

## **Relational Public Diplomacy: The Perspective of Sociological Globalism**

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This article attempts to go beyond “citizen diplomacy,” or private sector–driven public diplomacy, by setting its sights on global people-mobility—a perpetual, systemic dynamic for creating relationship linkages—and understanding its consequences for relational public diplomacy. To this end, the article considers relational elements of three groups of global migrants, examining how their differing nexuses influence public diplomacy. It begins with diasporas, expands to international students, and then focuses on a survey of global temporary laborers, a long overlooked yet powerfully emergent group that presents both risks and beneficial opportunities. The conclusion discusses temporary laborers’ potential role in democratizing the Western monopoly over public diplomacy and calls for a departure from soft power toward relationship-centered theory and practices.

### **Introduction**

At the forefront of contemporary public diplomacy, the search for cross-border relationship building aims either to garner foreign public support for a country’s policy goals or to cultivate general values that could eventually be conducive to the goal of soft power. Such a relational approach is manifest in the recent rise of “citizen” or “privatized” diplomacy (Bhandari & Belyavina, 2010; PR Coalition, 2007; Snow, 2008b), as well as “corporate” (Reinhard, 2006) and “network” (Zaharna, 2007) diplomacy. These terms denote the types of relationship connections that are tapped, such as those between individuals, groups, and institutional agents, in relational public diplomacy. The identified agents, or connections, represent a wide array of new and old establishments. The new include multinational corporations serving in “corporate” diplomacy and global nongovernmental organizations responsible for “network” diplomacy. The old comprise scholarly, cultural exchange, philanthropy, and volunteer service programs, all sponsored by governments or civic organizations.

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The relationship linkages sought under the broad umbrella of citizen diplomacy have promising potential for relational public diplomacy in their own right. But as a purposefully mounted institutional endeavor, citizen diplomacy comes only with great difficulty. Initiation and nurture of the exchange, philanthropy, and volunteer programs organized by old establishments—and of the new corporate programs as well—requires conscientious, lasting effort from the actors concerned. These efforts are inherently subject to ebbs and flows in the agents' commitment and financial resources. In brief, these relationship linkages, particularly the program-driven ones, lack a perennial force to structure their genesis and proliferation, which poses a serious challenge to the prospects of citizen diplomacy. The challenge, however, should not negate the value of citizen diplomacy but rather call for expanding the scope of relational public diplomacy beyond the confines of citizen diplomacy. The way forward is to mobilize a systemic, perpetual force for seeding and cementing relationship linkages across the world. This force is not brand-new but as old as human history itself. It is global people-mobility, the force of sociological globalism unleashed by permanent and temporary migrants spinning webs of relationships between countries on the most substantial, far-reaching, and natural terms.

Just as old and new players occupy the arena of citizen diplomacy, such players inhabit the landscape of relational public diplomacy predicated on global people-mobility. Permanent immigrants with citizenship have long played a role in so-called ethnic lobbying, particularly in the United States, and international students, a temporary migrant group, are another, decades-old pillar of relationship-forging public diplomacy. These established agents of relational public diplomacy, however, are constantly undergoing momentous change. Early in the Cold War, for instance, the United States successfully used its Italian American immigrant community as a public diplomacy resource to influence a pivotal election in Italy through a letter campaign (Cull, 2008). Such bidirectional immigrants' influence has now culminated in dual citizenship, allowing them to exert stronger influence on their homeland politics (Spiro, 2007).

International students, who once relied mostly on governmental or other institutional sponsorship from such establishments as the Fulbright Program in the United States, are now trotting the globe on their own bankrolls in ever increasing numbers. The number of international students shot up by 75% between 2000 and 2009 to reach 3.43 million (Institute of International Education [IIE], 2011a). Driven by the sheer force of the global education market, migrant students are now the world's fastest-growing mobile group. Their ascendance speaks to an exponential multiplication in relational public diplomacy linkages, not only to traditional host countries such as the United States but also to newly emerging ones such as China.

Making its mark in relational public diplomacy alongside these familiar faces, meanwhile, is a currently surging category of mobile people: temporary migrant laborers, who as a group are as old as their established peers, yet are little recognized for interfacing with relational public diplomacy. Long unnoticed in the shadow of permanent immigrants and international students, migrant laborers are finally coming into view. The Republic of Korea's experience in the past decade showcased temporary laborers' entrance onto the South Asian stage of relational public diplomacy, where they wreaked havoc on Korean public diplomacy efforts. "Dynamic Korea," the Korean government's national branding campaign, was derailed in the 2000s by repercussions from the country's maltreatment of South Asian temporary workers. Migrant workers returning home as activists started organizing anti-Korean movements in 2001.

That same year, books promoting anti-Korea sentiment flooded Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Nepal, and Korean businessmen and tourists were lynched by locals in Thailand, the Philippines, and Nepal (Cho, 2001). In January 2004, the Anti-Korean Interests Agency, reportedly based in Thailand, sent bomb threats to a branch of Korean Air and the Korean embassy in Bangkok and called for attacks on Korean businesses and organizations in Thailand, Malaysia, Laos, Vietnam, and Indonesia ("Regional Security," 2004).

Although temporary workers' clout is not yet fully felt, their sheer numbers and worldwide omnipresence will soon beget enormous challenges and opportunities for relational public diplomacy. Each year over the past decades, half of all migrants, including mobile students, have been laborers. In 1975, a total of 75 million people migrated worldwide, and by 2000 that number had more than doubled to 174.9 million, of whom 80.9 million were workers (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2004). By 2010, the global migrant population had risen to 214 million, with workers correspondingly increasing to 105 million that same year. The vast, growing majority of labor migrants are temporary workers, who now not only bridge <sup>1</sup>the South and the North but exhibit South-to-South movement on a similar scale (ILO, 2010).

This article's goal is to track the developments among the undercurrent relationship nexuses woven by sociological globalism, and to probe the ways those relational elements interface with public diplomacy and affect it. Discussion will distinguish two primary categories of global migrants: permanent and temporary. Each of these duration categories is defined by its own nature, dynamics, and consequences for public diplomacy. Two groups of global migrants will receive attention first, not least because their strategic values for public diplomacy have long been subject to scholarly and policy-related scrutiny: diasporas (a naturalized, permanent group) and international students (a temporary group). Another reason for this delineation is that both groups and the lessons they offer are good starting points from which to illuminate the long-unheeded but powerfully ascendant group of temporary labor migrants. In conclusion, the article will discuss South-to-South labor migration's potential for challenging the Western monopoly over theories and practices of public diplomacy.

### **Permanent Migrants**

#### ***Diasporas***

Permanent migration is a central feature of human history, shaping and reshaping societies, cultures, and economies. The 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed waves of large-scale immigration to "new" lands such as North America. Since a brief slackening in the mid-20th century, human migration has regained momentum. Much of the recent history of global immigration involves the United States, the largest immigration country in the world. As of 2009, the 39 million foreign-born people living on U.S.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms "the South" and "the North" do not necessarily refer to the world geography. Instead they are used in this article in accordance with their conventional usages in the literatures of international relations and international communication. Thus, the South refers to developing and underdeveloped countries while the North developed ones. In addition, another term "the West" refers to developed countries mostly in West Europe and North America.

territory made up more than 12% of the country's population. Naturalized citizens accounted for about 17 million of the total, while noncitizens made up the remaining 22 million (U.S. Congressional Budget Office, 2011). According to the latest comprehensive survey on Americans' ancestry, conducted in 2000, the United States was home to 92 different ethnic groups (categorized by ancestry) with a population base of at least 100,000. Thirty-seven of these ethnic groups had more than 1 million members, and seven had more than 15 million members (Brittingham & de la Cruz, 2004).

Permanent migrants, as agents of fundamental change to the fabric of society, have long been a subject of research in the study of ethnicity, racial relations, and even gender, for migration transforms formal and informal social, cultural, economic, and political institutions (e.g., Nestor, 1999, 2001; Pessar, 1988, 1999). Early on, these migrants entered the arena of relational public diplomacy as a force in transnational politics. Ethnic immigrants form diasporas, a particular type of transnational community whose members, dispersed from their homeland, permanently reside in one or more "host" countries and possess a collective, sometimes idealized, myth of the homeland (Sheffer, 2003). Because of their position amid nations and cultures, diasporas "forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, building social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders" (Basch, Schiller, & Blanc-Szanton, 1994, p. 7). Throughout most of the 20th century, transnational diaspora politics stood center stage among various cross-border social fields. Outstanding among diasporas' political activities, "ethnic lobbying"—the indigenous U.S. version of transnational diaspora politics—has from its inception intensively intersected with public diplomacy, as for example when German Americans campaigned just before World War I to prevent the United States from going to war with Germany. In U.S. ethnic lobbying, past and present alike, diasporas as special interest groups actively engage in pressure politics to sway U.S. foreign policy in the interests of their homelands, influencing Congress via their grassroots voting power while vocally appealing to public opinion. The American Jewish diaspora has an especially powerful ethnic lobby, and other diasporas, for instance Irish and Greek groups, have rotated in and out of the spotlight over the past century. Since the 1980s, new groups have ascended, such as the Mexican and Indian lobbies, the latter particularly in the 2000s as European immigration declined and was replaced by Asian groups.

Ethnic lobbying on the U.S. stage is "political" in nature, in the conventional sense of the term. Diasporas become involved in matters that concern the state or its government, government policies, or public affairs in general. U.S. ethnic lobbying, though long outside the lexicon of public diplomacy and relegated instead to comparative American politics, complements the workings of public diplomacy. In the classic U.S.-envisaged definition of public diplomacy, "the objective [of public diplomacy] is to influence the behavior of a foreign government by influencing the attitudes of its citizens" (Malone, 1988, p. 3). Here the conduit is the attitudes of non-American, foreign citizens. In ethnic lobbying, meanwhile, the means of action is immigrants-turned-U.S. citizens. Seen in this way, ethnic lobbying is a sociological model of public diplomacy that foreign countries pursue through their citizens' permanent migration to another country.

Contrary to their ideal role as bridges between countries, diasporas' actions in the 20th century were mostly viewed as benefiting their homelands while harming U.S. interests. Ethnic lobbying remains a thorny, intractable drain on U.S. foreign policy in the eyes of many unhyphenated Americans, who see it

as a global sociological force that is both asymmetrical and detrimental. Some even argue that ethnic lobbying has brought about a fragmentation of American foreign policy (Clough, 1994), promotes "the interests of people and entities outside the United States" (Huntington, 1997, p. 38), and undermines the nation's common good (Smith, 2000).

Ethnic lobbying nevertheless continued, and the asymmetrical tides began changing in the United States' favor in the 1990s. The country found itself riding a reverse wave of influence that ethnic diasporas exerted in its interests. This moment arrived paradoxically, as a windfall, following a strategic, second-round maneuver from the camp of immigrant-sending countries. The game changer was their embrace of dual citizenship to further tighten ties with their diasporas in America. These countries reaped a multitude of political and economic gains by strengthening their ethnic lobbying and attracting more remittances and financial, human, social capital from diasporas in the United States (Spiro, 2007, 2010). Dual citizenship entails the rights to own property and, most importantly, to vote and run for public office. Thus it opens a more formal, powerful gate to diasporas' influence on the politics of their homeland, and on democratization efforts in particular.

The countries vigorously promoting dual citizenship include Mexico, Croatia, India, the Philippines, South Korea, Dominica, Jamaica, Malawi, Nigeria, and Latvia. Many allow dual citizens only voting rights in national elections, but a few do permit their election to public office. A recent account (Leblang, 2011) noted that whereas the number of countries with dual citizenship was only 26 in 1986, it had tripled to 84 as of 2006. At the dawn of dual citizenship, Shain (1999) foresaw U.S. diasporas' becoming an instrument of democracy to serve U.S. interests. In his view, diasporas impart American values and ideologies—such as democracy and pluralism, as well as capitalist entrepreneurial spirit and skills (Naim, 2002)—to the politics of their mother countries through the backflow of dual citizenship. During the 1990s, the U.S. saw these high hopes confirmed as expatriates returned from America took up high-ranking government offices across Eastern Europe, in Yugoslavia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Armenia. As Shain (2000) put it, dual citizenship represents the most interesting new development in the once one-way street of diasporas' political influence (i.e., ethnic lobbying in the U.S.). The flow of political influence was "becoming a two-way street" (p. 17).

The rosy view of dual citizenship as a wind of change for the United States is not without reservations, though. It would be naïve to believe Americanized diasporas are necessarily heralds of democratic values in their home politics. Greek Americans, for example, through fervent ethnic lobbying following Turkey's invasion of Cyprus in 1974, succeeded in moving the U.S. Congress to impose a sweeping embargo on Turkey. On the topic of democratizing the military junta in Athens (1967–1974), however, their general silence indicated indifference. Indeed, they acquiesced to and even collaborated with the dictatorship (Shain, 1994). Diasporas in general are likely to be holders of not only American but also nationalist, sectarian, and even parochial ideas, as Lyons and Mandaville (2010) observed. Whether diasporas balance the flow of political influence accompanying permanent migration remains an open question. Nonetheless, at the moment the bright side of the two-way street rests on a fundamental fact of world politics: the ongoing, globetrotting, half-century-long proliferation of democracy. The more countries that become at least electoral democracies, or even liberal democracies, the more chances there are for dual citizenship to play into U.S. hands. Also, although they are uncertain agents of democracy for

their homelands, American diasporas do promise one thing to the United States: In the long run, their leverage on homeland politics through dual citizenship will benefit, more than harm, the U.S. "milieu" and "possessive goals" (Nye, 2008; Wolfers, 1962), as the power base of diasporas' homeland politics is essentially American-grown.

Relational public diplomacy's alignment with permanent migration seems to have gathered enough steam to last a while. The average annual number of naturalizations in America rose from the 1950s to 2010, averaging 680,000 per year between 2001 and 2010 and hitting a record high of over 1 million in 2008 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2011). Meanwhile, 4.3 million permanent migrants of all kinds, including laborers, moved into OECD countries in 2009 alone. Nevertheless, the future likely concerns mainly the United States and a handful of other Western settlement countries on one hand, and their many, mostly Southern, counterpart emigration countries on the other. For all its clout, permanent migration as seen in modern times remains a relational linkage for public diplomacy involving the North and the South only. Permanent linkage is not yet truly global because it does not weave from South to South, where permanent migration has hardly developed on a scale comparable to that of its South-to-North counterpart.

### **Temporary Migrants**

#### ***International Students***

Like permanent immigrants, student sojourners are historically part of global human mobility, if on a far smaller scale. Alone or in groups, they have existed since antiquity, as documented in classical Greek literature. In Egypt in 332 B.C., the library and museum in the city of Alexandria, a Greek venue for higher education, attracted students from all over Europe, Asia Minor, and North Africa (Fletcher, 1968) and hosted mathematical luminaries such as Euclid and Archimedes. But only after World War II did mobile students begin to form a sizable, global social group. To be sure, throughout the decades before the war they had existed and grown in number (Ninkovich, 1996), owing in part to educational programs offered by internationally minded, philanthropic private-sector U.S. institutions such as the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations.

Nonetheless, it was largely the force of international relations in the aftermath of the war that enabled their ascendance. In the milieu of the Cold War, international study was purposefully cultivated in the service of traditional public diplomacy (Ninkovich, 1996), with its vision of international students as a strategic relational linkage. They were in fact the first relationship agent recognized in the history of relational public diplomacy, far ahead of diasporas. Their utility as a tool of public diplomacy was hailed mostly in the North, primarily the United States, where they were seen as exerting subtle one-way influence on the South.

Yet it was undeniably in a noble liberal arts spirit that from 1946 on, the U.S. Fulbright Program became a hotbed of student exchange programs sponsored by governments and civic organizations across the world (Snow, 2008a). The government-led era of sponsorship mostly lasted until the end of the Cold War. Global students numbered only 0.8 million in 1975, then plateaued at 1.1 million in the period from

1980 to 1985 before rising slightly to 1.3 million in 1990. That is, it took 15 years for the number to increase by 0.5 million (OECD, 2010a).

Then, with the new millennium, the market-driven era of global student mobility dawned. The driving force behind it was an exploding demand to study abroad among middle-class students in newly emerging economies, especially China, the world's biggest source of international students with 820,000 abroad as of 2010 (National University of Singapore, 2011). In this era powered by the global education market, the proportion of government-sponsored international students worldwide has receded dramatically to become dwarfed by the share of those who finance themselves. According to the Institute of International Education (2011b), of the 690,923 foreign students in the United States in 2009, only 4,660 (0.7%) received U.S. government funding, including Fulbright scholarships. Another group of 31,452 (4.6%) students were supported by funds from their home governments and universities. In sharp contrast, the overwhelming majority (86%) relied on financing from their families (61.9%) and research/teaching assistantships at universities (24.1%).

Over the past decade, global travelers for tertiary education have multiplied at a staggering pace. Indeed, their numbers skyrocketed by 75%, from about 1.9 million in 2000 to 3.43 million in 2009—an increase of 1.53 million in a 10-year period, triple the 0.5 million rise over the 15-year stretch leading up to 1990. In 2009, as in the decades before, the lion's share (almost 60%) of global students went to a premier league of a handful of developed Western countries: the United States (20%), Great Britain (13%), France (8%), Germany (7%), Australia (7%), and Canada (4%). The difference nowadays is the surge of second-tier players outside the league, most notably China, which has beaten out Australia to become one of the top five destinations and aims to attract more foreign students, bringing their population up to 500,000. Japan, with 4% of global students, has set an ambitious target of 300,000 by 2020. Other emerging student magnets include Korea, Singapore, New Zealand, South Africa, Italy, Spain, and many other OECD countries (IIE, 2010; National University of Singapore, 2011). On the path to commercialization, international education has spawned a lucrative global industry as well, worth \$20 billion in the U.S. alone in 2009 (IIE, 2011b). And student mobility worldwide is projected to expand far more briskly than ever: The number of global students is expected to reach more than 7 million over the 10 years from 2010 through 2019—an increase of 3.6 million, more than double the 1.53 million increase from 2000 to 2009 (UNESCO, 2010).

This market-driven sociological transformation of student mobility opens up ample new opportunities, stoking high hopes for relational public diplomacy. Since the beginning of history, international students have proved a strategic, efficient channel for host countries' relational public diplomacy. The students are inherently potential socioeconomic and political elites of their homelands; their study, personal contacts, and intercultural experiences tend to make them dear friends to the host country; and after returning home, they are likely to become leaders in politics, government, media, business, education, and the private sector, or at least middle-class multipliers of the ideas, values, and institutions of the host country.

A plethora of research confirms that hosting foreign students has strategic value for relational public diplomacy (Atkinson, 2010). The widely vaunted accomplishments of foreign alumni of the Fulbright

Program are perhaps the most compelling evidence of the promise of this claim. As of 2010, the program had brought 188,000 foreign students and scholars to the United States since its inception in 1946 (Fulbright Program, 2011). Hundreds of Fulbright alumni have held top positions in their homelands; 29 have served as a head of state or government and 20 more as their country's minister of foreign affairs (U.S. Department of State, 2011). A global survey of foreign Fulbright participants found that 99% reported better understanding of America and its culture, and 96% shared their experiences through media or cultural activities upon returning to their home country (Bellamy & Weinberg, 2008).

Whereas much attention is devoted to the final benefits of hosting foreign students, the intercultural passage through which they become friends to the host country is less well-known. As temporary migrants with a deadline for return, when they cross borders they experience "sojourner adjustment," in contrast to the long-term assimilation or integration process that permanent migrants undergo. As for foreign students' favorability toward the host country, research shows that it does not follow an upward linear path but a bumpy track down and then up. In the literature, this peculiar swing is dubbed a U-curve trajectory: as time elapses, the attitude is initially negative, but after reaching a midpoint trough it rebounds positively through to the exit (i.e., return). The U-curve passage—first proposed by Oberg's (1954, 1960) four stages of cultural adjustment (honeymoon, culture shock, recovery, adjustment) and first confirmed by Lysgaard's (1955) empirical study with Norwegian Fulbrighters—rose to the status of theory upon the release of corroborating findings based on experiences of U.S. foreign students of diverse nationalities: Scandinavian (Scott, 1956; Sewell & Davidsen, 1961; Sewell, Morris, & Davidsen, 1954); Indian (Coelho, 1958); Turkish (Davis, 1971); Columbian, Greek, and Turkish (Greenblat, 1971); and Taiwanese (Chang, 1973).

The bright promise of the U-curve notwithstanding, its generalizability across host nations other than the United States is arguable. After all, the happy-ending recovery picture was drawn on the American canvas, a country that, built on immigrants from abroad, is perhaps more friendly, welcoming, and accommodating of foreigners than other countries. The United States moreover had well-established academic and nonacademic support systems for foreign students, most of whom from countries, friends or at least neutrals to America. The U-curve's viability, however, gained strength from studies done mostly in the 1990s on Chinese and South Korean students in Japan, a country long known to be xenophobic on many counts (e.g., Hofstede, 2001; Hogg, 2005) whose imperialism in the first half of the 20th century led to rocky relations with neighboring countries.

A review of the literature suggests that Chinese and Korean students' favorability toward Japan follows the U-curve. Their feelings first soured upon exposure to Japanese ethnic prejudices and discrimination but tended to bounce back later (Chung, 1998; Higashi Chiiki Kenkyukai, 1997; Hsiao-Ying, 1995; Iwao & Hagiwara, 1991; Murphy-Shigematsu, 2002). Two studies of Korean students found that their attitudes toward Japan became even more positive after they returned home (Chung, 1998; Iwao & Hagiwara, 1991). Furthermore, a 2006 cross-sectional survey of 1,381 Chinese returnees from Japan by Zweig and Han (2007) and Han and Zweig (2010) revealed a far more pronounced finding. The Chinese returned with a quite positive view of Japan, equivalent to a score of 72 on a 100-point feeling thermometer; favored Japan over six countries of comparison (France, Canada, the United States, North Korea, Russia, and India); and felt 31 points warmer toward Japan than did the Chinese middle class with



its cold, negative feeling of 41 points, as captured by the Global View 2006 Survey of the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Another recent large-scale survey of 1,220 Chinese students in Korea, conducted by the Korean Educational Developmental Institute (KEDI, 2010), also attested to the presence of the U-curve. Like Japan, Korea is considered xenophobic (though perhaps less so) and has strained political relations with China (over North Korea). In the study, the downturn slope in favorability toward Korea ran very steep and deep, although the later upturn was also clear. Before coming to Korea, only 4% of Chinese students felt “negative to very negative,” but after living and studying in the country, their overall negative attitude mushroomed to 41%, a tenfold increase. The top two reasons for their anti-Korean sentiment were Koreans’ discrimination and disregard of Chinese, and Korean media’s distorted coverage of Chinese affairs.

Meanwhile, a closer examination of the U-curve passage revealed by this study offers rare, new insights into the potentially treacherous optimism of the passage’s apparent happy end (Yun & Vibber, 2012). These insights are crucial to newly emerging or aspiring magnets for foreign students—particularly countries that, like Korea, lack a multicultural society and established academic/nonacademic support systems. Yun and Vibber (2012) found that the Chinese students’ initial attitudinal plunge to the bottom lasted far longer (3–4 years) than the drop observed in studies of foreign students in the United States. Most of the U.S. studies—which, though old, offer the sole available indication of the length of the period up to the trough—discovered much shorter periods than were observed in Korea, from as little as 4–6 months (Heath, 1970) to 7–18 months (Chang, 1973) to as long as 10–19 months in one study (Morris, 1960). The difference between the countries is alarming. The longer it takes to reach the bottom, the deeper the plunge is likely to be; and correspondingly, should recovery happen at all, the attitude would take just as long to rise again. If an individual student does not stay long enough for a worsening attitude to grow warmer, the promise and optimism of the U-curve cannot materialize, and the resulting negative attitude inflicts harm on the host country. Regrettably, this was likely the scenario for Korea, given that the vast majority (81%) of Chinese in the KEDI study reported staying less than three years. The lesson from the Korean case is that although the U-curve may take the same shape across countries, its consequences for relational public diplomacy are likely to differ.

Furthermore, U-curve variations may occur between government-sponsored and self-sponsored students. The former are mostly future elites of their home countries, targeted for “critical exchanges” because they are considered critical segments with high strategic value for the host country (Snow, 2008a). Their relatively comfortable conditions of stay and study—financially sponsored and carefully cared for while preparing to assume a secure high rung on the social ladder back home—incline them to a best-case U-curve scenario. In fact, Fulbright alumni tend to express very high levels of satisfaction with their stay and experiences in the United States, as documented by Bellamy and Weinberg (2008). On the other hand, the unsponsored, large numbers of whom are neither as “critical” nor as privileged as the sponsored, might not enjoy the same luxury, favor, or future prospects. Accordingly, the U-curve ahead of them is less likely to follow the best-case path, as was the case for Chinese in Korea. The current era of commercialized mass mobility of international students as such will thus have complicated consequences for relational public diplomacy.

In any event, despite their increasing abundance and strategic value (even if the same bright promise does not extend to all), global students form only a minuscule group compared to temporary labor migrants, who constitute the vast majority of global migrants yet remain little understood within the scope of relational public diplomacy.

### **Temporary Labor Migrants**

"Temporary labor migration is back," the 2008 International Migration Outlook (OECD, 2008) proclaimed, acknowledging a paradigm shift from traditional permanent migration. In modern history, deliberate temporary labor migration first appeared mostly in Europe in the form of "guest worker" programs culminating in the 1950s and 1960s. Its intensity declined over the following two decades as European countries strove to manage the externalities of housing transit laborers in large numbers. But in the 1990s, the workers were back, this time looming larger than before because not only affluent countries but also newly industrialized countries faced huge domestic labor shortages caused by lower fertility. Also, temporary labor migration proved the optimal way for receiving countries to buffer the challenges that ongoing permanent migration and its sociopolitical, economic, and cultural repercussions posed for every aspect of society.

In much of the world during the 10-year period before 2010, temporary workers outnumbered permanent ones. In 2010 alone, 2.3 million temporary workers moved to OECD countries, outnumbering permanent immigrant laborers by nearly 1 million. Between 2003 and 2007, temporary worker populations increased at an annual rate of 7% in affluent countries, making them the fastest-growing group of migrants (OECD, 2010b). The eclipse of permanent workers by temporary workers prevailed even in traditional settlement countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia. For instance, U.S. admissions of temporary workers more than doubled between 1996 and 2006. Including family members, they numbered 2.3 million in 2006, more than the number of permanent immigrants in that year (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2006) and far more than the stock of 580,000 foreign students. Canada shared a similar story; its temporary workforce swelled by 118% in the same period (Thomas, 2010).

The prevalence of temporary worker migration as the definitive feature of current global migration is also felt in many recently industrialized and developing countries that, compared to the core countries of the affluent world, have a very small number of permanent migrants and foreign students. For instance, Korea, a recently developed country, had 770,000 temporary foreign workers in 2010. They accounted for only 3.1% of the total labor force (Hyundai Research Institute, 2011), but their number was almost 10 times that of international students and 30 times that of naturalized workers in that year. The dominance of temporary workers Korea is experiencing is likely to be typical of other emerging economies, which have similar levels of foreign laborers in their labor markets.

At the other extreme sits a group of oil-rich Arab countries. In the decades since the 1970s, the oil boom-driven need for temporary migrant workers has changed these countries' entire demography, not just the labor force. Of the total population, foreign workers, mostly temporary, have made up as

much as 87% in Qatar, followed by the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait (about 70% each), Jordan (46%), and Saudi Arabia (28%), according to the ILO (2010). Outside this group, Singapore and Israel also stand out in this respect (roughly 40% each).

As such, temporary labor migration is interweaving more and more countries into a web of global people-mobility both denser and wider than those created by diasporas and international students. Yet for several reasons, temporary migrant workers have long been outside the scope of relational public diplomacy. Hosting countries likely deem them insignificant populations. For the masses in foreign countries, these laborers are hardly as strategic for public diplomacy as elite foreign students are. Nor are the foreign workers eligible to take part in the two-way process of political influence via dual citizenship in the long run. For the sending countries, temporary workers make little contribution to ethnic lobbying because they are not citizens of the host country.

But despite the paucity of public diplomacy-focused research, a burgeoning body of research from the perspective of international human resource management offers a promising vantage point for probing temporary workers' significance for relational public diplomacy. Its main thrust is to understand the process of sojourner adjustment that foreign workers undergo abroad and its bearing on the concerns of personnel management: job performance, work satisfaction, job turnover (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991; McCaughey & Brunig, 2006; Peltokorpi & Froese, 2009). The research field emerged when global corporations began dispatching managers from headquarters, called "intra-company transferees" or "organizational expatriates," to international posts. When serious competition for global talent kicked in recent decades, its focus moved to the retention of talent.

The literature suggests that these mostly highly skilled temporary workers pose no grave problems for relational public diplomacy. Owing to the scarcity of their talent, their transition or adjustment to foreign work and life generally occurs in favorable conditions and is thus unlikely to lead to negative attitudes toward the host country. Moreover, their presence is not yet global but mostly confined to countries in the North. One estimate (ILO, 2010) describes their total number as increasing, but also points out that three quarters of mobile talent shuttles back and forth between Northern countries. Across far more countries, the greatest challenges and dangers to relational public diplomacy come from the rank and file of the temporary workforce: low-skilled seasonal and contract workers. They constitute the vast majority of the global temporary workforce, bridging not only South and North but also South and South on an equal scale; 80% of labor mobility in the South takes place between intra-region countries.

These temporary workers' adjustment to foreign work and life is likely doomed to failure, for the very nature of their migration as low-skilled and temporary laborers fosters negative feelings toward the host country from the outset. Being low skilled places them at the bottom of sectors like agriculture and labor-intensive manufacturing, including construction, where employers are small enterprises reaping small profits in the face of global competition (Martin, 2004). In auditing more than 1,500 factories in more than 60 countries, Verité (2005) found the following common abuses of foreign contract laborers: excessive overtime, improper wage payment and withholding of wages, poor health and safety conditions, xenophobic discrimination, and compromised freedom to move and change jobs. They are particularly vulnerable in Asia and the Middle East. In the worst case of Singapore, for instance, temporary workers do

not have the right to marry or cohabit with a Singapore citizen, and female workers have to undergo mandatory pregnancy tests every six months under threat of deportation for a positive result (Ruhs & Chang, 2004). Even in traditional Western settlement countries, temporary workers endure pervasive hardship, if to a lesser degree. Canada and Australia teem with exploitation and abuse of foreign temporary laborers (Mares, 2009; "Not Such," 2007).

Under such extremely harsh conditions, temporary workers are not strongly motivated to interculturally adapt, learn the host country's language and culture, or maintain contacts with host nationals (Andolsek & Stebe, 2004; Castle & Miller, 1993). They generally expect to return home after one or at most three years of bitter privation withstood for economic gain. Their psychological well-being is further strained by the nature of their interaction with their most frequent contacts: native workers in the workplace. The native workers' higher status tends to engender alienation rather than solidarity between these two groups in the same working class.

Worse, foreign laborers' frustration with "3-D" work (dirty, dangerous, and difficult) and native coworkers deepens as they experience the disparity of "skill mismatch" or "overqualification." Currently, many temporary workers who end up in 3-D occupations have attained higher levels of education than their native colleagues. For example, among foreign workers in low-skilled jobs in South Korea in 2009, 70.5% had two- or four-year college degrees; only 6% had less than a middle-school education. Taken together, they are much better educated than Korean workers at the same level (Hyundai Research Institute, 2011). The foreign workers' higher educational level and accompanying self-pride play out to the detriment of their psychological satisfaction. As a defense mechanism, they tend to protect their personal and national pride and identity by becoming severely critical and antagonistic toward the host country (Chen, 2004).

All things considered, temporary workers' attitudinal passage regarding the host country is highly likely to diverge from the optimistic U-curve observed among international students. Their negative attitude would have little prospect of ever bouncing back because their stay is short, at most three years. In that time their favorability toward the host country would drop steeply and deeper because of the very unfavorable conditions of adjustment in the workplace and wider society. Having left the host country, they would have every reason to perceive it negatively, even hostilely. The anti-Korean movement started by former migrant workers, highlighted before, speaks to the nature of challenges arising from the treacherous conditions temporary laborers endure.

### **Conclusion**

As shown heretofore, the relational public diplomacy stands most firmly on the substantial, structural basis of global people-mobility. Findings to date on the elements of global migration highlight the perspective of sociological globalism for relational public diplomacy, referred to as "sociological public diplomacy" (Yun & Kim, 2008; Yun & Toth, 2009). Through the lens of sociological public diplomacy, this article has surveyed three relational elements, or agents, both old (diasporas and international students) and new (temporary labor migrants). Considering their perceived importance rather than their historicity, this new body of migrants forms the most substantial relational linkages between countries and societies.

Long obscured, temporary workers are emerging to pose challenges and grave risks for relational public diplomacy, across more countries than ever.

Still more important, their presence in countries in the South is likely to further level the playing field of public diplomacy, with the potential to drive a bigger wedge into the Western-led monopoly over theory and practice in public diplomacy. Most non-Western countries, either <sup>2</sup> semi-peripheral or peripheral, have typically been followers of inventions from the West. The first strand of modern public diplomacy, "the old, traditional public diplomacy," is hard to defend against critical theory. For instance, Ariel (1995), a rare critique of public diplomacy as a tool to perpetuate the West's cultural and informational dominance, characterized the old version as limited to a mere handful of "elite" states. The rules of the traditional game were and are above all capital-intensive, ruling out significant participation by the overwhelming majority of poor countries in the South, which generally have lacked vast resources to run the requisite comprehensive range of programs from global broadcasting networks to libraries and information centers to cultural and educational exchanges of persons. Apart from its acclaimed invention of ethnic lobbying in the United States, the South has tended to labor under the illusion that it must emulate Western practices as the ideal model, only to suffer frustration. Its denizens thus have long been relegated to the sidelines in the development of the theory and practice of public diplomacy.

This marginalization, though still persistent at large, is nonetheless ebbing in today's new public diplomacy, whose currency is the notion of soft power (Nye, 2011). A country's attractions are promoted by many more channels of communication—including globalized flows of information, trade, and capital—and by other players such as agents of corporations, NGOs, and civic groups. An expanding global pool of countries participate in soft-power seeking public diplomacy. Some countries from the South have developed into regional yet globally poised hubs for cultural products, as in the cases of South Korea and Mexico, or for news products, as Qatar has done with Al Jazeera (Thussu, 2006). These are signs of the challenge posed by the semiperiphery, which is now competitive with the center in certain spheres (Shannon, 1996), such as cultural diffusion through communications channels.

Furthermore, emerging economies in the South have taken possession of another instrument of soft power: the flows of trade. Southern economies are now more directed horizontally, toward one another, rather than vertically toward the North as they once were. This signals the growth of their soft power through intraregional trade as well. For instance, in the regional economic bloc of ASEAN Plus Three—comprising nine Southeast Asian countries, China, Japan, and South Korea—the share of intraregional trade is currently greater than the share of interregional trade with the Northern Hemisphere (Fukasaku, Meng, & Yamano, 2011). Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRIC) are another example. Intra-BRIC trade, growing at an average of 28% annually, is expected to more than double from US\$230 billion in 2011 to US\$500 billion by 2015. The five BRIC countries together now make up 43% of the world population and 40% of the global GDP ("BRICs Target," 2012). In sum, less industrialized

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<sup>2</sup> The term "semi-peripheral" refers to developing countries, some of them nowadays often dubbed "emerging markets," which include the BRICs. And another term "peripheral" means underdeveloped countries.

countries' channels of attraction show an increasingly centrifugal proliferation (i.e., South-to-South), and the field of global public diplomacy is populated with many more players.

The remarkable presence of temporary workers interweaving South-to-South forms another base of potential competitiveness for Southern countries, for which the global flow of people is a wake-up call to reassess their preoccupation with U.S.-grown soft power public diplomacy. As Thussu (2006) pointed out, despite apparent discontinuities with the history of Western dominance in global communication, such as counterflows of culture from the South to the North, little has changed overall: "Though there are more producers of images and information, fewer than 10 corporations, most based in the U.S., own most of the world's media industries" (p. 99). Because the global flows of news and information regrettably remain in Galtung's (1971) vertical and feudal modality, Southern countries are at an insurmountable disadvantage in this regard.

The nature of the South's newfound base of competitiveness inevitably breeds disillusion with soft power's promise. Soft power is still power, a one-sided influence over another, even if it is soft, subtle, and consent-based. Meanwhile, migrant labor is a relational element, and relationships are hardly an influence game. They are always two-way—not in the sense of two mirrors trying to influence one another, but in the sense of coorientation and sharing that resonate with the notion of social capital (Hanifan, 1916; Putnam, 2000). The Holy Grail in such relationships thus lies beyond the one-sided mirror of a country's favorability or attraction in the eyes of the other. Any measure of influence, be it simplistic favorability or complex attraction, should fall short of fully gauging the workings of relationship linkages for public diplomacy. Seen in this light, sociological public diplomacy must elude the grip of soft power and instead seek out relationship-centered theories and practices, a progressive move that could level out the historically uneven playing fields of public diplomacy.

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