

Critical Public Relations and Cultural Public Relations: Two Theoretical Exits before the Bridge for the Lopsided, Practice-Focused Public Relations Field

Ulaş Başar GEZGİN

University of Duy Tan

Danang, Vietnam

ulasbasar@gmail.com

Abstract

Public Relations field appears to be weak in theory with a practice focus. This situation is unusual, as it points to a disconnect between research and practice. If the practice is not supported by research findings, how does it be sound? If research does not consult practice, who will do the reality check? If we adapt Kant's (1781) famous statement: "Research without practice is empty, practice without research is blind" (pp.193-194). To renew and improve Public Relations field, we mainly suggest 2 solutions: Criticalization and culturalization. The negative public image associated with public relations can be balanced by the critical public relations research in contrast to the mainstream public relations research which does not question the intentionality, genuineness, sincerity, wider context, power dynamics and social and political implications of public relations practices. Secondly, the true Western character of the public relations model should be exposed, as it is not a universal model despite as otherwise claimed. Public relations research and practice in non-Western contexts show that we need cross-cultural public relations, cultural public relations and multicultural public relations as emerging, shining subareas of public relations fields. Furthermore, public relations profession and research should be well-prepared for future trends of digitalization such as big data, corporate and government surveillance, the digital undivide (which is explained in the text), Industry 4.0, AI and Social Media 3.0. Finally, a great challenge for public relations would continue to be how to rise up and respond to consumer, labor, citizen, gender and environmental conflicts instigated by the very corporation or government that public relations is supposed to defend, promote and even sometimes whitewash.

Keywords: Critical public relations, cross-cultural public relations, cultural public relations, multicultural public relations, and digitalization in public relations.

Eleştirel Halkla İlişkiler ve Kültürel Halkla İlişkiler:

Orantısız Gelişmiş, Uygulama-Odaklı Halkla İlişkiler Alanı için Köprüden Önce Son İki Kuramsal Çıkış

Özet

Halkla İlişkiler alanı, uygulamaya dönük odağıyla kuramsal açıdan zayıf görünüyor. Bu durum, araştırmayla uygulama arasında bir bağlantısızlığı imlediği için olağandışı. Uygulama, araştırma bulgularıyla desteklenmeyecekse ne kadar sağlam olabilir? Araştırma, uygulamaya başvurmayacaksa, gerçeklik testini kim yapacak? Kant'ın (1781) ünlü sözünden uyarlırsak: “Uygulamasız bir araştırma boş, araştırmaz bir uygulama kör” (ss.193-194). Halkla İlişkiler alanını yenilemek ve geliştirmek için, temel olarak 2 çözüm öneriyoruz: Eleştirelleştirme ve kültürelleştirme. Halkla ilişkilerle ilişkilendirilen olumsuz kamusal imge, halkla ilişkiler uygulamalarının niyetselliğini, sahiciliğini, içtenliğini, daha geniş bağlamını, güç dinamiklerini ve toplumsal ve siyasal yansımalarını sorgulamayan anaakım halkla ilişkiler araştırmalarının tersine olan eleştirel halkla ilişkiler araştırmalarıyla dengelenebilir. İkinci olarak, halkla ilişkiler modelinin gerçek Batılı özyapısı ortaya çıkarılmalıdır, çünkü tersi yöndeki iddialara karşın evrensel bir model değildir. Batılı olmayan bağlamlardaki halkla ilişkiler araştırmaları ve uygulamaları, halkla ilişkiler alanlarının yükselen, parlayan altalanları olarak kültürlerarası halkla ilişkiler, kültürel halkla ilişkiler ve çokkültürlü halkla ilişkiler altalanlarına ihtiyacımız olduğunu gösteriyor. Dahası, halkla ilişkiler mesleğinin ve araştırmalarının, büyük veri, şirket ve devlet gözetimi, (metinde açıklanan) basamaksal (dijital) uçurumsuzluk, Endüstri 4.0, Yapay Zeka ve Sosyal Medya 3.0 gibi gelecek basamaksallaşma (dijitalizasyon) yönelimleri için iyice hazırlıklı olması gerekiyor. Son olarak, halkla ilişkiler için büyük zorlu durumlardan biri, ayağa kalkıp halkla ilişkilerin savunması, tanıtması ve hatta kimi zaman aklamayı beklenen şirketlerin ya da devletlerin ta kendilerinin körüklediği tüketici, emek, yurttaş, cinsiyet ve çevre çatışmalarına nasıl karşılık vermek gerektiği olmaya devam edecek.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Eleştirel halkla ilişkiler, kültürlerarası halkla ilişkiler, kültürel halkla ilişkiler, çokkültürlü halkla ilişkiler ve halkla ilişkilerde basamaksallaşma (dijitalizasyon).

Introduction

It is usually stated that public relations theories are not as developed as in the other fields. We can state that we have a theory crisis in public relations. This may be due to a number of factors: First of all, public relations does not have a history as long as the case for the other fields. Secondly, it is far from comprehensively testing its components in different settings such as non-Western countries. Thirdly, public relations is characterized by a pendulum oscillating between marketing (profit motive) and public interest (social motive). When the former outweighs the latter, public relations increasingly overlaps with an extended version of marketing. This lopsided inclination

leads to loss of academic and social credibility for public relations (cf. Szondi, 2009).¹ Public relations for profit motive is associated with cheating, misconduct, lies, scandals, corruption etc. When we have corporate or government scandals, public relations department is the one to clean up the mess. As a result, people don't believe in public relations. As mentioned by Kunczik (2009), “[p]ublic relations is often perceived as the art of camouflaging and deceiving and it is assumed that for public relations to be successful, target groups (those to be influenced) not notice that they have become the “victims” of public relations efforts” (p.842).

To restore trust and credibility to public relations, we need more research and practices about PR for public interest, i.e. not for profit maximization, but to maximize public benefit. Johnston (2017), surprised at relatively lower interest of public relations scholars in public interest claims that “public relations may benefit from a deeper understanding of the complexity of the public interest and the ways in which it is viewed and adopted in other fields in order to more robustly connect with democratic processes and social change agendas” (p.5).

On the other hand, there is a narrow demarcation line here: In many countries, people don't trust governments either. A PR effort by a government agency is usually received with suspicion. So people usually value PR for public benefits (such as those for NGOs²), but not for government benefit. In that sense, unfortunately, PR has a very narrow area of trust or let's say comfort zone. Edwards (2006) claims that “[i]n the United Kingdom, popular skepticism about the merits of public relations has prompted self-reflection among practitioners and industry bodies” (p.229).

Converging with Edwards (2006), Mersham, Skinner & Rensburg (2011) state the following:

“A number of trends in society should have directed public relations to its roots in communication and relationships, instead of blind support for rationalist business management methods. These include: (1) increasingly segmented stakeholders requiring alternatives to traditional mass media channels and the dissemination of ‘one size fits all’ messages; (2) declining levels of trust in big business and government; (3) business turning to communicators as relationship specialists to

¹ In this vein, Tsetsura (2009) reports the distinction between Black PR (i.e. unethical PR) and White PR (i.e. ethical PR) which is a common conceptualization of PR among Russian researchers. The former is associated with cheating and propaganda.

² However let's note Dutta-Bergman (2005)'s criticisms against NGOs in low-income or middle-income countries: “Using the narratives of the Philippines, Chile, and Nicaragua, it is demonstrated that civil society serves the goals of the transnational elite and actively participates in the marginalization of the Third World participant” (p.267).

succeed where management techniques have failed in controlling a business environment heavily burdened with social problems; (4) workforces whose productivity is seriously affected by social problems; and (5) a growing public demand for the commitment of corporate resources to solving global problems of wealth disparity and poverty” (p.199).

Mainstream Public Relations vs. Critical Public Relations

The situation of distrust brings to mind a necessary distinction between the mainstream public relations scholarship and critical public relations scholarship, analogous with the division in management research (for critical management studies cf. Grey & Willmott, 2005) and psychology (for critical psychology cf. Parker, 2015). This distinction can be used to distinguish benign (those that are genuine and ethical, and for public/people’s benefit or welfare) and malicious (unethical cases) examples of PR. A critical public relations scholarship will not only be ethical, but question the epistemic, social and political assumptions of the mainstream public relations scholarship. Furthermore, it will recognize the power asymmetry between PR agencies and citizens which makes the latter the prey to PR tactics and strategies. Thus a new concept was developed to address this vulnerability, which is public relations literacy (Holladay & Coombs, 2013).

A precious compilation on critical public relations is provided by L’Etang et al. (2016) covering various subjects with regard to public relations which are rarely studied by the mainstream, such as critical thinking, activism, societal change, feminism, pluralism, reforming PR, postcolonialism, refugees, questioning taken-for-granted of the mainstream public relations scholarship, deconstruction, liberation, citizenship etc. ‘The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations’ edited by Robert L. Heath (Heath, 2010) includes a number of critical works on PR such as Ihlen (2010) which has a sociolinguistic perspective, L’Etang (2010), and Vujnovic & Kruckeberg (2010) adopting an anthropological point of view, Wrigley (2010) presenting the feminist view, Bourland-Davis, Thompson & Brooks (2010), and Smith & Ferguson (2010) focusing on activism. In the compilation, the final section is dedicated to global public relations (Heath, 2010).

In public relations literature other than this great compilation, the discussion of the distinction between mainstream public relations scholarship and critical scholarship is limited to a relatively small set of articles, compared to the mainstream research. But we can at least provide some examples with the hope that this effort can help theory building in public relations research.

Motion & Weaver (2005) analyze an advocacy campaign with its sociopolitical context. This is an example of critical public relations research, as it studies public relations and its context in an integrative way, rather than the mainstream studies where usually the context is left out of analysis or understudied. L'Etang (2005) provides a brief overview of critical public relations with a reflective discussion. Berger (2005) looks for ways to connect public relations and activism in advocacy campaigns. Ihlen & Van Ruler (2009) introduce social theory to PR in Ihlen & Fredriksson (2009) which is another useful compilation for the field. Edwards (2006) and Ihlen (2005) distinguish themselves by applying Bourdieu's sociological notions to public relations such as social capital. While Dutta-Bergman (2005) refers to subaltern studies in his research on public relations of NGOs in low-income and middle-income countries, Sejrup (2014) views the postcolonial controversy between Taiwan and Japan in terms of activism and subaltern studies. Yeomans (2016) exemplifies an emotional turn in public relations scholarship by her work on empathy. Weaver (2001) offers a more blatant and radical criticism of the mainstream public relations scholarship:

“Mainstream public relations scholarship has not explored what the role of public relations should be within this new economy and what its ethical obligations are to different cultures, social groups, and identities that engage with it. (...) I argue that public relations theorists need to acknowledge their generally unspoken support for, and allegiance to, corporate capitalist power and to reconsider that allegiance in the context of the new economy. In my view, such a move would encourage more open consideration of whether public relations scholarship should be contributing uncritically to the development of a globalized capitalist economy and of where public relations theory should be positioned in relation to the development of that economy. If mainstream public relations theory were more open to theorizing structures of power, it would also be more open to consideration of how public relations practice could be appropriated by, and work to serve the interests of, those groups who perceive themselves as disempowered by globalization or who oppose the philosophies and/or economic effects of that globalization. Certainly, critical public relations scholars—so defined by a central concern with theorizing issues of power—have already made some inroads into marking out new possibilities for public relations theorizing in the context of the new economy. (...)” (pp.279-280).

For theory building in public relations, we propose, one should start from these critical works. The problems associated with public relations are not only in its generally unacknowledged relation to power, but also in public relations education. Macnamara (2010a)'s excellent work based on content analysis of public relations textbooks shows that portrayal of cultural issues in public relations is disproportionately rare. His conclusion also provides clues about why theory development in public relations is weaker than the case in other disciplines:

“However, four major gaps can be identified in public relations texts and reference books—and, therefore, potentially in public relations teaching and practice. First, despite a decade of increasing critical thinking, many public relations texts remain predominantly Western, grounded in positivism, functionalism, and systems theory, and dominated by US-centric theories and models of practice. Second, many public relations texts are largely devoid of critical analysis. Third, they are severely lacking in theoretical and practical engagement with social media. Fourth, research is mostly segregated as an “add on” rather than integrated into practices and activities” (p.13).

Referring to 4 gaps identified by Macnamara (2010a), to get out of this theory crisis, first of all, we need to decolonize and decentralize the epistemic foundations of public relations. Secondly, public relations field needs to involve with more critical thinking which also requires self-criticism about PR's role and function in maintaining status quo. Thirdly, social media should be incorporated to the curriculum. This point could be valid in 2010, but it is no longer applicable. Nowadays we see lots of research on public relations and social media (e.g. Damásio, Dias & Andrade, 2012; Fitch, 2009; Huang, Wu & Huang, 2017; Macnamara, 2010b; Smith, 2010; Valentini, 2015; Wright & Hinson, 2017).³ Nevertheless, let us also add to Macnamara's remarks that as parts of digitalization education, we need to cover online community relationship management (Ang, 2010) rather than a vague conceptualization of public relations, the influence of big data (cf. Akter & Wamba, 2016; Frizzo-Barker et al., 2016; He, Zha, & Li, 2013; Lewis,

³ However, we should also note, at this point, Verčič, Verčič & Sriramesh (2015)'s conclusion of their study reviewing 35 years of research on public relations and ICTs including social media: “[the research] revealed a lop-sided growth of the field. But the focus has almost exclusively been on using these media as “tools” for purposes of media relations with negligent study of DSM media stakeholders and publics. Issues of the Digital Divide and Privacy are absent, while amalgamation of public relations, advertising and journalism in DSM media is overlooked” (p.142).

Zamith & Hermida, 2013; Mahrt & Scharkow, 2013; Rogge, Agasisti & De Witte, 2017; Xiang et al., 2015) and corporate and government surveillance on public relations, the digital undivide (i.e. increasing percentage of digitalization to disable past discussion of digital divide⁴), the likely influence of Industry 4.0 and AI (i.e. which components of public relations will be mechanized by AI (i.e. AIified), and Social Media 3.0 (which brings complete personalization to social media use, implying confirmation bias). Research on these new themes in connection with public relations is rare, but we will hear more about them in the upcoming years. Finally, more research should be incorporated into public relations so that the unbalanced practice focus would be avoided. For one thing, all PR students should have strong data collection, interpretation and reporting skills. This is also a requirement for engagement with big data.

The Need for Culturalization of Public Relations

In the historical establishment of public relations as a professional field and research area, nation states were more or less assumed. Cultural components within a culture and cultural similarities and differences across cultures were not deemed significant. That is why we have a disproportionately smaller number of discussions about cultural public relations and cross-cultural public relations in contrast to the full-fledged areas of cultural psychology and cross-cultural psychology. This is about to change for 2 major reasons: An increasing number of non-Westerners study public relations and struggle to adapt this Western-originated discipline to their non-Western setting (e.g. the case study on public relations profession in China by Elmer & Cai, 2006).

The second reason is sinification, in other words, increasing exposure to Chinese people and culture as a consequence of the economic and political rise of China. In fact, the Western world constitutes a minority (18%) in the world population (PEWforum, 2015). Asia alone accounts for more than half of the world population, while only China and India in total correspond to 23% of the population (PEWforum, 2015). Contrary to this situation, most of the research on public relations is conducted in Western countries, usually with a mono-cultural assumption ignoring

⁴ Let us expand on this a little bit further: The notion of digital divide will be more and more inapplicable as all the basic operations of life will be digitalized. A computer or a laptop (at least a secondhand, cheap one) if not an old, cheap smart phone has been becoming an indispensable furniture in every household, complementing or replacing TV. Even people of lowest income aspire and do buy a computer or a laptop. The major reason is its entertainment function. By games, music, videos, social networks etc. the most difficult lives become bearable. So it has a psychological function. It is also because for example government services are increasingly digitalized. It is easier to have a connecting device at home to complete government services forms, rather than visiting the government office and waiting for the queue.

intra- and inter-cultural variation and diversity. This is completely in contrast to how they do research in psychology. Testing Western-originated theories and findings in non-Western contexts is the norm in psychological research rather than an exception. Thus, in fact, public relations area has a lot of unused potential, as its epistemic composition needs cultural and cross-cultural validation. Sinification, in this context, will bring more research on public relations in China. We will start thinking “what if public relations would have originated in China, rather than in the global West?”⁵

Culturalization of public relations will not start from nowhere nor without a clue. Sriramesh & Verčič (2009) provide a wonderful collection on global public relations from all continents in 1113 pages, where public relations is defined as “the strategic communication that different types of organizations use for establishing and maintaining symbiotic relationships with relevant publics many of whom are increasingly becoming culturally diverse” (n.p.) which refers cultural differences in the audience, but not the source. In fact, the majority of the companies of the world are non-Western, which requires a culturalized understanding of the source of public relations as well. In other words, in reality, culture is not only object of public relations, but the subject.

If most of the PR professionals are employed in transnational corporations (TNCs) as claimed by Verčič (2009) then public relations profession as a whole should be culturalized and internationalized:

“There continues to be little information on the profile of model global corporate public relations practitioner. Are they to be natives in a country in which they are serving or are they to be professional expatriates committed only to their corporations? Are they building lasting relationships with their stakeholders or moving from country to country (as professional diplomats do) so often that this is not possible? Currently, TNCs probably employ the majority of public relations professionals and they will probably employ an even larger share of them in the future. TNCs are public relations’ natural environment” (Verčič, 2009, p.882).

In a thoughtful book chapter conclusion, Sriramesh (2009) states that

⁵ Throughout the article, we intentionally used the terms ‘the global West’ and ‘globally Western’. That is to distinguish the global with the geographical. For example, Australia and New Zealand are not in the West, but they share Western culture, while African countries are on the West of China, but they are not considered to be culturally Western. Also the geographical West is a relative concept, it depends on your starting point. That is why, to avoid the confusion, we have used the terms ‘the global West’ and ‘globally Western’.

“[c]ulture (or multiculturalism) is almost an afterthought in most public relations books and textbooks. The challenge before us is to conduct public relations research studies indigenous to other parts and cultures of the world such as Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This is the only way of reducing the ethnocentricity of the body of knowledge thus making it more culturally diverse and holistic. Students who receive training in such a holistic system would truly be “global citizens,” which is what it will take for them to succeed in, and be effective contributors to, a global and culturally integrated world.” (p.64).

Likewise, Ferrari (2009), a South American researcher wisely states that

“[t]he growth of public relations will become a reality only when governments, organizations and publics engage in continual dialogue. Communications professionals are ever more aware that the outright adoption of foreign successful models is a useless practice. We need to define the exact meaning and unique characteristics of the public relations that we practice. Everything we do in public relations requires adjusting to local realities that take into consideration the influence of culture, politics, the economy, medias and the idiosyncrasies of each nation. Public relations will be legitimated only when it truly meets the needs of its publics” (p.794).

Public Relations in China and Other Non-Western Contexts

In an earlier work reviewing eleven years of international public relations research, Coombs (1995) complains that the field lacks internationalization and the speed of internationalization is slow. Let us note that asking for internationalization of the whole field is one thing, while formal, firm and separate establishment of cultural, cross-cultural and multi-cultural public relations subareas is another. In a detailed content analysis, Ki & Ye (2017) discover that top countries as global PR research focus are the United States, China, the United Kingdom and South Korea respectively.

Puspa (2013) in his work on Asian public relations practices concludes that “certain countries have their own public relations practices which is specific due to their own cultural characteristics. Applying Western theories without putting them in context proved to be inappropriate if not misleading” (p.105). For one thing, he discusses, the cultural differences in

terms of Hofstede's dimensions of individualism/collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity, and the Confucian dynamism (also known as short/long term orientation) prove that a globally Western model of public relations can't be applicable for all countries. In the same vein, Chen & Culbertson (2009) present and discuss public relations in China, connect it to Hofstede's dimensions and argue that public relations in the global West started in the mass communication era and then adapted to interpersonal communication in the upcoming years, whereas in China since its introduction was recent, it was introduced within the context of interpersonal relationship with translations meaning guest relations, in association with the notion of guanxi.⁶ Guanxi is still found to be a significant component of public relations in China (Hou, Zhu & Bromley, 2013).

Shah & Chen (2010) find that “[c]orporate organizations which consider their public relations as corporate social responsibility during their operations, earn more reputation among the consumers in Confucius China” (p.117). Cheng (2016), and Cheng, Huang & Chan (2017) investigate crisis management of the Red Cross Society of China after a scandal (known as ‘Guo MeiMei Incident’) broke out on social media that tarnished the reputation of the organization. The study shows the indispensability of social media platforms for crisis management and reputation management in China. This makes complete sense, considering the high number of WeChat accounts⁷ (more than a billion) (Statista, 2018) and monthly active users of Weibo (340 million), the Chinese equivalent of Twitter which surpassed Twitter in China in major statistics (BBC, 2017). It is estimated that there are 770 million Internet users in China (Xiaoming, 2018). Most of them connect to Internet by mobile phones (BBC, 2017).

In an early work, Taylor & Kent (1999) question the assumptions of the Western-originated public relations model and state that “[in] many developing nations it is government officials rather than the general public who are of greatest importance to effective public relations. If government is the most important public in developing nations, then this relationship will influence the practice of public relations” (p.131). Again in an early work, Sriramesh (1992) proposes that since Indian

⁶ Guanxi is the transliteration of 關係 which is the combination 2 characters meaning ‘a gate’ and ‘to connect’ (Luo, Huang & Wang, 2011). Guanxi is defined as “an informal, particularistic personal connection between two individuals who are bounded by an implicit psychological contract to follow the social norm of guanxi such as maintaining a long-term relationship, mutual commitment, loyalty, and obligation” (Chen & Chen, 2004, p.306) or “a corporate culture that has a strong emphasis on the relationships between business partners for achieving mutual benefits and involves the use of personal and/or inter-firm connections to secure favors in the long run” (Lee & Humphreys, 2007).

⁷ Let us note that WeChat is a messaging site similar to WhatsApp but with more functions such as ordering food, bill payment, e-commerce etc. For an example of a scholarly research on WeChat use cf. Hou et al., 2017.

management philosophy is based on domineering, the role and function of Public Relations department is mostly limited to publicity. In the same vein, while Kriyantono (2017) discusses potential adaptations of the Western-originated Public Relations model to an Indonesian context, Kriyantono & McKenna (2017) propose that

“[a]s an applied communication science, public relations has been dominated by Western perspective. However, the idea of the need to study communication from the Eastern (including Indonesian) perspective has emerged recently. Some public relations theories from a Western perspective may need to be applied differently because of the difference of societal systems and philosophical backgrounds” (p.1).

In case of South African public relations, one of the challenges is intra-cultural public relations between Blacks, Whites and mixed races and PR for companies associated with colonialism and apartheid (Rensburg, 2009). In that sense, PR in South Africa is particularly challenging as the credibility of PR activities is more problematic than the case in other more politically stable countries. In fact, a comprehensive compilation edited by Somerville et al. (2017) is dedicated to public relations in deeply divided societies including Yugoslavia (Taylor & Kent, 2017), Israel and Palestine (Toledano, 2017), Northern Ireland (Hargie & Irving, 2017; Somerville & Rice, 2017), Catalonia (De San Eugenio, Ginesta & Xifra, 2017) etc.

Cultural Diplomacy: An Example for Culturalization of Public Relations

A research area and practice under the name of cultural diplomacy has been developed in the intersection of public relations, international relations, cultural studies and peace research. This area aims to find diplomatic ways to resolve or manage international conflicts and aims for impression management with reference to cultural variables (e.g. Albro, 2015; Ang, Isar & Mar, 2015; Kang, 2015; Kunczik, 2009; Van Dyke & Verčič, 2009; Yun & Toth, 2009; Wang, 2008). Just like the trust problem with the citizens, cultural diplomacy should convince the related parties that the cultural diplomacy source is genuine and really believed in friendship and peace. Converging with this point, Kunczik (2009) argues that “[f]or the nation-state, public relations implies the planned and continuous distribution of interest-bound information by a state aimed (mostly) at improving the country’s image abroad. Trying to distinguish between advertising,

public relations, and propaganda in foreign image cultivation is merely a semantic game” (p.842). However, despite of the rise of this promising field of cultural diplomacy, culturalization of public relations at its core has a long way to go.

Kunczik (2009) points out that during wars, public relations take another position, rather than benign-looking only, it can be both benign-looking and malicious. Benign-looking PR efforts try to end the war by negotiations, while malicious PR efforts involve propaganda programs aiming for demoralization and pacification of enemy soldiers and civilian populations. The most typical examples are Hannah Hanoi from Vietnam-American War and Tokyo Rose from World War II. In that sense, such a malign PR effort becomes a vital component of the psychological war. We like it or not, these are also parts of cross-cultural public relations as a field and practice. That is also another case where the lines between PR and propaganda get blurred. Similar to this discussion, Bakir et al. (2018) aims to distinguish and include various forms of manipulative communication under public relations:

“There exists, however, considerable confusion and conceptual limitations across these fields: scholars of PR largely focus on what they perceive to be non-manipulative forms of organized persuasive communication; scholars of propaganda focus on manipulative forms but tend either to examine historical cases or non-democratic states; scholars of promotional culture focus on ‘salesmanship’ in public life. All approaches show minimal conceptual development concerning manipulative organized persuasive communication involving deception, incentivization and coercion. As a consequence, manipulative, propagandistic organized persuasive communication within liberal democracies is a blind spot; it is rarely recognized let alone researched with the result that our understanding and grasp of these activities is stunted” (p.1).

Overall, one of the next step for research on cultural diplomacy may be on how governments, embassies or relevant agencies and organizations utilize social media for cultural diplomacy, and how they differ in their social media strategies. For example, Dodd & Collins (2017) compare how Central and Eastern European and Western embassy accounts differ in their Twitter use through content analysis of tweets.

Multicultural Public Relations

It is interesting to note that although there is no overarching theory for multicultural public relations, it is already in application in culturally diverse countries. In that sense, we can state that practice overwhelmed the research in multicultural public relations. Cultural studies of the public relations in globally Western countries such as UK (e.g. White, L'Etang & Moss, 2009) also points to another direction: Unlike the times of the emergence of public relations, Western countries are no longer mostly homogenous, due to immigrants they deliberately (e.g. brain drain) and undeliberately (e.g. refugees) attract. The existence of large communities of ethnic groups pave the way for a multicultural public relations where each ethnic group, rather than the whole British population is treated as audience for PR programs. Additionally, globally Western cultures may differ not only in their ethnic homogeneity/heterogeneity, but also official focus, interest and support of diversity. That one more time means that a single PR model can't be applicable even within the globally Western countries. The contrast between public relations in Canada and in the United States provides a good example for this point:

“Public relations practice in Canada has been, and is, greatly influenced by that in the United States—from text books to trade and association magazines to ownership of consulting firms. Standards and quality of practice are similar. Emphasis is different, given Canada's differing political structure and culture—one based on accommodation, collective rights, bilingualism and biculturalism, individual rights and multiculturalism” (Likely, 2009, p.734).

(...)

“The public relations industry in Canada has been affected by the country's evolving culture in a number of ways, such as:

- Practitioners employ a cross-section of cultural and racial sources for marketing and public good messages, including visible minorities and women, rather than rely on traditional elites or men as message authorities.
- Communication programs and communication product messages are conceptualized, developed and implemented differently for various minority subcultures, not only for French Canadians, as one would expect, but also for smaller but still distinct ethnic groups.

- Both the public and private sectors in Canada produce communication vehicles in a variety of languages. (...)" (Likely, 2009, p.731).

In a Unites States context, Bernstein & Norwood (2006) compare 2 ethnic groups (African Americans and Korean Americans) in terms of conflict communication styles and community meeting attendance which will definitely affect how to differentially do PR for different ethnic groups. Another vast country as well, the Russian Federation is inherently multicultural, as mentioned by Tsetsura (2009):

"Today's Russia is a union of people of almost 100 different nationalities with different subcultural backgrounds. One may safely surmise that these differences might influence the perceptions and general understanding of public relations practices among these peoples. However, it is important to remember that as a profession, public relations developed in the Moscow/St. Petersburg metaregion first and was then transported to other metaregions. The misinterpretations and misunderstandings of the profession, which were developed in the Moscow/St. Petersburg region, thus got transported to these other regions also" (p.666).

Molleda, Athaydes & Hirsch (2009) state the following about Brazil:

"The Brazilian population is made up of five major ethic groups: the indigenous full-blooded natives who mainly live in the upper Amazon basin and in the northern and western border regions; Portuguese who initiated intermarriages with natives and slaves since colonization in the 1500s; Africans brought as slaves; and, various other Europeans, Middle Eastern, and Asian immigrants who entered the country mainly between 1875 and 1960. Since the mid-nineteenth century, about 5 million Germans, Italians, Spaniards, and Poles have settled in the southern states of Paraná, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and São Paulo. The largest Japanese community outside of Japan is in São Paulo" (p.809).

Likewise, Cupid & Hines (2018) study the role of multiculturalism in PR in a Brazilian context. While Clark (2012) and Synnott (2012) investigate Aboriginal public relations which is defined as "communicating to and/or on behalf of Aboriginal people, Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal communities" (Clark, 2012, p.20), Ray (2012) conducts research about public relations with indigenous populations in Trinidad and Tobago.

Reading the lines above, again it is clear that a mono-cultural Western-oriented model can't fit other countries where we have diversity and where the existing diversity is officially recognized. In addition to the works cited here, a review of the findings and discussions of neighboring disciplines such as cross-cultural advertising,⁸ cross-cultural communication⁹ and cross-cultural psychology¹⁰ could be helpful for theory development in public relations as a relief to its theory crisis. These reviews with the aim of theory building in public relations can be the subject of future studies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The public relations field is said to be in a theory crisis as the practice focus crowds out the research focus. However, such a position is untenable, as practice and research should feed each other for a sound and realistic scholarship. Referring to a set of public relations research studies, we proposed 2 solutions to the theory crisis situation: Firstly, in fact public relations scholarship is full of lively theoretical debates, but they are marginalized as they don't share the assumptions of the mainstream public relations scholarship. As the first way to exit, critical public relations research some of which are reviewed here should be prioritized and referred to in theory building efforts. These critical studies are rarely discussed and elaborated on with regard to the existing theories of public relations. Theory development is exhaustive, it requires extensive and enormous energy and time. The public relations field should cooperate with its critical brother to develop strong theories, rather than looking further to other research fields or practices.

Secondly, while the social reality that public relations professionals operate within is highly cultural, the Western-originated public relations model is mostly acultural. The new model should

⁸ For example, Kalliny & Gentry (2007) report difference between American and Arab TV advertisements. Likewise, Luqmani, Yavas & Quraeshi (1989) advise to take sufficient care of socio-cultural norms and legal situation in their research on advertising in Saudi Arabia. In contrast, Kanso, Sinno & Adams (2001) focus on common biases and stereotypes observed in public relations campaigns both in the United States and Arab countries. However, we should be cautious about the term 'cross-cultural' when it is used interchangeably with 'comparative'. For a public relations activity to be cross-cultural, at least one of the following should be of another culture: Source, model, content and audience. If we study for example Turkish public relations and Vietnamese public relations separately and then compare them, this does not constitute cross-cultural research. It becomes a comparative study, but not a cross-cultural one. A good example of cross-cultural research would be about Chinese companies doing PR in other countries and vice versa.

⁹ E.g. Arunthanes, Tansuhaj & Lemak (1994) which study cross-cultural business gift giving; Freitag (2002) which discusses intercultural readiness of PR professionals for international assignments; Guang & Dan (2012) who undertake an anthropological approach to cross-cultural business communication; Sriramesh & Takasaki (1999) which present how culture influences Japanese public relations; and Zaharna (2000) which reflects on the parallels between intercultural communication and international public relations.

¹⁰ E.g. Wu (2006) that reviews 30 years of Hofstede's cultural dimensions research; Fischer et al. (2005) for comparisons of organizational cultures across various countries etc.

be cultural for various reasons: Firstly, if Verčič (2009) is right, in other words, if the majority of the PR professionals work at transnational settings, the model should be completely culturalized, i.e. it should be made sensitive to cultural issues. The days of a single homogenous model to be utilized on mass media is over by cultural diversity as well as digitalization. Secondly, the model should be culturalized as a response to the cultural differences between the globally Western countries (e.g. Canada vs. the United States) (cultural public relations), sizeable ethnic groups living in globally Western countries (multicultural public relations) and before all, due to non-Western settings, actors and audiences of public relations activities (cross-cultural public relations).

Cultural, cross-cultural and multicultural public relations models are not without a clue from the beginning. In this article, we presented some of the research studies that can act as a spring board for model construction and theory building. Additionally, they can get inspiration from findings and discussions in cross-cultural advertising, cross-cultural communication and cross-cultural psychology fields.

Penultimately, although digitalization is proposed as a future trend for public relations, more advanced components of this process such as big data, digital undivide, official and corporate surveillance, AI and Industry 4.0, Web 3.0 etc. are rarely considered with regard to public relations. A higher number of research studies should be dedicated to these issues.

Finally, regardless of whatever form or reformed version public relations would take, the same unacknowledged, unnamed, mostly unrecognized challenge of defending and promoting the very corporations and governments that consumers and citizens are highly suspicious of will stay with the profession and scholarship. Against overall complaints, mainstream public relations is blamed to do whitewashing for the corporations or governments, and against environmental concerns, greenwashing (i.e. giving the impression that they care for the nature in the midst of environmental disasters they created or planting a few palm trees in a concrete and gray gated community that they built out of a green area).

On this occasion, we introduce new terms: Yellowwashing for cleaning up corporate injustice against workers, orangewashing for hiding unhealthy and inhumane production processes of goods against consumers, bluewashing for covering up government scandals against citizens, and finally pinkwashing for concealing gender injustice in production or management. All these are utilized by mainstream public relations professionals for impression management, reputation management and ultimately relationship management purposes. Thus, the question is the

following: “Are these forms of colored washing, inherent to the profession or will they soon be thrown away as bad habits of the past?” Originally the mainstream anthropology was colonialist and racist, but then it was decolonized and deracialized, accepted its complicity in all those colonial and racist villainy, and reconciled with the wrongs of the past. Analogously, maybe we also need decolorification of public relations to gain public trust, as that may be another source of the theory crisis in public relations.

References

- Akter, S., & Wamba, S. F. (2016). Big data analytics in E-commerce: a systematic review and agenda for future research. *Electronic Markets*, 26(2), 173-194.
- Albro, R. (2015). The disjunction of image and word in US and Chinese soft power projection. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21(4), 382-399.
- Ang, I., Isar, Y. R., & Mar, P. (2015). Cultural diplomacy: beyond the national interest?. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21(4), 365-381.
- Ang, L. (2011). Community relationship management and social media. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management*, 18(1), 31-38.
- Arunthanes, W., Tansuhaj, P., & Lemak, D. J. (1994). Cross-cultural business gift giving: A new conceptualization and theoretical framework. *International Marketing Review*, 11(4), 44-55.
- Bakir, V., Herring, E., Miller, D., & Robinson, P. (2018). Organized Persuasive Communication: A new conceptual framework for research on promotional culture, public relations and propaganda. *Critical Sociology*. doi: 10.1177/0896920518764586
- BBC (2017). Twitter user numbers overtaken by China's Sina Weibo. BBC. 17.05.2017. Accessed <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-39947442>
- Berger, B. K. (2005). Power over, power with, and power to relations: Critical reflections on public relations, the dominant coalition, and activism. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(1), 5-28.
- Bernstein, A. G., & Norwood, R. (2006, March). Ethnic Differences in Participative Public Relations for Community Planning. In 10th International Public Relations Research Conference (pp. 34-47).
- Bourland-Davis, P.G., Thompson, W.T. & Brooks, F.E. (2010). Activism in the 20th and 20st centuries. In R.L. Heath (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.) (pp.409-420). California: SAGE.
- Chen, X. P., & Chen, C. C. (2004). On the intricacies of the Chinese guanxi: A process model of guanxi development. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 21(3), 305-324.
- Chen, N. & Culbertson, H.M. (2009). The relationship between culture and public relations. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.187-211). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cheng, Y. (2016). Social Media Keep Buzzing! A Test of The Contingency Theory in China's Red Cross Credibility Crisis. *International Journal of Communication*, 10, 3241-3260.
- Cheng, Y., Huang, Y. H. C., & Chan, C. M. (2017). Public relations, media coverage, and public opinion in contemporary China: Testing agenda building theory in a social mediated crisis. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(3), 765-773.
- Clark, T. (2012, November). Aboriginal Public Relations: An Exploration of the Balance of Aboriginal Cultural Competency and Public Relations. In *World Public Relations Forum 2012* (pp. 20-25).
- Coombs, W. T. (1995). Progress in Research and Theory: Eleven Years of International Public Relations Articles. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Communication Association (Indianapolis, IN, April 19-23, 1995).
- Cupid, J. A., & Hines, B. B. (2018). Black Consciousness and Multicultural Diversity in a Brazilian Public Relations Agency. *International Journal of Business & Applied Sciences*, 21-34.

- Damásio, M. J., Dias, P., & Andrade, J. G. (2012). The PR Pyramid: Social media and the new role of Public Relations in organizations. *Revista Internacional de Relaciones Públicas*, 2(4), 11-30.
- De San Eugenio, J., Ginesta, X. & Xifra, J. (2017). Catalonia's public diplomacy and media relations strategy: A case study of the Eugeni Xammar Programme of International Communication and Public Relations. In I. Somerville, O. Hargie, M. Taylor & M. Toledano (eds.). *International Public Relations: Perspectives from Deeply Divided Societies* (pp.113-130). Oxford: Routledge.
- Dodd, M. D., & Collins, S. J. (2017). Public relations message strategies and public diplomacy 2.0: An empirical analysis using Central-Eastern European and Western Embassy Twitter accounts. *Public Relations Review*, 43(2), 417-425.
- Dutta-Bergman, M. J. (2005). Civil society and public relations: Not so civil after all. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(3), 267-289.
- Edwards, L. (2006). Rethinking power in public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 32(3), 229-231.
- Elmer, P., & Cai, L. (2006, March). When PR Worlds Collide: A Chinese Case Study. In 10th International Public Relations Research Conference (pp. 97-106).
- Ferrari, M.A. (2009). Overview of public relations in South America. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook* (pp.771-796). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Fischer, R., Ferreira, M. C., Assmar, E. M. L., Redford, P., & Harb, C. (2005). Organizational behaviour across cultures: Theoretical and methodological issues for developing multi-level frameworks involving culture. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 5(1), 27-48.
- Fitch, K. (2009). The new frontier: Singaporean and Malaysian public relations practitioners' perceptions of new media. *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*, 10, 17-33.
- Freitag, A. R. (2002). Ascending cultural competence potential: an assessment and profile of US public relations practitioners' preparation for international assignments. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 14(3), 207-227.
- Grey, C., & Willmott, H. (Eds.). (2005). *Critical Management Studies: A reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Guang, T., & Trotter, D. (2012). Key issues in cross-cultural business communication: Anthropological approaches to international business. *African Journal of Business Management*, 6(22), 6456-6464.
- Hargie, O. & Irving, P. (2017). Making sense of communication in societies divided by terrorism: Lessons from Northern Ireland. In I. Somerville, O. Hargie, M. Taylor & M. Toledano (eds.). *International Public Relations: Perspectives from Deeply Divided Societies* (pp.46-71). Oxford: Routledge.
- He, W., Zha, S., & Li, L. (2013). Social media competitive analysis and text mining: A case study in the pizza industry. *International Journal of Information Management*, 33(3), 464-472.
- Heath, R.L. (ed.). (2010). *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.). California: SAGE.
- Holladay, S. J., & Coombs, W. T. (2013). Public relations literacy: Developing critical consumers of public relations. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 2(2), 125-146.
- Hou, J., Ndasauka, Y., Jiang, Y., Ye, Z., Wang, Y., Yang, L., Li, X., Zhang, Y., Pang, L., Kong, Y., Xu, F., Zhang, X. (2017). Excessive use of WeChat, social interaction and locus of control among college students in China. *PloS one*, 12(8), e0183633. 10.1371/journal.

- Hou, Z., Zhu, Y., & Bromley, M. (2013). Understanding public relations in China: Multiple logics and identities. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 27(3), 308-328.
- Huang, Y. H. C., Wu, F., & Huang, Q. (2017). Does research on digital public relations indicate a paradigm shift? An analysis and critique of recent trends. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(7), 1364-1376.
- Ihlen, Ø. (2010). The cursed sisters: Public relations and rhetoric. In R.L. Heath (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.) (pp.59-70). California: SAGE.
- Ihlen, Ø. (2005). The power of social capital: Adapting Bourdieu to the study of public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 31(4), 492-496.
- Ihlen Ø. V., & Fredriksson, M. (eds.) (2009). *Public Relations and Social Theory*. London: Routledge.
- Ihlen, Ø. V., & Van Ruler, B. (2009). Introduction: Applying social theory to public relations Ø Ihlen & M. Fredriksson (eds.). In *Public Relations and Social Theory* (pp. 9-28). London: Routledge.
- Johnston, J. (2017). The public interest: A new way of thinking for public relations?. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 6(1), 5-22.
- Kalliny, M., & Gentry, L. (2007). Cultural values reflected in Arab and American television advertising. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 29(1), 15-32.
- Kang, H. (2015). Contemporary cultural diplomacy in South Korea: explicit and implicit approaches. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21(4), 433-447.
- Kanso, A., Karim Sinno, A., & Adams, W. (2001). Cross-cultural public relations: Implications for American and Arab public relations practitioners. *Competitiveness Review: An International Business Journal*, 11(1), 65-82.
- Kant, I. (1781). *Critique of Pure Reason*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press.
- Ki, E. J., & Ye, L. (2017). An assessment of progress in research on global public relations from 2001 to 2014. *Public Relations Review*, 43(1), 235-245.
- Kriyantono, R. (2017). Do the Different Terms Affect the Roles? A Measurement of Excellent and Managerial Role of Business and Government Public Relations Practices in Indonesia. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 15(6), 193-209.
- Kriyantono, R., & McKenna, B. (2017). Developing a culturally-relevant public relations theory for Indonesia. *Jurnal Komunikasi, Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 33(1), 193-209.
- Kunczik, M. (2009). Transnational public relations by foreign governments. *Handbook of Global Public Relations: Theory, Research & Practice (Australasian edition)* (pp.399-424). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- L'Etang, J. (2010). "Making it real!": Anthropological reflections on public relations. In R.L. Heath (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.) (pp.145-162). California: SAGE.
- L'Etang, J. (2005). Critical public relations: Some reflections. *Public Relations Review*, 31(4), 521-526.
- Lee, P. K., & Humphreys, P. K. (2007). The role of Guanxi in supply management practices. *International Journal of Production Economics*, 106(2), 450-467.
- Lewis, S. C., Zamith, R., & Hermida, A. (2013). Content analysis in an era of big data: A hybrid approach to computational and manual methods. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(1), 34-52.

- Likely, F. (2009). A different country, a different Public relations: Canadian PR in the North American context. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook* (pp.715-739). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Luo, Y., Huang, Y., & Wang, S. L. (2012). Guanxi and organizational performance: A meta-analysis. *Management and Organization Review*, 8(1), 139-172.
- Luqmani, M., Yavas, U., & Quraeshi, Z. (1989). Advertising in Saudi Arabia: content and regulation. *International Marketing Review*, 6(1), 59-72.
- Macnamara, J. (2010a). Four gaps in public relations scholarship and practice: The need for new approaches. In *Australian New Zealand Communications Association Annual Conference*. Australian and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA). Accessed <https://opus.lib.uts.edu.au/handle/10453/16721>
- Macnamara, J. (2010b). Public relations and the social: How practitioners are using, or abusing, social media. *Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal*, 11, 21-39.
- Mahrt, M., & Scharkow, M. (2013). The value of big data in digital media research. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(1), 20-33.
- Mersham, G., Skinner, C., & Rensburg, R. (2011). Approaches to African communication management and public relations: a case for theory-building on the continent. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 11(4), 195-207.
- Molleda, J.-C., Athaydes, A. & Hirsch, V. (2009). Public Relations in Brazil: Practice and education in a South American context. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook* (pp.797-820). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Motion, J., & Weaver, C. K. (2005). A discourse perspective for critical public relations research: Life sciences network and the battle for truth. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(1), 49-67.
- Parker, I. (ed.). (2015). *Handbook of Critical Psychology*. London: Routledge.
- PEW Forum (2015). The future of world religions: Population growth projections, 2010-2050. Accessed <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>
- Ray, A. (2012, November). An indigenous approach to public relations in the Caribbean Energy Sector: Petrotrin waking to a changing world. In *World Public Relations Forum 2012* (pp. 99-102).
- Rensburg, R. (2009). public relations in South Africa: From rhetoric to reality. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook* (pp.355-392). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Rogge, N., Agasisti, T., & De Witte, K. (2017). Big data and the measurement of public organizations' performance and efficiency: The state-of-the-art. *Public Policy and Administration*, 32(4), 263-281.
- Sejrup, J. (2014). Awakening the sufferers: Reflections on public relations, activism, and subalternity in postcolonial controversies between Taiwan and Japan. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 3(1), 51-68.
- Shah, M. H., & Chen, X. (2010). Relational corporate social responsibility: public relations implications in culturally Confucius China. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 1(3), 117-123.
- Smith, B. G. (2010). Socially distributing public relations: Twitter, Haiti, and interactivity in social media. *Public Relations Review*, 36(4), 329-335.
- Smith, M.F. & Ferguson (2010). Activism 2.0. In R.L. Heath (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.) (pp.395-408). California: SAGE.

- Somerville, I., Hargie, O., Taylor, M. & Toledano, M. (eds.). (2017). *International Public Relations: Perspectives from Deeply Divided Societies*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Somerville, I. & Rice, C. (2017). Deliberative democracy and government public relations in a deeply divided society: Exploring the perspectives of Government Information Officers in Northern Ireland. In I. Somerville, O. Hargie, M. Taylor & M. Toledano (eds.). *International Public Relations: Perspectives from Deeply Divided Societies* (pp.72-93). Oxford: Routledge.
- Sriramesh, K. (2009). The relationship between culture and public relations. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.52-67). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Sriramesh, K. (1992). Societal culture and public relations: Ethnographic evidence from India. *Public Relations Review*, 18(2), 201-211.
- Sriramesh, K., & Takasaki, M. (1999). The impact of culture on Japanese public relations. *Journal of Communication Management*, 3(4), 337-352.
- Sriramesh, K. & Verčič, D. (eds.). (2009). *the Global Public Relations Handbook, Theory, Research and Practice*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Statista (2018). Number of monthly active WeChat users from 2nd quarter 2010 to 1st quarter 2018 (in millions). Accessed <https://www.statista.com/statistics/255778/number-of-active-wechat-messenger-accounts/>
- Synnott, G. (2012, November). Public relations and social change in Indigenous communities. In *World Public Relations Forum 2012* (pp. 124-127).
- Szondi, G. (2009). A Hungarian rhapsody: the evolution and current state of hungarian public relations. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.627-654). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Taylor, M. & Kent, M. (2017). Nation building in the former Yugoslavia: A 20-year retrospective to understand how public relations rebuilds relationships in divided societies. In I. Somerville, O. Hargie, M. Taylor & M. Toledano (eds.). *International Public Relations: Perspectives from Deeply Divided Societies* (pp.9-26). Oxford: Routledge.
- Taylor, M., & Kent, M. L. (1999). Challenging assumptions of international public relations: When government is the most important public. *Public Relations Review*, 25(2), 131-144.
- Toledano, M. (2017). Dialogue with the enemy: Lessons for public relations on dialogue facilitation drawn from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In I. Somerville, O. Hargie, M. Taylor & M. Toledano (eds.). *International Public Relations: Perspectives from Deeply Divided Societies* (pp.27-45). Oxford: Routledge.
- Tsutsura, K. (2009). The development of public relations in Russia: a geopolitical approach. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.655-674). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Valentini, C. (2015). Is using social media “good” for the public relations profession? A critical reflection. *Public Relations Review*, 41(2), 170-177.
- Van Dyke, M., & Verčič, D. (2009). Public relations, public diplomacy, and strategic communication: An international model of conceptual convergence. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.413-440). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Verčič, D. (2009). Public relations of movers and shakers: Transnational corporations. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.872-886). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Verčič, D., Verčič, A. T., & Sriramesh, K. (2015). Looking for digital in public relations. *Public Relations Review*, 41(2), 142-152.
- Vujnovic, M. & Kruckeberg (2010). The local, national, and global challenges of public relations: A call for an anthropological approach to practicing public relations. In R.L. Heath (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.) (pp.671-678). California: SAGE.
- Wang, Y. (2008). Public diplomacy and the rise of Chinese soft power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616(1), 257-273.
- Weaver, C. K. (2001). Dressing for battle in the new global economy: Putting power, identity, and discourse into public relations theory. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 15(2), 279-288.
- White, J., L'Etang, J. & Moss, D. (2009). the United Kingdom: Advances in practice in a restless kingdom. In K. Sriramesh & D. Verčič (eds.). *the Global Public Relations Handbook*, (pp.822-842). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Wright, D., & Hinson, M. (2017). Tracking how social and other digital media are being used in public relations practice: A twelve-year study. *Public Relations Journal*, 11(1), 1-30.
- Wrigley, In R.L. Heath (ed.). Feminist scholarship and its contributions to Public Relations. *The SAGE Handbook of Public Relations* (2nd. ed.) (pp.247-260). California: SAGE.
- Wu, M. (2006). Hofstede's cultural dimensions 30 years later: A study of Taiwan and the United States. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 15(1), 33-42.
- Yeomans, L. (2016). Imagining the lives of others: Empathy in public relations. *Public Relations Inquiry*, 5(1), 71-92.
- Yun, S. H., & Toth, E. L. (2009). Future sociological public diplomacy and the role of public relations: Evolution of public diplomacy. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(4), 493-503.
- Xiang, Z., Schwartz, Z., Gerdes Jr, J. H., & Uysal, M. (2015). What can big data and text analytics tell us about hotel guest experience and satisfaction?. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 44, 120-130.
- Xiaoming, Y. (2018). Over 770m internet users in China. China Daily, 13.07.2018. Accessed <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201807/13/WS5b48384ea310796df4df64ec.html>
- Zaharna, R. S. (2000). Intercultural communication and international public relations: Exploring parallels. *Communication Quarterly*, 48(1), 85-100.