**NOTE 1: ANCIENT CITY-STATES DIPLOMACY**

**(GREEK CITY-STATES DIPLOMACY)**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The most historically referred evidence of diplomatic practice and arrangement is the **Amarna tablet** found in Egypt in 1887. Modern Diplomacy can, however, be traced to diplomatic arrangements in Greece, France, Rome, Italy, and China. Mythological, the genesis of Diplomacy goes back to God and his emissaries, the angels or messengers. The first diplomats in such **mythologies** were **angels,** who were angels of God sent from Heaven to earth.

**1.1. ORIGIN OF DIPLOMACY**

The word **‘diplomacy’** originated from the Greek verb ***‘diploun’*** which means *‘to fold.* ***Diploun*** evolved into **diploma** during the Roman Empire as a travel pass/ documents for royals comparable to a modern diplomatic passport. The management of ***diplomas*** became the conduct of ***res diplomatica or diplomatic affairs***

**1.2. ORIGIN OF ANCIENT GREEK DIPLOMACY**

As ancient Greek city-states developed, they began to have constant interaction with each, such lead to conflict, development of closer ties, alliance etc. Diplomacy originated for the ancient as a means of communication, to settle disputes, to reach an agreement and work towards common goals. For the Greek, Diplomacy was first used as a mean to harmonised religious activities. The Greeks are a homogenous people, and they speak the same language, had similar culture, history and religion. As religion was an important part of their life’s, Diplomacy serve as a means to decide on common days for festivals, how to honour their Patheon of gods, when to make sacrifices, the sacrosanct of temples and priest, the bond of sacred out to their gods and others. Of note was the use of Diplomacy to host the **Olympic games**, a uniform festival to honour their gods where all Greece and their leaders attended. At the Olympics’, city-state used the opportunity to discuss their state business and make an agreement for peace or war. Hence, as Diplomacy made such interactions possible, it allowed for an expansion of Diplomacy into other spheres of Greek society. From Religion, Diplomacy was used in trade and commerce, to the military and political alliances. By the 400 BC, the Greek peninsula was dominated by alliances called **leagues.** A league was an arrangement between city-state to pull resources together in common efforts for religious, trade, military, political and other goals. The Two most famous of them were the **Peloponnesian League** led by **Sparta** and the **Delian League** lead by **Athens.**

**1.3. TYPES OF ANCIENT GREEK DIPLOMATS**

In Greek Diplomacy, they are three types of diplomats, they are

1. **The Proxenos**
2. **The Herald and**
3. **The Envoy**

**1.4. THE ROLE OF THE PROXENOS IN ANCIENT GREEK DIPLOMACY**

The ancient city-state did not have what we in modern terms called diplomats. They had people who carried out traits similar to the contemporary practices of Diplomacy. A Proxenos is what we call in modern times and **Honorary Consul.** They were an individual native to an ancient Greek city-state (e.g. Athens) who serve to act to promote friendly relations and offer protection to citizens of another state (e.g. Sparta) when they are in his city-state. The position was more of social status. It conferred no financial benefits other than the clout and respect in the Proxenos gain in the society of the two city-states. Usually, Proxenos are recognised due to the close relations they have between both their home state and representing city-state. It could be in terms of family ties, trade relations, friendship and contacts etc. They are persons of great social standing, possess the talents of good orators and negotiators, morally upright and held in high esteem by both city-states.

**1.5. THE ROLE OF HERALDS IN ANCIENT GREEK DIPLOMACY**

In ancient Greece, each city chose a **Herald** to communicate with foreigners. **Heralds** required a good memory and a strong voice so they could accurately repeat the views of their leaders. From the 6th century BC onward, commercial interdependence increased and political relations became more complex. As a result, the city-states chose their finest orators to plead their city’s case. The main characteristic of the ancient Greeks’ Diplomacy was **public negotiation**. They also made treaty ratifications by exchanging **solemn public oaths**. In order to alleviate ill-treatment of heralds beyond their own borders, the City-States placed them under the guard of the god; **Hermes**, patron of travellers and thieves, and symbol of charm, cunning, and trickery. This was the origin of the view that Diplomacy is largely the art of deception.

**1.6. THE ROLE OF ENVOYS IN ANCIENT GREEK DIPLOMACY**

Envoys were a delegation assign to attend to a specific diplomatic task. Unlike **Proxenos (Honorary Consuls)** and **Herald (Messengers)**, envoys had greater authority to reach a diplomatic agreement with other city-states. The ancient Greek did not subscribe to the idea of sending out a single envoy. Envoys were sent out as a group of three and above citizens. They were usually their city-states finest and most influential citizens, which shows the seriousness of such a delegation. The envoys represented the various viewpoints and interest of powerful segments of their society. They possess the qualities of both Proxenos and envoys. When they travelled, a herald is usually sent out ahead to guarantee their safe passage as well as notify the ruling authority of the other city-state that they desire to meet with them or their citizens to discuss issues affecting relations.

**1.7. CHARACTERISTICS OF GREEK DIPLOMACY**

1. **GREEK DIPLOMACY WAS TRANSPARENT**: tactics were debated in political assemblies before embassies set out, and negotiations were generally conducted in public meetings. If an agreement were reached there would be a **formal exchange of oaths**, and **terms would be engraved** on stone tablets. If the news were especially important, copies of such tablets would be displayed beyond the territories of the state most involved. After Athens and Sparta reached an accord in 421, copies of the treaty were set up at both Olympia and Delphi.
2. **GREEK DIPLOMACY WAS EXTEMPORANEOUS**: there was no distinctive arm of government dedicated to foreign affairs, or of a permanent diplomatic establishment. Men were simply chosen for ambassadorial errands as and when the need arose. There were scant financial rewards, and envoys drawn from political classes were obliged to bear all expenses of their retinues. However, services as an ambassador tend to enhance a politician’s reputation.
3. **GREEK DIPLOMACY WAS ALSO RIDDLED WITH DISSENT:** important errands were not given to individuals or small groups, Athens rather favoured the larger Embassy, of three, five, or ten men. These large groups were often furnished with specific, detailed instruction even though antagonism could still surface. Demosthenes within the Embassy of 346 BC was predictably hostile to Philip, insisting that any agreement with Macedon would have to be in Athenian’ best interests. Aeschines particularly antagonised Demosthenes and was more sympathetic to the Macedonian cause.

**1.8. CONCLUSION**

Greek Diplomacy was, however, often vulnerable to the selfish machinations of individual ambassadors. These insular relations of the Greek city-states gave way to ambassadorial encounters with the rest of the world.