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**19/SMS09/059**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY**

**IRD 106 ASSIGNMENT**

**IN NOT MORE THAN 5 PAGES, DISCUSS ANCIENT CHINESE DIPLOMACY**

**NOTES**

1. Assignment must be adequately referenced (APA Style 6th Edition) with intext and endnote references.
2. Plagiarism test will be conducted and Assignment not meeting up to standard will be rejected.
3. Student identity page and the reference page and not include in the 5-page limit.
4. The font is "12", style is "Times New Roman", spacing is 1.5 to 2.0 and all work must be justified.

Diplomacy is the practice of communication and negotiation between representatives of states. All other tools of international relations are arguably considered the failure of diplomacy. It is a very important tool that must be used in order to ensure harmony among states of the world.

Ancient Chinese Diplomacy covers 4,000 years of Ancient China political development before the modern time. Ancient China, was not always on a unified entity; it was divided into different Chinese states, each competing with each other for hegemony. With time however, these states were unified under one Dynasty (e.g., Han, Quin, Tang, Jin, dynasty) and once this was achieved, the leaders sought to establish relations with other states.

In pre-modern times, the theory of foreign relations of China held that China was the Middle Kingdom or the Celestial Dynasty; the center of world civilization, with the Emperor of China being the leader of the civilized world. This view saw China as equivalent to all under heaven. All other states were considered to be tributaries, under the suzerain rule of China. Theoretically, the lands around the imperial capital were regarded as "five zones of submission", the circular areas differentiated according to the strength of the benevolent influence from the Son of Heaven (tian ming). This political theory was largely accepted in East Asia, often even in periods of Chinese weakness.

There were several periods when Chinese foreign policy took on isolationist tones, because of the view that the rest of the world was poor and backward with little to offer. Nevertheless, China was, from very early history, a center of trade. Many of China's interactions with the outside world came via **the Silk Road**. This included, during the 1st or 2nd century BC, contact with representatives of the Roman Empire.

Chinese foreign policy was usually aimed at containing the threat of so-called "barbarian" invaders (the Mongols, and Jurchen) from the north. This could be done by military means, such as an active offense (campaigns into the north) or a more passive defense (as exemplified by the Great Wall of China). The Chinese also arranged marriage alliances known as *heqin*, or "peace marriages." In many periods, Chinese foreign policy was especially assertive, as in the case of the treasure voyages of Admiral Zheng He during the Ming dynasty.

The foreign relations of ancient China, from the Qin dynasty until the Qing dynasty encompassed many occurrences as the fortunes of dynasties rose and fell. The purpose of diplomacy was to **conduct diplomatic relations between China’s warring states,** to **conduct diplomatic and tributary relations with states outside of China**, and to **promote Chinese power abroad by upholding moral values worthy of emulation.** During the Western Han dynasty, the Silk Road trade routes were established and brought Hellenistic Central Asia, Persia under the Parthian Empire, and South Asia into contact with the Chinese empire. Chinese historical records maintain that the Romans traveled to southern China and Vietnam via the Indian Ocean. Buddhism from India was introduced to China during the Eastern Han period and would spread to neighboring states of Vietnam, Korea, and Japan.

The first records of Chinese and Indian diplomacy date from the 1st millennium BC. By the 8th century BC, the Chinese had leagues, missions, and an organized system of polite discourse between their many “warring states,” such as **resident envoys,** diplomats who were deployed from and to warring states and who served as evidence of the good behavior of those who sent them. This tradition emphasized the practical virtues of ethical behavior in relations between states. As 3rd century BC writer Zhuangzi once said to “**diplomats**” at the beginning of the 3rd century BC, “*if relations between states are close, they may establish mutual trust through daily interaction; but if relations are distant, mutual confidence can only be established by exchanges of messages. Messages must be conveyed by messengers [diplomats]. Their contents may be either pleasing to both sides or likely to engender anger between them. Faithfully conveying such messages is the most difficult task under the heavens, for if the words are such as to evoke a positive response on both sides, there will be the temptation to exaggerate them with flattery and, if they are unpleasant, there will be a tendency to make them even more biting. In either case, the truth will be lost. If truth is lost, mutual trust will also be lost. If mutual trust is lost, the messenger himself may be imperiled. Therefore, I say to you that it is a wise rule:* ***‘always to speak the truth and never to embellish it.*** *In this way, you will avoid much harm to yourselves.****’”***In addition, there were **emissary envoys,** diplomats who were appointed to deliver messages and carry out diplomatic functions. These diplomats were to **establish mutual confidence in both parties** and to **protect and promote the interest of the Emperor and the entire state**.

This tradition of equal diplomatic dealings between contending states within China was ended by the country’s unification under the Qin emperor in 221 BC and the consolidation of unity under the Han dynasty in 206 BC. Under the Han and succeeding dynasties, China emerged as the largest, most populous, technologically most-advanced, and best-governed society in the world. Once each succeeding Chinese dynasty had consolidated its rule at home and established its borders with the non-Chinese world, (proving right the arguments of earlier Chinese philosophers, that the best way for a state to exercise influence abroad was to develop a moral society worthy of emulation by admiring foreigners and to wait for them to come to China to learn) its foreign relations with the outside world were typically limited to:

1. the **defense of China’s borders against foreign attacks or incursions**,

2. the **reception of emissaries from neighboring states seeking to ingratiate themselves and to trade with the Chinese state**, and

3. the **control of foreign merchants in specific ports designated for foreign trade**. However, there were rare exceptions (e.g., official missions to study and collect Buddhist scriptures in India in the 5th and 7th centuries and the famous voyages of discovery of the Ming admiral Zheng He in the early 15th century). Chinese leaders and diplomats waited at home for foreigners to pay their respects rather than venturing abroad themselves. This “tributary system” lasted until European colonialism overwhelmed it and introduced to Asia the European concepts of sovereignty and other diplomatic norms.

According to the literature of the Hundred Schools of Thought, China’s ancient strategists preferred **diplomatic maneuvering** to secure state objectives and were averse to territorial expansion by force. Kong Zi or Confucius (551 BC – 479 BC) stressed the limitation and regulation of power, focusing his teachings on education and humanity rather than war. Mencius (372 BC – 289 BC), another great thinker of the time, also denounced wars with the idea that benevolent kings who could easily win over masses had no enemies. Ideas such as culture winning over an enemy and winning a battle before it is fought are replete in ancient Chinese writings. The celebrated military strategist, Sun Zi (722 BC – 481 BC), in The Art of War, argued for attacking the enemy’s mind rather than his fortified cities. Indeed, Chinese ancient philosophy and history rarely espoused hard power and focused on cultivating friends as opposed to engaging in jousts or struggles with other states.

The rapid growth of Roman commerce with ancient China would probably not have been possible without the expansion of Alexander the Great deep into Central Asia, where he founded a Greek settlement, or the spread of embassies of the Han Dynasty into Central and Western Asia. This occurred in around 130 BC, when the Chinese emperor Wudi became interested in developing relationships with the sophisticated urban civilizations of Ferghana, Bactria and Parthia, (he believed them to full of rare things, with a population living in fixed homes and given to occupations somewhat identical with those of the Chinese people, but with weak armies). The Chinese subsequently sent numerous embassies every year to these countries. Thus, more embassies were dispatched to Anxi (Parthia), Yancai, Lijian (Syria under the Seleucids), Tiaozhi (Chaldea) and Tianzhu (northwestern India). Trade with the Roman Empire followed soon, confirmed by the Roman craze for Chinese silk (supplied through the Parthians) from the 1st century BC, even though the Romans thought silk was obtained from trees. The Senate issued several edicts to prohibit the wearing of silk, on economic and moral grounds: the importation of Chinese silk caused a huge outflow of gold, and silk clothes were considered to be decadent and immoral, but all these were in vain.

**REFERENCES**

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