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Hybridity and Soft Power Statecraft: The "GREAT" Campaign

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Abstract. This examination analyses transformations to statecraft accelerated by digital media technologies. This theory-building study moves beyond digitalisation of diplomacy as a means of adapting statecraft to evolving media landscapes and extends to the governance of soft power capabilities. It challenges static approaches to digital diplomacy and argues for conceptualisations of soft power that account for changes to statecraft. To theorise this dynamic, the concept of "soft power statecraft" and the notion of hybridity in the analysis of "GREAT", Britain's prominent strategic campaign, reveal trajectories of change elicited by it. The findings, drawn from interviews, policy data, and media artefacts, reveal how "GREAT" embodies a hybridised approach to soft power statecraft at the levels of governance, communicative practices, media landscapes, and cultures. They reveal how these changes translate into statecraft strategies for the articulation of soft power.

This exegesis explores changes to the field of diplomacy and statecraft associated with the British government's "GREAT" campaign, a long-term initiative launched in 2012. Drawing from multi-source data, analysis centres on the relationships amongst key actors in "GREAT", the mobilised

sources, and resources of soft power and media strategies that were deployed in its implementation. British statecraft has developed capabilities and communicative practices aimed at exerting "attractiveness effects". From the late-1990s, the Labour government pursued the "re-packaging of diplomacy for public and business consumption".[1] British diplomatic practice has tended towards polyphonic statecraft, focusing on a diversity of domains ranging from, for example, development aid programmes, international broadcasting to trade, and cultural relations. In these settings, state actors have displayed tendencies to operate in silos. There had been some collaboration with non-state actors although, prior to "GREAT", this was fragmented and limited in strategic co-ordination.

British foreign policy-makers have, in recent years, sought to align diplomacy and statecraft with "global competition", seeking to harness wealth creation through promoting tourism, arts, higher education, and "creative industries". Expanding economic imperatives have directed the course of foreign policy orientation for the British "competition state", re-enforcing "the spread of pro-business solutions" in diplomacy and statecraft.[2] Against this background, "GREAT" has survived funding cuts to participating state actors such as Visit Britain, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office [FCO], UK Trade and Investment [UKTI], and the British Council. The 2012 London Olympics and Paralympic Games bid provided impetus for developing "GREAT" in anticipation of their providing excellent opportunities for increased and positive exposure in foreign broadcast and print media and across social media platforms. Explicit *raisons d'être* for the campaign were domestic and foreign policies, notably austerity at home and commercial interests abroad. Implicitly, the British government aimed to advance narratives of Britishness by drawing on state and national identities. The simultaneity of changes in statecraft and the timing of the "GREAT" launch anticipated four strategic goals: deliver significant direct return to the British

economy; have an impact on Britain's international consumer behaviour; increase brand value; and gain support at home with a view to generate value in cash and kind.[3]

The "creative industries" equipped campaigners with conceptual resources and, by drawing from extensive symbolic sources, enabled the skilful articulation of tactics organised around "pillars": "Innovation"; "Entrepreneurship"; "Creativity" and "Technology" supporting trade and investment; "Knowledge" underpinning education; and "Heritage", "Culture", and "Countryside" embodying the key attractions for tourism. In addition, "Design", "Music", "Fashion", "Film", "Food", and "Literature" were used as themes for pillars to increase the appeal of Britain, followed by "Shopping" and "Coastline and Adventure" as tactics promoting tourism and English language education.[4] In terms of engagement, endogenous to the field, state actors integrated into the campaign exogenous actors referred to as "partners" and "ambassadors". The former included sponsoring organisations and individuals that, by March 2015, had "attracted £68 million of sponsorship from the private sector with 202 private sector partners and 164 high-profile individuals endorsing the brand".[5] The latter constituted high-profile actors endorsing "GREAT", featuring a range of celebrities from business, sport, and the arts including Sir Richard Branson, Sir James Dyson, Daniel Craig, David Beckham, Dame Judi Dench, and members of the Royal Family. In contrast to either corporate or celebrity diplomacy,[6] which tend to be practiced in parallel to state diplomacy, high profile actors in the case of "GREAT" were directly engaged in transferring perceived commercial and personal attributes to "brand equity" and, in turn, amplifying the campaign. Apart from "brand equity", the discourse on the campaign reveals different relationships between state and non-state endorsers of "GREAT", including *pro bono* engagements and sponsorship. In what follows, the field refers to a space, spanning across diplomacy and statecraft, made up of state actors, open to newcomers, and equipped in soft power

capabilities. Blurring boundaries between diplomacy and statecraft, "GREAT" exemplifies multi-faceted changes in the field. This analysis focuses on their dynamics.

Given its post-colonial status, Britain has manoeuvred between perceptions of "punching above its weight" or "perfidious Albion" – signifying unreliability and self-interest in international politics. These opposing views resonate in scholarship making up the background for "GREAT". The adaptability of Britain's diplomacy and statecraft *vis-à-vis* challenges in political and media landscapes are particularly relevant as a departure point for theorising "GREAT" as a trigger of changes in the field.

Prior to launching "GREAT", Britain used soft power capabilities for diplomatic engagement building on a polyphonic institutional set up. In theory, it deployed soft power capabilities through endogenous institutional links and diplomatic networks. In practice, exogenous actors increasingly shaped statecraft – notably external consultants as "nation branders",[7] the proliferation of digital media technologies particularly in public diplomacy,[8] and engagement with corporate actors.[9] In addition to FCO communicative practices of public diplomacy,[10] contributors to Britain's soft power included agencies such as British Council cultural relations,[11] Visit Britain destination marketing,[12] and UKTI trade promotion.[13] Finally, British diplomacy and statecraft has at times circumstantially engaged corporate and celebrity actors.

Although polyphonic in terms of establishment and practices, foreign policy-makers began co-ordinating statecraft.[14] Introduced in preparation for the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics, the 2008 *Strategic Framework* became of one of the first steps providing a basis for shifting towards hyper-campaigning, whereby "newer" media became an addition to, rather than a substitute for, "traditional" forms in soft power statecraft. A comparative study of Britain and Germany links sporting mega-events to soft power resources.[15] Providing cross-media

opportunities, particularly for Britain's public diplomacy,[16] the 2012 event mobilised state, citizen, and corporate resources to engender a sense of economic legacy.[17]

The 2012 Olympics coincided with new theorisations of media landscapes whereby the interplay of "old" and "new" media set the tone for campaigning. Interestingly, this hybrid ontology of media landscapes and campaigning has not extended to diplomacy and statecraft more broadly. Scholarship recognises that diplomatic and statecraft practice responds to shifts in media landscapes, particularly *via* digitalisation of public diplomacy.[18] Hence, focusing on British diplomacy, the use of transmedia strategies occurred in advocacy campaigns,[19] the adaptation of social media to re-invent new public diplomacy as "public diplomacy 2.0",[20] or the rise of seemingly autonomous "digital diplomacy".[21] Whilst the above occurrences unfold in silos, "GREAT" brought together changes going beyond evolving media landscapes. Hybridisation is a productive way to explore transformations in diplomatic and statecraft practice elicited by this hyper-campaign.

Questions about changing facets of soft power are central to International Relations studies in general, and diplomacy and statecraft in particular. In its seminal iteration, the notion of "soft power" based the concept on cultural and ideological, intangible, or indirect influences on international politics. It defined soft power as being about "more than just persuasion or the ability to move people by argument, though that is an important part of it. It is also the ability to attract, and attraction often leads to acquiescence. Simply put, in behavioural terms soft power is attractive power".[22] The concepts of "soft power" and "hard power", arguably, have converged into "smart power" as a strategy to gain influence in international politics.[23] The merging of concepts, like public diplomacy with nation branding, extends this strand of analysis.[24]

Whilst scholarship has bridged communicative practices with soft power, the field still seeks for ways to theorise change.[25] The convergence of concepts instead of the dynamics of diplomatic and statecraft practices underpin previous cross-disciplinary reviews.[26] Along with the dominance of American-focused or inspired studies, this limits analysis within context-specific fields. This analysis addresses ontological and epistemic issues stemming from standardisation and aids a cross-disciplinary dialogue amongst studies on international relations as well as media and communication. The interplay between diplomacy and statecraft mirrors hybrid media landscapes and "empirical" transformations embodied by "GREAT". With digitalisation rapidly emergent, British statecraft has responded to diplomatic challenges – say, in relation to Britain's international position after the 2008 economic crisis and more recently, Brexit – re-enforcing the argument that the proliferation and cultural adaptations of social media dominates the field.[27]

Instead of soft power "effects", this analytical *foci* is on "soft power statecraft". It involves the participatory conduct of foreign policy issues geared towards exerting influence and advancing state interests through engaging relevant networks at home and abroad, mobilising multiple sources and resources, utilising "older" and "newer" media, and enacting communicative practices such as, but not exclusively, public diplomacy to meet the aims of interdependent domestic and foreign policies. "Soft power statecraft" is a useful umbrella term for opening the debate and examining cross-institutional transformations in diplomacy and statecraft.

"Hybridity" is the state of flux between a state, governance, society, and media. Hybridity enables a re-conceptualisation of soft power statecraft by accounting for multi-dimensional changes in the field. This theorisation is extensively, but not exclusively, inspired by Chadwick's approach to political campaigning,[28] the features of which are explicit in the field of diplomacy and statecraft. Thus, the central premise of this argument: "GREAT" has initiated large-scale

transformations in Britain's soft power statecraft that go beyond the adaptation of diplomacy to a hybrid media landscape. It, therefore, responds to the argument pointing to the relevance of global hybrid media landscapes to soft power,[29] extending the argument to the interplay of statecraft with "traditional" media supplanted with "newer" campaigning modalities.

By virtue of the simultaneity of changes in its *endemic* design, "GREAT" triggers and embodies a multi-layered hybridisation in the field. Whilst hybridity has been adapted in the study of international relations, soft power statecraft has not used its exploratory power in analysis.[30] Hybridity is of relevance to the field as it enables the analysis of changes stemming from the interplay of state and non-state actors, endogenous and exogenous sources, and resources of soft power, landscapes of old and new media, which translate into inter-organisational cultural exchanges and new campaigning modalities. This analysis rests on intertwining layers of soft power: governance behind "GREAT"; the inter-mingling of sources and resources of soft power as well as inter-organisational cultural and campaign strategies.

First, whilst analysing the interplay between state and non-state actors engaged in "GREAT", networked architecture comes to the fore as a governance hybrid promoting the campaign as foreign policy strategy.[31] Work on hybridisation of public organisations and the New Public Management unravels the interactions amongst participating actors: its ties foreign and domestic policies – for example, foreign policy goals and diplomatic orientation.[32] It also touches organisational forms – interdependence; organisational architectures; timings; cross-organisational processes – centralisation and decentralisation; operational arrangements – roles and changing identities; and how, despite the critique of the scope of soft power, participating actors draw and re-draw the boundaries of "GREAT".[33]

Second is consideration of sources and resources of soft power that have enabled the hybridisation of capabilities aimed at engendering "attraction effects" through the *"*GREAT" campaign: "soft power resources are the assets that produce such attraction".[34] However, differentiated sources and resources of soft power capture how the pillars of "GREAT" are hybridised modes of campaigning. It unfolds the ways in which participating actors define the campaign mode and how these, in turn, are hybridised into emerging forms of statecraft. In this regard, the hybridisation stems from distinct views on soft power statecraft drawing on cultural resources like British "creative industries". It describes merges of endogenous, state-centred practices for the articulation of soft power with exogenous sources such as elements of British culture and heritage, which became the central theme of "GREAT".

Third is the hybridisation across media landscapes, where Chadwick's ontology of media landscapes echoes in soft power statecraft.[35] Whilst digital media technologies link to public diplomacy[36] and social media remains inextricably linked to practice,[37] the new assemblages of networks and media landscapes comprising a blend of broadcast and digital media technologies display a propensity to hybridised media and cultural forms. This insight goes beyond the adoption of social media by the field, extending hybridity to interactions amongst actors participating in "GREAT" and, in turn, expanding opportunities for cultural connectivity in soft power statecraft. Mindful of the dimensions of connectivity culture, that is "ways in which platforms became central to forces in the construction of sociality",[38] this analysis pays attention to the ways in which "GREAT" reshaped polyphonic dynamics into a single amplified hyper-campaigning effort.

Hybridity enables theorising Britain's statecraft, particularly about blurring boundaries in the field, interpreting the expansion of soft power capabilities, and adaptating statecraft, rather than relying on soft power as an outcome of foreign policy articulated by state and non-state actors. By

using hybridity, the analytical scope of "digital diplomacy" expands.[39] This approach opens useful avenues for analyses of statecraft, particularly bringing studies of international relations and media and communication closer together. To that end, the ontology of hybridity enables scholars to theorise links between conceptual and empirical features of statecraft. Because hybridity eschews dichotomies – "public affairs" versus "foreign affairs"; "public opinion" versus "world public opinion" – omnipresent in scholarship,[40] it enables tracing specific changes to statecraft and, at least partially, overcoming terminological silos.

This study examines large-scale changes to diplomacy and statecraft initiated by hyper-campaigning modes of "GREAT". Whilst herein, hybridity underpins the ontology of statecraft, the epistemic position of the analysis is rooted in discourse analysis[41]. Due to its ability to capture flux in the field, discourse analysis readily merges with hybrid ontology. Indeed, this case study of "GREAT" unravels how a wide-scale campaign embodies and elicits transformations to soft power statecraft. Discourse analysis is a compelling way to operationalise hybridity as a lens for analysing statecraft as, *ex definitione*, it is about "institutionalised ways of talking that regulate and re-enforce action and thereby exerts power".[42] Discourse analytical procedures permit answering the following research questions:

RQ1. What nuanced changes to statecraft has "GREAT" triggered?

RQ2. What were sources and resources of soft power deployed in "GREAT"?

RQ3. How does statecraft behind "GREAT" adapt to digital media landscapes?

Data collection divided into three stages. First, interviews were conducted with "GREAT" leaders from the Cabinet Office, the FCO, the British Council, Visit Britain, and UKTI, and from the Radley Yeldar consultancy, which co-designed the campaign [Table 1]. Snowballing and affinity techniques facilitated the selection of participants. Conducted in London between February

and April 2013, the interviews lasted between 50 and 90 minutes. Participants were members of the steering committee, a network shaping the direction of the campaign, their decision-making abilities and links to the field making their insights central to this analysis. All interviews occurred face-to-face in professional settings, the participants anonymised and referred to by their generic job titles.

The interview guide focused on changes to statecraft initiated by "GREAT" [RQ1] and in particular foreign policy, governance arrangements and distinctive features illuminated by party politics in past campaigns. To add depth, interviews expanded [RQ2] to questions regarding sources and resources behind "GREAT", and media strategies [RQ3]. Semi-structured interviews allowed for free-flowing discussions of terminology in the field, routines, practices, and relationships amongst participating actors. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and theme-coded. Searches of policies and documents cross-examining the campaign followed this stage of fieldwork. Finally, assemblages of broadcast news media as well as digital media contents in the examination of campaign strategies triangulated data. A sample of 125 campaign items were clustered into modality categories including: news features, brand book, advertisements, digital hub content, press releases, launch speeches, social media posts, billboards, and posters.

Table 1. Interview participants.

Participant	Institutional Role	Campaign Role	Length (in min.)
1	Liaison to Prime Minister	Director	56
2	Chief Operating Officer	Steering Group	60
3	External	Consultant	40

4	Head of Emergent Powers	Steering Group	52
5	Managing Director	Steering Group	55
6	Programme Manager	Steering Group	60
7	Director of Communications	Steering Group	60

Through discourse analysis and following similar designs in political communication, scrutiny of the collected data occurred. Exploring transformation in the field of statecraft linked to "GREAT" by using an extant framework saw focus on: the immediate terminologies and internal co-texts, inter-textual and inter-discursive relationships between utterances, texts, and genres; institutional frames of a specific context situation; and broader socio-political contexts for the campaign.[43]

A shift from a "development aid-centred" to "market-centred" statecraft underpinned the "GREAT*"* campaign. This governance feature is explicit in interdependent and networked relationships amongst participating state actors: the FCO, British Council, Visit Britain, UKTI, and 10 Downing Street. Mobilising state actors, incentivising them, and keeping centralised control over the finances were an efficiency measure:

> Now in truth that's really quite a difficult thing to do in government with its departments, which is why the campaign is run from Number 10, the Cabinet Office, from the centre. This is where the money comes to – the centre – and why we actually control and work with all the partners in putting a consistent campaign together.[44]

Whilst using soft power statecraft as a means of addressing foreign policy issues, in the case of "GREAT", the logic of managerialism, including a degree of public accountability and the

expectation of return of investment [ROI], underpinned this networked campaign. Statements from the campaign director and a liaison with a Cabinet Steering Group directly reflected these governance features:

> I'm also responsible for the evaluation, the governance and the maintenance of the governance procedure, and the reporting to Parliament, which is what the minister has to do. So, we have a programme board which runs this campaign, which is chaired by the secretary of state for the DCMS [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport] in a cross-government role; we have four ministers for the organisation and other officials there. I run that board and advise them . . . and that becomes the reporting mechanism upwards, which goes up to the Prime Minister, and ultimately to Parliament.[45]

The Cabinet and participating state actors were proactive in terms of capabilities building. Corporate actors have engaged with the campaign, building a coalition of support for it, and, by doing so, expanding the opportunities for drawing from corporate sources and resources. Some 500 state and non-state actors endorsed "GREAT" including Aston Martin, Mulberry, De Montfort University, McLaren, and Burberry. These external partnerships aimed to extend the value of corporate reputations, the campaign's visibility, expanding human networks, and, above all, supporting it financially.

The governance architecture for "GREAT" involves interdependence in sharing resources and the co-production of campaign strategies, both of which emerged as distinct features sustaining interactions within the network:

> This campaign is not without its challenges because, for example, just next financial year, the UKTI and the FCO have been given a joint allocation of money. So, everything we do we have to do completely jointly, now that takes a little bit of discipline in terms of all our

> communication has to be joint. It's so much better, though as I say it's not necessarily always easy to make these kinds of changes, but it's the first time that I've seen genuine collaboration in terms of recognising that we've all got different networks, we've all got different strengths, we've all got different weaknesses, but together we're a very, very good team.[46]

The big data and evidence-based policy-making also affected the governance of soft power, quantifiable measures for what the campaign achieves valued over subjective outcomes of soft power. This "datafication" trend translated into governance, partly by employing consultants to evaluate "GREAT" outputs:

> We must have told you about Arcadian. Because evaluation is so important, so important in terms of knowing that taxpayers' money is being spent well and in a way that is bringing investment back to the UK. It is evaluated by a company, that every single event that happens, every single activity, there is an evaluation for and it is all linked in to targets and measurable.[47]

Finally, "GREAT" design lays inherently on transactional principles that, by virtue of exchange values, leverage British culture and heritage into commodities:

> The campaign has so far delivered £1.2bn direct return to the economy against its £113.5m investment, with a further £500m in the pipeline. Just 2.9% of the investment went towards design fees, which is 0.28% of the total return. This is an impressive return on investment – and without the design work that provided the brand and campaign with a unified voice, GREAT is unlikely to have been the success that it is.[48]

The logic of bringing new and old governance approaches to the campaign elicited other features of hybridisation in soft power statecraft. These have unfolded in relation to soft power sources and resources underpinning "GREAT".

Whilst the originator of soft power speaks of resources,[49] a distinction exists between its sources and resources. In practice, the two are mutually constitutive and used in statecraft strategies for "attractiveness effects", particularly market-focused campaigns exemplified by "GREAT". Indeed, it represents another dimension of hybridisation in soft power, which "GREAT" allowed to unfold as its strategies developed from diverse sources and resources into a single campaign. "GREAT*"* has drawn to a lesser extent from Britain's foreign policy as a source of attraction, foregrounding elements of culture and heritage conceived in terms of tourism appeal, alongside components of the "creative industries" conceived in terms of economic value.

In meeting "GREAT" objectives, commercial attributes aiding perceived value to participating actors underpinned the selection of campaign sources. The relation to soft power statecraft of past "New" Labour governments foregrounded the sense of distinction in the way "GREAT*"* appropriates culture and heritage:

> I like to make the distinction between "Cool Britannia" and this campaign. Cool Britannia kind of forgot about our past a bit – it was all about "now", whereas this recognizes our past, and [also] the familiar and surprising. So, what we bring to peoples' attention is the familiar quality in an inspiring and surprising way, and the new.[50]

Those themes evolved by appropriating additional sources of soft power. Despite critiques of the scope of soft power statecraft,[51] the pillars provided the campaign with credible foundations. In addition, these thematic pillars equipped participating actors with a source of soft power that superseded "counter narratives" of government campaigns such as those targeting Romanian and Bulgarian citizens, unequivocally regarded as not related to "GREAT".[52]

The blend of soft power resources – composed of heritage, cultures and, in turn, desired legacy effects – from which participating actors constructed the "core idea" for "GREAT"

constitute a mosaic of the features of Britishness attributable to the qualities of iconic technological products, educational institutions, and cultures and landscapes, imagery utilised extensively in the campaign. The overarching strategy aimed at showcasing the old – established and traditional cultural landscapes and features – in new ways – using novel means of articulating them – had grounding in the multiplicity of cultures and, not only borrowing from national imagery and iconic landscapes, but also drawing from business, entrepreneurship, arts, sport, and consumer cultures. One statement expressed this aspect of hybridisation: "to some extent there has been a degree of retro-fitting. OK, how do we take this concept that is developed and now turn this into a brand".[53]

Whilst constructing the campaign pillars from exogenous sources – blending with state-centred soft power statecraft – the resources mobilised for the campaign were hybridised, too. Apart from financial resources committed by the Cabinet, participating state actors engaged with corporations, British academia, and high-profile individuals – all adding value to the campaign and, in turn, creating synergies, as well as using the campaign for self-promotion:

> Not just partnership within government, but the actual partners working together plus big partnerships with the private sector from the very beginning. So, we made this an open source brand. That was the second principle of partnership.[54]

Despite direct ties to the Cabinet, a special consideration went to the ways presenting and defining the intentions behind "GREAT" as "apolitical":

> It could be very clear that if this was seen as a political campaign by the government at the time, actually for many individuals and companies from the private sector, who've worked with us in this, could . . . decide to join or not join according to their political affiliation.[55]

Given the collaborative design of the campaign strategy, "GREAT" became centre stage for pulling soft power resources together, including streamlining financial resources. Between 2005

and 2006, the total British grant-funded public diplomacy expenditure reached £617 million.[56] Following the 2010 change of government, austerity measures affected the annual £5 million FCO discretionary public diplomacy budgets; "GREAT" emerged *in situ* with an initial budget of £30 million that expanded as the campaign evolved. According to the National Audit Office, financial reports on the campaign reveal that state expenditure on "GREAT" reached £113.5 million for the period 2012-2015, with further increases planned.[57] The campaign also benefitted financially from private sector partnerships, the value in 2013 estimated at £9 million. By the 2015 audit, these partnerships generated £68.5 million in cash and kind;[58] and they typically happened *via* sponsorships or endorsements by non-state actor organisations: "Sometimes a company will put in money, other times they will contribute their services, their goods to the campaigns, off the top of my head British Airways, so that's big match funding".[59]

The merger of public and private resources supporting the campaign created a unique financial structure, bringing the two worlds closer together in promoting British commercial interests. The campaign budget was centralised, with incentives for participating actors to bid for funding to pursue promotional activities targeting overseas markets. For the Cabinet, financing the campaign in this way mobilised the participating actors – FCO, UKTI, British Council, Visit Britain, and DCMS – as this additional financial injection gave these state actors impetus to advance the campaign. This financial structure also translated into delivering better value for money as the campaign followed business principles and delivered measurable targets. Participating actors partly saw co-creation as an efficiency measure, important to the governing *"*GREAT" Board, as the campaign was required to deliver a return on investment.

Sharing resources and capability building expanded campaign opportunities by merging endogenous and exogenous soft power resources. Notably, skills and practices became a cornerstone component of the hybridisation process:

> Diplomats in our country are highly trained people, they regard themselves as generalists, rather than specialists. I try and say: look you're a specialist diplomat, you know your business in influencing governments etc. very, very well indeed. You must also respect that around you there are people who actually know tourism and marketing very well indeed. They're people who know about branding, people who have spent a lifetime doing this and what I'm trying to engender is a respect for all the disciplines needed and the specialisations needed to run this campaign, because it is education marketing, destination marketing, it is business-to-business and investment marketing.[60]

Indeed, the London-based advertising agency, Mother, designed the core idea for the campaign, and Radley Yeldar designed and implemented its creative strategy for £3.3 million. These, and other external consultancies, entered the field of soft power statecraft to share their expertise, a process skilfully moderated by the campaign director, a civil servant with business and advertising experience. In addition, "GREAT" provided opportunities for sharing other resources such as market data supporting the campaign's directions and evaluation of delivery. With central funding allocated to the campaign's priority markets, non-priority ones could access money in 2014 via a co-produced "GREAT Challenge Fund".[61]

A financial focus in evaluating "GREAT" is consistent with "New Public Sector Management".[62] With no accounting measures for monetising soft power statecraft, the interim methodology for the campaign assessment borrowed from business, based on market research practices and matrices. The first type of research informed decision-making concerning campaign

directions and market priorities. In turn, decisions occurred about which "pillars" were more significant overseas, specifically for advancing business opportunities and commercial appeal. The campaign used a second type of market research data to meet its objectives, focusing largely on financial returns on ROI and transactional exchanges within campaign partnerships. The 2012 launch of the campaign gave some flavour to the campaign dynamics with its early stage credited with headlines claiming a boost of £250 million to the British economy[63].

Market data to develop the evaluation metrics drew from surveys of attitudes, perceptions, campaign recall, social media analytics, informal feedback, case studies of "success stories", and testimonials. Of the participating actors, Visit Britain was one of the biggest beneficiaries of the funding. Unsurprisingly, the assessment suggests that "GREAT" made an impact of £800 million on the British economy, including £12.7 million of match-generated cash or in-kind funding from the tourism industry, indicating that for every £1 expended overseas, Britain saw £23 spent.[64] Other evaluation practices by Visit Britain included tracking data such as "consumer journey" information from the International Passenger Surveys, interviews, and linking data sets with the ROI produced by measuring "perceptions and intentions".[65]

Additional examples of campaign resources brought by corporate practices, and used by campaign leaders, included the Nation Brand Index as well as the Ernst & Young LLP model of reporting on the campaign as exemplified by the 2015 National Audit Office report. The London-based consultancy, Brand Finance, participated in the evaluation of "GREAT". Its 2013 annual report, *Brand Finance: Nation Brands*, publicised a framework for evaluating the campaign's impact.[66] However, none of the measures presented in the report – the inflow of foreign direct investment, jobs created, and safeguarded and additional sales by British businesses – have shown causality between "GREAT" and economic performance measures used to evaluate it. Finally, in

the discourse of campaign evaluation, the value attributed to the endorsements came principally in monetary terms, in this case juxtaposing time commitment to the campaign with endorsing celebrities' commercial engagements; the assessment used a proxy measure for time they had committed to "GREAT".

The future of diplomacy remains inextricably tied to social media, with the adoption of such platforms for the practice of public diplomacy exemplifying evolving media landscapes and digitalisation.[67] Before considering the logic of old and new media utilised in the "GREAT" campaign, how co-branding became the central feature of the campaign design needs illustration. Whilst the experience of the 1990s was to re-brand Britain as a "modern" state rather than one "stuck in the past",[68] it was apparent that "GREAT" is not a "nation branding" campaign; branding was simply a tactic integral to it:

> In a sense the broad strategy is quite simple in a way, one brand with those pillars, to actually work on all governments outward facing, prosperity related activity. We don't do necessarily aid or defence. That's a different area, but all the government's prosperity growth related activity overseas would come under this brand.[69]

This insight reveals that "GREAT" exemplifies a "branded content" campaign embodying a "hybrid message" strategy culminating in promotion optimisation to reach diverse audiences.[70] Given that British statecraft had institutionalised communicative practices for articulating soft power, co-branding is a meta-strategy binding participating actors to the campaign's *modus operandi* and moving beyond institutional silos. The co-branding strategy was an interface for delivering cross-organisational collaboration. On the one hand, participating state actors, conversely incorporating their corporate branding, adopted "GREAT". On the other, the campaign reveals reverse branding effects on corporate actors:

> McLaren has embraced it. They branded their race car with it on, they made themselves available, and they actually want to do more with it. There is a two-way street here. Organisations like McLaren who are trying to get into new markets in the developing world are actually piggybacking on something that helps give them a presence and currency that is benefitting them.[71]

Since the British government was unable to adopt the Olympic trademark for its soft power statecraft, "GREAT"'s design was to create synergies between national interests, national identities, and the 2012 Olympics, as well as act as a "leverage or roundification" mechanism.[72] To that end, the campaign superseded the practice of public diplomacy, cultural relations, and destination and investment marketing, amplifying narratives on "Britishness". Due to financial incentives and campaign design, "GREAT" was a proactive public diplomacy strategy responding to foreign media critiques and foreign policy issues. Notwithstanding the branding design, the campaign leadership recognised that the branded contents of "GREAT" were one of many layers of Britain's soft power statecraft enacted alongside government influence *via* diplomacy by adopting a hyper-campaigning mode. To that end, British politicians and policy-makers received briefings on the campaign.

The circulation of messages relied on collaboration within and amongst human networks and communicative practices focusing on corporate or state-sponsored events. As for delivery, the campaign leadership facilitated media relations as well as advertising that carried the "GREAT" brand. It constituted an optimisation strategy:

> Having defined the new brand principles, identity system and guidelines, Radley Yeldar gave it expression across an ever-evolving range of applications and opportunities: from films to vehicle liveries, large-scale advertising campaigns, press executions around the

> world and much more. RY also partners with No.10 as brand guardian to ensure consistent application as the brand continues to evolve. The result is a comprehensive, flexible, easy-to-use, and easily recognisable framework which enables communication of the UK's key attributes and the proof that sits behind it – across dozens of different communication applications, whether it be outdoor advertising, TV, exhibitions and events, social media, PR or anything else.[73]

Amongst events utilised to maximise visibility were exhibitions, conferences, and launches. State actors launched the campaign in multiple locations, for instance, British embassies enjoyed autonomy in their organisation but followed set guidelines concerning the use of the pillars and how "GREAT"-branded content was maximised to present hybrid messages matching specific issues. Accordingly, if the issue on the ground was limited local knowledge about Britain's technological innovations, "*Technology is GREAT*" served as a pillar and communication tactics tuned into this key narrative.

Campaign design received recognition for the multi-purpose use of advertising. The initial conception of "GREAT" was an advertising campaign, whose strategy evolved into a "branded content" approach:

> My understanding is that this was originally conceived as very much an out-of-home advertising campaign. It really started life as an advertising campaign and as a brand campaign where the intention was to brand Britain. We have come in at the back end of that to take the creative on, from being just out-of-home through to being a piece of brand which can be expressed as an out-of-home, but actually is applied in all sorts of ways by all different partners.[74]

The advertising used by participating actors indicates multi-layered use of persuasive communication. Whilst most "GREAT" communicative practices were shared, advertising was used in silos to suit particular organisational aims:

> We're working with a British artist and it's a pop up . . . a blow- up Stonehenge and it will go into public places – like shopping malls and so on. And it's kind of experiential. We've done some street events, and then the whole range of advertising and there's been some advertising television, big deal with Yahoo, out of home, taxi-ranks, station take-overs, exhibition stands.[75]

Diversifying soft power statecraft by blurring the boundaries of international and home advertising was a prominent feature of "GREAT". Programmes such as "Home of Amazing Fans: Liverpool" attracted tourists to Britain either by displaying iconic landscapes or interlinking them with other soft power statecraft resources, say business hubs.[76] Similarly, the television advertisement, "*Holidays at Home are Great*", encouraged British holidaymakers to support the economy by staying in Britain instead of going overseas.[77] The production of "GREAT"-branded content launched at home and abroad supported British businesses. Commissioned at £759,950, billboards, posters, and advertising carrying "GREAT" branding were unfolded in multiple locations in Britain as public space advertisements at high profile airports and business nexuses. These communicative practices allowed consistency in articulating narratives about Britain as a "great" place and, thanks to reiteration and recursion strategies, re-enforced campaign narratives. These communicative practices appear fragmented, but digital media technology also brought the campaign into central spaces and revealed hybridisation in networked soft power statecraft.

These efforts increased the visibility of "GREAT" and its ability to shape synergies between thematic pillars of the campaign. It is, however, the participatory affordances of digital media

technology, particularly social media, which allowed "GREAT" to become a cross-platform campaign. In the study of political communication, the cross-platform analysis of politics is gaining momentum;[78] but with one exception,[79] scholarship on soft power is under-analysed, and the examination of soft power statecraft has paid most attention to particular social media platforms. In the case of "GREAT", participating actors adapted digital media technologies – including social media platforms, blogs, and micro-blogs – and created purpose-made digital media content to facilitate online public engagement with its narratives. Whilst the affordances of digital media technology, particularly social media, provided opportunities for dialogue, participating actors also used these multiple platforms as a way of co-producing the campaign, measuring the evaluation of the campaign's outreach and, most importantly, disseminating and re-inventing its key narratives.

The multi-platform approach to "GREAT" proves relevant as the campaign's media landscape adapts to changing hybrid media systems.[80] The display of cross-platform narratives has been omnipresent, such as the campaign main web page acting as a focal point with social media platforms interconnected and branded as "GREAT". Online news media reporting on the campaign produced the development of hybrid news media genres, reporting not only spending, but also providing news reports with examples of campaign narratives and embedding advertising in news media stories or re-purposing global representation of Britishness.[81] Notwithstanding these isolated examples of hybridisation, the discourse on design demonstrated the features of soft power statecraft,[82] namely the intertwining of monologue, dialogue, and collaboration in public diplomacy. These are particularly explicit regarding the co-production of "GREAT", the delivery and evolution of its narratives enabling users' engagement with the campaign's content.

Digital media technologies, particularly social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, have been adopted by participating state and non-state actors and, by its design,

"GREAT" exemplifies a "hybrid campaign" combining traditional broadcast, print, and digital media to provide narratives of Britishness. Inherently embedded into the campaign design stage, digital media and the advent of hybrid media systems have accelerated the compression of time and space with which soft power statecraft adapts its strategies to evolving media landscapes:

> There would be an extra lift of active marketing to go into that and that's when we decided on: the target markets, the focus, the return on investments, advertising, the campaigning around it, the media mix, the channel mix, obviously the audiences to try and achieve those objectives.[83]

Digital media technologies bounded the campaign into one networked hub and allowed participating actors to adapt content to targeted audiences. Further, these technologies allowed for tailoring of communicative practices to target audiences as well as foregrounding sources to match requirements of participating actors:

> That's easy for destination marketing but for instance – in the inward investment side – it would involve looking at airports etc. plus digital, plus engagement. That determined the focus on the cities to determine then the media mix and impact of iconic images, to showcase the best of Britain.[84]

Elsewhere, digital media technology was preferred in some campaign settings and amongst actors pursuing culturally focused rather than business-focused campaign goals such as promoting Britain's higher education sector:

> Yes, social media. We also provide information on British education through our websites, publications about particular sectors of UK education. So, it's very targeted at people who are potentially interested in British education. It's going to be supported by UKTI and

> Foreign Office by bringing in a PR agency this year and they will be addressing some of the wider perception issues around things like visas, and that kind of thing.[85]

Another strand emerging in the "GREAT" discourse illustrates collaborative features embedded in the campaign website, as well its Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, and LinkedIn presence. The collaborative components of "GREAT" demonstrate how the campaign network expands, by either sharing its branded content or consecutive actors joining or endorsing campaign pillars. Campaign implementation via digital media technologies not only illustrates how social media as a cost-effective measure disseminated narratives; it simultaneously enabled real-time engagement with emerging campaign-related content. Thus, the participatory affordances of social media facilitated the desired *modus operandi* for "GREAT" to become a targeted digital viral campaign.

Concerning the circulation of "GREAT" narratives, discourses on the campaign further highlighted networked logic. Participating actors aimed for consistent dissemination of narratives centred on campaign themes, underpinned by guidelines including proactively emphasising "good original content to central and local FCO, "GREAT" and partner channels for cross-promotion".[86] Along with managing the contents of websites, say, carrying featured interviews with brand ambassadors and enabling cross-platform interconnectivity with social media platforms, the networked approach to soft power statecraft has enabled tailoring of the content to correspond with participating actors' interests and identities. Consistency in the dissemination of branded content in multiple digital spaces was the foremost priority.

The articulation of the campaign narratives found basis on networked campaign logic and, following its design, enabled optimisation in promoting "GREAT". A sense of the campaign evolution reveals their circulation as well as its modalities. Whilst campaign leaders prioritised digital media technology between 2015 and 2016, dissemination centred initially on awareness-

raising tactics, applying broadcast media management strategies over participatory ones associated with social media platforms:

> We're just going into year two now and it was really an awareness campaign, so it's a series of events around ten to twelve different markets, and it was launch events. So, a number of events, not really to do with diplomacy.[87]

And elsewhere, this evolution was re-enforced by another discursive statement:

> So part of that is because the campaign is shifting from being an advertising driven campaign to being a much more rounded, cross-media campaign. The difficulty with that of course is that the campaign is very visual. So, it lends itself naturally to display in media.[88]

The global outreach and visual modalities have attracted media attention. Of all dissemination strategies, media relations had a multiplier effect, as the content of press conferences was repurposed and digitalised:

> I feed into briefs, which the Culture Secretary will give. If ministers have time, I'd rather they were looking overseas and selling this, rather than trying to talk to their own media about it. But, yes, of course we have press officers, who are aware of this . . . [and] sometimes for instance the decision to involve Princess Beatrice and Eugenie in a trip to Berlin, was criticised by the British press at first until they found out how successful it was in Germany and then were warmer to it. So, we have to be aware of the press, but the British press are an enabler for us not a target audience.[89]

The network for the enactment of media relations serves not only to disseminate campaign narratives, the contents of which were prepared for digital media consumption; they also function as a means for reporting on campaign developments. For instance, news media stories point to

governance accountability strategies: reporting on campaign spending, developments, and expansion; the role of private-sector actors; the campaign's affiliated research and data; and portrayals of "Britishness" not incorporated explicitly in campaign narratives. The decentralised network for disseminating narratives is demonstrated by the dispersion of "GREAT" social media accounts, each affiliated with different campaign strands with different "power clusters" behind them. For example, the "*Love GREAT Britain*" Facebook account is allied with the tourism strand; "*Business is GREAT*" is business facing; and "*Knowledge is GREAT*" focuses on culture and education. These operated as routine digital spaces, and their visibility aimed at aiding public engagement with the campaign.

Whilst the branded social media content co-produced content for cross-platform use, including Youtube and LinkedIn, British diplomatic missions employed their social media accounts to connect to the "GREAT" campaign. Embassies and diplomatic missions were responsible for adapting campaign content to local cultural and political circumstances, as well engaging with existing and potential networks of campaign influencers. One of the digital media strategies adopted for "GREAT" targeted bloggers whose digital spaces enjoyed high visibility and online traffic. This has been the case in Poland, where UKTI organised a series of events and used purpose-made digital content to promote British food as a way of responding to stereotypes about "British national" cuisine through the Facebook "*Food is GREAT*" account. As the campaign unfolded, more British food producers entered the market – a strategy designed to re-enforce "country-of-origin effect" of product brands. A local public relations consultancy, Binaria Communications, produced a digitalised version of the press package and co-ordinated the conduct of media relations.[90] The campaign content dispersed further into non-campaign networks as Britain-based or overseas partners disseminated independent narratives of digital networks by

participating actors. Hence, in Britain, several universities participated in collaborative events with state actors such as Visit Britain, which used the "GREAT" brand as part of digital public engagement. Similarly, "GREAT"-branded content has been used for a lecture series – "*Knowledge is GREAT*" – organised by the British Council.[91]

As well as using routinised digital spaces, clustering around global or local networked "power centres", campaign leaders sought "viral effects". A designed corresponding digital media strategy, yet again borrowed from the corporate sector,[92] was a viral approach to start an "international conversation" about "*Britain as Home of Amazing Moments*". The *#OMGB* ["Oh My GREAT Britain"] extension of "GREAT" adopted digital storytelling as a strategy for social media platforms. Initiated for the American and European markets, this plan gradually rolled out in Australia and China from March 2017. The campaign thus redefined itself in global terms. As before, campaign design centred on "GREAT"-branded contents; now, however, its hashtag was to leverage additional content, engage social media platforms users, and drive interest in Britain as an attractive travel destination. These tactical messages deployed digital landscape imagery of Britain, shared across social media platforms, with a central archive for storing digital resources.

In addition, connected to social media platforms, Visit Britain produced and curated a dedicated webpage carrying digital blogs and displaying experiential features of British holidays. This media landscape, focusing predominantly on visual strategies, was to disseminate narratives of Britain as an attractive holiday destination. For example, in China, a business partnership established with airlines and tour operators directed consumers into making holiday bookings online. Similarly, in Germany, France, and the United States, Expedia developed and executed online a strategic business partnership, driving digital traffic to specific marketing spaces offering deals and travel packages. In Germany and France, endorsement by established media

organisations supported digital strategies, including digital and print media of *Die Zeit* and *Le Figaro*, as well as the globally-circulated digital "*Imagination Magazine*".[93] Apart from targeting three travel segments abroad in priority markets, *#OMGB* had a domestic dimension, supported, yet again, by strategic business partnerships – notably, Thomas Cook, TUI, and The Travel Network Group – designed to encourage British holidaymakers to spend holidays at home. Additional practices supported the viral campaign strategy, such as a television advertising campaign, "*Home of Amazing Moments*". Through inter-connectivity, these features displayed a "network-enhanced word-of-mouth"[94] and appeared to be a standard practice in the business world.

Whilst cross-platform media strategies span cultures, blended organisational cultures and communicative practices emerging within statecraft paved the way for cultural hybridisation. By its design, "GREAT" adopts a "glocal" strategy – *portmanteau* "local" and "global". Constructing the grand-design strategy of the campaign occurred with narratives about British culture and heritage using "new and inspiring" ways. As the strategy is the co-product of the endogenous "generalist" culture of diplomats and "specialisms" of marketing/branding consultants, mixing and synthesising cultural sources plays into its design and structure. On one hand, "GREAT" branded-content provides uniformity and continuity of campaign narratives. On the other, its participants adapted content to local settings. Doing so, it reflects co-production by multiple actors, and its flexibility in using digital media technologies and cultural traits aimed at tackling local issues. Such cultural synthesis emerged about public-facing events in South Korea in 2014:

> From 27 to 31 March, we ran our first ever GREAT Festival, the largest piece of consumer-facing public diplomacy we have undertaken in Korea. We transformed part of Gangnam – the high-fashion district made famous by Psy – into a showcase of modern GREAT

> Britain. On the basis of consumer demand, market opportunities and campaign plans for the coming year, our focus was Food & Drink, Fashion and Creativity.[95]

In addition to synthesis of cultural sources, "GREAT" draws on nostalgia. The notion of "greatness" has the capacity to associate with discourses on the British Imperial past, and arguably, extends to the perceived influence of Britain in international relations. The ambiguities captured in the utterance "GREAT" signifies the contemporary imagining of Britishness, tactically used in the campaign and branding acts to bridge it with the past. The campaign keeps Britain's political history in the background yet demonstrates aspiration for the scale of influence that the British state had been able to leverage into economic performance in the past. The expansion of the campaign's branded-contents is one of the crucial features of connectivity culture, by which digital media technologies connects users with more specialised policy or resources, like digitally-mediated spaces leading to "*Exporting* is *GREAT*".

*"*GREAT"'s design occurred in a way that its nodes transformed into cultural hybrids in other ways, too. For example, the appropriation of celebrities into the campaign such as Victoria Beckham and Richard Branson, and their role as intermediaries, along with other cultural features of "GREAT", merges popular and business cultures, not only through interaction between participating actors, but by the multiplicity of sources brought to the campaign as well as multi-modalities of their articulation:

> So our Ambassadors hosted these previews of the film [and] invite all their important contacts or trade people that they know and influence inward investors. They would do their big Britain promotion using the Bond film and it's glamorous, Britain doesn't always have glamorous stuff. So where everybody's working together we . . . . make the sum greater than the part . . . . the other way round the UKTI . . . wanted to do something around fashion

> in New York, I think during New York fashion week Victoria Beckham and Anna Wintour. We didn't initiate that we were able to put a really good story around that about fashion and shopping here. Where it works you actually can build on each other's platform.[96]

Done this way, cultural hybridisation stems from campaign's abilities to appeal to broader audiences, fulfilling the most fundamental feature of soft power. Thought of as the end users of the campaign through which global viewers can connect with Britain, "GREAT" audiences were also a source of data to monitor the campaign:

> All partners use digital media as part of their GREAT activities and increasing its digital activity is one of the "GREAT" campaign's key objectives for 2015-16. The GREAT campaign also measures digital media activity which assesses the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Overseas teams record and monitor a wide variety of digital and social media metrics. Centrally, the Cabinet Office tracks Facebook "likes" for Love GREAT Britain (VisitBritain), Knowledge is GREAT (British Council) and Business is GREAT (UKTI and FCO), twitter followers and subscribers to the Love GREAT Britain YouTube channel.[97]

The social media side of the campaign, focusing on user engagement, did not consider connectivity of multi-platform dynamics, for example, how users travel from one social media platform to another. This digital media affordance, now expanded in the realm of soft power statecraft, provides unprecedented opportunities for synthesising cultural contents drawn from Britain's creative industries. Whilst Britain has used culture and heritage as a source of soft power, both the multi-dimensionality and broad appeal of "GREAT" has made it into a hybridised campaign. Further, hybridity defined by cultural synthesis involved one more aspect of the

campaign – the spill over effect and the production of user-generated content, indicating that the campaign gains a life on its own.

Whilst arguments exist for "digital diplomacy" as a stand-alone field of practice,[98] there are complex shifts underpinning the articulation of soft power that the "GREAT" campaign brings to the fore. These changes exceed developments in statecraft described as a "re-packaging of diplomacy for public consumption".[99] If anything, the adaptability demonstrated by "GREAT"'s design enables Britain to "punch above its weight".[100] By virtue of its governance, capabilities, and media strategies, "GREAT" embodies hybridised soft power resting on the interplay between endogenous and exogenous statecraft features.

Hybridity is a way of understanding change in soft power statecraft. In addition to network and platform affordances of digital media, business concepts, and practices such as the production of branded content or corporate sponsoring, economic factors like the logic of ROI also drive it. Hybridity in soft power statecraft rests on centralised campaign resources, decentralised campaigning networks, the push to blend practices across institutions, merged cultural resources, and shared practices in response to external pressures. "GREAT" governance reveals blurring boundaries between domestic and foreign policies. Whilst predominantly facing outward, the campaign's domestic features in governance terms link with Whitehall's austerity and prosperity agendas: "GREAT" aims to capitalise on domestic markets alongside foreign capital inflow. As well as meeting economic policy goals, the campaign's governance connected with the advancement of "Britishness" narratives. A series of mega-events were mobilised that gave the campaign greater media visibility due to exposure from the London 2012 Olympics – as well as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the wedding of Prince William. Whereas limited scholarly literature exists explicitly examining GREAT, several studies investigate the impact of mega events

as an "enabling condition" for large-scale campaigns to become a platform for long-term soft power statecraft.[101]

The concept of "soft power statecraft" is useful in bridging the gap between international politics and communicative practices, which are evolving and growing in complexities. To that end, this exegesis offers a theorisation that provides a framework for analysing campaigns that are sites for the hybridisation of soft power statecraft vis-à-vis media landscapes. Furthermore, "GREAT" is a networked site for bringing together diverse institutional resources, including communicative practices such as public diplomacy, destination marketing, investment marketing in articulating soft power narratives, supplemented with branded contents and resources derived from the corporate sector along with financial resources, reporting and measurement strategies, creative arts, and celebrities. The intermeshing of state and corporate sources and resources demonstrates the emergence of hybridised features of the building blocks for soft power statecraft.

This proposed theorisation enables researchers to overcome the risk of standardisation surrounding soft power statecraft. For example, the former Labour government favoured using the term "public diplomacy" and its practice at "the more central place" in the FCO's statecraft.[102] In line with this approach and signifying the importance of public diplomacy, the foreign secretary rather than – as in the past – a junior minister chaired the Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Board.[103] The change in terminology is particularly evident in the campaign leading to the London 2012 Olympics, translated explicitly into the ability to bring various strands of statecraft together and execute them in practice. "GREAT" represents a shift from standardised approaches to soft power statecraft in terminologies used, but the diversity of resources and practices binds it together. This theorisation opens new avenues for comparative work on soft

power that addresses similarities and differences in governance, capabilities, and practices in statecraft.

Finally, hybridisation is evident in "GREAT" on the level of media and culture dynamics. The proliferation of culture of connectivity into the realm of soft power statecraft has been a subject of analysis in the past, but "GREAT" exceeds the mere adoption of social media platforms. It draws, through its design, from the culture of connectivity whereby traditional broadcast and print media are utilised alongside digital media technologies and social media platforms to circulate narratives and report on the ways in which the campaign advances and evolves.[104] Apart from providing opportunities for some dialogue and multi-modality, the cross-media strategies match connectivity in building human networks for foreign policy, which in the context of soft power statecraft, requires further investigation.[105] The hybridity approach to soft power statecraft, however, reveals how the campaign targets, engages, and provides spaces for circulating old narratives of Britishness in new and appealing ways.

The above insights indicate that in the case of "GREAT", intertwining modes of thinking and concepts derived from the corporate sector with soft power statecraft have triggered hybridisation, as well as setting up campaigning networks that have been operating in parallel to existing institutional structures. It is a manifestation of so-called "co-construction", which became the dominant *modus operandi* of actors participating in the campaign; it extended into the corporate sector by building the coalition supporting "GREAT" and engaging additional political actors. The campaign aligned with Britain's foreign policy and attempted to address domestic policies issues. Further, the campaign demonstrated adaptability of the field to a shift in political circumstances with flexibility becoming one of the hallmarks of Britain's soft power statecraft. Despite the introduction of "digital diplomacy" as having potential to drive change in international politics,[106]

the process involves transformations to the statecraft itself. If anything, the importance of soft power statecraft for Britain seeking to negotiate bilateral relationships and communicate with international publics in a post-Brexit "*Global Britain*" landscape becomes more imperative and re-enforces the critical importance of the "GREAT".[107] The participation of non-state actors in conceptualising, implementing, and evaluating soft power statecraft might also continue whichever political party forms subsequent governments in Britain. This will necessitate further research on where politics, business, and celebrity cultures intersect and where contrasting and potentially conflicting, clashing, and corrupting organisational cultures exist.

The use of multi-modality and hyper-media strategies – applying broadcast media and digital media technologies – accompanying the networked design of the "GREAT" campaign lead the emergence of hybrid forms in soft power statecraft. Political campaigning blending with the transitional logic of branding and marketing, blurring boundaries in targeting domestic and international audiences, will also continue to require critical analysis in times of "post-truth" and "fake news" having a greater impact on soft power and statecraft in general. The on-going development, choices made, and changes to representational branded content and design drawing on (re)sources of soft power will also be of interest relating to "GREAT" and other comparable campaigns. It is inevitable that tensions will exist in balancing nostalgia, conservatism, and heritage with arts and aspects of the creative industries, which, at times, will confront "official" discourses in future manifestations of soft power statecraft.

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