments and



peoples of the world to follow the example of the dialogue of cultures and civilizations"(Khatami, 2001, p. 67). If it can be shown that what exists in international relations is not natural, eternal and eternal, we can reach the potential possibility of a dialogue of civilizations in changing the international order (Moshirzadeh, 1383: 188).

The civilizational aspect of the dialogue is particularly important in that it seems that, especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, the civilizational foundations of identities become more important. If the "self" and the "other" civilization can replace Contradictory identities (as Huntington puts it) operate on identities based on difference and acceptance and recognition of another. One of the most important areas of conflict in the existing international system can be undermined. According to the constructivist expression, the dialogue of civilization as a verbal act or action can lead to the formation of rules and create restrictions for actions (Onuf, 1989: Zelfusr, 2002). In other words, the dialogue of civilizations may be considered a deliberate attempt to redefine oneself and another (Moshirzadeh, 2004: 193).

It can be said that the dialogue of civilizations is not limited to the governmental level and includes dialogue between individuals, groups, non-governmental organizations, etc. It can affect the definition of self and other states in a different way by influencing the forces influencing the formation of collective semantic structures within societies and changing patterns of conflict or antagonism between societies. but how? Here, the use of sociological-psychological sociological perceptions of the effect of dialogue in preventing and also eliminating - stereotypes that are the basis of definitions of "other" and thus his definition contradicts "self", can be helpful (Moshirzadeh, 2004 : 193). Therefore, this theory is a suitable platform for the dialogue of civilizations because it emphasizes the construction of international reality and the variability of international relations. It also opens the way to the ethical, normative, and value issues that these assumptions emphasize, based on this variability.

**Public Diplomacy; A new function in the field of international relation Edmund Glion, the inventor of the term public diplomacy, defines public diplomacy as follows: "The role of the press and other media in international affairs and the direction of public opinion by governments; And the impact of such international processes on the formation of foreign policy and the conduct of foreign affairs are a set of activities called public diplomacy "(Tiedeman, 2005: 9).**

**Of course, it is clear that he puts the role of the media at the center of public diplomacy.**

Diplomacy is defined as the technique of managing foreign policy or regulating international relations and resolving international disputes through peaceful means, which has found a public trend throughout history as a result of globalization and the expansion of communications. Qawam, 1382: 207). Developments in diplomacy, like changes in any other concept in the world of politics, have not been created all at once, and undoubtedly a long history can be found for each new concept, the prototypes of which grow and evolve in the context of history. Public diplomacy, which in the

simplest sense is the advancement of a country's foreign policy goals by communicating with foreign people, also has a long history (Sazmand and Barati, 2014: 33).

Some scholars trace the history of public diplomacy to 1622; That is, when the pope, George XV, established an institution with the aim of promoting the Catholic religion (Mannheim, 1994: 158). Others argue that the history of public diplomacy can be traced back to the distant past. The behavior and type of invitation of the prophets to the people of other lands shows the same way of dealing in public diplomacy. Delaney considers the origin of public diplomacy in Moses' action towards Pharaoh and its subsequent manifestations in the illustration and design of the image by Cardinal Richello in France and the perfection of Atatürk for Turkey (Delaney, 1968: 3). But the term public diplomacy was coined professionally and for the first time by retired diplomat Edmund Glion (Walter.R, 2007: 12-11). This term quickly gained popularity in the United States (Sazmand and Barati, 2014: 34).

Edmund Glion, the inventor of the term public diplomacy, defines public diplomacy as follows: "The role of the press and other media in international affairs is to direct public opinion. This is done by governments, mutual cooperation between private and stakeholder groups in one country with other countries. The impact of such international processes on the formation of foreign policy and the conduct of foreign affairs is a set of activities called public diplomacy "(Tiedeman, 2005: 9). Of course, it is clear that he puts the role of the media at the center of public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is the process by which nation-states and other international actors pursue their own interests by attracting the world. The term developed during the Cold War as a result of the emergence of mass media and public opinion stimuli in foreign policy management. The United States, in its bipolar ideological conflict with the Soviet Union, realized that among nations outside the United States, in order to gain public support for its political goals, direct interaction was sometimes better than traditional contact with the government. Public diplomacy is very close to the concept of soft power of Joseph Nye and brings it closer to the neoliberal school (snow, 2020). Nye argues that soft power stems from a state's culture, political values, and foreign policy in the international system, and that public diplomacy is a tool in the hands of governments to mobilize the source of soft power to communicate with and attract people from other countries. , 2008: 95).

Public diplomacy is the influence of public attitudes to shape and implement foreign policy and involves aspects of international relations that go beyond traditional diplomacy. The creation of public opinion by governments in other countries, the interaction of one country's private and interest groups with their counterparts in another, the reporting of foreign affairs and its impact on politics, the relationship between professional communicators such as foreign diplomats and journalists, and the cultural communication process. This sentence has dimensions (Salehi Amiri, 1392: 135\_134).

In principle, the invitation to dialogue requires accepting the existence of the other party, because a kind of peace-seeking and peaceful relations entails "inducing" positions on the right of others. A person who gives himself mere legitimacy and is always striving and does not accept any relativity in his knowledge, can not really breathe a sigh of relief (Haghighi, 2007: 38). The theory of the dialogue of civilizations gives originality to culture and civilization. Unlike confrontation, dialogue

is based on the following: equality (dialogue from an equal position), diversity of cultures, the basis of cooperation, attention to common areas to start a dialogue, in search of friendship and solidarity, seeking to create common understanding and genuine awareness, Bridges of communication between the parties. Also tolerance and consultation of transparency for cooperation and constructiveness useful for all parties to the dialogue, the imposition of reason and criticism and the ethics of exchange of words of experts and thinkers, the richness of civilizations through dialogue and the grand strategy of just and lasting peace (Hosseinzadeh Moghaddam, 1394: 55).

Therefore, for more familiarity and easier understanding of public diplomacy, the following figure can be expressed, which clearly clarifies the structure and distinction between traditional and public diplomacy;

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In these two forms, the concept of diplomacy is explained in simple language. In Figure A, the black arrow shows the concept of traditional diplomacy that State A seeks to directly influence Government B through behavior, dialogue, and other formal means. In Figure B, the arrow shown is public diplomacy and represents Government A's efforts to inform and influence the people of Country B. A government's relationship with the people of another country can be desirable in itself. This means that Government A can expand its trade with people B, attract tourists and foreign investors, students and immigrants. Of course, the results of public diplomacy can go beyond the mentioned results. The main goal in public diplomacy is the influence of government A and the relationship with people B, through which it can indirectly influence the decisions of government B (McDowell, 2008: 5-8).

As a result, in view of the developments in international relations and the more up-to-date concepts, in the general definition of public diplomacy, the following definition can be considered. Public diplomacy, strategic planning and implementation of information, cultural, and educational programs by the sponsoring country to create a conducive environment for public opinion in the target country or countries that can assume the political leadership of the target country to make decisions that Support the goals of the foreign policy of the supporting country (Botes, 2007: 21). In fact, public diplomacy is a set of strategies and tactics that serve the foreign policy of a country and try to improve the image of a country in the world and in the eyes of public opinion.

In general, if we define public diplomacy as communication aimed at the national interests of a country through communication with people outside the geographical area, by this definition, issues such as sending students abroad, accepting scholarships are debatable. also sending reporters, the process of intercultural communication, Holding various art festivals, conferences and cultural seminars, meetings with foreign businessmen and prominent academic figures, broadcasting audio and video programs and even creating websites, etc. are all debatable in the field of public diplomacy (Wolf and Rosen, 2004).

### **Investigating the role of public diplomacy in the dialogue of civilizations**

During the period of public diplomacy reforms, more emphasis was placed on the democratic, liberal nature and basis of the Republic of the Islamic Revolution (Dehshiri, 2009: 266\_257). Therefore,



according to the then president, public diplomacy is possible in the light of Iran's identity and depends on a correct knowledge of Islam and the development of Islamic knowledge (Khatami, 1379: 151). Therefore, the reform government needed public diplomacy to successfully advance its theory, that is, dialogue in order to resolve misunderstandings, and thus explain and promote the model of religious democracy sooner and more comprehensively (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Radfar, 2010: 167 ). As a result, public diplomacy became a tool for the theory of dialogue of civilizations.

## **Identity and mentality**

The identity that the Khatami government sought was a peace-seeking and dialogue-seeking identity. This was the ideal identity of Khatami, who wanted to show the international system, governments and nations that what is being said about Iran and portraying Iran as a militant and hostile identity is wrong, and Iran always wants Dialogue and peace. For this purpose, according to the desirable identity that the Khatami government had in mind, the dialogue of civilizations was presented and the appropriate tools for this work, in addition to traditional diplomacy, were also considered public diplomacy. Therefore, the Khatami government had a very difficult task ahead of it to change the negative mentality of the West towards Iran. The information that reached the Western states at the beginning of Khatami's government had a negative effect on this negative mentality and shook it in positive directions; In a way that European countries welcomed it well and the level of interaction was wide.

American politicians also pursued their policies more cautiously during this period. But it did not take long for this mentality to decline. Because the main goal of the Europeans and the Americans was for Iran to reconsider the four elements of terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, Middle East peace and human rights, and to act in accordance with their definition of these elements. While Iran was originally at odds with the West over the definition of these elements. Therefore, because the changes in Iran and the positions of Khatami's government were not formed in the direction of the mental model of the West, these positions and changes could not change their mental pattern (Darvish Manesh, 87: 132-211). Also, as soon as Iran's secret activities in the field of nuclear technology were introduced, the previous mentalities of Europeans and Americans towards Iran were re-formed (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 215).

In relation to the neighboring Arab countries and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, they have always had the mentality that a powerful Iran threatens their interests, and Iran's rise to power overshadows them and weakens their position. Khatami tried to create a positive attitude towards Iran and calm in maintaining relations with Arab countries by portraying Iran as a country that wants dialogue and does not seek physical confrontation. She was somewhat successful in this regard, but as soon as Hezbollah came to power and won the battle against Israel and the Shiites gained strength in Iraq, their previous mentality returned (Darvish Manesh, 1387: 216-215).

The dialogue of civilizations of Khatami's government, by creating an understanding of international understanding and tolerance, provided the appropriate mentality for the realization of peace and dialogue and led to the establishment of cultural and intellectual contexts of peace (Ghasemi, 2004:

144). But in fact, the only change that had actually taken place was that the Western governments and the Americans, with the coming to power of Khatami and the change in his literature on domestic and foreign policy, hoped that the Iranian government could reconsider. They are forced to bring this government closer to their perception of the issues in question (Darvish Manesh, 1387: 216). Despite all the talks, talks, and speeches, Khatami not only had the power to seriously influence the beliefs of Western societies and their policymakers, but also failed to change even some of the Western beliefs and values toward Iran. Even if there was a change and some successes were created, it was very short-lived and was never established (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 218). But what role did public diplomacy, which transmitted the dialogue of civilizations, play in transmitting the identity and changing the mentality of the people?

Therefore, it can be said that the Khatami government made many efforts to present the peace-seeking identity of the Islamic Republic. But due to the lack of a single and common definition of some issues of the international system (terrorism, human rights, etc.), Iran's nuclear activities and support for foreign movements (Hezbollah in Lebanon), not only created an identity Did not challenge the new regime, but the mentality that the governments had of Iran and hoped that Iran's previous behavior would be moderated, was practically not realized and the same identity and mentality that they previously had towards Iran returned.

## **Imposed isolation**

To get out of the isolation that the United States had created for Iran, the most appropriate solution that would lead Iran out of this isolation and to be able to interact with governments was the dialogue among civilizations. ; Because the dialogue of civilizations would open the door to dialogue between countries and by creating a common understanding of issues, interactions would begin and break out of isolation. The tool of this work was traditional and public diplomacy, in which public diplomacy could be useful. For example, we can mention France.

France's approach to the Islamic Republic of Iran was also welcomed in various fields under the influence of Khatami's public diplomacy and the idea of a dialogue of civilizations, as in other European countries. ; In addition to highlighting economic relations, cultural, artistic, environmental, etc. relations between the two countries, most Iranians and French have found more opportunities to introduce their culture, art and norms and products in this country (Hussein Zadeh Moghadam, 1394: 83). The parties are interested in increasing communication in the form of talks in order to increase radio and television exchanges, signing a memorandum of understanding on the establishment of consular facilities and visas for transit travelers and businessmen and students, signing an agreement on scientific-environmental cooperation in Iran. It was the acceptance and dialogue of civilizations by this country and its growing interest in Iran. In that year, France wanted to introduce the ancient culture and heritage of Iran. For this purpose, an excerpt from fifteen centuries of Iranian Islamic civilization was displayed at the headquarters of the Arab World Institute in Paris. The Gimah Museum also set up an exhibition of culture and art related to the fourth to second millennium BC in Iran and tried to recognize and introduce Greater Iran at that time.

The opening of the Iranian Cultural House with the presence of a group of Iranian directors in the French city of Issy and also the establishment of an exhibition of books and photographs on the subject of cultural diversity in Iran was in this direction. Certainly, the Dialogue among Civilizations project has had a direct impact on these events and has been the founder of such activities. The most central issue in the dialogue between civilizations is the recognition of the culture and history of nations. In this regard, holding a three-day seminar "One hundred years of activity of French archaeologists in Iran" and the welcome of French researchers to this action was one of the reasons and motivations for naming 2004 the Year of Iran (Hosseinzadeh Moghadam, 1394: 84).

The combination of efforts to break the isolation imposed by the United States and its allies has, in effect, shown that public diplomacy based on the dialogue of civilizations can be a viable solution for Iran against other societies and thus break the deadlock. And imposed isolation. In fact, the dialogue of civilizations potentially provided a way out of isolation and allowed Iran to interact with other governments. Two important tools in this process were traditional diplomacy in the first place and then public diplomacy. In this regard, public diplomacy was able to establish cultural ties with European countries such as France, albeit for a short time, but to establish good interaction with Iran, which is evidenced by the claim that Iran was able to break out of relative isolation.

### **Welcomes and interactions towards the dialogue of civilizations**

The announcement of the "Dialogue of Civilizations" theory was a turning point in Iran's evolving foreign policy process, which, after its announcement, was welcomed by the world and the international scientific and cultural community. Because by proposing the theory of the dialogue of civilizations as an alternative to the realistic discourse of the clash of American civilizations "Samuel Huntington" from the perspective of power, Khatami practically created a change in Iran's foreign policy and its place in the regional and international system (Asadi, 2000). : 1007). Public diplomacy welcomed the Dialogue of Civilizations initiative. Because on the eve of the third millennium, the world wanted to abandon the paradigm of conflict and organize its life under another paradigm (Ahmadian Hosseini, 1390: 95). Therefore, public diplomacy was the best tool for the peaceful transfer of the Islamic Republic's peaceful identity and the establishment of international relations in the cultural form. The following are examples of how public diplomacy has been able to play a constructive and useful role;

The proclamation of 2001 called the Dialogue of Civilizations was widely welcomed by thinkers around the world (Ghasemi, 2004: 127). The European Union welcomed the proposal of the President of Iran, Mr. Khatami, to the UN General Assembly to designate 2001 as the year of dialogue between civilizations (Sadghi, 2013: 89). To this end, scientific conferences, meetings and conferences were formed with the approach of dialogue of civilizations between nations. The total number of meetings, conferences and seminars, both inside and outside the country, focusing on the dialogue of civilizations from 2000 to 2004, was a total of 80 cases (Department of Islamic Culture and Education, 2004: 253). According to the explanations, a key role can be considered for public diplomacy, because

it was able to implicitly convey the peaceful aspect of the Islamic Republic to its audiences in these conferences and meetings.

On the other hand, the increase of Iranian cultural projects abroad, through the Organization of Islamic Culture and Communication during this period and the development of relations with regions such as Central Asia and the Middle East, where Iran could use its cultural affinities as a tool to develop relations. Slow, led (Mousavi Khorshidi, 1394: 79). In this regard, the promotion and expansion of Persian language and literature, awarding scholarships, attracting tourists, holding seminars and scientific and cultural conferences accelerated (Dehghani Firoozabadi and Radfar, 1389: 167).

### **Lack of awareness of public diplomacy and its sources of power**

Mr. Khatami intended to travel to some European countries and rebuild their views on Iran by meeting with their elites and speaking to them. He tried to draw the attention of professors and students of some European countries to the true nature of the Islamic Republic by giving numerous lectures in important universities of some European countries. Mr. Khatami's speeches opened a new space for Iran, but in order to achieve the desired situation, that is, to positively affect the mental image of Westerners towards Iran, he needed other complementary factors, which were only part of this series (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 208\_206).

Regarding the role or influence that private or state-owned companies could possibly play as a tool of public diplomacy in transmitting the axes of dialogue between civilizations, it should be noted that there were no private companies outside Iran in the cultural field. Government institutions operating in some European countries not only ignored Khatami's views and policies, but also because most of these institutions were supported and run by those who were politically aligned with Khatami's government and his ideas. They were not in the same direction, they acted against his policies (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 208).

The media is the language of public diplomacy. The media, as tools of national power, have found a meaningful role in an identity without which effective diplomacy cannot be used effectively (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 209). Not only was the Khatami government unable to use this medium (radio and television) to advance its goals, but in some cases it was a serious obstacle to achieving these goals. So it can be said that the only thing that the media covered in Khatami's government and in the field of public diplomacy was his speech at the United Nations and European universities. It was able to significantly soften the atmosphere. But in general, the use of public diplomacy in the Khatami era was much higher than in the previous period, but this could not bring about a fundamental change in Europe's attitude towards Iran (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 211-210).

According to the explanations given, the author considers the lack of comprehensive success of public diplomacy, lack of knowledge and full knowledge of the sources of public diplomacy according to the capacity of the country. If there was sufficient knowledge and a better understanding of the sources of public diplomacy, public diplomacy would be more likely to succeed in the dialogue



among civilizations. It is true that lectures, cultural programs, meetings with elites and the media are the most effective methods of public diplomacy, but public diplomacy is unsuccessful until a thorough understanding of public diplomacy and its sources is achieved. Sources of public diplomacy in Iran include issues such as civilization and culture, Islam and Shia, economics and political behavior (Ghiyasian, 2012: 108-105). In fact, it can be said that concepts such as public diplomacy have not found a place in Iranian intellectual circles and decision-making and have not yet been clearly defined conceptually and practically and are considered synonymous with other concepts (Vaezi and Ahadi, 2010: 17).

### **Moderate performance and dependence on traditional diplomacy**

Other tools of public diplomacy in the field of transmitting the dialogue of civilizations include sending elites and influential people. Not much was done in this regard. Only a handful attended a conference hosted by the German Green Party in Berlin, the outcome of which was more to the detriment of Iran-West relations than to its advantage. The events that took place during this event, including groups opposed to the Islamic Republic and dealing with Iranian guests participating in the conference, caused more challenges in Iran's relations with European countries (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 208). Studies also show that not all conferences, meetings and lectures inside and outside the country are outside the realm of conceptual and theoretical issues and have dealt with useless discussions in this field. Useless means in the field of political action and international relations, and scientifically good topics have been expressed (Darvish Manesh, 2008: 257-256).

But in the end, the idea of a dialogue of civilizations and Khatami's policy of de-escalation, which were the two main components of the eighth government's public diplomacy, remained only a plan and a theory. The head of the eighth government could not take advantage of other components of public diplomacy. In fact, it should be said that Seyyed Mohammad Khatami in the implementation of his foreign policy placed great emphasis on official diplomacy and pursued the principles of his foreign policy mostly through official diplomacy and especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Ghiyasian, 2012: 211).

Based on the above explanations, it is perceived that the performance of public diplomacy has been moderate. Relying on traditional diplomacy and not paying enough attention to public diplomacy also led to public diplomacy not being as strong and efficient. While one of the most important methods for advancing national interests is public diplomacy, in which developed countries have become much more capable.

### **Conclusion**

Public diplomacy as a tool to use soft power has shown that it plays an important role in strengthening and achieving the national interests of countries. Today, public diplomacy as an alternative to traditional diplomacy, due to its lasting impact and lower costs in achieving foreign policy goals, has found a major place in the foreign policy of countries, especially Iran. One of the most important tasks of public diplomacy is to establish dialogue, international relations and interactions between



governments, public opinion and the people. Mohammad Khatami, one of the former presidents of the Islamic Republic, tried to advance the goals of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic and to show a peaceful approach to this political system with the model of the dialogue of civilizations. Findings show that public diplomacy as a valuable tool could play a relatively constructive but partial role in the dialogue of civilizations and lead to overcoming imposed isolation, relative increase in interactions of the Islamic Republic at the level of nations and governments, drawing a new mentality of The system of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its pacifist identity. But in general, due to the lack of knowledge of public diplomacy and its sources of power, mediocre performance and dependence on traditional diplomacy, it could not remain an effective and efficient tool for dialogue of civilizations. In this study, an attempt was made to investigate the role of public diplomacy in the dialogue of civilizations.

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