



Diaspora as a Public Diplomacy Agent: a  
Comparative Case Study on Armenian  
Communities in Italy and Poland

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## Abstract

Diplomacy has traditionally been considered as a stately activity privileged to professional diplomats interacting behind closed doors. However, the significant changes in international relations and communication in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have led to transformations, including in the field of diplomacy, thus resulting in the emergence of New Diplomacy (Cooper, Heine & Thakur 2013). Now diplomacy is not merely about negotiations, but includes various spheres, levels, as well as tools. Another significant change has been the pluralization of actors involved in diplomatic activities. The New Diplomacy has also impacted the ways in which diplomacy is conducted. The rise of new means of communication, namely the internet and the social media, has turned the use of online space into an indispensable part of diplomacy. In the logic of changes in the diplomacy, public diplomacy has undergone significant transformations, now to include a variety of actors, levels, tools and lots of other novel qualities (Melissen, 2005).

So far, however, the activities of diasporas as public diplomats, has been overlooked in academic literature. “Both ‘diaspora’ and ‘diplomacy’ are concepts that have undergone considerable expansion in recent years, marking a shift away from understanding diaspora as a descriptive category and diplomacy as the practice of state officials respectively” (Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 15). Thanks to their dual presence and the ability to bridge the kinstate and host countries, diasporas emerge as important non-state actors in terms of being a relevant actor of public diplomacy.

The current research intends to shed light on diaspora’s public diplomacy activities on social media. It also attempts to identify the possible similarities and differences in the online public diplomacy activities by two communities of the same diaspora – Armenian diaspora communities in Italy and Poland – as well as find out the reasons behind the different performances.

In order to demonstrate how the diaspora communities conduct public diplomacy and to identify the similarities and differences in the practices, the research adopts an innovative approach of relying on the data retrieved from social media, namely the Facebook platform, throughout the year of 2021, and uses the synthesis of public diplomacy components suggested by E. Sevin (Sevin, 2017) and N. Cull (Cull, 2008): *advocacy (agenda-setting); attraction; listening; and socialization*.

The findings of the research show how, throughout the selected period, both communities have used the social media platform for public diplomacy purposes, a function declared as one of the main missions of the selected diaspora organizations. Furthermore, the study reveals the similarities and the differences in public diplomacy practices of the two communities. It, particularly, points out that while both communities were engaged in public diplomacy activities in the selected period, the Italo-Armenian community has been more active both in terms of the quantity and the range of topics.

By shedding light on this underdeveloped field of research, the current work appears to be a stepping stone for further efforts emphasizing the relevance of diasporas in online public diplomacy.

*Keywords: public diplomacy, new diplomacy, diaspora, social media*

Dyplomacja była tradycyjnie uważana za działalność państwową zarezerwowaną dla zawodowych dyplomatów działających za zamkniętymi drzwiami. Jednak znaczące zmiany w stosunkach międzynarodowych i komunikacji w XX wieku doprowadziły do przeobrażeń, w tym,

w sferze dyplomacji, skutkując tym samym pojawieniem się Nowej Dyplomacji (Cooper, Heine i Thakur 2013). Teraz dyplomacja to nie tylko negocjacje, ale różne sfery, poziomy, a także narzędzia. Kolejną istotną zmianą była pluralizacja aktorów zaangażowanych w działania dyplomatyczne. Nowa dyplomacja wpłynęła również na sposób prowadzenia dyplomacji. Pojawienie się nowych środków komunikacji, a mianowicie Internetu i mediów społecznościowych, sprawiło, że korzystanie z przestrzeni internetowej stało się nieodzowną częścią dyplomacji. W logice zmian w dyplomacji, dyplomacja publiczna przeszła znaczące przeobrażenia, obejmując obecnie różnych aktorów, narzędzia i wiele innych nowych cech (Melissen, 2005).

Dotychczas jednak działalność diaspor jako aktorów dyplomacji publicznej była pomijana w literaturze naukowej. „Zarówno „diaspora”, jak i „dyplomacja” to pojęcia, które w ostatnich latach znacznie się rozwinęły, oznaczając odejście od rozumienia diaspery jako kategorii opisowej, a dyplomacji jako praktyki urzędników państwowych” (Ho i McConnell, 2017, s. 15). Dzięki swojej podwójnej obecności i zdolności do łączenia krajów pokrewnych i przyjmujących, diaspery stają się ważnymi aktorami pozapaństwowymi, również w dyplomacji publicznej.

Obecne badania mają rzucić światło na działania dyplomacji publicznej diaspery w mediach społecznościowych. Podejmują również próbę zidentyfikowania możliwych podobieństw i różnic w działaniach dyplomacji publicznej online przez dwie społeczności tej samej diaspery – diaspery ormiańskiej we Włoszech i w Polsce – a także poznania przyczyn tych różnic.

Aby pokazać, w jaki sposób środowiska diaspery prowadzą dyplomację publiczną oraz zidentyfikować podobieństwa i różnice w praktykach, w badaniu przyjęto nowatorskie podejście polegające na wykorzystaniu danych pozyskiwanych z mediów społecznościowych, czyli platformy Facebook, przez cały rok 2021 i wykorzystujące syntezę komponentów dyplomacji

publicznej zaproponowaną przez E. Sevina (Sevin, 2017) i N. Culla (Cull, 2008): rzecznictwo (agenda-setting); przyciąganie; słuchanie; i socjalizacja.

Wyniki badań pokazują, w jaki sposób w wybranym okresie obie społeczności wykorzystywały platformę mediów społecznościowych do celów dyplomacji publicznej, funkcję deklarowaną jako jedna z głównych misji wybranych diaspor. Ponadto badanie ujawnia podobieństwa i różnice w praktykach dyplomacji publicznej obu społeczności. Wskazuje w szczególności, że podczas gdy obie społeczności były zaangażowane w działalność dyplomacji publicznej w wybranym okresie, społeczność włosko-ormiańska była bardziej aktywna zarówno pod względem ilości, jak i zakresu tematów.

Rzucając światło na tę słabo rozwiniętą dziedzinę badań, ta praca wydaje się być wstępem do dalszych wysiłków podkreślających znaczenie diaspor w internetowej dyplomacji publicznej.

*Słowa kluczowe: dyplomacja publiczna, nowa dyplomacja, diaspora, media społecznościowe*

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## Introduction of the topic

Throughout centuries the term ‘diplomacy’ has undergone substantial changes as a result of transformations in international relations (Cooper, Heine & Thakur, 2013). Currently, state no longer appear to be the only actors in diplomacy, in spite of still maintaining their relevance. Over the past decades, non-state actors have increasingly claimed greater role in diplomacy (Cooper et al., 2013; J. R. Kelley, 2010; Melissen, 2005). In addition to pluralization of actors, also the spectrum of diplomatic practices has expanded to involve a bunch of new spheres, levels and instruments. In other words, diplomacy has pluralized and become more open and inclusive (Cooper et al., 2013). In this context, nothing more than Public Diplomacy, as a direct communication with foreign peoples, with the aim of affecting their thinking, and ultimately, that of their governments (Gilboa, 2008, p. 57) and as a practice involving various non-state actors, instruments of attraction and information through the use of modern communication tools, reflects these transformations. Especially in the era of qualitatively new international relations and technologies, public diplomacy is about new actors, new content, new methods, new direction, new limits, new theory and many more new qualities (Cooper et. al., 2013, p. 215).

Since the rise of non-state actors has made academics revise their perceptions of diplomacy, the research on the role of diasporas, as non-state public diplomats, gained relevance as increasingly more diasporas have started to take on the role of unofficial ambassadors of their kinstates in terms of not only the lobbying function, but also in terms of serving as an information channel and cultural diplomats (Behar Xharra & Martin Wählisch, 2012; Goirizelaia & Iturregui, 2019; Murthy, 2017; K. S. Rana, 2013). However, despite “both ‘diaspora’ and ‘diplomacy’ are concepts that have undergone considerable expansion in recent years, marking a shift away from understanding diaspora as a descriptive category and diplomacy as the practice of state officials respectively” (E. L. E. Ho & McConnell, 2017), from the review of the existing literature, it



becomes clear that the strand of scholarship studying diasporas as actors of public diplomacy, especially in the social-media-dominated era, is still underdeveloped and extremely scarce.

Having the above-mentioned in mind, the current thesis studies a diaspora's public diplomacy practices on social media. Taking into account the overall transformations in international relations and diplomacy, it is vital to understand a diaspora's potential as a public diplomacy agent in the fight for peoples' 'hearts and minds. The realization of the potential of diasporas to serve as (online) public diplomacy agents is relevant for several reasons. One is the perspective of diaspora communities as they can become aware that their assistance to the kinstate might not simply be limited to sending remittances, or providing any type of material support, and lobbying foreign decision-makers, but also raising the attractiveness of the kinstate, building bridges between the kinstate's and host state's publics, as well as raising issues concerning the kinstate, its people and its foreign policy. Apart from this, poor performing diasporas can learn how to use the new technological tools in order to advance their goals. This perception can also lead to a more systematic and consistent operation of diaspora communities. On the other hand, taking this new insight into consideration, governments can view their diasporas in a new light and share or delegate some of the state's responsibilities on their communities abroad. Finally, with the use of this new approach and an innovative method of exploring diaspora's public diplomacy activities, this work fills the gap and paves a way for new researches on this topic in the future.

## **Introduction to the Research**

Having lived abroad for years, I have followed my kinstate Armenia's diaspora community activities on social media. Following their updates on social media, I have noticed that the community organizations have been engaged in not only intra community matters, but also in activities that fall within the scope of what I had known to be referred to as "public diplomacy". In

addition, being interested in the diaspora as a bridge between the kinstate and host state, I embarked on studying the phenomenon of diaspora, public diplomacy, as well as the link between them and social media. In the thought process, I combined the theory of New Diplomacy, Public Diplomacy and Diaspora Diplomacy and became interested in the activities of diaspora organizations as manifestation of diaspora's actorness in public diplomacy. At the same time, a question arose how two communities of the same diaspora, with similar background, perform when it comes to activities in public diplomacy.

The aim of this research is to get a better understanding of how diaspora communities with similar characteristics carry out public diplomacy activities on social media. In this context, the research has the objective to shed light on this dimension of diaspora diplomacy as a new perspective from which to consider the relevance of diasporas as actors in international relations. This will be done by analyzing the cases of the use of social media as a public diplomacy tool by organizations in Armenian communities in Italy and Poland as communities with mainly similar background.

For research purposes a content analysis of the organizations' Facebook profiles has been done. Then, a synthesis of the pathways (taxonomy) suggested by N. Cull (Cull, 2008) and E. Sefin (Sevin, 2017) have been applied in order to answer the following research question and sub-question:

- Research question: How are the public diplomacy components reflected in the social media communication of the Armenian communities in Poland and Italy, according to N. Cull and E. Sefin's public diplomacy pathways?
  - Subquestion: What are the similarities and differences between the public diplomacy practices of Italo-Armenian and Polish-Armenian diaspora communities?

Do these communities stick to their functions online as they claim in their respective non/formal charters?

### *Scope of the research*

In order to find out how two communities of the same diaspora carry out public diplomacy, the research focuses on two communities of the Armenian diaspora through a comparative case study of Armenian communities in Italy and Poland. The reason for this selection, first of all, lies in the fact that, so far, the Armenian diaspora has mainly been studied from sociological perspectives. Furthermore, those few works that are relevant to the discipline of International Relations, discuss the Armenian diaspora in terms of lobbying activities and are limited to certain regions outside Europe. When it comes to the communities, the selection is explained by a number of similarities such as the diaspora type, structure and difference such as size and minority status. These features will be presented further in detail in the following sections.

The time frame for the research is the period from January 1, 2021 until December 31, 2021. Despite the selected community organizations have had their presence on social media long before the selected period, this decision has been made by taking into account the rapidly changing nature of social media (addition of new functions, removal of some content etc), as well as the feasibility of manual data collection. That is why for the research a relatively recent time period on Facebook has been selected.

The research is anchored around the concepts of New Diplomacy, Diaspora Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy. While each of these concepts has been well researched separately, the studies on diaspora's public diplomacy, especially online public diplomacy, in the context of new diplomacy, are still quite scarce and poorly researched. The aim of the research is to shed light on the relevance of diaspora as a practitioner of public diplomacy on social media. Here

Diaspora Diplomacy is understood as a diaspora's service as the kinstate's unofficial diplomacy agent in the sphere of Public Diplomacy. Diaspora's public diplomacy is placed in the broader theory of transformations of diplomatic practices in terms of actors, tools, implementation levels and other qualities that together amount to New Diplomacy. The focus of the research, therefore, include the Public Diplomacy, namely Public Diplomacy on social media, and the Diaspora Diplomacy. The limitation of the research is that it does not intend to assess the effectiveness of the selected diaspora's public diplomacy on social media and only serves as a stepping stone for further research on this under researched topic.

In order to take the reader in logical steps towards the results, the thesis will be set forth in the following way. First will be presented the transformation of diplomacy, leading to the theory of 'New Diplomacy'. Then it will be linked to the concept of (New) Public Diplomacy, including online public diplomacy, as one of the components of New Diplomacy. The theoretical framework will continue with introduction to Diaspora and its definition, and will close with the link between Diaspora Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy.

## **Literature Review**

Academic interest towards the phenomenon of diaspora has been increasingly growing since the second half of the 1970s and 1980s. According to Aikins, Sands and White, this interest is explained by the "continual increases in the mobility of people, assisted by ever improving transportation and telecommunications" which have "intensified the international interest in diaspora studies" (Aikins, Sands, & White, 2002). As the interest grew, more and more academics attempted to explain what should be referred to as 'diaspora', as well as offer different perspectives for understanding the role of diasporas as diplomacy agents.

According to several academics, diaspora seems to be used as metaphoric designation for different categories of people and share meanings with words like emigrant, expatriate, refugee, guestworker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community and so on (Safran, 1991; Tölölyan, 1991, 1996). Despite this catch-all tendency, however, there is general agreement among academics on the common features shared by diasporas as communities of people with a common origin that reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside their ethnic or religious homeland, whether existing or imagined (Shain & Barth, 2003; Ter-Matevosyan et al., 2017). Diasporas are also presented as mobilized ethnic minority groups with self-awareness of their identity and emotional attachment to the homeland (Brinkerhoff, 2012; Cohen, 2008; K. S. Rana, 2013; Sheffer, 2013). The formation of community organizations being at the heart of networks, has been mentioned as another distinctive feature of diasporas (King & Melvil, 1999; Sheffer, 2013).

The central characteristics of diasporas, however, is their transnational nature or the so-called transnational moment of their existence (Tölölyan, 1996).

With the rise of critical diplomacy studies that refute the explanation of diplomacy as an activity carried out only by professional diplomats behind closed doors, and argue for the role of non-state actors in diplomatic practices (Melissen, 2005), diasporas also have come to be recognized as one of the key diplomacy practitioners. Indeed, at individual and/or collective levels diaspora representatives can make contributions to their homelands not only through remittances and economic investments, knowledge transfer and brain circulation, but also political influence (Brinkerhoff, 2012; Rey Koslowski, 2005). Moreover, in terms of political influence, the highest service perhaps could be considered the very creation of a state, something which R. Cohen has listed among a diaspora's 'common features' (Cohen, 1996, p. 515). In this case, "a diaspora may be concerned not only with the maintenance or restoration of a homeland, but with its very creation" (Becke, 2019; 1996, p. 516). In this regard, the most vivid example is the creation and

further modernization of the state of Israel, in line with its law, according to which, “the State of Israel expects the participation of all Jews and Jewish bodies in the upbuilding of the State and in assisting mass migration thereto” (Selzer, 1971, p. 8).

As transnational communities, they are found in and between two worlds at the same time. Diasporas claim presence in the internal political life of the homeland but are also able to influence the policies of the countries they reside in (Brinkerhoff, 2012; E. L. E. Ho & McConnell, 2017). The possibilities of playing a greater role in international relations has been facilitated since the significant changes in diplomacy and the advent of new technologies especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Increasingly more and more non-state actors and tools became involved in diplomatic activities, which rendered the importance of public diplomacy a subject of study among academics. In Tuch’s definition (Melissen, 2005, p. 11) public diplomacy is “a government’s process of communication with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and policies.” According to this definition, public diplomacy assumes actions aimed at gaining “people’s hearts and minds” through the country’s attractive assets such as culture and values (Nye, 2004). Public diplomacy is considered an important foreign policy tool as its ultimate goal is to influence the policies of other states by creating positive perceptions and gaining acceptance among foreign publics.

Public diplomacy quite often might be described as solely a governmental activity as in the definition by Tuch. However, the change in international relations and the rise of new diplomatic practices made academics break the stereotype. Melissen argues that “non-state actors, and supranational and subnational players develop public diplomacy policies of their own” (Melissen, 2005). Similarly, Bruce Gregory defines public diplomacy as the instrument “used by ... non-governmental actors in order to understand the culture, stances and attitudes, in order to create and

manage relationships and influence opinions as well as mobilize actions in order to forward their interests and values” (Gregory, 2011, p. 353).

On the way of forwarding those interests and values, technological innovations have expanded also the list of tools that can be used in public diplomacy. Advancement of technology, especially the internet, has ensured new ways of building communication channels with foreign public, with a wider reach that overcomes geographic obstacles in a few clicks. According to Kent and Taylor “technology itself can neither create nor destroy relationships; rather, it is how the technology is used that influences organization-public relationships” (1998, p. 324). In this regard, one should not underestimate the role of social media which are defined by Smith (2010, p. 330) as “virtual platforms for interactivity and information exchange, where issues are debated and defined” and which are used by organizations for increased interactions with publics through inputs and outputs (Smith, 2010; Sundar, 2012). As Pamment notes, the rise of social media networks has generated a consensus among academics about the irreversible ‘new diplomacy’ practices (Pamment, 2014, p. 53). Indeed, since social media networks or the Web 2.0 serve as meeting platforms for individuals to get informed and discuss pressing issues, they are a useful tool for reaching out the public and, therefore, act as a “catalyst” for public diplomacy implementation (Costa, 2017, p. 145). This link between the use of social media and public diplomacy is what Glassman has called “Public Diplomacy 2.0 (Glassman, 2008).

Having the above written in mind, it can be argued that the most comprehensive definition of public diplomacy has been given by N. Cull, who finds that new public diplomacy, among others, refers to: a new context (more voices); new players (NGOs and more powerful individuals); new methods (Internet); new directions (horizontal); new challenges (one world); new vocabulary (branding); new limits (partnerships); new theory (soft power). In public diplomacy, openness matters (open systems are attractive); time matters; image matters; stories matter (the power of

example); diasporas matter (individuals carry messages), partnerships matter (no one can go alone); information matters (others will fill the world); success matters (many are hurt by the failure of one) ... Public diplomacy is about relationships” (Andrés Rozental, 2013, p. 215).

Given the expanding role of non-state actors in diplomacy, diasporas, as well can be considered as relevant actors. Noya, for example, thinks of immigrant and emigrant communities as a country’s most important public diplomacy assets as they provide an immediate view of the problems, which can never be obtained through studies, surveys, etc (Noya, 2006, p. 5). According to Ho and MacConnel, “diasporas are...seen as key to cultural and public diplomacy, such as by fostering cross-community relations and understanding that goes beyond the formal initiatives of the state” (E. L. E. Ho & McConnell, 2017). Referring to the changes in communication sphere, some have even predicted that “public diplomacy will become increasingly diasporic, with all the opportunities and challenges, that diasporas represent.” (Brinkerhoff, 2012).

Rana has particularly emphasized the role of diasporas in the culture arena. According to him, “diasporas are the natural ambassadors of the country of origin and can play a special role in the development of its soft power in the target country” (K. S. Rana, 2013). Continuing this strand of thought, Mark Leonard has argued that diasporas are “living links” in terms of relations among friends, business partners and that they “can help fill the demand for language skills...provide cultural knowledge, political insight and human intelligence necessary for a successful foreign policy” (Leonard et al., 2002). Another important point worth mentioning is that “diasporas may also seek support for a policy or intervention targeted to the COO” and “provide...perspectives [to the COR] through direct advocacy” (Brinkerhoff, 2019, p. 53). Airapetova (2019) observes that diasporas “interact with each other within the country of residence, as well as with the host public, they form communication channels by interacting at a unique transnational social level”. The



author then adds that, diasporas “provide foundation for the creation of communication networks, thus connecting people through borders and generations”.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the spread of mass communication platforms and expansion of the role of media in diplomacy, diasporas have even more opportunities for acting as public diplomacy agents. In general, means of communication and their role as ‘technologies of presence’ have always been key to understanding diasporas as they both deal with the modalities and implications of ‘presence at a distance’ (Diminescu & Loveluck, 2014, p. 3). Diasporic populations are not contained within nation-states even though they live within them. Most often they sustain vibrant cultural and political connections locally and nationally, but also transnationally, not least through the media (Georgiou, 2013, p. 81).

The existing literature approaches diaspora diplomacy mainly from the state-centric perspective and explores the ways in which *states* endeavor to better engage with their diasporas in order to reap the benefits diasporas offer as transnational entities (Dickinson, 2017; E. L.-E. Ho, 2020; E. L.-E. Ho et al., 2015; Liu & van Dongen, 2016) and only a few works study the phenomenon of diaspora in terms of actorness in public diplomacy. Several case studies have been carried out in order to understand the role of diasporas in public diplomacy (Behar Xharra & Martin Wählich, 2012; Isar, 2017; Li, 2012; Murthy, 2017; Sinani, 2015). These include diasporic communities of India’s distinct regions, China, Kosovo and others. An interesting case study on the role of diasporas in public diplomacy has been carried out by Maialen Goirizelaia & Leire Iturregui about the Basque diaspora in the U.S. (2019). However, none of those researches has touched upon the use of social media for public diplomacy activities. Furthermore, the studies linking the fields of diaspora to media studies, have so far focused on the use of social media as a means of creating “communities of belonging”, connections with the homeland/kinstate and establishment of ties across other ethnic diasporas (Al-Rawi & Fahmy, 2018; Ponzanesi, 2020; Yu & Sun, 2019). In

other words, so far there has not been carried out any research on a diaspora's public diplomacy activities on social media which now constitutes the inalienable part of modern public diplomacy. The proposed research intends to further explore this topic and fill this gap in the literature by linking diaspora studies to communication and public diplomacy 2.0.

## Theoretical chapter

### Diplomacy

The first thing associated to diplomacy would most probably be a scene of state officials sitting around a table, wearing suits and discussing something. This would not be a wrong association as long as such meetings are still the inalienable component of diplomacy. However, this is only one of the settings that the term 'diplomacy' relates to. Diplomacy is the oldest instrument of statecraft and one of the longest standing institutions of the international system, which has undergone significant changes (Gram-Skjoldager, 2011). The way we know diplomacy today is mainly the outcome of the 1648 Westphalian world order that "codified the role of the state within a defined, sovereign territory as the key actor in international relations (Malone, 2013). And while the fundamental elements of diplomacy inherited from this system have endured throughout centuries, the world is no longer what it used to be. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the features of diplomacy have tremendously changed in accordance with the 'crazy-quilt nature of modern interdependence' (Rosenau, 1995). As Cooper has observed, "with accentuated forms of globalization, the scope of diplomacy as the 'engine room' of IR has moved beyond the traditional core concerns to encompass a myriad set of issue areas. And the boundaries of participation in diplomacy—and the very definition of diplomats—have broadened as well, albeit in a still contested fashion. In a variety of ways, therefore, not only its methods but also its objectives are far more expansive than ever before." (Cooper, 2013, p. 69).

Diplomacy has been defined as one of the “lesser tools of foreign policy” (James, 1993, p. 95), a medium communicating the use of other foreign policy tools, and an instrument in its own right (Sharp, 1999, p. 39). In the mainstream IR, diplomacy is conceived of as an instrument of foreign policy along with propaganda, economic rewards and punishments, the threat or use of force to crush or punish (Constantinou & Sharp, 2016). Some used to refer to ‘diplomacy’ as a synonym to statecraft, foreign policy and international relations in general (Constantinou et al., 2016; Sharp, 1999). At the other extreme, diplomacy is nothing but a process limited to international negotiation practices (Sevin, 2017; Sharp, 1999). Diplomacy has also been defined as “the conduct of relationships, using peaceful means, by and among international actors, at least one of whom is usually governmental. The typical international actors are states and the bulk of diplomacy involves relations between states directly, or between states, international organizations, and other international actors.” (Cooper, Heine, & Thakur, 2013, p. 47). In general, these perspectives more or less reflect the traditional understanding of diplomacy “as a game where the roles and responsibilities of actors in international relations are clearly delineated” and involving symmetrical interlocutors (Melissen, 2005).

In this sense, for this research the more acceptable definition is the one suggested by Ho and McConnell who described diplomacy as the management of relations between groups, and the way it is articulated through practices of communication and representation (Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 4).

## New Diplomacy

The use of diplomacy “for international relations in general may be regarded as a holdover from a time in the history of the modern state system when it was reasonable to claim that nearly all the important international relations were undertaken by professional diplomats representing sovereign

states” (Constantinou & Sharp, 2016, p. 17). Over the past decades, the ways in which international relations and diplomacy are managed, have been subject to transformations. Modern diplomatic communication assumes involvement of new actors such as wider publics, multinational corporations, NGOs and individuals. In this regard, Kelley has observed that “the continued rise of the non-state actor in twenty-first century international politics issues a potent challenge to state primacy in the area of diplomacy. Diplomacy’s statist tradition, once the bedrock organizing institution for pursuing international politics, is ceding influence to nonstate actors” (J. R. Kelley, 2010, p. 286).

Furthermore, not only the scope of actors, but also the number of activities, methods and instruments has increased. Diplomacy is increasingly being stripped off the “special aura of diplomacy” characterized by “ornate setting of diplomatic functions, elaborate ceremonies and regular contacts with important figures” (Leguey-Feilleux, 2009, p. 145). Heine has defined new diplomacy as the result of the changes introduced by globalization and network state into the dynamics of diplomacy (Cooper et al., 2013). Regarding the complexity of the management of new diplomacy, Heine has noticed that it is conditioned not only by the involvement of vast number of actors but also inclusion of numerous public policy issues and many policy levels (local, domestic, national, bilateral, regional and global). In terms of qualitative changes, Riordan has argued that New diplomacy would be about promoting values and ideas (Riordan, 2003, p. 132). Diplomacy is also becoming more public as “the “global public domain” is integrating social and technological networks to harness its developing diplomatic capabilities” (J. R. Kelley, 2010). Kelley also notes that the new diplomats “are competing with government action as well as compensating for government inaction” (p. 294).

Halvard Leira highlighted two principal developmental trends that led to the uptick in references of “new diplomacy”: emergence of new actors, arenas and institutions that are covered

by diplomacy or the so-called “pluralization of diplomacy”; and association of diplomacy with “public diplomacy” and “soft power” (Leira, 2018). In Leira’s words, in broad terms, ‘New diplomacy’ is associated with expansion of “diplomacy” as such; and more narrowly, it refers to a new way of conducting diplomacy, directed at populations rather than states”(p. 6).

In other words, in this “fuzzy world of postmodern transnational relations” diplomacy has become a multi-level cooperation that requires openness and transnationalism for successful implementation (Melissen, 2005). And such inclusive diplomacy implying openness towards and engagement with various actors is what underlies (New) *Public Diplomacy*.

### Public Diplomacy as a form of New Diplomacy

*“The new diplomacy, as I call it, is, to a large extent, public diplomacy and requires different skills, techniques, and attitudes than those found in traditional diplomacy”.*

*Canada’s Ambassador to Washington* (Melissen, 2005, p. 11)

The term ‘Public Diplomacy’ was coined in 1965 by Edmund Gullion, the dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, however, the practice of public diplomacy is as old as statecraft and diplomacy (Cull, 2008; Melissen, 2005). As E. Sevin notes, in the concept, the “diplomacy” label demonstrates its link with international relations, while the “public” label signals the move beyond traditional diplomacy(Sevin, 2017).

In the transformed and more inclusive environment of diplomacy in which openness and transnational cooperation are essential for success, “public diplomacy is an indispensable ingredient for a collaborative model of diplomacy” (Melissen, 2005, p. 5). According to Melissen, since “diplomacy today is evolving at a much faster rate than in the second half of the 20th century”

and “it is no longer a stiff waltz among states alone, but a jazzy dance of colourful coalitions...public diplomacy is at the heart of its current rebooting” (p. 344). In the logic of New Diplomacy, “while traditional diplomatic practice is associated with actors involved in largely invisible processes of international relations, public diplomacy is about diplomatic engagement with people” (p. 344). Decades ago, some predicted that the new public diplomacy would be an increasingly standard component of overall diplomatic practice and would be “essential to securing the aims of postmodern states, whether in the postmodern or non-postmodern world, or in dealing with non-state actors” (Melissen, 2005; Riordan, 2003, p. 132).

In its traditional form, public diplomacy was considered as the “offshoot” of diplomacy and a less biased type of propaganda implying “one-way dissemination of information aimed at influencing domestic and foreign publics, and disinterested in dialogue or relationship building” (Constantinou et al., 2016, p. 440). It became a more substantial area due to the ideological battle of the cold war between the two dominant powers who were fighting for the hearts and minds of people around the world by not merely informing or justifying actions but also convincing the enemy of their ideological, economic and political convictions (Constantinou et al., 2016; Gilboa, 2008). In the late twentieth century, with the advent of information technology, public diplomacy was gradually carried out through innovative methods of using the media as a means of communication and broadcasting for the purposes of information management and cultural promotion. Public Diplomacy is a foreign policy tool and appears to be one of the key instruments of what Joseph Nye calls ‘soft power’ - the ability to persuade rather than coerce (Melissen, 2005; Nye, 2004; Pamment, 2014).

Melissen (2005) has highlighted three features that distinguish the new public diplomacy. Firstly, public diplomacy is not a merely stately activity since “large and small non-state actors, and supranational or subnational players develop public diplomacy policies of their own”.

Moreover, despite not all non-state actors are successful, many of them draw the admiration of state agencies who seek greater effectiveness. Second, public diplomacy is aimed at *foreign* publics, and the strategies for dealing with these publics should be distinguished from the strategies targeting the home public. In other words, public diplomacy and public relations should not be considered as identical. The author, however, recognizes that in the ‘interconnected’ realities of global relationship it becomes increasingly difficult to separate these two fields of engagement with the public due to the overlap of the objectives and the “natural process of convergence” (Fitzpatrick et al., 2013; Signitzer, 2008). And thirdly, despite public diplomacy is often associated with one-way information flow, the new public diplomacy departs from simply conveying information to the foreign publics and is inclined towards engaging with foreign audiences. According to Huijgh, contemporary public diplomacy should encompass at least two features: first, a multi-actor approach that involves various actors above and below the state level of national governments, as well as many non-governmental actors at home and abroad; second, formation of relations between those actors through dialogue and networking activities (Constantinou et al., 2016).

Public Diplomacy can be considered as a practice equally relying on the three mainstream IR theories of realism, liberalism and constructivism with their respective explanations of how the international system operates (Sevin, 2017). Realism declares the state, which seeks to maximize its power in relation to other competing states, as the central actor in the anarchic environment of the international system. From this perspective, the foreign state appears to be the ultimate target of public diplomacy and the relevance of the foreign public is recognized as long as it is able to influence the foreign policy of the state it belongs to. Liberalism departs from state-centrism and hard-power perception of international relations, and recognizes the relevance of multiple non-state actors on global stage, as well as communication through ways other than the military power.

Constructivism posits that “the concept of structures in international politics means different things to different people” (Wendt, 2003, p. 189), they have multiple meanings for different actors based on their own intersubjective understandings and practices”, and therefore, actors have the freedom to choose or modify their identity (van Ham, 2002). From this perspective, public diplomacy serves as a communicative tool able to assign certain meanings to social construct (Sevin, 2017). It is a story-telling about who the presented is, one’s best version. Moreover, since public diplomacy deals with information flows, through social construction of public diplomacy it is also possible to manipulate meanings by influencing public discussions (Gilboa, 2008).

### *Public Diplomacy Definition and Components*

Public diplomacy has been defined as “direct communication with foreign peoples, with the aim of affecting their thinking and, ultimately, that of their governments” (Gilboa, 2008, p. 57). Another definition explains public diplomacy as “the process by which direct relations with people in a country are pursued to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented” (Sharp, 2005, p. 106). While these definitions recognize the target audience and the ultimate goal of public diplomacy, they fail to identify the practitioner. This gap has been filled by H. Tuch who defined public diplomacy as “a government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies” (Tuch, 1990, p. 3). Tuch’s definition is more elaborate about the means of diplomacy as it emphasizes the use of soft power features such as culture, ideas and values. Nevertheless, it is still state-centric. Years later when the role of non-state actors in international relations was gradually recognized, N. Cull defined public diplomacy as “an international actor’s attempt to manage the international environment through engagement with a foreign public” (Cull & Sadlier, 2009, p. 12). A more elaborate definition has been offered by Signitzer and Coombs who find that public diplomacy is “the way in which both government



and private individuals and groups influence directly or indirectly those public attitudes and opinions which bear directly on another government's foreign policy decisions" (Gilboa, 2008, p. 57).

So far, however, the most comprehensive definition has been given by N. Cull, in whose words:

*"new public diplomacy refers to: a new context (more voices); new players (NGOs and more powerful individuals); new methods (Internet); new directions (horizontal); new challenges (one world); new vocabulary (branding); new limits (partnerships); new theory (soft power). In public diplomacy, openness matters (open systems are attractive); time matters; image matters; stories matter (the power of example); diasporas matter (individuals carry messages), partnerships matter (no one can go alone); information matters (others will fill the world); success matters (many are hurt by the failure of one)....Public diplomacy is about relationships"* (Cooper et al., 2013, p. 215).

Gregory (2011) argued that while many appear to know it when they see public diplomacy in practice, there is lack of consensus on how "it" should be used. In this regard, Cull (2008) has suggested a taxonomy public diplomacy with five components: *listening, advocacy, cultural diplomacy, exchange diplomacy and international broadcasting*. According to Cull, *listening* "is an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about publics and their opinions overseas and using that data to redirect its policy or its wider public diplomacy approach accordingly". *Advocacy* is an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by undertaking an international communication activity to actively promote a particular policy, idea, or that actor's general interests in the minds of a foreign public". Through

*cultural diplomacy*, an actor attempts to “manage the international environment through making its cultural resources and achievements known overseas”. *Exchange diplomacy* is presented as an actor’s attempt to manage the international environment by sending its citizens overseas and accepting citizens from overseas for study or acculturation purposes, and exchanges can overlap with cultural work but can also be used for specific policy and/or advocacy purposes. And the *international broadcasting* refers to the use of communication technologies such as radio, television, and the Internet to engage with foreign publics.

Similarly, E. Sevin (2017) has showed the operation of public diplomacy through three areas of impact – *public opinion*, *relation dynamics* and *public debates* - each consisted of three broad and three narrow pathways. **Public opinion** is divided into *attraction* and *benefit of the doubt*. The first one is what Cull has called cultural diplomacy. Attraction, however, it is not simply about culture as music, arts, language etc. but involves also promotion of policies, advantages and values. It is about presenting one’s best version. In the case of the benefit of the doubt, “audiences become more likely to give benefit of the doubt to [the] practitioner...and policies that might look self-serving at a glance might be reconsidered by target audiences in a more positive manner” (p. 58). **Relations dynamic** involves *socialization* – the way people interact - and *direct influence*, which implies a more targeted action aimed at individuals and is close to the notion of lobbying. **Public debate** is presented as an activity of *agenda setting* and *framing*. Public opinion is about managing information flows in order to shape public opinion shaping. Agendas are set by increasing the “salience of certain topics via mediated and non-mediated means”, while framing “is used to explain the cases in which issues are already discussed among public” (p. 62). Agenda-setting, therefore, presumes introduction of new subjects and topics for public debate.

Having the above-mentioned public diplomacy components in mind, it can be argued that public diplomacy is a doable function for diasporas as quite often diasporas are willing and able to engage

in activities aimed at aiding the foreign policy of the homeland and opinion-making in the host land, thanks to the “liminal political subjectivity” implying actorness “‘betwix and between’ that of insider and outsider (E. L. E. Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 10) which will be discussed in detail in the next sections.

In summary, despite the long existence of public diplomacy in international relations, the era of new diplomacy has transformed it by making it more dialogical, engaging, public and technological. And in this context, it becomes useful looking at non-state actors, namely diasporas, in terms of their role as public diplomats.

### *Public Diplomacy and Social Media*

Technological advancement such as the advent of the internet and, in the course of the last two decades has provided people with quicker and more comfortable ways of communicating among themselves. The practitioners of public diplomacy now can use the new technological means to reach out the target public much quicker and more often, and why not, engage with new ones. As Kent and Taylor have put it, “technology itself can neither create nor destroy relationships; rather, it is how the technology is used that influences organization-public relationships”(Kent & Taylor, 1998, p. 324).

This significant change could not have bypassed and have influenced the world of international relations, in general, and public diplomacy, in particular. In this regard, one of the most widely used tools are the social media the diffusion of which allows “to partially bypass traditional gatekeepers and directly engage foreign publics via platforms such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram” (Golan, Manor & Arceneaux, 2019, p. 6). Given that the social media serves as the platform for web-based public-diplomacy and the fact that its use in public diplomacy

is still under researched, there rises a demand to view the link between social media and 21<sup>st</sup>-century public diplomacy from a practical perspective (Al-Hasni, 2020; Xiguang & Jing, 2010).

Furthermore, the social media have started to play a key role in everyday diplomatic activities due to them being a “complex set of instruments designed by actors (e.g. Google, Facebook) to interact with others and systematize their interests in social, political and economic spheres (Melissen & de Keulenaar, 2017, p. 2). In this context, the increasing wide use of social media in public diplomacy in recent decades is conditioned by a general paradigm shift in public diplomacy from propaganda to a “relational, networked, and collaborated” approach, referred to as “new PD” (Park, Chung & Park, 2019, p. 1). Totally in line with the aim and spirit of public diplomacy “engaging with target audiences through social media is a way to overcome the limitations of traditional diplomacy, as it enhances mutual understanding and shared interests among countries and the public” (p. 2).

In other words, thanks to the mediatory capacity, the social media serve as a unique way to access culture, politics and economic activities, and when it comes to practitioners, “actors behind popular platforms have a powerful political impact in how they organize one’s access to information and capital (p. 2). With their ability to facilitate instant communication between individuals, the modern means of communication, especially the social media, also serve as amplifiers of networking power (Park & Lim, 2014). When it comes to public diplomacy activities, “the new media ecology” has given opportunities to governments to promote their foreign policy agendas and soft power not only through broadcasting technology but also social media platforms (Golan et al., 2019, p. 4). Moreover, “the migration of governments to social media were intrinsically linked to diplomats’ need to frame events, actors, and issues in a new global media ecology brought about by social media platforms” (p. 6). However, as it will be discussed below, states are not the only players in international relations and public diplomacy, in particular. And

while the existing literature is mainly focused on public diplomacy efforts by governments, this thesis will throw a fresh new insight into online public diplomacy by non-state actors.

### Diaspora: Definition and Importance

The academic interest towards diasporas has increased from the second half of the 1970s and 1980s and led to the formation of the field of Diaspora Studies. This interest is explained by the “continual increases in the mobility of people, assisted by ever improving transportation and telecommunications”(Aikins, Sands & White, 2009, p. 9). The importance of diasporas as a subject of research has increased due to the quantitative indicators showing increasingly high numbers of people leaving their home countries in search of better opportunities. It has been estimated that “1 person in 35 in the world is an international migrant and the number of people who have settled in a country other than their own is 180 million” (p. 10). The interest is also caused by the consequences of migration, in general, since without migration there would be no diasporas. Cooper et. al consider voluntary and forced migration as an issue of the new millennium (Cooper et al., 2013, pp. 54–55). According to them, “the movement of people in large numbers, whether seeking fresh opportunities in new lands through migration or escaping cycles of violence, famine, persecution, natural disasters, or poverty, has been a major political problem domestically in many countries and a major diplomatic challenge internationally”(p. 55).

Since then, scholars have examined the various aspects of diaspora, including types, characteristics, identity issues as well as the role in and the relations with the homeland and host land. “Just as diplomacy studies have increasingly questioned what is meant by ‘diplomacy’, so the core concept of diaspora has been subject to critical debate within the field of diaspora studies” (Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 5). The more general and broad definition by Walker Connor suggests that diaspora is a “segment of a people living outside the homeland” (Safran, 1991, p. 83). Relying

on Connor's definition as a point of departure, Safran further extended the concept by describing diaspora as an "expatriate minority community" (p. 83), thus emphasizing its mobilized nature. Cohen has defined diasporas in terms of the reasons behind migration and has distinguished several types of diasporas (Cohen, 2008) such as victim; labor; imperial; trade and business diasporas. In general, the motivations underlying these categories of diasporas are identified as forced and voluntary. In the same vein, by emphasizing ethnicity as a core feature, Sheffer has defined diaspora as "a group of people with the same ethnic background residing in different countries and formed as a result of difficult circumstances such as conflicts, wars, genocides or economic and financial issues" (Sheffer, 2013; Ter-Matevosyan et al., 2017).

As the interest towards diasporas grew, some scholars began to worry that the term "diaspora" which traditionally was used to refer to the Jewish, and later also to Greek and Armenian social formations (Tölölyan, 1996) was becoming vague. There is a tendency to use the term as "metaphoric designations for different categories of people" by adding meanings and values such as immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guestworker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community (Safran, 1991; Tölölyan, 1991) which deprives the term of its "discriminating power", (Brubaker, 2005, p. 3) thus making 'diaspora' mean anything and everything. Nevertheless, the current research will rely on the definition offered by Shain and Barth, according who define diaspora as "people with a common origin who reside, more or less on a permanent basis, outside the borders of their ethnic or religious homeland— whether that homeland is real or symbolic, independent or under foreign control. Diaspora members identify themselves, or are identified by others—inside and outside their homeland—as part of the homeland's national community, and as such are often called upon to participate, or are entangled, in homeland-related affairs" (Shain & Barth, 2003).

One of the main characteristics of diasporas is that they maintain relations with the homeland and preserve their ethnic identity by staying attached to their roots (Aikins et al., 2009; Safran, 1991). According to Vertovec, “belonging to a diaspora entails a consciousness of, or emotional attachment to, commonly claimed origins and cultural attributes associated with them. Such origins and attributes may emphasize ethno-linguistic, regional, religious, national, or other features. Concerns for homeland developments and the plight of co-diaspora members in other parts of the world flow from this consciousness and emotional attachment” (Vertovec, 2005). This consciousness is the realization of being the members of a dispersed identity group with continuing common ties to the homeland (Brinkerhoff, 2012). Residing in a different country and still being attached to the homeland is what underlies the “transnational moment” of their being (Tölölyan, 1996) which makes diasporas an actor both in the homeland and the host land. For example, the Indian diaspora of educated generation is transferring skills and knowledge and helping India in its development of the IT industry (Aikins & White, 2011, p. 99; Pandey, 2014). Diasporas also contribute as a force of economic growth by sending remittances and boosting urban regeneration, through foreign direct investments, trade, tourism, transferring norms and social remittances (Constant & Zimmermann, 2016; Joseph, 2011). Apart from investments in the homeland, the value of diasporas in the era of new diplomacy diasporas also act as diplomacy agents. The era of new public diplomacy is about pluralization of actors and, in this regard, as non-state actors, diasporas are more than just a provider of financial contributions since “in many ways diasporas are quintessential diplomats, mediating between homeland and host communities and playing key brokering roles” (Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 15). It is for this reason that in our globalized world what makes embassies concerned with their diaspora, even if they have taken up citizenship in their new homeland, is that the diaspora is an element of rising importance as it is increasingly a link between the states concerned (Airapetova, 2019; K. Rana, 2016, p. 152).

## Diaspora Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy

### *Public Diplomacy as a Practice of Diaspora Diplomacy*

“One does not encounter much specialist writing on the theme of diaspora diplomacy—even the term may appear novel to some— though the subject receives increasing attention in the media” (Rana, 2011, p. 94). Indeed, given the growing interest in state-driven diaspora strategies and in the role of diasporas as diplomats, yet still limited academic research on the topic, the link between diaspora and diplomacy still needs to be further explored (Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 3). However, it has been predicted that Diaspora Diplomacy will be increasingly important in the years to come (Rana, 2011, p. 109).

Diaspora diplomacy has been understood as “a collective action that is driven, directed, and sustained by the energy and charisma of a broad range of migrants who influence another country’s culture, politics, and economics in a manner that is mutually beneficial for the homeland and the new home base” (Gonzales, 2012, as cited in Constant & Zimmermann, 2016, p. 20). Similarly, Ho & McConnel (2017) describe diaspora diplomacy by linking the field of diaspora studies to the concepts ‘new diplomacy’ and ‘public diplomacy’. Ho & McConnel have offered suggested a definition of diaspora diplomacy which “follows critical scholarship that approaches diplomacy as ‘humanist aspirations’ that have the potential to bring about changes in ‘how we live together and in relation to others’ (Ho & McConnell, 2017, p. 2). According to them, Diasporas Diplomacy is an “evolution in diplomatic practices in general”(p. 2) and should be understood as a “particular mode of diaspora politics that goes beyond participation in domestic politics, and which entails communication and mediation with multiple stakeholders and audiences (p. 15). The authors have distinguished two modalities of diaspora diplomacy: diplomacy *through* diaspora and diplomacy *by* diaspora. From these modalities, the former has been labeled as diplomacy “*in the service of states*” while the latter is about independent agendas pushed by the diaspora. The current research



will focus on the ‘*through*’ dimension of diaspora diplomacy since it suggests that “to their ability to foster cross-community relations through means that go “beyond the formal initiatives of the state”(2017, p. 8) diasporas are relevant public diplomacy actors, in a sense, agents. The *through* approach intertwines the functions of the state, namely those of public diplomacy, with those of a diaspora. And this is what the current research strives to demonstrate – the relevance of diasporas as (online) public diplomacy agents. Diaspora diplomacy, thus, is conceptualized as “diaspora assemblages composed of states, non-state and other international actors that function as constituent components of assemblages, connected through networks and flows of people, information and resources”(p. 16).

#### *Diasporas as Public Diplomacy Agents*

The activities of diasporas can vary in strength, intensity, and success, yet diasporas, especially in countries with liberal political system, more or less, are involved in some political or diplomatic activities in the host country (Constant & Zimmermann, 2016; Shain & Barth, 2003). The links diasporas maintain in their country of origin can be a useful tool in strengthening bilateral ties despite these communities are often assimilated into the recipient nation's culture and society,” (Cooper et al., 2013, p. 209).

As the ‘new public diplomacy’ recognizes the importance of engaging with non-state actors, diasporas are increasingly being recognized as public diplomacy agents. In this regard, diasporas, both emigrant and immigrant, are an important public diplomacy asset (Goirizelaia & Iturregui, 2019; Noya, 2006). “When saying that the diasporas are the new actors of public diplomacy we talk about the term ‘Diaspora diplomacy’ which has been used to refer to ‘the growing public diplomacy trend in which diasporas are contributing more actively to the recasting of real world cross-cultural exchanges and relations’ (González, 2014, as cited in Goirizelaia & Iturregui, 2019).

Diasporas are cultural ambassadors of their homeland as even after emigration they continue to follow the customs and traditions of the homeland (Tigau, 2014). They are transnational transporters of cultures, and manifestations of "de-territorialized communities." (Shain & Barth, 2003).

In public diplomacy, diasporas possess several advantages that help them to serve public diplomacy agents. Those advantages are: (Airapetova, 2019, p. 278)

- They serve as “cultural mediators” by overcoming the differences between home and host lands;
- They are “communication highways” transcending national borders and national media, influencing policy making both at home and abroad;
- They serve a political function by transporting policy values beyond a country’s borders.

In summary, in the era of new public diplomacy, thanks to the transnational nature relying on the links in the host land and attachment to the homeland, diasporas appear to be public diplomacy agents.

## Armenian Diaspora

### *Formation of the Armenian Diaspora – A Historical Overview*

“The history of Armenian migration is almost as old as the history of Armenia itself” (Chaloyan, 2017). As it was mentioned before, Armenian diaspora is placed among the Greek, Jewish, and also Chinese diasporas as the ones having relatively deep historical roots (Sheffer, 2013). What is interesting about the Armenian diaspora is that as a home country, Armenia is a unique case among different diaspora communities as there are more Armenians currently living outside of Armenia than within its borders, according to the estimated number of the global

Armenian population amounting to ten million whereas those living in the country are not more than three million people (Bolsajian, 2018).

After the fall of the Bagratid Armenia and the second Armenian Kingdom in the eleventh and fourteenth centuries respectively, for centuries, Armenians did not have statehood and were under domination of foreign empires that sought not only to conquer the territory of Armenia, but to physically exterminate Armenians as a nation (Chaloyan, 2017). For this reason, most Armenians found shelter and created communities abroad. Accordingly, at the initial stage of the diaspora formation, the dominant motivations were fleeing massacres, forced displacement and persecution in conditions of absent statehood (Tololyan, 2005; T. S. Torosyan & Saradyan, 2017). In this regard, by Cohen's classification of diasporas, Armenians fall under "victim" diaspora category (Cohen, 2008) as migration was forced rather than voluntary. However, due to the consequences of some geopolitical shifts of the previous century, especially the fall of the USSR, many Armenians emigrated in search of better life conditions and, therefore, some Armenian diaspora communities can fall under several categories developed by Cohen. For example, the modern (post-Soviet) part of Armenian diaspora can be considered both as "labor" and "victim" diaspora as it was formed because people sought economic wellbeing, but also because they fled pogroms, ethnic cleansing and displacement in the Soviet Union, namely Soviet Azerbaijan (Torosyan et.al, 2017). As a result, it turned from a 'victim' to 'transforming' diaspora, combining both political (forced) and socio-economic (voluntary) factors (Torosyan et. al, 2020).

Based on the historical developments, periodization of the history of Armenian diaspora is divided into four phases with varying time span and qualitative characteristics of formation and functioning of the Armenian diaspora (Torosyan et. al, 2020).

Armenian diaspora is usually associated with the Armenian genocide at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when about one and a half million Armenians were killed in the Western Armenia

(now Eastern Turkey) by the Turkish authorities in the Ottoman Empire, and those who stayed alive either had to adopt Islam or emigrate. However, the history of the emigration of Armenians dates back even before the Genocide. Specifically, the *initial stage* of the formation of the Armenian diaspora began in the 3-4<sup>th</sup> centuries as a result of the forced displacement by the Sasanid kings, whereas the most massive flows date back to Byzantine rule following the latter's occupation of Armenia and the population's forced deportations to the Empire's less populated areas (Tololyan, 2005). Another major flow took place in 1033-1071, during Armenia's occupation by Seljuk Turks, with a destination to Cilicia where Armenians established the Kingdom of Cilicia (Tololyan, 2005). However, due to the invasion of Mamluks in 1375, also the Second Armenian Kingdom collapsed resulting in a new emigration flow to Europe.

*The second phase* of emigration started with the conquest of Byzantine capital Constantinople in 1453 and establishment of the Ottoman Empire running a policy of forced Turkicization by displacing and persecuting Christian nations (Tololyan, 2005; Torosyan et. al, 2020). Because of this, Armenians emigrated not only from Armenia, but also from other annexed territories to Eastern Europe and elsewhere. Forced migrations were numerous especially during the wars between the Ottoman Empire and Persia, eventually leading to the division of Armenia between the two. Later, under the Ottoman rule, the mass repressions and the Genocide of Armenians in Western Armenia, the victims who managed to stay alive had to permanently flee the motherland and find shelter in Eastern Armenia or Armenian communities abroad (Cohen, 1996 in Torosyan et. al., 2020).

*The third phase* of migration is mainly about immigration rather than emigration from Armenia. This is the phase when the term 'colony', previously used to refer to Armenian communities abroad, was replaced by the term 'Diaspora'. These changes are explained by the restoration of statehood, embodied in the First Armenian Republic of 1918-1920, and the Socialist

Armenian Republic (Torosyan et. al, 2020). In this phase, the Great Repatriation was organized in several flows aimed at improving the demographic situation in the Homeland (Chaloyan, 2017; Tololyan, 2005; Torosyan & et. al, 2020). However, despite the positive change in the demographic data, even this period was not void of emigration, mainly due to the Soviet Union's totalitarian regime manifested in persecutions, and economic factors such as finding a more profitable job abroad. This is the phase when the seeds of Armenian diaspora's transformation were thrown.

The *fourth phase* is characterized by the transformation of the Armenian diaspora, mass emigration following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the change in Homeland-Diaspora relations. Due to significant geopolitical shifts, Armenia was suffering the consequences of drastic transition from communist regime to democracy and free market economy leading to crises in political, economic and social systems. In addition, Armenia was affected by the destructions of 1988 Spitak earthquake, and external factors such as the blockade of Armenia by Azerbaijan and Turkey at the beginning of 1990s (Görgülü, 2009). This led to mass emigration from the Homeland and, consequently to radical changes in Diaspora and Diaspora-Homeland relations. Despite in this period Armenians emigrated due to ethnic cleansing and pogroms during the war unleashed by Azerbaijan in response to the exercise of the right of self-determination by the Nagorno Karabakh (Torosyan et al., 2017; Torosyan et al., 2020), the mass emigration was also conditioned by social-economic factors which transformed the *victim* diaspora into a *labor* diaspora. At the same time, given the economic hardships in the Armenia, Diaspora was increasingly perceived as a source of financial assistance to the Homeland.

In summary, migration of Armenians has a long history spanning through centuries. Currently, the traditional/old diaspora communities, such as those in the Middle East, continue to maintain their existence, but there have also emerged new communities motivated by social-economic factors. However, apart from these two main types, there are also communities that have undergone a

transformation and now appear to be a mixture of the old and the new. The Armenian communities in Italy and Poland belong to this category.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Approach**

The current research aims to shed light on the diaspora's relevance as a public diplomacy actor on social media. It will attempt to find out how diaspora communities use social media for public diplomacy. The purpose of the research is to show that in the 21st century, when we witness pluralization of actors and tools of diplomacy, diaspora becomes an important actor with its dual identity and access to both the homeland and hostland, and is able to utilize the technological advancement for bridging the two worlds through public diplomacy. In the course of the research, an interpretivist epistemological position will be adopted, stressing the understanding of the social world by means of examining the interpretation of that world by its participants (Bryman, 2012, p. 380). The adoption of this position is justified by the research purposes and goals requiring from the researcher to grasp the subjective meanings behind social action (p. 30). At the same time, constructionist ontology will be adopted which asserts that “social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors. It implies that social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant state of revision” (2012, p. 33).

The current research will be done through a comparative case study of Armenian diaspora communities in Italy and Poland. According to Bryman, a comparative design consists of studying two or more contrasting cases using more or less identical methods and “embodies the logic of comparison, in that it implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are

compared in relation to two or more meaningfully contrasting cases or situations” (2012, p. 72). In other words, the comparative case study “is the systematic comparison of two or more data points (‘cases’) obtained through the use of case study method” (Kaarbo & Beasley, 1999, p. 373). Having this in mind, the cases have been selected based on similarities such as the diaspora type – both are transformed communities that include representatives of both the victim and labor diaspora- and availability of community structure assuming the existence of a union of community organizations, but also some differences such as the size and availability of a minority status within the host country. What refers to the selection of the organizations, it is based on the availability of presence on social media, namely Facebook platform.

The value of the research is, first of all, justified by the fact that it will be among the few academic works that will discuss diasporas in the context of international relations and diplomacy, particularly public diplomacy. Furthermore, the research will stand out among others in that it will discuss diaspora communities’ public diplomacy activities on an online platform, something which has not been touched upon by any researcher so far. For this purpose, the research will implement an innovative method of using social media as a source of data. The contribution of the research, carried out with a fresh perspective and innovative methodology, will not only be an addition to the existing academic works on public diplomacy, diaspora and communication, but will have a practical value as it can help both the diaspora communities and official diplomatic agencies to see the diaspora as relevant actors in diplomacy, in general, and online public diplomacy, in particular. Moreover, the research will help the practitioners, especially the underperforming ones, to get an insight into how the other community organizations do public diplomacy, compare with and reflect on their own, as well as suggest ways for improvement.

## **Synthesis of Cull and Sevin's Public Diplomacy Models**

In order to show the public diplomacy practices of the two communities, this research will use the synthesis of Cull's taxonomy and E. Sevin's pathways since they not only overlap but also complement each other. For example, Sevin's attraction corresponds to Cull's cultural diplomacy. "Historically, cultural diplomacy has meant a country's policy to facilitate the export of examples of its culture" (Cull, 2008, p. 33) since "soft power arises from the attractiveness of a nation's values, culture, and policies" (Nye, 2004, p. 256). In other words, "culture has emerged as the new dynamic in international relations" as it "increasingly serves as the means for defining political identity, as well as allegiance" (Zaharna, 2007, p. 215). And throughout this process, "culture and communication are intertwined, in that culture shapes the production of information by political sponsors and the interpretation of that information by publics" (p. 215). Similarly, agenda-setting corresponds to Cull's advocacy. Relying on constructivism, public diplomacy can also "have the objective of influencing the construction of structures and identities" and "the basic assumption in the public debates is that it is possible to influence the topics and coverage of certain issues" (Sevin, 2017, p. 61). "Public diplomacy projects can change the social constructions of norms by prioritizing certain subjects and viewpoints over others" which is done through management of information flows (p. 62). Elements of advocacy are present in all areas of public diplomacy, and this is the reason why its "short-term utility has historically led to a bias toward this dimension and a tendency to place it at the center of any public diplomacy structure" (Cull, 2008, p. 32). In the era of new public diplomacy, information management is facilitated by technologies and the use of media which are what constitutes the international broadcasting suggested by Cull (2008; Cull & Sadler, 2009). Public diplomacy is "when state and nonstate actors use the media and other channels of communication to influence public opinion in foreign societies" thus helping to understand the uses of media as an instrument of foreign policy (Gilboa, 2001, p. 4). Media outlets



can influence the salience of topics and lead publics to think about certain topics, and the issues receiving the most attention in the media will be perceived by the public as the most important (Gilboa, 2008, pp. 63–64). Nowadays, the Internet offers opportunities for individuals to interact with information (Entman, 2008). In this regard, the rise of social media networks has significantly changed ‘new diplomacy’ practices in transforming media environment (Pamment, 2014). Social media networks, technologies or the Web 2.0 serve as meeting platforms for individuals to get informed and discuss pressing issues, and social media networks, therefore, are a useful tool for reaching out the public (Costa, 2017; Glassman, 2008). Public diplomacy, thus, implies the use of media and culture to facilitate the implementation of foreign policy and to improve the international image ... (Nieto & Peña, 2010). The three mentioned components can be carried out in a dialogical way, through Cull’s exchange diplomacy. Since in the era of instant communication exchange does not necessarily presume sending/receiving citizens to/from overseas, exchange should be understood in terms of relationship building through what Sevin calls ‘socialization. Unlike traditional diplomacy, public diplomacy expands the functions of diplomatic activities by providing platforms to build relations and engage with non-state actors, including individuals, civil society groups and corporations (Zaharna, 2007). Public diplomacy, thus, is about building relations through exchange and collaboration (Sevin, 2017). Since relationship building is seen as an essential objective of public diplomacy, practitioners interact with target audiences in the form of collaborative projects that bring different actors together to work for the same project (Cowan & Arsenault, 2008; Sevin, 2017). Collaboration serves as a tool for promotion of foreign policy, cross-national understanding, respect and relationships (Cowan & Arsenault, 2008). The activities aimed at attraction or advocacy, can also be coupled with the listening function as it has traditionally been an element of each constituent practice of public diplomacy (Cull, 2008). In its basic form, it can cover “an event whereby an international actor seeks out a foreign audience and

engages them by listening rather than by speaking” (p. 32). Listening is also possible to observe on social media since in the digital age it serves as a platform for events aimed at socialization and for the public to express its opinions.

This research will, therefore, apply the synthesis of Cull’s taxonomy and Sevin’s pathways and observe the public policy practices according to *attraction, advocacy, socialization* and *listening*. The international broadcast is missed out as the current research focuses on only one means of media - the social media - namely the Facebook platform. The method has been applied in the following steps:

- 1) Manual data gathering – Manually collecting all the posts published by the selected organizations throughout the selected period
- 2) Content analysis and categorization - Categorizing the posts into the categories of listening and/or attraction and/or agenda-setting and/or socialization categories. Depending on the content, some of the post have fallen into several categories.

It is, however, worth mentioning that while the components are pre-defined as categories for the posts, the sub-categories or themes of each category are defined based on the content of the post. It is studied how the two communities carried out online public diplomacy throughout the selected period and are identified the similarities and differences between their performances.

### **Content Analysis of Social Media Posts**

Content analysis is defined as a “research method that systematically analyzes the content of communication and can be applied to study any aspect of it, whether manifest or latent” (Pashakhanlou, 2017, p. 449). While the existing literature distinguishes between quantitative and qualitative content analyses, in this research a qualitative content analysis will be carried out. Due to its emphasis on latent meanings. Technically, a ‘qualitative observation’ identifies the presence

or absence of something, in contrast to ‘quantitative observation,’ which involves measuring the degree to which some feature is present....” (Kirk and Miller, 1986, as cited in Cane & Kritzer, 2012, p. 929). Qualitative content analysis requires more efforts than the quantitative one since “determining latent meaning is more demanding and may require a wider examination of the communication or additional background information”(Pashakhanlou, 2017, p. 449). Another difference between the two types of content analysis is that qualitative content analysis does not merely rely on statistical data but “attempts to capture and categorize social phenomena and meanings”(Cane & Kritzer, 2012, p. 929). Before this, however, as Bauer has noticed, first of all, “one needs to have a notion of qualitative distinctions between social categories” since “it is not possible to measure the frequency of a “social fact” until it has been identified” (p. 929). This process of identification is what has been called systematic reduction of communication which is “accomplished by restricting the investigation to the theme(s), concept(s), or word(s) of interest with the aim of condensing the communication to more relevant and manageable pieces of data that can be explored more thoroughly” (Pashakhanlou, 2017, p. 449). When it comes to data collection, for content analysis, any material that conveys a message can be used. These sources can appear in any form of oral and visual communication such as websites, articles, diaries, images, texts, images, videos and so on. From these options, however, the current research will specifically look at the social media (Facebook) posts both in textual, image and video formats and use media sources in order to compare the public diplomacy practices by the two communities.

### **Sampling and Sources**

The research has been done by conducting a qualitative content analysis of social media posts of the selected diaspora organizations. The selection of the organizations is, first of all, based on their presence on Facebook social media platform. Another criterion is the relatively wide spectrum

of activities relevant to public diplomacy and not being limited to a certain direction such as culture, education, sport etc. The selected organizations are the following:

*Italy*

1. Union of Armenians of Italy
2. Armenian Community of Rome

*Poland*

1. Armenian Foundation
2. Polish-Armenian Foundation

Facebook has been chosen as the social media platform since it is not only the biggest social media platform but is also the platform where all of the selected organizations have presence. In total of 1744 Facebook posts have been manually collected and classified according to the abovementioned public diplomacy components. Out of these, 13 posts have been left out either due to the impossibility of identifying their content as over time the content of the posts has been removed by Facebook, or because the content of the posts was not relevant in terms of public diplomacy. The analyzed posts are mainly in the form of texts, but there are also photo- and video-dominated posts. The content analysis of textual materials has been carried out by considering paragraphs as units of analysis. It is for this reason that some of the posts have been categorized under several themes at the same time. The languages of social media posts include Italian, Polish, English, and to a lesser extent, Armenian and French languages.

## Findings and Analysis: Public Diplomacy Activities of the Armenian Communities in Poland and Italy

### Attraction/Cultural Diplomacy

According to the websites of the Armenian diaspora organizations in Poland, one of the main activities they carry out is the promotion and popularization of the Armenian culture. The Armenian Foundation, particularly, has mentioned that its activities include cultivating culture through material sources, which are published on an ongoing basis and put into public use (Armenian Foundation, 2009). Moreover, it is emphasized there that the activities related to culture, such as promotion, are aimed at a wider and external audience through special events presenting the different spheres from music to cuisine. Similarly, the Statute of the Polish-Armenian Foundation states that popularization and dissemination of knowledge about the Armenian culture and history among the Polish society is one of its goals (Fundacja Polsko-Ormiańska, n.d.). These statements basically assume efforts and activities aimed at exercising soft power” which is at the core of public diplomacy. It is noteworthy that despite it has not been explicitly mentioned by the organizations about the use of social media for those purposes, the results of the research demonstrate that both organizations, to varying extent, have used the social media, namely the Facebook platform, in order to promote the different aspects of kinstate “soft power resources” (Nye, 2008). ranging from culture, examples, internal practices and policies, as well as its relations with others.

“Culture refers to both 'peoples' and their ordinary social characteristics, traditions and day-to-day patterns of behaviour which mark them out as 'different', as well as to more exceptional representations of creative and artistic endeavor (Carbone, 2017, p. 68). In an attempt to share this “cultural knowledge” (Murthy, 2017), the Armenian community organizations in Poland have tried to spread the kinstate culture as a soft power resource for public diplomacy. “Visiting museums,

art galleries, musical events, theatre and opera, represent the main activities realized by tourists within a destination” (Carbone, 2017, p. 68) and this is what the organizations have basically tried to promote on social media. The community organizations have tried to virtually familiarize the public with those cultural resources online.

For example, both the Polish-Armenian and Italo-Armenian organizations have published posts on Facebook aimed at popularization of Armenian *music, musicians and dances*. Such posts include Youtube videos containing Armenian music, as well as news and information about Armenian classic and contemporary singers and composers, their achievements, as well as updates on upcoming musical events, with participation of Armenian musicians, where it would be possible to learn something about Armenian musical culture from first hand. In comparison, however, the Italo-Armenian community organizations have promoted the Armenian music and musicians more actively than the Polish-Armenian community organizations, as the former has dedicated 100, whereas the latter has dedicated only 45 posts throughout the entire year of 2021.

## Figure 1

### *Promotion of Armenian music by Polish-Armenian organizations*



*A post informing about Armenian world-famous musician Jivan Gasparian's passing away. The post is featured by a music video.*

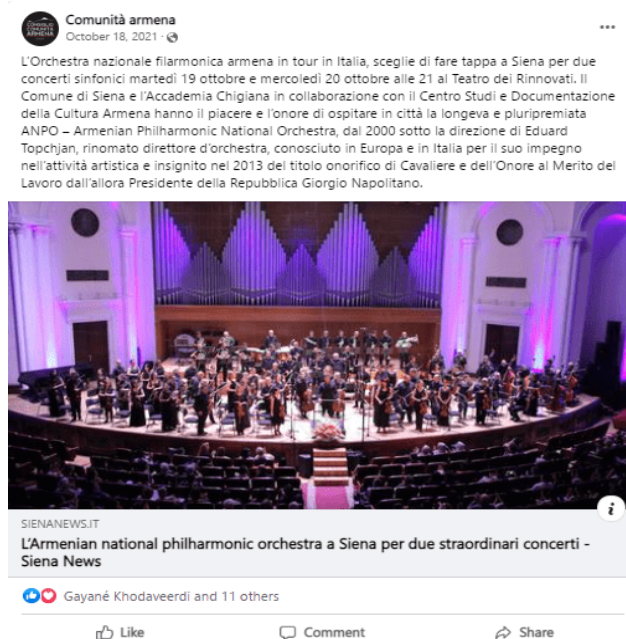
*A post informing the followers about where to listen to Armenian musician Eva Gevorgyan's music.*

## Figure 2

### *Promotion of Armenian music by Italo-Armenian organizations.*



*An article about an upcoming concert to be played by Armenian musicians-siblings Sergey and Lusine Khachatryans in Rome.*



*A which informs about the Armenian National Orchestra's tour in Italy, but also presents the accomplishments in Italy and Europe.*

Since the aim of cultural diplomacy is to make the practitioner – or, in this case, the kinstate and its people – known to the target public, one way of doing it is to present the subject's *history*, Especially the heroic episodes tend to create a more positive image of a nation, and in this sense, are useful tool for public diplomacy. On the other hand, however, since public diplomacy is aimed at connecting two publics, the presentation of tragic moments in history can arouse compassion and create some emotional connectedness between those publics. In line with the goal to make the Armenian history known to the target public, along with the purpose to maintain the historical memories alive within the migrant community in the host land, the public diplomacy of the community organizations has presented both the heroic scenes and tragic moments from their nation's history in order to create those links between the two publics with. When it comes to posting about history, the results of the two communities differ significantly in favor of the Italo-

Armenian community organizations that published a total of 37 posts compared to the 14 by the Polish-Armenian organizations.

### Figure 3

#### Posts about Armenian history by the Polish-Armenian organizations



Historic Armenia ▶ Armenia - An Ancient Land  
September 13, 2021 · 🌐

On the occasion of the 106th anniversary of the Musa Dagh heroic battle and the 82nd anniversary of the founding of Anjar, Musadaghtsiz/the people of Musa Dagh celebrated the anniversary of the occasion in Anjar on September 10th.

Those who survived the Genocide resettled in cities all over the world, keeping their faith, language and traditions alive. You might say that the painful history is the glue that binds the Armenians all over the world. The diaspora Armenians have built churches, schools, businesses, and homes for the elderly with having nothing they built everything with their bare hands.

**Unique photos of old Anjar, from when they first settled in 1939.**

**Links of various posts of the real Musa Dagh in Historic Armenia, photos are taken by the Administrator of this page on pilgrimages throughout the recent years:**

<https://www.facebook.com/historicarmenia/posts/1912118615525607>

<https://www.facebook.com/historicarmenia/posts/1881348468602622>

<https://www.facebook.com/historicarmenia/posts/1881332058604263>

<https://www.facebook.com/historicarmenia/posts/1877908602279942>

👍❤️ 9

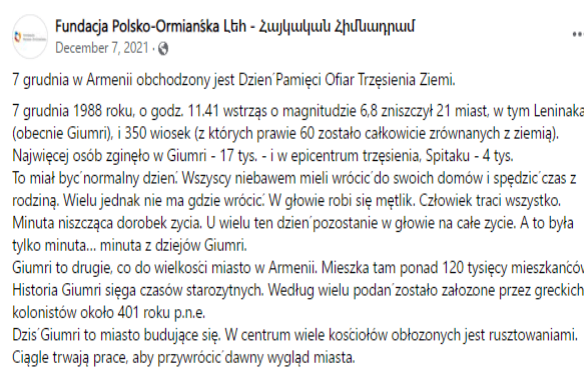
3 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

A shared post about the heroic battle of Armenians in Musa Dagh.



👍❤️ 6

3 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

➦ Share

A post about the devastating earthquake in 1988.



## Figure 4

### Posts about Armenian history by the Italo-Armenian organizations



*A video post about the history of Artsakh/Nagorno. It reads “History of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). Artsakh is the Armenian name of one of the 15 provinces of historic Armenia, always majorly populated by Armenians, of which there are loads of historical and artistic testimonies”.*



*A post about Armenia's historical relations with Persia/Iran, Russia and Turkey, its modernization and diaspora.*

It goes without saying that **art and architecture** stand at the core of a nation's culture and can appear to be a powerful source of attraction toward a nation's talent, taste and character. As N. Cull has described it, architecture has always been one of the most enduring resources for branding as prestigious buildings are the calling cards of their cities (Cull, 2015). For that purpose, the Facebook platform has been used for posting about the various monuments and architectural gems of which Armenians, including the diaspora, are proud. In particular, those posts include articles about Armenian architecture both inside and outside Armenia, as well as information about events dedicated to Armenian arts and architecture. Nevertheless, by comparing the efforts aimed at spreading the kinstate culture by showing off its arts and architecture, it can be said that again the Italo-Armenian organizations have been more active with their 61 posts compared to the 13 posts by the Polish-Armenian community organizations.

Figure 5

Promotion of Armenian art and architecture by Polish-Armenian organizations



A post about Armenian cathedral in Lviv.



A post about inauguration of Armenian Khachkar (a cross-stone).

Figure 6

Promotion of Armenian art and architecture by Italo-Armenian organizations



A post about a 11<sup>th</sup> century church in Armenian architectural style in Italy's Puglia region.



An article which presents the artworks in Armenia's capital Yerevan.

Closely linked to art and architecture is the promotion of *nature and tourism* for the kinstate. In this regard, one way of making a culture attractive to the target public is to view the audience as a tourist. Undoubtedly, attraction of the audience as “tourists” is easier to do by showing what could interest a real tourist the most – the sites worth visiting, the nature, pieces of advice on what to see or, generally, how to spend time in the country of destination. The difference between the promotion of tourism and art/architecture is the goal of boosting tourism through general advice of what to do in the country of destination, as well as by showing the country’s natural landscapes. The posts aimed at promotion of tourism to Armenia or simply presenting the wonders of Armenia were, of course, intertwined with culture, but as a separate category it presents the kinstate as a touristic destination by internationalizing the key destinations. These posts include, for example, articles, videos with pieces of advice, and sometimes also photos of Mount Ararat which is located in former Western Armenia (current Eastern Turkey) and is considered to be a sacred mountain. In the promotion of tourism and nature, the posts of the Italo-Armenian community again exceed the ones by the Polish-Armenian community with a ratio of 35 and 4 posts respectively.

## Figure 7

*Promotion of tourism and Armenian geographic landscapes by Polish-Armenian organizations*



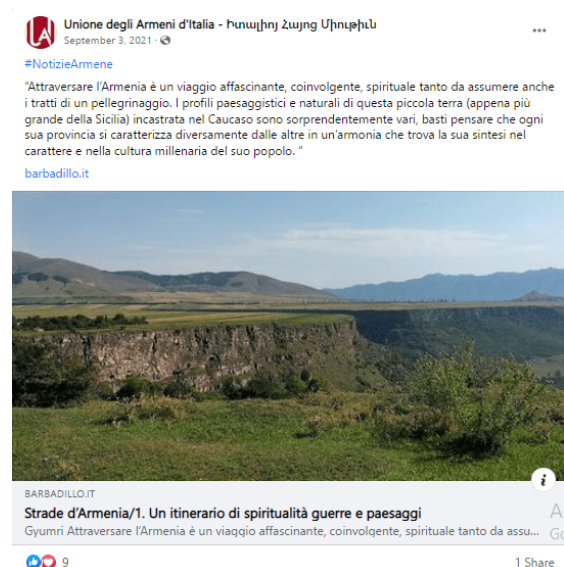
*A post with recommendations on what to do in Armenia as a tourist.*



*The picture of Mount Ararat in Western Armenia (current Eastern Turkey) visible also from Armenia.*

## Figure 8

### *Promotion of tourism and Armenian geographic landscapes by Italo-Armenian organizations*



*A post presenting Armenia as a land of surprisingly various natural landscapes, a country where each province is characterized by different from the other, yet still in harmony found in the synthesis of its people's character and millennial culture.*



*A post presenting Armenia as a "pearl in the Caucasus"*

Another kinstate cultural attribute which perfectly fits into the understanding of soft power resource is the kinstate *literature, language and authors*. According to Daniel Sip, "literature can work for cultural diplomacy as it can allow readers to imagine foreign countries or foreign cultures; characterizations of protagonists can invite us to empathize with people we would usually never meet or even fear, and even fictitious societies can potentially make us understand the workings of distant cultures" (Šíp, 2011, p. 1). According to Edward Nawotka, although books, literature and authors are often wildly unpredictable, and using books and literature can often be a risky proposition, books are an interesting instrument in cultural diplomacy" and it is for this reason that "numerous countries around the world sponsor large exhibitions of their authors and the translation of their books abroad." (Nawotka, 2013). In fact, language and literature have the ability to attract and, therefore, are a useful public diplomacy tool. Having the purpose to attract the foreign public, the Armenian community organizations in both countries have tried to use literature and language

as a soft power resource for their cultural diplomacy. For this purpose, they have used their Facebook accounts to present the Armenian literature, language and authors. On their accounts, the community organizations have published translations of Armenian poems, posted information about newly-inaugurated books by contemporary Armenian authors, disseminated information about events involving Armenian authors, with possibility of interaction with representatives of the host public. Some posts have also attempted to familiarize the audience with Armenian language, alphabet through photos and announcements about the possibilities of taking part in Armenian language courses. With a total number of 45 posts, the Italo-Armenian organizations again have been more active in the promotion of literature and language compared to the Polish-Armenian community organizations that together posted on Facebook about this cultural attribute only 19 times in 2021.

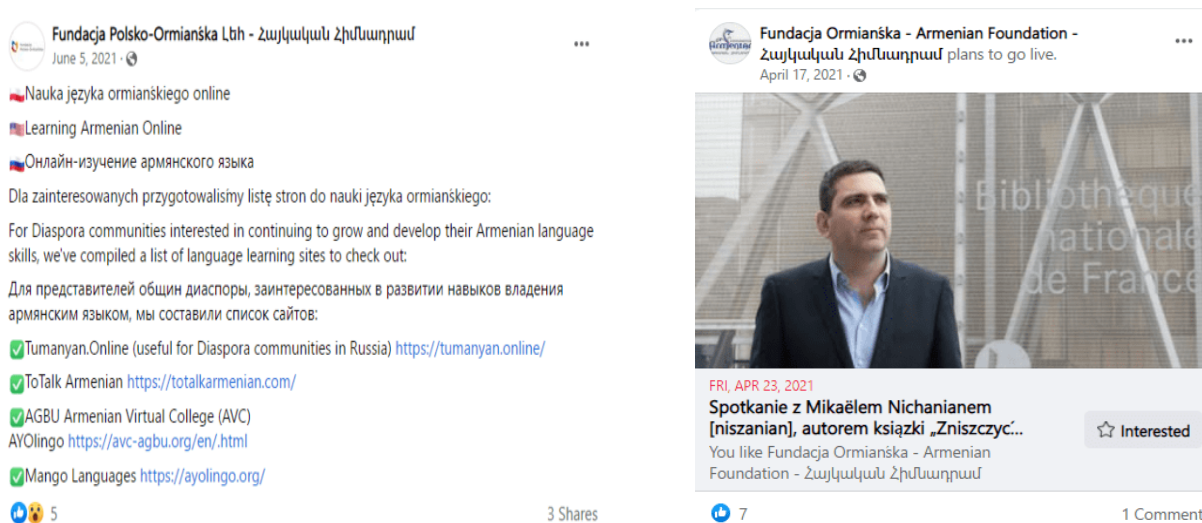
## Figure 9

*Posts about Armenian literature, language and artists by Italo-Armenian organizations*

The image displays two Facebook posts side-by-side. The left post is from the 'Unione degli Armeni d'Italia' (Armenian Union of Italy) and is dated February 19, 2021. It features a photograph of a library or study area with several people sitting at tables, reading or working. The text of the post mentions the celebration of the book-giving day in Armenia on the birthday of the author Hovhannes Tumanyan. The right post is from the 'Comunità armena' (Armenian Community) and is dated September 17, 2021. It features a book cover for 'CON FEDE TI CONFESSO' by Nerses Šnorhali, with a religious illustration of a figure in a white robe. Both posts include interaction buttons like 'Like', 'Comment', and 'Share'.

*A post informing about the Book Day celebrated in Armenia on the occasion of Armenian author Hovhannes Tumanyan's birthday.*

*A post about Nerses Shnorhali, one of the spiritual authors from the 12<sup>th</sup> century.*

**Figure 10***Posts about Armenian literature, language and artists by Polish-Armenian organizations*

*A post informing about useful website links for learning the Armenian language*

*An invitation to participate in an online event with Michael Nicheaniam, an Armenian author*

Not a less powerful tool for public diplomacy is the *national cuisine*. The so called “gastro diplomacy” has been defined as “the act of winning hearts and minds through stomachs”, “a form of a food culture exchange, a promotional tool and a way to influence the public at the cultural level (Luša & Jakešević, 2017, p. 101). In this context, since “gastro diplomacy is intended to encompass a wider range of ‘users’ and aims to deliver a specific message to the larger populations of other countries through food” (2017, p. 102) the diplomatic use of food can be categorized as a soft power resource and, therefore, serve public diplomacy purposes (Reynolds, 2011). It is not for nothing the saying that “the discovery of a new dish confers more happiness on humanity, than the discovery of a new star” (2017, p. 103). In this regard, the community organizations in Poland and Italy have used Facebook to present the Armenian national cuisine to the Polish and Italian audiences. These efforts, however, have been very scarce in the Polish-Armenian community as the Armenian Foundation and the Polish-Armenian Foundation together have published only 3 posts whereas the organizations in Italy have dedicated 20 posts throughout the same period.

Figure 11

Posts about Armenian cuisine by Polish-Armenian organizations



A post which invites the followers to attend an event dedicated to Armenian food.



A post presenting Armenian food products exhibited by the Armenian Embassy during a food exhibition event.

Figure 12

Posts about Armenian cuisine by Italo-Armenian organizations



A post sharing an Armenian recipe and a link to its making process.



A post which presents the traditions related to a UNESCO heritage Armenian bread called "lavash".

According to B. Sanders, “*sport* is a gigantic and powerful medium for the international spread of information, reputations and relationships that are the essence of public diplomacy” (Sanders, 2011). For example, “a well-played game might win some respect from foreign publics for the skills of a nation” and serve the purpose of public diplomacy in terms of creating a positive image of the kinstate and eventually attracting the foreign public. However, despite Armenia’s sport achievements, in this sphere, again, not much has been done throughout the entire year by the Polish-Armenian community organizations as only one post has been published by the Polish-Armenian Foundation, whereas the Italo-Armenian organizations published 23 posts dedicated to Armenian sports and sportsmen/women.

### Figure 13

*A post informing about Armenian delegation’s participation in Fide World Rapid and Blitz Championship held in Warsaw*

Fundacja Polsko-Ormianska Lth - Հայկական Հիմնադրամ  
December 29, 2021 · 🌐

Հարգելի ընկերներ,  
Վարչապետը անցկացվող արագ շախմատի աշխարհի առաջնությանը կարող եք հետևել  
ացցանց, անցնելով հետևյալ հղումով  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndqD6Wkfk3E>  
Տեղեկացնում ենք, որ Լեհաստանի մայրաքաղաքում ցնթացող շախմատի աշխարհի  
առաջնությունում Հայաստանը ներկայացնում են Գաբրիել Սարգսյանը, Սամվել Տեր-  
Սահակյանը, Շանթ Սարգսյանը, Ռոբերտ Հովհաննիսյանը, Մանուել Պետրոսյանը, Հայկ  
Մարտիրոսյանը, Հովհաննես Գաբուզյանը, Տիգրան Պետրոսյանը, Սերոբեյ Մովսիսյանը,  
Էլիսա Դանիելյանը, Սուսաննա Գաբրյանը:  
Աշխարհի առաջնության մրցանակային ֆոնդը 1 միլիոն դոլար է:  
Հաջողություն և հաղթանակ ենք մաղթում մեր հայրենակիցներին!!

MISTRZOSTWA SWIATA W SZACHACH SZYBKICH I BŁYSKAWICZNYCH  
Indywidualne Mistrzostwa Świata w Szachach Szybkich i Błyskawicznych to wielkie doroczne  
święto szachów, które po raz pierwszy w historii zagodzi w Warszawie.  
Są około 300 najwybitniejszych, wśród których nasze Ormianie.  
Sciskajmy kciuki i sledzmy zmagania naszych gwiazd.

**TATNEFT**

**BLITZ - DAY 1**

**FIDE WORLD  
RAPID & BLITZ  
CHESS  
CHAMPIONSHIPS  
WARSAW 2021**

YOUTUBE.COM  
FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship 2021 | Day 1 |  
Commentators: IM Lawrence Trent and WGM Keti Tsatsalashvili All info about the event: <https://...>

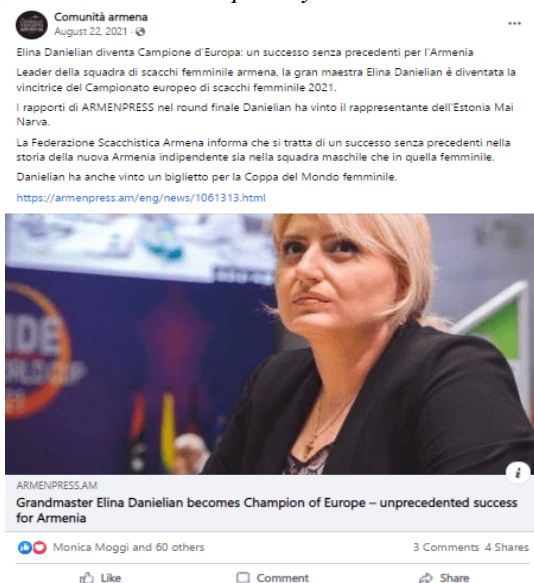
1 Share

Like Comment Share

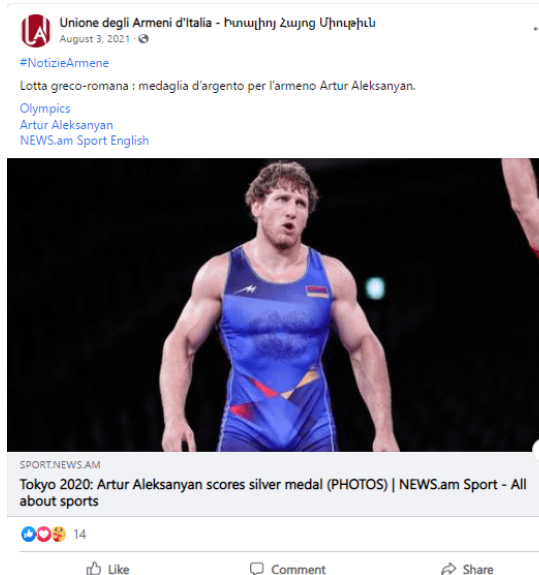


## Figure 14

*Post about Armenian sport by Italo-Armenian organizations.*



*A post about Armenian chessplayer Elina Danielyan becoming a champion of Europe.*



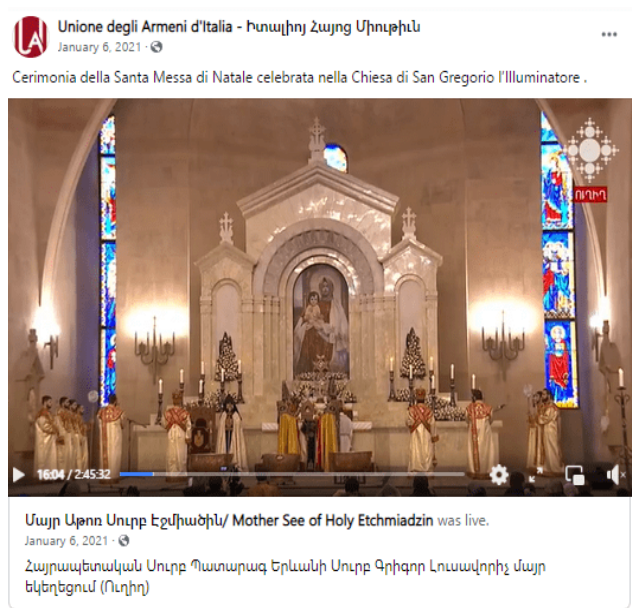
*A post about Armenian wrestler Arthur Aleksanyan earning a silver medal at Tokyo Olympic games.*

However surprising, even *religion, religious figures and updates on community's religious life* can be a public diplomacy tool for attraction. As Seib Philip has noted, “while many believe that there has been a resurgence of religion in the world, a closer look shows that religion, as beliefs, associations, and a motivator for public action, has never gone away” (Saib Philip). Moreover, “religious institutions, leaders, and adherents represent an important segment of the global publics that public diplomacy seeks to influence and partner with” (page 9/20). Especially for Armenians that are a predominantly a Christian nation with huge respect for religious institutions having historically run the nation in times of absence of statehood. Interestingly, Armenian Christianity follow neither the Pope of Rome of Catholic Christianity, nor the leader of the Orthodox Church. This is because Armenians profess the so-called Armenian Apostolic Church led by Armenian Catholicos. In this regard, the presentation of the community's and the kinstate's religious life serves not only the public relations within the community, but also public diplomacy with relations to the host public. The latter refers to emphasizing the unique religious attributes,



## Figure 16

*Posts presenting Armenian religious ceremonies, events and figures by Italo-Armenian organizations*



*A live stream of a religious ceremony held in Armenia.*



*A post about Armenian Saint Gregory of Narek being added in the liturgic calendar by the Pope Francisco.*

Undoubtedly, the first thing one might recall when thinking about tools of cultural diplomacy and attraction, is the *cinema*. It is a powerful medium of public diplomacy as “with its wide reach and accessibility, film has a long history of not only entertaining but also educating, breaking stereotypes, and transcending borders at different levels to foster mutual understanding through exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples” (Lee, 2021). In this regard, there have been some posts aimed at presenting the audience Armenian film industry or the contribution of Armenians in cinematography, in general. However, the theme of films has not been actively covered by the Polish-Armenian organizations who throughout the year posted only twice, whereas the Union of Armenian and the Armenian Community dedicated 13 posts to Armenian cinematography and producers.

Figure 17

A post about Armenian the Oscar-nominated film “Songs of Solomon”



Figure 18

Posts promoting Armenian films by Italo-Armenian organizations



A post about Armenian film “Yeva”.



A post about Armenian director Eric Israelyan's reception of a Papal Medal.

Interestingly, while it might seem that *holidays and celebrations* are about the memory and social relations inside a group, in reality, they claim a cultural value and can be a unique cultural product as in cases of, for example, Halloween and Thanksgiving in the US. While these celebrations are exported to the world as cultural products thanks to the U.S' global reach, internationalization of Armenian holidays among the target public can have the purpose to give more information about the Armenian nation and the values it nurtures. When the activities of the community organizations on social media are compared, the number of posts show that unlike other themes, the promotion of Armenian holidays and celebrations was the one in which the Polish-Armenian organizations were more active than the Italo-Armenian organizations with 28 and 18 posts respectively.

## Figure 19

### *Posts presenting Armenian holidays by Polish-Armenian organizations*



*A post dedicated to Armenian capital's 2803 anniversary*



*A post celebrating the day of the First Armenian Republic*

## Figure 20

### Posts presenting Armenian holidays by Italo-Armenian organizations



A post about Armenian celebration of Sts. Vartanats Day.



A post about celebration of Epiphany and Armenian Christmas. The latter is celebrated on January 6.

**Economic attractiveness, exemplary policies and famous Armenians** that are considered to be another source of pride, have also been touched upon as soft power assets and used for public diplomacy purposes on social media. Some of the posts with such content include, for example, the Armenian Aurora prize for prevention of genocides and granted to those who risk their lives to save others from crimes against humanity, investments into the Armenian economy, Nobel prize laureates with Armenian origins, Armenia's green policies etc. Regarding this theme, the Polish-Armenian organizations again lag behind the efforts made by the Italo-Armenian organizations who published 41 posts compared to only 2 posts published by the former.

## Figure 21

A post about Armenian brandy “Nairi” winning a gold prize at Tokyo Whiskey & Spirit Competition.

Fundacja Ormiańska - Armenian Foundation - Հայկական Հիմնադրամ  
June 10, 2021 · 🌐

Najwyższe uznanie dla ormiańskiego koniaku 20 letniego Ararat Nairi 🇷🇺 🇵🇱

See Translation



**ARARAT “Nairi” Brandy Wins Gold At The Tokyo Whiskey & Spirits Competition.**  
@ZartonkMedia ZM

Zartonk Media  
June 8, 2021 · 🌐

ARARAT “Nairi” Brandy Wins Gold At The Tokyo Whiskey & Spirits Competition.

20-year-old ARARAT Nairi brandy has been awarded the gold medal and “Category Winner” title at the Tokyo Whiskey & Spirits Competition held in Japan, reports ArmRadio.

The Tokyo Whiskey & Spirits Competition, operated by the Japan Research Center, aims to reveal and promote high-quality spirits worldwide. This year, 427 drinks from different countries participated in the competition, including a variety of world-renowned brands.

The competition was fierce for ARARAT Nairi, but the legendary Armenian brandy overcame both the first stage of the competition, the individual expert evaluation and the second-panel discussion and appeared in the “Best of the Best” category.

ARARAT Nairi brandy created in 1967, has won more than 30 gold medals in the world’s most prestigious competitions.

17 1 Share

Like Comment Share

## Figure 22

Posts about *economic attractiveness, exemplary policies and famous Armenians* by Italo-Armenian organizations

Comunità armena  
October 14, 2021 · 🌐

Coronavirus, il chairman di Moderna: «Serve una piattaforma unica per creare vaccini»  
Noubar Afeyan, imprenditore di origine armena, cofondatore della farmaceutica americana, lancia l'idea di una grande piattaforma per creare vaccini. «Nel 2022 un miliardo di dosi ai paesi poveri»

Coronavirus, il chairman di Moderna: «Serve una piattaforma unica per creare vaccini»



ILSOLE24ORE.COM  
Coronavirus, il chairman di Moderna: «Serve una piattaforma unica per creare vaccini»


5 4 Shares

Like Comment Share

Unione degli Armeni d'Italia - Իտալիայի Հայոց Միություն  
June 10, 2021 · 🌐

#NotizieArmenie

“La società Masdar , con sede negli Emirati Arabi , ha cominciato ad implementare il primo programma di investimenti nel campo delle energie rinnovabili in Armenia.”  
Armenpress



ARMENPRESS AM  
UAE-based company Masdar starts implementing first investment program in Armenia's renewable energy field

1 1

Like Comment Share

A post informing about the Armenian origins of Moderna’s chairman Noubar Afeyan.

A post about investments from the UAE in Armenia.

One more theme – *state symbols* - has been brought up by the Union of Armenians of Italy with only one post.

### Figure 23

*A post about the Armenian flag*

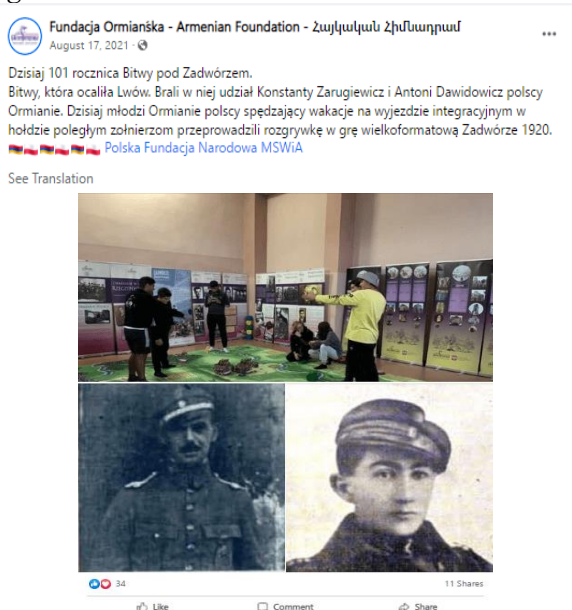


Emphasizing common values, such as links connecting these two, can be another way of creating a positive image of the practitioner's kinstate and its people. The diaspora organizations in Poland and Italy have tried to do this, for example, by informing the audience about the *presence and contribution of Armenians in the host societies*. In case of Poland, for example, the posts present prominent people with Armenian origins such as the Symbolic Mother of Unknown Soldier, Jadwiga Zarugiewiczowa, the famous painter Teodor Axentowicz, the poet Juliusz Slowacki and others. And in Italy, such posts include information about the imports by Armenians of certain traditions and products, their traces that are reflected in architecture, science, music etc. Compared to other themes, the presence of Armenians in the host societies is the most actively covered one in which the organizations in both countries have published quite many posts on Facebook. In particular, throughout 2021, the Polish-Armenian organizations have posted 104, and the Italo-Armenian organizations – 86 times about the presence and contribution of Armenians in the host countries.

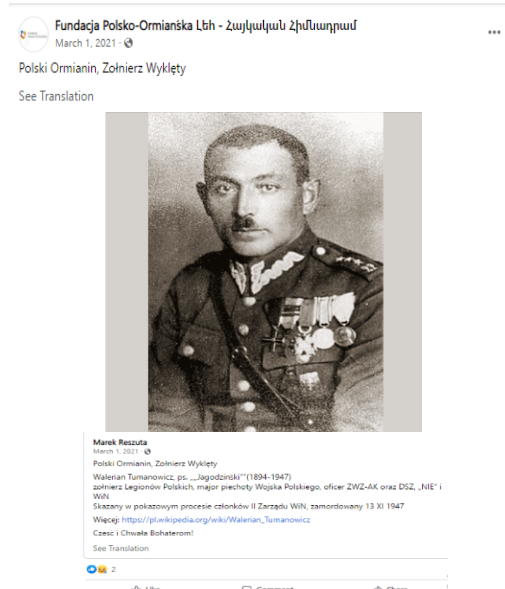


## Figure 24

Posts about the presence and contribution of Armenians in the host society by Polish-Armenian organization



A post informing that Polish-Armenians Konstanty Zarugiewicz and Antoni Dawidowicz took part in the battle of Zadwórze.



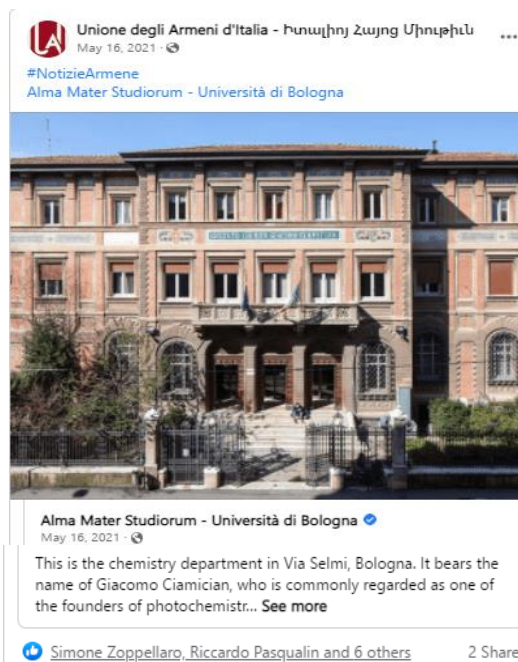
A post about Polish-Armenian Walerian Tumanowicz who fought the Second World War in the Polish Army

## Figure 25

Posts about the presence and contribution of Armenians in the host society by Italo-Armenian organization



A post which informs that one of the most "Italian" buildings was built by an Armenian trader.



A post which informs that the Department of Chemistry of the University of Bologna is named after Armenian-Italian chemist Giacomo Ciamician.

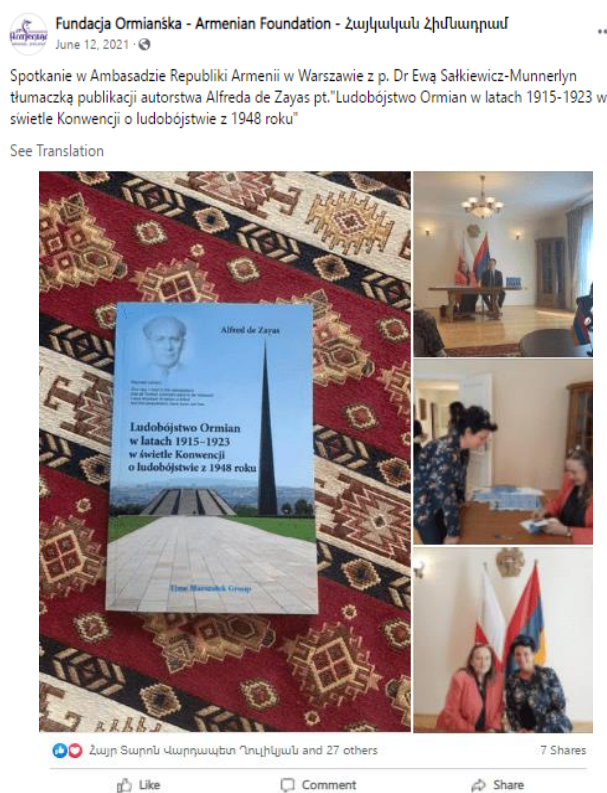
Whether *official ties or just people-to-people links* connecting Armenians with the host public, the cordial ties have also been presented as a common value. The posts dedicated to presenting Armenia and Armenians as a friendly nation to the host countries and vice versa, includes information about official visits, Armenian artists performing in the host countries and the works of Polish and Italian artists dedicated to Armenia and Armenians. In total, the two organizations in Poland have promoted the Polish-Armenian ties on Facebook with 155 posts, whereas those in Italy have dedicated 441 posts.

## Figure 25

### *Promotion of mutual ties as a value by the Polish-Armenian organizations*



*A post about a mourning mass organized for the last first lady of the II Republic of Poland, Karolina Kaczorowska, who also had Armenian origins.*



*A post about the visit of Polish academic Ewa Salkiewicz-Munnerlyn to the Armenian Embassy.*

Figure 26

*Promotion of mutual ties as a value by the Italo-Armenian organizations.*



*A post about the meeting of the new Italian Ambassador with Armenian Catholicos.*

*A post about Italian conductor Riccardo Muti's concert in Armenia.*

In summary, it can be said that when it comes to attraction through cultural diplomacy, organizations in both Poland and Italy have made efforts to promote various attributes and values of Armenian culture in its broader sense. These attributes included spheres such as music, arts, tourism, literature, mutual ties and so on as listed above, and amount to a total of 14 themes that could potentially attract the target audience. Despite both communities have touched upon more or less the same cultural themes and values, it is noteworthy, however, that diaspora organizations operating in Italy have been much more active in practicing the cultural diplomacy component of public diplomacy compared to the diaspora organizations in Poland.

### Advocacy/Agenda Setting

The task of public diplomacy is to spread information about what should be cultivated among the foreign public. From this perspective, throughout the selected period, the community organizations in Italy and Poland have acted as public diplomacy agents also by advocating certain issues related to the kinstate politics and foreign policy. By “taking the ideas...to a place of high visibility so that others may learn of them and act” (J. Kelley, 2012) these organizations have

attempted to draw attention to a number of issues that they have found to be worth of the target audience's attention.

One of those issues focused on by the organizations is the *Armenian Genocide* committed by the Turkish authorities of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The issue of recognition of the Genocide by the international community, and especially Turkey, who is the legal successor of the Ottoman Empire and who pursues a state policy of denial, appears to be one of the central topics of the kinstate foreign policy. For this reason, the community organizations have used the Facebook for advocating the issue by informing the followers about the committed atrocities, Turkey's denial, as well as then-ongoing processes of international recognition. It is noteworthy that the year of 2021 was marked by the recognition of the genocide as such by the United States' President Joe Biden, which was actively covered by the organizations, especially by those operating in Italy. In general, despite this topic was covered by both communities, the Italo-Armenian community organizations were much more active in advocating the topic of the Genocide compared to the Polish-Armenian community with their 304 and 37 posts respectively.

### Figure 27

*The advocacy of the Armenian Genocide by the Polish-Armenian community organizations*



*A post informing about a documentary to be broadcasted by Polish television. An article about the Armenian Genocide*

## Figure 28

### *The advocacy of the Armenian Genocide by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*



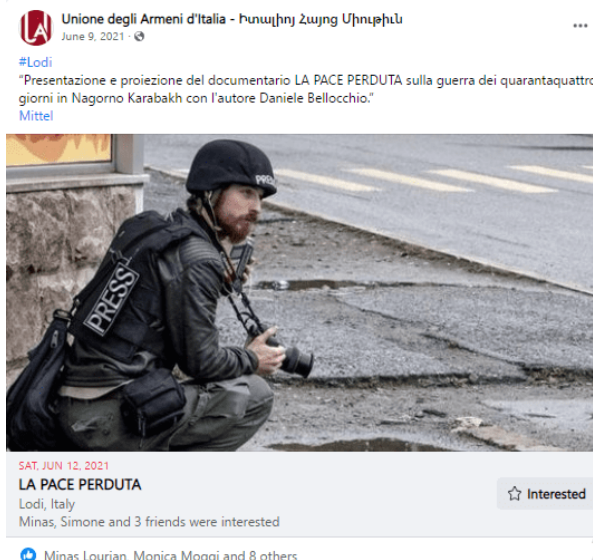
*A post about the Dutch Government's possible recognition of the Armenian Genocide.*

*A post about commemoration of the Armenian Genocide in Italy.*

Throughout the year of 2021, the two community organizations have also campaigned to inform the public about one of the most pressing issues that became more than relevant since - the war in the Nagorno Karabakh. The conflict of the Nagorno Karabakh or Artsakh (Armenian name), has its roots back in 1921 when the predominantly Armenian-populated region was annexed to Soviet Azerbaijan by Joseph Stalin, and which later, being an autonomous region, voted for independence during the collapse of the Soviet Union, following Azerbaijan's declaration of independence and legal succession to Azerbaijan of 1918-1920. Most of the posts published by the organizations, however, were not about history, but about the second Karabakh war or the so-called "44-day war" that erupted in the fall of 2020. With 36 posts by the two Polish-Armenian organizations and 192 post by the Italo-Armenian organizations, the two communities brought about issues such as the war crimes committed by Azerbaijan's Armed Forces and the ordeals caused by the war. The platform has been used also to inform the followers about the organizations' activities regarding mitigating the consequences of the war and updates about the online and offline events related to the war.

Figure 29

*The advocacy of the Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) war by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*



*Invitation to presentation of a documentary intitled "The Lost Peace" about the 44-day war in the Nagorno Karabakh*



*A shared post about the 44-day war.*

Figure 30

*The advocacy of the Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) conflict and war by the Polish-Armenian organizations*



*A post depicting the horrors of the war.*



*A post about the 44-day war*

Closely related to the previous topic and advocated by the community has been the issue of the return of Armenian *prisoners of war (POWs)* - one of the points enshrined in the trilateral ceasefire agreement signed by the leaders of Armenia, Russia and Azerbaijan. Throughout the year, the community organizations took over their social media accounts in order to communicate their audience Azerbaijan's continuous refusal to return the prisoners of war, as well as the tortures of Armenian prisoners of war by Azerbaijan's Armed Forces and violations of the Geneva convention about the preserving the dignity of the prisoners of war. It is noteworthy that the issue has been covered by only one of the selected Polish-Armenian organizations. In total, the Polish-Armenian community organizations, or rather, only the Polish-Armenian Foundation with its 6 posts significantly lagged behind the Italo-Armenian community organizations with their 86 posts in advocating the return of prisoners of war on social media.

### Figure 31

*A post a Polish member of parliament voicing the issue of the prisoners of war at the Polish Parliament.*



## Figure 32

*The advocacy of return of prisoners of war by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*

Unione degli Armeni d'Italia - Իտալիոյ Հայոց Միութիւն  
June 24, 2021 · 🌐

#NotizieArmenie  
"I prigionieri di guerra armeni trattenuti dall'Azerbaijan devono essere liberati senza precondizioni."  
Giulio Centemero  
Massimiliano Capitanio  
Armenpress

ARMENPRESS.AM  
Armenian POWs held in Azerbaijan must be released without preconditions – Italian MPs

3

1 Share

A post informing about the issue of the prisoners of war.

Comunità armena  
October 8, 2021 · 🌐

AGENSIR.IT  
Incontro Sant'Egidio: appello di Karekin II per la liberazione di tutti i prigionieri della guerra in Artsakh, "tragedie del genere non si ripetano mai più" | AqenSIR

10

1 Share

A post which reads "Meeting in Sant'Egidio: the call of Karekin II upon liberation of all the prisoners of war in Artsakh, "so that such tragedies never ever repeat".

The *tensions between Azerbaijan's Armed Forces and Armenian forces on the line of contact* both in the Nagorno Karabakh and along the state borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan were among the issues brought up in 2021. The issue was actively covered in light of the advances of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces into Armenia's eastern and southern regions of Syunik and Gegharkunik. Given the huge gap between the efforts by the two communities, the Italo-Armenian community organizations obviously advocated the issue more actively than the Polish-Armenian organizations with 40 and 2 posts respectively.



**Figure 33**

*Advocation of the issue of clashes on the line of contact between Armenians and Azerbaijan's Armed Forces by the Polish-Armenian community organizations.*



*A post setting as an agenda the tensions on the line of contact in Armenia's southern region Syunik.*



*A post informing about Azerbaijan's advancement in Armenia's eastern and southern regions.*

**Figure 34**

*Advocation of the issue of clashes on the line of contact between Armenian and Azerbaijan's Armed Forces by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*



*A post which reads "Winds of war in the Caucasus. Not anymore only Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) but [also] Armenia in the azero-turkish sight. Towards the destruction.*



*A post intitled "Armenia-Azerbaijan": the Defense Minister of Yerevan announces the death of one soldier in the border area.*

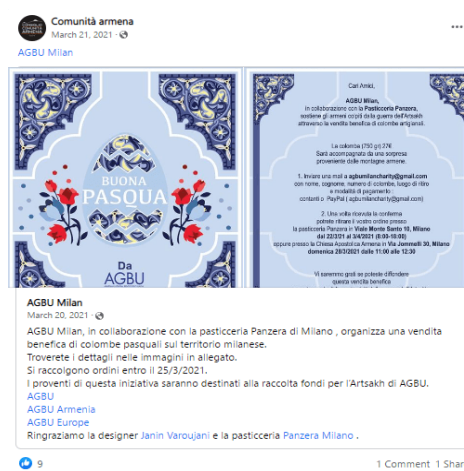
The community organizations in both countries have also posted *calls to action* in the form of fundraisings for various purposes, but mainly aimed at mitigating the consequences of the war and helping those affected by the war. Apparently, the Polish-Armenian community organizations were more active in raising funds online as in total, the Italo-Armenian community organizations posted only 3 times, whereas the Polish-Armenian organizations posted 10 times for fundraisings.

**Figure 35**

*Call to action by the Italo-Armenian organizations*



*A post by the Union of Armenian for a fundraising.*



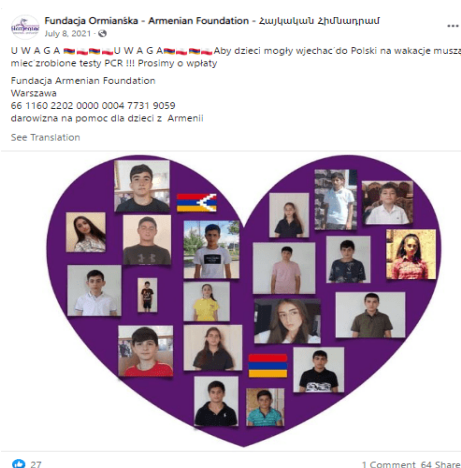
*A post by the Armenian Community for a fundraising.*

**Figure 36**

*Call to action by the Polish-Armenian organizations*



*A post calling to action by the Polish-Armenian Foundation.*



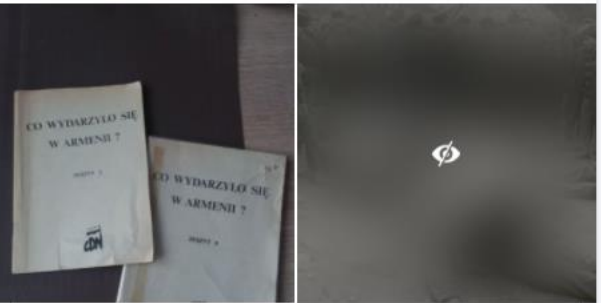
*A post calling to action by the Armenian Foundation.*

*The anti-Armenian statements and actions (armenophobia) in Turkey and Azerbaijan have also been covered. In this regard, most posts were predominantly dedicated to the pogroms of Armenians in Azerbaijan's cities of Baku, Sumgait and Kirovabad in the early 1990s, totaling to 5 posts by the Polish-Armenian organizations and 31 posts by the Italo-Armenian organizations.*

### Figure 37

*Advocation of anti-Armenian rhetoric and actions by the Polish-Armenian community organizations*

Fundacja Polsko-Ormiańska Lth - Հայկական Քիմնադրամ  
February 28, 2021 · 🌐



**Marek Reszuta**  
February 28, 2021 · 🌐


Dzisiaj w Armenii Dzień Pamięci Pogromów w Sumgaitcie, Baku i Kirovabadzie (obecnie Gandza), gdy Azerowie zmasakrowali setki, tysiące Ormian  
W Polsce CDN pisał o tym już w 1989 r., ale tak naprawdę to wiedza o tych wydarzeniach jest u nas zerowa

See Translation

👍🙄 4

Fundacja Ormiańska - Armenian Foundation - Հայկական Քիմնադրամ  
February 26, 2021 · 🌐

Sumgait...  
See Translation



**Hracja Bojadzjan**  
February 26, 2021 · 🌐

26 lutego 1988 roku dla wielu Ormian zawalił się świat. Wspólnie mieszkający razem sąsiedzi, wychowywani w tych samych szkołach, chodzący do tych samych teatrów, kin, kawiarni stali się dla siebie wrogami. Sumgait podobnie jak Wukovar w Chorwacji, Sarajevo w Bosni jest symbolem klęski braterstwa budowanego na kłamstwie i przemocy. Bestialskie morderstwa, łapanki, pobicia, groźby jakichś ciwoliadczą społeczeństwo ormiańskie w Azerbejdżanie podważyły możliwość wspólnej koegzystencji dwóch sąsiadujących ze sobą narodów. Liczba ofiar pogromu w Sumgaitcie, portowym industrialnym mieście w Azerbejdżanie nie jest dokładania znana, wedle różnych statystyk zginięło od kilkudziesięciu do kilkuset Ormian, jedynym ich przewinieniem była ich narodowość. Niestety jak pokazała historia, to był dopiero początek. Fala antyormiańskich pogromów rozlała się po całym kraju. Ormianie byli nie tylko brutalnie mordowani w Sumgaitcie, ale i Baku, gdzie stanowili ogromną część społeczności, de facto tworząc to miasto w jego niezwykłym kolorycie i bogactwie, mordowano ich w Kirovabadzie, dzisiejsza Gandza. Tem konfliktu była kwestia Górskiego Karabachu oraz dokonana przez młodoturków (nacionalistów turecy) na początku XX wieku Ludobójstwo Ormian na terenach upadającego Imperium Osmańskiego. Ormianie wymazani zostali całkowicie w pejzażu Azerbejdżanu, chciano ich również wypędzić, a jeżeli nie będą chcieli to zabić również na terenach tak zwanego Górskiego Karabachu. Pomimo bohaterstwa obrony i determinacji, aby zachować resztki swoich historycznych ziem, Ormianie pozostawieni zostali na pastwę politycznych gier największych aktorów międzynarodowych. Historia rzezi Ormian z Sumgaitu przed 33 lat zniszczyła ostatki istniejącego zaufania między Ormianami i Azerami. Jak zawsze trzeba oddać honor nielicznym, którzy potrafili współczuć: prześladowanym sąsiadom i nieraz ryzykując życie ukrywać swoich ormiańskich przyjaciół, lecz już na zawsze Azerbejdżan stał się dla Ormian śmiertelnym wrogiem, miejscem w którym mimo zapewnieni, usmiechów i deklaracji nigdy nie będą bezpieczni. Dziś, kiedy po raz kolejny słyszymy zapewnienia władz Azerbejdżanu o bezpieczeństwie Ormian w Górskim Karabachu w granicach Azerbejdżanu, nie możemy mieć złudzeń. Życie tysięcy ludzi zależy od prostego faktu, czy Górski Karabach, ziemia zamieszkała przez Ormian nie od wczoraj czy kilku lat, lecz od kilkunastu wieków będzie niezależny od szowinistycznego, zbrodniczego reżimu z Baku. Tylko niepodległe państwo Republiki Arcachu-Górskiego Karabachu jest gwarancją zachowania podstawowego i zdawaloby się każdemu oczywistego prawa – prawa do życia

See Translation

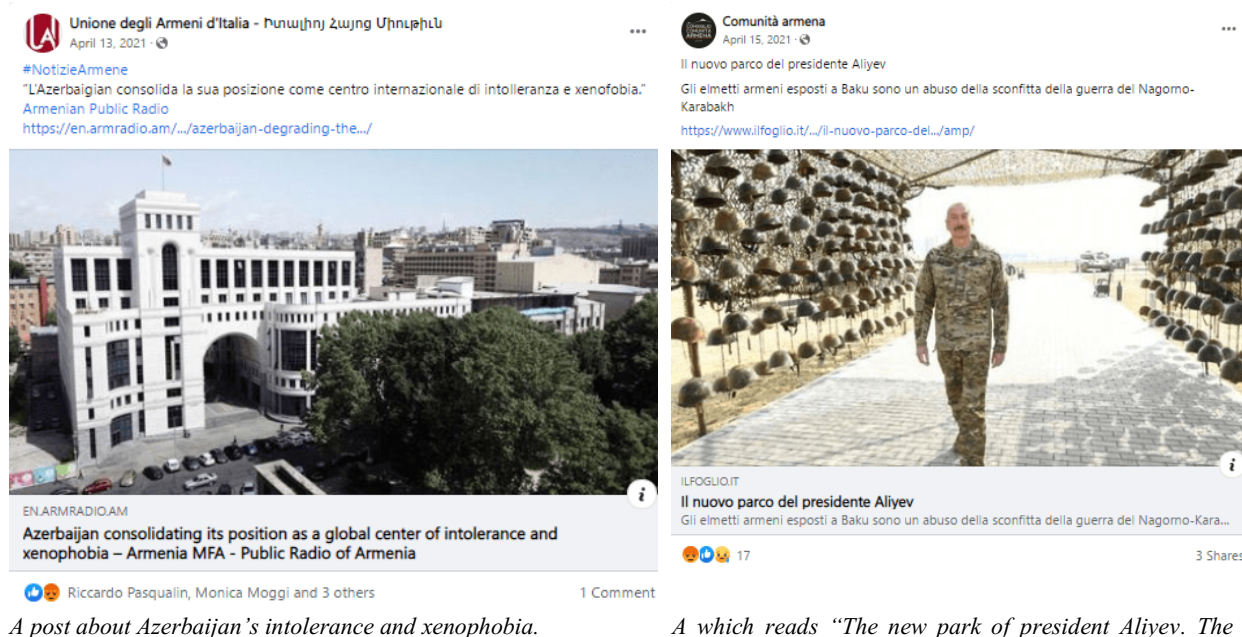
👍 5 1 Share

*A shared post about the pogroms of Armenians in Sumgait, Baku and Kirovabad (Ganja) in 1989.*

*A shared post about the pogrom of Armenians in Sumgait, Azerbaijan in 1988.*

## Figure 38

### *Advocation of anti-Armenian rhetoric and actions by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*



*A post about Azerbaijan's intolerance and xenophobia.*

*A which reads "The new park of president Aliyev. The helmets of Armenians exhibited in Baku are an abuse of the defeat in the Nagorno Karabakh war".*

The organizations have also tried to spread a word and inform the followers about the endangerment of the *Armenian cultural heritage in current Turkey and in those territories in Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh currently under Azerbaijan's rule*, especially following the advancement of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces in the Nagorno Karabakh. Again, this topic has not been intensively covered by the Polish-Armenian community organizations as together have dedicated only 3 posts throughout the year, whereas the Italo-Armenian community organizations have published 78 posts to informing the followers that the Armenian cultural heritage in Turkey and in the areas under Azerbaijan's control were in danger.

Figure 39

Advocation of endangerment of Armenian cultural heritage by the Polish-Armenian organizations



A post about Polish writer Marek Dzewowski's book "Armenian Cultural Monuments in the Lake Van Region".

A post about Polish writer Marek Dzewowski's book "Armenian Cultural Monuments in the Lake Van Region".

Figure 40

Advocation of endangerment of Armenian cultural heritage by the Italo-Armenian organizations



A post which reads "Turkey, Van: Armenian cemetery vandalized with bulldozer, scattered gravestones and bones".



A post which reads "Islamic Christianophobia in Black Garden. Armenian treasures endangered in Nagorno Karabakh".

Among the issues raised by both communities was the topic of *fake news, propaganda and disinformation sponsored by the state of Azerbaijan*. In this case, too, the gap between the number of posts was by the two communities was significant as only one post was published by the Polish-Armenian Foundations throughout the year, whereas the organizations operating in Italy dedicated 20 posts to raising the issue.

**Figure 41**

*Advocation of the issue of Azerbaijan's state-sponsored disinformation by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*

Unione degli Armeni d'Italia - Իտալիայի Հայոց Միություն  
June 22, 2021 · 🌐

#NotizieArmenie

L'intervista dell'Ambasciatore Tsovinar Hambarzumyan pubblicata nella rivista Intervento nella Società.

"L'Azerbaijan persegue una politica di falsificazione dei fatti storici e di appropriazione dell'eredità del popolo armeno".

Intervento nella Società  
Ambasciata d'Armenia in Italia Իտալիայում Հայաստանի դեսպանություն



Ambasciata d'Armenia in Italia Իտալիայում Հայաստանի դեսպանություն  
June 18, 2021 · 🌐

L'intervista dell'Ambasciatore Tsovinar Hambarzumyan pubblicata nella rivista Intervento nella Società.

"L'Azerbaijan persegue una politica di falsificazione dei fatti storici e di appropriazione dell'eredità del popolo armeno".

Դեսպան Շուկիսար Համբարձումյանի հարցազրույցը Intervento nella Società ամսագրին.  
«Ադրբեջանը վարում է պատմական փաստերը կեղծելու և հայ ժողովրդի ժառանգությունը յուրացնելու քաղաքականություն»:

6 1 Share

A post which reads "The interview of Ambassador Tsovinar Hambarzumyan published in the newspaper Intervento nella Società. 'Azerbaijan pursues a policy of falsification of historical facts and appropriation of the heritage of the Armenian people'".

Comunità armena  
March 26, 2021 · 🌐

Il Ministero degli Esteri dell'Armenia ha denunciato "la deplorabile pratica di falsificazione dei fatti storici e di alienazione dei valori religiosi e culturali del popolo armeno" attirando l'attenzione sul fatto che "l'Azerbaijan sta preparando il terreno per l'ennesimo atto vandalico".



SPONDASUD.IT

Nagorno Karabakh, l'Azerbaijan continua a falsificare la storia - Spondasud  
(Ani Vardanyan) — Durante la sua visita nel villaggio di Tsakuri nella regione Hadrut occupata d...

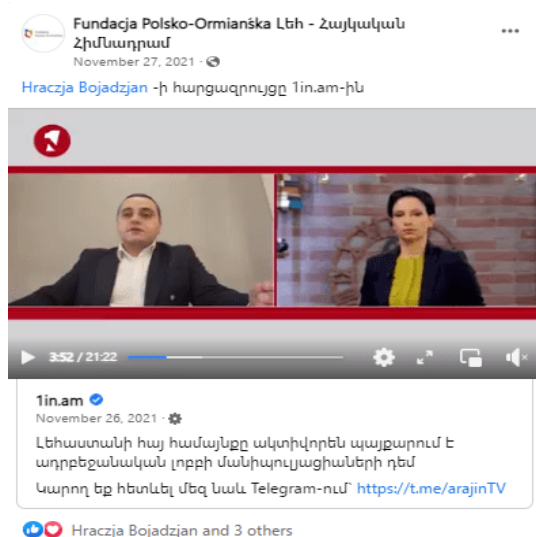
Carlyne Verducy and 23 others

Like Comment Share

A post which reads "The Foreign Minister of Armenia denounced 'the deplorable practice of falsification of historical facts and estrangement of religious and cultural values of the Armenian people' drawing attention to the fact that Azerbaijan is preparing ground for yet another act of vandalism".

## Figure 42

*Advocacy of the issue of Azerbaijan's state-sponsored disinformation by the Polish-Armenian Foundation.*



Not directly concerning the Armenian foreign policy, but relevant to it was the topic of *Turkish affairs* such as its direct involvement in the 44-day war, assistance to Azerbaijan, its internal politics and relations with third countries which were covered by both communities, although in varying degrees. In total, Turkish affairs were covered more often by the Italo-Armenian community than the Polish-Armenian one with 68 and 1 posts respectively.

## Figure 44

*Advocacy of Turkish affairs, direct involvement in the 44-day war by the Polish-Armenian Foundation*



*A post which reads "Ankara has provided military drones to azeris against Armenians by circumventing the rules".*



*A post which reads "How a fringe of the Turkish community in France has radicalized".*

Figure 43

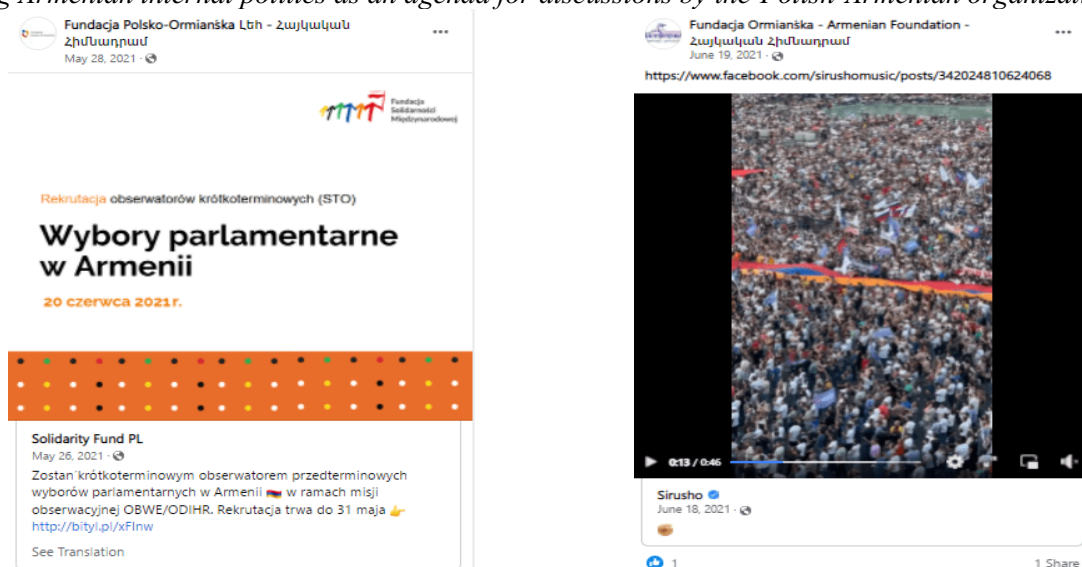
*Advocacy of Turkish affairs, direct involvement in the 44-day war by the Polish-Armenian Foundation*



Although posts about Armenia's *internal politics* might not be relevant to the kinstate's foreign policy, they can be set as an agenda for discussions among the followers. The posts were mainly about the then-upcoming national elections, the pre-election campaigns and the results, amounting to a total of 6 posts by the two Polish-Armenian, and 10 posts by the Italo-Armenian organizations.

Figure 45

*Setting Armenian internal politics as an agenda for discussions by the Polish-Armenian organizations*



*A post about the parliamentary elections in Armenia shared from Solidarity Fund PL.*

*A shared video post showing the pre-election rally of one of the political coalitions.*



Apart from presenting the ties between the kinstate and the host state as a value and asset for attraction, the *negative trends in the mutual relations* have also been covered by the organizations as an agenda for discussions. In this regard, each community has updated on the relations between the kinstate and their respective host state resulting in 3 posts by the Italo-Armenian community and only 1 post by the Polish-Armenian Foundation.

## Figure 46

*Raising the issue of negative trends in the kinstate-host state relations by the Polish-Armenian Foundation.*

Fundacja Polsko-Ormiańska Lth - Հիմնադրամ  
May 23, 2021 · 🌐

**ZMIANY W STOSUNKACH POLSKO – ORMIAŃSKICH?**

**2016-** Ryszard Czarnecki odznaczony Medalem Włhiłaca Gotha, jednym z wainiejszych odnawieni państwowych Armenii, za aktywną działalność na rzecz Ormian na świecie.

Zgłosował PRZECIW przyjęciu projektu rezolucji sprawie powrotu jeńców Ormiańskich uwielonnych przez Republikę Azerbejdżanu.

**2017-** „Nie sposób sobie wyobrazić historii Rzeczypospolitej, jej kultury i tradycji, bez wielowiekowego wkładu w tę historię Ormian” - Prezydent Andrzej Duda, uroczystość w Pałacu Prezydenckim w związku z jubileuszem 60-letnia obecności Ormian w Polsce.

**2021-** Wypódy Projekt Rezolucji Parlamentu Europejskiego w sprawie jeńców wojennych pojmanyh w czasie ostatniego konfliktu między Armenią i Azerbejdżanem. Projekt rozwiązań dotyczących uwolnienia Ormian poparli 607 Europejsów. Przeciw było 27. Wśród eurodeputowanych, którzy byli przeciw, 23 jest z Polski (95).

Zobowiązanie budzi fakt, iż Polska, która podobnie jak Armenia ceni wartości humanitarne, przy tak wainym dla Ormian głosowaniu było PRZECIW..

**ARSYEN OVSYEPYAN**  
May 23, 2021 · 🌐

6  
1 Share

*A post about Poland's negative vote to the European Parliament resolution urging Azerbaijan to return the Armenian prisoners of war. This incident is presented as a negative trend in Polish-Armenian relations in the context of comparison between the past and present states of the relations.*

Figure 47

*Setting negative trend in Italy-Armenia relations by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*

The figure displays two screenshots of Facebook posts from community organizations. The left screenshot is from the 'Unione degli Armeni d'Italia' (Armenian Union of Italy) page, dated May 21, 2021. It features a post with a blue background and the Eurovision Song Contest Rotterdam 2021 logo. The text of the post discusses the negative comments of Italian commentator Saverio Raimondo regarding Armenia's absence from the Eurovision Song Contest 2021. The right screenshot is from the 'Comunità armena' (Armenian Community) page, dated May 24, 2021. It features a post with a white background and the Eurovision Song Contest Rotterdam 2021 logo. The text of the post discusses the negative comments of Italian commentator Saverio Raimondo regarding Armenia's absence from the Eurovision Song Contest 2021.

*A shared post about Italian commentator's negative comments about Armenia's absence during the Eurovision 2021 due to the war of 2020.*

*A post about Italian commentator's negative comments about Armenia's absence during the Eurovision 2021 due to the war of 2020.*

The community organizations have also used the Facebook platform in order to *inform the community members* about various matters, as well as to keep updated on organizations' everyday activities. In order to share information with the community members, the Polish-Armenian community organizations have posted 41 times, and the Italo-Armenian organizations – 17 times.

Figure 48

### Informing the community members by the Polish-Armenian organizations

Fundacja Ormiańska - Armenian Foundation - Հայկական Հիմնադրամ is with Ferdinand Makłowicz and 10 others  
July 4, 2021 · 🌐

Chrzest Bianki Jezewskiej z ormiańskiej rodziny Wartanowiczów 🙏 naszej przyszłej wolontariuszce życzymy wszelkiej pomyślności i błogosławieństwa Bożego a szanownym Rodzicom pociechy z małegoństwa

PRACUJ.PL  
Praca Accounts Payable Senior Accountant Armenian or Russian, HSBC Service Delivery (Polska) Sp. z o.o., Kraków  
Oferta pracy Accounts Payable Senior Accountant Armenian or Russian, HSBC Service Delivery (Polska) Sp. z o.o., Kraków

Like Comment Share

A post informing about the baptism of one of the newborns in the community.

Figure 49

### Informing the community members by the Italo-Armenian community organizations

Unione degli Armeni d'Italia - Իտալիոյ Հայոց Միութիւն  
June 2, 2021 · 🌐

"Sei un membro attivo della Diaspora?  
Il nostro Diaspora Youth Ambassador Program ha come obiettivo creare un network dinamico di leaders tra i giovani, la Diaspora e la Patria.  
Per maggiori informazioni: <http://diaspora.gov.am/.../19/Diaspora-Youth-Ambassador>  
Iscriversi entro il 24/6/21."

Սիյուղնի Գլխավոր Հանձնակատարի Գրասենյակ Diaspora High Commissioner's Office

APPLY NOW  
DIASPORA.GOV.AM  
DIASPORA YOUTH AMBASSADOR PROGRAM  
APPLICATION DEADLINE  
JUNE 25 2021

Unione degli Armeni d'Italia  
JMF  
Diaspora High Commissioner's Office

Սիյուղնի Գլխավոր Հանձնակատարի Գրասենյակ Diaspora High Commissioner's Office  
June 1, 2021 · 🌐

! CALL FOR APPLICATIONS !

Are you an active member of your Diaspora community? Then this is the right program for you!  
Our Diaspora Youth Ambassador Program is a... [See more](#)

Like Comment Share

A post informing the community members about a possibility to take part in a Diaspora Youth Ambassador Program.

Comunità armena  
April 20, 2021 · 🌐

ECCO ALCUNE DELLE INIZIATIVE PROGRAMMATE IN OCCASIONE DEL 24 APRILE

24 APRILE 2021

- Roma alle 11.00 Santa Messa in rito Armeno in memoria dei martiri del Genocidio Armeno presso il Pontificio Collegio Armeno (Sal. San Nicola da Tolentino 17)
- Padova alle h. 10.30. Cerimonia commemorativa alla presenza del Sindaco di Padova Sergio Giordani. [https://www.padovanet.it/\\_cerimonia-1006922680](https://www.padovanet.it/_cerimonia-1006922680)
- Milano dalle 12.00 alle 13.00 - in Piazza Duomo ang. via Marconi "Flash mob organizzato da AGBU Milano"
- Milano ore 16.00 - Preghiamo per i Santi Martiri del Genocidio Armeno - Piazza Sant'Ambrogio - Monumento di Croce (Khachkar)
- Compongara alle ore 10.00 - Un melograno per ricordare l'Armenia - presso lo spazio verde vicino al teatro Dario Fo sarà piantato un melograno, alla presenza del Sindaco di e di un rappresentante dell'Associazione Italoarmena.
- Ferrara alle ore 21.00 "Metz Yeghern il genocidio degli armeni tra memoria, negazione e silenzio"
- On Line - ore 18.00 - "I peccati dei Padri" di Siobhan Nash-Marshall: [https://guerni.mosiemai.net/\\_zpeccati\\_dei\\_padri\\_24-04-](https://guerni.mosiemai.net/_zpeccati_dei_padri_24-04-)
- On Line ore 17.00 - Associazione Armeni Apulia - Commemorazione On Line del 106° Anniversario del Genocidio Armeno
- On Line - ore 11.30, 17.00 e 23.15 - DOCUMENTARIO Telepace [https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=289455804079105&id=1704230406455207](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=289455804079105&id=1704230406455207)
- On Line - ore 20.30 - Comabbio racconta l'Armenia - Musica colta dai campi di grano: un piccolo viaggio nella musica colta armena

25 APRILE 2021

- Milano alle h. 11.00 S. Messa di commemorazione dei Santi Martiri del genocidio, presso la chiesa armena di via Joninelli
- Roma alle 18.30 "Preghiera con i martiri Armeni" Celebrazione ecumenica per la pace. Basilica di San Bartolomeo all'isola.

26 APRILE 2021

- On Line - dalle ore 15 alle 18 NAPOLI: Webinar - "La Cristianità: il Volto di nostra sorella Armenia."

SANTA MESSA  
IN MEMORIA DEL 106° ANNIVERSARIO  
DEL GENOCIDIO ARMENO  
CELEBRANTE: S.E. MONS. RAPHAEL MENASSIAN  
ARCHIEPISCOPAL COADIUTORE, LEGATO DELLA SANTA SEDE PER L'ARMENIA

Chiesa 24 Aprile 2021 dalle 11-16  
Sabato 24 Aprile 2021 ore 11-16  
CONTRIO COLLEGIO ARMEÑO  
BASILICA DI SAN BARTOLOMEO ALL'ISOLA

1915  
2021

Armenia

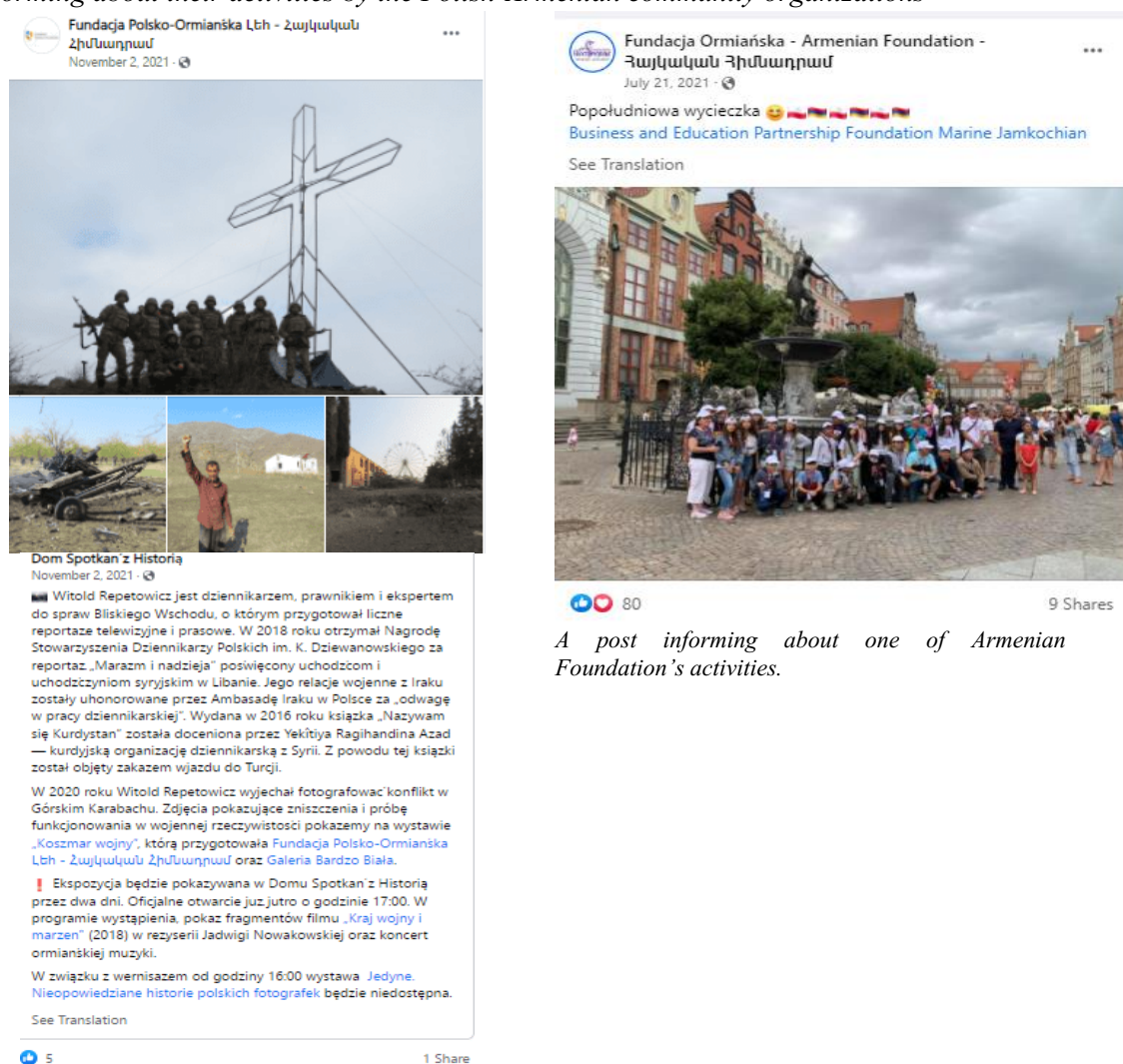
Monica Moggi, Carmyne Verducy and 34 others  
Like Comment Share

A post informing about planned events on the occasion of the Genocide.

The posts *informing the followers about the organizations' everyday activities* have also found some space on their Facebook accounts. These posts include meetings, preparation of events, sponsorship etc. This is one of the very few categories in which the Polish-Armenian community organizations exceed the Italo-Armenian organizations with their 102 posts compared to the 50 posts by the latter. Moreover, from the Italo-Armenian organizations, only the Union of Armenians has posted about its activities.

**Figure 50**

*Informing about their activities by the Polish-Armenian community organizations*



*A post informing about one of Armenian Foundation's activities.*

*A shared post informing about one of Polish-Armenian Foundation's activities.*

Figure 51

*Informing about the organization's own activities by the Union of Armenians of Italy*



There have been 3 more topics which have been set as agendas only by the Italo-Armenian communities. One of these topics is the general *Armenian foreign policy and relations with other countries*. Regarding this topic, the two Italo-Armenian organizations together have published 30 posts.

Figure 52

*Setting Armenia's foreign policy and international relations as an agenda by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*



*A post which reads "EU-Armenia: Borell on the telephone with Ayyazyan, focus on the partnership accord".*

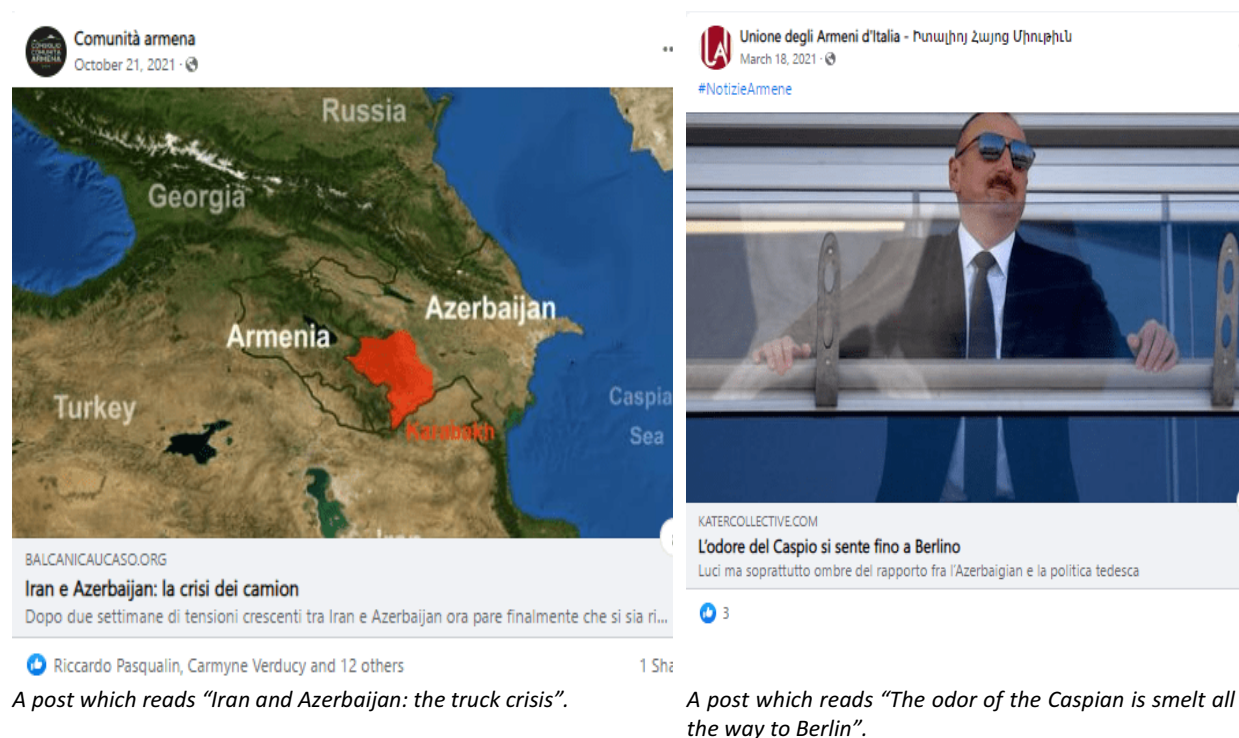


*A post about the relations between Armenia and the Holy See.*

The next topic is *Azerbaijan's affairs*, including its internal politics and relations with third countries. This topic, however, has been brought up only by the Italo-Armenian organizations. Overall, 27 posts were dedicated to this topic.

### Figure 53

*Setting Azerbaijan's affairs as an agenda by the Italo-Armenian community organizations*



And finally, the *recognition of Nagorno Karabakh Republic* and the right of its people to self-determination as a guarantee for physical security is the last issue set as an agenda for discussions. This issue has been raised in total of 26 times.

## Figure 54

*Raising the issue of recognition of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) by Italo-Armenian organizations*



*A post which reads "The region Lombardia has recognized the Republic of Artsakh. Thank you!".*



*A post about the recognition of the Republic of Artsakh by the commune of Riva del Garda.*

## Listening

One of diplomacy's objectives is seeking knowledge and understanding foreign publics (Herman, 1998, p. 17). According to L. di Martino, "with the emergence of public diplomacy and its emphasis on foreign publics, information-gathering activities were reframed as "listening" in order to distinguish it from propaganda and earlier forms of information gathering in diplomacy." (Snow & Cull, 2020, p. 21). N. Cull defined the listening as an actor's attempt to manage the international environment by collecting and collating data about public and their opinions (Cull, 2008, p. 32).

In general, depending on the way of engagement, the spectrum of listening can include various forms of execution, from active listening - which assumes the active engagement of both sides –

to passive monitoring. In this regard, the advent of Internet and subsequent emergence of online platforms have grown to become a game changer. While in offline settings of public diplomacy it is possible to *listen* to the target public via networking during face-to-face events, the online environment has its limitations when it comes to understanding what the public thinks about the practitioner's kinstate, its people, culture, policies etc. At the same time, however, the online platform does not entirely cross out the possibility of listening and getting some feedback from the target public for further implementation or readjustment of public diplomacy strategy. On the contrary, the emergence of social media has opened new opportunities not only for public diplomacy in general, but also for its listening function, in particular. In fact, in the context of public diplomacy, the emergence of social media technologies has catalyzed the arrival of new actors to the international relations scene, which means that diplomats can now listen to those actors directly (Snow & Cull, 2020, p. 24). In contrast to the idea that "*listening* is not a common metaphor for online activity and that *speaking up* has become the dominant metaphor for participation in online spaces...social media powerfully invoke an efficient listening subject" (Crawford, 2009, p. 526). According to L. de Martino, there are several more relevant types of listening that can be used for public diplomacy on social media: *active listening* – an active listener creates a favorable environment where public diplomacy actors are seen to listen and are therefore considered credible interlocutors; *tactical listening* – social media metrics, such as Facebook users' reactions, are used to assess the capacity of public diplomacy organizations to engage with the public, their networking power and public perceptions and attitudes toward a country; *listening in* – equivalent to passive monitoring or traditional diplomatic information-gathering activities focused on measuring a public diplomacy actor's message reach and impact through analytics (e.g., number of views, followers, shares and likes on social media); *background/casual listening* – can potentially lead to forms of casual engagement that can result in the "appearance of listening" by,



for example, occasional sharing or strategic following. From the perspective of content analysis which limits generating data from what is visible to the eye, and disconnects from what is done “behind the scenes” – or rather, “behind the screens” – the data retrieved from the social media accounts of the selected organizations show that the listening of these organizations is predominantly background/casual listening-type with episodes of active engagement with the audience. This type of listening is characterized by a constant but unsystematic — or casual — variation of the listener’s levels of attention (Snow & Cull, 2020, p. 24).

In practicing public diplomacy, the organizations from both Poland and Italy have not initiated conversations with the followers and have not been engaged in a dialogue with them in the comments section. Instead, as the content analysis shows, the organizations randomly, though quite often, had high level of attention as they listened to the local media, their opinions and analysis on certain topics related to the kinstate, its people, culture, policies etc., as well as separate individuals. This is, particularly, reflected in their posts shared from local media sources, government agencies, NGOs, as well as individuals, including politicians, social figures and ordinary people. In comparison, however, just like in case of most public diplomacy components, the Italo-Armenian community organizations had more concentrated attention towards the public’s opinions. Although it can be conditioned by certain factors such as objective abundance of local sources talking about topics related to kinstate, or subjective factors such as active engagement with sources, including both the media and individuals, the results, nevertheless, show that Italo-Armenian communities listened the public 715 times, whereas the Polish-Armenian community organizations practiced listening only 59 times. The reasons behind this huge gap will be discussed in the next chapter.

## Figure 55

### *Listening through media monitoring by the Polish-Armenian organizations*



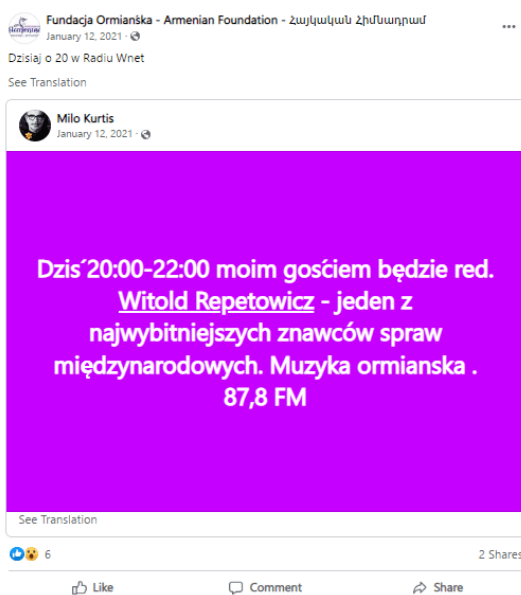
*An example of listening to an opinion about Armenian musician Eva Gevorgian. The title of the article reads "It is impossible to not pay attention to Eva Gevorgian".*



*An example of listening through media monitoring by the Polish-Armenian Foundation..*

## Figure 56

### *Listening to individual users by Polish-Armenian organizations*



*An example of listening to an individual user (Milo Kurtis) by sharing his post. The post informs about a radio meeting during which the guest will speak about Armenian music.*



*An example of listening to an individual user (Robert Biernacki) writing about passing away of Armenian Grigor Szaginian.*

Figure 57

## Listening through media monitoring by the Italo-Armenian organizations



An example of listening to the local media source writing about reconstruction of the edifice of an Armenian church in Italy.



An example of listening to the local media writing about the link between Italian writer Dante Alighieri and Armenian language.

Figure 58

## Listening to individual users by Polish-Armenian organizations



An example of listening to an individual user (Riccardo Grittini) posting about the Armenian Genocide and holding the flag of Artsakh/Nagorno Karabakh.



An example of listening to an individual user (Simone Zoppellaro) by sharing his post about the Nagorno Karabakh war.

## Socialization

The fourth component of public diplomacy is the *people-to-people relationships*, otherwise called socialization. “Public diplomacy is not only about projecting an image; it is about engagement and relationship building” (Parliament of Australia, n.d.). Moreover, “effective public diplomacy is rooted in strategic people-to-people communication in the effort to establish a sustaining relationship” (Payne, 2009, p. 579). and “in order to be successful, today’s public diplomacy has to go beyond traditional ‘one-way-street’ information work: It should be a *dialogue* and a steady discussion with the goal to establish a *long-term relationship* with foreign audiences” (Parliament of Australia, n.d.). In other words, people-to-people approach is “two or more individuals sharing a conversation in an effort to further understand what they share in common, as well as developing a mutual respect for their respective differences” (2009, p. 580). It is common to conceive of people-to-people communication, organized by governments or their agencies, as envisaged for face-to-face settings and counterpose it to the online space. Events aimed at gathering people together and facilitating cross-cultural communication, however, can take place also online, thanks to the opportunities provided by technology. Moreover, they can be initiated or facilitated by non-governmental actors such as, for example, diaspora organizations, which we will see later in this section.

Socialization or “exchanges are different in that they directly involve the “human factor,” where an engagement with the personality, psychology, and both short- and long-term personal development of participants is central. So far, despite “the interpersonal nature of the exchange experience, coupled with its inherently private character, have caused this field to be largely written out of the documentation of diplomacy and its conduct in the public realm”, the existing works have discussed the people-to-people links in terms of face-to-face contacts (Cull, 2008; Sevin, 2017; Snow & Cull, 2020, p. 38). However, the development of technology and appearance of new

means of communication have changed the ways in which people establish connections and socialize. This has also influenced the ways in which socialization happens or is organized now, as well as the possibility of discussing activities aimed at socialization beyond offline settings and interpersonal limitations.

Similar to listening, people-to-people connections or socialization is intertwined with other components of public diplomacy. For example, through events gathering people together, whether on offline or online mode, it is possible to organize cultural exchanges, discuss certain issues, as well as listen to opinions. When it comes to public diplomacy carried out by diaspora community organizations, through establishing people-to-people contacts between the kinstate people or diaspora representatives and the people of the host country, it is possible to show the attractiveness of the kinstate culture, advocate issues relevant to kinstate foreign policy, and listen to the opinions of the host society about the kinstate, its people and policies. This works also in the other way around as through holding events aimed at showing cultural attractiveness of the kinstate, raising issues relevant to the kinstate foreign policy, and listening to opinions of the host society, it is possible to maintain and nurture the existing people-to-people links, as well as establish new ones. Since the internet and social media have now become the indispensable part of public diplomacy - as we saw in the previous sections – and gained much more relevance due to the Coronavirus pandemic, socialization and attempts to organize or facilitate socialization, too, happen on social media. In this regard, in the course of the research, it was found out that also the Armenian diaspora organizations operating in Italy and Poland used the social media not only with the purpose to promote the Polish-Armenian and Italo-Armenian current and historical ties as an asset for attraction, but also made on social media continuous efforts aimed at facilitating socialization between the two publics. The published posts aimed at facilitating socialization included possibilities to take part in events such as meetings with Armenian authors, Armenian music and

dance events, Q&As with Armenian politicians, artists, experts and, in general, events where the people from the host society could meet and communicate with the diaspora community members. These events were envisaged to be held both offline, though more rarely, and online, mainly through the ZOOM platform. Some events were open to guests, whereas others required prior registration which would ensure reception of a link to the platform through which to access the event. A few posts encouraged also exchanges and trips for education and volunteering purposes. In total, as in case of previous components, efforts aimed at establishing people-to-people links were made more intensively by the Italo-Armenian community organizations compared to the Polish-Armenian ones with a total of 69 and 28 posts respectively.

### Figure 59

Posts aimed creating people-to-people links by Polish-Armenian organizations

**Fundacja Polsko-Ormiańska Lbh - Հայկական Հիմնադրամ**  
May 28, 2021 · 🌐

Fundacja Solidarności Międzynarodowej

Rekrutacja obserwatorów krótkoterminowych (STO)

**Wybory parlamentarne w Armenii**

20 czerwca 2021r.

Solidarity Fund PL  
May 26, 2021 · 🌐

Zostan krótkoterminowym obserwatorem przedterminowych wyborów parlamentarnych w Armenii 🇦🇲 w ramach misji obserwacyjnej OBWE/ODIHR. Rekrutacja trwa do 31 maja 🙌  
<http://bityl.pl/xFinw>

See Translation

Like Comment Share

**Fundacja Ormiańska - Armenian Foundation - Հայկական Հիմնադրամ**  
September 26, 2021 · 🌐

Ormiański Kościół Apostolski w Polsce / Հայ Առաքելական Եկեղեցի Լիհաստանում  
September 26, 2021 · 🌐

🇵🇱 🇦🇲

Drodzy rodacy i przyjaciele narodu ormiańskiego,

Duszpasterz Apostolskiego Kościoła Ormiańskiego Ksiądz Archimandryta Taron Ghulikyan, zapraszają na modlitwę ku pamięci poległych podczas trwającej 44 wojny bohaterów ormiańskich oraz za pokój w Armenii i w Arcachu, które odbędzie się 27 września br. o godzinie 17:00 w Kościele Świętej Trójcy Kaplicy Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej w Warszawie (adres: ul. Solec 61).

See Translation

👍 10 2 Shares

Like Comment Share

*A post informing the followers about the possibility of becoming an observer for the parliamentary elections in Armenia.*

*A post inviting the friends of the Armenian nation to take part in a prayer for the soldiers killed during the 44-day war.*

Figure 60

Posts aimed at creating people-to-people links by Italo-Armenian organizations



*A post inviting to a Armenian music and dance events.*

*A post inviting to a cultural event with participation of Armenian experts and envisaged to be held on the ZOOM platform.*

As the research shows, the diaspora organizations operating in both countries have used the social media, namely the Facebook platform, for public diplomacy purposes. In particular, these organizations have published posts aimed at showing the attractiveness of the kinstate, its people and the uniqueness via sharing information about its culture, artists and policies. Apart from this, the social media platform has been used for raising certain relevant issues from the most pressing ones, such as the Armenian Genocide and the Nagorno Karabakh conflict to the organizations' daily activities. The certain features of the Facebook platform also allowed the organizations to listen to others, especially from the host society, their opinions and feedback about anything that

would be of relevance to the kinstate. However surprising it might seem, the development of technologies, also, have allowed to organize and facilitate events during which the representatives of the two publics could come together, maintain and establish ties through sharing knowledge, experiences, discussing political issues or just drinking wine and listening to music. Several years ago, this would be unbelievable, but today the social media give this opportunity and it seems that the diaspora organizations have seized it in order to take their public diplomacy activities to the wider audience. In spite of this similarities, however, there are differences in the public diplomacy performances between the organizations in Poland and Italy. The first one is relatively small and refers to the gap between the raised issues – 13 issues raised by the Polish-Armenian organization versus 16 issues raised by the Italo-Armenian organizations – and cultural themes – 13 themes presented by the Polish-Armenian organizations versus 14 themes presented by the Italo-Armenian organizations. In this regard, the selected organizations had closer results and acted “in harmony”. The same, however, cannot be said about the intensiveness of the efforts made on social media. This was noticed by looking at the overall number of the posts published throughout the year. In 2021, while Italo-Armenian community organizations posted in total of 1248 posts, the Polish-Armenian organizations published only 496 posts.



## Conclusion

Nowadays, the spectrum of actors in international relations and diplomacy ranges from states to individuals. Among them, also diasporas play a significant role when it comes to one of the ancient yet modernized fields of diplomacy – public diplomacy. With advancement of internet and technologies, the implementation of public diplomacy seems to have become much easier as information can reach out to the audience with one click at the blink of an eye. But how do diasporas use these new tools to reach out their target audience? This study has shown that a social media platform can be a useful tool for diasporas to exercise their public diplomacy activities. It also found out that mostly similar communities of the same diaspora might perform differently as public diplomats on social media.

The aim of this thesis was to show the relevance of diasporas as online public diplomacy agents, how in practice they carry out public diplomacy on social media, as well as to identify the similarities and differences between the public diplomacy activities of two community belonging the same diaspora. By analyzing the activities of Armenian diaspora community organizations' on social media over the past year, the thesis has shown how the contemporary social media is used by diaspora communities as a public diplomacy tool. It has particularly demonstrated this by categorizing the activities on social media, namely Facebook platform, in line with the public diplomacy pathways suggested by E. Sevian and N. Cull. As the social media platform has been used by those organizations to communicate with the host public in times of limited movement and physical contact, by doing that, in fact, the thesis also came to support the existing statement on the relevance of diasporas as actors in international relations, specifically when it comes to public diplomacy.

With the comparative case study of two Armenian diaspora communities in Italy and Poland, the research attempted to find out the ways in which two communities of the same diaspora, with

similar background, would carry out public diplomacy. It particularly revealed some similarities and differences in the performances of these two. Similarities were found in the ways the social media was used, that is posting in the same format including articles, images, news, event invitations, live and music videos etc., as well as posting more or less about the same topics. If consider all the activities in terms of the public diplomacy pathways suggested by E. Sevin and N. Cull, it can be stated that all the four organizations have used the suggested pathways. In particular, they have set agendas for reflection among the host public on issues related to the kinstate, its people and policies. At the same time, the function of listening to the host public, including both individuals and groups, has been executed through the social media. These organizations have also used Facebook for raising the kinstate's attractiveness in the eyes of the host public by sharing the kinstate's culture and the achievements in this sphere including music, cinema, language, art etc. Furthermore, throughout the year, despite the global restrictions imposed on movement, the activities of the selected organizations have not been limited to one-way communication but were aimed at building some dialogue between the two publics through online and offline events promoted on the social media platform. However, these community organizations have also had differences in their performances on social media. These are, first of all, reflected in the quantity of posts published on Facebook platform. In particular, the research found that the organizations of the Italo-Armenian community have been posting more actively throughout the year. In total, the Italo-Armenian community organizations have published about 2,5 times more compared to the organizations of the Polish-Armenian community. Apart from this, a difference is present also in the content of the posts. In this regard, the content of the posts by the community organizations operating in Italy has been much wider and covered more topics, especially when it came to setting an agenda for reflections among the target public, compared to the range of topics brought up by the Polish-Armenian community organizations. Having this in mind, it can be concluded that

despite the similar backgrounds of these two communities, on social media they differ when it comes to performing as online public diplomacy agents.

This research, however, is not devoid of limitations. These, first of all, include the reasons behind the different performances of the diaspora community organizations. Although this question has not been set for research from the onset and the thesis paves a way for further studies, the question, however, is worth studying as it will give a deeper insight into the topic. Besides this, despite the modern ways and tools of communication that facilitate connection over large distances, they, too, have shortcomings. This, first of all, might affect the data collection process and also its later verification as some posts on social media, namely Facebook platform, might be removed or become unavailable especially after a long period of time. In the course of this research, some cases of unavailable posts have been identified which otherwise could have been categorized, although would not significantly change the outcome.

Nevertheless, the value of this research lies not only in the fact that it views the link between diasporas and diplomacy from a fresh new angle and opens new prospects for researches on the topic, but it also employs an innovative method of data collection for a research on public diplomacy which would previously be bound to interviews and observations. Although not immediately but the social media have changed our lives and the ways we communicate with each other. Therefore, it is now inevitable to incorporate this fact into academic studies, an attempt made by the current research.

As it was mentioned previously, the current thesis serves as a stepping stone for future endeavors aimed at finding out more about this understudied field. For that reason, taking the abovementioned into account, the thesis also poses recommendations to consider. Among others, it is recommended to dive into the reasons behind the performances of separate communities, to find out the principles and strategies, if any, underlying certain behavior. This will also help

understand the source of differences, if any, between the diverging performances. It would be possible to do that through interviews with the representatives of community organizations. Apart from this, it would be interesting to study more than two communities of the same diaspora, and even carry out a comparative case study of different diasporas. In order to avoid a one-sided image, it would also add a real value to the existing scholarship studying the effectiveness of a diaspora's online public diplomacy activities and the engagement of the audience.

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