



THE BRITONS, A COMPLEX CHALLENGE FOR SOCIOCULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

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ABSTRACT

This article examines British cultural identity from a sociocultural intelligence (SOCINT) perspective, focusing on the symbolic role of the British monarchy and the impact of cultural stereotypes on intercultural interpretation. It argues that the monarchy serves as a constitutional institution and a symbol of continuity, stability, unity, and public service. Widespread stereotypes about British society—such as emotional restraint, politeness, irony, loyalty to the monarchy, and ritualized habits—may distort interpretations in diplomatic and intelligence contexts if approached uncritically. Using qualitative documentary analysis of literature, official sources, surveys, and intercultural examples, the study finds that understanding British cultural codes can reduce bias, improve communication, and support more accurate SOCINT assessments. It concludes that stereotypes should be critically contextualized, as they can reveal social patterns but also lead to false generalizations.

Keywords: *British monarchy, stereotypes, diplomacy, patterns, intercultural communication.*

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Introduction

As proven over and over again, efforts to accurately decipher concepts, behaviors, and languages in a cultural context have been valuable for better communication and cooperation. Furthermore, cultural and civilizational particularities and their in-depth knowledge are fundamental to intelligence, diplomacy, and politics, supporting objective decisions free from preconceived ideas and strengthening strategic relations over time. For that purpose, it is fundamental to identify the values, patterns, or stereotypes that shape the core of a nation's culture and to assess the impact they may have on sociocultural intelligence. In consequence, a good knowledge of the British culture will facilitate insight into its system of values and beliefs, enabling better calibration of one or the other party on the state of things in a diplomatic, political, or economic environment, securing at the same time a tremendous strategic advantage in the world of intelligence.

According to experts, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as it is known today, is not a truly unitary state, particularly in administrative and legislative terms. The four historical provinces that make up the state each have their own identity, although they have gradually merged since 1707, when England and Scotland formed Great Britain, later joined by Wales and then Northern Ireland. However, a common cultural identity has crystallized over centuries, resulting in the formation of nation-states during the second half of the 15th century and especially during the 17th century (Drimba, 1998, p. 73). Although he justifies the emergence of these states on economic grounds (highlighting the need for interdisciplinarity in the study of cultural phenomena), theorist Jeremy Rifkin (2004) points to a causal relationship between the two concepts, nation and cultural identity:

“The popular conception of the nation-state is of an organic creation rooted in common culture, language, and customs, that evolved over time and developed into a modern state formation. [...] The genius of the nation-state lay in its ability to provide a new collective identity for the growing numbers of autonomous free agents who made up the world of private property relations in self-regulated markets.” (p. 182)

Despite the cultural diversity that characterizes each of the four provinces mentioned above, and despite the theory of multiculturalism within the same state, a series of common elements has gradually come to define British culture and create its own profile. For

this particular situation as well, the pattern described by Tiberiu Brăilean (2005) in relation to the modern phenomenon of globalization may explain how, several centuries ago, differences came to converge:

“Cultural diversity is often presented as a major obstacle to cooperation or integration for different communities, such as – for example – the European integration. However, it can also be seen as an element of a necessary complementarity, as a factor that more often promotes cooperation and closer ties between and within communities.” (p. 150, our translation)

Within this architecture, one of the defining elements of British cultural identity is the monarch figure and the cult surrounding this institution of the state, which continues to play a major role in modern society. This reality can only be fully understood by considering a multitude of factors (historical, social, ethnic, political, etc.), proof of its complexity and, perhaps, of the monarchy's resilience over time, despite the increasingly polarized views of British citizens towards it (with a decline, at least for the past 10 years, in the British people's trust in the monarchy, especially among young people). At the same time, such an analysis can provide clues about possible pro- or anti-monarchical attitudes and behaviors, which can significantly influence various forms of intercultural communication and the relationships between the parties involved.

From a similar perspective, in a society defined by globalization, the efforts to preserve and promote the distinct features of each culture and civilization are fundamental, not only to contribute to cultural complexity at the global level, but also to ensure that each citizen has a cultural identity, based, among other things, on certain values, norms, and traditions. However, the complexity of various cultures and civilizations inevitably leads to stereotypes and prejudice, more specifically preconceived ideas about a country's population, its customs, or citizens' typical behavior. Stereotypes specific to each culture are frequently associated with a negative connotation, which is why they prevent genuine understanding of the culture in question and, at the same time, effective networking with its representatives, especially in official contexts, including meetings between state officials or members of the diplomatic corps.

Therefore, it is fundamental to establish the impact of stereotypes on how people comprehend the core of a nation's culture, as well as on sociocultural intelligence. But in the case of British culture, such a survey must never lose sight of the fact that the British monarchy is both a mirror of British stereotypes and their promoter. Those stereotypes give it substance and, at the same time, strengthen the connection between the

monarchy and its subjects.

For that purpose, starting from the literal meaning of certain notions and concepts, it is necessary to briefly review the key moments in the history of the British monarchy. This is to be done to highlight afterward the influence that the cult of royalty has on the cultural identity of the British people and how the British population relates to the monarchy in today's society. Consequently, one can see the significance of the thorough study of cultures and civilizations, not only in facilitating relations between representatives of different states, but also in understanding the behavioral patterns of citizens of different nationalities and in accurately assessing data.

This study employs a qualitative documentary and cultural-interpretative methodology. The analysis draws on three categories of sources: academic literature on culture, monarchy, stereotypes, and intercultural communication; official institutional sources on the constitutional role of the British monarchy; and public opinion data reflecting contemporary attitudes toward the monarchy in British society. The article does not aim to provide a quantitative sociological survey but rather to interpret how selected cultural symbols and stereotypes function within British identity and how they may influence sociocultural intelligence assessments. The analytical procedure involves identifying recurrent cultural themes — such as continuity, stability, public service, politeness, emotional restraint, irony, and loyalty to tradition — and examining their potential impact on diplomatic, political, and intelligence-related interactions. Particular attention is paid to the risk of analytical bias, especially when stereotypes are treated as fixed truths rather than as culturally situated representations that require contextual interpretation.

The British monarchy - theoretical view

For a better understanding of the issue, a complex perspective on what the monarchy actually represents is necessary. This concept should not be interpreted solely through the lens of its dictionary meaning, referring to a specific political system with all its particularities, but must also be understood in cultural, historical, and social terms. Usually, the term "monarchy" takes on the following meaning:

“Undivided sovereignty, ruled by a single person, who is also the permanent ruler of the state. The term now applies to countries with hereditary

sovereignty. The monarch was the ideal ruler of the new nation states of the 16th and 17th centuries; his powers aimed absolutism, although in England the Parliament limited this power. The former idea, according to which the monarch embodied (within the borders of the state) the very will of God, reached its peak in the 17th century with the doctrine of the divine right of kings illustrated by Louis XIV. Absolute monarchy adapted to the ideas of the Enlightenment, taking the form of enlightened despotism, as was the case with Catherine II of Russia. The French Revolution dealt a fatal blow to absolute monarchy, and World War I destroyed what remained of it, with the monarchies of Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary being blamed for starting the war and the post-war disaster. In Western Europe, it turned into a constitutional monarchy, although absolute (or almost absolute) monarchies still exist in the Near East. In Western Europe, it was transformed into a constitutional monarchy, although absolutist (or quasi-absolutist) monarchies still exist in the Near East.” (Enciclopedia Britannica, 2010, p. 300, our translation)

In the United Kingdom, the monarchy is the oldest form of government. Today, officially, the British monarchy is a constitutional monarchy:

Constitutional monarchy: “A system of government in which a monarch shares power with a constitutionally organized government. The monarch may be the de facto head of state or may be its ceremonial leader. The constitution allocates the rest of the government's power to the legislature and judiciary.” (Enciclopedia Britannica, 2010, p. 300, our translation)

The sovereign has authority, but no political or executive power (which belongs to the Parliament). Instead, he undertakes a series of constitutional and representative duties. Perhaps his most important role is being Head of State, according to the official presentation, which means that he “acts as a focus for national identity, unity, and pride; gives a sense of stability and continuity; officially recognizes success and excellence; and supports the ideal of voluntary service.” (The Royal Household, n.d.) According to constitutional principles, as summarized by Walter Bagehot in his 1867 work “The English Constitution”, the monarch has “three rights—the right to be consulted, the right to encourage, the right to warn” (p. 85). Bagehot (1867) also distinguished between the two necessary parts of a constitution and, implicitly, between two types of institutions, the “efficient” and the “dignified”. The monarchy was considered the perfect example of what the dignified element would represent: what is solemn and meant to cultivate the attraction and

reverence of the people (Lewis, 1977). This perspective remained unchanged even a century and a half later, with the British monarchy continuing to pursue this goal.

The monarch of the United Kingdom also appoints the Prime Minister — although he does not elect him; instead, the latter informs the sovereign of matters concerning the state and may seek his opinion. In addition, the king opens sessions of Parliament, and the monarch's consent (Royal Assent) is required to pass a bill — the right to refuse remains, although such situations no longer occur. (UK Parliament, n.d.) The sovereign is also the head of the Anglican Church, in which capacity he appoints bishops and archbishops on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. Formally, he also serves as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and, from a political and administrative point of view, the monarch of the United Kingdom is the sovereign of 14 other states (“the Realms”), as well as the head of all 56 states united under the title of “the Commonwealth” — although in most of these countries the position is only symbolic (About-Britain, n.d.).

Historical landmarks

Without claiming to be exhaustive, a brief overview of the key moments in the history of the British monarchy is important for understanding how, over more than a millennium, it has shaped the consciousness and cultural identity of the subjects of the current British monarchy. Ever since medieval times, the Crown's influence has been evident in various areas, including political, administrative, economic, religious, and cultural spheres. British royalty began with the Anglo-Saxon dynasty, whose first king was Alfred the Great (849–899), ruler of the Kingdom of Wessex, renowned for his victory over the Danes. His successors recovered some of the English territories conquered by the Danes and continued the kingdom's expansion, with Athelstan (924–939) often remembered for his conquest of Northumbria and the reunification of all the English kingdoms.

Starting in 1066, the Norman dynasty took over, with William II, Duke of Normandy, conquering England (becoming William I of England, also known as William the Conqueror) and moving the capital of the new kingdom to London. The House of Plantagenet followed, Richard the Lionheart (1189–1199) being, perhaps, the most famous of its monarchs. The Plantagenets ruled England for almost three centuries, during which time attempts were made to expand into Scotland, Wales,

and Ireland. During this period, as a result of political struggles between the king and local barons, Parliament was also founded, becoming, at that time, a partner of the sovereign (Lupşor, n.d.).

From 1399, the kingdom was ruled by the House of Lancaster (Henry IV, Henry V, Henry VI), marked by the outbreak of the Wars of the Roses (1455–1487), which ended with the victory of the House of York. About two decades later, the leadership was taken over by the kings of the House of Tudor (including Henry VIII, known for the terror he instilled and for breaking away from the Catholic Church, becoming the head of the Anglican Church). They were followed by the House of Stuart (beginning in 1603), and then, between 1653 and 1659 (after the assassination of King Charles I), England became a republic (the Commonwealth). In 1660, the kings and queens of the House of Stuart returned to rule at the request of the army and the Parliament (Twinkl, n.d.). They were followed — after 1714 — by the House of Hanover, a German dynasty.

Throughout this succession of dynasties and monarchs, some crucial moments stand out. Such are the Acts of Union of 1706–1707, through which the kingdoms of England and Scotland officially formed the United Kingdom of Great Britain; and then the Act of Union of 1800, which unified Great Britain and the Kingdom of Ireland. Under the leadership of the House of Hanover, the new political entity faced, on the one hand, the loss of the American colonies and, on the other hand, the Industrial Revolution, during which the United Kingdom experienced significant economic development. In 1901, the House of Windsor ascended to the throne, and its sovereigns, through King Charles III, continued to exercise their powers.

The cult of the monarchy, a defining cultural feature of the United Kingdom

Despite the variations it has experienced over time and the degree of trust it has enjoyed among the population — whether simply British or extended to the Commonwealth — the monarchy has continued to exert a special attraction and to define the very idea of national identity, becoming a symbol of stability and of a certain ethic.

The British monarch is both a leader and someone wholly dedicated to public service, a principle deeply rooted in his subjects' consciousness. To this extent, the statement made by the current sovereign,

King Charles III, at the time of his official proclamation as head of the United Kingdom (during the ceremony on September 10th, 2022) is an eloquent example. At least in part, the logic of this speech was to recall the inherited responsibility — a responsibility previously assumed with “dedication and devotion” by his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, and programmatically continued by him: to bring “peace, harmony, and prosperity” to all his subjects, “the people who live on these islands, in Commonwealth countries and territories around the world” (The Royal Household, 2022). Just one day earlier, when he addressed the nation and the Commonwealth to announce the Queen's death, King Charles III appealed to the “affection and loyalty” of his subjects to achieve this goal. And in doing so, he was merely confirming the place that the monarch currently occupies in British culture. Furthermore, his promise to serve with “loyalty, respect, and love” sums up the ethic of service that defines the British monarchy in the collective consciousness (The Royal Household, 2022). Several landmarks allow us to reconstruct the value system on which the British monarchy is built:

Historical continuity. The long path of the monarchy, as well as the reputation it has enjoyed throughout history, including periods when it was one of the largest colonial empires, easily translates into a form of national pride, enhanced by an obvious sense of belonging and connection to this remarkable history. The nationwide celebration of significant events and moments in the life of the monarch or of the Royal Family only amplifies these echoes among the British subjects.

Internal unity and stability. In a broad sense, the identity of the monarch is assimilated to that of the unifier, the one who brings together the people he leads, in diametric opposition to that of elected political leaders, who, in most cases, come and go too often on the political scene and antagonize the masses. In recent years, particularly in light of Brexit and Scotland's increasingly firm desire for independence, the British monarchy has crystallized as a source of stability amid multiple political changes. In the United Kingdom, this stability is embodied by the Royal Family, considered a pillar of political neutrality across the nation.

The ceremonial nature of the monarchy, which over time became much more accessible to the general public, created the impression of a closer connection between the people and the monarchy — seen as the guardian of strict, unaltered traditions and customs. A large number of such events (especially coronations and royal weddings) have become invaluable assets for a monarchy whose image has suffered on more than a

few occasions in recent decades. The sympathy gained this way was not limited to the British people but also attracted the attention of the entire modern world in a symbolic attempt to recapture some of the past charm of royalty, so inaccessible to other social classes.

An embellished picture of British society. On many occasions, the British monarchy has been perceived as a genuine “calling card,” a moral and behavioral model to be followed within British society and, at the same time, a model to be admired internationally. The press and, more recently, social media have played an essential role in this equation, especially in modern society. They have become the vehicle through which the British monarchy has rebuilt its image at difficult moments and has continued to maintain it, thus adapting to the demands of modern times in terms of transparency.

How today's society sees the British monarchy

At present, the British appetite for monarchy remains a reality. Although the sovereign and the Royal Family have mostly ceremonial duties, the cult of royalty remains a constant in British culture, and the monarchy continues to enjoy the appreciation and support of a significant number of British citizens. Of course, there are also strong voices arguing against the monarchy, perceiving it as an archaic system that perpetuates social inequalities and is no longer justified in the cultural context of modern democratic societies. These voices emphasize the monarchy's purely ornamental role, lacking any real power to decisively influence the course of modern Britain and the lives of its citizens. The high costs of maintaining the Royal Household are just one of the arguments supporting this position.

However, the constant interest of the British press, reflected in regular polls, indicates certain trends among the population. In this regard, in 2012 Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, a national holiday marking 60 years of reign. She was the second monarch in the history of the British monarchy, after Queen Victoria (in 1897), to celebrate six decades of reign, an occasion on which the British press in particular focused its attention on the relevance of the monarchy in a modern 21st-century state. A brief analysis of the opinions expressed by those who accessed the YouGov website at that time showed that opinions were clearly polarized. However, “a significant proportion thought that the monarchy was either fairly or very important” in the UK. At the opposite end of the spectrum was “a considerably smaller yet notably outspoken group” (MacLeod, 2012).

Just a few years later, in 2015, Queen Elizabeth II became the longest reigning monarch in British history, surpassing Queen Victoria's nearly 64 years on the throne. At that point, the YouGov website turned its attention to public opinion, noting the continued popularity of the British monarchy. According to the research, at that time, 68% of the British public — supporters of all political parties and representatives of all age groups — considered this institution to be “good for Britain” (Wildash, 2015).

A similar analysis was conducted in 2022, a year that marked a new significant milestone for Queen Elizabeth II's reign. It was the first time in British history that a monarch celebrated 70 years on the throne — the platinum jubilee. Once again, according to the conclusions published by the YouGov website, the monarchy as an institution continued to enjoy the favorable attitude of British citizens, with support coming mainly from Conservative Party voters and Britons aged 65 and older. However, there was a clear downward trend, with YouGov's findings showing a 13% drop in the number of people supporting the monarchy over the last decade (“from a high of 75% in favor of a monarchy in July 2012, to 62% now”). In addition, confidence in the longevity of the British monarchy has declined significantly across all age groups: according to YouGov, in 2011, two-thirds of Britons believed that the monarchy would continue to exist in 100 years' time; in 2015, this percentage had fallen to 62%, and in 2022 only 39% still held the same belief (while 41% of respondents denied that the monarchy would still exist in 100 years) (Kirk, 2022).

The interest should also be focused on a slightly different aspect: how attitudes toward the monarchy have shifted among young people — a demographic segment that is much more attuned to current international political and social trends but, at the same time, is more prone to falling prey to social media influence. A certain strategy (though not exactly recent) of the Royal Family to open up more to ordinary citizens in order to gain their sympathy and support also carried image risks. Precisely because of the media and the information circulating today with amazing speed and ease, certain contexts and certain decisions made by the members of the Royal Family have only served to increase young people's distrust of the British monarchy. In this regard, the results recorded by the YouGov website in a series of polls revealed that, after 2019, the opinion of those aged between 18 and 24 changed significantly. The number of those who supported the monarchy gradually decreased (from 46% in 2019 to 40% in 2020), while the number of those who wanted an elected head of state increased significantly (from 26% in 2019 to 37% in 2020) (Nolsoe, 2021).

The trends identified for the entire British population also hold true for ethnic minorities in the UK. According to conclusions drawn from YouGov surveys, the number of those who support the monarchy over an elected head of state increases with age. In 2023, among young people from ethnic minorities, the balance was 43% in favor of an elected head of state (and 30% in favor of the monarchy), while as they got older, the percentage of those declaring themselves in favor of the monarchy went up (to 45-46% in favor of the monarchy for the over-50 age group) (Abraham, 2023).

The importance of understanding British culture

It is true that the researchers who study cultures and civilizations recognize the fundamental role that language and religion play in defining a culture. In this regard, given the international widespread use of English, one could argue that knowledge of English represents an easy path to intercultural communication. However, this would be a simplistic view and could create significant gaps in the proper understanding of a culture, in this case, British culture. Consequently, any further steps based on such a comparison, whether in diplomatic, political, or intelligence circles, or limited to economic, social, educational, or other contexts, bear the risk of negative consequences.

What may seem, at first glance, to be simple intercultural communication can become imperative in specific contexts. Accurately deciphering certain concepts, behaviors, and languages in the context of the respective culture will allow for a better understanding of the other and, implicitly, a calibration of one's own manifestations and approaches for better communication and cooperation. Ideological confrontations and the danger of ethnocentrism may become obstacles in this process, which is why they must first be recognized and then removed.

Therefore, a good knowledge of British culture will facilitate openness to its system of values and beliefs. This will enable a better understanding of how this combination of cultural traits can alter the perspectives of one or the other party on the state of affairs in diplomatic, political, economic, or other environments. The British nation regards the monarch as a symbol of national unity and stability amid increasingly frequent political, economic, or social imbalances. Understanding the nature of this relationship may help explain, for example, a more determined attitude of an individual or group in support of the monarchy or even a specific action.

However, as stated before, the complexity of British culture resides both in the nature of the British monarchy and in the diversity of the stereotypes that define Britons. A better interpretation of the cultural context, considering both perspectives, will play an important role in painting a more accurate portrait of British society. For this purpose, the following case study is aimed at analyzing the connection between the core of the British monarchy and the stereotypes concerning the culture and civilization of the United Kingdom.

Overview of the main stereotypes concerning the United Kingdom

According to critics, stereotypes are defined as a set of beliefs and generalizations that people hold about certain national, ethnic, or religious groups, based on a specific feature linked to a group of individuals, a particular custom, or a specific behavioral pattern, resulting in prejudice or even feelings of hostility toward the group of individuals in question (Rinehart, 1963, p. 137). In most cases, stereotypes carry a negative connotation; therefore, understanding their origin is fundamental to developing a nuanced perspective on a nation's culture and civilization and, at the same time, to pushing the boundaries imposed by people's preconceived images of the representatives of a nation or of an ethnic or religious group.

Due to the long history of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, there are a significant number of stereotypes concerning British culture, the most widespread one being represented by the *habit to serve the afternoon tea*, a habit strictly followed by British citizens every single day according to the widespread misconception. Although based on a true fact, this stereotype amplifies and generalizes a habit defined by complexity and by a long history, not by a simple daily routine. In fact, the afternoon tea has a different connotation depending on the social class, since the representatives of the working class uses this term simply to refer to dinner, while the members of the higher social class and of aristocracy refer to the afternoon tea served along with traditional snacks, but it is noteworthy to mention that the passion for tea does not define the entire population, as the habit is largely amplified, generalized and a bit outdated from certain perspectives (Murcott, 2013, p. 38). This preconception may lead to unrealistic expectations about a nation's customs among individuals who are not accustomed to British civilization, resulting in the misinterpretation of certain information or the inability to properly analyze

this information by considering other possible scenarios, in order to reach proper conclusions that are backed by tangible facts, not by preconceived ideas.

Moreover, it is widely assumed that the British approach *the topic of the weather* in almost every single conversation, but, in reality, the fact that the weather changes quite rapidly in short periods of time in the United Kingdom allows people to easily integrate this topic when initiating a dialogue, while also ensuring that the discussion is not too personal, which would lead to an undesired closeness between participants. Unconditional loyalty towards the monarchy is another notable stereotype, as there is a general belief according to which all citizens around the United Kingdom perceive the Royal Family as being a role model, but present reality indicates that, although numerous British citizens do perceive monarchy as part of the cultural heritage of the Kingdom, there is an increasingly large number of individuals who consider it to be obsolete and lacking openness towards the public and especially towards the British citizens.

In regard to behavior patterns, stereotypes describe the language specific to British citizens as being *sarcastic*, based mainly on *irony*, this type of humor is often misunderstood outside the United Kingdom or by individuals who are not accustomed to the peculiarities of British culture and civilization. In addition to the sarcastic language, British citizens are generally perceived as being quite *private*, even *distant* from their interlocutors, their attitude permanently being *formal*, which automatically leads to the impossibility of establishing a connection or discussing in a more open manner. However, this perception represents a common prejudice, since close attention paid to behavior etiquette according to context, to manners, and to respect is commonly misinterpreted as signifying a distant attitude, even one of superiority, from the interlocutor.

The analysis of the impact of stereotypes on sociocultural intelligence

The impact of stereotypes is significant in how people outside the United Kingdom interact with British citizens, especially in official contexts, resulting in difficulties in mutual cultural understanding. Even so, their impact is even more emphasized in intelligence, since, in this domain, details specific to the culture and civilization of a culture represent the basis for the proper approach of British representatives and for the accomplishment of certain objectives in relation to them, as well as for the

establishment of strategic partnerships or in the context of diplomatic negotiations.

In sociocultural intelligence, the analysis of intel based on the certainty that some stereotypes must define the representatives of a culture may lead to the narrowing of the horizon in terms of interpreting the data available; thus, people's various behaviors and attitudes may be misunderstood, leading to conclusions that only reflect reality to a small extent. Moreover, generalizing certain features may lead to a superficial understanding of the language and of actions, because, in such circumstances, the individual responsible for analyzing a case cannot establish the subtext of certain statements or decisions to act and may overlook details that are essential for anticipating major situations.

At the same time, when an analyst fulfills their tasks starting from certain preconceived ideas about an ethnic, religious, or national group, it is likely that, during the analysis, they will focus their attention on trying to identify certain details to confirm their original beliefs, not taking into consideration the possibility that the case may not fit the pre-established patterns. In this case, significant details for the case in question may be overlooked, since the focus is on the information which may confirm the individual's preconceptions, instead of maintaining a certain distance from the subject, in order to have a perspective as objective and accurate as possible.

Another way stereotypes may affect the intelligence field is through the development of official meetings held at high levels, with the purpose of addressing subjects and matters of common interest, in order to conduct negotiations or establish strategic partnerships. In such circumstances, preconceived ideas lead to misunderstanding the interlocutor's message and attitude, due to inadequate knowledge of the culture and civilization in question.

A relevant example in this regard could involve a high-level meeting between a Romanian representative and a British diplomat, the latter being known, according to existing stereotypes, as a loyal supporter of the monarchy and as using a language based on irony, while maintaining a rather distant demeanor toward the interlocutor and a superior attitude. In such a circumstance, the Romanian official, without a thorough knowledge of British culture, may use language characterized by sarcasm and irony, aiming to foster a more familiar relationship with the interlocutor, but, in fact, this approach may come across as offensive to the British official. Moreover, initiating a dialogue by discussing the weather, especially by mentioning the British preference for approaching this topic quite regularly, may be interpreted as a lack of

consideration for the culture of the United Kingdom and its citizens. Therefore, based on the Romanian official's preconceived image, discussions on cooperation between the two countries mentioned in this example may yield a different outcome than initially intended, causing difficulties in the relationship between the two officials and a lack of understanding due to insufficient training and cultural knowledge. At the international level, the importance of understanding the culture and civilization of other countries is acknowledged, especially in situations focused on identifying solutions to international political matters, leading to diminishing the distance between nations and establishing connections through cultural diplomacy (Varma, 2008, p. 68).

Conclusions

Despite its obvious popularity, the cult of the British monarchy, along with the stereotypes that accompany it, has become a frequent topic of debate over the years. The perception of an anachronistic and costly monarchy has invited considerable criticism. At the same time, intense media coverage of episodes in the private lives of members of the Royal Family has led to a decline in public confidence in the monarchy.

In fact, the reaction of the general public, especially among the British sovereign's direct subjects, is itself a measure of the responsibility with which he assumes his role in the state. The more strictly the values symbolized by the monarchy are cultivated by the representative of the Crown and by the entire Royal Family, the more their echoes are reflected in the willingness of British citizens to recognize the monarchy's privileged position and to support it. Even so, the cult of the monarchy remains one of the most striking features of British culture. With ancient origins and a rich history, often playing a leading role in international politics and the economy, the British monarchy stands today as a synthesis of a well-defined system of values.

However, Historical continuity, unity, and stability, enhanced by a sense of national pride and a specific dignity, clearly outline the skeleton of British culture, which is then clothed in a series of other particular elements. Together, these give consistency to what the British anthropologist Kate Fox (2014) called "Englishness":

"Englishness is not a matter of social position, race, colour, or creed: it is a mindset, an ethos, a behavioural 'grammar' — a set of unwritten codes that might seem enigmatic, but that anyone can decipher and apply, now that we have the key." (p. 564)

It is important not to overlook the fact that the process of "deciphering" mentioned by Kate Fox becomes necessary when effective intercultural communication is sought. All things considered, cultural and civilizational elements and their in-depth knowledge are fundamental to intelligence, since they allow analysis to comprehend various behaviors in an objective manner and beyond certain preconceived ideas, in order to have a complex perspective on a particular matter. Moreover,

in regard to international cooperation in intelligence, having a thorough comprehension of foreign cultures and civilizations encourages the establishment of relations between nations, in order to identify common solutions to international issues and to establish strategic partnerships. This is why stereotypes and preconceived ideas have a significant impact on the process of reaching these aims, with the necessity to push the boundaries imposed by these stereotypes as much as possible.

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