

HISTORICAL STAGES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DIPLOMACY AND DIPLOMATIC SERVICE AND ITS MODERN IMAGE.

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Abstract: This article examines the historical stages of the development of diplomacy and diplomatic service and analyzes their contemporary transformation. It systematically explores diplomacy in the ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern periods. Particular attention is given to the institutionalization of diplomatic service, the emergence of permanent embassies, the evolution of international legal norms, and the rise of multilateral diplomacy within the framework of the United Nations. The study further highlights the main types of contemporary diplomacy, including economic diplomacy, public diplomacy, soft power, digital diplomacy, and the growing role of non-state actors in global governance.

Keywords: diplomacy, diplomatic service, international relations, Westphalian system, United Nations, multilateral diplomacy, economic diplomacy, public diplomacy, digital diplomacy, soft power.

Annotatsiya: Mazkur maqolada diplomatiya va diplomatik xizmatning tarixiy rivojlanishi bosqichlari hamda ularning zamonaviy qiyofasi ilmiy tahlil qilinadi. Qadimgi davr diplomatiyasidan boshlab o'rta asrlar, yangi davr va zamonaviy diplomatiyagacha bo'lgan evolyusion jarayonlar tizimli ravishda yoritiladi. Shuningdek, diplomatik xizmatning institutlashuvi, doimiy elchixonalar tizimining shakllanishi, xalqaro huquq normalarining rivojlanishi hamda BMT tizimi doirasida ko'p tomonlama diplomatiyaning kuchayishi tahlil qilinadi. Maqolada zamonaviy diplomatiyaning asosiy xususiyatlari – iqtisodiy diplomatiya, jamoat diplomatiyasi, “yumshoq kuch”, raqamli diplomatiya va ko'p aktyorli xalqaro tizim sharoitida diplomatik xizmatning transformatsiyasi keng yoritilgan.

Kalit so'zlar: diplomatiya, diplomatik xizmat, xalqaro munosabatlar, Vestfaliya tizimi, BMT, ko'p tomonlama diplomatiya, iqtisodiy diplomatiya, jamoat diplomatiyasi, raqamli diplomatiya, yumshoq kuch.

Аннотация: В статье анализируются исторические этапы развития дипломатии и дипломатической службы, а также их современная трансформация. Последовательно рассматриваются особенности дипломатии древнего периода, средневековья, нового времени и современной эпохи. Особое внимание уделяется институционализации дипломатической службы, формированию системы постоянных посольств, развитию норм международного права и становлению многосторонней дипломатии в рамках Организации Объединённых Наций. В работе также раскрываются ключевые характеристики современной дипломатии, включая экономическую дипломатию, публичную дипломатию, концепцию «мягкой силы», цифровую дипломатию и роль негосударственных акторов в международных отношениях.

Ключевые слова: дипломатия, дипломатическая служба, международные отношения, Вестфальская система, ООН, многосторонняя дипломатия, экономическая дипломатия, публичная дипломатия, цифровая дипломатия, мягкая сила.

INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy has developed throughout human history as an important instrument for regulating relations between states, political entities, and civilizations. It has performed different functions such as preventing armed conflicts, resolving disputes through negotiations, establishing trade-economic and cultural relations, and protecting political interests. Historical experience shows that diplomacy has often served as a decisive factor in resolving issues of war and peace, even determining the fate of entire people and states.

Therefore, studying the history of diplomacy and how the diplomatic service was formed and evolved has significant importance for understanding both the theory and practice of international relations, as well as for comprehending the mechanisms of modern foreign policy. Diplomacy is not only the art of negotiation but also a means of advancing state interests, maintaining balance, and ensuring the stability of the international system.

The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, stated: “First of all, our main goal will be to further close to dan keyin darhol fe’l ishlatish kerak furtherni close dan oldin ishlatgan yaxshi vergul bilan) strengthen close friendship, good-neighborliness, and strategic partnership relations with the countries of our region.

We will pay special attention to expanding mutually beneficial and multifaceted relations with both near and distant countries of the world...

“We will elevate multilateral relations to a new stage with the United Nations and its specialized structures, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Organization of Turkic States, the Economic Cooperation Organization, and other international, regional organizations as well as financial institutions”¹ clearly expresses the strategic directions of the diplomacy of Uzbekistan.

DISCUSSION

During the development of humanity, the content and form of diplomacy have changed. Changes in political systems, state structures, legal norms, and the international environment have directly influenced to the diplomatic practice. Conditionally, the development of diplomacy can be divided into historical stages such as ancient, medieval, new period, and modern diplomacy. The following, we analyze the main characteristics of these stages more broadly.

Ancient diplomacy: The earliest manifestations of diplomacy began to take shape during the period of the most ancient civilizations. In the III–II millennia BC, among the Sumerian, Akkadian, and Babylonian city-states which were existed in the territory of Ancient Mesopotamia, the practice of concluding trade relations, military alliances, and territorial agreements was widespread. In these processes, methods such as sending envoys, concluding written agreements, and exchanging gifts were used widely.

Written agreements were aimed at regulating territorial disputes between Sumerian states dating back to the XXIV century BC were considered among the oldest diplomatic documents in history. In particular, agreements concerning the border issue between the city-states of Lagash and Umma demonstrated the formation of diplomatic practice. These documents were recorded on clay tablets, and their content reflected norms such as defining borders and responsibility for violating the terms of agreements.

In the civilizations of the Ancient East, diplomacy often relied on personal relations between rulers. Correspondence was conducted between the Egyptian pharaohs and the rulers of the Near East. The famous Amarna archives dating back to the XIV century BC reflect

¹ Mirziyoyev Sh.M. Bir bo‘lsak – yagona xalqmiz, birlashsak – vatanmiz. – Toshkent: O‘zbekiston, 2024. – B.22.

diplomatic correspondence between Egypt and other states. These documents confirm that international relations were conducted on the basis of a certain protocol.

One of the important monuments of ancient diplomacy is the peace treaty concluded between Egypt and the Hittite Kingdom after the Battle of Kadesh in 1274 BC. This agreement is considered one of the first written international peace treaties in history. It established norms such as mutual assistance, military alliance, and the return of fugitives, reflecting the early forms of today's principles of international law.

In the ancient world, there was no institution of permanent ambassadors, but traditions of sending special missions and envoys had already formed. During the period of prosperity, Ancient Egypt conducted diplomatic relations with neighboring states by sending gifts and letters. In Ancient Indian sources (for example, in the treatise "Arthashastra"), information is provided about the appointment of envoys and their duties, which shows the existence of early elements of diplomatic theory in the Indian subcontinent. In Ancient China, diplomacy manifested in the form of a tributary system. The Chinese imperial court accepted tribute from neighboring vassal states through envoys and, in return, granted them protection and trade privileges². This system, unlike modern equal diplomatic relations, had a hierarchical character.

At the same time, in the ancient world, the concept of diplomatic etiquette and the inviolability of envoys also began to take shape. For example, the ancient Greeks considered envoys and messengers sacred and adhered to the principle of not harming them. The concept of "ius gentium" (law of nations) used in the Roman Empire meant legal and ethical norms common to all peoples and served to ensure the inviolability of envoys. Even in ancient times, disrespect toward envoys was considered a great disgrace. During the Mongol period, it is known from history that Genghis Khan regarded the killing of envoys sent to his enemies as an extremely grave crime and took ruthless revenge against such states.

In general, although diplomacy in the ancient period was not permanently institutionalized, it formed the initial principles of international communication and negotiations. It was precisely during this period that diplomatic customs such as concluding the first treaties, sending envoys, and ceremonially receiving guest delegations emerged³. These traditions laid the foundation for diplomatic practice in subsequent centuries.

The main characteristics of ancient diplomacy were as follows:

- conducting diplomatic relations at the level of personal rulers;
- the important role of gifts and symbolic ceremonies;
- the temporary nature of diplomatic missions;
- the use of peace treaties and military alliances as the main diplomatic instruments;
- the active use of military force alongside diplomacy.

Thus, although ancient diplomacy existed in a primitive form, it occupies an important place in history as the first attempt to regulate interstate relations on the basis of certain rules. In later periods, this experience was further developed and served as the foundation for more complex diplomatic systems.

Medieval diplomacy: During the medieval period, diplomacy developed on the basis of traditions inherited from the ancient world, but under new political and religious conditions. As a result of the collapse of the Roman Empire, the centralized political structure in Europe disintegrated, and diplomatic relations were carried out mainly between imperial authority,

² <https://www.britannica.com/topic/tributary-system> (10.01.2026).

³ Nazarova G.G., Azimov A.E., Adilova Z.D., Eshtaev A.A., Yusupov A.S. Xalqaro diplomatik munosabatlar: o'quv qo'llanma. – Toshkent, 2009. – B.125.

church institutions, and major feudal rulers. In this period, diplomacy often relied on religious legitimation and a system of personal loyalty.

One of the most developed examples of medieval diplomacy was manifested in the activities of the Byzantine Empire. Byzantine rulers considered diplomacy to be a political instrument equal in importance to military power. They exercised political influence by setting neighboring peoples against each other, concluding peace agreements, arranging dynastic marriages, giving material gifts, and granting honorary titles. Byzantine diplomacy is famous in history as one of the practical manifestations of the principle of “divide and rule.” Ceremonies for receiving foreign envoys at the Constantinople court were conducted according to an extremely carefully developed protocol. Through these ceremonies, the power of the empire was demonstrated and external political influence was strengthened. Byzantine diplomacy greatly influenced on later European diplomatic traditions.

In medieval Europe, the Papacy (the Pope of Rome) emerged as an important subject of diplomacy. The popes acted not only as religious leaders but also as political figures. By sending legates (special representatives), they established relations with European rulers, mediated in resolving conflicts, and organized crusades. An important feature of Papal diplomacy was that it sought to view the entire Christian world as a single political and cultural space. Therefore, Papal diplomacy possessed a universal character that stood above state borders.

During the period of the Crusades in the XI–XIII centuries, diplomacy developed closely connected with military actions. For example, the truce agreement concluded in 1192 between King Richard I of England, known as Richard the Lionheart, and the Ayyubid sultan Saladin temporarily halted military confrontation in the Near East. This agreement was an example of medieval diplomacy in the spirit of realpolitik, demonstrating that agreements could be achieved through negotiations despite religious confrontation.

In Central Asia and the Near East, diplomacy was quite active during the medieval period. During the Abbasid Caliphate, the caliphs of Baghdad conducted regular diplomatic correspondence with Byzantium, the Frankish state, and other political powers. Exchanges of envoys, trade agreements, and political arrangements existed. For example, the Mongol Empire introduced a distinctive approach to diplomacy. Genghis Khan and his successors sent letters to other states containing strict demands. These letters often had an ultimatum character and demanded submission. If envoys were killed or insulted, this was regarded as a basis for war.

At the same time, Mongol diplomacy also served to open extensive trade routes, ensure the safety of envoys, and develop transcontinental connections.

The most important turning point in medieval diplomacy was connected with the activities of the Italian Renaissance cities in the fifteenth century. Political rivalry among city-states such as Venice, Florence, Milan, and others required the maintenance of permanent representatives. As a result, the institution of permanent resident ambassadors was formed. In the 1450s, the Duke of Milan maintained a permanent representative in Genoa, and in 1463 a resident ambassador was sent to the Kingdom of France. This was an important stage in the history of diplomacy toward the formation of a professional diplomatic service. By the sixteenth century, this experience had spread throughout Europe.

In medieval diplomacy, ceremonies, rituals, and protocol held significant importance. Traditions such as ceremonially receiving envoys, exchanging gifts, and writing letters in a special style became generally accepted forms. For example, the letters sent by Amir Temur to European rulers demonstrate the high level of development of diplomatic language.

Although medieval diplomacy was in the hands of religious and imperial centers, by the Renaissance it evolved into professional and interstate diplomacy. In particular, the emergence of the institution of permanent embassies became the main factor in the transition to modern diplomacy.

Modern period diplomacy: Modern period diplomacy usually covers the stage from the sixteenth century to the period of the First World War. Its theoretical foundations and international-legal formation are connected with the Peace of Westphalia treaties of 1648. The Peace of Westphalia strengthened the principles of state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs. This turned official relations between equal states into a norm in diplomacy⁴. After this, national states in Europe began to centralize foreign policy.

In France, Cardinal Richelieu placed foreign policy under centralized control in 1626. Later, ministries of foreign affairs were established in Great Britain (Foreign Office in 1782), the Russian Empire, and other states. This demonstrated that diplomacy had risen to the level of a professional state apparatus. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the ranks of diplomatic representatives were officially defined: ambassador, minister plenipotentiary, chargé d'affaires, and others. The Aachen Protocol of 1818 further clarified this system. As a result, the diplomatic corps, protocol, and accreditation system became standardized.

In the nineteenth century, diplomacy expanded beyond European borders and acquired a global character. Under conditions of colonialism, diplomatic instruments served the interests of empires. At the same time, Japan (Meiji reforms, 1868) and China (Zongli Yamen, 1861) began to adopt modern diplomacy.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, diplomacy came under public oversight. In 1918, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, in his "14 Points" program, put forward the idea of abandoning secret diplomacy. This was the beginning of the concept of new diplomacy.

The League of Nations, established in 1919, became the first global diplomatic platform in history. Although it was unable to prevent the Second World War, it later laid the foundation for the establishment of the United Nations.

Modern period diplomacy is characterized by the strengthening of the system of permanent embassies, the formation of diplomatic law, and the emergence of multilateral conferences and global diplomatic institutions. These processes created a solid institutional foundation for contemporary diplomacy.

Contemporary diplomacy: Contemporary diplomacy refers to diplomatic activity from the second half of the twentieth century — in particular, from the period after the Second World War to the present day. The new international order formed after 1945, the factor of nuclear weapons, ideological confrontations, the collapse of the colonial system, and globalization processes fundamentally changed the content, form, and instruments of diplomacy. If modern period diplomacy placed relations between sovereign nation-states on an institutional basis, contemporary diplomacy brought this system to the global level.

The establishment of the United Nations (UN) in 1945 became the main turning point of contemporary diplomacy. The UN Charter strengthened the principles of non-use of force, peaceful settlement of disputes, and the sovereign equality of states in international relations. From then on, international issues began to be discussed in multilateral forums such as the UN General Assembly and the Security Council. This transformed diplomacy into a global, multidimensional, and institutional system.

4 Halpern, J. (n.d.). 2.02: The Treaty of Westphalia – A Foundation for the Modern State System. In International Relations - Introduction Essentials (Kirkham). LibreTexts.

In the mid-twentieth century, as a result of the collapse of the colonial system, dozens of new independent states emerged in Asia and Africa. While 51 states were members of the United Nations in 1945, today their number has reached to 193 countries. This expanded the geography of diplomatic relations to an unprecedented level.

The Cold War period between 1947 and 1991 constitutes a separate stage of contemporary diplomacy. During this period, the international system was divided into two poles - blocs led by the United States and the USSR. High-level meetings ("summit diplomacy") became an important instrument. Heads of state attempted to manage global crises through direct communication. For example: during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, rapid correspondence between U.S. President John Kennedy and USSR leader Nikita Khrushchev prevented nuclear war; in 1972, SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) was signed; in 1987, the INF Treaty (on the elimination of intermediate-range missiles) was adopted. These agreements were the result of complex and lengthy diplomatic negotiations.

During the Cold War period, concepts such as "telephone diplomacy," "secret diplomacy," and "back-channel negotiations" were formed. Diplomacy became the main instrument for maintaining security under conditions of nuclear threat. Heads of state began to conduct rapid consultations through direct communication lines.

In 1949, NATO was established, and in 1955 the Warsaw Pact was formed. Both blocs conducted active diplomatic competition to strengthen and expand their allies. In the 1970s, the period of "détente" (easing of tensions) began. During this period, agreements on arms limitation such as SALT I (1972) and SALT II (1979) were signed. This became an important stage in the history of diplomacy aimed at controlling nuclear weapons.

At the end of the 1980s, with the end of the Cold War, contemporary diplomacy entered into a new environment. Instead of a "bipolar world," a multipolar and complex international system was formed. In this process, diplomacy also adapted – in addition to international security issues, many new matters such as economic development, ecology, global terrorism, and transnational crime entered the diplomatic agenda. One of the important features of contemporary diplomacy is the growing importance of multilateral diplomacy. Today, continuous diplomatic dialogue is conducted within the framework of many international and regional organizations such as the UN, OSCE, European Union, ASEAN, and SCO. States protect their interests not only through bilateral embassies but also within these organizations. In particular, the Republic of Uzbekistan became a member of the UN in 1992 and put forward initiatives on transforming Central Asia into a nuclear-weapon-free zone, the Afghanistan issue, and water security.

RESULTS

In twenty-first century diplomacy, the economic factor has gained central importance. Diplomatic missions attract investments, support exports, protect national companies, and conclude trade agreements. Economic diplomacy is considered an important element of state power under conditions of global competition.

Another distinctive feature of contemporary diplomatic service is the strengthening of the public and the "soft power" factor. In the information age, diplomacy is no longer limited to governments but is also compelled to work with foreign publics. Public diplomacy includes cultural exchange, educational programs, grants and scholarships, media campaigns, and the formation of a national image. For example, cultural festivals, language centers, and art exhibitions are important instruments of contemporary diplomacy.

The newest element of twenty-first century diplomacy is digital diplomacy. "Digital diplomacy" departments have been established within the ministries of foreign affairs of many

states, and communication with foreign audiences is conducted through social networks. Diplomatic representatives now communicate directly with the public through platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. Digital diplomacy serves as an important instrument in rapid information exchange, crisis communication, and image management.

In contemporary diplomacy, subjects such as international NGOs, transnational corporations, global media, and analytical centers are also gaining special importance. Diplomacy is no longer only an intergovernmental process but has become a multi-actor system.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary diplomacy is a complex, multidimensional, and dynamic system. It encompasses a wide range of instruments, from classical bilateral negotiations to multilateral dialogue within the framework of global organizations. The main task facing diplomacy in the twenty-first century is to provide rapid, balanced, and constructive responses to global threats and conflicts. In the conditions of a rapidly changing international environment, diplomacy remains the most important instrument for advancing national interests, strengthening international stability, and developing international cooperation.

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