

## Soft cultural infiltration.. What role for Israel digital diplomacy

الاختراق الثقافي الناعم.. أي دور للدبلوماسية الرقمية الاسرائيلية

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### Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to highlight the most important topical in the field of diplomacy, by analysing the different roles played by digital diplomacy as a new type of diplomatic activity. Based on the progress made in the field of communications, diplomatic actors have a pretty wide margin to achieve their objectives through the widespread of multimedia and their penetration among large communities. This made us in front of a tool of people and system's soft infiltration. Digital diplomacy and its facilities, in terms of proliferation and leverage, have become a threat to peoples because of its use in international plans of control and penetration, away from the traditional sense of force, but through the use and supervision of information as well as promoting it in a manner that ensures its dissemination and convincing the recipient of its content. Especially if it relates to Israel digital diplomacy.

**Keywords:** digital diplomacy- soft infiltration- information- The Zionist infiltration.

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**Introduction:**

The current era has become the age of advanced technology and software. The speed with which information flows and spreads and the speed with which various events can be accessed and commented, through the use of modern media to communicate through online platforms and social media. The widespread use of modern technologies - particularly in the field of communications - has helped to influence the making and building of intellectual trends among peoples and individuals, as these platforms have enabled formal and informal actors to provide targeted messages and data on specific issues, which, by factor of repetition, have a profound impact on the recipient, without his will or choice, which result in increasing the ability to spread and influence opinion as well as shaping conviction.

In parallel, social media and platforms have become sensitive tools in the hands of various forces and actors. This has strengthened the interconnectedness of the media's terrible ability to transmit news and data, and to use them in the area of dissemination and persuasion, thereby putting many populations at risk of control and soft penetration, which adopts methods of persuasion and infiltration into the psychological depth of individuals. On the other hand, States are obliged to develop ways and means by which their peoples can be protected from the risk of penetration and external guidance. What makes it even more sensitive is the exploitation by great Powers and various non-official actors, such as non-governmental organizations, or even extremist groups, of the advanced levels of information technology in transmitting their messages and persuading others by their orientation, and thereby shaping an opinion on certain issues through what has become known as digital diplomacy, which plays sensitive roles in the cultural and intellectual influence of individuals and societies. If these instruments are monopolized and exploited by the great powers, then it is possible to talk about a shift in the course of these techniques, or even in their meaning towards dimensions that may amount to a contradiction with designation and objectives of diplomacy.

The State of Israel has been proactive in dealing with this new type of diplomacy in order to achieve its long-standing goals and to seek to improve its ugly stereotype linked to violence, bloodshed and political rape, which has been portrayed by peoples around the world in general and by the Arab peoples in particular, replacing it with the image of a democratic, tolerant and unparalleled State in the world.

Accordingly, this simplified study will attempt to address the following problem: To what extent have States successfully sought to exploit the advantages of digital diplomacy and mobilize their tools to control minds, influence opinion-making and culturally infiltrate peoples? And how Israel invested in the benefits of digital diplomacy?

The problematic can be dismantled into several interrogation levels, from which the main contents of the study can be understood:

-What's digital diplomacy? And what are their field of use?

- How has the interest of international actors in modern communication techniques evolved and how much they employed them in their foreign policy agendas?

- What are the field of Israel's utilisation and exploitation of digital diplomacy's benefits as part of its strategies for the creation of the great Jewish State?

**Hypothesis:**

-If digital diplomacy is considered to be a path based on the ability and control of the latest communication technologies and the optimal exploitation of cyberspace; that kind of diplomacy can be used as an instrument of penetration and control over others, and Israel is one of the greatest beneficiaries of its advantages.

To answer the problematic and address the hypothesis, the following elements will be analysed:

-An outlook of the meaning and connotations of digital diplomacy.

-The evolution of States interest in the use of the digital diplomacy tools (soft cultural penetration).

-The effectiveness and impacts of Israeli digital diplomacy.

**1- An outlook of the meaning and connotations of digital diplomacy and cultural penetration:**

The interest of States and organizations in its various forms in exploiting the considerable development of communications has become a tradition in political field, particularly with regard to the conduct of diplomatic activity. Before reviewing the manifestations of this interest, we will try to identify the various descriptions of digital diplomacy.

**Firstly: The signification of Digital Diplomacy:**

Before defining digital diplomacy, a simplified definition must be given to diplomacy, which is generally considered as: The art of negotiating with others and a method of peaceful persuasion in order to maintain relations of cooperation, understanding and partnership among States.

Diplomacy is also defined as: The art of managing international relations, the process of managing transactions between States through dialogue and negotiation, as the language of dialogue, debate, persuasion and the art of dealing with international organizations and solving their problems. The diplomacy is also the path of reason, not of war and conflict; till it works to achieve what war fails to accomplish; it moreover interfere in the economic, political, media and cultural spheres<sup>1</sup>.

There is no doubt that the emergence of the concept of digital diplomacy and its expansion are linked to the proliferation and development of major Internet and cyberspace telecommunications companies, which have become important players in international relations, including in the field of digital diplomacy, as well as non-governmental organizations as part of global civil society.

The transformations brought about by the information revolution have also led to a redefinition of diplomacy, as such it become different in nature from traditional diplomacy. Jordan Smith defines digital diplomacy as "the art of progress and

preservation of national interests through the exchange of information between government, States and other groups". The definition focused on the role of communications in the emergence of other actors; the emergence of diplomatic actors outside the sphere of the State has thus become one of the most important features of contemporary international relations; given that digital diplomacy is linked to the State's use of modern technology to increase communication and rapprochement both with its citizens in other States and with other States in its own diplomatic relations with them.

In other descriptions of digital diplomacy, Potter's definition describes it as: all diplomatic practices based on digital technologies and networks, including the Internet, mobile devices, channels and social media". Others consider it: "Employment of modern communication technology and social networks to achieve objectives of the country's foreign policy and public diplomacy practices."<sup>2</sup>

According to both Manor and Sejeev, digital diplomacy refers to the increasing use of social media platforms by States to achieve their foreign policy objectives and improve their image and reputation, and they exist at two levels: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies around the world, which enable States to design foreign policy messages and their national emblem for the unique characteristics of the public, which make it easier to accept their foreign policy and the image it aims to promote<sup>3</sup>. The British Foreign Office considered it as: "Solution to foreign policy problems using the Internet"<sup>4</sup>.

Based on the foregoing, digital diplomacy is more important than simply being considered one of the many tools of diplomacy, but is presented as a fundamental activity that can no longer be ignored, considered secondary or of little importance. In this regard, the author Nicholas Westcon says in his book "Digital Diplomacy: Impact of the Internet on international relations": "Those who underestimate digital diplomacy and believe that they can still perform their diplomatic functions in the traditional way alone will inevitably lose in favour to those who believe in new variables and implement them without delay"<sup>5</sup>.

Caution should be taken when dealing with the concept of digital diplomacy, since speaking about it in no way merely means launching websites and social networking pages, on which news is exclusively and quickly disseminated, but above all it is an awareness of the fact that Governments around the world are no longer the only actors involved in the activity and construction of international relations, as technological developments have abolished the boundaries between what is domestic and what is international, allowing new actors to operate through citizen journalism, civil society institutions and non-governmental organizations<sup>6</sup>.

All these parties are communicating interactively and directly, its importance and impact cannot be neglected. Thus, professional communication with them through the tools of digital diplomacy and public diplomacy initiatives has become imperative, in order to provide a true and positive image to all peoples around the

world, and to assist Governments to explain as well as to justify their fundamental values to peoples in a logical and comprehensive way that helps them to be accepted.

Greater attention should therefore be paid to raising awareness and training of diplomatic personnel about new technology and its uses. Such diplomats would be responsible for managing and supervising social networks in different and diverse languages, ideas and cultures, in accordance with the vision and objectives of the country's public diplomacy.

Digital diplomacy is considered as an extension of diplomacy in its traditional sense; it is based on innovations and types of use resulting from information and communication technologies. However, digital tools are only a means of transmitting information, since they contribute to change the face of diplomatic activity being a priority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>7</sup>.

Digital diplomacy is a form of public diplomacy, highlighted through the use of digital technologies and social media platforms, such as Twitter, Facebook...etc, by States to communicate with the public in an inexpensive manner, and given the close connection between digital diplomacy and public diplomacy, the concept of public diplomacy should be briefly assessed, given that it is the diplomacy that has been associated with public opinion and civil society (i.e. with citizens of the State).

In that regard, "Anderlek" believed that there was an agreement to define public diplomacy as the process of influencing public opinion in order to achieve foreign policy objectives, and that public diplomacy is an exercise of influence by Governments over their citizens through the media<sup>8</sup>.

### **Secondly: Definition of cultural penetration:**

There is a difference between cultural invasion and cultural penetration. The first concept was linked in its use to ancient traditional colonialism, which was through the State's occupation of the territory of another State and the attempt to impose its cultural model, customs and traditions on the people of the occupied country by tough physical and coercive means. The second concept is associated to technological progress and new scientific and technical development in the field of communications and information and its smooth use according to a soft power approach.

Muhammad Haouat penetration as: "The range of informative, cultural and intellectual activities, directed at specific communities and peoples by a state, one or several entities, aiming at changing attitudes and forming patterns of behaviors, values, visions and mindset among penetrated peoples, according to the interests and objectives of perpetrators of the penetration operation<sup>9</sup>.

Abed al-Jabri also defined cultural penetration as follows: "... The cultural penetration targets the mind and the soul and its two means to deal with the world: Perception which aims to control it, abduct it, guide it through an audio-visual image, and from it to flattening the consciousness, i.e., to make it associated with images and scenes on the surface of an informative and advertising character which stimulates perception, incites excitement and overshadow reason. With perception controlled,

spirit will be submitted, this means: disrupting the effectiveness of the mind, adapting logic and values, guiding imagination, profiling etiquette, stereotyping of behaviour... And the objective is to devote a certain kind of knowledge, and goods... it's the American lifestyle, but only on the consumer side of it<sup>10</sup>; So we moved from cultural conquest using the tools of physical power. (hard power) to use a new kind of power, deeper, more easy and faster at reaching the results of the cultural penetration of peoples by means of soft power, which Joseph Nye was the first to touch upon, consisting mainly in the power of influence of non - physical factors in international interactions, such as culture, religion, modern audio - visual technologies and various social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).

## **2- The evolution of States' interest in the use of digital diplomacy tools:**

The meaning of digital diplomacy concept highlighted new expressions to perform diplomacy, and every country has to look at how technology tools like social media can be used to exert diplomacy. In view of this, the interest of States in developing their performance in accordance with the requirements of diplomatic digital activity – such as the preparation and controlling its means - has been essential for the success of their diplomatic performance, for increasing their impact on the outside world and for achieving the objectives of their foreign policies. States with active foreign policies have realized the importance of integrating digital public diplomacy into foreign policy decision - making, where digital diplomacy contributes to enabling foreign policy by delivering it to a wider audience using different social networks.

The British Foreign Office has established the Office of Digital Diplomacy, which carries out many of the activities that rely on the use of the latest developments in communications, and there is some agreement that the British Foreign Office has taken the lead in perusing and developing digital diplomacy under the supervision of “Tom Fletcher”, the British Ambassador to Lebanon, who contributed to the development of the diplomatic use of social media, calling it Twitter diplomacy. This concept then spread to refer to a new function, that of a diplomat who shares messages on Twitter with his followers. According to Fletcher, the use of social media has become important in diplomatic work, as it contributes to information-gathering, analysis and to enhance crisis impact ability<sup>11</sup>.

However, the prospects for digital diplomacy are much greater than the process of official use highlighted by British experience, as the official diplomat's creativity in communicating with the public remains ruled by the foundations of official state policy and the limits of his state's bilateral relations.

Its impact therefore remains short-lived. Long - term relationships are formed by groups of citizens who can be organized into real or virtual networks, regional or international organizations, scientific or professional associations, and who have a greater capacity for dialogue and interaction through social media with citizens of other countries with whom they share an interest in humanitarian or global issues.

Consequently, digital diplomacy goes beyond the official experience of the British Foreign Office, despite the importance of its study, the potential it has revealed for the use of social media in diplomatic work, and it goes beyond the official experience of all States. The most important thing revealed in this experience is the need to train diplomats to use social media with the masses and opinion leaders of other countries and to influence them for the benefit of their States or to build a positive image of their States in other countries<sup>12</sup>.

As for the United States of America, the State Department has launched the 21st Century Political Competence Initiative to train American diplomats and encourage them to use social media to create global dialogue. This initiative led to important results in American diplomats using social media such as Twitter and Facebook in their daily work. As a result, the United States Department of State's Facebook and Twitter pages have increased to 26 million followers<sup>13</sup>.

Moreover, the Indian native young man Parach Khanna, who was an adviser to the former American president Barack Obama played an important role in the new world of digital diplomacy. He moved America from traditional to digital diplomacy, talking about new digital transnational empires and digital tribes that couldn't get out into the new world in his new book, "The Second World: Power and Ascendancy in the New World"<sup>14</sup>.

In addition to the instigation of the Arab Spring revolutions by the USA. In this context, the report published by the Petersburg Centre for Contemporary Near East Studies on 31 March 2011 showed the role of the United States in containing and mobilizing protests by activating the role of public diplomacy and greater activity in digital diplomacy, using its capabilities to contain and direct social networks. Because the Arab Spring is a direct result of developments in the Middle East Initiative, through which the United States prepared and formed loyalist elites among tens of thousands of Arab citizens in order to mobilize and train them using modern means of communication<sup>15</sup>.

That is why, according to Ronald Parles, this initiative led to the transformation of the U.S. State Department into a global empire, which means that the American experience adds an important aspect that complements the image of digital diplomacy: that foreign ministries can develop their official diplomatic capacity to communicate with the public via Twitter and Facebook pages, and that the number of followers on these pages indicates how successful they have been in attracting the masses<sup>16</sup>.

It also means that digital diplomacy has become a science with practical applications and offers possibilities to qualify diplomats to interact with the public via social media.

The European experience in the field of interest and the development of its diplomatic performance can be observed by relying more on the wider use of modern communication technologies to activate its diplomatic roles by linking digital diplomacy to cultural diplomacy, where digital diplomacy has become a new strategy

aimed at providing access to European cultural content and shaping new ways of interacting with the worldwide audience<sup>17</sup>. The European Union aims to use digital diplomacy to facilitate access to its multiple cultures around the world and to achieve intercultural cooperation. France has also used the term "influence diplomacy" in speaking of developments that have accompanied French public diplomacy and the development of its digital diplomacy.

Therefore, in recent years, many States of the European Union have rapidly developed digital platforms for the preservation, development and dissemination of European cultural heritage, as well as the use of this heritage, which has been transformed from digital national origins into creative industries, and used to develop interaction with diverse audiences.

According to the European perception: In the information age, digital diplomacy has evolved in the States of the European Union as a new and powerful means by which ordinary citizens and organizations can engage in diplomacy, thus becoming ambassadors who represent their cultural affiliation and are keen to disseminate it. The European Union therefore opens the way for the development of digital diplomacy and cultural diplomacy, so that a citizen is not only an ambassador of his or her own State, but he can also be an ambassador of his or her own culture, propagating and defending it, innovating in producing serious ideas emanating from that culture, and increasing the soft power of his or her State by increasing the attractiveness of that culture<sup>18</sup>.

The experience of the European Union has also opened the way for the development of digital diplomacy, as new means of communication provide opportunities for interactive communication between different parties to create a participatory environment across borders, as well as possibilities for the two-way, rather than one-way, flow of cultural products. It increases the chances and possibilities that soft instruments will succeed to accomplish what colonial powers have been unable to achieve, as well as to eliminate the burdens and costs of military power in trying to influence the other and impose certain values and agendas<sup>19</sup>.

It is clear from this that States have recognized the importance of digital diplomacy and the need to train their diplomats to use it, to increase their soft power and shape their relations with the public. They were therefore quick to make this digital space and the advantages it offered serve their objectives, and to impose arrangements based on this digital diplomacy power of influence, its speed of diffusion, its low cost versus effective influence. But it does not stop at the limits of diplomats' use of social media to interact with the masses, despite the importance of this and its role in bringing together visions and more detail and explanations of the State's trends and positions on certain issues, thus ensuring acceptance and support of State authority. Indeed, the development of the State's interest in activating and increasing their diplomatic digital activity is meant to penetrate the public and to influence their attitudes towards many issues and matters. There no doubt that this serves the interests of the major players on the international scene, who have been



using their capabilities and technological means to guide values and ideas in accordance with their plans and objectives<sup>20</sup>.

Despite the advantages and facilities offered by digital diplomacy in the management of foreign affairs and in the diplomatic development of organs and services functioning, many followers and diplomats highlight the darker side of it, taking into account the risks and challenges that further affect the institutions and diplomatic organs of the State. It is clear that the expansion and rapid flow of information is problematic to control information and to protect certain data and reports from piracy and distortion, thus making it easier to exploit them for contrary purposes, as are the hacking by terrorist organizations of electronic platforms belonging to sovereign institutions or the accounts of officials and diplomats, which they exploit in carrying out operations that threaten the security of both States and individuals<sup>21</sup>. Not to mention the facilities and advantages that this space offers to terrorist groups in recruiting, mobilizing and communicating between members and supporters, and thereby turning these free spaces into channels for the spread of extremism and the imposition of hostile agendas. They are available to any organization or actor to play an influential role in achieving their objectives whatsoever<sup>22</sup>.

On the other hand, diplomatic practices with this digital instrument - similar to Tweeter diplomacy - pose a problem of overlap between personal opinions and official positions of States, which may lead to the risk of hasty dissemination of political opinions and comments, at a time when the accounts of some political officials and diplomats have become open conferences, where the tweets of US President Donald Trump have caused much controversy, as well as many political and diplomatic crises, such as his offense against the allies of United States of America in many tweets, prompting strong criticism of Britain, Germany and other countries.

In view of these challenges, digital diplomacy has become an instrument for enabling and simplifying the fundamentals of diplomatic work, with the preferences and advantages that it offers to its users, while there are many reservations about the risks and challenges surrounding them.

### **3-The effectiveness and effects of Israeli digital diplomacy:**

Digital diplomacy has become an instrument in the hands of many States, primarily the dominant Powers, especially in the manufacture and direction of public opinion in order to achieve their ambitions and objectives of hegemony and to play more leading and influential roles over others. This usage has been accompanied by some concepts that have attempted to move closer to the reality of the roles that digital diplomacy contributes among many international Powers. And from those concepts we find under the designation of: soft power, infiltration, occupying cyberspace and digital warfares. However, many and different the nomenclature may be, the fact is that it is intended primarily to control minds, i.e. to control the human

being and his pattern of thinking, his actions and behaviours, and can go beyond to direct espionage or software sabotage<sup>23</sup>.

Israeli diplomacy is among the most active, seeking to improve Israel's image before world public opinion in general and Arab in particular.

**Firstly: Israeli digital diplomacy:**

Israel is one of the developed countries in the field of digital diplomacy. It ranked eighth globally in the Digital Diplomacy Report 2016 and surpassed such developed countries as Switzerland, Germany, Japan, Canada, Austria, Spain and Sweden; bearing in mind that the above-mentioned States have a special interest in digital diplomacy and communication with other peoples<sup>24</sup>. An important indication of Israel's interest in digital diplomacy is that the Israeli Government and its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in collaboration with the Institute for Internet Studies at Tel Aviv University, organized the first international conference on digital diplomacy, in which experts from around the world, including academics from prestigious universities such as Oxford University, participated.

According to the "Israeli Source" report, in 2015 the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs employed more than 75 staff members, volunteers and 8 advisers in the "Public Diplomacy" section, as well as 30 staff in the same section, but they are deployed around the world in diplomatic representation offices such as embassies and consulates in different States. The Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Department of Digital Diplomacy, oversees "more than 350 digital and social channels on the Internet, and nearly 20 websites in Arabic, English, Persian, Russian and others, as well as more than 80 sites belonging to diplomatic representation offices around the world."

Israel realized that the best way to approach young Arabs is this new world, the world of Facebook and Twitter, which is the best way to influence public opinion. "Israel in Arabic," which is run by the Arabic Language Section of the Israeli Digital Diplomacy Service, is followed by about 1.3 million people, mostly from the younger generation between the ages of 18 and 24, most of whom live in Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq and the Maghreb. It has therefore devoted much of its potential to work under the theme of "Public Relations and Public Diplomacy Activities in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs," in order to implement the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Public Relations Strategy. Within this framework, a specialized digital diplomacy service has been established, which is responsible for using the necessary software and tools to disseminate messages on social media so that it can reach a large number of users<sup>25</sup>.

However, the most important Israeli digital diplomacy is the Arabic department headed by "Jonathan Junen", who is directly responsible for digital diplomacy in Arabic at the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>26</sup>.

Israel realized sooner the role of digital diplomacy in re - improving its image among various peoples in ways that are easy and inexpensive, in which it does not

need military or nuclear power, but only soft power sources from social networks - Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc.

**Secondly: Israeli digital diplomacy instruments:**

It consists of many different media channels. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Information and Press Division comprises six units<sup>27</sup>:

- Public Affairs Section (audio-visual, production and publishing, special projects).

- Information and Internet Section (collection and transmission of information to missions, embassies and to current journalists in Israel).

- Ministry Spokesman's Office and Press Section (relations with Israeli and foreign media, as well as journalists visiting Israel).

- The Arab Media Section works with the Arab media by coordinating press interviews and press authorisations, holding press conferences and interviewing senior Israeli officials, primarily the Minister for Foreign Affairs. These activities are aimed at presenting Israel to the Arab public and emphasizing Israel's political positions in the peace process in Palestine. The Section operates two websites, one in Arabic and the other in Persian, which contain a variety of information on Israel, its institutions and its external relations, as well as information on Israel's society and culture, documents on the peace process, the history of this process and Jewish people, and the history of Jews, including during the Nazi Holocaust. The Section also monitor a daily reports published in the Arab media.

- External Relations Section (public requests, friendship associations, local administration and local organizations).

- Administrative and Budgetary Section.

Israeli digital diplomacy also relies on numerous media channels, especially social media pages and sites, including:

The page of what is known as "Coordinator," whose widespread promotion coincided with the acquisition by the State of Palestine of the status of observer member at the United Nations General Assembly in 2012. This page is constantly undermining the concepts of "State" and "national authority," in favour of the so-called Coordinator, who is creating virtual relations with the Palestinians that turn into real relations on the ground by requesting the provision of humanitarian and other services and assistance aimed at bypassing the role of the State of Palestine and its institutions.

The Coordinator of the Occupation Government's actions in the West Bank and Gaza also posts videos and photographs with comments in Arabic, citing what he says are the "morality of Israel's army," or the "facilities" that Israel grants to the Palestinians.

It is worth mentioning that the Coordinator's Page is an Israeli page launched in March 2016, and it defines itself by saying: "Territories Government Coordination Unit."

In addition to the Israeli Army of Occupation spokesman's page "Avichay Adraee) "The aim of which is to penetrate Palestinian and Arab public opinion and influence its beliefs and values in order to create a dialogue on issues that, prior to the existence of this kind of diplomatic activity, were beyond discussion, in an attempt to raise Palestinian awareness about The "humanitarian role" of the army of occupation, and until the publication of this report, more than 1,367,577 people follow Avichay Adraee's Arabic Facebook page, while the coordinator's page is followed by 558,111 people<sup>28</sup>.

Moreover, there is an official Israeli Facebook page branded with "Israel Speaks Arabic." This page has more than 1.7 million followers on Facebook, mostly from the Arab world. It publishes various videos and photographs of Israel in an effort to win the hearts of the people of the Arab world. It also publishes religious publications and congratulates Muslims and Christians on their religious and national holidays. It also publishes publications sympathizing with the natural disasters, wars and other events in the Arab world. It also congratulated the Arabs for their achievements at various fields, as it had published on 21 June 2019 when it congratulated the Algerian national team for having won the African Nations Cup in Egypt; posting a number of Algerian players photographs and saying, "Congratulations to the Algerian people for winning the African Cup of Nations." Congratulations to the Desert Warriors for this remarkable achievement. Photo was from Israel Channel 55, which broadcast the match in Israel<sup>29</sup>.

### **Thirdly: Israeli digital diplomacy and public opinion:**

Israel's digital diplomacy, through its strategies, has achieved many of its objectives. 10 years ago, Israel had no relationship with people in the Arab world. But now every citizen is accessible thanks to digital technology, and they can change viewpoint of people who follow their pages in Israel. Among the objectives of Israeli digital diplomacy are:

- The first objective is to give Israel the image of a "friend" of Arab peoples, as well as to praise the Israeli model as an example of a democratic, wealthy and technologically advanced State whose citizens are living a decent life that any Arab might wish for.

- The second objective of Israeli public diplomacy is to defend Israel during crises, particularly in wars, and to highlight hostility towards anti-Israeli Islamic jihadist organizations and movements<sup>30</sup>.

- The third objective, concerning Palestine and the Palestinians, is to try to tarnish the image of the Palestinian Government towards its dealings with the Palestinian people, showing images of Hamas leaders. (Ismael Haniyeh, Khalid Meshaal, Mahmoud Al-Zahar and Sami Abu Zuhri) At a low-profile angle, these leaders were given the characteristics of authoritarianism, evil, cold and lack of empathy. Ordinary Palestinian citizens, especially women and children, appeared poor and miserable and lacked basic rights such as food, medicine, health and education<sup>31</sup>.

- The fourth objective is to achieve Israeli security and peace within Israel, particularly as a result of the increase in hatred towards the Zionist entity during the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip since 2008 as a result of the criminal actions of the Israeli army against the Palestinian people since the voices of States and organizations that have denounced the crimes committed by Israel have increased, causing Israel to resort to digital diplomacy in order to reduce hatred towards it and thereby achieve peace and lasting security.

The use of digital diplomacy by Israel has had a wide resonance and a clear impact on world public opinion, even Arab public opinion. Large audiences estimated at millions interact with a number of Israeli digital diplomatic pages belonging to Israeli representatives. Israel's experience in digital diplomacy deserves to be studied in depth. It clearly operates on the basis of a clear vision and a strategic plan with specific objectives; and it uses all means of modern technology professionally, which has outperformed developed countries such as Switzerland, Canada and Spain; and this has led Israel to surpass developed countries such as Switzerland, Canada and Spain.

At the Arab level, Arab followers interact daily with these accounts, the authors of which show Israel's tolerance and willingness to do good for its neighbors; in addition to be a victim of Arab and Islamic terrorism, all of which, of course, are allegations from which the Zionist entity achieves a clear objective within the framework of the digital diplomacy approach<sup>32</sup>. For example, if we come to analyse the various comments written by Arab followers on the Facebook page "Israel speaks Arabic," most comments speak positively about Israel and praise the Zionist entity; we have also found that most of the commentators for these publications are from the Arab Gulf States, Egypt, Morocco and others. However, there are some who describe the views and positions of the Arabs in this regard as a digital normalization when describing the Arab responsiveness to Israeli digital diplomacy<sup>33</sup>.

Consequently, using its digital diplomacy, Israel seeks to reformulate its international and regional standing by influencing the minds the followers of this websites (especially those from the Arab world), and to try to gain support through the use of modern technology with a view to influencing and penetrating the minds of certain categories of public opinion, to turn from opponents to supporters of it in what it seeks to achieve. That is why Israel's Facebook page, which works to break through Iraqi society, seeks to develop Iraqi - Israeli relations; we also find Israel's Farsi Twitter page, which has a growing number of followers.

### **Conclusion :**

What we can conclude with through this study, based on the use of digital diplomacy as a tool to penetrate and guide world public opinion in favour of the goals and interests of the most major powers controlling modern communication technologies, the shift in the connotations of this tool, the existence of which was supposed to contribute even more to bringing global point of view and attitudes closer together, by making sure to create a global public opinion that interacts on

issues that are basically about humanity, in order to put an end to all the differences and barriers that contribute more to hostility and conflict than for the coexistence of peoples and nations. However, the current use of the digital diplomacy has become a synonym of all negative connotations, when it has become an indicator of penetration and control over the minds and levels of thinking of peoples and societies, which has given preferential advantages to the major Powers most in control of information and communication techniques, particularly networking, and has therefore been included among the priorities of their policies and plans in influencing the outside world in order to ensure and achieve their interests, even at the expense of the unity and cohesion of other countries.

Digital diplomacy, which is part of public diplomacy, aims to improve the image of Israel vis-à-vis the world in general and the Arab world in particular by portraying various illustrations of civilization, humanity, religion and culture within Israel as a tolerant and peaceful State that embrace peaceful coexistence toward different peoples. This is what it looks like; but implicitly, Israeli digital diplomacy is aimed at achieving the foreign policy objectives consisting in fulfilling the special interest of Zionists and achieving peace and security for Israel, as well as preserving the Jewish religion (claiming to be the chosen people of God). It also aims to tarnish the image of Palestine before public opinion and the image of Islam, especially in view of the spread of Islam, especially in Europe. Thanks to the media, its men and its social media, Israel has been able to achieve many diplomatic objectives, as it has been able to maintain its security so far. The rate of hatred towards Israel has declined, as confirmed by social media sites. It has also been able to build political relations with many countries, including the Arab States. This has caused Israel to benefit greatly from both digital and popular Israeli diplomacy.

### Margins:

<sup>1</sup> See, Hallams, Digital Diplomacy: The Internet, The battle for Ideas & US Foreign Policy, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> وائل عبد العال، الدبلوماسية الرقمية و مكانتها في السياسة الخارجية الفلسطينية، مركز تطوير الإعلام، جامعة بيرزيت، 2018. ص9.

<sup>3</sup> المرجع نفسه، ص10.

<sup>4</sup> Ilan Manor, What is Digital Diplomacy, and how is it Practiced around the World? A brief introduction, Annual Review of the Diplomatist Magazine, November 2016, p03.

<sup>5</sup> Grincheva Natalia, Digital diplomacy rhetoric, UK: city university London, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> Ilan, Op. Cit, P04.

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<sup>8</sup> Nancy Snow, Percuader-in-chief : Global Opinion and Public Diplomacy in the age of Obama , Nimble Books, 2009, p 6.

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