**NOTE 2: ANCIENT CHINESE DIPLOMACY**

**2.1. INTRODUCTION**

Diplomacy is not a new activity in human history. As man has been interacting with each other and had formed political entities called states, Diplomacy has been used. Diplomacy served for most of history as a non-violent means of achieving the foreign objective of Monarchs, Empires, Polis or States. For an understanding of modern Diplomacy, it’s best to first look to the past, to view Diplomacy in its formative eras, were the practice and ideas that first lead to what we call modern Diplomacy was forged. In examining such, it will be herculean to cover all past culture, so it is best to be selective. Hence, the limited focus on Ancient Chinese Diplomacy.

**2.2. DEFINING ANCIENT CHINA**

Ancient China is a historical state whose modern-day successor is the Peoples Republic of China (Under the Communist Party) and the Republic of China (Taiwan). Ancient China has a history that covers 4,000 years Ruled by Numerous Dynasties and Emperors.

**2.3. UNDERSTANDING ANCIENT CHINESE IDEA**

The ancient Chinese idea of relations between state was based on Ancient China Political System, and by extension, its Diplomatic System is shaped by **FOUR** Major Ideals and Institutions. They are the

**A.** The Mandate of Heaven

**B.** The Emperor

**C.** The Tributary System and

**D.** The Ministry of Rites.

**THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN:** Is the Authority and Recognition by Heaven (A Chinese Mythical System of God and Destiny) of a leader (the Emperor) right to rule (as the son of Heaven), as well as Ancient China place as the centre of the world and blessed by heavens to rule others.

**THE EMPEROR:** The Emperor was the Son of Heaven granted the mandate to rule Ancient China as heaven representative on earth and to educate foreigner. All political powers and indeed the sovereignty of the state was in his hands.

**THE TRIBUTARY SYSTEM:** It was a system instituted by China that was used by her to conduct and handle, trade, diplomatic, military and religious relations. In this system, a hierarchy was established with China and its Emperor as the Superior in such relations. Also, the Tributary System regarded foreigners as subordinate. Subordinate States were called tributary states, who sent envoys regularly to the EMPEROR’s Court to pay him tribute and recognise his precedence (higher position) in their foreign relations. This system mostly functioned in East Asia

**MINISTRY OF RITES:** Was a Ministry in Charge of maintaining foreign Relations with Foreigners and also the other Chinese States.

**2.4. UNDERSTANDING ANCIENT CHINESE POLITY**

Ancient Chinese Diplomacy covers 4,000 years of Ancient china political development before the modern time (from 1912 till date). In Ancient China, China was not always on a unified entity. It was divided into different Chinese states, each competing with each other for hegemony. With time, these states were unified under one Dynasty (e,g, Han, Jin, Song, Tang, Ming, etc. dynasty). And as such, once china had established and consolidated dynastic rule at home, it sought to secure its border with the non-Chinese world.

**2.5. OBJECTIVES OF ANCIENT CHINESE DIPLOMACY**

The guiding principle of ancient Chinese Diplomacy was shaped by;

**A**. Project the Majesty of the Emperor and the Empire.

**B.** Uphold Equal Diplomatic Dealings amongst contending states within China.

**C**. To promote the superiority of Ancient China as the Middle Kingdom by Upholding Ethical and Moral Standards.

**D.** To Educate Foreigners by Developing a Moral Society Worthy of Emulation

E. To exercise Ancient China Power Abroad by fostering the opportunity of foreign to learn and adopt ancient china moral standard and system of governance.

**2.6. ANCIENT CHINESE DIPLOMAT**

In Ancient China, Diplomats were appointed by the Emperor to carry messages to foreign nations or to contending ancient Chinese states. These diplomats are most notably called envoys. They must not necessarily be personnel from Ancient China Ministry of Rites (In Charge of Foreign Relations), but persons knowledgeable and eloquent enough to convey the messages of the Emperor. Ancient Chinese Diplomacy mad use of two types of envoys:

**A.** **The Emissary Envoy:** Appointed only when a message is required to be delivered or When a diplomatic function needs to be carried out

**B.** **The Resident Envoy:** Mostly Deployed within China, When china was not unified and there existed different warring state in china

**2.7. FUNCTIONS OF ANCIENT CHINESE DIPLOMAT**

The functions of Chinese Diplomacy was best captured by the 3rd Century BC Ancient Chinese Writer Zhuangzi as;

A. To Establish Continuous Interactions between states

B. To Establish Mutual Confidence through the exchange of Messages (especially if relations are distant)

C. To faithfully Convey messages (either good or bad).

D. To Protect and Promote the interest of the Emperor and Empire

E. To Uphold Moral and Ethical Prestige of the Emperor and Empire

**2.8. FUNCTION OF ANCIENT CHINESE DIPLOMACY**

The Function of Chinese Diplomacy is Threefold. They are:

A. To conduct diplomatic relations between and amongst warring states in China

B. To conduct diplomatic, trade and tributary relations with the non-Chinese world

C. To promote Chinese Power Abroad by upholding Moral and Ethical Values Worthy of Emulation