



## REDEFINING DIPLOMACY IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY & EXAMINING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AN IDEAL DIPLOMAT

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### Abstract

This article focuses on diplomacy and argues that conventional interpretations of diplomacy have fallen behind the dizzying developments of contemporary international relations. And a new account of diplomacy should be given by developing, first and foremost, a more comprehensive, inclusive, and up-to-date definition of the phenomenon. Understanding the transformation that diplomacy has undergone in the historical cycle and exploring the exigencies of its modern incarnation is worthy of more focus in order to grasp a better understanding of world politics. To this end, this contribution primarily tackles “track one” or “traditional” diplomacy and highlights a new and in-depth perspective by scrutinizing diplomacy as the art of conducting various relations between global political actors and examining the characteristics of an ideal diplomat. The grievous and destructive disasters experienced throughout history have revealed that career diplomacy, i.e. the carrying out of diplomacy by professionals, is a unique occupation that requires tactful delicacy and expertise. Accordingly, one side of this study explores the evolution of diplomacy, examining the phenomenon along with the postmodern political environment, which corresponds to a diversification of issues in international politics especially since the 1980s. The other side analyzes the characteristics of an ideal diplomat in order to offer a better insight into the optimal functioning of this essential field.

**Keywords:** Diplomacy, Track One Diplomacy, Ideal Diplomat, Career Diplomacy.

### Introduction

Despite the widespread image of diplomacy as a subfield of International Relations on which many works have been written, and with very little left to survey, contemporary diplomacy, in fact, is a relatively untouched area that needs further study to bring new practical and theoretical perspectives. Indeed, it is inevitable that every concept be re-examined according to the spirit of the time, and the immediate effects of crucial developments compel us to do so. The peace of Westphalia, the Vienna and Aix-la-Chapelle congresses, two devastating world wars, the invention of nuclear weapons, the inauguration of

international regimes, the disintegration of the Soviet Unions and the end of Cold War, the technological revolution and the emergence of global terrorism are just a few examples of numerous noteworthy developments evolving the phenomenon of diplomacy, and urging thinkers to make new interpretations of the concept.

The Cold War dominated politics by prioritizing high politics. And then the world witnessed the end of the Cold War and the declaration of the liberal triumph in the late 1980s.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the impetus of globalization and the “triumph” of the West challenged the *status quo* of the structure of international politics and threatened the limited political agenda of high politics, which ultimately caused a diversification on the political agenda in the 1990s. The emergence and development of globalization holds a particular significance when analyzing the evolution of diplomacy. Although Theodore (Ted) Levitt popularized the term in the marketing sector in 1993, globalization actually emerged as a buzzword after the Cold War; its impact has deepened over the last century, affecting almost every modern phenomenon. Diplomacy has not been exempt from the burst of change fueled by globalization.

During the Post-Cold War period, global political issues diversified substantially. Issues such as global terrorism, refugee problems, environmental pollution, climate change, xenophobia and feminism are not unusual to hear in political discussions and discourses. As a result, “diplomatic activity has multiplied and diversified” (Liebich, 2007: 9). Based on this fact, this paper, focusing on traditional diplomacy, argues that the conventional interpretation of diplomacy has fallen behind the dizzying developments of contemporary international relations. It aims to give a new account of diplomacy and diplomatic practice. To this end, this paper examines the characteristics of an ideal diplomat, and offers a new and in-depth perspective on diplomacy by scrutinizing diplomacy as the art of conducting various relations between global political actors. To limit the framework of this study to a reasonable level, this contribution focuses on “track one” or “traditional” diplomacy (Mapendere, 2005: 66-81). To begin, the historical evolution of diplomacy is touched on briefly.

### **A Glimpse into the Evolution of Diplomacy**

One can view diplomacy as an independent discipline, in addition to being an institution of International Relations<sup>2</sup>. Despite being included under the rubric of International Relations, which emerged as discipline after the First World War, diplomacy long predates

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<sup>1</sup> In his much-cited article “The End of History?”, Francis Fukuyama alleged that the end of the Cold War implied the triumph of Western liberal democracy (Fukuyama, 1989: 3-18).

<sup>2</sup> In line with Onuf and Wendt’s citations, when it is shown with upper case it refers to the discipline, but in the opposite case, a type of relation (Onuf, 1989; Wendt, 1999).

this period. In the sense of carrying out relations in a specified manner between one society and another, foreign society, diplomacy surely dates back even before history; the example of the first diplomats given by 16<sup>th</sup>-century thinkers is that of angels delivering messages between heaven and earth (Nicolson, 1950: 104-126). From a theoretical point of view, the idea of diplomacy, although as old as diplomatic history itself, appears to be contemporaneous with the first alliances and treaties of human societies, emerging in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine, German, and Italian city-states (Weisbrode, 2014: 14-15). In this sense, diplomatic discourse is Western and is predicated on Western history (Neumann, 2005: 72-93). However, from a historical standpoint, it is possible to see examples of diplomacy among the very ancient Egyptians and Hittites.

In prehistoric times, it is estimated that primitive societies gathered together in order to negotiate with one another, to pause to collect and bury their dead and care for their injured, and show they had fought sufficiently at the end of a day of combatting (Nicolson, 1950: 17). One of the most important examples given while mentioning the roots of diplomacy is the Treaty of Kadesh. It is the oldest written international treaty which was signed between the Hittites and Egyptians in the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. (Aruz, Benzel, Evans, 2008: 171). Another example is the Amarna Letters. These letters, which were the writings of the Pharaohs in Ancient Egypt to each other and to their neighbors in the 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., are very significant texts in terms of helping us understand the ways of diplomatic implementation and the social and political conditions of that era (Mynarova, 2007: 185). Put differently, diplomacy is as old as human history itself.

Diplomacy initially emerged as the science of reviewing documents. The term diplomacy, which etymologically means *doubling*, was used for the first time by the Irish-born English statesman and eminent political thinker Edmund Burke in 1796 (Berridge, James, 2003: 70). Incidental to the Italian city-states reciprocal opening of permanent residences on the Italian peninsula, *ad hoc* diplomacy was replaced with resident diplomacy, marking the first transformation phase of the modern diplomatic network, which emerged during the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century (Eilers, 2009: 2-10). Diplomacy acquired its meaning in today's context on the European continent during the 250-year period following the Peace of Westphalia (Berridge, Keens-Soper, Otte, 2001: 1-2).

The procedures put in place during the Congress of Vienna (1815) and the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle (1818) established an important influence in the formation of the rules of protocol and professional diplomacy as such (Nicolson, 1950: 9). However, a significant milestone for diplomacy emerged with the realization of the first of U.S. President Woodrow

Wilson's 14 points, the principles of peace proposed to bring an end to the First World War. Point one emphasized the necessity of the open conduct of diplomacy, which was a real and pivotal change in the nature of diplomatic practice. Wilson, whose prudence has been mostly underestimated, was actually not alone in his initiative to promote open diplomacy. After the October Revolution (1917), the Soviet unveiling of all the secret treaties that Tsarist Russia had been party to, signaled that the era of open diplomacy had already begun. Despite the positive and remarkable developments on behalf of preserving world peace after WWI, Morgenthau, from a pure realistic perspective, asserts that the influential and exceptional position of diplomacy from the time of the 30 Years' War to the First World War cannot be seen in the inter-war period, and that this period comprises the decline of diplomacy (Morgenthau, 1948: 425). However, after WWII along with the emergence of international regimes and organizations, diplomatic practices became more widespread and were implemented in various ways. It should also be noted that the codification of conventional diplomatic methods with the ratification of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR) (1961) contributed significantly to the consolidation of modern diplomatic exercise. In fact, the VCDR further strengthened the open diplomacy promoted by Wilson and others.

### **Diplomacy: Practice and Theory**

Even if it is, in the general sense, possible to define diplomacy as carrying out interstate relations, this corresponds to a narrow definition in contemporary world politics. Although the dominant actors of international politics are arguably still sovereign states, the last century has witnessed a change in the *status quo* of the structure of the international political system. Since the period of *détente* and the end of the Cold War, the world has experienced a diversification of actors in world politics, such as international/regional organizations, supranational companies and NGOs, which has necessitated redefining diplomacy from a wider perspective. Bull's delineation of diplomacy as "the conduct of relations between states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means" is one of the most cited definitions of diplomacy (Bjola, Holmes, 2015: 1-2; Bull, 2012: 156). Bull alleges that this is the widest sense of the term (Bull, 2012: 156), yet it is possible to give a shorter and more encapsulating definition. Accordingly, diplomacy can be briefly defined as the art of conducting various relations between actors of global politics.

Diplomacy, according to Berridge and James, is a concept describing the official communication channels used by members of the system of states and the carrying out of communications between sovereign states through officials possessing the title of temporary

diplomat<sup>3</sup> or those who are members of the diplomatic services; diplomacy in this sense includes positioning personnel in permanent residential locations to represent the state in international organizations. States, although they are nominal personalities, cannot establish communication as individuals; however, they can establish communication through individuals acting as their representatives (Berridge, James, 2003: 70). One might think that today's technological capabilities would render face-to-face diplomacy absolute. However, due to the various drawbacks of technology, establishing communication by means of diplomatic missions to other states still forms the backbone of diplomacy (Berridge, James, 2003: 70). Thus, diplomacy is the basic tool which can ensure that states establish regular and diverse relations with one another and it is actually the name of the communication system of international society (Berridge, James, 2003: 69-70). In a similar way, Rana predicts no radical change in the role of foreign ministries or residential representations concerning the emergence of any alternative to them (Rana, 2013: 15-16). Thus, despite the multiplicity of increasing channels of communication, residential diplomatic representation preserves its importance in regard to diplomatic functions.

Diplomacy, according to the noted English diplomat Ernest M. Satow, is the implementation of grace and intelligence in conducting official relations between independent state governments and also establishing relationship even with certain vassal states (Neumann, 2005: 72-93). Diplomacy is enacted through various tools by which nations establish and maintain communication with one another in today's world; it provides a framework through which they cooperate by means of international mechanisms and institutions on matters such as military intervention, trade, economics, cultural exchange, peace settlements, and so on (Eilers, 2009: 1-4). Therefore, the modern understanding of diplomacy accepts it as a tool used in carrying out relations among essentially sovereign states (Eilers, 2009: 1). However, diplomacy is not merely an effective form of communication between agents. It ensures the possibility for states to be able to negotiate and establish communication autonomously with one another despite limitations and domestic political repression (Bloom, 1990: 154). In the words of Jönsson and Hall, "whenever and wherever there are polities with distinct identities, who see the need to establish exchange relations of some kind and realize their interdependence, diplomatic rules and roles are likely to emerge" (Jönsson, Hall, 2005: 26). In this sense, diplomacy and diplomatic rules stem from social needs.

Hedley Bull points out four functions of diplomacy in his book *Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*. The first of these functions is to make diplomatic

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<sup>3</sup> The staff working in a diplomatic service without being a member of a foreign ministry.

communication possible between different components in global politics and among state leaders (Bull, 2002: 164). According to Bull, without communication, neither the international community nor the international system would exist. Therefore, the basic function of diplomats is to be messengers and, in order for them to be able to carry out this function effectively, observance of the principle of security, according to which the receiving state does not execute or use any force against an ambassador, is crucial (Bull, 2002: 164-165). This may be accepted as a settled norm<sup>4</sup> in international relations and it was specified in VCDR. Indeed, the famous saying “do not kill the messenger” has become an adage in both political and daily life.

The second function of diplomacy illustrated by Bull is to negotiate treaties. If treaties were not negotiated, international relations would still be possible; however, it would likely involve only short-lived and hostile encounters between the parties. Even if the parties desire different things, treaties overlap these differences to find compromise. Thus, the duty of diplomacy and diplomats, by determining the overlapping interests, is to help parties discern this phenomenon via persuasion and reasoning. In cases where a state’s foreign policy involves building a universal hegemony or some sort of authority over its counterparts or rivals, or if others’ gain is ignored, then there is hardly anything diplomacy might be able to do at this point (Bull, 2002: 164-165). In the absence of such selfish ambitions, negotiation ensures that the conflicting parties can discuss their matters of discord at the backstage far from public attention. This kind of diplomatic practice allows the disputing states not only to express their true wishes and positions, but also to avoid losing prestige in a way that would harm their identities (Bloom, 1990: 155).

Diplomacy’s third function, according to Bull, is to collect intelligence and information pertaining to other countries. Therefore, in order to be able to construct its foreign policy, a state does not want other states to gather information about itself, yet desires to possess information about others (Bull, 2002: 164). However, in certain specific matters, states provide access to information on a reciprocal basis in the modern diplomatic system. In this context, diplomats play an essential role in the process of gathering information in those permissible fields (Bull, 2002: 164-165). The fourth function of diplomacy, proceeds Bull, is to minimize conflicts emerging in international politics. Accordingly, as a natural facet of body politics, there have always been disputes between political communities possessing different values, judgments, preoccupations, prejudices and sensitivities which form the basis

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<sup>4</sup> For the concept of “settled norm” in IR see Frost, M (1996). *Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p 104 -112.

of international tension. Herein, diplomats, as the executors of diplomacy, have a function to reduce tensions and, whenever possible, resolve them (Bull, 2002: 164-165).

When the phenomenon of diplomacy is being discussed, the concept of negotiation needs to be analyzed with an in-depth understanding;<sup>5</sup> indeed, “diplomacy turns chiefly on regular and regularized negotiation, and its advent was a moment of profound historical importance” (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte, 2001:1). In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Cardinal Richelieu is said to have referred to “continuous negotiation” (Weisbrode, 2014: 45). While power is shared and dispersed between numerous states, negotiation will continue to preserve its vitality. Therefore, the only activity that will be able to produce the advantages that can be gained from the pursuit of common interests and prevent the ongoing, persisting discords among the parties from turning into conflict is negotiation (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte, 2001: 1-2). Even if war were to erupt, limiting and diminishing the violence of war and starting the reconciliation period would only be possible through negotiation. Thus, diplomacy functions fundamentally as a defense against international chaos by establishing and administering dialogue between states (Berridge, Keens-Soper and Otte, 2001: 1-2). Furthermore, negotiation is the core of diplomacy and, although some treaties include technical components which do not entail diplomatic specialization, it is the job of diplomats and of diplomacy to indicate and implement the procedures of pre and post-negotiation (Rana, 2013:15-16). In short, negotiation is the heart of diplomacy and positioned at its epicenter.

Devising a relatively modern definition for diplomacy, Barston expands the concept by including relations between states and non-state actors, stating, “diplomacy is concerned with the management of relations between states and between states and other actors” (Barston, 2014: 1). In this way, he expands the scope of diplomacy. From the perspective of the state, the functions of diplomacy include inculcating, shaping and implementing foreign policy. In this regard, diplomacy is the sum of the tools with which states preserve and communicate their interests in both narrow and wide circles via officials and other representatives, thereby engaging in a number of activities such as corresponding, meeting with one another, exchanging perspectives, lobbying, visiting, and even threatening (Barston, 2014: 1). Although diplomacy calls for peaceful activities, it can be implemented while using force, for example, with an airspace permission request for an air attack or during an armed struggle in war (Barston, 2014: 1). In this sense, paradoxically, diplomacy might be deemed a double-faced phenomenon.

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<sup>5</sup> The 3<sup>rd</sup> article of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations addresses one of the functions of a diplomatic mission as “Negotiating with the Government of the receiving State”. Accessible from: [http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9\\_1\\_1961.pdf](http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_1_1961.pdf), retrieved 13 February 2018.

To summarize the concept up to this point, diplomacy is the art of management that uses the mechanisms of coercion and consent among the various actors of international politics. The word “art” used here is a conscious choice. Since the execution of global relations has taken on a gradually more complex appearance today, approaching world affairs with artistic proficiency has become almost a *sine qua non*. The underlying reason for that involves change in the type of actors and relations of the Westphalian system. In today's post-Westphalian international political system, it has become more difficult than ever to take the right decisions to manage the immediate and dizzying developments affecting relations in the global context.

Global terrorism, epitomized in the 9/11 attacks, has further complicated the job of diplomats and the function of diplomacy. More particularly, establishing relations with a sovereign state as a legitimate political actor in the international system by favor of the tools of diplomacy is more likely possible within the framework of *pacta sunt servanda* (agreements must be kept). However, global terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and Daesh, which disregard international law and use terror as a means to achieve their political/ideological goals, threaten the framework itself. Therefore, issues of the post-modern period such as cultural differences, sexual discrimination, xenophobia, migration, human trafficking, terrorism, human rights, and so on compel attention to *low politics*. Thus the proliferation of many forms of diplomacy in today's world such as dollar diplomacy, oil diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy, environmental diplomacy, shuttle diplomacy, public diplomacy, summit diplomacy, cable diplomacy, soccer diplomacy, gunboat diplomacy, digital diplomacy and so on (Liebich, 2007: 9). Table 1 describes the most common types of diplomacy and offers some specific examples.

**Table 1.** Types of Diplomacy

Type	Description	Notable Examples
<b>Dollar diplomacy</b>	Using loans and debts to acquire state interests or aims. Dollars/loans/debt is a tool for hegemony over weaker states <sup>6</sup>	American aid after WWII as a part of the Marshall Plan
<b>Oil diplomacy</b>	Securing oil/energy demand and defending the position of a country by using oil resources as leverage in power politics (Hartshorn, 1973: 281-290)	The five-month oil embargo against the West by OPEC in retaliation for the 1973 Arab-Israeli War
<b>Shuttle diplomacy</b>	"Discussions between two or more countries, in which someone travels between the different countries, talking to the governments involved, carrying messages, and suggesting ways of dealing with problems" <sup>7</sup>	Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's engagement in the Arab-Israeli War in 1973 <sup>8</sup>
<b>Humanitarian diplomacy</b>	Diplomacy executed by governments, non-political agencies, NGOs, international organizations or groups with humanitarian concerns to protect and support those who need humanitarian assistance (Smith, Minear, 2007: 1-4)	Activities of agencies or societies such as UNHCR, ICRC and Doctors Without Borders (MSF)
<b>Environmental diplomacy</b>	Applying international cooperation to find solutions for environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, nuclear waste, and extinction of plant and animal species (Benedick, 1998: 3-12)	Negotiations held under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) <sup>9</sup>
<b>Public diplomacy</b>	"Conveying information and selling a positive image to a foreign public and building long-term relationships that create an enabling environment for government policies" (Nye, 2004: 107)	American and British claims that Saddam Hussein's regime had weapons of mass destruction and its ties to Al Qaeda swayed public opinion to support the Iraq War (Nye, 2004: 107)
<b>Intermediary diplomacy</b>	Peaceful settlement of disputes between states through negotiations with the help of a third party as facilitator	UN Secretary General Annan's engagement in the Cyprus question
<b>Summit diplomacy</b>	Exchanging views via summits held by leaders	Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's meeting with his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif in Lahore (Haidar, 2015)
<b>Cable/telephone diplomacy</b>	Phone conversation or sending telegrams by leaders to exchange views on world affairs	The U.S. and USSR established a direct communication channel known as the "hot line" during the Cold War. It was first used upon Israel's unexpected attack on Egypt during the Arab-Israeli War in 1967 (Marková, Gillespie, 2011: 151-152).
<b>Football diplomacy/Ping pong diplomacy</b>	Mending broken relations or promoting current ones by organizing or participating in joint sport activities	The U.S. table tennis team's visit to Beijing for some matches in 1971 upon China's invitation during the Cold War era. The dialogue for reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia via a football match in 2009 <sup>10</sup>
<b>Gunboat diplomacy</b>	"The use or threat of limited naval force, otherwise than as an act of war, in order to secure advantage or to avert loss, either in the furtherance of an international dispute or else against foreign nationals within the territory or the jurisdiction of their own state" (James, 1994: 14).	1. The Perry Expedition (1853-54) of US Navy which ended Japan's isolation 2. During the second Moroccan Crisis of 1911, the Germans sent the Panther gunboat to the Port of Agadir.
<b>Digital diplomacy</b>	Stimulating foreign policy interests using the internet and IT and communication technologies in diplomatic practices such as information management, public diplomacy, strategy planning, international negotiations and crisis management (Bjola, Holmes, 2015: 1-11).	Ministry of Foreign Affairs' (MFA) and ambassadors' use of social media in public diplomacy

<sup>6</sup> In his address entitled "The True Meaning of Dollar Diplomacy" at the third National Peace Congress in Baltimore, in 1911, Huntington Wilson, then US Assistant Secretary of State, defines this type of diplomacy as, "I use the newly-coined phrase, Dollar Diplomacy, in another sense. It means using the capital of the country in the foreign field in a manner calculated to enhance fixed national policies. It means the substitution of dollars for bullets. It means the creation of a prosperity which will be preferred to predatory strife. It means availing of capital's self-interest in peace. It means taking advantage of the interest in peace of those who benefit by the investment of capital. It recognizes that financial soundness is a potent factor in political stability; that prosperity means contentment, and contentment means repose." (Wilson, 1911: 160-161 )

<sup>7</sup> "shuttle-diplomacy" retrieved from [www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org) on 2 May 2018.

<sup>8</sup> "shuttle-diplomacy" retrieved from [www.history.state.gov](http://www.history.state.gov) on 2 May 2018.

<sup>9</sup> "UNFCCC Process" retrieved from [www.unfccc.int](http://www.unfccc.int) on 3 May 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Football Diplomacy, The Economist, retrieved from [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com) on 7 May 2018. For a theoretical framework; Football Diplomacy, Maia Manchkhshvili, *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, March 2017, Vol. 7, No. 3, 366-375,

Another common distinction of diplomacy is carried out pursuant to “tracks”. Track one and track two are the most common types of this distinction. Track one diplomacy is the traditional one reflecting the official interactions and it goes back a long way in history (Mapendere, 2005: 68). However track two diplomacy is a relatively new complementary of track one and is defined as “the unofficial, constructive interaction between adversaries in political conflicts” (Montville, 2006: 7-15). Track three diplomacy also takes place in literature but not as common as the first two. Kraft notes “track three networks proved a forum for those communities marginalized by an international system that gives primacy of place to states and their officially-declared concerns. In this context, track three diplomacy has become an alternative form of diplomacy” (Kraft, 2002: 60).

This multiplicity of diplomacy and the diversification in the wide arrange of global affairs require those who implement diplomacy to be more qualified and equipped in terms of expertise and communication. Concordantly, the following section examines the characteristics of an ideal diplomat.

### **Career Diplomacy and the Characteristics of an Ideal Diplomat**

The anarchic nature of the global political system and the attributes of international political issues, increasingly becoming more intricate, necessitate that these issues be approached with artful sensibility. If diplomacy is described as the art of conducting relations between international political actors, then the diplomat becomes the person who carries out this art. As such, a diplomat is the person who executes the career of diplomacy in a professional manner as a member of a diplomatic service without regard as to whether or not his/her innate talent towards the profession exists (Berridge, James, 2003: 70). All public officials employed in diplomatic affairs, regardless of whether they are career officer in the capital service or abroad, are called diplomats, even if they have a separate political identity (Gore-Booth, 1979: 7). Foreign policy is organized at the convenience of the representatives elected in democratic countries and the implementation of this policy is carried out by professionals with experience and grace (Nicolson, 1950: 12).

Diplomacy is an ancient profession and the personal abilities of a diplomat are quite in the limelight. Diplomats, having a profession existing since time immemorial, are the intermediaries of international politics and therefore they should have even greater abilities and better behaviors than those expected from other statesmen. The absence of a hierarchical order among sovereign states, the nature of the international system, and the inevitability of sudden and unexpected developments in global politics make it essential for diplomats to have some distinguished innate

or learned capabilities in order to protect the interests of the states they represent. Diplomats, first and foremost, are the symbolic representatives of their country and, as such, endeavor to preserve the prestige of their state. They are also the legal representatives of the sending state, and can be authorized to vote in an international organization or sign a treaty on behalf of their country. It is the most important function of diplomats to shape the foreign policy of their country together with the foreign ministry, which brings them to the level of their country's political representatives in the receiving country. In this sense, diplomats ensure two-way communication between their own country and the hosting one (Morgenthau, 1948: 422-424). Kopp and Gillespie describe the characteristics of a diplomat as follows:

Diplomatic professionals are skilled in negotiation, communication, persuasion, reporting, analysis, and management. They recognize ambiguity and dissembling and can practice both when necessary. They know foreign languages, cultures, and interests, and they have learned, with respect to at least some parts of the world, how other governments make decisions and carry them out and what moves societies to action and change. Equally important, they have learned how their own government works-its politics, laws, and bureaucratic processes. They know where diplomacy fits in the array of tools the nation can deploy to assert its interests, and they can work effectively with military and intelligence professionals in pursuit of common objectives (Kopp, Gillespie, 2011: 7)

As Kopp and Gillespie note, it is true that diplomats should have all the answers about the functioning of their government. However, more importantly, they should also have an insight into their own society, culture and language, i.e., identity. They should execute their state's foreign policy in a manner to minimize differences and tensions between the country they represent, the host country, and the outside world.

On the other hand, it may be observed that there are "sacred" modes of communications and rituals such as the protocol of seating arrangements in a conference or the precedence of an ambassador while presenting a letter of credence which have emerged during the course of the history of diplomacy (Bloom, 1990: 154). These rituals allow diplomats to escape the narrowness of their national identity and lead them to create a more transnational one. The development of this identity ultimately allows them to carry out their activities while eluding some of the negative aspects of domestic policy dynamics (Bloom, 1990: 154-155). The common image of diplomats, in which they are regarded as aristocrats, is perhaps rooted in a simple assumption; they live as world citizens with universal values and behavioral codes.

An array of attributes, such as being a good theologian and scientist, poet, historian; being wealthy, possessing a good physical appearance and coming from an excellent family, which

characterized an ideal diplomat in the Middle Ages, have lost their importance in today's world, says Harold Nicolson, a former English diplomat and thinker. He recommends that a diplomat should be a good negotiator. Several characteristics, such as prudence, hospitality, knowledge, and intelligence should be found in an ideal and successful diplomat or negotiator; these merits speak for themselves. However, seven virtues should be highlighted: truthfulness, precision, calm, good temper, patience, modesty, and loyalty (Nicolson, 1950: 104). Of these, the most important is truthfulness. Accordingly, a diplomat not only abstains from false statement, but at the same time it is vital for him/her to show great attention to avoid dissembling the truth. Contrary to the Machiavelli's doctrine (Machiavelli, 2008), the negotiator should not apply dishonesty just because the other side did. The second most important characteristic of a diplomat, proceeds Nicolson, is precision. In professional diplomacy there is no room for imprecision and an ambassador takes instructions always in a written form and transmits his/her government's message to the receiving government via a *note verbale*. In some instances, she/he can convey the instructions or her/his government's message on a subject during a meeting. However, depending on the importance of the subject of the meeting, he/she is expected to bring a short *synopsis* or *aide-memoire*. The underlying rationale for applying this procedure stringently is a very simple yet important fact; there are many ruinous misunderstandings in the history of diplomatic interactions (Nicolson, 1950: 104-126).

Hedley Bull describes an ideal diplomat's characteristics as follows:

The diplomatist, or at all events the 'ideal diplomatist', helps to minimize friction through the conventions he observes in dealing with foreign officials, and also through his influence upon his own state's policy. In dealing with the representatives of other states, he observes conventions of language. In advancing or defending his own state's interests he seeks always to keep his objective in view, and use only those arguments that will promote the end in view, avoiding arguments that are intended to give vent to feelings or to satisfy his own or his country's pride or vanity. He seeks always to reason or persuade rather than to bully or threaten. He tries to show that the objective for which he is seeking is consistent with the other party's interests, as well as with his own. He prefers to speak of 'rights' rather than of 'demands', and to show that these rights flow from rules or principles which both states hold in common, and which the other state has already conceded. He tries to find the objective for which he is seeking in a framework of shared interest and agreed principle that is common ground between the parties concerned (Bull, 2002: 165-166).

Some may criticize Bull's views as excessively optimistic; however, he actually gives valuable tips for today's diplomats. While academics can express normative truths without

twisting them, diplomats whose job is to minimize conflicts cannot act so freely and they discreetly might abstain from explaining cold facts.

Diplomats generally handle diplomacy as a professional field of occupation. This professionalism requires mentor-mentee education and specialization in certain skills. A diplomat, who begins from the first steps of the career, has the chance to advance in the career steps and a number of codes of behavior and qualifications traditionally expected from him/her (Kopp, Gillespie, 2011: 63). As an example of a distinguished career diplomat, George F. Kennan was substantially impressive at forming the US foreign policy toward the USSR soon after WWII. When he was *Chargé d'Affaires* in Moscow in 1946, he articulated the “containment policy” with his famous “Long Telegram” consisting of 8,000-words<sup>11</sup>. Then in 1952, he was appointed as US ambassador to Moscow where he was declared *persona non grata*. Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon also was a career diplomat in the South Korean Foreign Office. Influential ministers of foreign affairs include, Talleyrand of France, Metternich of Austria and Kissinger of U.S., however, they were not career diplomats.

Career diplomacy actually is a relatively new phenomenon in comparison with diplomacy. This is due to the late emergence of resident diplomacy and Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFA)s. The first MFA was established in France in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when Cardinal Richelieu foresaw the necessity of forming a separate ministry to manage foreign affairs (Hocking, 1999: 3), another token of his statecraft and brilliance. Since then, the significance of career diplomacy has been on the rise. Conversely, the political appointment of *non-career* ambassadors has given rise to controversy, and is generally considered superfluous both in terms of bureaucracy and foreign offices. The main reason for this controversy is concern about to what extent non-professionalism can fulfill diplomatic criteria such as delicacy and professionalism.

In the United States, the 2:1 ratio (of career to non-career diplomats), which John F. Kennedy implemented in the ministry, is practically as same today despite some slight increases/decreases under some administrations (Kopp, Gillespie, 2011: 63). Therefore, the U.S. chooses nearly 30% of the chiefs of its missions from those who are not career diplomats. However, according to the Academy of Diplomacy, this percentage should not exceed 10%.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, non-career ambassadors could also carry out the job professionally. What is important is whether or not merit is considered in an appointment; in

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<sup>11</sup> “George Kennan and Containment” retrieved from [history.state.gov](http://history.state.gov), on 18 May 2018.

<sup>12</sup> The Academy of Diplomacy is a community of American ambassadors those who are both on active duty and retired. According to recommendation 3a of “*American Diplomacy at Risk*” Report, the number of politically appointed ambassadors should not exceed 10 percent of all ambassadorial appointments. The report is available at [http://academyofdiplomacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/American\\_Diplomacy\\_at\\_Risk\\_Recommendations.pdf](http://academyofdiplomacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/American_Diplomacy_at_Risk_Recommendations.pdf). According to AFSA, bargaining agent on behalf of the US State Department employees, political appointments of ambassadors should be an exceptional practice. For AFSA statement: <http://www.afsa.org/afsa-statement-ambassadors>.

spite of several unsatisfactory appointments, there exist many examples of fruitful political appointments (Kopp, Gillespie, 2011: 63). Keeping the significance of career diplomacy in mind, non-career diplomats can also add a surplus value in the conduction of foreign affairs in world politics. For example, Charles H. Rivkin, who was appointed as U.S. Ambassador to Paris by the Obama Administration, was called “a visionary non-career ambassador” and he was accepted as having done well during his term of office (Knowlton, 2013)<sup>13</sup>. Another success story of a non-career diplomat is that of Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He was a professor at Cairo University before being Egyptian Foreign Minister. Then he took office as UN Secretary-General from 1992 to 1996 and contributed significantly to world peace as one of the most prominent and influential UN Secretary-Generals of all time.

### **Conclusion**

Diplomacy maintains its crucial relevance to the optimal functioning of global politics today. Its modern-day incarnation is a relatively untouched area that needs further study, especially if the structural and political changes that emerged in the post-Cold War period are considered. The change process fueled by the buzzword *globalization* entails new interpretations of the concept. Conventional interpretations of diplomacy have fallen behind the dizzying developments of contemporary international relations, where global political issues such as radical terrorism, the refugee problem, environmental pollution, climate change, xenophobia and gender issues require expert attention in order to be addressed adequately and with regard to cultural difference. As a new definition of diplomacy, the art of conducting various relations between global political actors is recommended as more comprehensive, inclusive and up-to-date.

As the implementers of diplomacy, diplomats retain their vital importance in the preservation of international peace and stability. In this sense, the ideal diplomat provides a contribution developed from the perspective of his/her country’s cultural, political, social, economic perspective, and which takes into consideration the merits of the host country’s ( or other, significant global actor’s) perspectives with skillfulness and respect.

When relations are going smoothly, the vital importance of diplomacy is usually ignored. Then, diplomats stand at the backstage. However, when things start to deteriorate, professional diplomacy is called upon to restore harmony. When diplomacy fails, it corresponds to the downfall of hope, and the beginning of chaos. Its rise may uncover a glimmer of hope for peace and stability.

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