

**DIGITAL DIPLOMACY: IN THE LIGHT OF MACHIAVELLIAN
PARADIGM OF STATECRAFT, GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND
FOREIGN POLICY**

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ABSTRACT

Modern World Diplomacy is presently witnessing revolutionary transition in its essence and character as a product of the Digital Revolution. It can be attributed to Globalisation that has made governments reconsider their conduct of foreign relations while simultaneously engaging with technology to address various issues at home and abroad. Any research on Diplomacy can truly be realised of its full potential by connecting it with the Art of Diplomacy as prescribed by Niccolò Machiavelli in his most famous work, The Prince (1532), where he perfectly describes notion of statecraft, foreign policy and diplomacy as he had a hands-on experience of being a diplomat. Digital means of diplomacy does not find any place in his analysis of conducting Foreign Policy even though Machiavelli's analysis can be applied to most current world affairs, his perception on Digital Diplomacy can only be corroborated by comparing and contrasting the present form of Diplomacy with his traditional notion of Foreign Policy. The research paper aims at forming inter-linkages between the present notion of digitized world of diplomacy and Machiavelli's emphasis on rigid organizational structures and their inevitability. It will further develop upon the relevance of his views and the upheaval of digital diplomacy as a way forward for the contemporary times.

Keywords: Statecraft, Diplomacy, E-summits, Virtual, Digitization, Mediation, Idealism, Realism, Morality, Globalization, Feedback, Networking, Policy, Communication, Hacking and Governance.

METHODOLOGY

The research paper would include research from secondary sources such as books, articles, editorials and other research papers. The research paper would look into the way of diplomacy during the Machiavellian times as well as in the modern times of digitalization by citing present-day dynamics of International Relations and Digital Diplomacy.

INTRODUCTION : THE REALM OF DIPLOMACY

Diplomacy can have various dimensions. It can be establishing relations with people in our regular lives as well as conducting negotiations between representatives of polities. Diplomacy is not a new concept. It has been existing for a very long time. . Basically, It emerged when formal communication occurred between two parties. Diplomacy can be carried out by not just states but cities, individuals and multilateral bodies. Simply put, It has become a non-negotiable tool to ensure peace and conducive relationships amongst political communities.

Successful diplomacy in a narrow sense entails achieving smooth dialogue and communication between parties. It appears fruitful when peaceful and mutually agreed treaties are signed between parties. Diplomacy which does not deteriorate current relations, even if it does not improve the relations, can be termed as successful. It can be understood by citing examples wherein nation states practised confidence building measures despite being in a state of war. The channel of communication must be open to enable parties to convey their anticipations and interests. Successful diplomacy leads to a learning process for both the parties as it is achieved when communication at both ends is equally well received and supplied. Failure in diplomacy can be simply explained by ending dialogue or communication between parties. Severity of relationship wherein states cannot trust one another and have turned completely antagonistic to each other signal towards failed diplomatic efforts. Poor planning and strategizing of meetings and summits might lead to strained relations. Most common signs to gauge if diplomatic efforts are failing can be states putting sanctions against each other on unreasonable grounds. War is often cited as a consequence of failed diplomacy. However, in current times, economic sanctions might seem to be more reflective of failed diplomacy.

Diplomacy has been in action as early as during colonial times where trading companies signed treaties and agreements with different states. Modern diplomacy has certainly changed a lot. It is

no longer understood as conventional diplomats meeting and signing agreements. Diplomats representing countries at multilateral forums such as UN, ASEAN, BRICS and putting upfront national agendas and goals are instances of Diplomacy in Action. Back-channel diplomacy between parties has become a trend nowadays. We have seen diplomacy in action during the Doklam Standoff whereby the crucial issue got resolved by diplomacy i.e. talks, communication and confidence building measures. Indian Diplomacy has seen success via the Vande Bharat Mission. Helping countries in terms of medicines, equipment etc has shown the way we are accelerating our ties. *E-diplomacy has to be the most visible example where SAARC meetings have happened as well as India-Australia Bilateral talks took place. All these instances are reflective of Diplomacy in action.*

Diplomacy can be best understood in its traditional meaning by Machiavelli's work, *The Prince*. However, Machiavelli is often regarded as a failure as he could never get his Prince in his lifetime and his principles were never applied practically as he wanted them to be applied while he was alive. Even though the nature of diplomacy has completely changed in the present times, his Principles can be narrowly termed as relevant in analysing the various instances that the world is presently witnessing.

MACHIAVELLI ON FOREIGN POLICY & STATECRAFT

Machiavelli belonged to the place called Italy. It was the age of nation-states emerging in Europe. Italy was just like Mediaeval India i.e. *A house divided against itself*. There were five feudal kingdoms and Machiavelli belonged to Florence. In Italy, the feudal Lords and the Roman Church supported each other. Machiavelli wanted unification of Italy. His ideology is said to have belonged to the bourgeois class.

His work, *The Prince* is called the best book ever written in the field of statecraft. Machiavelli established politics as an autonomous field as he believed that political actions are not right or wrong based on religion and ethics but should be based on morality of politics i.e. being *politically correct*. Machiavelli is said to be the *Prophet of Nationalism* and possessed no inhibition in considering national interests as supreme. According to him, The Prince will be judged by the ends he achieved for his nation rather than the means he employed to achieve those ends. Princes need not think about religion or morality. For instance, *the United States of America could have finished World War II even as a conventional war but still decided to drop*

atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki despite Japanese surrender. It is in his theory that we see the theory of nation-states emerging.

Machiavelli wanted Italy to regain its lost prestige. He was a diplomat to France where he was insulted as *Mr. Nihilo or Mr. Zero* as he belonged to a corrupt nation. He wanted a strong Prince ruling with an Iron hand. He is called a child of renaissance as every philosopher is a child of his times. His era saw the emergence of Reformation, Capitalism. Nation-states and Geographical Exploration.

His book, *The Prince* is a manual containing instructions for the prince. He established that the interest of Prince is equivalent to the interest of the state and vice versa. He believed that it is important for the Prince to understand the nature of profession (*Politics*) as it is rather than what the prince wants it to be. Those who sacrifice for the sake of ought not only bring destruction to the people but to themselves.

He advises the Prince to look at things as they are. Prince who tries to find goodness in politics is bound to bring destruction to his people and to himself. For instance, *Jawaharlal Nehru while dealing with China in 1962 received a personal shock as well as caused a territorial loss to the nation due to his miscalculations of Chinese intentions.*

On Human Nature, Machiavelli suggests that Prince must master human nature as he has to deal with individuals who are selfish, fickle-minded, ungrateful, fearful, cowardly and avaricious.

According to Machiavelli, the only difference between the Prince and a common man is that a common man is fearful while Prince is brave and takes calculated risks. Machiavelli prescribes a cold-blooded Prince who is able to control his emotions, does not get provoked and makes decisions based on rationality. Even in present times, his ideas can be applied as States still need *intelligence and defence* to protect its citizens.

Prince must understand what statecraft is. For Machiavelli, statecraft is nothing but management of power i.e. coming to power and exercising power whereby power has two dimensions: *Power of attraction and Power of coercion*. Prince must primarily rely on Power of Love/Attraction and should only use Power of Coercion/Force only when it becomes absolutely essential. Hard-Power generates feelings of revenge which is a very strong element in human nature. Man

pursues Revenge even at the cost of his own interest. Hence, the Prince must understand which type of force to be used when and in what proportion.

Prince must use coercion indirectly through subordinates. He should punish the enemy to such an extent that he does not leave him alive to take revenge. For instance, *India dealt with Pakistan with little coercion in the 1965 and 1971 War resulting in Pakistani Objective of giving India thousand cuts.*

Only a strong Prince ruling with an iron hand can rule a society which is corrupt. Prince should distribute favours personally and should shower love gradually and in small amounts. Policy of love has relevance but is limited as man forgets favours. Therefore, he says it is better to be feared than to be loved. People love the Prince at their own wish, they fear the prince at the wish of the Prince. A wise Prince never does what others want but does what is in his will. Machiavelli suggests *Smart Power i.e. Soft plus Hard power.*

Prince has to take politically correct actions on time but religion and ethics can create a dilemma for the prince in taking correct and timely actions. Thus, Machiavelli gives a concept of Dual Morality where he explains that morality of a common man differs from that of the morality of a prince as a common man can sacrifice himself for his principles but Prince cannot sacrifice the interests of the common man for his principles. If the Prince is successful in achieving National interests despite using wrong means, he will be revered. He is not asking Prince to be immoral in his personal life rather not worrying about morality for National interest. He is thus amoral rather than Immoral. He is against the Church dictating the prince. He wants the Prince to use religion rather than being used by religion. He has a utilitarian approach towards religion as people do not commit crimes out of fear of God. Therefore, He suggests that the prince can be religious or anti-religious in personal life but not in his public life.

Machiavelli is a realist as he admits the factors of luck and chance. He advises The Prince that even though he has all the qualities, he still might not get successful due to the luck factor as misfortune can come to any person. However, *a wise Prince makes embankments and insurance to fight torrential rainfall even though it might not prevent devastation.* Thus, the nature of Fortune is like women. Women embrace brave men. Fortune comes to brave men who deal with bad times with courage.

Machiavelli has stressed on the importance of a state's external environment as even more crucial than its internal affairs. On Foreign Policy, He has advised the ruler to prevent the rise of any alternate power near to his state. This centre of power could intervene in domestic politics and influence the hold of the Prince in his own territory. For instance, *China is trying to confront India to showcase itself as the sole player in South Asia while India is trying to resist US's help to avoid getting labelled as a US ally as we want to maintain our regional autonomy.*

He also recommends the Prince to support the neighbouring states which are feeble but without adding to its strength and rather making it dependent on Prince's help. *India has been providing moral and material help to its neighbours like Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh but without any substantial motive of helping these states to rise up to our level of development.*

Machiavelli supports the use of force to protect one's own territory. Moreover, he puts forth an expansionist foreign policy encouraging geographical exploration for a nation's economic and commercial benefits. He asserts the importance of knowledge of warfare for the Prince or else he might lose his state to a much more powerful ruler or state. He suggests that the Army should consist of common nationals i.e. common man only as nobles have ambitions and can challenge the Prince whereas the common man cannot afford and dare to do so. He describes Population, territory and economics as the key elements that binds the nation together and strengthens it. These three symbolise the absolute power of the Prince.

Machiavelli leaves no chance to emphasize his support towards an aggressive foreign policy with no aim of avoiding war as an option. He even discourages any role of morality or ethics in war. As far as the world order is concerned, Machiavelli's work, *The Prince*, hints towards his tilt to Imperialism as he eulogised the Roman Empire. However, it is integral to read through the text and understand his actual persuasion towards a multipolar world order with multiple republics and principalities competing against and with each other. It is because of his justification that Roman Empire's success was not favourable even for its own domestic well-being as well as the world around.

Machiavelli is called the father of Modern Realism. He realized that the race for glory in International Relations will never come to an end. Thus, the realm of International Politics can never be a peaceful domain. He also acknowledges that the scarcity of resources will keep compelling nation-states to enter into conflicts with each other and fight for those scarce

resources. His view on the world order is rightly termed as amoral and sets it apart from other realists.

Therefore, Machiavelli states the relevance of weighing consequences of each action both for domestic and international discourses as no decision can always be a safe course as all choices involve risks and it is imperative for the Prince to make prudent choices considering all the probable risks of his actions. For an instance, *The disintegration of USSR has not prevented ethnic conflicts, Gulf War, growing security challenges in the US hegemonic world, terrorism and climate change i.e. a utopic world as was assumed to be established post the end of USSR by Idealists.*

DIGITAL DIPLOMACY- A NEW REALITY

Digital diplomacy can be considered as one of the most efficient ways of diplomatic communication in the twenty-first century. Digital diplomacy is a modern version of public diplomacy that is digitally advanced and uses the Internet, new information and communication technologies (ICTs) and social media as a way of handling and deepening diplomatic relations. The key difference between digital diplomacy and conventional public diplomacy lies in greater access to information, greater engagement between individuals and organisations, and greater transparency. Social media has become one of the most significant instruments of diplomacy. This worldwide recognition of online platforms has given rise to a significant wave of openness and transparency that has never been seen before. The increasing use of websites by foreign ministries, embassies and delegations of international organisations is now a significant activity in the field of digital diplomacy. The websites of foreign ministries also serve as a way of explaining and documenting their national foreign policy and denying unacceptable statements by other states. There are many words that have been used to refer to the impact of emerging technology on diplomacy. Like 'networked diplomacy' and '21st century statecraft.' There are other concepts that reflect on the characteristics of digital technology, including: 'public diplomacy 2.0,' which takes its name from the definition of web 2.0; 'net diplomacy,' which applies more generally to the web, and 'Twiplomacy,' which refers to Twitter. Finally, words such as "cyber diplomacy" apply to modern diplomatic arenas.¹

¹https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283259027_Digital_Diplomacy_20_A_Cross-national_Comparison_of_Public_Engagement_in_Facebook_and_Twitter

This term conjointly has historically been outlined among the context of specific studies. As an example, in 2015 "*Segev and Manor* made digital diplomacy as the use of social media by a state in order to realize its foreign policy goals and for managing its national image. Throughout a similar year *Bjola and Holmes* outlined digital diplomacy as a tool for modification in the management system whereas in 2012 *Potter* expressed that digital diplomacy is the conduct of diplomacy through networked technologies . Finally, in 2016, *Manor* re-defined digital diplomacy as the overall impact of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) on the implementation of diplomacy. *Lewis* in 2014 defines digital diplomacy as the use of digital tools of communication (social media) by which diplomats communicate with one another and with the final public.² There is a wide range of social media platforms that international actors and audiences use, but the most popular ones are: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Periscope and Snapchat etc. These online platforms have led to the adoption of new norms and beliefs. For example online dialogue has given connected publics' willingness to interact with diplomats. This process has led to the adoption of new behaviour - "listening" to the feedback of online publics. In addition, under this kind of new working procedures there is a place for incorporating followers' feedback into policy formulation.

Digital technologies have also led to a significant change as it forces diplomats to adopt a new kind of transparency given the increased role of non-state actors such as online public, civil society organizations, and NGOs. This has also led to a subsequent change in the working style of diplomats' as they now aim to form temporary alliances, or networks, to advance specific goals for example by forming a network of NGOs, UN missions etc. Digital technologies have led diplomats to engage with many new actors, both online and offline which has made them more efficient.

GOALS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Digital diplomacy nowadays has become a standard practice and while incorporating it as a means of diplomacy by international actors, it possesses certain goals. Major goals of digital diplomacy are mentioned below:

² <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23311886.2017.1297175>

1. **Knowledge management** - To keep the complete government information to protect from any kind of hampering by outside forces.
2. **Public diplomacy** - To maintain contact with people all across countries to know about their thoughts and ideas on certain issues.
3. **Information management** - To manage information properly as it will help policy makers to formulate policies in a better way and would also help to anticipate emerging political and social movements.
4. **Consular communication and response** - To have effective and direct communication during tough times like crisis.
5. **Disaster response** To have connected technologies to cope up disastrous situations.
6. **Internet Freedom** establishment of free and open internet to promote the idea of freedom of speech and expression in democracy without any scope of authoritarian system.
7. **External resources** - To establish an advanced mechanism to have help from outside to achieve national goals.
8. **Policy formulation**- To have effective communication while formulating policies among officials and governments.

EVOLUTION OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Due to the advent of technology the practice of diplomatic communication has totally changed. In the nineteenth century the invention of steamships and trains helped diplomats to have effective communication and provided them a means to move from one place to another. At the same time, the invention of telegraphs helped a lot to communicate. Also, the development of airlines and information technology (IT) in the twentieth century acted as a means of easy and smooth communication. In the time of pandemic digital diplomacy has become an essential part for managing relations and ties with other countries. . There are certain world events which took place in the 1920's and 30's that have modified the definition and procedure of diplomacy. One of the first events was the widespread usage and popularity of radio. The second was the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 and the rise of Nazi's in 1933 and the third was the use of radio by Nazis and Bolsheviks for spreading revolutions in the neighbouring countries. All this led to the birth of public diplomacy.

Public diplomacy is defined as a way to achieve foreign policy goals by communicating directly with foreign publics. It acts as a positive tool for officials to facilitate policies. This communication revolution has made an instant transmission of information beyond oceans and mountains regardless of boundaries. Gadgets like Transistor radios, Television, satellite transmissions, telefax have enabled people to share and receive information from anywhere. The end of the Cold War era led to the rise of democracy which increased the sense of connectivity and openness among nations. This eventually created a new form of diplomacy named as social diplomacy which is the most popular form of diplomacy in contemporary times. Social diplomacy enables the involvement of ordinary citizens as well as state actors such as NGOs and MNCs. This kind of joint effort of cooperation by NGOs has increased the scope of lobbying which is also a form of social diplomacy. Initially activity like lobbying was prevalent in the UK and USA but today European Union is also practicing the same. Lobbyists try to exert pressure for execution of certain kinds of policies.

At the end of the twentieth century there was the emergence of a new form of diplomacy known as digital diplomacy. It basically consists of usage of digital means to communicate. The internet has opened new conversation spaces between governments and the public. E-diplomacy is the word which basically describes the early commercialisation of the internet for communication. The first implementation of digital diplomacy can be seen in 1992 at the time of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro as emails were used for lobbying in negotiations and at the same time in Malta, at the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, it was found that computer applications have been used. Diplomats also look towards Arab Spring as an emergence of Digital Diplomacy.

Ritto in 2014 has defined that after the telegraph, invention of the telephone in the late nineteenth century, communication between governments and diplomatic officials have become easy and smooth. Then he also mentioned the importance of the fax system as an important aspect of this digital revolution. He gave an example of French Ambassador in Tokyo signing a treaty with the Japanese authorities and receiving a fax copy by telefax within 10 minutes in Paris. In this way he outlined the importance of fax in accomplishment of diplomatic missions.

Another example of emergence of digital diplomacy was the online recruitment of youths for Jihadi movement by terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda. In order to prevent this kind of outreach the

US State department team took steps to prevent this recruitment drive. One of the biggest milestones of digital diplomacy was the Wikipedia Scandal of 2010 in which Wikipedia published some 2,50,000 cables sent between US missions and Washington. WikiLeaks taught diplomats that secrecy doesn't exist in the digital age. Thus, using social media as a diplomatic tool needs a certain kind of attention to preserve information and to maintain secrecy.

In the modern times social media has shaped the new way of policy formulation with involvement of several views together and online platforms like Twitter has become a very effective social networking tool. The era of Twitter diplomacy has emerged as many countries use Twitter to communicate directly with the people and to create more inclusive space as it encourages citizens to participate in Foreign policy debates and promotes the idea of participatory democracy.³

BENEFITS OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

Digital Diplomacy helps to *strengthen international relations* under the leadership of the executive organ of the government as well as lawyers, economists, scientists, ambassadors and different kinds of audiences. This kind of involvement has increased the potential and created a scope of innovative and smooth partnership among the different parties. The era of globalization has also intensified the political, economical and cultural interaction beyond the territorial boundaries. This idea of creating the whole world as a global village has increased the interaction of intergovernmental organisations, International actors including states, non-governmental organisations and individuals. This kind of network has united people from all across the countries. This rapid growth of networks has increased the interaction and international interdependence. With the advent of digital diplomacy the interaction between governments and international officials has become more smooth and effective. It has helped to advance and strengthen the state's work in International relations and in expanding international alignments.

Digital Diplomacy also provides *Fast and effective communications*. It provides the opportunity to reach citizens of countries in the most needed times as it has provided a platform to reach among millions within seconds. It provides more inclusive space for interaction, increased

³ <https://www.orfonline.org/research/twitter-diplomacy-a-brief-analysis-60462/?amp>

engagement and thus furthering the goal of diplomacy. Digital technologies are really very helpful for assimilating and processing information in urgent situations. For example in times of crisis embassies can create groups to function as a crisis management cell to cope up with the crisis. Social media platforms provide a medium of dialogue between counterparts and creates a more democratic society. Also, the costs of using new technologies are also falling rapidly and it doesn't need much financial investment. It is *cost effective* in nature and can gravely deal with troublesome issues by pushing the public, media and diplomats together. This makes digital diplomacy more effective to the governments and diplomatic officials. It does not cause any budget damage.

Digital Diplomacy provides ample *proximity with audiences* as the geographical distance has become less important. The reach of internet websites and social media have made everyone closer to each other. Social media enables diplomats to gather information and to observe events. It provides space to influence beyond traditional audiences. Digital diplomacy mostly *favours small states*. For example, the Republic of Kosovo which is a small state with limited financial resources sees digital diplomacy as a contributor to its cause by linking its diplomats and citizens with other countries. Another, they put pressure on them to recognize the newer states in the Balkans. Kosovo has also set up the *Digital Kosovo* platform to serve its international recognition. Small states have become leaders in trends by using internet pages and ICT for their advantage. It helps small states to maintain optimal relations with external actors.⁴

THE RISKS INVOLVED IN DIGITAL DIPLOMACY

New information technology has some negative effects as well. Social media platforms sometimes acts as a *channel to spread extremism, terrorism and the imposition of certain ideologies*. Terrorists and xenophobic groups mobilize and recruits supporters through social media platforms. It also acts as a medium to spread religious hatred as well. For example between august 2015 and December 2017, Twitter had closed around 1.2 million accounts for *terrorist apology with purpose to prevent the spread of terrorism*. The Internet also multiplies the number of voices which creates difficulties while formulating policies.⁵

⁴ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2013/12/06/kosovos-digital-diplomats/>

⁵ https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/company/2018/twitter-transparency-report-12.html

Digital Diplomacy also risks misuse of the platform if there is a *lack of knowledge regarding how to use the internet and social media*. It can result in terrible consequences, grave conflicts. To deal with these kinds of risks there is a need for training for diplomats by foreign ministries in order to avoid any kind of mishappening in near future with the sensitive data. Digital Diplomacy users need to be trained and to practice as well as to adopt new technologies in order to avoid the risk. Another challenge of digital diplomacy is the *culture of anonymity* as someone can pretend to be someone else and can create serious damage. This kind of widespread information can hamper the ability of the leaders to manage the ensuing crisis. There is a need to be clear if the information is coming from a trustworthy source or not.

The growing risk of *hacking* and misuse of sensitive information of the institutions is one of the major challenges of Digital Diplomacy. Diplomatic rivals including state and non-state actors try to attack government systems with an intention to misuse their information which can create grave damages to the security. Hence, in the age of digitalization cyber security has become a part of major international diplomatic and political agenda of the UN, NATO, ITU, OECD, G7 and G20 etc. Most of the countries have gone for different cyber security strategies to deal with hacking.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY IN THE PRESENT ERA

In the modern world governments are using social media as an active tool to reach beyond traditional diplomacy. Ministries and embassies are opting new and innovative strategies in the digital age and exploring different ways to reach and engage with domestic and foreign systems. Digital Diplomacy has emerged as one of the effective tools to communicate. Political leaders are also using social media extensively to promote their initiatives and thoughts. Leaders are initiating different campaigns to spread awareness about their governments. For example, *Hilary Clinton used social media platforms like Twitter and YouTube exclusively to announce her 2016 presidential run.*

In the current times Digital Diplomacy has become a new normal. It is considered as the most effective means of public diplomacy and possesses a variety of digital platforms as well as tools of communication for negotiations. Platforms like Twitter have become a crisis response mechanism and a space for image enhancement. Before Covid-19 the role of digital diplomacy was not that widened but the pandemic created a sincere need of digitization to connect for

virtual conferencing instead of physical gathering. For example, *Our External Affairs Minister has had around 65 virtual diplomatic engagements with other countries since the spread of global Pandemic*. Virtual meetings have become an effective alternative. For the first time, *a bilateral virtual Summit between the prime ministers of India and Australia took place*.

In the contemporary context digital diplomacy has become the only possible practice as it has helped to cope up the difficulty of meeting physically in the pandemic. Countries *like India* are clearly seeing a shift from traditional methods of physical gathering to virtual meetings. India is aspiring and working really hard to become a successful example of this revolution. But there is a sincere need to adopt strong data protection legislation to maintain data sovereignty.

CONCLUSION

The Machiavellian Paradigm of Statecraft and Foreign Policy can certainly shed some light on the current path of Digital Diplomacy. Even though Machiavelli considered war as inevitable in the sphere of International affairs, his idea of weighing the pros and cons of a decision resonates well with the present way of how countries avoid getting involved in conventional wars and instead prefer diplomacy as a tool to prevent bloodshed and loss of lives.

As Machiavelli could not see practical application of his philosophy on foreign policy and diplomacy during his lifetime, He would have better supported his theory if social media was present in his era. He could have made great use of Twitter-Diplomacy for advocating his principles. However, Machiavelli posed great faith in rigid organizational structures for conducting foreign policy as inevitable. But current times would have changed his perception as basic greetings from leaders via their social media accounts carry huge weight and impact on world affairs. Leaders use Twitter, Instagram and Facebook to assert their views and opinions.

Machiavelli had suggested that the Prince should ensure that no major power emerges near to his state. Though the Prince must help the neighbour with basic material help, these resources should not help the neighbour to turn into a competitor for the Prince. This resonates well with the current policy of China which is making an attempt to eliminate India as a rising power in South-Asia by trying to diminish Indian authority by projecting it as an ally of the United States of America.

As Machiavelli promoted separation of ethics and politics, China seems to have followed this principle in current times as it has been reported that it made an attempt by spying on eminent personalities of India and has been time and again launching cyber attacks through its various apps to get hold of sensitive information concerning India. He even favoured an expansionist foreign policy which seems to form a base of Chinese foreign Policy which is trying to assert its unjust claims on various territories around the world.

Machiavelli stressed on the importance of maintaining an all-encompassing authority without diminishing the weight of cultural and social ties. India has been seen proliferating its cultural ties with Nepal, Bhutan and Sri-Lanka.

It was Machiavelli who set a stage for a multipolar world order through his writings. Very recently, PM Modi participated in the virtual NAM summit giving out the message of India being an autonomous power with no intentions of joining any power bloc.

Had Machiavelli been a part of this digitized world, his opinions would have helped shape public opinion which could have changed the entire spectrum of World Affairs. Therefore, Digital Diplomacy marks a big shift from the Machiavellian Way of Diplomacy but the essence and motive of diplomatic actions find inspiration from his work, *The Prince*.

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