DISCUSSION PAPERS IN DIPLOMACY

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Among the many stories of people crossing to the other side of the divided island of Cyprus (following the recent opening of the barricades after almost three decades) a particular event struck me as an exemplar of reconciliation at the human level. Returning to a church that had been turned into a mosque, a bitter symbol of occupation and ethnic cleansing, a Christian Greek-Cypriot man headed for a charged encounter with the Other. The imam in place, however, welcomed him as a most honoured guest, unfolding a red carpet so that he could walk inside the church/mosque without removing his shoes. Behind a white curtain, he unveiled the altar where the Christian relics were safely kept for the return of the dispossessed. Occupation and religious exclusivity aside, it was clear that the unused church was carefully modified into an interim mosque. The imam explained his past and present actions through a spiritual genealogy, for 'we are all descendants of Adam and Eve, all brothers, one body', meaning that it was his and indeed everyone's foremost responsibility, irrespective of religion and ethnicity, 'to love, respect and help each other as our Creator intended'. Capturing everything on camera and deeply moved by the event, the Greek-Cypriot man admitted to an epiphany, 'a feeling that Cyprus expanded' and became more accommodating (Demetriou, 2003).

The experience of new or expanding space, opening up possibilities and promising alternative ways of relating to others, characterises what I will be discussing in terms of human diplomacy and spirituality. Specifically, the imam exemplifies such a practice in being an emissary of humanity, someone who in mediating the ethno-religious Other extends the normalised space of diplomatic action, elevates Self and Other to a spiritual realm and transforms hostile or potentially hostile relationships. To explore this, I have coined the term *homo-diplomacy*, seeking to bring together two neglected aspects of historical as well as contemporary diplomatic practice. The first aspect concerns the non-professional dimension of diplomacy, by which I mean the inter-personal dealings of the homo sapiens, or if you like the non-technical, experimental and experiential diplomacy of everyday life. The second aspect concerns the transformative potential of diplomacy, that is a form of diplomacy (a more spiritual form of diplomacy) that engages in heterology in order to revisit and rearticulate homology, whose mission is not only, not just, the knowledge and control of the Other, but fundamentally the knowledge of

the Self; and crucially this knowledge of the Self as a more reflective means of dealing with and transforming relations with Others.

In underscoring the value of homo-diplomacy, my assumption is that conventional approaches to diplomacy (i.e. approaches that view diplomacy as merely an intergovernmental affair, as management of interstate relations or as primarily the pursuit and negotiation of national interests) are not able to account for either the rich history or current complexity of the diplomatic world. In terms of broaching the concept, I have found insightful James Der Derian's reframing of diplomacy as the mediation of estrangement; where estrangement includes not only alienation from other people and other cultures, but also from one's labour, the environment and god(s) (Der Derian, 1987). Within this context homo-diplomacy would be about the mediation of sameness, internal mediation, as a condition for as well as a neglected aspect of the mediation of the estranged. In homo-diplomacy not only the Other but the Self become strange, a site to be known or known anew. Self becomes strange so as to creatively deal with alterity, overcoming the diplomatic fixation of clear and unambiguous identity, which renders mediation a one-dimensional external process (Kristeva 1991; cf. Sofer, 1997; Neumann, 2005).

Diplomacy, Spirituality, Alterity

What does this double estrangement entail? How does the mediation of sameness operate? And how does it enable an alternative culture of diplomacy? My interest in these questions follows from my past research in the history and theory of diplomacy. I have examined elsewhere the forgotten diplomacy-philosophy intertext that is encapsulated in the ancient Greek practice of *theoria*. Specifically, how the term *theoria* did not only mean philosophical contemplation, methodical scheme or rational statement of principles (as we generally understand the notion of theory today), but that it also had a twofold diplomatic sense. First, *theoria* was a name for the solemn or sacred embassy sent to consult the oracle (like the embassy to Delphi or Delos). This form of diplomacy was therefore philo-gnostic, charged with receiving cryptic missives and reflecting on their implications for the polis. Second, *theoria* was a freelance or ecumenical embassy of prominent citizens of the polis, 'sent abroad to see the world' with the purpose of finding out the laws and political ways of other peoples (non-Greeks) and bringing back this knowledge to inform and suggest reforms in the polis. This form of diplomacy was eminently philo-barbaric, seeking to learn from non-Hellenic Others,

from known and unknown foreign cultures. What these forgotten aspects of *theoria* have in common is the idea of sending an embassy as a mission of problematisation, in order to bring back new knowledge (a prophesy, alternative views, revaluations, strange ideas), which can then be used to rethink and reinvigorate the Self, to reconsider dominant norms and provide new frameworks for deliberating political action. In short, *theoria* was an ancient diplomatic practice, or within my current terminology a homo-diplomatic instrument, charged with knowledge of the Other as a means of knowing oneself (Constantinou, 1996, 2004).

This culture of diplomacy is not limited to ancient Greece. It is indeed part of other western and non-western traditions that see 'realist' international relations as problematic and diplomacy not in isolation but in conjunction with spirituality. For example, Herbert Butterfield already suggested how a spiritual qua Christian revival of diplomacy could more effectively address human problems in post-World War II international relations. According to Butterfield this diplomacy would have to fully embrace the principles of Christian charity as a way of dealing with diabolical agencies and political plots contaminated by raison d'état. A Christocentric diplomacy enhances the recognition that 'it is human understanding itself that needs to be enlarged' and that ultimately 'real apprehension' involves 'giv[ing] something of ourselves', sacrificing precious identities, positions and perceptions (Butterfield, 1954, pp. 8-9; cf. Hall, 2002; Sharp, 2003). In this respect, the Biblical notion of forgiveness has been suggested not as painless work or egocentric charity but literally as a struggle with oneself to make space, 'make space in one's heart so that the other can fit in' (*sun-ch r*).[1]

Afzal Igbal explores the 'moral diplomacy' that adheres to early Islamic principles and which rejects the use of power domination, ambiguous discourse, cunning and guile, vain actions, and laborious and impressionistic protocol. From this perspective, the diplomacy of the prophet of Islam is presented as encouraging the constant use of modus vivendi ('Allah will bring us together and unto him is the journeying') and underscoring reflection on the means to an end, the former as always open to ethical scrutiny, the latter not as the yardstick of diplomatic success. Diplomatic teleology in the form of foreign policy objectives is seen as subservient to diplomatic methodology, the conduct through which one pursues global goals, and becomes the real test of a truly *Islamic* diplomacy (Igbal, 1975, pp. 81-131). One could also add in

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1) Neophytos, Bishop of Morphou, 'Our Prayer is not Against the Work of Politicians', *Politis* (Cypriot daily newspaper), 2 September 2004, p. 9.

relation to reflective Islamic diplomacy, the practice of the 'greater jihad' (contrasted to the 'lesser jihad' associated with military struggle and militant violence), which is a spiritual struggle seeking to stretch and break one's limited self or enemy within, as a means of self-discovery or union with God.[2]

Other works have pronounced religion as 'the missing dimension of statecraft' or 'faith-based diplomacy' as a means of 'trumping realpolitik' (Johnston and Sampson, 1994; Johnston, 2003). In a recent work identifying global problems as spiritual as much as material crises, David Wellman has responded by mixing religion with ecology to propose a practice of 'sustainable diplomacy': 'Practitioners of Sustainable Diplomacy will not only share in the political, economic, and consular duties current diplomats undertake, but they will also be conveyers and receivers of culture-including the stories of marginalized peoples and lands' (Wellman, 2004, p. 41). Integrating 'ecological footprint' (the impact individual communities make upon the earth) with Islamic and Christian precepts of relating with others and the environment, Wellman offers common ethical principles through which relations between Moroccans and Spaniards could be reassessed and managed in people-to-people encounters, especially religious and quasi-religious conversations that transcend secular and egotistic interests. For example, the need to reflect on the common ontological relationship between the human, the earth and its creations; encountering the Other and through this recognising 'the truth about ourselves' and of 'our common Divine origin'; offering hospitality, help and sustenance to strangers as a religious responsibility; recognising how the 'stranger we encounter could in fact be God or an emissary of God' (Wellman, 2004, pp. 165-6). The latter is especially interesting for it recasts the stranger from an intriguing 'problem' of secular political relations to a most crucial agent of homo-diplomatic practice, bearing gnostic material and testing one's spiritual resilience.

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2) For more prosaic, yet progressive, uses of 'the greater jihad', see the recent pronouncements by the Palestinian president Abu Masen, following the dismantling of the Israeli settlements in Gaza that the 'lesser jihad' ended and the Palestinians were now 'standing before the 'greater jihad,' which is construction, development, and achieving security and tranquillity for our people.' (Al-Hayat Al-Jadida (Palestinian Authority), 21 August 2005). The term 'greater jihad' had already been employed by Abu Mazen following the presidential elections in a meeting with Christian clergymen. At the meeting, he had said: 'As I have already said, the 'lesser jihad' has ended and the 'greater jihad' has come, and the meaning of 'greater jihad' is the attempt to achieve peace' (*Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* (Palestinian Authority), 14 January 2005).

Such mediation alternatives, however, are not limited to mainstream spiritualities. Richard Sidy, for example, has put forward a pedagogical proposition for a 'world diplomacy' inspired by the teachings of Torkom Saraydarian. This is a diplomacy that is not based on maximisation of separatist interests but rather on the enhancement of 'the common good of all humanity' (Sidy, 1992, p. viii). Saraydarian has already called this elsewhere 'new diplomacy', 'real diplomacy' or 'high diplomacy', where one seeks to 'raise the political consciousness' of Self and Other as a way of mediating conflict and estrangement. The driving principle of such practice is: 'Know yourself, and know other people, and know God, and know that all three are one and not separate.'[3] To that extent, Saraydarian seems to be revisiting the 'kinship diplomacy' of ancient times, concerned with re-establishing broken familial relationships among humans and between them and their gods (Jones, 1999). Following Saraydarian, Sidy has redefined diplomacy as being 'beyond personal or national gain or loss. Diplomacy is the process of understanding Divine Will' (Sidy, 1992, p.100). In effect, this seeks to reintroduce to diplomacy the philo-gnosticism pursued in *theoria*.

Within and beyond the diplomacy of new age spirituality, one should not neglect the impact of secular spiritualities too. On the one hand, the holistic approaches of new physics (as developed from quantum mechanics and relativity) have challenged Newtonian presumptions of linearity, objectivity, monism and causal determinism. Especially by combining with Eastern mysticism, they have been used to develop novel scientific understandings of the interconnectedness of all things, of undivided wholeness, of consciousness-based reality, of 'living systems' and 'multiple worlds' which necessitate a radical shift in diplomatic discourse and perspective (Capra 1975, 2002; Gunaratne, 2005). On the other hand, there are those humanist spiritualities that animate 'unofficial', 'citizen', or 'track two' diplomacies and associated with specific conflict resolutions. There are of course many illustrations of how such non-state, non-governmental mediations and workshops have brought about cross-ethnic togetherness and political catharsis, including a remarkable change in perspective and/or reconciliation among previously suspicious or hostile parties. Yet it has been suggested that the application of 'foreign' methodologies and spiritualities into local conflicts can be another form of cultural domination and 'civilising mission', be it in the form of western (and often expensive) conflict resolution workshops

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3)   An   interview   given   to   Leon   Fermanian   in   1991   at
     http://www.tsgfoundation.org/downloads/TSinterview.pdf, accessed 5 August 2005.

treated as universal panaceas or Quaker missions mediating the Indo-Pakistani conflict. One could also add a general defensive tendency among these approaches, seeing themselves as at best supplementary to the 'official' or 'track one' process (despite being occasionally distrusted and vilified by state diplomats), which means that their diplomatic purview tends to be limited. This should not however underestimate their contribution to interethnic and international relations (Berman and Johnson, 1977, Sharp, 2001, Richmond, 2002).

In the case of Cyprus, which has had its fair share of such 'track two' efforts, the opening of the barricades brought about intensification but also a new dimension to the reconciliation effort at the human level. The crossings made possible less organised and more contingent encounters across the ethno-religious divide without the presence of third-party mediators as in the recent past. The abstract Other was humanised en masse, old enemies acquired faces (and even became friends), old friendships were renewed. Since the opening of the barricades, Cypriots experienced (either personally or vicariously through friends and the mass media) an ambivalent shift from hetero-diplomacy to homo-diplomacy. By this I mean, a shift from projecting ethno-religious Otherness as something that needs to be managed through foreign policy at the governmental or professional level (or be it at the so-called track two, or citizen diplomacy level), to the notion that the ethno-religious Other is also part of the collective Self, of another Self (a forgotten Self); a concealed sameness that Cypriots need to confront and come to terms with at the human-personal level and on a daily basis. Frankly, it has been the experimental and experiential homo-diplomacy that proved more fruitful in mediating intra-Cypriot estrangement and transforming visions of Other/Self; perhaps that is only for some people, or temporarily, or for short periods, begging the need that this form of diplomacy should be enhanced. By contrast, the hetero-diplomacy or traditional diplomatic practice has been largely responsible for demonising the Other and in this respect, effectively, for decades of mobilised hostility.

What are then the conditions of possibility of this transformative diplomacy? What different methods do homo-diplomatic practices entail? My assumption is that to account for the richness and complexity of these ad hoc mediations, we need to develop 'new' diplomatic concepts which, at least in my understanding and approach, means that we need to come to terms with and re-imagine 'old' concepts of diplomacy. Exploring homo-diplomacy requires a willingness to look to the history of ideas and so beyond traditional international relations knowledge. I therefore propose three interrelated sites upon which we can rethink the diplomatic and retrieve the homo-diplomatic:

namely, introspective negotiation, reverse accreditation and gnostic discourse. I am *not* arguing that these three sites are either essential prerequisites or exhaustive of homo-diplomatic features. I would rather treat them as rough guides or exploratory tools through which we may begin to orient ourselves in terms of homo-diplomacy.

Introspective Negotiation

Homo-diplomacy enhances introspective negotiation. This notion of negotiation moves away from the idea of it being essentially bargaining, simply the business of pursuing one's national or self-interest through 'talks' or 'exchange of concessions'. Such a mental shift in negotiation is possible by taking stoicism seriously, especially the works of Cicero and Seneca. Latin *negotium* had the general sense of 'business', 'not to be idle' (*neg-otium*), and more specifically to engage in public affairs. The stoics introduced, however, a radical twofold inversion of this sense of negotiation, underscoring instead of public business, private self-analysis.

First, as Cicero put it, there is a critical form of negotiation that is not pursued in social and political engagements but paradoxically in leisure (*in otio de negotiis*). In this regard, Cicero idealised Publius Scipio Africanus (a famous Roman general and ambassador) who 'was never less idle than when he had nothing to do' and who 'used to commune with himself when alone' (Cicero, 1913, 3.1). The periodic withdrawal from the public world, the calculated withdrawal from business, far from an epicurean move of idle pleasure constituted for the stoics a deliberate exercise in shifting perspective. It promoted a form of 'creative idleness', where the stoic was forced to confront oneself, give an account and come to terms with one's problematic views, identifications and position in the world. As an inward move of negotiation, *in otio de negotiis* called upon humans to account for and negotiate their humanity and disposition towards the world, and so functioned as an active unsettling of the claims and assumptions upon which humans came to practice outward, public negotiation.

Seneca builds on Cicero's notion of *in otio de negotiis* in his treatise *De Otio (On Leisure)*. He provides a second radical modification of the concept of negotiation, suggesting that the purpose of *negotium* is not to benefit oneself, but rather to be useful to others. Stoic *negotium* is primarily other-serving.

> It is of course required of a man that he should benefit his fellow-men—many if he can, if not, a few; if not a few, those who are nearest; if not

these, himself. For when he renders himself useful to others, he engages in *negotium* (Seneca, 1932a, 3.5).

Seneca's notion of negotiation, however, also transgresses the conventional borders of Self/Other, when viewed in the context of his scheme of the two commonwealths:

> Let us grasp the idea that there are two commonwealths-the one, a vast and truly common state, which embraces alike gods and humans, in which we look neither to this corner of earth nor to that, but measure the bounds of our citizenship by the path of the sun; and the other, the one to which we have been assigned by the accident of birth (Seneca, 1932a, 4.1).

Leisurely or introspective negotiation benefits this greater commonwealth by reflecting on what it means to be a citizen of the cosmopolis and by that promoting 'interests' which transcend those defined and assigned by the accident of birth, i.e. city-state or imperial interests. Stoic *negotium* fulfils its public role privately (*in privato publicum negotium agit*) by cultivating the mind, instilling the virtues of the greater commonwealth, bringing forth a realisation that human affairs and problems are not independent of the mind but 'born from nothingness they go back to nothingness' (1932b, 3.4 and 15.4). It is therefore a technique through which one not only deconstructs one's constructed views and interests but also learns 'to accept calmly the ways of the public and the vices of man, and be thrown neither into laughter nor into tears' (1932b, 15.5). Thus stoic *negotium* is meant to undermine the pursuit of exclusively self-serving or vain human goals and help one to become attuned to the needs of the Other as well as the fluctuations of human and political affairs.

One can perhaps picture this stoic notion of negotiation in the actions of the imam that I quoted in the beginning of this paper. On the one hand, the depictions of a greater heavenly commonwealth that involves adherence to higher duties and responsibilities, and which in many ways neutralise the ethno-religious dogmatic interests and demands. On the other hand, the attempt to 'negotiate' by being useful to others; not simply to negotiate the needs of one's religious community as one is officially charged to, but also to negotiate the needs of the Other, of the so-called opposing religious community, if and when it returns to claim that converted space of worship.

Yet introspective negotiation is not the privilege of a western philosophical tradition. It has animated, for example, the diplomatic practices of the American natives, specifically in the smoking of the calumet or 'pipe of

peace'. This was a ritual that regulated intertribal relations among native Americans and subsequently also their relations with the settler communities. For the natives, it was a means through which they sought to enter a spiritual dimension prior to discussion of intertribal affairs, perceiving this collective chain-smoking as a way of inviting good spirits and ancestral prototypes to their meetings, and chasing away bad ones. For the European settlers, it was more of a symbolic ceremony when peacefully negotiating with natives, though the inhaling of who knows what substances, may have effected a different perspective of the self and a weakening of the pursuit of exclusively self-serving interests, as it did for the natives. This ritual was thus deemed 'a necessary preparation for having a good talk together' (Numelin, 1950, p. 224) and could be seen as part of ceremonial preliminaries aiming to establish a 'psychological connection' between parties and for the 'drawing together of minds' (Foster, 1985). It was, in other words, the first mediation upon which a successful mediation was subsequently built, and so employed as a 'passport' by ambassadors and travellers. Furthermore, the pipe-of-peace was institutionalised 'in ceremonies designed to conciliate foreign and hostile nations and to conclude lasting peace, to ratify alliances of friendly tribes; to attest contracts and treaties which could not be violated without incurring the wrath of the gods' (Numelin, 1950, p. 222). It was, in short, a medium through which the American natives sought to negotiate vertically with their gods and ancestors, and introspectively within themselves, inviting spiritual powers to become involved and change the perspective of their daily horizontal relations with Others.

Reverse Accreditation

Homo-diplomacy functions by reverse accreditation. The credentials of the homo-diplomat are not conventionally provided, empirically handed over by an authorising sender, but bestowed by the recipient of the message. In terms of historical practice, reverse accreditation is derived from the Paulian missionary work to the Gentile nations. Paul is a revolutionary figure in the history of diplomatic thought and crucial to homo-diplomacy, for based on his epiphany on the road to Damascus, he anoints himself 'apostle to the nations' (lit. *apostolos* is the one who is sent) despite never meeting Jesus and

partaking of the Last Supper as the core circle of disciple-apostles.[4] Paul's credentials were, rather, suggested to lie in the revelation he brought to the spiritually estranged humans, who then become a commendation in view of the help they receive (*2 Corinthians* 3.1-3; cf. *Galatians* 1.1).

From this perspective, Paul issues a radical challenge to the conventional missionaries, 'those who are esteemed' because of some unverifiable authorisation by God. He challenges the notion of the Lord or King who historically or empirically dispatches the apostle to deliver a revealed truth. By openly disseminating the gospel in public forums, Paul also seeks to democratise the ancient mysteries and their elite initiations (Steiner, 1972). By reserving 'divine' authority for the recipient, the one who experiences (or not) the effects of the revelation or mystery, the kingdom of god comes to symbolise not yet another regime of power imposed from above but a state of transformed consciousness experienced from below.[5] In this way, Paul heralds the possibility of a new Self, a new consciousness for those who deep down already suspect its critical necessity; a new consciousness triggered by receiving an apostolic deputation that they mystically and paradoxically already dispatched.

Paul is in his own words 'an ambassador of Christ', 'an ambassador in chains' (*uper christou oun presbeuomen*: *2 Corinthians* 5.20; *uper ou presbeu en alusei*: *Ephesians* 6.20). He is not an esteemed envoy destined to some royal court where he is to be given his due honours, but he is freely enslaved to deliver the mystery of the gospel, labouring the earth in great discomfort to bring the 'good news' not only to Jews but also Gentiles, all estranged from God:

> Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law

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4) As Alain Badiou put it: 'What exactly does 'apostle' (*apostolos*) mean? Nothing empirical or historical in any case. In order to be an apostle, it is not necessary to have been a companion of Christ, a witness to the event. Paul, who claims his legitimacy only from himself, and who, according to his own expression has been 'called to be an apostle', explicitly challenges the pretension of those who, in the name of what they were and saw, believe themselves to be guarantors of truth... An apostle is neither a material witness, nor a memory' (Badiou, 2003, p.44).

5) As Paul put it to the recipients of his gospel, 'we have no dominion over your faith but are helpers of your joy' (*2 Corinthians* 1.24).

(though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some (*1 Corinthians* 9.19-22).

Paul's ecumenical embassy functions as a precursor of universalism, working to cast off differences: 'Paul demonstrates in detail how a universal thought, proceeding on the basis of the worldly proliferation of alterities (the Jew, the Greek, women, men, slaves, free men, and so on), produces a Sameness and an Equality (there is no longer either Jew, or Greek, and so on)' (Badiou, 2003, p.109). Paul mediates Otherness by getting the faithful to see 'that differences *carry the universal that happens to them like a grace*' (Badiou, 2003, p. 106; emphasis in original). Living through your otherness, experiencing your internal and external estrangement as that which unites you rather than separates you from others, it will be possible to reconcile yourself with humankind, with all those estranged Others also in search of a new Self.

Reverse accreditation should be seen in conjunction with the dissemination of the gospel. Indeed, the notion of delivering the gospel or 'good message' (*to euaggelion*) can be recovered and reclaimed for diplomacy rather than reserving it exclusively for the apostolic mission of the Church and the modern so-called evangelists (in fact, one could argue the need of rescuing it from the latter). The marginalisation or downgrading of the evangelical disposition of diplomacy-i.e. the 'good message' embassy-has been effected by the secularisation of diplomatic theory and practice, the formalisation and monopolisation of diplomacy by the Westphalian inter-state system. By reemploying the evangelical disposition in homo-diplomacy, the emancipatory discourse that characterises the 'good message' may be regained. Note that Paul's 'good message' embassy, heralding the advent of a new Self, had the specific purpose of freeing the faithful from the religious (Judaic) regime of power, liberating them from 'the curse of the law' (*Galatians*, 3:13); that is, emancipating them from practising a sterile canon, the hypocritical economy of good works and salvation, which conventionally mediated one's inner self as well as one's relations with others.

This originary sense of the 'good message' as that which liberates the recipient from a particular state of being is, however, a pre-Christian term and can in fact be traced as far back as Homer. In the *Odyssey*, the term *euaggelion* is related to the good news of Odysseus final return to Ithaca, freeing the island-polity from the rule of the suitors, and specifically for Odysseus' heralding the release from the bondage and trials of voyeurism (14.152, 166). The goodness of the 'good message' lies therefore in the freedom it brings to

the recipient, citizen and king alike. Christian *euaggelion* repoliticises this freedom but also radicalises it. Delivering the 'good message' becomes the urgent need for the spiritual renewal of sinful humanity estranged from God, a means to bring about earthly peace and heavenly salvation. John thus proclaims in typical evangelical fashion: 'You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free' (*John*, 8.32). Freedom from your old Self; freedom to invent new Selves, develop a new consciousness that will be spiritually reconciled with God and the world. That is what the Christian 'good message' embassy promises, unlike the ancient Greek *euaggelion* whose liberating promise remained more mundane.

In the medieval and modern world, the Church becomes the main vehicle for the dissemination of the Christian 'good message' to all nations. An important actor in this regard has been the Holy See, whose temporal diplomacy is actually presented as an apologia for fulfilling its spiritual mission (Pope Paul VI, 1970). Its apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) views evangelisation as the mission of granting to the evangelised recipient, 'a total interior renewal which the Gospel calls *metanoia*; it is a radical conversion, a profound change of mind and heart' (10). Yet authorisation to deliver the 'good message' is institutionalised in the Catholic Church, changing from the ad hoc and reverse accreditation of Paul to mandated ministers and missionaries who have to 'pass it on with complete fidelity' (15). Within the Christian Catholic dogma, true interior renewal is no longer possible through the recipient's encounter with the strange apostle but can only be channelled through the formally designated envoy, the 'true' and 'credible' evangeliser. The proclaimed evangelism establishes an embassy relay, for s/he who has been evangelised is under a duty to evangelise others (24), yet crucially it forecloses the possibility of the evangelised individual becoming the recipient of a renewed gospel from a different tradition (the ecclesiastical rejection of Latin American liberation theology due to its influence by the thought of Karl Marx, whom Nietzsche once pointedly described as 'the last of the Jewish prophets', is a case in point). In short, institutionalised evangelism brings the practice of reverse accreditation to an end. Ad hoc embassies outside the faith are no longer to be, or only figure as bogus or heretic. But contra Papal diplomacy, the 'good message' embassy in the form of a promise of spiritual freedom and reconciliation, can indeed be found elsewhere and anywhere (again remember the Christian man's encounter with the agent of another faith, the imam's words and deeds, in the opening story). That is, as long as one keeps recalling that the 'stranger we encounter could in fact be God or an emissary of God' and willing to accredit her embassy in reverse.

Gnostic Discourse

This brings us to the third site of homo-diplomacy: gnostic discourse. One could start by repaying a compliment to the Cypriot imam, showing how Islamic gnosticism can provide both a transgressive politology and a critical theory of international relations. Consider the following Qur'anic verse on the so-called Medina deputations, which is also the preamble of the Islamic Declaration of Human Rights.

> 'O Humankind! We created you from one, into male and female, and divided you into nations and tribes, so that you may know one another' (*Qur'an*, 49.13).

Homo-diplomacy is enhanced by accepting that the division of humans into nations and tribes does not constitute a genealogical break but has a specific divine and knowledge purpose. Such envisioning supports, firstly, the position that the ethnic and national Other is always part of a wider single Self. Secondly, it implies that self-knowledge is not an individualistic or solitary exercise but rather the product of an encounter with Others and reflection on heterology. Thirdly, it intensifies the need of internationalising the Umma, the community of believers, which through the Islamic notion of 'the people of the book' can turn the polis into a cosmopolis (I refer here to the esoteric traditions of Islam that see in 'the people of the book' not only the Christians and the Jews but anyone who follows in life a sacred scripture).

In order to appreciate what the notion of 'knowing one another' entails, it is important to understand that Islamic 'knowledge' (*ilm*) means not just scientific and religious knowledge but gnosis (Akhtar, 1997; Rosenthal, 1992). Bridging the chasm between the Self, the Other and the divine, seeing all three as identical, gnosis amalgamates knowledge of Self/Other with knowledge of God. Gnosis is thus another word for the archaic sacred embassy. Yet knowing one another is not a singular event but lifetime education, not a momentous revelation but seeking to translate into a practice of ethical engagement what it means to be spiritually this or that Self as related to this or that Other.

Beyond Islamic gnosticism, self-problematising and self-knowing can be a way of returning diplomacy to its Hermetic tradition, its historical link to the mystical and the esoteric (Constantinou, 1996, pp. 146-153). Hermes is the celebrated god of diplomacy but also of language and gnosis. The Hermetic mental disposition underscores a coming to terms with the hermeneutics of human knowledge, the interpretive dimension in the

constitution and mediation of identities. Hermes warns those engaging in diplomatic representation that there is no unmediated reality, that apparent meaning can never be trusted, prompting them not to rush to accredit an ultimate interpretive version of events and phenomena, and to realise that every identification is a form of self-forgetfulness. Here Hermetic 'untrustworthiness' (Hermes is a known trickster) has a great value, constantly reminding the recipients of knowledge of what is politically at stake in unproblematically accepting at face value 'identities', 'interests', 'facts' etc., and thus shying away from introspective negotiation. The Hermetic disposition indicates that the discourse of diplomacy, including the quest for knowledge of Self and Other, should remain open to the work of hermeneutics while accepting the possibility of hermetism, that is, the possibility that something always remains hidden. A part of Self and Other always remains strange to us, even when (or precisely because) that part is represented to us as most 'familiar'.

That is not a license, however, for diplomatic discourse not to try to come to terms with the 'mercuriality' of the stranger within. Indeed, one should lament the scarce collaboration between the disciplines of diplomacy and psychoanalysis, with respect to the study of the human unconscious ('the language of the Other' as Lacan put it) and its impact on interethnic and international relations. Beyond the problematic use of psychoanalysis in public relations and political marketing, the insights of post-Freudian group psychology have had little application in the study of modern diplomacy. Insights, for example, on how others are used as 'reservoirs' to project the negative aspects of the Self, or the subtle interchanges of individual and large group identities, or how the nation or state can become a psychological substitute for the nurturing mother, or how the leader can become an idealised father, who can even sublimate into loyalty negative feelings and initial jealousies (Volkan, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c).

My preference, however, is to employ Jungian rather than Freudian psychoanalysis to inform homo-diplomatic practice. That is not only because of the historical and spiritual depth of the Jungian study of archetypes (the psychic propensities of the collective unconscious), but also because it seems to me less liable to psychoanalytic hierarchy and more open to gnostic narratives and experimentation. Jung actually reserves a special psychological place for the tutelage of diplomacy, Hermes or Mercurius. He sharply distinguishes Mercurius from Christ by suggesting that: 'Christ appears as the archetype of consciousness and Mercurius the archetype of the unconscious' (Jung, 1967, p. 247). On the one side, Christ, the son of God, epitomizes the depth and potential of conscious human knowledge, but which in its secular

version can reach the Cartesian fallacy of *cogito ergo sum*; a 'deification' of the modern sovereign reasoning Man. On the other side, Mercurius and its Christian version, Lucifer, the light-bringing angel, challenge the Cartesian claim. Lucifer or Mercurius is the one who lightens the dark side of the psyche: 'Mercurius is by no means the Christian devil-the latter could rather be said to be a 'diabolisation' of Lucifer or Mercurius' (Jung, 1967, pp. 247-48). Mercurius as the 'light of darkness' illuminates the contradictions, the complexes, the strange demons that are always hidden inside humans. (As Jung puts it: 'One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious. The latter procedure, however, is disagreeable and therefore not popular' (Jung, 1967, pp. 265-6). To seriously worship Mercurius is not to engage in naive mysticism but effectively in 'primitive' psychoanalysis, to seek to reveal and experience the power of the unconscious and how it impacts on individual and collective beliefs, thus overcoming the illusion of a unity or sovereignty of consciousness.

> Mercurius, that two-faced god, comes as the *lumen naturae* [the light of nature], the Servator and Salvator, only to those whose reason strives towards the highest light ever received by man and who do not trust exclusively the *cognitio vespertina* [the human knowledge]. For those who are unmindful of this light, the *lumen naturae* turns into a perilous *ignis fatuus* [lit. the foolish fire], and the psychopomp into a diabolical seducer. Lucifer, who could have brought light, becomes the father of lies whose voice in our time, supported by press and radio, revels in orgies of propaganda and leads untold millions to ruin (Jung, 1967, p. 250).

Consequently, for Jung the knowledge currently circulating in the mass media, the public diplomacy of spin and propaganda, is a 'devilish' appropriation of Mercurius, or a corruption of an important diplomatic and psychological archetype, whose mission is primarily gnosis; that is to say, not 'fast' learning but carefully attending to Self paradoxes and complexes, reconciling opposites and seeking to transform them into Self-knowledge.

In this regard, Jung supports a twofold move that is relevant and promising for homo-diplomacy. First, by employing Mercurius as a guide to self-analysis he elevates the human unconscious to a modern secular oracle. This is now where the most solemn human embassies must be directed. This is the barbarian that must be befriended and listened to. This is where the effort of translation and interpretation ought to concentrate, thus seeking to understand psychic conflict and limiting its negative impact on interpersonal and international relations. Within this context diplomacy is not only

concerned with mediating separate Selves, groups or identities, but primarily with the exposition and mediation of conscious or unconscious goals, fears and needs *on the basis of which* the mediation of separate Selves takes place. Second, unlike Freud, Jung wants the individual and not the professional psychoanalyst to take the primary charge of this mission. He suggests that this can be done through 'active imagination' (as distinguished from passive fantasy or daydreaming), that is, for each human to directly and seriously attend to and engage with the representations of his/her unconscious; e.g., meticulously noting down and attempting to analyse dreams, persistent images and symbols, word-associations, slips of the tongue, etc. By actively making unconscious propensities conscious (here Jung also supports the use of the creative arts, if the individual finds this means of expression easier) individuals can self-manage or be assisted to bring about a new consciousness, outgrow problems or resolve external conflicts with which they pathologically identify. Working with Mercurius, actively mediating the 'stranger within' and the affectations it brings about for the human thus becomes an effective means of mediating the 'stranger without'. [6]

Concluding Remarks

The gnostic way is contrasted to the 'unimaginative' Cartesian tradition where 'modern man is so darkened that nothing beyond the light of his own intellect illuminates his world' (Jung, 1967, p. 250). Within the Cartesian tradition, human knowledge passes off as self-knowledge with disastrous consequences in terms of moral self-righteousness and for empowering policies based on total truth and total evil. This has spiralling effects for the practice of diplomacy as the mediation of estrangement.

In this article I have suggested a possible remedy. By looking at more personal and experiential forms of diplomacy, I argued that diplomatic theory and practice can be informed and enriched by experimenting with spirituality. Specifically I proposed that the stoic idea of introspective negotiation, the Paulian notion of reverse accreditation and the gnostic dimension of encountering Otherness can be a means of conceptualising and enhancing homo-diplomacy. By this, I certainly do not want to suggest that human diplomacy should be limited to these specific spiritual traditions, or that these

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6)   On the different ways and means that this can be done, including word-association, dream interpretation, dance, music, painting, theatre and poetry, see Jung, 1997.

traditions can be effortlessly and idealistically appropriated. Rather the crucial point I wish to underscore is experimentation.

Some authors have already suggested experimentation as an important feature of diplomacy (Latour, 2004; cf. Keens-Soper, 1975) and this is a view that I fully share. The issue is how far we are willing to extend diplomatic experimentation, skill and innovation, beyond brokering alliances, packaging agreements and drafting constructive ambiguities. Are we willing, for example, to experiment with the parameters of individual and collective identity by way of mediating difference and self-interest? Are we willing to accredit ad hoc diplomats that help us escape 'realist' notions of who we are or what we must be? Are we willing to innovate with and politicise discourses that reflect on the spiritual dimension of Otherness and its value in knowing the Self? The positive answer to these questions is, I believe, a step forward in the theory and practice of human diplomacy.

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