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TITLE:

**THE ROLE OF DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL IN CONSTRUCTING A
FOREIGN POLICY IDENTITY: THE CASE STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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Political Science in the Department of Political Studies, University of the Western
Cape.

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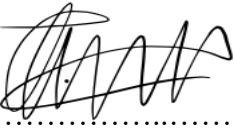
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DECLARATION

I declare that *The Role of Diplomatic Protocol in Constructing a Foreign Policy Identity: The Case Study of South Africa* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted I have indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Tricia Apollis

November 2021

Signed: 



KEYWORDS

Diplomatic protocol

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Leadership

Symbols

Rules



ABSTRACT

Diplomatic protocol may come across as entailing red carpets, table settings and dress codes when diplomats come together. However, there is much more to it. This research study explores the role of diplomatic protocol in constructing a foreign policy identity in the case study of South Africa. Protocol, along with the actions and politics of a country, shapes the perception that foreign powers have of a state, in turn impacting on their relations politically, economically and culturally.

The study will be focused on diplomatic protocol during the administrations of three South African presidents since 1994: Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma. This research uses the constructivist theory in the field of International Relations; it centralises the notion that a state constructs an identity for itself through foreign policy actions, of which diplomatic protocol is an understudied aspect. The foreign policy identity as it evolved during the three administrations will be analysed by using the structure and agent approach. I argue that each president (agent) leaves a unique stamp on the identity of South Africa (structure). I then continue to investigate the role of diplomatic protocol during two state visits by utilising the Bakker model of rules and symbols. In terms of the latter phase of the research, I analyse media coverage of the state visit of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom in 1995 and South Africa's state visit to Beijing, China in August 2010 to illustrate the relationship of diplomatic protocol and foreign policy identity.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and rationale

Today, International Relations bring together more than 200 countries in the world, each state with its own political conditions, history, culture and traditions. International Relations has the ability to cause serious complications for the development of international ties. However, international rules and standards regulating different intergovernmental relations facilitate the establishment of mutually beneficial and respectful relations in the international arena (Pshtyka, 2011: 86). The mechanism of implementing the principles of international communication is called diplomatic protocol, as codified by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (Pshtyka, 2011: 86). It specifies the rules of a diplomatic mission that enable diplomats to perform their functions without misunderstandings. Further states modernise these rules in mutual agreement according to cultures and traditions (Pshtyka, 2011: 86).

During the apartheid period (1948–1994), South Africa was known for its racial segregation policies. Alike to Carlsnaes and Nel (2006: 23), political scholars often refer to South Africa's foreign policy at the time as a 'diplomacy of isolation'. Diplomacy of isolation, a form of diplomacy, nonetheless affected South Africa's engagement with the world. The engagement was minimal, as South Africa did not have embassies in most countries during this period due to being considered a political outcast.

When apartheid ended in 1994, South Africa became a democracy as well as a respected member of the international community. Academic scholars such as Carlsnaes and Nel (2006: 23) described the political identity of South Africa during the start of the democracy as one of "freedom, hope, and exceptionalism". The state had made a formidable transition from "the most isolated [state] in contemporary history" by the end of the 1980s to a "fully integrated member of the international community" under the leadership of the governing party, the African National Congress (ANC), by 1994 (Kurbalija, 1998: np; Cilliers, 1999: np; Mandela, 1993: 86). The goal of the ANC was to bring about a radical change in racial segregation and enforce racial equality (Carlsnaes & Nel, 2006: 24; Mandela, 1993: 86). South Africa's foreign policy under the ANC after apartheid focused on its commitment to peace and to the promotion of human dignity.

1.2 Problem statement

At the root of foreign policy is foreign policy identity. States construct specific identities for themselves that frame their foreign policy behaviour. The term 'identity' refers to the definitions created for and superimposed on the self (Mercer, 1995: 230). That is to say, identity is the whole picture of whom we believe we are and whom we tell ourselves and others we are, while self-image is one piece of that picture (Hirschberg, 1993: 78; Spinner-Halev & Theiss-Morse, 2003: 516).

Neack (2019: 80) describes national self-image as the story people tell about their state; it explains who their state 'is' in the world and what it does. This notion of national self-image is similar to Holsti's role theory and the study of national role conceptions. Holsti (1970: 238) explains that role theory, a normative concept, refers to behaviour rather than position. Therefore, a state's behaviour is more critical than its international or national position, as the behaviour of a state, for example the state a president chooses to visit, affects its international position and by extension its foreign policy identity.

Foreign policy behaviour results from domestic politics, not from the expectations of other states in international society (Neack, 201: 84). It is what the state wishes to portray and achieve in the international arena that leads its agenda. A positive self-image can contribute to stable governance. Hirshberg (1993: 79) argues that maintaining a positive self-image is crucial for support for the government and continued public acquiescence. Furthermore, national self-image can send out a message about who the nation is, its values, and what it can achieve in the future.

In 1994, when President Nelson Mandela won the South African presidential election leading the ANC, he became that identity at the time: "free, democratic and engaging" (Kurbalija, 1998: np; Cilliers, 1999: np). The new democratic identity of South Africa was evident in its foreign policy, the way its representatives conducted themselves and ultimately the way the world perceived the country. Nelson Mandela portrayed signature behaviours in public that simultaneously created an image of South Africa. For example, Mandela always wore the signature print shirt, which later became known as the Mandela print. His accent and slow manner of speaking became a beacon of kindness. Mandela as president of South Africa created new alliances with the states that he chose to visit and with whom he built relationships with.

Nelson Mandela through his behaviour created a political identity for South Africa, which was a key factor in the dramatic foreign policy shift for South Africa.

The identity of a state is aligned to and forges its diplomatic objectives. Identity informs diplomacy; in other words, the actions of a state are a reflection of its identity. Diplomatic protocol acts as a tool of diplomacy; therefore, I will argue in this thesis that diplomatic protocol plays an important role in forging a foreign policy identity for a country. I will specifically use South Africa as a case study to show how diplomatic protocol played a role in carving out South Africa's foreign policy identity since its democracy. This study intends to research diplomatic protocol to understand and identify its meaning and how it can be best implemented and understood in diplomacy and state identities.

While South Africa maintained a fairly stable identity since becoming a democratic state (1994) to 2018, largely due to the government being governed by one political party, there are substantial changes that can be seen in the identity of the way other states perceive South Africa. There is a huge lack in research on the influence of diplomatic protocol in creating a state identity. This thesis makes the observation that diplomatic protocol during state activities has a direct effect on the identity of a state.

Another element to the research problem relates to the lack of research material and resources that is available in the public domain around the influence of diplomatic protocol on the identities of states. More specifically on South Africa, particularly because it is such a young democracy and also because of the prominent economic and political status it carried on the African continent. There are no clear indication in the available research studies that diplomatic protocol can influence or play a role in the identity of a state. There are also no clear indication on how different presidents can influence diplomatic protocol and by extension the identity of a state.

1.3 Research question

The research question is therefore: What is the role of diplomatic protocol in constructing a foreign policy identity in the case of post-apartheid South Africa?

This study will investigate the role of protocol in South Africa's foreign policy. In doing so, it seeks to answer further sub-questions, for example, how is national identity linked to foreign policy? How do states construct a foreign policy identity? How has foreign policy identity manifested itself in the different administrations in post-apartheid South Africa? What is the link between diplomatic protocol and foreign policy? How do states use protocol in diplomacy?

1.4 Conceptual clarification

1.4.1 Diplomacy

Diplomacy concerns the management of relations between states and other actors, and it implements and moulds foreign policy (Barston, 2013; Feltham, 1998: 3; Alam, 2013; Baranyai, 2011; Sharp, 1999: 18). In so doing, diplomats and other representatives articulate, coordinate and secure particular interests through lobbying, visits, threats or exchanges of views on behalf of a state (Barston, 2013: 5; Feltham, 1998: 3; Alam, 2013: 51; Baranyai, 2011: 2; Sharp, 1999: 20).

Diplomacy is a discrete human practice constituted by the explicit construction, representation and negotiation of ambiguous identities (Sharp, 1999: 20; Feltham, 1998: 3; Spies, 2019: 9). Therefore, to understand people and their perceptions is to understand policy, while to be able to explain and clarify is to be able to influence to mutual advantage (Feltham, 1998: 4; Spies, 2019: 8). Diplomacy is the practice of conducting international relations in negotiating alliances, treaties and agreements (Alam, 2013: 51; Feltham, 1998: 4). The goal of diplomacy is to further the state's interest economically through the skill of handling affairs without stirring hostility (Spies, 2019: 8). Diplomacy seeks maximum national advantage without using force and ideally without causing offense (Alam, 2013: 51; Feltham, 1998: 4).

Permanent diplomatic relations between states exist with the establishment of a diplomatic mission (Feltham, 1998: 4; Barston, 2013: 5). These relations are established with mutual consent and mutual understanding of the function and purpose of the mission (Feltham, 1998: 5; Wood & Serres, 1970: 19). Over the past few decades, this type of understanding has been defined by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, which is an international treaty that defines relations between countries (Wood & Serres, 1970: 19). This treaty serves as a guide that specifies the privileges of a diplomatic mission that enable diplomats to perform their function and to create a sense of mutual agreement between countries.

1.4.2 Diplomatic protocol

Protocol codifies and puts into practice the rules of ceremonial events and supervises their application (Wood & Serres, 1970: 18; Iucu, 2008: 18). Protocol governs both negotiation and settlement, and activates international contracts, by a display of ceremony and splendour, the value attached to them and the respect due to their special provisions (Wood & Serres, 1970: 24). An important aspect of diplomatic protocol is to maintain peaceful relations between individuals and to avoid offense (Naankiel et al., 2013: 1). Through protocol, power is exercised through hierarchy and precedence, each participant is allocated a title according to the political and administrative structure and they are expected to act accordingly. Therefore, diplomatic protocol acts as a lubricant to diplomacy. It is a tool for how a country operates politically. Protocol is a tool within diplomatic relations that is used to set very particular standards and rules when countries convene in the same place which offer mutual benefit and precedence (Wood & Serres, 1970: 19).

Protocol and the ceremonial events contribute not only to the proper foreign manifestation of a state, but particularly to the quality of its relations to different foreign states (Feltham, 1998; Wood & Serres, 1970). It is argued by Iucu (2008: 16), Feltham (1998: 38) and Wood and Serres (1970) that the absence of protocol may cause difficulty for international relations and may result in more friction between states. While some scholars argue that diplomacy exists mainly whenever there are boundaries for a certain identity and those boundaries are crossed by states' behaviours, this research intends to argue that diplomacy through diplomatic protocol is a crucial method in international relations for a country to set the stage for future political projection.

Diplomacy can arise, transform, grow more complex or remain unaltered, depending on how power is utilised through diplomacy (Jonsson & Hall, 2003: 196; Serrao & Bischoff, 2009: 365). The head of state and its government has the ultimate control over the way a country operates within diplomatic measures. It has been clear that with different presidents in the same political party a different method of diplomatic protocol and foreign policy has been executed. This study suggests a detailed analysis of South African foreign policy by analysing the execution of diplomatic protocol and its foreign policy identity during the administrations of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma.

1.4.3 State identity

Managing a state's identity with stakeholders in other countries remains an integral part of foreign policy making and public diplomacy. State identity refers to collective judgments of a country's image and character that are then used to predict future behaviour; thus, national reputation is an instrument of power (Jonsson & Hall, 2003: 196; Hopf, 1998: 175). A state's identity can change due to both national and international contexts. Spies (2019:50), in her work on *Global South Perspectives on diplomacy*, describes public diplomacy as an instrument used by governments who engage with, mobilise and influence the public members rather than governments of their own or other states.

The state identity of South Africa, for example, in the 1990s may not be the same as the state identity during the early 2000s. Mandela and Mbeki had strong foreign policy agendas, whereas Zuma portrayed a more international pro-East agenda (Daniels, 2019). A state understands another state according to the identity it attributes to it while simultaneously forming its own identity through daily foreign policy practice. State identities imply a particular set of interests with respect to choices in particular domains and concerning particular acts (Hopf, 1998: 175). The relationship between state identity and public diplomacy exposes the element of power held within a good or positive state identity (Jonsson & Hall, 2003: 196; Serrao & Bischoff, 2009: 365).

1.4.4 Foreign policy identity

The foreign policy identity plays a role in how states define and pursue their national interests. An identity is the mechanism that provides states with a sense of self and the means for comprehending the relationship of the state and the external environment. Chafetz et al. (2007: viii) describe identity as an inherent part of cognition that makes the actions of a state more predictable and less inchoate by giving actors more of a sense of how their behaviour will affect another state's behaviour towards them. Foreign policy identity is directly related to a state's foreign policy actions and commitments internationally. For example, when President Nelson Mandela wrote his new foreign policy for South Africa in 1993, it established a new identity for South African foreign policy. While the state identity has changed over the years, the fundamentals of South Africa's foreign policy remain in line with its foreign policy identity that was established under Nelson Mandela.

1.5 Rationale

The observation of relationships and determining factors between diplomacy and diplomatic protocol allows for a different perspective in understanding the importance of this research. Oana Iucu (2008) identifies courtesy, good manners, and etiquette as crucial elements in diplomatic protocol. The presence of good protocol creates an atmosphere needed in the activities of diplomatic missions and collaborations between sovereign partners. The quality of protocol is dependent on a proper foreign policy manifesto and the successful conduct of such a manifesto (Iucu, 2008: 15; Hecht et al., 2015: 18).

Diplomatic protocol is ceremonial and can be considered as a true indicator of the state of relations between countries. Diplomatic protocol offers the framework for establishing and developing concrete relationships between states through rules unanimously accepted by the international community. However, different countries under different types of leaders operate very differently in portraying their identity and executing foreign policy. For the purpose of this research I will focus on two major foreign policy events to analyse protocol in South Africa: the United Kingdom state visit to South Africa in 1995 and the state visit to Beijing in 2010. Due to the nature of this being a mini-thesis, it limits the discussion of a third major event. These two events had significant impacts on the past, current and future foreign policy of South Africa and marked pivotal points in South African relations with other states.

Ample research has been conducted on South African political identity during the Mandela era. While these writings will remain relevant in understanding the start of foreign policy in democratic South Africa, new research is needed to bring clarity and understanding of the contrast and its consequences of the stance of foreign policy in the immediate past and present period. Further, studies in diplomatic protocol in South Africa are very rare and this research allows for an analysis of diplomatic protocol as a foreign policy tool, which will form part of very few such studies in South Africa.

This research aims to investigate the significance of South Africa's foreign policy identity and its linkage to foreign policy in the post-apartheid era. It is relevant, as the identity of a state is an instrument of power in international relations, therefore this knowledge may bring more clarity and understanding to the current stance of South Africa in the international community. It is the view of this study that the notion of identity is at the root of a country's foreign policy.

The practice of good foreign policy is dependent on diplomatic protocol, therefore, diplomatic protocol serves as the lubricant between foreign policy and diplomatic identity.

1.6 Theoretical framework

In investigating the link between foreign policy identity and diplomatic protocol, this research will be executed using a post-structuralist paradigm. The study will employ constructivism and some aspects of post-structuralism to provide a lens for analysis. A post-structuralist paradigm is based on an assumption that no one can stand outside the traditions or discourses of their time (Grant & Giddings, 2002: 20). This paradigm will enable an understanding of how state power works within diplomatic protocol. Poststructuralist investigations are supported by interrelated theories of discourse between “power” and the “subject” relating to this research, respectively, referring to the power that the head of state holds (Grant & Giddings, 2002: 20).

Discourses in this research will refer to foreign policy identity and diplomatic protocol. Defining these terms is important, as they have complex and contested meanings in the poststructuralist paradigm due to multiple meanings which may be open to interpretation (Grant & Giddings, 2002: 21). Grant and Giddings (2002: 21) argue that discourses in poststructuralist theory are interrelated systems of social meanings that “systematically form the object of which they speak”. Therefore, identity concerning this study is not a stable or transparent representation of reality. Instead, it may be a political and unconscious force that structures the realities experienced.

The current dominant discourses in South Africa mainly serve the interests of the dominant political-social group, that is, supporters and members and representatives of the ANC, which as the governing party affects South Africa’s state identity. Using this paradigm, the goal is to understand how South Africa identifies itself, in the way diplomats and representatives act, to make sense of the international community and its place in it.

International relations have been destabilised since the Cold War, and scholars have subsequently questioned the "cultural bases of conflict, alternative concepts of state identity and the ethics of intervention", to use just some examples (Klotz & Lynch, 2015: 3). According to Klotz and Lynch (2015: 3) Hopf (1998: 173) and Huddy (2001), many academic scholars and researchers came to accept the constructivist view, i.e., individuals are not only shaped by

the world, but they can also change the world through economic, social, cultural and political actions

Both realists and liberalists disagree with constructivists, as they claim that states behave in a certain way in conditions of the anarchical system (Wendt, 1992: 392; Hopf, 1998: 173). They draw different conclusions of how states behave in conditions of anarchy. Classical realists, such as Thomas Hobbes, claim that states compete in the condition of anarchy and anarchy makes all states enemies or competitors of each other (Wendt, 1992: 392; Hopf, 1998: 174). Liberalists claim that anarchy, on the contrary, promotes states to cooperate, as cooperation is the only way for states to survive in an anarchical system; however, anarchy is the nature of the international system, which means that anarchy is the major driver of the behaviour of states (Wendt, 1992: 392; Hopf, 1998: 174). As stated above, international relations cannot be seen as static but rather as a social reality. Due to the notion of perception and identity, there is no particular way in which states behave, as the behaviour of states is constructed as time goes by.

Constructivists suggest that each state creates its own constructed identity based on its perception of international politics, history, culture and actions. This means that despite the constructivist view that states may have fundamentally different identities and agendas, diplomacy remains a mediator for states to find common ground (Klotz & Lynch, 2015: 4).

This research seeks to investigate whether diplomatic protocol plays a role in a state's foreign policy identity. One of the main assumptions made by Wendt (1992), Klotz and Lynch (2015) and Hopf (1998) in the constructivist methodology is that identities, cultures and norms play a central role in world politics. Identities and interests of states are not simply structurally determined however, as they are produced by interaction, by institutions, norms and cultures (Wendt 1992: 395; Klotz & Lynch, 2015; Hopf, 1998). Therefore, constructivist thinkers such as Wendt (1992) and Hopf (1998) make an important conclusion that it is the process, not a structure that determines how states interact. For example, the values of the ANC and South Africa during Nelson Mandela's presidency were not the same as the values of the ANC and South Africa under the presidency of Jacob Zuma, because although South Africa still has the same structure (ANC), the process of different leaderships directly affects the identity of the state. This is what the research of protocol and identity aims to address, as in the idea that identity is created and not imposed. Identity then becomes a method of power because the narrative is in the hands of the state, or rather the head of state.

This is in essence why this theoretical framework enables the above-mentioned investigation, as identity according to constructivism is central to perception and state interactions. State behaviour is not predetermined by the structure and objective reality (Klotz & Lynch, 2015; Hopf, 1998: 176). Therefore, constructivism makes a very powerful conclusion, namely that states behave as they choose to behave. States behave not according to what exists out in the world but according to what they perceive. Human beings live in a world of images and live according to those images. In other words, what South Africa as a country portrays as an image is what the world will perceive. Therefore, it matters how South Africa acts, as its behaviour creates an image of constructed identity for both South Africa and other states.

The research aims to build a bridge between diplomatic protocol and a state's foreign policy identity by developing a constructivist argument using South Africa's post-apartheid leadership as its focus. One of the main assumptions made by Wendt (1992), Klotz and Lynch (2015) and Hopf (1998) in the constructivist methodology is that identities, cultures and norms play a central role in world politics. The identities and interests of states are not simply structurally determined but are produced by interactions, institutions and cultures (Wendt 1992: 395; Klotz & Lynch, 2015; Hopf, 1998). Therefore, constructivist thinkers make an important conclusion that the process, not the structure, determines how states interact. These processes are governed by protocol. The research of protocol and identity aims to address the idea that identity is created and not imposed. Identity then becomes a method of power because the narrative is in the hands of the state, or instead the head of state or the dominant governing organisation.

1.7 Methodology

This a qualitative study. Qualitative research is the appropriate method for this study, as it allows for interpretations of the actions of different heads of states and South African foreign policy behaviour. This will be a descriptive study, as it aims to explain and detail the process of constructing foreign identity through diplomatic protocol within South Africa's foreign policy. The case study approach is specifically useful when there is a need to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, phenomenon of interest or event, in its natural real-life context. Two cases were examined to investigate the role of diplomatic protocol in South Africa's foreign policy identity construction. Considerations that impacted the selection of these cases were

their relevance to foreign policy identity at the time and availability of resources that could be accessed via a desktop study.

While the initial plan was to conduct interviews with industry professionals and experts in the area of foreign policy and diplomatic protocol, due to unforeseen circumstances, such as low response rates of research subjects and COVID-19 conditions, the research was limited to desktop research.

This study relied on both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources used in this research include photo and video analysis, news articles, reports on foreign policy and state visits, books, speeches by heads of state and autobiographies. Secondary sources include dissertations, academic books, journal articles, reviews and textbooks.

Further, photographs and video content of critical foreign policy events were analysed to demonstrate the implementation of diplomatic protocol in foreign policy. The visual content is supported by political commentary articles, diplomatic corps commentary and newspaper articles reporting on these events. Most of the documents used for this study are publicly available; these documents were accessed through online sources or hard copies in libraries.

The study of diplomatic protocol in South Africa has been researched by very few scholars, hence there is very little secondary information about this topic. It would not be an overstatement to claim that this is the first study in broadening the impacts and relevance of diplomatic protocol in South Africa.

1.8 Thesis structure

This thesis will be structured as follows: The **second chapter** will deal with the theoretical elements of this research, where the main concepts of foreign policy and diplomatic protocol will be discussed in detail. This analysis will lean mainly on authors such as Neack (2008, 2018), Jönsonn and Hall (2003), Sharp (1999), Wood and Serres (1970) and Feltham (1998), followed by a theoretical discussion of the constructivist theory proposed by authors such as Wendt (1992, 1994) and Hopf (1998).

The **third chapter** will deal with the contextual part of the empirical research on South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy identity. This chapter describes the evolution of the foreign policy identity of South Africa and how it manifested over time. It will be structured by discussing the administrations of Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, respectively, and how these presidents' agencies influenced structural elements of foreign policy identity.

The **fourth chapter** will answer the research question, namely the role of diplomatic protocol in constructing a foreign policy identity. The research has shown that South Africa has crafted a foreign policy identity for itself, which is demonstrated through analysing two important foreign policy events using the Bakker theory of creating trust and connection through protocol. This section will focus on demonstrating the role of diplomatic protocol in crafting those identities.

The **fifth chapter** will conclude the research argument by drawing all the chapters together and summarising the role of diplomatic protocol in the construction of a foreign policy identity. It outlines certain limitation to the study and identifies some avenues for future research.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

Diplomatic protocol is an extremely understudied topic in international relations and even more so in South African politics. This study will include the years 1994 up until 2018. President Kgalema Motlanthe, who was elected to step in as interim president when President Thabo Mbeki stepped down in September 2008 amid accusations of political interference in the government's corruption case against President Zuma. As President Motlanthe was only president of eight months, it does not allow for enough time to analyse an identity during his 'term'. Further, in a speech after his inauguration, President Motlanthe, assured parliament that he will "there would be continuity with the policies of the Mbeki's administration. For that reason, the Motlanthe administration will not be included in this analysis.

Due to the limited information on the current president, Cyril Ramaphosa, the research will stop with the Zuma administration. The limited amount of resources called for a mainly primary research study that relied on international sources of diplomatic protocol analyses, of which there are very few. The gap between the Mandela and Zuma administration allowed for an in-depth diplomatic protocol analysis on the initiation of the African Union (AU) held in

South Africa under the Mbeki administrations. However, due to the length restrictions of a mini-thesis it was excluded from this analysis.

Further to the unique topic are the limitations of COVID-19. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the international shutdown, efforts to reach out to the Department of International Relations and the Department of State Protocol became very difficult. Telephone lines were left ringing and emails remained unanswered. Further to the initial research plan, interviews with industry professionals could not be conducted due to the low response rates of research subjects and COVID-19 conditions. Nevertheless, digital resources on the state visits and international studies on foreign policy identity and protocol enabled the research to be conducted.



2 LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide an overview of the scholarly literature that pertains to the topic of research and outline the main concepts that will be used in the study. This chapter consists of three sections. Firstly, it explains constructivism as an approach in International Relations and juxtaposes it with realism and liberalism. Secondly, foreign policy and foreign policy identity will be discussed followed by how a state's foreign policy is constructed. Thirdly, diplomatic protocol and diplomacy will be distinguished, followed by explaining their place in foreign policy. The aim is to conceptualise a framework of how diplomatic protocol can play a role in the construction of a state's foreign policy.

2.2 Constructivism in International Relations

The discipline of International Relations has been destabilised following the end of the Cold War. Since then, scholars such as Alexander Wendt (1992, 1994), Martha Finnemore (2001), Ted Hopf (1998) and Kathryn Sikkink (2001) have questioned, inter alia, the “cultural bases of conflict, alternative concepts of state identity and the ethics of intervention” (Klotz & Lynch, 2015: 3; Wendt, 1992: 395; Theys, 2018: 1; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 399). All International Relations theories are based on social ideas of the relationship between agency, process and social structure (Wendt, 1992: 422; Onuf, 2013).

Alexander Wendt, a classic constructivist, established the constructivist theory's foundations in the International Relations field in the Cold War, which led to the development of an alternative narrative (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 399). In Wendt's (1992) well-known work, “Anarchy is what states make of it”, he explains the philosophy and the main points of constructivism. He argues that international anarchy, meaning there is no higher authority than states in the international level, is not all-encompassing in the determination of the behaviour of states (Wendt, 1992: 395). Constructivism is a way of studying social ties. At the core of constructivism is the mainstreaming of the claim that reality and knowledge are socially and politically contrasted and to various degrees contestable (Vucetic, 2017: 2; Wendt, 1992: 392; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 399; Theys, 2018: 1).

Constructivism emerged from the premise that classical theorists could not predict the end of the Cold War (Theys, 2018: 2). Classical theorists assume that International Relations never change; they believe that states behave the same in all times of history (Waltz, 1990: 22; du Plessis, 2006: 121). Realists, such as Thomas Hobbes, claim that states compete in the condition of anarchy, and anarchy makes all states enemies or competitors of each other (Wendt, 1992: 392; Hopf, 1998: 174; du Plessis, 2006: 121). Liberalists such as John Lock claim that anarchy, on the contrary, encourages states to cooperate, as cooperation is the only way for states to survive in an anarchical system (Wendt, 1992: 92; Hopf, 1998:174; du Plessis, 2006: 121).

Constructivists fundamentally disagree with these theorists; they argue that International Relations are more complex and dynamic and not always rational or material (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 393; Onuf, 2013: 4; Theys, 2018: 1; Hopf, 1998: 175). Wendt (1992: 404) argues that International Relations is a social reality. Therefore, constructivism can be seen as the sociology of International Relations, because if International Relations are social realities, it makes ideas much more potent than material things (Wendt, 1995: 74; Onuf, 2013: 4; Theys, 2018: 1). Consequently, states in their behaviour are not always rational, as states often behave differently when faced by similar challenges in the anarchical system (Wendt, 1995: 74; Onuf, 2013: 4; Theys, 2018: 1).

Constructivists argue that states behave in a certain way, not because of the objective reality that they face, but according to their images and perceptions of reality (Wendt, 1995: 74; Hopf, 1998: 176; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 393; Onuf, 2013: 4). Therefore, constructivism focuses on history, culture and values as determinants of the image-making that takes place in the minds of states (representatives and decision-makers) and thus policy (Hopf, 1998: 176; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 393; Onuf, 2013: 4; Theys, 2018: 2). Constructivists argue that the driver of state policies is the perception and not the objective reality (Wendt, 1995: 74; Hopf, 1998: 176; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 393; Onuf, 2013: 4). A positivist theorist of International Relations does not display this difference between perception and reality. Thus, perception and reality are the foundational values of constructivism in studying International Relations and analysing the relationship between agency, process and social structure (Wendt, 1995: 74; Hopf, 1998: 176; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 422).

Many scholars came to accept the constructivist view. According to Klotz and Lynch (2015: 3) and Hopf (1998: 173), the world does not only shape individuals, as individuals can also change the world through economic, social, cultural and political events. However, constructivism is not a theory as such. It does not offer general explanations for why societies differ, what people do or how the world changes (Onuf, 2013: 3; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 393; Theys, 2018: 2). A fundamental aspect of constructivism is the proposition that humans are social beings, and it is social relations that make us human (Onuf, 2013: 4; Wendt, 1995: 76). Therefore, social relations construct people into the beings they are. Constructivists argue that people make society, and society makes people; it calls for a continuous two-way process (Wendt, 1995: 76).

Constructivists suggest that each state creates or establishes its own constructed identity based on its perception of international politics, history, culture and action (Wendt, 1995: 76). One of the main assumptions made by Wendt (1992), Klotz and Lynch (2015: 7) and Hopf (1998: 176) in the constructivist methodology is that identities, cultures and norms play a central role in world politics. State identities and interests of states are not merely structurally determined but are produced through interactions, institutions, norms and cultures (Wendt, 1992: 395; Klotz & Lynch, 2015: 7; Hopf, 1998: 176). Therefore, constructivist thinkers have come to an important conclusion that it is the process, not a structure, that determines how states interact. This is what protocol and identity research aims to address: the idea that identity is created through the process of diplomatic protocol and not imposed. Identity becomes a powerful strategy, as the narrative is in the hands of the state's political elite.

State identity and identity projection are concepts within diplomatic protocol determined by a state. It has been claimed that the state's identity is the primary determinant of its behaviour (Hopf, 1998: 175). Wendt (1992: 392) identifies perception as a fundamental notion in the constructivist theory. Different states have different perceptions, images, and what they see as realities. States' behaviour is determined by perceptions of reality and not an absolute objective reality (Wendt, 1992: 393; Hopf, 1998: 176; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 6; Onuf, 2013). While states determine their perceptions, one way of finding common ground is through diplomacy, particularly diplomatic protocol.

Constructivism, in essence, explains why the post-structuralist theoretical framework enables the research, as identity is central to perception and state interactions. Constructivists make a

compelling conclusion that states behave as they choose to; they do not act according to what exists out in the world objectively, but what they perceive to exist and what will be in their interest. These perceptions are impacted by how a state perceives itself (image) and how it portrays this image in its relations with other states. Therefore, it matters how a government acts, as its behaviour creates an image of its constructed identity for itself and other countries.

2.3 Constructing a foreign policy identity

2.3.1 Foreign policy

Foreign policy, a subfield of International Relations, refers to how a state interacts with another state in the international community by using, amongst other processes, diplomacy to strategically make agreements and solve global problems. International politics consist of the state being the primary political actor with privileges, rights and legal standings above all other domestic actors (Neack, 2019: 7). States need a foreign policy to engage with other states within the international community. Neack (2008: 9) defines foreign policy as “the intentions, statements and actions a state directs to the world and the response of other actors to these intentions, statements and actions”. Further, Neack (2019: 7) defines foreign policy as “purposeful action that results from the political-level decisions” of individuals or a group of individuals.

In contrast to other authors, Hermann and Hermann (1989: 362) oppose the idea that foreign policy is the study of policy. Russett, Starr and Kinsella, according to Neack (2008: 9), take an obverse and broader view to Hermann. They argue that policy can be seen as a programme that serves as “a guide to behaviour to perceive the goals (a state or) organisation has set for itself”. Therefore, foreign policy is “a guide to actions taken beyond the boundaries of the state to further the goals of the state” (Neack, 2008: 9). While these scholars have different views, they all indicate that the study of foreign policy must include analysing both the “formulation and implementation” of policy (Neack, 2008: 9).

Foreign policy can thus be identified when one state engages with another state. These engagements include conferences, state visits, trade deals, alliances, membership in organisations – such as the United Nations (UN); Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS); Global 20 (G20) and other bilateral and multilateral engagements between states.

Diplomacy can be identified when a state communicates with another state employing negotiation and discussion on agreed topics. These actions usually occur when a president or prime minister goes on a state visit or attends conferences such as the World Economic Forum or G20, where the state sends representatives and diplomats.

2.3.2 Foreign policy identity

State identity matters in foreign policy, as it creates certain expectations. The desired state identity enables a state to carry out its economic, military and political plan. Having economic power, but a deficient state identity may cause blockages in carrying out successful bilateral relationships. State identity is, therefore, a form of control, more specifically, soft power. Soft power refers to the act of reaching a goal through attraction rather than coercion (Nye, 2008: 96). Soft power involves shaping the preference of others through interest and appeal through diplomatic activities. Soft power is non-coercive, and therefore, its currency is foreign policy, values and culture. That is to say, state identity can be projected and consolidated externally by executing soft power through foreign policy.

Foreign policy identity is an indication of a state's power. Foreign policy identity refers to the identity that a state portrays in its foreign policy activities. For example, a foreign policy identity may affect the state's ability to build alliances and coalitions to achieve international political objectives, such as attracting foreign investments from a specific country with the goal of economic gain. However, in aligning with that, a state portrays an identity of state alliance. Anholt (2011: 22) makes an important observation: the rapid advance of globalisation means that what countries try to pull in (tourists, business, events, students or researchers) and what countries push out (products, services, policies, ideas and culture) have a negligible impact if the state's identity is weak, while the outcome is at a premium if the identity of the state is strong.

Therefore, the identity of a state goes hand in hand with the local and international performance (economically and diplomatically) of a nation. Foreign policy identity refers to the identity that a state portrays through their foreign policy actions. The issues that the state chooses to focus most on form part of the foreign policy identity. Thus, foreign policy identity is an element in foreign policy that is constructed by a state. The decision of a state impacts and influences its foreign policy identity and consequently defines the state with whom they align with.

2.3.3 Construction of foreign policy identity

Constructivists see the world and what we know about the world as socially constructed. This view refers to the nature of reality and knowledge, also called ontology and epistemology in research language. A state's foreign policy is constructed, as reality is always under construction, enabling the prospect for continuous transformation. Thus, foreign policies are not static; they can change over time depending on the ideas and beliefs that actors hold.

Since identity can be exhibited in many forms and varies over time and place, it is difficult to make sense of the unsettled character of identity in world politics. Nevertheless, the goal of this chapter is to reaffirm the importance of identity in enhancing the understanding of foreign policy by focusing on the conceptualisation of state identity. In doing so, this chapter emphasises diplomatic protocol as a method to constructing foreign policy identity. Although other aspects of identity politics, such as national, ethnic and religious identities at the domestic level are important, this chapter will argue that state identity in particular holds explanatory power in cases where the identity of the state, as perceived by agents (heads of state), plays a dominant role foreign policy construction.

Constructivists argue that agency and structure are mutually constitutive, which implies that structure influences agency and, in turn, agency influences structure (Wendt, 1992: 74; Theys 2018: 2; Onuf, 2013: 4; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 395). In reference to this case study, structure refers to the government lead by the ANC political party and the agent refers to the presidential administration leading the country in the different eras. If the opinions and ideas of the agent changes, it affects the opinions and ideas of the structure. Consequently, the foreign policy of the country changes and the social relationships between these states may also change. Realists argue that the anarchic structure of the international system determines the behaviour of states. In contrast, constructivists argue that “anarchy is what states make of it” (Wendt, 1992: 74; Theys, 2018: 1; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 395).

States act according to their perspectives about world politics, who they are and how they fit in. Therefore, when a state acts in a certain way due to its knowledge, it shapes the diplomatic protocol in how and with which states it deals, which in essence shapes that state's foreign policy. In summary, how states act (diplomatic protocol) is constructed by their knowledge and

perception of the world, which then constructs their foreign policy and how they execute it. A major power's main concerns may entail dominating global political, economic and military affairs and it will base its actions on maintaining this power. A small state, on the other hand, may be more focused on survival and maintaining a solid regional political presence and will therefore focus and structure its foreign policy agenda on achieving that. The major power and the small state may face the same issue; however, they will arguably have different reactions to the case due to their perspective, means and political and economic abilities.

2.4 Diplomatic protocol, diplomacy and foreign policy

Diplomacy and foreign policy are both manifested at an international level. They concern human and practical issues (du Plessis, 2006: 120). Diplomacy and foreign policy are notoriously difficult to define due to the diversity of interests, decision-making processes, outcomes, and the actors and issues involved (du Plessis, 2006: 120). A foreign policy refers to each state's unique strategy to implement International Relations formally. Foreign policy is supported by several elements that include tools of foreign policy of which diplomacy is one (du Plessis, 2006: 125). Jönsson and Hall (2003: 196) claim that diplomacy exists whenever there are boundaries for identity and if those boundaries are crossed. Diplomacy carries the principle message that peace is appropriate and best maintained by restraint in pursuing specific interests (Sharp, 2009: 42). Therefore, keeping communication going with other states is an essential part of sustaining good foreign policy.

2.4.1 Diplomacy

Diplomacy is essentially the process of executing an agenda set by a government. Jonsson and Hall (2003: 196) identify diplomacy as a “controlled method of communication for international society”. Du Plessis (2006: 124) offers several definitions of diplomacy in various contexts; he defines diplomacy within foreign policy as a technique of state action, whereby communications from “one government go directly to the decision-making apparatus of another” in the practice of state-to-state persuasion. He further identifies diplomacy as the art of advancing national interests through the sustained exchange of information among nations, states and people. Jonsson and Hall (2003: 196) identify three essential elements of diplomacy: representation, communication, and international society's reproduction. These elements will be implemented in presenting the research in chapter 4 to demonstrate the importance of

diplomacy through diplomatic protocol in setting the stage for future political projection and a foreign policy identity.

Permanent diplomatic relations between states exist through establishing a diplomatic mission or exchanging diplomatic missions (Feltham, 1998: 4; Barston, 2013: 5). These relations are established with mutual consent and understanding of each mission's function and purpose (Feltham, 1998: 5; Wood & Serres, 1970: 19). Over the past decades, this type of understanding has been defined, as in the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 is an international treaty that codifies certain rules governing relations between different countries (Wood & Serres, 1970: 19). This treaty serves as a legal guide that specifies a diplomatic mission's privileges that enable diplomats to perform their function and create a sense of mutual agreement between countries.

2.4.2 Diplomatic protocol

There are many misconceptions as to what protocol entails. According to Wijers et al. (2019: 26), protocol is often confused with etiquette, rules only applicable when dealing with royalty or is seen as unnecessary formalities. A good understanding of protocol is a crucial element when using it as a modern tool to build a strong reciprocal network of authentic relationships. The word protocol derives from the Greek word *prōtokollon*, which refers to the first sheet of a papyrus roll. *Prōtokollon* was used to connect all different parts of manuscripts into one. Today, protocol is a major constituent to increase trust and relationships by bringing together the 'right' people at the 'right' moment and in the 'right' way (Wijers et al., 2019: 26).

Protocol is a set of rules that govern behaviour. Different industries have protocols for a variety of procedures and events. Hospitals have protocols for what happens before, during and after a surgery, churches have protocols for the procedures of a wedding ceremony and a restaurant has protocols for how to handle a complaint from a diner. In government, protocol is the framework within which diplomacy takes place, "the structure that houses dignitaries as they have crucial conversations and negotiations that affect the people they represent" (Marshall, 2020: 30). In essence, protocol identifies the rules that govern diplomacy as opposed to the content for International Relations.

In short, protocol is more concerned with how something is said and *how* a message is carried across rather than *what* is said (Marshall, 2020: 30). Protocol codifies and puts the rules of ceremonial events into practice and supervises their application (Wood & Serres, 1970: 18; Iucu, 2008: 18). Protocol governs both negotiation and settlement and activates international contracts by displaying ceremony and splendour, the value attached to them and the respect due to their special provisions (Wood & Serres, 1970: 24). Diplomatic protocol is the mechanism of implementing the principles of global communication (Pshtyka, 2011: 87). It refers to how presidents and diplomats behave in the international arena. These standards were also secured by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to which 32 countries are ratified. Diplomatic protocol standards were not invented but rather developed over time; they resulted from longstanding relationships with states (Pshtyka, 2011: 87). State protocol regulates interactions nationally, whereas diplomatic protocol regulates state interactions internationally. The diplomatic protocol rules and processes are based on pragmatic thinking, common sense and good manners.

While government protocol involves codes of conduct such as greeting, etiquette and seating arrangements, it is more extensive than rule following; it also creates a productive environment for successful interactions. Marshall (2020: 32) uses the brain as an analogy for protocol, which she states is for “making sure neurological signals are fired properly and that all organ systems are operating at their peak performance”. Diplomacy, also an important organ in the ‘body’, relies on protocol to engage with other countries in order to achieve its foreign policy goals. Diplomacy is similar to building relationships, as Marshall (2020: 34) states, whereby it is the process by which one tries to “reach out to others in pursuit of an increased understanding and try to resolve matters between you and your countries”. Therefore, when two leaders or delegates meet they embark on a journey of diplomacy, and protocol sets the rules for the occasion.

More practically, protocol and all its preparatory work allows the work of diplomacy to take place. For every presidential meeting, state visit or treaty to be signed, a protocol official scouted the most suitable location, room plan and pens (a very important element, as it is unique to each president and often gifted after signing as historical mementos) (Marshall, 2020: 34). For every state dinner or luncheon a seating plan is carefully planned, placing the appropriate dignitaries next to each other based on their countries’ identity and beliefs, in the hope that

contentious topics do not come up for discussion. The gritty details of protocol may appear insignificant in the big picture, but if they are mismanaged, chaos can erupt.

2.5 Diplomatic protocol and foreign policy identity

The importance of protocol has not been researched extensively, particularly not in South Africa. Drawing on the international research of Wijers et al. (2019) and Marshall (2020), foreign policy is dependent on the element of relationships between states. Wijers et al. (2019: 18) argue that building strong authentic networks of reciprocal relationships means having an understanding of the value of the relationship. Relationships in the political and business work offer five elements to success: they offer inside information, provide protection and advice, provide one with inside information, assist in crossing boundaries effectively, and facilitate the breakthrough of ideas and agreements (Wijers et al., 2019: 18).

Sinologist, Monica Bakker, formulates a protocol model with the rules on the left side, the symbols on the right side and the creation of trust and connection in the middle. The rules guarantee predictability and therefore offer the opportunity to create community (Wijers et al., 2019: 29). The symbolic side of protocol is the story, in order for everyone participating in the event to understand the broader context of why the event is taking place (Wijers et al., 2019: 29). It is only when these two elements are applied in the right way that protocol is a facilitator of trust, connection and confirmation of the good relationship.

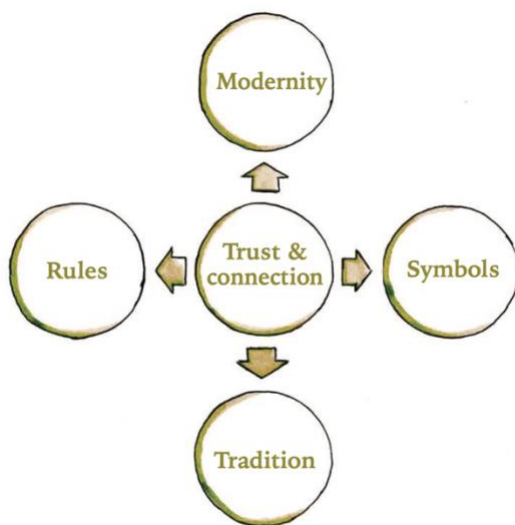


Figure 1: Diplomatic protocol model (Wijers et al., 2019: 29)

The events and rituals of states and their encounters drive the symbolic value of protocol. For example, the State of the Nation address domestically is an annual tradition wherein the president reports on the status of the state and unveils the government's intentions as a symbol of democracy and transparency. The annual presidential addresses at the UN's General Debate is an example of such events internationally. Such an event also confirms and reiterates the precedence and symbolises the recognition of the state or organisation. Further, symbols add meaning to the community's values, as well as credibility, strength and often also beauty.

Respect plays an invaluable role in protocol, as it determines the status of a person. Status is formalised in the so-called precedence: "the rules concerning priority, arrangement, or the creation of a concrete hierarchy of functionaries in public positions according to public interest" (Wijers et al., 2019: 26). Countries and international organisations have formalised the hierarchy of all public positions in an official order of precedence; these include heads of state, ministers, ambassadors and secretaries, etc. "Generally, the higher one's political mandate or the greater one's managerial responsibility, the higher one's position in the order of precedence" (Wijers et al., 2019: 26).

Foreign policy identity, as mentioned before, refers to the identity that a state takes up in their foreign policy. Diplomatic protocol enables a state to project its foreign policy to the world. For example, South Africa, since its democracy has portrayed the foreign policy identity of a state that is committed to peace and the promotion of human dignity. To demonstrate this foreign policy identity, South Africa built strong ties with the US. This is evident in the relationship that President Mandela built with President Clinton and the regular visits that occurred. Later, South Africa became a prominent member in the UN, where the country received assistance and a platform to act towards peace promotion and human dignity. Diplomatic protocol enables this identity to be projected to the world through the use of symbolism and ceremony.

President Mandela, in his speech at the UN General Assembly in 1990 projected the foreign policy identity of the ANC through the use of symbolism and ceremony. The UN organisation, by allowing Mandela to speak, confirmed its recognition at the international level and provided a state, in this case the ANC, a staged opportunity to communicate its foreign policy principles to the world. This iconic speech influenced the projected identity of the future of South Africa. It is due to this speech that the world came to learn the intentions of the ANC, and already in

1990, South Africa was busy constructing its foreign policy identity for the democratic South Africa in building relationships with the UN and the members of the UN. This speech enabled President Mandela to communicate to the world the future plans of the ANC. In doing so, President Mandela succeeded in implementing the diplomatic protocol, “the process by which one tries to reach out to others in pursuit of an increased understanding and tries to resolve matters between states” (Marshall, 2020: 32).

The relationship that Wijers et al. (2019: 26) refer to is an element to what keeps the two states interested in and allies of each other, and which keeps the foreign policy interest alive. Another crucial element of foreign policy identity is diplomatic protocol. Therefore, in order to demonstrate and grow foreign policy identity states are dependent on diplomatic protocol, which acts as the facilitator of relationships between states. While it is assumed that diplomatic protocol is a strict set of rules that restricts engagements to be formal, on the contrary, diplomatic protocol in its facilitation of relationships in fact creates space for a productive environment and successful interaction towards achieving foreign policy goals (Marshall, 2020: 32).

Further, diplomatic protocol assists the growth of relationships in facilitating interactions where states are aware of cultures, traditions and preferences before the physical engagement to avoid offense and differences. While all states act in an anarchic manner with their own ideals, values and beliefs, diplomatic protocol allows for differences to be communicated beforehand, so when states are in disagreement on foreign policy ideas, diplomatic protocol allows for an amicable situation of states distancing themselves from each other. With that said, protocol is the use of symbolism and importantly also facilitates the rebuilding of relationships by showing respect and giving recognition. An example will later be discussed in chapter 4 on how diplomatic protocol facilitated the start of a new relationship between President Mandela and her Majesty the Queen during her visit to South Africa in 1995.

Marshall (2020: 35) points out that in her experience as head of diplomatic protocol to former President Obama, the most valuable lesson in executing effective diplomatic protocol is that it “allows you to pivot your power”. It acts as a secret weapon to move the scale to the desired direction to achieve political goals. This is a tool that can be recognised in President Mandela’s speech at the UN in 1990, as by presenting the world with a different, personal and authentic perspective the power pivoted towards the favour of South Africa. The ANC started seeing

support from international organisations and other states in its fight for South Africa to become a democratic country. According to Marshall (2020: 33), to achieve the power of pivot effectively, one should focus on the engines that fuel diplomacy, namely the two predominant goals of diplomatic protocol – “bridging and persuading”. Bridging refers to establishing a “connection with your counterpart” and persuading refers to “convincing others to see things your way”.

Constructivists argue that states can have multiple socially constructed identities through interactions with other actors (Onuf, 2013: 4; Wendt, 1992: 417; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 392). Theys (2018: 1) argues that identities represent an actor’s understanding of who they are, and what signals their interests. Identities are essential to constructivists, as they argue that it represents interests and actions (Wendt, 1992: 417; Theys, 2018: 1; Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001: 393). The constructivist theory bridges foreign policy and diplomatic protocol. Diplomatic protocol analysis will mainly focus on two important foreign policy events that shaped the identity for South Africa. The first is the state visit to South Africa, in 1995 by her Majesty the Queen and the second is the state visit to China by President Jacob Zuma. While this thesis analyses three administrations to portray the shift in identities for South Africa, it will only analyse two major foreign policy events due to the limitations of a mini-thesis. Further, as already mentioned, the study of diplomatic protocol in South Africa has not been explored in depth by other scholars, therefore the analyses in chapter four remain primary data. A research study with a bigger scope would enable the resources, time and framework for a more in-depth study of diplomatic protocol in South Africa.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to outline the theoretical and conceptual backdrop to answer the question: What is the role of diplomatic protocol in constructing a foreign policy identity with specific reference to the South African case? It did so by using the constructivist theory to outline the assumptions that are utilised to understand the bridge between foreign policy identity and diplomatic protocol, and to frame the argument of structure and agency in international relations.

This study takes the constructivist view, whereby international anarchy states create and establish their own constructed identity based on their perceptions of international policy,

culture and actions using diplomatic protocol. Constructivists formulate the analysis of the role of diplomatic protocol in foreign policy construction by making certain assumptions that will lead the case study analysis. These main assumptions will be utilised in demonstrating the role of diplomatic protocol in the construction of South Africa's foreign policy identity, and are as follows:

The first is that states create their own identities based on their images and perceptions of the world and social realities. These perceptions and realities are shaped by the heads of state of the period.

The second is that the heads of state as individuals have their own beliefs and identities that influence the state's identity and perceptions. Therefore, the structure and agency debate enable space for the agent (head of state) to demonstrate their role in a country's foreign policy identity.

The third assumption is that foreign policy identity refers to the identity that a state takes up in their foreign policy, and that diplomatic protocol enables a state to project its foreign policy to the world. Diplomatic protocol in its facilitation of relationships creates space for a productive environment and successful interaction towards achieving foreign policy goals.

In the next chapter, the thesis turns to an analysis of South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy identities as a necessary step before the role of diplomatic protocol in constructing these identities can be illustrated. The chapter will demonstrate the specific foreign policy identity created for South Africa under the different administrations as the agents of the state.

3 THE EVOLUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA'S POST-APARTHEID FOREIGN POLICY IDENTITY

3.1 Introduction

Foreign policy decisions, the effects of these decisions, and the way that they are implemented are often the main elements of what defines foreign policy. An investigation of how governments and ruling parties carry out foreign policy decisions indicates that authority is implemented by different entities (Hermann & Hermann, 1989: 361). Former US president Harry Truman said that “the president makes foreign policy” (Le Pere, 2008). Among these decision-making units are the president, ministers, cabinets, coalition groups and members of parliament.

South Africa's diplomacy has been relentlessly tested through the ordeal of managing some of Africa's most brutal conflicts. However, one of South Africa's soft power attributes has been the attraction and power of its transition (Le Pere, 2014: 45). This has given South Africa a specific moral authority and prestige to play critical roles in conflict resolution and mediation (Van Nieuwkerk, 2012: 87). This chapter aims to outline the evolution of South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy identity. It will do so by chronologically assessing the foreign policy approach and principles of each administration under a new president, providing an analysis of how these approaches influenced the construction of South Africa's foreign policy, and further assessing the impact of the approach on South Africa's foreign policy identity. Each administration will represent the agent element in international relations, while other sources of South Africa's foreign policy identity receive less attention, as the focus is on the role of the president and their administrations. In each of the three administrations below, the president played a significant part in putting their stamp on South Africa's foreign policy, as will be illustrated.

3.2 Foreign policy under Nelson Mandela (1994–1999)

3.2.1 Background

Nelson Mandela joined the ANC in 1943 and became a co-founding member of the ANC Youth League in 1944 to overthrow the National Party and racial segregation (Mandela, 1994: 112).

He also joined the banned South African Communist Party (SACP). He was arrested several times for subversive activities, and in 1956 he was unsuccessfully prosecuted in the Treason Trial (Mandela, 1994: 165). However, Mandela, in association with the SACP, co-founded the militant Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961. Umkhonto we Sizwe, initially committed to nonviolent protest, led a campaign to sabotage the apartheid government. Nelson Mandela was arrested and imprisoned in 1962 and sentenced to life imprisonment for colluding to overthrow the state following the Rivonia Trial (Limb, 2008: 28).

Nelson Mandela served 27 years in prison, split between Robben Island, Pollsmoor Prison and Victor Verster prison (Mandela, 1994: 451-533). Domestic and international pressure arose, which placed President F.W. de Klerk under pressure of a possible racial civil war. Consequently, Mandela, and other prisoners, were released in 1990 (Mandela, 1994: 610). Mandela and De Klerk subsequently led efforts to negotiate an end to apartheid. These negotiations resulted in the 1994 multiracial general election, which the ANC won, and Mandela became South Africa's first democratic president. A coalition government led by President Mandela resulted in a new constitution; the government also emphasised reconciliation between the state's racial groups and established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate past human rights abuses (Mandela, 1998: 48). Despite his socialist beliefs, the Mandela administration followed a somewhat liberal framework and introduced measures to further combat poverty, expand healthcare services, and implement land reform.

3.2.2 The Mandela administration's foreign policy principles

In rehabilitating South Africa from an international outcast to a respected democracy, the Mandela administration's primary challenge was repositioning South Africa on the global stage. Apartheid destroyed the essence of life and humanity of black people, who were the majority of citizens, hence the main goal of the Mandela administration's foreign policy was to protect and enhance the quality of people's lives and humanity. Therefore, together with the ANC, his administration strove to build a foreign policy which enabled people to fulfil their human worth, liberty, and the free pursuit of happiness (Mandela, 1993: 86). His administration led the ANC to believe that a new foreign policy for South Africa was the crucial element in constructing the identity of peace and prosperity (Mandela, 1993: 86). The Mandela administration established new pillars for South Africa's foreign policy to reposition South Africa. These include:

i. Human rights

Human right issues are central to international relations; they extend beyond political issues and include the economic, environmental and social spheres (Mandela, 1993: 87). South Africa's dramatic redemption from international outcast during apartheid to the champion of African democracy is in itself a constructed transition. This unique transformation is so powerful that it influenced foreign policy's shape and conduct by constructing post-apartheid objectives. This was clear to see in how South Africa established a place in the international system through policy choices that emphasised human rights and development and its predilection to pursue its foreign policy through multilateral channels (Alden & Le Pere, 2004: 283).

President Mandela's efforts to stop Nigeria's military ruler, General Sani Abacha, from executing human rights activists in Nigeria in 1994 stands as proof of the human rights position the South African government took at the time. General Abacha arrested and sentenced 40 political opponents to execution (Adams, 1995). In efforts to prevent the execution from taking place, Mandela sent Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, on missions to lobby for the release of the activists (Block, 2011). President Mandela was led by pretences that they would not be executed; however, General Abacha moved ahead with the execution of nine leaders (Block, 2011). The Mandela administration then publicly criticised General Abacha, emphasising the seriousness of its hope for a public outcry against human rights abuses, and lobbied for a two-year suspension of Nigerian membership in the Commonwealth of Nations. The issue became even more controversial when Mandela further criticised Royal Dutch Shell for going ahead with a \$4 billion US gas project in Nigeria despite its unpopularity with the rest of the world (Block, 2011).

South Africa's state identity was positioned as being pro-human rights. To pursue this identity, the ANC government had the duty to act against injustices against human rights in other states. Constructivists argue that states' identities are not structurally determined, but are produced through interactions, institutions, norms and culture. Therefore, drawing on constructivist theory, states behave as they choose to, and South Africa acted according to what existed in the world and according to what it perceived as good for its democracy. Nigeria acted according to what existed in its perspective and what it perceived as good for its state. The image that

South Africa portrayed during the interactions with Nigeria is the image that the world perceived as an identity of South Africa.

ii. Peace and cooperation

The Mandela administration operated on the belief that “where peace is not achieved, internationally agreed and nonviolent mechanisms, including effective arms-control, should be implemented” (Mandela, 1993: 87). The Mandela administration’s appointment to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1996 enabled it to play a key role in peace events, such as ending the first Congo war in Zaire, and taking up a mediator role in the ethnic conflict between political groups in Burundi (MacGreal, 2001). While the administration’s involvement in peace talks brought increased stability to the state, it did not succeed in ending the ethnic violence. In 1999, Mandela assumed the responsibility of primary negotiator for peace talks on the Burundi issue (ACCORD, 2007: 17). Together with other African politicians, Mandela increased pressure on the poor political leadership of Burundi’s negotiators, pressurising them to accept a government with the participation of the rebel groups to enter a democratic government system.

Why would South Africa risk so much of its political power on the Burundi crisis? The Mandela administration had “a vested interest in strengthening South Africa’s role for conflict resolutions for Africa”, particularly in regions where political and economic conditions affected South Africa (ACCORD, 2007: 18). The interest in solving conflicts in other states was also a political strategy for South Africa to carve out an identity of relevance and influence. Political power strategies can be implemented through constructing a particular identity, as the narrative is in the hands of state leaders. South Africa's involvement in the Burundi crisis increasingly proved to be a political strategy for South Africa to construct a desired identity within the continent. This multilateral platform (SADC) enabled the Mandela administration to construct an identity for South Africa, which elevated South Africa’s political, economic and humanitarian stance while simultaneously fulfilling Mandela’s duty as chairperson.

iii. Multilateralism

The foreign policy of the Mandela administration proactively used multilateral institutions to construct the desired identity for South Africa. Multilateralism involves the alliances of several

states to reach a common goal. South Africa gained its relevance in multilateral diplomacy when it was able to show the significant role the state could potentially play through its economic interest, natural resources and geographical positioning. As the fastest developing state in Africa, South Africa became more attractive as it attained a more favourable international image through the Mandela administration's efforts and its embodiment of human rights and democracy, together with the economic opportunities that South Africa offers. South Africa's involvement in the SADC since 1994 enabled South Africa to be part of the conversation and opened it up to other African countries to experience what the state had to offer after being isolated during apartheid. The SADC's main objectives are to "achieve economic, peace and security and growth development, alleviate poverty, enhance the standard and quality of living" of the people in Southern Africa and, further, to support the socially disadvantaged through regional integration (SADC, 2012).

South Africa re-joined the Commonwealth of Nations in 1994, which consists of 54 independent countries with the common goal to "promote prosperity, democracy and peace, amplify the voices of small states, and protect the environment" (Commonwealth, 2021). South Africa has been part of the World Trade Organization (WTO) since its initiation in 1995. The WTO has many roles: "it operates a global system of trade rules, it acts as a forum for negotiating trade agreements, it settles trade disputes between its members and it supports the needs of developing countries" (WTO, 2021). South Africa also became a member of the G20 upon its initiation in 1999. The G20 focuses on policy coordination between its members in order to achieve global economic stability, sustainable growth, the promotion of financial regulations that reduce risks and prevent future financial crises, and the creation of a new international financial architecture (G20, 2021). In 1999, South Africa was the only African state to make the G20 list.

These four multilateral organisations have missions and objectives all aligned with the foreign policy objectives of South Africa. Joining these multilateral alliances was done strategically to shape South Africa's foreign policy identity. The Mandela administration's use of multilateralism enhanced its foreign policy objectives by exercising its ability to build alliances and coalitions to achieve international political objectives. The objectives that these multilateral institutions choose to focus on also shape the foreign policy identity of South Africa.

3.2.3 Assessing South Africa's foreign policy under Mandela

The Mandela administration's flaws of selling arms to Indonesia and leaving too many of apartheid's economic inequalities intact, to name a few, cannot be overlooked. However, they do not outweigh the enormous amount of work that was done under his administration. In less than a year after the first democratic elections, South Africa had established full diplomatic relations with most states, which included 46 African countries. South Africa had furthermore been readmitted to full membership in the UN, the Organisation for African Unity (OAU), the Commonwealth of Nations, as well as the SADC (Le Pere, 2004: 286).

The new ANC government was tasked with the challenge of reconstructing the institution dealing with foreign relations. In the new government's post-apartheid configuration, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) had been tasked with attempts to oppose international sanctions and diplomatic isolation (Le Pere, 2004: 285). Even after the end of the Mandela administration, the successes continued; although Mandela also faced enormous political and economic challenges, and arguably far more legal and constitutional constraints than his apartheid predecessors (Campbell, 2013). However, during his single term as president, Mandela left the conduct of government increasingly to his deputy and successor, Thabo Mbeki. Together, they maintained warm relations with notorious human rights violators, such as Yasser Arafat, Muammar al Qaddafi and Fidel Castro, who all supported the ANC during the struggle to end apartheid (Campbell, 2013).

Despite the Mandela administration's success, Mandela also drew some criticism. Mandela faced many controversies over his close relationship with Indonesian President Suharto, responsible for mass human rights abuses (Brummer, 1995). Similarly, there was a controversy due to South Africa's trade links with Libya, Cuba and Syria, and Mandela's relationship with Fidel Castro and Muammar al Qaddafi. This is the kind of criticism that fed anti-Mandela factions, criticisms that were supported with arguments about how Mandela's intentions were more political than humanitarian.

3.2.4 South Africa's foreign policy identity under Mandela

The Mandela administration opened a new chapter in constructing a new foreign policy for South Africa, while the world watched South Africa in awe of the ANC's efforts to transform

the country from a racially segregated state into a democracy. The establishment of a global diplomatic presence and the transformation of its foreign policy instruments were what boosted South Africa's diplomatic presence (Le Pere, 2014: 34). However, the democratic South African foreign policy objectives were extremely ambitious. Scholars such as Van Nieuwkerk (2012: 94) and Alden and Le Pere (2004: 288) argue that South Africa has, at times, presented a strategic approach that is better suited to more prominent players in the world.

As a political leader, Mandela played a significant individual role in the way the state was perceived from an internal perspective. In the four years after his release from prison, from 1990 to the 1994 election, Mandela traversed the world to build support for the negotiation process and to raise money for the ANC and South Africa, and thereby carved out a celebrity identity for himself (Siko, 2014). Due to the individual efforts of Mandela, several other world leaders could relate to him on a personal level, which further offered South Africa the opportunity to redeem itself as a country amongst equals. As a result of these efforts, South Africa was allowed into the global arena to participate in bilateral and multilateral platforms. The opportunity to act in positions such as membership in the G20, WTO, SADC and the UN enabled South Africa to construct a foreign policy identity.

Under the Mandela administration, through foreign policy and diplomatic exercises, South Africa quickly became an African force to be reckoned with. This administration, in creating strategic alliances with other states, portrayed a public image of self-assuredness despite its turbulent history. These diplomatic actions moved South Africa to middle-power status. According to Neack (2008: 161), middle-power diplomacy involves international mediation, peacekeeping and cooperative behaviours. These are all activities that South Africa has been able to execute since its democracy. Further, Neack (2008: 162) and Leith and Pretorius (2009: 347) claim that middle powers are the coalition builders, the mediators and the 'do-gooders' in the international system. Middle powers, such as South Africa, are states that are able and willing to be responsible mutually for protecting the international order, particularly "when smaller states could not and greater powers would not" (Neack, 2008: 162).

However, while the Mandela administration succeeded in creating a space for South Africa on the international stage, the administration did not portray itself as a pro foreign policy administration (Siko, 2014). Its focus and attention were predominantly on issues of national reconciliation, state stability and service delivery. The identity of the Mandela administration

is seen, not so much in its foreign policy actions, but rather in creating a platform for South Africa to do so in future.

Further, according to Siko (2004), despite Mandela's looming personality, he was generally focused on the "big picture", such as reconciliation. In terms of foreign policy, Mandela delegated most of the responsibilities to his deputy president, Thabo Mbeki, from the very beginning of his presidency (Landsberg, 2010). Mbeki's dominance of policy was particularly perceptible in the foreign affairs realm, where he (and Aziz Pahad, his most trusted advisor) took the reins in crafting the tenets of South African foreign policy (Siko, 2004). Mandela still made waves with his statements and actions, but these were only distractions to Mbeki's construction of a comprehensive policy. Mandela and Sampson (1999: 533) state that Mandela even went so far as to say on television, before leaving office, that "Thabo Mbeki is already [the] de facto President of the country". This statement indicates that the end of the Mandela era in office was not necessarily the end of his influence on South African foreign policy.

A major event that indicated the transition period for the Mandela foreign policy approach was seen in the administration's efforts to prevent human rights injustices in Nigeria. While these efforts bore fruit, such as the commutation of death sentences for top political opponents (including once and future president Olusegun Obasanjo), it also created turmoil in South Africa's foreign policy identity. The muted African response to Mandela's call clearly demonstrates how little political capital South Africa had on the continent (Siko, 2014). The OAU dismissed Mandela's call for sanctions as "not an African way to deal with an African problem," while a December SADC meeting to discuss the problem determined that the region would take no further action on Nigeria (Alden & Le Pere, 2003: 22). This lack of support forced South Africa to back down, which led to Foreign Minister Nzo's announcement that South Africa was abandoning its hard line against Nigeria, saying it breached "the norms of African solidarity" (quoted in Van Nieuwkerk, 2006a: 144).

The significance of the Nigerian foreign policy issues brings substance to the identity of the Mandela administration, as they were actions and decisions from President Mandela himself. Alden (2001) argues that neither Mandela's public expressions of outrage over Nigerian President Sani Abacha's human rights injustices in 1995, nor his 1996 announcement that South Africa would recognise China over Taiwan, were coordinated with the DFA or Cabinet in advance. Siko (2014) claims in an interview with a former minister of the Presidency of

South Africa, that President Mandela did not consult his cabinet about these decisions. The administration, however, was left to pick up the pieces. These two announcements by President Mandela form part of the stamp that the Mandela administration placed on South Africa's foreign policy identity at the time.

The next section will focus on the foreign policy identity that the Mbeki administration carved out for South Africa. The Mbeki administration was a continuation of the Mandela administration. It is clear that the Mandela administration primed Thabo Mbeki to step into the role of carving out the foreign policy identity of South Africa after the eventual end of the Mandela administration. This can be seen in the endorsement of Mbeki, as well as Mbeki's position in foreign policy relations, during the Mandela administration.

3.3 Foreign policy under Thabo Mbeki (1999–2008)

3.3.1 Background

Thabo Mbeki was the second president of post-apartheid South Africa, from 16 June, 1999 to 24 September, 2008. He became the first president to be recalled in the history of the ANC. Mbeki announced his resignation nine months before his second term ended after being recalled by the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) (Cooksey, 2008). He was recalled on the grounds of improper interference in the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and accusations of conspiring against Jacob Zuma, who would become his successor, in a corruption case (Cooksey, 2008). The supreme court of appeal unanimously overturned the case against Mbeki; his resignation still stood.

Thabo Mbeki completed his British-level schooling and undertook a degree in economics as an external student at the University of London (Gevisser, 2007: 185). He holds a Master's degree in Economics from Sussex University (Gevisser, 2007: 185). He spent the early years of his exile in the UK, received military training in the Soviet Union, and lived in Botswana, Swaziland and Nigeria at different times (Gevisser, 2007: 289-370). Mbeki played a significant role in turning the international media against apartheid; his international presence during the fight against apartheid ensured an international identity linked to the ending of apartheid and a figure that had an invested interest in Africa.

Raising the diplomatic profile of the ANC, Mbeki acted as a point of contact for foreign governments and international organisations, and he was highly successful in this position. Mbeki also played the role of ambassador to the steady flow of delegates from the elite sectors of white South Africa (Gevisser, 2007: 617). These included academics, ministers, businesspeople, and representatives of liberal white groups who travelled to Lusaka to assess the ANC's views on a democratic, free South Africa.

Mbeki is seen as pragmatic, eloquent, rational and urbane. He is known for his diplomatic style and sophistication. Between 1990 and 1994, when the ANC began preparing for the first democratic elections, Mbeki played a crucial role in transforming the ANC into a legitimate political organisation (Gevisser, 2007: 655). His role as deputy president of South Africa under the Mandela administration shaped him into the political leader he became. He succeeded Nelson Mandela as ANC president in December 1997, and as president of South Africa in 1999; he was re-elected for a second term in April 2004.

3.3.2 African Renaissance as a foreign policy principle

Africa's place in South Africa's foreign policy has been at the forefront of practically every Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and DFA document after apartheid. Africa has been endorsed as the primary sphere of South Africa's foreign policy. When Thabo Mbeki succeeded Nelson Mandela, the 'African Renaissance' became a touchstone of his administration. African Renaissance, a concept first articulated by Cheikh Diop, encourages African people to overcome the challenges confronting the continent and achieve cultural and economic renewal (Vale & Maseko, 1998: 272). Thabo Mbeki promoted Diop's philosophy as deputy president, where it played a crucial role in the post-apartheid intellectual agenda.

The African Renaissance agenda, as promoted by the Mbeki administration, is a "political and philosophical movement to end elitism, poverty and corruption" (quoted by Vale & Maseko, 1998: 273). These ills are believed to have inundated the African continent, and the African Renaissance agenda argues that they need to be replaced with a more just and equitable order (Moore, 2014: 373). In order to achieve this goal, Mbeki proposed doing so mainly by nurturing education and preventing human capital flight of African intellectuals (Bongmba, 2004: 293).

Further, in its foreign policy approach, the Mbeki administration encouraged Africans to take charge of their lives and take pride in their heritage (Mbeki, 1996). Mbeki emphasised this point, as there was a perception that Africans were considered less valuable than Europeans and Westerners. Africanists such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o argue that there is a tendency for "seeing Africa as a beggar", when in reality the economic relationship between the West and Africa is such that "Africa is always the giver as a source for bushland and minerals" (Farred, 2003: 8). For reasons such as this, the Mbeki administration promoted the African Renaissance agenda to help Africans have more pride in what the continent offers.

The Mbeki administration's African Renaissance vision serves as a blueprint for a democratic, rejuvenated and affluent Africa. South Africa's diplomatic and commercial investments in Africa could co-exist with the idealistic condition of improving Africa's expectations for development (Moore, 2014: 375). This does not necessarily indicate a mutually beneficial relationship. However, it contradicts the beliefs of some critics such as Elais Bongmba and Jose Cossa that South Africa uses the African Renaissance agenda, and consequently Africa, for personal economic and political gains (Moore, 2014: 375; Bongmba, 2004: 296).

In the White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy proposed by DIRCO, South Africa's commitment to Africa is to be realised through the support of regional and national processes to "resolve and respond to crises, strengthen regional integration, significantly increase intra-Africa trade and champion sustainable development and opportunities in Africa" (Moore, 2014: 375). The specific areas in which the state undertakes to commit resources include "conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction" (DIRCO, 2011: 20).

3.3.3 Mbeki administration's foreign policy assessment

President Mbeki was the first South African leader to bring a distinct and comprehensive ideology to South African foreign policy, one that emphasised solidarity with the continent and broader global South (Siko, 2014). Mbeki, in taking advantage of the global attention focused on South Africa, used his platform to advocate for the developing world, particularly Africa, to have a stronger voice in global economic governance (Olivier, 2003). His formulation of the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) demonstrated this

commitment, as well as his preference for establishing structures that would address and correct the continent's underdevelopment (Landsberg, 2004; Siko, 2014).

Given the role of president Mbeki as ANC foreign policy maker since the 1980s, and his role in foreign relations during the Mandela administration, it may be argued that few changes were made in South Africa's foreign policy priorities (Siko, 2014). However, the Mbeki administration's main focus was primarily on Africa's development, with his African Renaissance philosophy emphasising African solutions to African problems and encouraging African unity (Mpungose, 2018). Further, he also advocated for solidarity amongst developing countries, due to the need to reorient global power relations between the West and global trade regimes such as the UN, the International Monetary Fund and WTO. Siko (2014) argues that in terms of implementations, this period was driven by inter-agency coordination driven by the presidency. Former director-general Jakie Selebi stated in an interview that "Pretoria sought to make South Africa's foreign policy more predictable, ensuring that it was proactive and not colliding with events (Mills, 2000: 300).

During the Mandela administration's time in office, criticism often focused on the strategic uncertainties and confusing approaches to policy (Le Pere, 2014). There was, for example, evidence of tension between South Africa's perceived commercial trade and political interests and its role as a moral crusader in promoting democracy and human rights (Alden & Le Pere, 2004). However, the Mbeki administration brought a stronger sense of purpose and a more accepting foreign policy. Unlike most other post-colonial African countries, South Africa retained a relatively advanced economy due to apartheid capital and earlier access to Asian, European and American technology (Farred, 2003). This resulted in South Africans having more wealth and power and holding greater international esteem than other African countries. The elevated status of South Africans in comparison to other African nationals created some sort of contempt. Towards the end of Mbeki's first term at the end of 2006, South Africa had strengthened its ties with Russia and China, two major non-Western powers (Moore, 2014).

During the Mbeki administration, South Africa's increased deals with China paved the way to the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) Conference (Moore, 2014). In 2005, in an announcement made by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), South Africa was identified as the largest recipient of Foreign Direct Investment

(FDI) in Africa. On the domestic level, the South African economy peaked with a growth of 4.9% for 2006. This growth was accompanied by developments in the financial, communication, construction and transportation sectors and a decline in unemployment figures (Manual, 2007). The growth in relations with China and the membership and formation of FOCAC demonstrate huge successes for the Mbeki administration's goals for solidarity between developing countries. Further, it is as a result of the statement made by the Mandela administration for the recognition of China over Taiwan that the ties under the Mbeki administration grew stronger. The growth in friendship was nurtured by several visits to China by the Mbeki administration.

Towards the end of Mbeki's second term, the need for international validation from the West seemed to be less persistent as South Africa embraced stronger stances against "Western unilateralism", particularly during the time of non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council (Moore, 2014: 382). Ironically, as a state that positions itself as a leader on the African continent and the founder of the African Renaissance, South Africa presented itself as a xenophobic society in the middle to late 2000s. In the decade after apartheid, South Africa had exhibited an economy that could not sustain its people, and had gradually become hostile to the stream of immigrants from the north of the border (Farred, 2003). Africans as far as western Nigeria and eastern Ethiopia seek a piece of the post-apartheid pie due to the economic destruction in the rest of the continent.

3.3.4 Foreign policy identity under Mbeki's administration

The African Renaissance is more than the speeches and economic opportunities it poses; it brings a critical attitude that "Africa is a land with people(s), culture(s) and pride(s)" (Le Pere, 2004: 287). Being relatively stable politically and economically during the Mbeki era, South Africa was anointed a leader of Africa by the West (Farred, 2003: 4). The African Renaissance is an identity that the Mbeki administration constructed for Africa: an ideology, a new way of thinking about Africa's place in a postmodern world where the status of Africa as a feasible post-colonial entity is under serious scrutiny.

The Mandela administration set the stage for South Africa as a country bent on freeing itself from the consequences of apartheid. This, in its own right, created a well-known identity for South Africa, one associated with human rights and peace. The Mbeki administration expanded

this view by ‘including’ the rest of Africa in the pursuit for a more equal and strong African presence in the international arena. The end of the apartheid system marked the emancipation of South African people as full citizens of the continent. Although those were the intentions of the Mbeki administration, they did not all materialise.

In terms of promoting good governance, Mbeki was the leading advocate for continental initiatives, including NEPAD in 2001, the formation of the AU in 2002 and its peer review mechanism, and the Pan African Parliament in 2004. NEPAD, arguably the biggest achievement of the Mbeki administration, was designed to bring unity between Africa and the developed world. African states would commit to good governance, conflict resolution and sound economic policies, while in exchange international donors would accelerate debt relief, increase assistance levels, bolster African peace support capacity, and open their markets (Siko, 2014).

The Mbeki administration, through NEPAD, envisioned an Africa with the hope of economic development through good governance and stability. Further, the Mbeki administration pushed for African states to speed up regional economic integration initiatives to enhance development. Despite the good intentions, Taylor (2006) argues that South Africa’s skewed balance of trade with the continent, such as pitching only South African firms in the continent, raised suspicion about South Africa’s intentions to develop Africa as a whole. This fuelled allegations of hypocrisy across the continent. While most states still believed in the potential and good intentions of South Africa, the cracks in the Mbeki administration’s foreign policy started to show.

South Africa’s controversial term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council demonstrated the weaknesses of the Mbeki administration. In 2007/2008, South Africa showed clear signs of difficulties in its official human rights agenda and its desire to be a global normative leader. The administration was faced with having to rebalance relations between the developed and the developing world (Economist, 2018). The administration rejected the ‘inappropriate’ views and pressures from the West with regard to human rights issues, responding with soft diplomatic actions of public disagreements.

It was clear in some public statements that Africa should be wary of China’s trade interest, and Mbeki cautioned leaders on the continent to ensure that China’s engagements did not merely

become a different form of colonialism (BBC report, 2016). China was not high on the Mbeki administration's list, however, even so, the formulation of a bi-National Commission and signing of a strategic partnership took place in 1999, two years after the Mbeki administration came into office (Mpungose, 2018). However, South Africa's engagement with China strengthened significantly during the Zuma administration. It started with the announcement of upgrading relations to a Comparative Strategic Partnership (CPS) during President Zuma's first state visit to China in 2010 (Mpungose, 2018). The growth of the relationship between China and South Africa during the Zuma administration opened new avenues of business, economic and bilateral benefits for the two countries. The next section will unpack the foreign policy identity of South Africa under the Zuma administration.

3.4 South Africa's foreign policy under Jacob Zuma (2009–2018)

3.4.1 Background

Jacob Zuma served as the fourth president of post-apartheid South Africa from May 2009 until his resignation in February 2018. Previously, President Zuma was labelled as a friendly and well-meaning leader in Western capitals; however, not long into his presidency, he became viewed as lacking the leadership skills necessary to steer South Africa out of mounting troubles (Moore, 2014: 161). This section will focus on the role of the Zuma administration and the identity that it established for South Africa and its foreign policy.

President Zuma has no formal education. He joined the ANC and its military wing at the age of 17 in 1959. In 1963, Zuma was arrested and imprisoned for 10 years for conspiring to overthrow the South African apartheid government (Presidency, 2021). After his release in 1973, he set up underground operations for Umkhonto we Sizwe, fighting against the apartheid government (Presidency, 2021).

In 1975, President Zuma went into exile for more than a decade. He was based in Mozambique and Swaziland while working for the ANC. He was forced to leave Mozambique in 1978, and then moved to Zambia where he served as head of the ANC intelligence unit (Presidency, 2021). In 1990, when the South African government lifted the ban on the ANC, Zuma returned to Natal and was elected the chairperson of the ANC Southern Natal region. Zuma served as the ANC deputy secretary-general in 1991, and later, in 1994, became a member of the

executive committee for economic affairs and tourism in the new KwaZulu-Natal region (Presidency, 2021). He was elected deputy president of the ANC in 1997, and in 1999 became deputy president of the state (Presidency, 2021).

Zuma was not eligible to serve as interim president when Mbeki resigned due to the requirement for the president to be a member of the National Assembly, which he was not (Constitutional Court, 2008). The next candidate, Kgalema Motlanthe, received the majority vote of the National Assembly in September 2008. As time drew closer to the 2009 general elections, many of the corruption charges levelled against Zuma took centre stage. Although prosecutors stated that they felt that the corruption charges had merit, the charges were withdrawn due to evidence of misconduct in handling his case (Mpshe, 2009). Opposition parties criticised the withdrawal of the charges and claimed that the NPA favoured the ANC due to the pressure it was put under to drop the charges before the elections (Gordin, 2008). Despite the controversy around President Zuma and the charges against him, the ANC performed well and achieved votes far higher than the opposition parties (Shubin, 2018: 48). Zuma was officially inaugurated as the fourth President of South Africa, and served in this role from May 2009 until his resignation in February 2018.

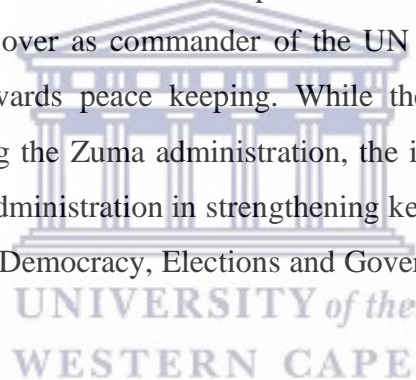
3.4.2 A shift in state identity

The Zuma administration had big shoes to fill, from a foreign policy shaped under the leadership of the Mandela administration that focused on human rights and peace, to a foreign policy under the Mbeki administration that was aimed at building stronger African relations and institutions. In his State of the Nation address in February 2013, Zuma outlined his leitmotifs – which reverberated in South Africa’s foreign policy. These themes included working towards a “stronger AU [that could] build a more stable, peaceful continent, building pillars of stronger South–South relations” through South Africa’s BRICS membership, and consolidating North–South relationships, particularly with the US, Japan and Europe (Zuma, 2013; Le Pere, 2014: 32).

The Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), previously called the Department of Foreign Affairs, regards soft power and soft-balancing notions in its conceptualisation of the national interest as very important. DIRCO Minister at the time, Maite Mashabane, stated that national interests and foreign policy resonate in and are informed by

South Africa's domestic agenda (Landsberg, 2014: 156). Mashabane further indicated that "unlike realists, we do not believe that the international system is characterised by anarchy and that states have to hide behind the cover of their sovereignty and focus narrowly on the pursuit of their national interest" (Landsberg, 2014: 156). She further stated that South Africa's national interests scheme enables states to work together on a shared global agenda (Landsberg, 2014: 156). This statement by Mashabane calls for an analysis of the irony of the idea of non-hegemonic international relations. The Zuma administration was now clearly steering away from the hegemonic identity that previous administrations had created in the past. Instead, the Zuma foreign policy used soft power as a tool to reach good relations with other states by sacrificing its hegemonic identity that was carved out in the past.

South Africa continued to play a role in Africa by engaging in various peacekeeping operations, including in Burundi, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In 2017 and 2018, the Zuma administration took over as commander of the UN force intervention brigade in playing its role in Africa towards peace keeping. While there was involvement in UN peacekeeping operations during the Zuma administration, the involvement was significantly less than during the previous administration in strengthening key institutions and instruments such as the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) (Mpungose, 2018).



The following key events characterised foreign policy under the Zuma administration:

i. Joining BRICS

Scholars such as Langa and Shai (2019: 109) argue that South Africa's membership in IBSA and BRICS was partly informed by the possibility and desire to position the state as an advocate of the interest of the global South. BRICS remains labelled as one of the highlights of the Zuma administration, but it is impossible to overlook the disappointing lack of benefits it offers South Africa. According to Verhoeven, De Oliveira and De Murthy (2014), joining the BRICS club (which officially included South Africa's 'S' since 2011) further depended on the ANC's belief in a multipolar world and a balance of Western powers. Moore (2014) argues that South Africa's BRICS membership had very little meaning, as the state remained at a 3% growth rate after three years as a BRICS member while the currency lost grounds and the country saw its highest unemployment rate at 25%. Several critics, including Jim O'Neil, who coined the term

BRIC, doubted South Africa's membership in BRICS based on its average economic, political and strategic performance compared to the other members.

ii. The International Criminal Court (ICC)

Another issue that had significant implications on the foreign policy identity that South Africa portrayed during the Zuma administration concerns rebuking the ICC. The Zuma administration's involvement in the Al-Bashir saga stirred significant public opinion on where the values and priorities of the ANC under Zuma's leadership lay. The South African government stated in October 2016 its intentions to withdraw from the Rome Statute of the ICC (Kemp, 2019: 414). The ICC is an intergovernmental organisation tasked with prosecuting perpetrators of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity; they rely on state parties to arrest individuals and surrender them to the Court (Fehl, 2004: 358). Langa and Shai (2019: 109) argue that withdrawing from the ICC may obstruct South Africa's ability to play its peacekeeping role in the African continent efficiently. However, the attempt to withdraw from the ICC was ruled invalid and unconstitutional by South Africa's High Court in 2017, and it was therefore halted (Langa & Shai, 2019: 109).

The reason for the controversy around the ICC issue results from what sparked the bid for South Africa to withdraw from the ICC, namely the state's failure to arrest the then President of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, whom the ICC wanted to try for war crimes (Langa & Shai, 2019: 110). South Africa was left with no choice but to choose between two obligations: the one would be to support the fellow AU member state of Sudan, and the other to support its membership in the ICC. The situation of the Sudanese President presents a classic case where the state must opt between embracing regional or continental positions.

How the Zuma administration chose to address the issue brings into question many of the values and intentions of South Africa. Le Pere (2017) argues that South Africa's intention in its decision-making on this matter was directed at helping to strengthen the foundations of multilateral governance. Furthermore, South Africa experiences difficulties in implementing the principles of *Ubuntu* and *Batho Pele* in Africa, as citizens remain intolerant and resentful towards immigrants and refugees from the African continent (Le Pere, 2017).

3.4.3 South Africa's Foreign policy under the Zuma administration

Under the Zuma administration, it is clear that joining the BRICS grouping led to several other bilateral relationships, such as its relationship with China, that further shaped South Africa's foreign policy ideals. While economic and political relations continued to deepen with China, there was a relative decline in diplomatic and trade relations with the West, particularly the US. Tensions between South Africa and the US arose in 2015 when then US president Barack Obama threatened to cancel South Africa's duty-free access for certain exports to US markets under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) (Mpungosa, 2018). This followed South Africa's obligation of anti-dumping duties against US chicken to protect its domestic markets. Mpungosa (2018) states that US chicken exports declined by 33% due to the market barriers imposed by South Africa between 2012 and 2013. South Africa started to move further away from the US as its relationship with the Trump administration did not improve. On the other hand, China, which emerged as the second largest economy in the world, continues to build stronger relations with South Africa.

Since the end of apartheid, the policymakers of South Africa crafted policy in such a way to create a foreign policy strategy based on South African exceptionalism. This strategy was implemented and executed by the Mandela and Mbeki administrations through human rights and African Renaissance agendas, respectively. On the basis that constructivists argue that identities of states are not structurally determined but produced through interactions, it can be argued that the identity of South Africa under the Zuma administration was created through multilateral actions such as its BRICS membership.

South Africa experienced an investment grade, BB+ to be specific, with a stable outlook for 17 years from 2000 to 2017. Thereafter, due to the increasingly weakening economy under the Zuma administration, rating agencies Fitch and Standard and Poor gave South Africa a rating of junk status (Mkokeli & Cohen, 2017). Towards the end of the Zuma era, South Africa's credit rating stood at BBB, one notch above junk status. Rating agencies expressed concerns about how the political turmoil under the Zuma administration had threatened policy and institutional stability and undermined structural reform, particularly in state-owned enterprises (Le Pere, 2017: 19). In the process of experiencing a credit downgrade, South Africa's sovereign credit profile suffered a severe setback, and as a result, the state lost its spark as a

primary destination for foreign investment, with direct ramifications for its global stature and standing (Le Pere, 2017: 19).

As South Africans witnessed the demise of the Zuma administration, South Africa's foreign policy deteriorated to a more confusing identity as the dots were increasingly being connected. President Zuma entered into his position as president with citizens doubting his capabilities due to corruption and other charges against him as well as the divides he created within the ANC party through his actions against former president Mbeki.

The positive modern discourse has been worn down under the Zuma administration in South Africa's foreign policy for a more active type of diplomacy lacking direction, spirit and energy (Le Pere, 2017). This does not refer to joining BRICS, participating in peace missions, nor the soccer World Cup. The concern is mainly based on the extent to which South Africa can and will continue to play an influential and significant role on the global stage that is morally driven. This was done under the Mandela administration with a new foreign policy focused on human rights, and under the Mbeki administration with an African Renaissance vision. However, there is no clear, nor positive connotation of what the Zuma administration did towards the South African foreign policy identity. What is evident in relation to the Zuma administration is that poverty increased, unemployment increased, and the voter support of the ANC decreased. The domestic economic problems had direct implications on the foreign policy identity of South Africa, as the international community started to see less value in South Africa.

3.5 Conclusion

South Africa built its credibility and distinctive identity on the international stage in three ways: the transition to democracy in a relatively peaceful negotiation; Nelson Mandela as the global personification of reconciliation; and the state's emergence as a strategic multilateral actor under Mbeki (Pere, 2017). These features endowed South Africa with considerable power to act and behave as a norm entrepreneur in international relations. Therefore, the state was able to implement significant regional and global influence, which, argued by Le Pere (2017), was considerably unbalanced due to the geographical location, population size and material capabilities of the country.

Looking at the leadership styles of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki, they appeared to have shaped the South African foreign policy identity based on their own identity, history, and how they chose to implement foreign policy. Under Mandela, his personal style impressed many in the world, and people saw him, and therefore South Africa, as an icon.

However, under the Zuma administration, the state suffered tremendously in drawing connections between the foreign policy values that Mandela and Mbeki created to the foreign policy identity that Zuma created. Firstly, the corruption charges that hung over his head created an identity in complete contrast to the values of South Africa that manifested in the foreign policy during Mandela and Mbeki's administrations (Pere, 2017). It is evident that President Zuma failed to enhance the concrete foundation that his predecessors created; this may be a result of failing to provide moral leadership due to his attention being diverted to controversies and scandals.



4 THE ROLE OF DIPLOMATIC PROTOCOL IN SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN POLICY IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

4.1 Introduction

As noted in chapter 2, Monica Bakker formulates a protocol model with the rules on the one side, the symbols on other the side, and the creation of trust and connection in the middle. The rules guarantee predictability and therefore offer the opportunity to create community (Wijers et al., 2019: 30). The symbolic side of protocol is the story that ensures everyone participating in the event understands the context of why the event is taking place (Wijers et al., 2019). It is only when these two elements are applied in the correct way that protocol is a facilitator of trust, connection, and confirmation of the good relationship.

This chapter will analyse two state events that impacted the foreign policy identity of South Africa significantly. The first is the state visit of Elizabeth II, the Queen of the United Kingdom, and Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, in 1995 that concluded with South Africa's membership into the Commonwealth of Nations. This visit is analysed through photos (Graham, 1995) and video footage (Gilbert, 1995) published during and after the state visit. The second is the South African state visit to China in 2010 that led to the confirmation of its membership into the BRIC alliance. This visit will be analysed through pictures (GovernmentZA, 2010) that were taken throughout the visit. These events will be analysed through the lens of diplomatic protocol to demonstrate its role in South Africa's foreign policy identity. Bakker's theory will be supported by Marshall's (2020: 35) tools of bridging and persuading to demonstrate the soft power elements that lie in protocol when executed in the correct way.

4.2 Case study 1: The Queen of England's visit to South Africa (1995)

The visit of the Queen to South Africa marked the first visit after the end of apartheid. The Mandela administration needed this to be a successful visit, as it represented the new democratic South Africa in the capacity of the head of state and not as an ANC member. The Mandela administration needed to show the rest of the world the standard of its relationship with the UK, which projected its capabilities and foreign policy identity and economic readiness.

4.2.1. Relations between United Kingdom and South Africa

The UK and South Africa have a long history that dates back as far as 1600 (Cook & Wells, 2020). Political relations date to 1910 when the Union of South Africa was founded as a dominion of the British Empire (Harrison, 1981). From 1910 until the day South Africa declared itself a republic on 31 May 1961, South Africa fought in support and as a part of the British Empire in both World War I and II (Harrison, 1981). In 1961, when the National Party government under Prime Minister H.F. Verwoerd declared South Africa a republic after winning a white's only referendum, South Africa pulled out of the Commonwealth of Nations (Tibane, 2017). This decision meant that South Africa would no longer be part of the British Empire. When South Africa pulled out of the Commonwealth of Nations, the UK did not implement monetary and economic sanctions. The UK had several valuable trade links to South Africa, which included gold resources (Dowden, 2013).

There were several other reasons why the UK did not cut its ties with apartheid South Africa, including its economic interests in South African ports, harbours and airfield facilities. However, there was a change in the relationship between the UK and South Africa due to disagreements regarding apartheid policies. During a visit by South African President P.W. Botha to the UK in 1984, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher stated that: “[she] expressed [their] strongly-held views on apartheid. [She] told Mr. Botha of [her] particular concern at the practice of forced removals and raised the question of the continued detention of Mr. Nelson Mandela” (Dowden, 2013).

Visiting anti-apartheid activists, such as Desmond Tutu and Oliver Tambo, challenged Thatcher to implement sanctions against South Africa. In 1985, at a Commonwealth of Nations summit, Thatcher agreed to impose limited sanctions against apartheid South Africa and to set up a contact group for dialogue with Pretoria to aid the fight for democracy. However, countries such as India, Malaysia and Zambia threatened the UK by indicating a withdrawal from the 49 nations of the Commonwealth of Nations. This resulted in calls for a total embargo being halted, and the existing restrictions adopted by member states against South Africa being lifted. The President of the ANC, Oliver Tambo, expressed deep disappointment in the UK at this major compromise. However, boycotts and protests increased in London and other ANC political allies encouraged the UK to join the fight against apartheid in South Africa. This led

to UK sanctions against apartheid South Africa being extended to include a "voluntary ban" on tourism and new investments in August 1986 (Lelyveld, 1986).

Dowden (2013) illustrates this in a letter to Botha in October 1985, which Thatcher wrote to reiterate the potential impact of the release of Mandela. In 1990, soon after F.W. de Klerk took over as president, he released Mandela from prison. On the same day of his release, Mandela made an internationally broadcast public speech. The speech was written by the hard-liners and communists in the ANC and was full of Marxist jargon, as Dowden (2013) phrases it. Mandela said: "Our resort to the armed struggle in 1960 was a purely defensive action against the violence of apartheid. The factors which necessitated the armed struggle still exist today. We have no option but to continue". This statement angered the UK government, and led them to question their involvement in the release of Mandela when he had an agenda for violence.

However, Dowden (2013) argues that Mandela felt obligated to perform the duties expected by the ANC after they had battled to get him out of prison. In doing so, he did not visit Thatcher during his first visit to London after his release in 1990, which she found offensive (Buchanan, 2013). Later that year (1990), despite his counterpart's approval, Mandela met with Thatcher while in London to thank her for her support in ending apartheid, and he further made the announcement of the meeting at a press conference in efforts to salvage the relationship between himself and Thatcher. Dowden (2013) states that when he met Thatcher in 1999, he had asked her what she thought about Mandela. She claimed she had never met him before, despite a photo of her shaking Mandela's hand having been publicly distributed. The message of that comment is not intended to be taken literally; rather, she did not want to be associated with him after he had treated her with disrespect by not paying her a visit upon his first arrival in London, and further for carrying out what she believed were the agendas of a Marxist party that were against her beliefs.

A diplomatic protocol analysis of the state visit of Elizabeth II and Prince Philip in 1995, which concluded with South Africa's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations, will follow.

4.2.2 Diplomatic protocol during visit

4.2.2.1 Rules

Article 2 of the Vienna Convention declares that “the establishment of diplomatic relations between states and the exchange of permanent diplomatic missions will be effected by mutual consent of the countries concerned” (Wood & Serres, 1970: 28). Queen Elizabeth II paid a visit to South Africa 48 years after her last visit. A state visit is initiated by the host state’s head of state by means of invitation. The visit according to the Vienna Convention can only take place upon mutual agreement. The acceptance of such an invitation is to be followed by thorough planning from the protocol office (UN, 1961). Upon the approval of the guest, the arrangements are made to ensure the success of the visit. The chief of protocol hosts a meeting with the foreign ambassador to discuss the forthcoming visit. This is where the process for protocol starts.

Queen Elizabeth II made a low-key arrival at Cape Town International Airport, where she was received by Deputy President Mbeki, Mrs Mbeki, and a three-year-old girl bearing peach-coloured roses (Collings, 1995). An official welcome for her arrival took place one day later at the V&A Waterfront, where she entered on board the Royal yacht, *Britannia*. The arrival of a foreign dignitary serves as a door opening into the world of the host state. Queen Elizabeth II was received by the second highest ranked diplomat of South Africa, as her arrival at the airport did not serve as the main ceremony. Traditionally, a diplomat of another ranking in precedence would be received by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and directly taken to the meeting of the head of state. However, due to the precedence of the Queen, who is classified as an extraordinary mission, she was met by the deputy president (Wood & Serres, 1970).

i Welcome Ceremony

The arrival ceremony was particularly important for both South Africa and the UK as this visit marked the Queen’s second visit to South Africa, the first visit after what she called “the miracle liberation from apartheid” (Gilbert, 1995). *Britannia* sailed past Robben Island upon its arrival to the ceremony, which symbolised the beginning of her visit, with Robben Island being where Mandela spent most of his years in jail. It was an historic moment, as this visit marked South Africa regaining membership in the Commonwealth of Nations. On land, Mandela officially welcomed Queen Elizabeth II to South Africa. The V&A Waterfront was packed with spectators, the South African Navy lined up to welcome the Queen, and a red carpet was rolled out for the historic arrival. Flags of both South Africa and England were

displayed on tall poles behind Mandela. The welcome ceremony included a 21-gun salute, a fly-past by air force jets, and a guard of honour (Gilbert, 1995; Archives, 1995).

Queen Elizabeth II, as guest, first extended her hand to give the head of state a handshake gesture of greeting. Culturally appropriate greetings – handshakes, curtseys, bows or nods – signal respect and a willingness to engage. As per her royal protocol, Queen Elizabeth II is not to be touched unless she extends her hand first. Marshall (2020) emphasises that a misstep in greeting upon first meeting of a visit can convey an opposite message to what is intended. The splendour and circumstance of an arrival ceremony is not just an eye-popping display to impress a visiting leader; it also serves as a shrewd welcome mat, priming participants to understand the significance of the engagement.



Image 1:
President Nelson Mandela (*left*), Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip (*right*) in Cape Town, South Africa (*photo by Tim Graham*).

ii State banquet

At the welcoming banquet, Queen Elizabeth II wore a diamond necklace that was gifted to her by South Africa during her first visit to South Africa when she celebrated her 21st birthday (Gilbert, 1995). It shows a symbol of gratitude that after 48 years she still attached value to it.

The Queen was seated next to President Mandela at a long table in front of the room. The main guest in a banquet setting is always seated next to the host facing the other dignitaries. President Mandela wore his new order of merit along with the other guests dressed in formal wear, and the Queen wore her royal crown. In the evening, decorations were worn on ceremonial dress in the presence of the head of state and the Queen. The table was decorated with king proteas and red flamingo flowers. Flowers, as Marshall (2020: 23) states, not only serve as decoration, but also add to the atmosphere. Greenery is known to have a relaxing effect, with the protea flower, being the national flower of South Africa, having been used at the banquet.

iii Toast

The custom of a toast dates back to the Middle Ages where people were distrustful of one another, and poisoning was common. As a safeguard, drinkers would first pour some wine into

each other's glass and all drink together. Later, friends would simply clink the glass before drinking and wishing the others good health. This custom became the most common toast in the world (French, 2010: 211). The word 'toast' derives from Elizabethan England, where a bit of spiced toast was added to the bottom of a cup of ale or wine to flavour the drink (French, 2010). Following this tradition, the host offers a toast to pay tribute to the guest of honour. Protocol suggests that the person who extends the invitations should send the guest of honour a copy of the toast he or she intends to propose in order to prepare the guest. The toast should consist of three elements: a salute to the guest of honour, a summary of the consideration which inspired the meeting, and an appropriate form of good wishes for the guest of honour, for prosperity of their state, and for the happiness of their people (French, 2010: 212).

Mandela in his toast wished Queen Elizabeth II "a pleasant stay in our state and I am confident, wherever you go, you will feel the warmth that South Africans cherish. My Lord, ladies and gentlemen please join me for a toast to Her Majesty the Queen [can hear all guests standing], to his royal highness the Duke of Edinburgh and to the people of the United Kingdom" (Lorch, 1995). Everyone stood except the Queen because the toast was for her. Protocol suggests that the host stands and invites others to do the same. The guest remains seated, nods in acknowledgment, and refrains from drinking to their own toast (Marshall, 2020). Guests raise their glasses and drink to the toast. Etiquette calls for guests to participate in the toast, so even non-drinkers should at least raise the glass to their lips. In contemporary protocol, it is not appropriate to 'clink' glasses together, but only to raise the glass (Wijers et al., 2019: 283).

4.2.2.2 Symbols

This visit marked the relationship between South Africa and the UK to be more symbolic, rather than economic. The symbolic side of protocol is the story that it tells, the side that expresses symbols and rituals and ceremonies with the intention to facilitate trust, connection, and confirmation of a good relationship (Wijers et al., 2019: 40). Sailing by Robben Island was likely the most important symbolic part, as it reminded Queen Elizabeth II of South Africa's history and what it had achieved. It also served as proof of the UK recognising the struggle South Africa had been through, and further recognising the first black-led South African government. By building symbolic relationships rather than systemic relationships, it becomes easier to create mutual understanding and to thereby build strong long-term relationships necessary to take strides in an interconnected global society (Wijers et al., 2019: 41). In 1947, when Elizabeth II celebrated her 21st birthday in Cape Town, she was gifted a diamond

necklace from the South African government. The symbolism of this necklace carried the memory and potential of South Africa for more than 40 years. At the official state banquet during her visit in 1995, she wore the same necklace (Gilbert, 1995). People attach great value to symbolism: it is what increases the significance of visits. Symbolically, upon arrival, Queen Elizabeth II was presented with peach-coloured roses, symbolising sincerity and gratitude (Marshall, 2020: 281).

i Gifts

Gifts are a language on their own. Marshall (2020) argues that when one learns to gift “fluently”, one can take every relationship to another level. Gifts have the potential to transmit a world of concrete ideas and goals and compile it into a single object. They can communicate emotional sentiments in a manner that is subtler than stating one’s feelings and risking an awkward moment. In protocol, the gift exchange is used to forge and reinforce relationships between individual dignitaries and nations (Marshall, 2020). The gift exchange is a long-held tradition of goodwill and a powerful way to forge or cement a connection. It speaks volumes about the current relationship between the countries and the direction in which they are heading, and it can invoke sensitivity and intimacy in a natural and easy way (Wijers et al., 2019; Marshall, 2020).



Image 2: Her majesty Queen Elizabeth (left) gifting President Nelson Mandela (right) the Order of Merit (photo by Tim Graham).



Image 3: President Mandela (right) gifting Queen Elizabeth II (left) the Order of Good Hope Grand Cross (photo by Tim Graham).

When careful consideration is given to gifts, the exchange of gifts can strongly contribute to strengthening relations. In protocol, there are three different ways in which to exchange gifts. Formally, the exchange of gifts takes place when the gifts are displayed on a table and the host and visitor pass by the table and present their gifts to one another. The second most formal exchange is personally between the host and guest. It is, however, important for gifts to be exchanged by officials on the same level. Thirdly, a technical exchange of gifts may also be done from protocol officer to protocol officer, or else gifts are placed in the hotel rooms of the guests (Wijers et al., 2019; Marshall, 2020). Formally, during a private ceremony, Queen Elizabeth II gave Mandela the Order of Merit, a distinction bestowed only on 24 Britons and one other living foreigner, Mother Teresa (Lorch, 1995). Mandela responded by awarding the Queen the Order of Good Hope Grand Cross, South Africa's highest honour for foreign heads of state (Lorch, 1995; Gilbert, 1995).



Image 4: Queen Elizabeth II (*left*) and President Mandela (*right*) at the state banquet held in Cape Town, South Africa (*photo by Tim Graham*).

ii Rituals

During Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Port Elizabeth, the mayor invited a Zulu praise-singer to give her a formal greeting. This cross between a court jester and a revivalist preacher received applause and laughter for his extravagant descriptions of her qualities (Gilbert, 1995). Zulu praise-poetry, *Izibongo*, is a genre of fundamental political and social-regulative relevance, a ritual within Zulu society that remains relevant. *Izibongo* is a combination of the poet expressing the importance, and describing some elements, of the leader's life (Kresse, 1998: 172).

On the last day of Queen Elizabeth II's visit to South Africa, she bid farewell in KwaZulu-Natal where she was presented with a White Nguni bull from King Goodwill Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu of the Zulus as a parting gift (Royal Collection Trust, 2021). Many rituals and customs often surround the meaning of gifts. This gift is a symbol of wealth, as a bull of this quality is very highly regarded in Zulu culture. However, the gift of such a large animal that needs to be maintained and kept in a special way is not ideal for the Queen to take with her to Britain. Therefore, in protocol, it is internationally customary that protocol officers from both sides discuss the gift exchange in advance to ensure to avoid any surprises. Queen Elizabeth II

made a generous donation to the University of Natal to use the bull for research purposes (Gilbert, 1995).

4.2.3 Trust and connection

Trust and connection are the points where the rules meet the symbolic elements of meetings and create space for states to pursue their mutual interest. Protocol assists this process by drawing these elements together by the pre-existing rules between states. A tool to strengthen relationships by organising effective networking meetings and events is crucial for every successful organisation. (Wijers et al., 2019). Engaging with other states enables officials to learn about each other's culture, their traditions, and, in the process, they discover differences and commonalities and develop trust and connection. The feeling of trust and connection makes states more likely to achieve foreign policy goals.

Successful protocol during the initial meeting may have paved the way for this kind of relationship to develop, which certainly benefitted relations between the states. Mandela and Queen Elizabeth II built a good relationship over the years, to the extent that he called the Queen by her first name (Molloy, 2014). When Marshall (2020) refers to successful protocol, this is what she meant: protocol to be implemented in such a way that states learn from each other in order to deal with each other better. Despite the challenging start of the relationship between Mandela (and by extension South Africa) and the UK, his relationship with the Queen blossomed into a great success.

Gilbert (1995) states that "Britain felt this visit swept away old problems from the colonial times and apartheid eras. South Africa had demonstrated that it was firmly back in the Commonwealth". Further, the Queen used her speech to welcome South Africa back into the Commonwealth of Nations, emphasising the important role the nation plays in promoting regional stability and growth in Southern Africa. South Africa was readmitted to the 51-member group of former British colonies after the African nation held its first non-racial election in April 1994. South Africa left the Commonwealth of Nations in 1961 under international pressure over its policies of racial separation.

To reach the level of trust and connection that states desire to build diplomatic relations and achieve foreign policy goals, it requires a fundamental element of protocol on a practical level.

This is the behind-the-scenes preparatory work that enables the work of diplomacy to take place. In the bigger picture, the granular details of protocol may seem insignificant, but there may not be a bigger picture without protocol. If there were no rules and preparations, and unanimous agreements in place, it would make diplomacy very difficult, and almost impossible. When the finer details are attended to, delegates may not fully realise why a visit is unfolding successfully. They will, however, sense a feeling of accomplishment that propels them to continue the work at hand.

4.2.4 Relevance to foreign policy identity

Although the history of South Africa and the UK goes back many years, this visit was fundamental to the future of their relations. The visit marked just one year after South Africa became a non-racial democracy with the new multi-racial ANC government and struggle icon Nelson Mandela as its leader. The identity and history of Mandela acted as the first indication of the identity of South Africa. At the time there was arguably a great deal more public knowledge about Mandela than the New South Africa. The identity of the president shaped Queen Elizabeth II's perspective on the identity of South Africa. Her visit affirmed the assumptions and changes the world came to know about South Africa.

The end of South Africa's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations came as a consequence of the apartheid system. South Africa's reinstatement into the Commonwealth of Nations does not only officially indicate that the UK recognised the new democratic government, as the state visit itself also indicated a stronger commitment to South Africa–UK relations. The efforts of the Queen, as the highest authority in the UK, indicated more than simply a state visit. Her visit, seeing that she had last visited on her 21st birthday, almost signifies the confirmation of a new world. For South Africa, the recognition of a black government as a member of the international community is a foreign policy identity achievement. The recognition by the UK, and, further, a visit by the Queen herself, illustrated the significance of the country's statehood, its democratic government, and its position and future in the international community.

This visit is relevant to the foreign policy identity of the time. At the time, South Africa, the new democratic state, had numerous policies, goals, objectives and intentions, but very little proof that it could live up to the ideals that it crafted for South African foreign policy. This

visit crafted a sense of a 'normal' standard for visiting South Africa. The visit was well planned and executed. It portrayed not only the capabilities of the state, but also projected its future capabilities.

4.3 Case study 2: South Africa's state visit to China in 2010

This state visit to China came at a time when the Zuma administration was in the process of shifting its attention from Africa to multilateral institutions. South Africa's state visit to China was a pivotal event in the success of South Africa's membership in BRICS and, by extension, South Africa's bilateral relationships with the BRICS countries. However, in order for South Africa to reach its membership in BRICS, it had to first succeed in its relations with China, which is the strongest country within BRICS.

4.3.1 Relations between China and South Africa

South Africa's relations with China, since the former became a democracy, started with a congratulatory message to President Jiang Zemin on the Chinese National Day in October 1996. The South African government later that year made a public announcement of its support to greater China, including the People's Republic of China and Republic of China. At this time, the Mandela administration was already confronted with having to choose to support either Mainland China or Taiwan. The main question revolved around how to balance the country's diplomatic relations with Taiwan, which was inherited from the apartheid government, with Beijing's One China principle, which views Taiwan as being part of China, over which Beijing is the only legitimate authority (Williams, 2018). Taiwan contributed to the ANC election campaign with a large donation. Williams (2018) argues that it was "a sense of loyalty combined with the lucrative offer" of assistance that persuaded the Mandela administration to continue ties with Taiwan.

However, China was on a rapid rise, and its prospects of influence over global politics in the future seemed bright. China was the world's most rapid-growing economy with significant international influence including a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (Williams, 2018). At the time, 159 states recognised the People's Republic of China, while only 29 had diplomatic relations with Taiwan. It took South Africa more than two years to make a decision for the Mandela administration to announce its support for Beijing over

Taiwan. This came after China's consideration to revoke South Africa's 'most favoured nation' trading status (Williams, 2018).

4.3.2 Diplomatic protocol during visit

President Zuma embarked on a state visit to Beijing, China in August 2010 with 17 cabinet member and 300 businesspeople (Satchu, 2010). This state visit with all its delegates was aimed at achieving the goal of better and stronger diplomatic relations with China. In doing so, the Zuma administration carried out the visit with particular diplomatic protocol intentions using China's soft power strategy to their advantage, which influenced a positive and successful visit. In China, soft power is preferred as a designation for cultural diplomacy. Liu points out in Bodomo's (2009: 173) article on Africa–China relations that cultural diplomacy is the aspect of diplomacy that involves a government's effort to pass its "national culture on to foreign publics with the objective of bringing about an understanding of national ideas and institutions as part of a larger attempt to build support for political and economic outcomes". Soft power or cultural diplomacy offers a promising path for Africa and China to balance the equation and achieve some sort of sustainable equilibrium in their relationship.

4.3.2.1 Rules

The first step in diplomatic protocol is to inform interest groups of the visit. A formal statement is made by the national government outlining the dates, objectives, agreements/MOUs to be signed and other information about the visit. A protocol officer is assigned to formulate the itinerary and to coordinate logistics and to provide the host with all the necessary information about the delegation to be implemented into the programme. The protocol officer is responsible for maintaining and constantly revising the visiting dignitary's minute-by-minute schedule (French, 2010). As mentioned before, the rules of protocol offer predictability for everyone to know what to do and how to do it. It takes pressure off both parties as they are both informed on what the business of the visit will be, allowing them to now focus on achieving their goals.

The presidency, through its state protocol department, released a public statement five days prior to the visit, outlining all the information above. China, along with its interest groups was in the receipt of this statement, resulting in both states being prepared for what was to transpire during the visit.

According to the statement, the main foreign policy objective was to strengthen and broaden economic and commercial interaction between the two countries (The Presidency, 2010). This objective prepared delegates for a visit that was packed with different elements, which explained the need for South Africa to have 300 businesspeople present during the visit. This is an unusually large number of delegates accompanying a state visit, but given the scope and agenda of the visit, it proved necessary.

i Arrival ceremony

Upon arrival in Beijing, President Zuma and his ministers received a warm welcome from the head of protocol and foreign minister on a red carpet (The Presidency, 2010). The delegation was received by Chinese diplomats and other welcoming parties such as media representatives and cultural entertainment. Rolling out a red carpet from the visiting president's aircraft across the tarmac is an indication of a high precedence ranking in protocol. A sincere welcome from the host creates an atmosphere of respect and importance. The protocol service of the host state is responsible for providing the head of state (protocol team) with a list of the official personalities of the state who should be paid courteous visits or calls (Wood & Serres, 1970). President Zuma, during his visit, held talks with National People's Congress (NPC) Chairman Wu Bangguo, Premier Wen Jiabao, and paid a separate visit to Vice-President Xi Jinping.



Image 5: President Jacob Zuma (*right*) and President Hu Jintao from China (*left*) during the welcome ceremony during President Zuma's visit in Beijing, China (*photo by GovernmentZA*).

The protocol around the arrival of guests during a state visit should include transport from the airport to accommodation, which is the physical starting point of a protocol for a state visit. This is to ensure that security in the visiting state for the president is not a challenge. It saves time for the president and his/her diplomats to be ushered through a diplomatic passport control and escorted to their hotels. Due to the limited time, the presidents receive traffic control escorts for security reasons and to save time to get to their first engagement as quickly and efficiently as possible.

ii Bilateral meeting

The order of the flags during a bilateral meeting should be the host on the left and the guest on the right (French, 2010). Image 8 shows the presidents shaking hands with their right hands and President Zuma supporting the handshake with his left hand, indicating a sign of respect (Marshall, 2020). In Chinese, and other East Asian countries, a handshake may not be used, and must instead be replaced with a nod or slight bow (Marshall, 2020). However, President Jintao is seen adapting to the South African culture by the shaking of hands. The first meeting of the presidents during a state visit is a crucial moment for the visit, for example, the facial expression, body language and physical approach of this meeting set the mood for the rest of the visit.

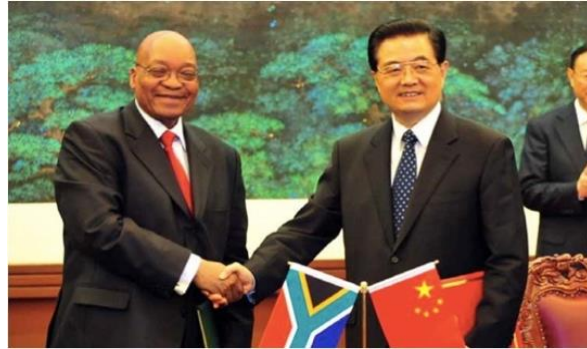


Image 8: President Jacob Zuma of South Africa (*left*) and President Hu Jintao from China (*right*) shake hands during a state visit in Beijing, China. (*Photo by GovernmentZA*).

Zuma in his opening remarks referred to China as “friends” of South Africa. The word choice is an essential element to the outcome and interpretation of protocol. This description indicates an already established, mutually beneficial relationship (Wijers et al., 2019). Zuma makes it clear that the relationship between China and South Africa is already established and is a long-term relationship.



Image 6: South Africa and China in formal dialogue during state visit in Beijing, China (*Photo by GovernmentZA*).

Further, in the opening remarks Zuma noted: “We [South Africa] look forward to fruitful discussions with His Excellency President Hu Jintao and his delegation” (The Presidency, 2010). The positive introduction to the meeting adds to the diplomatic power of South Africa as a visiting state. As Marshall (2020) states, manners are a form of soft power; showing respect to the host adds value to the outcome of the meeting.

iii Translators

When visiting a foreign state, translators form part of the essential outcome of protocol and ultimately the success of the meeting. It is generally preferred for each president to arrive with their own translator, who receives a detailed meeting agenda and points of discussion in advance to ensure that both parties are understood correctly and articulated correctly (Marshall, 2020). The translator possesses an absolute role of trust, as everything – all the efforts of the visit, the agenda, and the outcomes of the political ties between states – lies within the hands of the translator. If the translator conveys the wrong message, uses offensive language to translate, or misses important elements of the conversation, it affects the relations between states. A country with a political agenda cannot rely on a representative from another state to communicate their message and agenda. If anything is communicated in the wrong manner, the president and his staff will not know until after minutes of the meeting have been transcribed, which generally only happens after the actual meeting. That would mean time has been wasted, which is the essence of the existence of protocol – to save time and ensure structure.



Image 7: President Jacob Zuma (left) and President Hu Jintao from China (right) in dialogue during the state visit in Beijing, China. (Photo by: GovernmentZA)

4.3.2.2 Symbols

While this visit was driven by economic and political motivations, there are essential symbolic elements to the visit that enable a successful outcome.

i *Etiquette*

In East Asian countries, such as China, there are several rituals and beliefs that are different to the African way. Business card rituals are an essential part of any gathering. Anyone may be presented with a business card, and it must be handed over with both hands to show appreciation and respect (Marshall, 2020: 456). In Chinese culture, it is considered disrespectful when one immediately puts the card away. One should take a minute to read and keep it in one's hand while conversing with the person. At a dinner table, the business card should remain on the table during the dinner.

Different colours have different meanings in different areas of the world. In China, red means prosperity and good fortune (Marshall, 2020: 456). South African diplomats are often seen wearing red during meetings or gatherings in honour of the culture and for the goodwill of the meeting. Video footage of this visit reveals South African delegates wearing red ties and eating with chopsticks (Makori, 2010). China places great importance on their traditional identity and considers it part of their national identity.

4.3.3 Trust and connection

South Africa, the 27th largest economy in the world, visited China, the 2nd largest economy in the world, and was received with utmost respect and elegance. When visiting another state, it is courteous to do things that are important to them. It shows gratitude and respect, and it makes the host feel as if they are in control and that the guest agrees with the way they operate (Leki, 2005; Marshall, 2020). This stimulates a positive feeling in the host state, as respect and courtesy can create feelings of hope in working with a state in the long run. In this manner, when in China, South Africans were seen eating with chopsticks and dining at 18:00 as per the Chinese tradition.

Apart from guiding diplomats with rules, protocol also allows a state to pivot its power. As was noted in chapter 2, while protocol has several important functions, there are two overarching goals of diplomatic protocol: to bridge and to persuade. Bridging is establishing a connection with the counterpart, and persuading is convincing others to see things from their perspective. Practically, every strategy of protocol, gesture or procedure is used as a tool to achieve an outcome of either bridging, persuading, or both (Marshall, 2020).

4.3.4 Relevance to foreign policy identity

South Africa was clear in its agenda. By joining BRIC, South Africa aimed at positioning itself as a major regional power in Africa (Hambides, 2010). Some of the memoranda signed in Beijing covered ‘joint efforts in the global arena’, such as in the UN where South Africa was attempting to enter the UN Security Council and was looking to garner Beijing’s support. Zuma in his visits to China and the other three BRIC ‘emerging’ economies (Brazil, Russia and India) executed this strategy of bridging and persuading by paying them a visit and introducing South Africa to them (Hambides, 2010). South Africa, in its approach to China, overcame the

bridging element in posing itself as a viable candidate for an African representative in the BRICS alliance. After South Africa's first attendance at a BRICS meeting, it was essential to visit the other states to persuade them of its value. During these visits, South Africa created mutually beneficial, strong and transparent relationships with these countries (Yu, 2021).

In a report by the Chinese embassy, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu (2011) made remarks on the feedback from the four BRIC members towards South Africa. Yu (2011) stated that Brazil claimed emerging economies and developing countries serve as new engines for world economic growth and, with South Africa's entry into BRIC, the alliance would become more prominent. She stated that their Indian counterpart viewed South Africa's joining not only as a benefit to cooperation among BRICS countries, but as conducive to the economic development of Africa and even the world (Yu, 2011). The Russian Foreign Ministry claimed that South Africa's entry was in line with sustainable trends of global development, including the emergence of a polycentric international system (Yu, 2011). The Chinese ministry added that the entry of South Africa, which is an active participant in the G20 and the largest economic power in Africa, would not only increase the total economic weight of the association, but would also help create opportunities for mutually beneficial practical cooperation within BRICS (Yu, 2011).

The Zuma administration created the most significant shift in South Africa's foreign policy identity since its democracy: South Africa's turn towards the establishment of new friendships in the Global South, particularly with Asia and Latin America. Further, the favouring of the BRICS partnership, and increasingly anti-Western sentiments, have been evidenced in South Africa's contemporary foreign policy, which are of major significance to the nature and direction of both its foreign policy identity and economic-diplomatic strategy. In 2008, South Africa was widely criticised by Western powers for voting with China and Russia against a UN resolution condemning the Burmese regime, a close Chinese ally (Hambides, 2010). Towards the end of 2017, several concerns were raised on the foreign policy identity shift South Africa had implemented.

Furthermore, South Africa's BRICS membership could potentially assume a counter-hegemonic character (Neethling, 2017: 40). At least three out of the four BRICS members are battling with slow economic growth. This could mean that South Africa would rely on mainly two members to ensure some level of growth (Neethling, 2017). As a result, South Africa's

foreign policy identity would shift toward these states, namely China and Russia. Hence, because South Africa formed an alliance with these states politically, economically and socially, it risks other states' projecting their identity as 'similar'. Similarly, anti-Western ideological concerns bring South Africa's foreign policy identity into question from the point of view that South Africa, to some extent, enables a pathway to other African nations.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter analysed two main foreign policy events, the one dealing with the protocol of hosting a state visit, and the other dealing with being a guest to a foreign state. In both examples, Bakker's theory of rules and symbols to reach trust and connection has been applied, which showed the significant role of diplomatic protocol in constructing the foreign policy identity of South Africa.

The new democratic South Africa, in 1995, was still in the beginning phases of constructing its identity and, as discussed above, to do so, interactions needed to take place (McDowell, 2021). The visit by Elizabeth II is one of the significant interactions that, in some ways, rectified the reputation of Mandela, who considered Margret Thatcher a public disappointment in his political speech after his release from prison, and showed the Queen what a black dominated democratic South Africa looks like. The visit was most significant in the light of the history of South Africa and UK and, more importantly, for the future of the relations between the two states. South Africa's re-joining of the Commonwealth of Nations and a visit by the Queen, who is one of the most influential individuals in the world, was seen as an important achievement globally (McDowell, 2021). The visit served as a confirmation of the approval of the UK of the political changes in South Africa. Further, it shaped South Africa's foreign policy identity, confirming its relationship with the UK. South Africa, apart from the foreign policy identities that it constructed for itself, projected to the rest of the world that its values and goals are in line with those of the UK, a respected state.

South Africa's state visit to China served as the interaction that confirmed its identity in the BRICS alliance and subsequently cemented a stronger relationship with China. South Africa and China are vastly different in terms of culture and tradition, but similar in the view that they were both colonised by the British. An effective channel in bridging the gap between cultural, traditional and political differences is diplomatic protocol, as demonstrated above. Therefore,

this visit was significant to the relationship between China and South Africa, not because it transpired in the same way as other state visits, but rather, because it took place in the ‘showcasing’ manner that it did. The large South African delegation acted as representations of the vast business and economic opportunities in the country. It was done in such a manner to show China South Africa’s potential. Consequently, it enhanced the bridge between the two states and strengthened the relationship of trust and connection.

The foreign policy identity that South Africa undertook under the Zuma administration still showed certain aspects of the foreign policy that was crafted during the Mandela and Mbeki era. South Africa’s identity in Africa is still of significant importance due to the more developed nature of South Africa in relation to many other African states. However, while under the Zuma administration the foreign policy identity was not mainly focused on human rights or Africa, it utilised its previously crafted identities to cement itself in the BRICS alliance, other bilateral organisations, and mainly its relations with China. South Africa clearly regards itself as a regional leader and protector and further sees itself as representing Africa on global platforms. It also regards itself as a bridge-builder among great powers and acts through multilateral forums (Neethling, 2017).

The Chinese government has a strategy to become the largest economy in the world by 2030. Several analysts agree and predict it to be an achievable goal (Neethling, 2017). However, other important powers, such as the US, refer to the Chinese 2030 agenda as a new world order (Igoe, 2019). Based on this point of view, all states who form alliances with China, which include the majority of African states, form part of the drive towards a new world order. Therefore, the foreign policy identity that South Africa undertook during the Zuma administration is problematic because it is limiting itself and its identity to China. In the light of the Chinese 2030 agenda, it is more reason for South Africa to consider multiple identities to ensure greater stability as a sovereign state.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Overview of findings

This study set out to research the role of diplomatic protocol in constructing a foreign policy identity for South Africa. Two examples were used to understand and illustrate the role of diplomatic protocol in South Africa's foreign policy identity construction, namely: the state visit of Elizabeth II, the Queen of the United Kingdom, in 1995, and South Africa's state visit to Beijing, China in August 2010.

Constructivism was used to frame the research. That is, a state's foreign policy is constructed because the reality is always under construction, enabling the prospect for continuous transformation. This is seen in the evolution of South Africa's foreign policy identity over the three post-apartheid presidential administrations that were discussed. The different presidents built on the structural aspects of culture and history, but also brought their own value systems, worldview and interests to bear on foreign policy identity as presented in their foreign policy goals and approaches.

Since the start of non-racial democracy in South Africa, the Mandela administration focused on human rights and crafted a middle-power identity, depending mainly on Western support and influence, such as the UN and close relations with the US and the UK. The Mbeki administration focused on African Renaissance and moved the foreign policy identity to a regional power playing major roles in regional organisations such as the AU and NEPAD whilst keeping relations with the West, and used its foreign policy powers to oppose the West in some respects. The Zuma administration focused its foreign policy on bilateral relations with China, which shaped into a multilateralist agenda in its foreign policy focus turning to multilateral platforms such as BRICS and FOCAC. In its alliance with the Asian and Latin American countries, South Africa's foreign policy identity shifted further away from the West and dramatically closer to China.

The fourth chapter of this thesis illustrated diplomatic protocol as a soft power tool to achieve foreign policy goals. The way that this tool functions is by codifying the rules of ceremonial events and governing negotiations and activating international contracts by displaying ceremony and splendour. Firstly, the study demonstrated the role of diplomatic protocol in

South African foreign policy identity that the state visit by Queen Elizabeth II of England had on South Africa. This visit, with all its splendour, traditions and symbols, confirmed South Africa's place on the global map as a multi-racial democracy. South Africa's re-joining of the Commonwealth of Nations does not merely officially indicate recognitions of the UK, as the visit also indicated a stronger relationship between Queen Elizabeth II and Mandela, who became and remained friends throughout the shift in South Africa's position with the West. This illustrates the power of trust and relationships that protocol allows to take place (Parker, 2019). Secondly, the chapter analysed South Africa's visit to China in 2010 with the aim to gain membership into the BRICS grouping. This visit marked the most significant shift in South Africa's foreign policy since the Mandela era. It confirmed an alliance with a pro-Global South and East grouping and shifted South Africa's foreign policy identity to a multilateralist state mainly focusing its foreign policy on BRICS and China.

As was noted in chapter 1, due to the word limitation of this mini-thesis and the severe paucity of accessible information on diplomatic protocol as exercised by South Africa, a third case study on the Mbeki presidency was not included. This is acknowledged as a limitation of the study in addition to reliance on desktop research only.

Every head of state or government representative expects to be received in a way that makes them feel as if they are important and, furthermore, they want other countries to see they are important by the way they are being treated; in other words, as pointed out above, a relationship that shows trust and connection. Flags that are not displayed in the correct order, scheduled meetings where delegates do not show up, the playing of the wrong national anthem, or leaving the official welcome to a low-ranking functionary can all be interpreted as an insulting action with the intention of sending a message. It is therefore possible to argue that international protocol is a powerful instrument for states to construct their identities in the international society.

Protocol is not carved in stone, however. Protocol deals with people and provides guidelines in uncertain situations. It can be applied differently in each situation, based on the perspective of a state. In the same way that a state creates its identity, it shapes and creates diplomatic protocol accordingly.

5.2 Avenues for future research

Future research suggestions include, firstly, that more studies need to be conducted on the important political role of diplomatic protocol in foreign policy execution, including foreign policy identity construction. In particular, there is a lack in literature on how protocol is conducted by African actors, including South Africa. Further, useful research using the comparative perspective of the role of diplomatic protocol can be conducted to highlight how different states use this element of soft power in pursuit of their foreign policy objectives.

Other possible research studies could include comparisons between state visits by great powers versus state visits by small powers and the actions of a state when different benefits are at stake. Lastly, comparative studies can expand to include a focus on regional identities and on how different states from different regions of the world approach diplomatic protocol to project regional identities and achieve regional goals.



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