

The Evolution of Diplomacy: From Classical to Modern

Introduction

Si vis pacem, para bellum, said Publius Flavius Vegetius Renatus, a writer who lived in the Later Roman Empire (the period from the 4th century CE). These five Latin words simply mean ‘If you want peace, prepare for war’. While the quote seems to suggest a paradox it has been proven time and again. Wars have often been fought to reduce tensions among powers. But it has also simultaneously been understood that war is not a viable option to come to terms with another power. It deals with too much loss for one to bear over and over again. Hence, many believed that there are indeed more peaceful ways of handling matters with warring factions. It seemed appropriate to hold discussions with a representative of the other party who would negotiate the terms on behalf of his king. Thus the practice of diplomacy was generated but it assumed different meanings with the passage of time.

The most prevalent of diplomatic practice has largely been political. The reason for this bias is easily understood since the practice of diplomacy developed out of a need for avoiding hostile situations or wars. Diplomacy in its early days did not foresee the concepts of collective security or collective defence. In addition to that, with the inclusion of new areas of concern like technology, environment and cyber space, diplomacy has been compelled to span out from political confines. Therefore, bilateral or multilateral diplomacy in the current scenario is not confined to political attributions but has extended to include their economic and cultural counterparts. Nation-states have banded together to form institutions that would serve their economic and regional interests. Hence, diplomacy is no more a tool only to solve political or territorial friction but also to incur faster pace of development. Public diplomacy has most certainly and subtly carved out a niche for itself amidst the race for recognition. In Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar, when Brutus takes the stand at the pulpit to explain the rationale behind his actions, it is an artful display of public diplomacy. However, it would be easier to explain how the current form of diplomacy was derived by tracing the roots of diplomacy from the antiquities, especially the Greeks.

Greek Diplomacy

Diplomacy can be traced back to the Greek city-states, who were continually at war owing to their geographical barriers. The geography of Greece is of a mountainous and hence of a discontinuous nature which paved the way for small city-states and Greece a conglomeration of small city-states. The practice of diplomacy was indeed necessitated but was very different from

how we know it today. There were certain individuals who held the post of an emissary but the function of an emissary is of a very limited nature. During a war, communication between the two kings was primarily through the emissaries. The function of the emissaries included intimating the other ruler that they were allowed to collect the bodies of the soldiers that lost their lives in the battle or also that his king would be observing the traditional funeral rites to pay their respects for the loss of an important figure in the battle. An emissary was only a messenger.

The function of a modern-day diplomat can be loosely compared to that of a Greek proxenos. A proxenos had to be an influential individual who enjoyed cordial relations with both the parties who were at odds. Unlike diplomats of current world order, a proxenos was not trained at attaining diplomatic expertise. They were usually privileged members of the society who by some means was acquainted with both parties. As the practice goes, the proxenos would host a gathering at his own expense. The purpose of this gathering would be to encourage both parties to communicate with each other and sincerely attempt to sort out their differences. The proxenos would act as the mediator between the two parties. However, if he did fail to secure peaceful relations between the two, he was not exempted from participating in the war. His loyalty which was hitherto considered unquestionable would be under scrutiny. Since it was a very individual-oriented task it was a hereditary affair. The proxenos was awarded honorary titles for his diplomatic services to the state. Hence, it was an honour to be bestowed with such a title and was carried down generations.¹

However, Greek diplomacy had a number of anomalies, which makes it different from modern diplomatic practice. Firstly, the credibility of a diplomat largely depended on his oratory skills which he was expected to deliver in public. Hence, private diplomacy was not the prevalent form of diplomacy. Since the diplomats received no formal training, he had to rely on his own oratory skills, which would include language and tact, to convey the message from his king. Secondly, the exchange of gifts was not an acceptable practice. This was taken as a form of bribery. Finally, the diplomats did not enjoy immunity. Hence, they were often subject to arbitrary treatment by the recipient ruler, especially during wartime. Both Athens and Sparta executed the envoys that were sent by Darius I of Persia.²

A contemporary of the Greek civilization was the Roman Republic and later, Empire which managed to outlive the Greeks. It enjoyed a hegemonic status for one of the longest stretches of

¹ Brad K. Blitz, *Migration and Freedom: Mobility, Citizenship and Exclusion*, p.4, see website http://books.google.co.in/books?id=IBhCBAAAQBAJ&pg=PA4&lpg=PA4&dq=%22proxenos%22+%22honorary+titles%22&source=bl&ots=xgFw-Q0b5z&sig=vKQEf_ZmZLYwtKiWFsYd15WgxoU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=7fN4VMnQFpaPuATyilFI&ved=0CDUQ6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=%22proxenos%22%20%22honorary%20titles%22&f=false, accessed on 29 November 2014

² Shuhei Kurizaki, *A Natural History of Diplomacy*, pp.7-8, see website <http://people.tamu.edu/~kurizaki/b3.pdf>, accessed on 5 September 2014

history. However, the Romans relied heavily on their military strength rather than diplomatic expertise. The Later Roman Empire, or the Byzantine Empire, on the other hand did not bear this resemblance. On the contrary, they contributed significantly to diplomacy.

Roman Diplomacy

The Roman Republic was a contemporary of the Greek civilization. However, their system was nothing like that of the Greeks. They did not follow the Greek system of democracy. They were rather a republic or *res publica*. Initially, Rome was a republic till the appointment of Julius Caesar when it began to be called an empire. Every monarch hence has been referred to as Caesar invoking the first monarch Julius Caesar who transformed Rome from a republic to an empire.

The use of diplomacy was mostly for legal and commercial purposes. Trade relations within provinces were maintained through diplomatic means. The Romans did not stand much store by the practice of diplomacy for administering purposes. Instead they invested heavily in their military capabilities and were renowned for their military expertise. However, this does not indicate that the Romans did not make use of diplomacy at all in administration.

The role of the Senate transformed with the nature of the state of Rome. While Rome was a republic, the Senate was the decision-making body but when it became an empire, the Senate was reduced to an advisory body. Legatus, who were basically diplomatic representatives, were appointed by the Senate from amongst themselves. The legatus had some discretionary powers and so on their return had to report to the Senate about the proceedings that took place.³

It is also peculiar that despite having diplomatic abilities, the Senators were often not treated as diplomatic representatives. The spontaneous need for an envoy was mostly fulfilled by military commanders and provincial governors who were present on the spot. But this decline in the role of the Senate was more evident with the establishment of the Roman Empire. It lost its erstwhile dictatorial powers and was reduced to a symbolic wing of administration. The monarch now assumed dictatorial powers and was at the helm of administration.

The fall of the Roman Empire is essentially taken to have occurred in 476 C.E.⁴ Scholars assume plenty of reasons for this downfall. Firstly, the overwhelming reliance of the Romans on their

³ Ibid.

⁴ "The Fall of the Roman Empire", *USHistory.org*, see website <http://www.ushistory.org/civ/6f.asp>, accessed on 8 December 2014

military strength led to a ‘colonial’ approach in its ruling of its provinces.⁵ Secondly, the decline of the powers of the Senate also centralized power in the hands of the monarch.⁶ Thus this declining military capability was inherited by the Eastern Roman Empire, more widely known as the Byzantine Empire after the fall of the Western Roman Empire.

Byzantine Diplomacy

It has been made evident that the Romans were renowned in the region for their combatant skills and military strength. They had engaged in plenty of wars and maintained their hegemony through the means of it. It is also reflected in the words of the Greek historian Polybius who had said that “the Romans rely on force in all their undertakings, and consider that having set themselves a task they are bound to carry it through”.⁷

Due to their heavy dependence on military power, diplomacy was not considered a strong tool of statecraft by the Romans. However, this does not indicate an absolute absence of diplomacy. But like the Greeks, the Romans lacked an institutional structure of diplomatic practice as well. There is a shift in this ad hoc nature of diplomatic practice with the rise of the Byzantine Empire. This shift is very conspicuous since the longevity of the Byzantine Empire cannot be attributed to its military strength, unlike the Western Roman Empire. It was something much more subtle, like the rampant practice of diplomatic efforts.

The Eastern Roman Empire or the Byzantine Empire inherited the weak military capability after the decline of the Western Roman Empire and was simultaneously surrounded by several neighbours. Byzantium did not enjoy a hegemonic influence in the region and hence was bound to maintain relations with its neighbours through other means than coercion. Hence, diplomacy was institutionalized by the Byzantines.

The Byzantines had several means of achieving success in establishing diplomatic relations. The first means was by awe and sublime.⁸ The goal was to impress the visiting envoy representing the neighbouring state with the display of “absolute superiority, luxury, and wealth”.⁹ The

⁵ See n.2, p.11

⁶ See n.2, p.11

⁷ Brian Campbell, “Power Without Limit: ‘The Romans always Win’, in Angelos Chaniotis and Pierre Ducrey (eds.), *Army and Power in the Ancient World* (Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002), p. 167, see website <http://bit.ly/1G6BMZ8>, accessed on 29 November 2014

⁸ See n.2, p.12

⁹ See n.2, p.12

Byzantine Empire did away with the Roman religion and declared Christianity to be the state religion. This in itself was a very powerful manifestation because it juxtaposed religious affairs with political ones. They posed themselves to be the representatives of God on earth. In that case, if a kingdom was to attack Byzantium, they would be waging a war on God himself. This can be seen as one of the earliest forms of deterrence.

Byzantium was surrounded by powerful entities like the Ottomans, the Seljuks, the Persians and the Arabs who had now largely become followers of the Islamic religion and also there was a constant threat that there would be a rise of a Western power that would threaten to replace the void created by the decline of the Western Roman Empire. Hence, they sought other means of appeasement. The practice of bribery was exploited to the maximum by the Byzantines. It can also be referred to as an art because it was to be very carefully manufactured. They could not afford to make it look like a bribe which would cause them to lose their credibility. Hence, it was always in the form of tributes or a large part of the stock of trade that these bribes were given.¹⁰

The position of the kingdom also played a major role in providing Byzantium with enough wealth to carry out such expensive practices. Byzantium was located in the heart of the financial hub which made for an extremely strategic location. In addition to that, the emperor did not regard it as bribery since this investment would only ensure the safety of the empire and its citizens.

If the first two methods failed to achieve the goals they meant to achieve, it was now sought through the means of matrimonial alliances. The use of this practice was done very sparingly but it increased when the treasury was declining. This arrangement was further strengthened with the means of dowry and gifts that were a part and parcel of wedding ceremonies.

The final method of diplomacy was the policy of dividing the neighbours and pitting them against each other. To serve this purpose effectively, the practice of gathering information was a crucial part of the Byzantine administration. Hence, there is an evident importance of intelligence in the diplomatic arena. Dignitaries of Byzantium were not only meant to represent their empire but also gather enough information for their emperor to use when every other means failed. They had a separate wing called the Skrinion Barbaron that served as the bureau for foreign relations that was responsible for gathering of intelligence.¹¹ It could be considered one of the first intelligence agencies of the world. Inducing hostile relations between foreign states

¹⁰ Keith Hamilton and Richard Langhorne, "The Practice of Diplomacy: Its Evolution, Theory, and Administration", p.22, see website http://books.google.co.in/books?id=Xd_W1wp-jgC&pg=PA5&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=4#v=onepage&q&f=false, accessed on 9 December 2014

¹¹ See n.2, p.14

was a means of stalling which would get the Byzantines more time to deter war, if not completely take it off the table.

Hence, the aforementioned methods of diplomacy contributed to the longevity of the Byzantine Empire till the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Ottoman Turks. Hence, the diplomatic effort of the Byzantines was the dominant practice. It was further developed by the Italian city-states during the period of Renaissance in the following century. The Italians made some marked improvements in the implementation of state-based diplomacy which had a lasting effect.

Diplomacy within the Italian City-States

With the decline of the Byzantine Empire, there was a rising threat of the Ottoman Turks towards the west. Italian city-states that were hitherto fighting amongst each other now sought collective security in alliance with each other owing to the external threat that they commonly faced. On the other side was the Valois dynasty that had managed to unite France and was seeking to extend its territory by attacking Italy. The Italian city-states were not very well-endowed when it came to military capabilities. It was much weaker than its Ottoman counterpart who had a standing army at its disposal. Hence, these threats compelled the Italian city-states to strengthen ties through diplomatic means.

The Treaty of Lodi was signed with respect to this concept of non-aggression against each other and it served its purpose. During this period, the Renaissance almost became a movement that flourished all over Italy. There was the introduction of the practice of resident diplomats. Representatives from different city-state were stationed in the monarch's court at the capital.

This practice arose out of two major reasons. Firstly, there was a lack of trust within the Italian city-states as, prior to the Treaty of Lodi, they thrived on animosity. Hence, there was an initial need to establish trust to further cooperation and coordination.¹² Secondly, this balance of power was very fragile and depended heavily on the intelligence gathered to prepare for the risks involved in case any city-state defected from the treaty.¹³

Owing to this, Shuhei Kurizaki in the chapter 'A Natural History of Diplomacy' of his book 'When Diplomacy Works' calls the resident ambassadors as "fire alarms". The need for a resident ambassador was to alarm the monarch back in his city-state that the monarch at whose capital he is stationed has defected from the treaty. So now there were permanent embassies and resident ambassadors which institutionalised diplomatic practice in the northern parts of Italy.

¹² See n.2, p.17

¹³ See n.2, p.17

By the time the Thirty Years War broke out, entire Europe had adopted the system of permanent embassies and resident ambassadors.¹⁴ But the peace was not continuous during this period; there was a breach in the balance of power with the invasion of Charles VIII of France in 1494.¹⁵ He belonged to the Valois dynasty of France. As the Italian city-states had anticipated, France did invade Italy. Rather it was this attack that impelled other European states to adopt the ways of Italian diplomacy. Even the popes, who till this invasion, only received ambassadors and never sent one did away with their conservatism.¹⁶

Diplomatic Practice in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

The absence of peaceful conditions in the western part of Europe in the 16th century can be largely attributed to the division of that hemisphere of the continent into small kingdoms. These kingdoms constantly sought power to ensure the maintenance of their position in the regional politics. Polity was intertwined with religion to a great extent. With the Renaissance and the Reformation paving the path for reason over faith, hitherto followed norms and customs were now being challenged.

Protestantism emerged under the tutelage of Martin Luther as Lutheranism. Luther raised his voice against the sale of indulgences and accused the church of blatant corruption. It was a dramatic turn of events since the Church enjoyed a position of unquestionable authority within the jurisdiction of every state. While Christianity now had several “brands” promoting itself, these tensions now manifested themselves in the form of wars. One major war that this period witnessed was the outbreak of the Thirty Years War that begun in 1618 and ended in 1648.

These constant outbreaks of war called for intensification of the diplomatic practice. Hence, during the 16th and 17th centuries, there were further improvements in the field of diplomacy. More and more states were now becoming independent and sovereign and following the European system had established permanent embassies and resident ambassadors. Hence, a need was felt to establish a kind of diplomatic immunity to spare ambassadors from arbitrary

¹⁴ See n.2, p.19

¹⁵ “The Italian Wars”, see website <http://europeanhistory.boisestate.edu/latemiddleages/invasion/invasion.shtml>, accessed on 9 December 2014

¹⁶ Garrett Mattingly, “Renaissance Diplomacy”, p.154, see website <https://books.google.co.in/books?id=GxbnOGK9IMwC&pg=PA155&dq=italian+diplomacy&hl=en&sa=X&ei=8JKGVLWODoLguQSunYGIaG&ved=0CCgQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=italian%20diplomacy&f=false>, accessed on 9 December 2014

treatment by the recipient monarchs.¹⁷ It was also firmly established that since ambassadors were representing the monarch himself they were to be treated equivalently.¹⁸

Cardinal Richelieu who was appointed Secretary of State for foreign affairs in 1616, later on assumed the position of Prime Minister of France in 1624 to King Louis XIII. In 1626, he established the first ever Ministry of External Affairs to centralize all foreign affairs under one separate department.¹⁹ He is also credited for two major innovations to the practice of diplomacy.

Kissinger refers to negotiations as a practice that involves “trading concessions.”²⁰ This practice was initially introduced by Richelieu who considered concessions and counter-concessions a very significant part of negotiations. He also emphasized that this trading of concessions need to be practiced in private since it becomes cumbersome when they are made public. Hence, details regarding the negotiations need to be kept confidential.²¹

The other innovation is a more important one and has indeed stood the test of time. Richelieu emphasized on the aspect of continuity of diplomacy which led to the advent of peacetime diplomacy. He stated that diplomatic efforts would be more fruitful if they did not happen in fits and starts but were in continuum irrespective of wartime or peacetime.²²

The Thirty Years War came to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The Treaty of Westphalia was signed in Munster and Osnabruck on the 24th of October, 1648. The Treaty acknowledged Protestantism as a legitimate form of Christianity and it was now to exist alongside Catholicism. There were significant territorial distributions as well. The Treaty granted independence to the Swiss from the Austrian Habsburg power. As a result of the Eighty Years’ War, the Dutch Republic gained independence from the Spanish. The Treaty also granted Sweden, Brandenburg, and Bavaria more territory. Moreover France largely acquired the region of Alsace-Lorraine.²³

¹⁷ Karin Ahonen-Ström and Pontus Andgren, “Changing Diplomacy: Actors or Structures”, p.9, see website <http://lup.lub.lu.se/luur/download?func=downloadFile&recordId=1325817&fileId=1325818>, accessed on 9 December 2014

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ S.M. Tariqul Islam, “Changing Nature and Agenda of Diplomacy: A Critical Analysis”, *Asian Affairs* (Bangladesh), v.27, n.1, January-March 2005, p.60

²⁰ Henry Kissinger, “Diplomacy”, (Simon and Schuster Inc.: USA, 1994), p.744

²¹ See n.2, p.23

²² Armand Jean du Plessis duc de Richelieu, translated by Henry Bertram Hill, “The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu: The Significant Chapters and Supporting Selections”, (University of Wisconsin Press: Wisconsin, 1961), p.94

²³ Richard Cavendish, “The Treaty of Westphalia”, *History Today* (London, 1998), v.48, n.10, see website <http://www.historytoday.com/richard-cavendish/treaty-westphalia>, accessed on 6 November 2014

The treaty's significance can be attributed to two major provisions. Firstly, it recognized the sovereignty of each state or principality and hence, prohibited the interference of external powers in domestic affairs. Secondly, the treaty provided the basis for the clear distinction and demarcation of a state's political affairs from its religious ones. The treaty of Westphalia ensured that the clergy never saw the return of its erstwhile influential position in the affairs of the state. Hence, the diplomatic system now was based on two principles: firstly, all states were sovereign and secondly, all states were equal to each other.

The Congress of Vienna

Following the devastation caused by the Napoleonic wars, European powers decided to pursue peace by the means of diplomacy rather than by waging wars. This was the purpose of the Congress of Vienna. This was followed by a series of other congresses at Aix-la-Chapelle, Troppau, Laiback and Verona.²⁴ All the congresses together along with the Congress of Vienna came to be known as the Concert of Europe. This was an attempt to establish a balance of power in the region and it did turn out to be a fairly successful one till 1914. Representatives of several European states attended and hence, it was one of the first displays of multilateral diplomacy.

During the 19th century, there is a growth of another phenomenon. Colonization of African and Asian regions by European powers takes place. In this, the relation is defined between the colonizer and the colonized and since both parties are not equal to each other, the scope of diplomacy is very limited. The colonizing masters subdued and exploited their colonies. This subordination nullified the scope of diplomacy in their relation.

Departure from Traditional Diplomacy

After the outbreak of the First World War, it was taken to be a defeat of diplomatic efforts. However, no state, either war or peace, is ever in perpetual continuum. Hence, there is a rise in diplomatic efforts with the end of the First World War.

But it is essential to discuss the elements that led to the departure from the traditional practice of diplomacy. The focus now moved away from the king, the elite and even Europe. Bilateral diplomacy took a backseat and gave way to multilateral diplomacy.²⁵

²⁴ See n.2, p.29

²⁵ See n.19, p.62

The need for a new form of diplomacy was driven by a few changes in the society. The first and foremost reason would be the increasing influence of democratic ideals. The spread of democracy was on the rise and this called for a more transparent system of diplomacy.

This was followed by the deepening of economic relations. Even after Germany was levied with a burden of reparations, the USA continued to trade with all nations to avoid the allegations of taking sides in European politics. Hence, the higher the economic stakes, the lesser the chances of war between those states.

In addition to this, the outcome of modern science took the form of weaponry. This demonstrated that war would take a heavier toll on mankind than ever before. The arms were now more precise and hence, destructive. Therefore, the stakes were now higher.

Finally, nation-states were now more willing to come together to serve their mutual interests in the international community.

Owing to these changes, there were certain expectations from the new form of diplomacy. Firstly, it was hoped that it would bring in a certain amount of transparency in the diplomatic exchanges so that it is subject to scrutiny by the citizens. This was mainly due to the rise of the concept of democracy which spoke highly of the involvement of the citizens in the governance of a state.

It was also felt that the establishment of an organization with membership open to whoever wished to join was the need of the hour. This kind of multilateral diplomacy was expected to help overcome many obstacles with minimum amount of disagreement and conflict. The League of Nations was established in 1920 in accordance with these expectations. Its primary aims were collective security and disarmament.²⁶

The League of Nations

The League of Nations was established to fulfil certain criteria. However, with its establishment it was also observed that there were more benefits to a multilateral diplomatic organization and other elements that proved beneficial to its working. Firstly, the advancement in science and technology led to faster travel of information and people. Hence, establishing contacts was now faster than ever.

²⁶ See n.19, pp.62-63

The leaders of the nation-states realized that issues of global concern were not possible to solve by the means of bilateral efforts but by multilateral means. Issues that concerned several nations required those nations to discuss the pros and cons of the issue together rather than bilaterally.

Multilateral diplomacy served as a good forum for smaller nations. In bilateral negotiations, it was difficult for a weaker nation to negotiate with a stronger one, while in a multilateral forum the weaker nations had the choice to band together to display a stronger front.

It was also expected that within the framework of a multilateral organization, it would be easy to discourage a nation-state from aggression. The policy of appeasement devised by the then British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain towards Nazi Germany was one such stance.

However, the League of Nations failed in its efforts to stop the outbreak of the Second World War and the consequences, as is well-known were devastating. This is largely attributed to the USA not being a member of the League despite being the one to suggest it. The membership of the USA was important because the USA by then had already emerged as a major player in international affairs.

Cold War Diplomacy

The Second World War saw the advent of nuclear weaponry and its devastating effects. This was a major concern after the end of the war. However, immediately after the Second World War, the Cold War between the USA and the USSR ensued. This period was alternated with periods of détente which meant ‘relaxation of tensions’. The periods of détente witnessed the use of diplomacy extensively to deescalate tensions and maintain this de-escalation.

The concept of nuclear diplomacy prevailed throughout, from 1945 to till the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991. The driving forces of the Cold War period were mutual suspicion and mistrust. This led the two blocs to constantly monitor each other’s moves and attempt to stay ahead of the other. The fear of a nuclear war was felt by the international community and there was constant anticipation that the tensions might just escalate to that point when both blocs feel the necessity to use their nuclear capabilities.²⁷

Crisis diplomacy was an emergent form of wartime diplomacy. The best example of such diplomacy was the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. If followed closely, the events were led one after another only due to lack of communication teamed with the elements of suspicion and

²⁷ See n.19, p.67

mistrust. The de-escalation process required a hotline that was established for the leaders of both blocs to communicate and sort their misconceptions regarding each other's moves and plans.²⁸

Summit diplomacy was another form that emerged during this time. This kind of diplomacy involved the leader of a nation visiting the leader of another nation by traveling to the latter's nation. This would be followed by a series of meetings to discuss the issues that were on the list of agenda.

Modern Diplomacy

After the end of the Second World War, the United Nations was established in 1945. However, due to the Cold War waging between the USA and the USSR, the UN was often very limited in its working. Veto power was exercised extensively against each other. With the demise of the USSR in 1991, things began to be run more smoothly than before. This can be roughly taken as the period that saw the advent of modern diplomacy that has been followed since.

The ambassadors now have to include commercial and economic relations within their purview as well. As is evident, there has been a shift in focus from the political to the economic. Economic relations between nation-states have proved effective in deescalating tensions. Therefore, the economic aspect of a nation also plays a major role in state-based diplomacy.

The assignment of a particular ambassador also matters. When Nation A assigns an ambassador to Nation B, it is necessary to note if that ambassador exercises any power over the leader of Nation A. In simpler terms, the choice of ambassador assigned by a state for a state shows the importance attached to that state.

The projection of a nation's foreign policy is no more limited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Recently, the heads of governments as well as the heads of states have also actively started participating in it. This is a kind of public diplomacy. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to several countries is a perfect example of the involvement of heads of governments in furthering public diplomacy.

In the past few decades, an increased involvement of the news media has been noticed. It has also brought matters to the forefront, to the public.²⁹ It played a huge role in bringing about transparency between the government and its people. The role of non-state actors like Non-Governmental Organizations has also influenced the governments to a certain extent, especially regarding matters of human rights.

²⁸ See n.19, p.67

²⁹ See n.19, pp.68-69

Theoretical Underpinnings: Neo-Realist and Neo-Liberal Understanding of Diplomacy

Diplomacy aims to initiate cooperation during peacetime and wartime. The idea of cooperation in itself is very liberal and neo-liberal in nature. However, it can also be seen through neo-realist lens of maximization of power.

The neo-liberals believe that due to the lack of a centralized global government the world is in a perpetual state of anarchy. However, it is not desirable for any state to remain in this state and hence, to de-escalate the tensions caused by arms race and security dilemma, states come together. They come together to feign cooperation and derive an understanding which would be beneficial to both to a certain level. But that certain level is decided by all parties concerned in the diplomacy. The negotiations need to reach a point where it will suffice for all the parties to conclude.

This is where the neo-realists differ from the neo-liberals. The neo-realists initially agree that the global order is in a state of anarchy. The arms race among nations leads to security dilemma which in turn escalates tensions. However, they opine that while it is natural for nations to call for global cooperation, even this cooperation is based on the Waltzian concept of maximization of power. Negotiations carried out by powerful nations like the United States of America will have more weightage than a nation like India. Despite having established that all nation-states are equal to one another, it is still evident that the Orwellian concept of some states are more equal than others is true. The UN Security Council is the best example. Veto power is granted to certain privileged countries only. Hence, it does create a divide in the international system.

The position of a nation-state on the power-scale will always determine its negotiating capabilities. The more powerful a state is, the less likely it is to compromise with its own interests. It is also interesting to note that this is not a recent practice either. Thucydides' Melian Dialogue emphasizes along the same lines where Athens declares to Melos that in a negotiation, the more powerful state dictates the terms and the less powerful one adheres to it.

The neo-liberals and the neo-realists look at two different aspects of diplomacy. While neo-liberals emphasize on the call for cooperation, neo-realists look at the driving factor of these negotiations. Hence, according to the neo-liberal school, diplomacy is the cooperation and coordination that nation-states initiate to deescalate tensions. But according to the neo-realist school, diplomacy is the projection of a nation's foreign policy and the intensity of this projection is decided by the power it exercises in the international community.

Conclusion

As can be derived from the paper, there has been a significant transformation in the meaning of the term ‘diplomacy’ over the years although one aspect of diplomacy that has stood the test of time is the concept of negotiations that Richelieu describes as trading of concessions. The basic idea of diplomacy is that all concerned parties gain something out of the bargain that has been struck, in layman’s terms but this bargain can be struck on different fronts, be it economic, political or even cultural.

However, it is interesting to note that the practice has not ceased to exist. Hence, it is safe to assume that it might change forms due to the emergence of new elements in international affairs but it cannot be done away with. For example, with the advent of nuclear warheads, the diplomacy of deterrence began to be exercised on a large scale. Recently, with the internet and social networking websites becoming a household phenomenon, e-diplomacy has come into effect.

To conclude, diplomacy will continue to change forms but will also continue to attempt to deescalate tensions.