CHAPTER IV

AMBASSADOR

In ancient Indian literature there is reference to the existence of a number of big and small states which were either monarchical or non-monarchical. 1 "The existence of these states proves the existence of inter-state relations. 2 According to H.C. Chatterjee, "Intercourse among states in ancient India was taken for granted. It was rather the rule than exception. States were convinced that they could not remain in isolation, even if they so liked, and this conviction made such intercourse somewhat unavoidable." 3 In inter-state relation, diplomatic espionage played the most vital role.

Espionage in relation to foreign affairs is of three types, viz., political, military and diplomatic. Diplomatic espionage in foreign countries is carried on by ambassadors. The nature and extent of diplomatic relation is not a sporadic new development, rather it is an outcome of certain historical forces through ages. To understand diplomacy and to ascertain its importance as a part of espionage, we must be conversant with the concept of diplomacy.

1 Epic Ind. C.V.B. 180
2 PEAI, M.J. 190
3 Ibid, 190
DIPLOMACY: A modern writer defines diplomacy as "a method of negotiation, persuasion and conciliation for promoting the common interests of different nations and adjusting those interests which are opposed." The similar concept of diplomacy is to be found in the political traditions of ancient India.

Diplomacy had its beginning in a period earlier than the Rig Veda. There are different evidences to show that the Indus Valley people had connections with the South and Eastern India and the countries of the Central and West Asia. From this it will not be very unusual to think that diplomatic practices were in existence when there was the flourishing of the Indus Valley Civilization. The Aryans at the time of their early settlement in the fertile plains of India came in clash with the original non-Aryan inhabitants of the land. The Aryan kings being supported by priests performed twofold functions. They offered their prayer to god Indra seeking his help to destroy the enemies, (the Dāsyus). They were also deputed as envoys to the non-Aryans to carry on negotiations for the settlement of land disputes.

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4 WAI, V.R.D, 301
5 VA, R.C.M, 182
6 Cf. CIVC, M.U.J, 1934
7 RV, I
8 Ibid
The Aryans in those early days were separated in different clans and engaged themselves in frequent battles with a view to extend sway over one another. The devastating consequences of war led the tribal chiefs to apply diplomacy for the avoidance of war, blood-shed and positive economic crisis. In the Rig Veda diplomacy played a vital part in the battle of Ten kings. In the same,

\[9\] AHI, 27

\[10\] Cf. L.T. deL’I, K.N, A.S. Tr. Dikshitar, JIH, M.U. 1926-27, Ch.IV, 50-53 - Similar instance is found in ancient Byzantine empire where the warring kings being tired of constant wars, resorted to diplomatic practices.

\[11\] R.V. M.M, VII. 18-33 ;

In the Rig Vedic age there was a severe war in which almost the whole of India was involved. The chief cause of the war was that Sudasa’s (of Bharata clan) priest Viswamitra was offended when the former showed his favour to Vasistha, an enemy of Viswamitra. Viswamitra left the court of Sudasa and organised a confederacy with those kings who were vanquished by Sudasa and were jealous of his immense wealth, power and influence. The confederacy consisted of Alinas, the Pakthas, the Bhalonases, the Shivas and the Vaishnavins, the Anus, the Druhyus, the Turvasas, the Yadus and the Purus. The three non-Aryan clans named Ajas, Shigrus and Yakshus also joined the confederacy. They fought under the leadership of Bheda. Sudasa, on the other hand, was assisted by Vasistha. It was a pitched battle in which Sudasa came out victorious by the grace of 'Indra'. The vanquished had to surrender. In this way, Sudasa established his sway over Rig Vedic India.
deception seemed to have been a part of diplomacy.\textsuperscript{12} There is also reference to the use of spies by Agni (deva-d\=uta) to attain success against enemies.\textsuperscript{13} Espionage as an adjunct of diplomacy was introduced in the Rig Veda and had its development in the Atharva-Veda when the king became the centre and source of diplomatic practices. In the Rig Veda, it is suggested that spies disguised as diplomats should be accredited in pursuit of a successful mission.\textsuperscript{14}

**Atharva Veda:** With the progress of time the diplomatic system became more important. In the Atharva Veda, the royal power seems to have extended to a great extent. The king who had already been the centre of diplomacy, occupied the supreme position in administration. But some control was imposed upon the monarch by the priest (purushita) and he could not totally ignore the public opinion.\textsuperscript{15} The Atharva Veda recommends the king to win over his enemy by trickery, deception, charms and spells.\textsuperscript{16}

**Diplomacy in the Rāmāyana:** In the Rāmāyana, there is reference to four means of diplomacy, viz., conciliation (sama), gift (dana), dissension (bheda) and

\textsuperscript{12} RV. IV. 15. 4, III, 18.1
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, IV. 4.3
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, IV. 4.3
\textsuperscript{15} AV. III. IV. 1.6
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, IV. 16.4.
war (danda). Each of these diplomatic methods was to be applied according to the prevailing conditions. Fighting should be the last resort if the other expedients failed. Bibhisana asked Rāma to avoid war. He said, "Prowess produceth fruit only in respect of well advised action directed while carefully watching (enemies) that are negligent or captive or under divine affliction." But Rāma was compelled ultimately to declare the expedient of war against the demon king Rāvana when Sāma, Dāna and bheedha failed. The Rāmāyaṇa, therefore, reflects that time, place and circumstances are the deciding factors for the application of a particular diplomatic means.

**Diplomacy in the Mahābhārata:** The Mahābhārata tells us that diplomacy was a regular feature at that time. In the Ādi Parva of the Mahābhārata, the kings are advised to show their valour to the enemy by hiding their own flaws and at the same time keep a sharp watch over enemies and try to find out their flaws. It is clear from a conversation between Kanika (probably Kanika Bharadvāja of the Arthasastra) and Dhritarātra. Kanika said, "Kings should ever be ready with upraised sceptre and they should even extend their prowess carefully,"

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17 RV, Tr. C.V. Y.K. IXXX
18 Ibid
avoiding all faults of theirs; they should ceaselessly watch for the faults of others.\footnote{19} "An enemy should never be allowed to escape, even if he piteously addresses you, you ought not to show him any mercy; he might be slain at once.\footnote{20}"

In the Adi Parva, sāma, dāna, bheda and danda have been asked to be applied against the enemy. It is said, "Enemies should be destroyed by the art of conciliation or the expenditure of money, or by producing disunion amongst their allies, or by the employment of every means in one's power."\footnote{21} Arjuna won over the Guhyakas through the expedient of sāma.\footnote{22} Krisna, too, tried to bring Karna to the side of the Pandavas by saying that he was their eldest brother, i.e., the policy of sāma. He applied dāna, i.e., tempted him with the throne and also used bheda by pointing out that the Kauravas would not give him proper respect like the Pandavas.\footnote{23}

When Krisna was sent as an ambassador to the Kaurava camp to carry on negotiations with Duryodhana, he tried to settle their disputes peacefully through sāma, dāna and bheda. He at first applied sāma and asked Duryodhana to come to good terms with the Pandavas. But it did not yield

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Mbh, BORS, Adi Parvan, chpt. 143}
\item Ibid
\item Ibid
\item \textit{Mbh, Sabha. XXVIII. 4}
\item Ibid, Udyoga, CXLI
\end{itemize}
success. He then resorted to bheda. He called many kings, told them about super-human prowess of the Pāṇḍavas and himself displayed his supernatural feats and asked them to side with the Pāṇḍavas. But his appeal had no effect on them. Then he tried to win over Duryodhana through dāna and asked him to give the Pāṇḍavas only five villages to satisfy their Kshatriya ambition in lieu of the kingdom. But Duryodhana paid no heed to it. Lastly Krisna, finding no alternative, declared war.24

About āśā (conciliation) Kanika states, "The king should destroy by incantation, by gift of wealth, by poison or by deception the enemy even if he be his own son, friend, father or preceptor. In so doing he should utter soft words and after hitting should pity the victim and even shed tears over him. Securing confidence by conciliation and gift of wealth, or by any means, the enemies must be destroyed so effectually that he may not raise his head afterwards. Spies should work as diplomatic agents."25

In the Mahābhārata, Nārada, the diplomat, in course of a discourse with the Pāṇḍavas, expresses his view about diplomacy in these words, "With the six attributes of kings

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24 Mbh. Udyoga. CL. 9-18
25 Mbh. BORS, Ādi, chpt. 143
(viz., cleverness of speech, readiness in providing means, intelligence in dealing with the foes, memory and acquaintance with morals and politics) doest thou attend to the seven means (viz., sowing dissensions, chastisement, conciliation, gifts, incantations, medicine and magic).—

Narada was well-versed in the science of Rājadharmā and he suggested the king to destroy his enemy through diplomatic means and declare war or conclude peace according to situation.— So, falsehood and force were accepted as means to meet political ends in utter disregard to morality.

The Mahābhārata gives description of six expedients of royal policy to be applied by the king in foreign affairs. These were Sandhi (treaty or alliance), vigraha (war), Vana or Yatru (march against a weak king), Asana (maintaining a post against an enemy) and "skilful withdrawal in face of danger", Samayaye (taking shelter under a superior king) and Dualdhībhāva (taking recourse to a dual policy). In the Mahābhārata, force became the principal factor in foreign policy.

DIPLOMACY IN THE BUDDHIST AND JAIN LITERATURE:

Diplomacy existed in a more developed form in the

26 Mbh. Sabhā, V. XX 29 EDB, K-M-J. B VB, II, 38
27 Ibid, XII. 56-22 30 Mbh. Śānti, LXIX. 67-8
28 WAI, 312 31 Ibid, LXIX. 16
Buddhist and Jain works. The foreign envoys were shown high respect. It was through envoys that matrimonial alliances were arranged and it became the keynote of diplomacy. Ajatasatru decided to bring down the Vajjians and sent his minister Vassakara to Gautama Buddha seeking his advice regarding his victory over the Vrijis. Gautama Buddha asked Anand whether the Vrijis observed the seven points of excellence which he preached in Sarandara Chaitya, viz:

1. Whether they held regular public meetings of their own tribe.
2. Whether they undertook unanimous decision regarding their policy of the state.
3. Whether they paid proper respect to tradition and pledges.
4. Whether they showed honour and supported their own class.
5. Whether women were given due respect and security.
6. Whether they had reverence for the places of worship.
7. Whether the Arhats were supported and protected by them.

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32 KJ, V, 146
33 DN, MPS, 2/3 (16)
34 Ibid, M.P.S. 2113 (16)
When Anand reported to Buddha that Vrijis were following the seven principles of dhamma, he said to Magadhan minister that as long as the Vrijis were true to their dhamma, and vigilant in guarding their sacred abodes, they could not be subdued in any way. Vāsakara reported to his master Ajātasatru, "The Vajjians cannot be overcome by the king of Magadha, that is, not in battle, without diplomacy or breaking up their alliance. Ajātasatru sent Vasakara to sow dissension among them through some diplomatic methods which brought Ajātasatru victory over the Vajjians. Jinasena (9th century A.D.) in the Ādipurāṇam refers to envoys. We have references that Mahābal, the king of Gandhil country, accepted foreign envoys very cordially and also exchanged gifts with them.

Thus it appears that diplomacy in politics was fully applied. Buddha himself laid stress on the importance of bheda. There were circle of states under Suddhodhana and his enemies became Nādiyaṁga, and Nādiyaṁga became allies. He had no enemies.

DIPLOMACY IN THE ARTHASAstra:

Diplomacy was termed 'nyaya' by Kautilya in the Arthasastra.⁴⁰ Kautilya said, "Nyayaih prithiva jayati" which means that a king well-versed in diplomacy is sure to conquer the world.⁴¹ The sixfold expedients of sandhi, vigraha, yana, asana, dvaidhibhava and samayava formed the vital part of Kautiliyan diplomacy.⁴² Kautilya also laid stress on the principles of sama,⁴³ dana,⁴⁴ bheda⁴⁵ and danda⁴⁶ which are nothing but negotiation, persuasion, conciliation and threat of war - the chief instruments of modern diplomacy. Besides these six expedients and fourfold policy, Kautilya deals with various other aspects of diplomacy. In his conception of the circle of states, Kautilya tells us about the part played by Madhya and Udāsina. In the configuration of states, viz., Vijigatu, Ari, Madhya and Udāsina, the latter two play the most important part. The Udāsina is situated far beyond the kingdom of Vijigatu and Ari and is as powerful to offer help to the enemy, the conqueror and the Madhya king.

⁴⁰ WAI, VIII. 301 ⁴¹ Ibid, 301 ⁴² AS, VII ⁴³ AS, VII. 7 ⁴⁴ Infra ⁴⁵ Infra ⁴⁶ Infra
jointly or resist any one of them individually. He (Udāsina) is generally neutral or indifferent. The Madhyama king is capable to offer help to both the belligerents or prevent any one of them from invasion.

DIPLOMACY IN THE DHARMASAstra:

The Dharmasastra considered diplomacy essential in politics. Manu asks the king to take recourse to diplomacy to reach his goal. He said that the king should behave "like a lion" when force is needed, "like a tiger", when he requires to display his prowess and "like a hare", when he is helpless. Manu further advises that the king should always strive to bring prosperity of his country and at the same time prevent foreign aggressions. According to Manu, success of diplomacy depended mainly upon the ambassadors. He says, "That is the ambassador who unites or divides the friends." He states further, "Let the king appoint an ambassador; the army depends on its commander; control of the subjects on the army; the government of the kingdom on the king; peace and war on the ambassador."
Apart from sāma, dāna, bheda and danda, six other expedients of diplomacy, sandhi (peace treaty), viqraha (war), yāna (marching against the enemy), āsana (stoppage or march or creation of blockade against the enemy), dvaidhibhāva (create dissension between two enemies or make friendship with enemy's enemy) and samrāva (take shelter under a powerful monarch) were given due stress by Manu.55 He suggests the time and circumstances when these six expedients are to be followed. A king, according to him, should either march (yāna) alone or accompanied by ally when his own army is strong and that of the enemy is weak.56 Āsana is suggested for the king who is weak or is asked by his ally to adopt the expedient for the prevention of war.57 Manu asks to apply dvaidhibhāva (sow dissension) in the ranks of army of the enemy.58 Manu prescribes the policy of samrāva for the king who is threatened by his enemy. Such a king should take shelter under a powerful, religious and noble king.59 Alliance was also considered to be an important principle of diplomacy. Manu tells us, "Even a weak ally is commended if he is pious, grateful, loyal, persevering and with his men contented".60 Thus, we find

55 Manu, VII, 166, 174, 168, 208-209
56 Ibid, 171
57 Ibid, 166
58 Ibid, VII, 173
59 Ibid, 174-168
60 Ibid, 208-209
that in the age of Dharmaśāstra, diplomacy received great impetus.

DIPLOMACY IN THE PURĀNAS:

In the Puranas the common principles of diplomacy did not undergo drastic changes but became more developed. The principle of self-preservation formed the basis of action of a state in the circle. It was on diplomacy that the success of a state in relation with others depended to a great extent. The dignified and eloquent ambassadors of both sexes were despatched to carry on diplomatic mission.61 There were three classes of envoys: The special envoy given the charge of a special job, the envoy entrusted with limited power and royal ambassador.62

The ambassador had to furnish detailed information regarding the country in which he was accredited, to his master. He enjoyed some immunities but sometimes those were challenged, when an ambassador exceeded his limit. Narada was deputed to Tarakāsura with an ultimatum from Kartikeya. But he began to blame Tarakāsura who, being enraged, chased Narada who somehow escaped.63 Mahisāsura's envoy Bāskal was abused by Devi. When Bāskal attacked Devi, he was killed by her.64

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61 AP, CCXX, 2–3 & 3 SP, K*K, XXXI, 39
62 Ibid, CCLI 64 08. S, V, XIII
In the period of the Puranas the king was asked to apply *śama*, *dāna*, *bheda* and *danda* according to time and situation.\(^{65}\) In the *Vishnu-Purāṇa* we have an instance of sending ambassador to declare war.\(^{66}\) The Pundra king Vasudeva sent an envoy to Krishna, king of Duārakā with the ultimatum of war.\(^{67}\) The policies of conciliation\(^{68}\) (*śama*), dissension (*bheda*)\(^{69}\) and *upekṣā* (to ignore) were given due emphasis in the Puranas. The six expedients of *yāna*, *āśa*, *māsaśra*, *dvārdhibhāva*, *sandhi* and *vigrāha* received same importance in the Purāṇas. They were applied according to time and circumstances.

In the historic period there was gradual evaluation of diplomacy. At the time of Alexander's invasion, a number of Indian kings sent their envoys to carry on negotiations with Alexander. The tribal envoys of Malavas and Keudrakas were sent to Alexander to conclude peace treaty when these tribes were defeated.\(^{70}\)

Diplomatic contacts were highly developed in the Mauryan period. A separate board was established to look after the comfort and convenience of diplomats of foreign countries.\(^{71}\) Diplomacy received same importance during the

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\(^{65}\) *APī*, LXXXIV: 34-36  
\(^{66}\) *VP*, 34  
\(^{67}\) Ibid

\(^{68}\) *MP*, CCXII  
\(^{69}\) Ibid, CCXIII

\(^{70}\) II, Mc Crindle, 154 - 'from the Oxydrakai (Keudraka) cave the leading men of their cities and their provincial governors, besides 150 of their most eminent men entrusted with full powers to conclude a treaty.'

\(^{71}\) *MA*, Mc Crindle, 82-5
Gupta monarchs. Samudragupta adopted the diplomatic policy of dynastic alliances to extend his political supremacy. This policy was continued by his son Chandragupta II who had established matrimonial alliance with Rudrasena II, the Vakataka king. He himself married Kuberanaga, the Naga princess and gave his daughter Probhavati in marriage with Rudrasena II of the Central Deccan. Dr. Smith says, "Chandragupta adopted a prudent precaution in giving his daughter to the Vakataka prince and so securing his subordinate alliance".72

From facts of history, we find that diplomacy had its gradual development. From the Vedic period to the period of Alexander's invasion there was no permanent embassy and it had not a distinct governmental structure. But in Mauryan age diplomacy became more organized and systematic. In course of time, diplomacy began to be evolved to a great extent.

72 V.A. Smith op. cit.
The diplomatic agent now called 'Ambassador' was termed 'Dūta' in ancient India. In modern times, an ambassador is often nothing more than an honourable spy acting under the protection of law. Similarly, the Dūta has been described as an open spy by a number of ancient Indian authors. The Kāmasūtra described Dūta as a 'Prakāsa-Chāra' i.e., an open spy. Both the Dūta and Chara aimed at the collection of information about the foreign states, although spies were employed to be watchful in the internal affairs as well. The difference between the spies and ambassadors was that spies were sent secretly whereas ambassadors were straightforward and open. In the Agni Purāṇa, the Dūta is defined as a Chāra (spy) in disguise. The same view is found in the Vuktikalpataru where the Dūta is described as 'Prakāsāscha prakāsāscha chārastu duvidho mātah. Aprakāsa yamuddistah prakāsā dūta samjñākah.' But the Dūta, both in ancient and in modern times, has

73 EB 76 AP, 241, 11-13
74 KS. XII. 32 77 Yukti, 71, 10
75 PEAI, 214-215
been recognised as an honourable representative of a country receiving all protection of law, whereas, a spy is an unrecognised secret agent and is liable to receive any sort of punishment when detected.

**CLASSIFICATION OF DūTA:**

The existence of Dūta as an important figure in diplomacy can be traced right from the days of the Rig Veda. In the Rig Veda, the diplomatic agents were known as Dūtas and Chēras. Dūta as a messenger or an envoy has been mentioned several times in the Rig Veda and later used metaphorically. The Sūta seemed to have performed the duties later assigned to Dūta. In the Taîttrīya Saṁhitā there is reference to a class of envoys called Prahitas who were same as diplomatic agents of modern times. The Prahitas were sent by their masters to gather information regarding the strength and strategy of the enemy's army.

In the epics, the Dūtas played the most vital role in inter-state relation. In the Rāmāyana there is reference to three kinds of envoys, viz., Purusottama, Madhyamanara, and Purushodhana. The Purusottama was the most reliable envoy of the king and was entrusted by him to perform the

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78 RV, 1.12.1  
79 V.I, I 371  
80 YS, IV, 5.7  
81 Rām, Y.K. 1.8.10  
82 Ibid, 1.8.11  
83 Ibid, 1.8.12
most difficult and risky jobs, the Madhyamanara was sent with a particular mission and had not the full discretionary power like the Purusottama and the Purusodhama was the carrier of a particular message. Kautilya classified envoys in three classes according to their rank and functions. "Amātya sampadapato nihasrstarthah, pādaagunarinah parimittarthah adhamagunarinah 'āśanaharāh'\(^{84}\). Kāmandaka and Somadevasuri in his Nitiivākyamrtrṣ refer to these three classes of envoys. Kāmandaka says, "Nihāristārtho mitārthaścā tathāsāsanāvahakah. Śaṃarthyatapādāto hinocūtāstu tribidhah 'mrīthah'.\(^ {85}\) The Nitiivākyā states, "sa cha trya vidho nihasrstarthā parimitārthah āśanahavasāchati'.\(^ {86}\)

*Nihāristārthā*: The first in rank enjoying the status of a minister was called Nihāristārthā. Such an ambassador had full discretionary power to act in favour of the greater benefit of the country. He was like an ambassador of modern times. Krishna was such a planipotentiary who was despatched by the Pāṇḍavas to Kaurava camp before the Kurukshetra war to carry on negotiation or declare war.\(^ {87}\) "Prakrīto suāśinah sahīvigrahah pramānaṃ sa nihāristārthā vathā Krishnō Pāṇḍavānām'.\(^ {88}\)

\(^{84}\) AS, G.P. Sastri, 1-16. 2-4 \(^{85}\) Plbh, Udyoga, LXXII, 30
\(^{86}\) Kāmandaka, XII. 3 \(^{88}\) Nitiivākyā, XIII. 4
\(^{86}\) Nitiivākyamrtrṣ, XIII. 3
Parimitārtha: The next in rank was Parimitārtha who possessed qualifications less by a quarter. He was sent with a particular mission.

Sasanahara: The Sasanahara was the carrier of royal writs. We have examples of such envoys in the Mahābhārata, viz., Purochita sent by Drupada to the Kaurava camp, Uṣuka despatched by Duryodhana to Yudhishthira, Sanjaya deputed by Dhṛtarāstra to the Pāṇḍavas. In the Rāmāyaṇa, Rāma sent Angada as Sasanahara Dūta to the demon king Rāvana.

Consular services: Besides the ambassadorial and espionage systems, another type of diplomatic contact, viz., consular service in relation to trade and commerce, existed from the days of the Indus Valley Civilization. According to Dr. Rackay, India had her connection at that time with Sumer and Elam through sea route. The Indus Valley people carried on trade with Egypt, Crete, Ur and Kish. Thus we find that trade contact through land and sea routes existed. Trade and commerce formed the most vital part in inter-state relation in ancient India. The consulars were supposed to have protected the commercial interests of their country. Kautilya says, "As regards the king's merchandise in foreign countries, he shall gather information as to conveyance charges".

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89 Supra fn. 83, 84 of this chapter
90 Rām, Yuddha, 21.
91 VA, 182
92 AS, Bk.II.XVI.
SS, 106
the Sainsthādhyakṣa who superintended the trade of the
country and controlled its routes (vipanimārgādhyakṣa, as the commentator explains the name). In the Mauryan
period the Superintendent of trade controlled the supply, price and sale of articles like the modern 'consul' who
carry on commerce with other countries.

**QUALIFICATIONS OF AMBASSADORS:**

The success of diplomatic mission depends greatly
upon the ambassadors. "The success of diplomacy of any
country will greatly depend upon the choice of its diplo-
mats - their abilities, their competence to discharge
their functions." The British Ambassador Sir David
Kellog says, "The essential qualities of a good diplomat
are common sense, good manners, understanding of foreign
mentalities and precision of experience."

The qualifications of diplomats laid down by the
ancient political thinkers of India are in parity with
those of modern period. In the Sānti-Parva of the Mahā-
bhārata Bhima says that faithfulness, knowledge in

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93 CMHT, 115  94 Ibid, 114  95 DD, 31
96 DD, 31
different branches of science and art, dexterity, capacity to work in the face of all oppositions, noble birth, good oratory, sharp memory are essential qualities of an ambassador. In the Mahābhārata, noble birth of an ambassador was highly appreciated. In the Udyoga Parva, Vasudeva proposed before the assembly of kings to send a high-born, pious and fearless envoy to Duryodhana asking him to give Yudhiṣṭhira half the share of his kingdom.

**Personal Appearance:** As the ambassadors played a vital role in diplomatic negotiations with other countries, so naturally they had to possess handsome appearance.

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97 Sānti, LXXXV, 28. "Kulinah kula sampanne vaṃśi dakhah priyamvadah. Yathoktavadi smritiman dutah svat saptabhirganauḥ".


Manu, VII. 63-4. "Vapuman vitadhivyam Ꝑuto rajah praseṣvata pragābhah smritiman vaṃśi sastra māstreka nighthitah."

Kamandaka, XII. 2. "Abhyaṣṭakarma nripata Ꝑuto bhabitumaherti eva vyaṣṭavirinata samantra sa cha kirtitatā="

Sukra, II. 86-6: "Ingita ka交通iteanaham smritiman de sakalavīt adounvamantra viṣvaṃśi bitabhi duta uchhatatā."
Saramā, the female envoy despatched in the court of Paniś, was charming enough to attract Pani who tried to win her by bribes.\(^9\) Angada, Rāma's envoy to Rāvana,\(^10\) Krishna sent by the Pānḍavas to the Keurava court\(^11\) were really very charming in appearance. Krishna had the charm and personality to win others.\(^12\) In Kautilya's Arthāśāstra,\(^13\) Mānavadharmaśāstra\(^14\) and Sukṛiti\(^15\) the pleasing feature of an ambassador was considered essential.

Physical Fitness: The Dūtas were not only to be pleasing in appearance but also had to possess sound health and physical fitness. Agni in the Rig Veda\(^16\) Hanumāna and Angada in the Rāmāyana\(^17\) and Krishna in the Mahābhārata possessed sound health. Kautilya also laid due stress on physical fitness of ambassadors.\(^18\)

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\(^9\) RV. X. 9.9.2-5
\(^10\) Tulsi. 1. 611716-7
\(^11\) Sabha, V. 20. Tr. P.C.R. also Sānti. IXXXV. 85-28
\(^12\) Sabha, V. 20. Tr. P.C.R.
\(^13\) AS. IV. 25-38
\(^14\) Mānava, VII. 62-64
\(^15\) Sukṛti. II. 84-87
\(^16\) RV. III. 2.5-4.
\(^17\) Tulsi, 1. 6.17. 6-7
\(^18\) AS. IV. 25-38
Courage: A Dūta was to be bold and straightforward in the despatch of his mission, even in the face of adverse circumstances. Saramā in the Rig Veda set aside the proposal of bribery by Pani. Hanumāna and Angada delivered the message of his master very boldly to the demon king. When Hanumāna was captured by Rakṣasas and brought before Rāvana, he showed utmost courage and presence of mind in dealing with the situation. He took most bold steps to enter into negotiations with the demon king. Krishna very skilfully handled the situation when representing the Pandavas in the Kaurava court. He had earlier come to learn about Duryodhana’s contemplation to arrest him. He had combined in himself supernatural power along with boldness. So he foiled Duryodhana’s conspiracy. Both Manu and Kautilya are of opinion that without boldness, the diplomat cannot fulfil his desired mission.

109 RV. X. 9. 9. 2-5
110 AR. Cited, Tulsi 1,6,803. "Angadam Balitanayam samahuryandyamvyrebhi. Gayage mumya dasagriyam vruhi madvachanaktae."
111 Tulsi, 1.6.1716. "Balitanaya vudhi vale gunadhamam. Lanka jahu, tata mama kama."
(a) "Gayau sabha, mana naku na mura! Balitanaya stivala vorkura. (b) Suni Angada sakopa kala vant. Valu sambharo edhama abhimani."
(a) Tulsi, 6.6.19.7 (b) Ibid. 6.25. 9-21.
112 Tulsi, 5/221 5-8
113 Abh, Udyoga. LXXII. LXXIII. LXXXVIII. X.CV. CXXX-CXXXI
114 Manu. 7163.64
115 AS. IV. 25. 38
Eloquence: "It is the art, power and practice of uttering strong emotion in correct, appropriate, expressive and fluent language.* It is eloquence through which a diplomat can bring a foreigner to his point of view. The success of diplomacy, therefore, depends upon fine delivery of speech. In ancient India this quality was regarded as an essential criterion for the selection of an envoy. Agni, Saramā, Angada as well as Krishna were highly eloquent. Kautilya laid due emphasis on this faculty.

Modesty: About modesty of an ambassador, Harold Nicolson points out, "a diplomat may be truthful, accurate, calm, patient and good-tempered, but he is not an ideal diplomatist unless he be also modest." In ancient Indian literary works like the Rig Veda, the Rāmāyana, and the Mahābhārata the quality of modesty has found proper attention in the selection of an ambassador. Kautilya said that the diplomats as well as the ministers should be modest.

116 CTCD, 342 117 RV. II. 1.9.2; 1.22.5.3; III, 4.15.4; II. 1.9.6.
118 Ibid. X, 9.9. 2-5 119 Tulsī, 5/2/2718; 6/21/1.2.
120 AS. IV. 25-38 121 Diplomacy, 63
122 RV. X. 9.9.2-5; II. 1.9.2; 1.22.5. 3-4; III, 4.15 4; 1.9.6
123 Tulsī, 6/7/6; AR, 803
124 Adbh. Sānti. LXXV, 18-28
Sharp memory: A good memory enables the Dūta to deal efficiently with the delicate and complex problems in inter-state relation. An ambassador having good memory can verbally reproduce the detailed information regarding the country and the proposals of negotiation carried on in the country where he has been accredited.

In ancient India the diplomats with sharp memory were sent to foreign country. In the Ramayana, Angada and Hanumana delivered the messages of their masters to Ravana and Sita respectively, exactly in the same way they were instructed to do because of their good memory. The Mahābhārata, the Mānavadharma Sāstra, the Kāmandaka-Nitiśāra, the Arthaśāstra and others laid due emphasis on good memory.

Oratory: Oratory is a rare gift to influence others. So, in ancient Indian diplomacy, it was regarded as an essential quality of an ambassador. Agni and Saramā in the Rig Veda, Hanumāna and Angada in

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126 Mbh, Sabhā, LXXXV, 85-88
127 Mānavadharma Sāstra, VII, 63-64
128 Nitiśāra, 13: 16, 1.3. "Pragālphaḥ amṛtimana vajagasya seṣṭre cha nirmritah. Abhyāstakarma nṛpaterdoto bhavitumahati".
129 AS, IV, 25-38
130 RV, X, 9.9.2-5
the Rāmāyana, Krishna, Sanjaya and Vīrūra in the Mahā-
bhārata were all expert in oratory. Kautilya considered
oratory as the most essential quality of a Dūta. In
the Natyāśāstra it is laid down that oratory helps an
ambassador to plead for his master in a convincing manner
which brings success.

Good Family: In the Rig Veda, the Rāmāyana, and
the Mahābhārata and also in the later works like the
Arthasastra and Mānava-dharmasāstra it is laid down
that the ambassadors who represented their country to the
foreign court were recruited from among those who were

131 Tulsī, 5. 2/27.8; 6/21/1.2
132 AS. IV. 25-38
133 *Praśabhānu kumalamadhura katha daksinachā
lachā samvartamantra dutiyeśvīvunāh karve.
Kalāna na jadām rupavanta cha parthavanta
na chaḷutam. Dutaṃ yaviḥi dutim va yuchah
kuraṭ kadačham. Kula bhogadhanadhikyam
karyā chaiva vikalthanam. Duti nivedayet-
kamārthanam chaiva bhagam". N.S.V. C.M.G.
134 RV. XI. 1. 9.2; 1.22.5.3-4; III. 4.15.4; II. I.9.6
135 K.K. (Tulsī 1. 5/30/4.5
"Pavana tanaya! vāla Pavana samana! Vudhi
vivaka viññana nidhana. Kavana su. kai kathina
jana mahim. Jo nahim hoī tata tune nahim".
136 Mbh. Śānti, LXXXV.
137 AS. IV. 25-38
138 Mānava. VII. 63-64
high born. In the Rig Veda, the gods employed Agni as their messenger because he was high born. So the Devas said to him, "Agni, be thou our messenger." In the Ramayana, Hanumāna and Angada had a good family background. Hanumāna was Pavana's son and Bali was the father of Angada. Krishna belonged to royal family and was Vasudeva's son. So he was accredited as an envoy of the Pandavas. Drupada sent his Brahmin priest to the Kauravas on the eve of Kurukshetra war. Aśoka's son and daughter were accredited by him to Ceylon and Suvarna-bhūmi to propagate the tenets of Buddhism.

**Moral character:** The success of diplomatic mission depends much upon the strong morality of an ambassador. An ambassador during his stay in a foreign state was supposed to avoid all kinds of allurements. A diplomat having moral lapses is liable to divulge secrets to a female spy. Such acts of immorality betray the real purpose of diplomacy.

In ancient India morality was considered as the first and foremost instrument of success of diplomacy. We have evidences to show that Saramā, Hanumāna and Angada were very strong in their character. Kautilya\(^{139}\) and \(^{140}\) laid stress on the morality of an envoy.

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\(^{139}\) AS, IV. 25-38

\(^{140}\) Manu, 7-63/64
Intelligence: Intelligence which is an essential trait of human character to cope with any kind of situation, is, of course, the main criterion of an efficient Dūta. It is through intelligence that an ambassador can understand the merits and flaws of different types of negotiations. Only an intelligent envoy can safeguard the interests of his country when he enters into an agreement or concludes a treaty with other countries. In ancient India, this quality was regarded essential in treating with others. Sarama, as we find, had the intelligence to sense the evil design of Pani and she cleverly refused his proposal of bribes.141 Hanumāna and Angada were intelligent enough to convince Ravana about Rāma's strength. In the Mahābhārata, intelligence played a significant role in diplomatic activities.142 Krishna's intelligence is beyond description and Sanjaya and Vidura too, were very intelligent diplomats. An intelligent ambassador has the keen observation to study the situation of the country where he is accredited. In course of conversation or negotiation with the rulers of the foreign country, an intelligent envoy can watch skillfully their reactions. Kautilya143 and Manu144 laid equal stress on this faculty. Manu says that an ambassador can make or unmake alliances.145

141 RV. X.9.9. 2-5 142 Sānti, LXXXV, 28
143 AS, IV. 25-38 144 Manu, VII.63-64
145 Ibid, 65.
Patience and perseverance,\textsuperscript{146} prudence\textsuperscript{147} and precision\textsuperscript{148} were other qualifications of the Dūta. All these traits bring desired goal to diplomatic mission. Mahavira, Angada and Krishna had patience and perseverance, prudence and correct precision which helped them greatly to promote the welfare of their masters as well as to others. When Hanumāna was arrested by Rāvana's men, the demon king ordered him death punishment. But after a discussion on diplomatic immunities his tail had been burnt. Hanumāna faced the situation quite patiently.\textsuperscript{149} Krishna, too, showed undaunted spirit and patience when he was imprisoned by Duryodhana.\textsuperscript{150}

\textbf{Presence of mind} : The presence of mind of a Dūta

\textsuperscript{146} Rv. X. 9.9. 2-5
\textsuperscript{147} Manu. 7-63/64; As. IV. 25-38
\textsuperscript{148} AS. IV. 25-38
\textsuperscript{149} Tulsigranthawali - 5.24. 8-9
\textsuperscript{150} Udyoga. 6. 20-21. Before the outbreak of Kurukshetra war Drupada despatched a well-versed Brahmana priest to Dhrtrarāstra to avert the struggle on behalf of the Pandavas. This ambassador maintained patience while staying in the court of the Kauravas.
is another great virtue to enable him in dealing with changed circumstances. In the Rāmāyana when Angada went to Rāvana with a proposal of peace treaty with Rāma, the demon king tried to instigate the envoy against his master by reminding him that his father had been killed by the same. Angada got very angry and then and there decided to surrender to the demon king if he could remove him by his feet. He said this to Rāvana. As Rāvana was going to do the same, Angada stopped him, with the advice to touch the feet of Rāma, his master.151 Krishna had repeatedly showed his presence of mind, tact and prudence.

Knowledge of language: The knowledge of different languages helps the ambassador to understand the culture and political systems of different countries. The success of a diplomatic mission depends much upon the knowledge of languages. According to Harold Nicolson, "An ambassador must be a good linguist......"152 In ancient India the Dutas were expected to be skilled in the languages of the country where they were sent, as well as conversant with the cultural tradition and political systems there.153 Both the Manavadharma and the Sukranitisara154 laid down that the diplomats should be well-versed in different

151 Tulsi, 1. 6/33/8
152 EDM, 35
153 Sukra. 87. 120. "Inigitekara checstaine grutimana demakalavit. Padouravamante, vidyagme vitabhidrute inostate".
154 RV. V. 99.2-5, Manava. 53-54
subjects and the śāstras of the contemporary period. Besides these, truthfulness and pleasing manners\textsuperscript{155} are other secrets of success in diplomatic relation with foreign country.

**Loyalty:** As a spokesman of his country, a diplomat should have loyalty and obedience to his government. He must have genuine patriotic feelings for his country. Hanumāna is the highest embodiment of loyalty.\textsuperscript{156} Angada was equally faithful to his master. The Mānavadharmasāstra\textsuperscript{157} and the Arthasastra\textsuperscript{158} laid equal stress on the loyalty of diplomats.

Thus we find that the ambassador in ancient India was expected to be highly qualified because "the responsibilities of a dūta are very great. He alone brings in peace or breaks off the peace and makes a cleavage among the subjects of the country", i.e., "Dūta evahāsandhatre bhineteyav cha samhātān. Dūtastukūruto karma bhidyante enamānavaḥ."\textsuperscript{159}

**Treatment towards ambassador:** Certain regulations were laid down regarding treatment towards ambassadors from an early period. When an ambassador came to represent his country, he was accorded a cordial reception. The king offered him a seat beside him, enquired about the health of

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\textsuperscript{155} A.S. IV. 25-38
\textsuperscript{156} Achyānta Rām, Cited in Tulsi. 753
\textsuperscript{157} Manu, VII. 63-64
\textsuperscript{158} AS, I V. 25. 38
\textsuperscript{159} HAI. 286 ff.; vide, Manu. VII. 66
his master. He was to give a patient hearing to the message conveyed by the Dūta and send a suitable reply. The diplomats were granted certain privileges and were immune from death punishments. In ancient India, we have examples of such immunities for the Dūta. In the Mahābhārata it is laid down that the Dūta was entrusted only to deliver the message of his master exactly. So he should never be killed.

"Dūtān kim aparādhyante vathoktaśāyānubhāsāt."

Ramayana also prohibits the murder of an ambassador who is simply the mouth-piece of his master because it is against public and political morality. i.e., "Uruvan parārtha-paravān na dūto vadhahahati.

"Nyastaśāstro grihito vā na dūto vadhahahati." In the same we are told "Nyastasāstro grihito va na dūto vadhahahati." In the Nitiśākyamrta it is suggested that an ambassador should not be killed if he commits any offense or is armed with weapons. "Mahatysapakārabhapi na dūtampahanyāt.

Udvrite savapi āstreṣu dūtamyukhā vai rājānāh. Teśāmāntyāvāṣaṇāngpyavadhya". Chandrasevara quotes from Sukraniti, that an ambassador, even if he be a mlechha, should not be slain because he is entrusted only to reproduce the view of his master.

160 Tulsigranthāvali. 1.1. 291. 3-4
161 Udyoga, CLXII, 39
162 PEAI, 218; Vide, Rām, P.P.S.S, 52-21
163 Rām, Yuddha - 25-21
164 Niti, 17-9.
"Dūti mlechchopavedhyah avadr̥jā dūtamukho yatah. Udyutasava pi śāstreu dūti vadati nānyathā."\textsuperscript{165} The Arthaśāstra, too, reflects the same view. "Sāasanāḥ che yathoktaḥ vruat pranāvadho ni drīste .... uchvateyapi śāstreu yathoktaṁ vakrārah te śāmantāvasānipya vadhyah."\textsuperscript{166}

But at the same time with the immunity of death punishment to Dūtaś, both the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata suggested to kill an undutiful and disloyal ambassador. The Rāmāyana says, "Astu hitvā mataṁ bhartuḥ svamataṁ saśāṁprabhāvate. Anuktavādi dūtaṁ sen sa dūto vadhaharhati!\textsuperscript{167} The same view is echoed in the Mahābhārata. "Yathoktaṁ dūtā ācāste vadhyah avadanyathā vruvān."\textsuperscript{168}

But these were cases of exception. As a general rule, from the days of the Rig Veda the diplomatic agents were granted personal security and immunities. Agni has often been referred to as divine messenger in the Rig Veda. He received great honour and reception from the people.\textsuperscript{169} Diplomatic immunities and privileges were granted to Agni, the messenger of the gods. That is why the gods made

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\textsuperscript{165} RV, III. 2.5.4
\textsuperscript{166} AS, 1.16
\textsuperscript{167} Yuddha, 20-19.
\textsuperscript{168} Udyoga, LXXXII, 7
\textsuperscript{169} RV, III. 2.5.4
\end{flushright}
thee (Agni) their messenger, the disinterested bearer of oblations." The ambassador was expected to be disinterested which means that he was to deliver the message disinterestedly. Agni seems to be disinterested in all affairs. Sarama sent as an envoy of gods to Pani, was accorded warm reception. She was not ill-treated or arrested even when she gave the ultimatum of war. In the Rig Veda there were frequent bloody encounter, treachery, arson and plunder, but the ambassadors were granted immunities and privileges to carry on their diplomatic missions.

In the Ramayana, we have instances of immunities and privileges enjoyed by diplomats. Sometimes envoys were despatched to make arrangements for matrimonial alliances. Raja Janaka sent his daughter's marriage proposal with Rama to Dasaratha through envoys who were welcomed and given honoured seats beside the king. When Dasaratha made arrangements to perform sacrifice for sons, he sent emissaries to invite other kings. The chief envoy Sumanta went to bring the kings. He was granted safety and received honour everywhere.

170 R.V. III. 2.5.4 172 Tulsi, 1. 1/291/3-4
171 Ibid. X. o.9. 2-5 173 Ibid. 1. 1./189/6-7
The Rakshasas were also well aware of diplomatic immunities and inviolability. When Hanumāna began to destroy the beautiful groves of Lanka, he was captured by Indrajit and brought to Rāvana. The demon king, out of anger, ordered the monkey to be executed. But Bibhisana said to his elder brother, "Oh king! Get rid of your anger. Death punishment is condemnable in Sāstras" i.e., "Dūta na vadhyah samavesu rājan. Sarvesu vadanti santah. Asamāyavā satruravam pravādīh kritam kshanenaśriya māpramēyam. Na dūtavādhyām pravādanti santo dūtasya. Drista vaheo hi dandāṃ vairupayabhagñesu kasābhighati maudhyāṃ tathā lakshmanasannipātah. Etanti dūto pravādanti dandāṃ vadhastru dūtasya na naherutoni."

But in cases of obnoxious ambassadors, Bibhisana suggested some forms of punishments such as, mutilation of certain limbs, beating, shaving hair and marking over body. Rāvana then ordered his men to set fire on the tail of Hanumana with which he burnt the citadel. When Rāma despatched Angada to Rāvana demanding the release of Sītā, Angada pleaded the case. Rāvana was extremely irritated but he could not kill Rāma's envoy by totally disregarding the ethical regulations of immunities from death punishment.

174 Rām, S.K. 52. 6-7, 13.VI
175 VR, J.R. cpt. 52, 1257-59
to the enemy. When Rāvana’s messenger Suka was captured by vanaras, they were about to kill him. Suka pleaded for his life on the ground that he was dūta. Rāma set him free.

The security of life and property of diplomatic agents was the bounden duty of a king. Bhisma warned against any death punishment of Dūtas. He said, "A king should never slay an envoy under any circumstances. The king who slays an envoy, who faithfully utters the message with which he is charged causes the names of his deceased ancestors to be stained with the sin of killing a foetus", i.e.

"Nātu hanyanro po jatu dūtaṃ kṣavanyāddipati. Dūtasya hanta nīvāma viset sačivaḥ sapa. Yathotavadinam dūtāṃ kṣatradharma ratonrph Yo hanyat pitarasastasa bhun chatvamavapnangub."178

When Duryodhana contemplated to imprison Krishna he said that the Kuru king was going to commit sin "an act disapproved by the gods from consideration of virtue, profit and desire."179

176 Tulsi, 1.6 /22/4.5
177 Rāmeś, Y.K. XXV. 20
178 Mbh, Śānti, 85. 26-27
179 Ibid, Udyoga, CXXXIX
A very funny story is told in the Jātaka regarding diplomatic immunity. A man cherished a desire to have a taste of royal food. He hit upon a novel plan. He declared himself as a dūta and entered into the palace. Nobody stopped him. He went to the king straight and shared his meal. When the guards were about to strike him, he prayed for diplomatic immunity. He told everything and said that he was the messenger of his belly.180 It is merely a story but shows that Dūtas were entitled to enjoy certain immunities and privileges. Kautilya says that "messengers who in the face of weapons raised against them, have to express their mission as exactly as they are instructed with, do not, though outcastes, deserve death .......".181 Vaisempyana tells us "an ambassador is not to be put to death even if he commits a grievous wrong?"182

Coming down to the historic period, we find that diplomats were given freedom to express their views. Chandragupta Maurya granted this privilege to the Greek Ambassador

180 Jātaka, II. 2. 262
181 AS, R.S, 30; A.S. 1. 11. 15
182 VN. III, 64
Megasthenes. He was not bound by the municipal law of the country and thus enjoyed extra-territoriality. He was free to move everywhere. This enabled him to make a study of the socio-economic and political condition of India and write an interesting account of geography, products and system of the country. Such diplomatic immunity was also granted to Hiuen-Tsang by Harsha-vardhana, king of Kanauj. It has been pointed out "...what is more important, this principle of diplomatic immunity was extended in the case of distinguished visitors." Harsha-vardhana made arrangements for the safety of his honourable envoy. Once his life was at

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IHT, Beal, 180; As in India, the diplomatic agents enjoyed the same honour and security of life according to Muslim usages. E.D. II, 535.

When Masud, a follower of Sultan Mahmud, was leading campaign against Hindustan, two envoys from the Rana of Satrakh came to him with valuable rich gifts and delivered the message of their master, in which Masud was given the ultimatum of war if he did not leave the country. Masud was extremely annoyed and said that he would have torn them to pieces speaking so insolently, if they were not ambassadors. E.D. II, 525-526. When Sultan Mahmud conquered one after another kingdom the king of Hind was threatened. He sent his relatives and other chiefs as envoys to the Sultan with gifts and peace negotiations. He promised to pay his tributes regularly. The Sultan also sent his envoy to see whether the conditions were fulfilled by the king. The king kept his promise and was saved. Thus the envoys of the Indian king avoided war through successful diplomatic mission
stake at the hands of his theological rivals. Harsha declared a royal proclamation that he would take serious steps if the inviolability of the envoy was threatened in any way. 184

The ambassadors, as a general rule, were exempted from death punishment but we have instances to show that they were sometimes insulted, harshly treated and even killed in case of enmity between two kings. The Rāmāyana tells us that Rāvana ill treated Hanumāna and Angada, the ṛtās of Rāma when they came to convey their master's message. This Rāvana even killed a ṛtā. 185 The story tells us that Rāvana's elder brother Kuvera having learnt about his younger brother's oppressive rule, sent an envoy to his court, with the message which runs as follows. "Oh king! For a long time you have committed all sorts of evils. Now leave off your evil company and follow the principles of religion, truth and honesty. The sages and gods are making a combined effort to destroy you". Hearing this message of his elder brother, Rāvana killed the ṛtā and gave his body to be devoured by the demons. 186

184 IAT, 180
185 VA, J.R. 1892-93
186 Ibid
It is not a single instance. In the *Skanda-Purāna* we find that Nārada was chased by Tārakāṣura but could not be seized, when the former declared an ultimatum of war on behalf of Kārtikeya. Once again, we find that Bāskala, the envoy of Mahisasura being angry when abused by Durgā, was about to attack the goddess, but was killed. But in this case, Bāskala was killed because he violated the jurisdiction of an envoy by using force against the goddess. Mahisasura, too, tried to kill the envoy of the goddess Durgā, Vānaramukha who declared the ultimatum of war to the demon.

In the South Indian epigraphy it is recorded that the Chola king Rājarāja's (986 A.D.) ambassador was insulted by a confederacy of eighteen princes. The king attacked those princes of Malaī Nādu and killed those princes.

*Functions of ambassadors:* The ambassador has played the most significant role in inter-state relation ever since the emergence of an organised state and government. A country cannot survive isolated without any connection with other countries. The ambassador serves as a

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187 SP, KK, XXXI, 39
188 DV, 5th Skanda, XIII
189 S P. Arunāchala, X, 89
190 WAI, 342. In history we have a very strange reference of insult to envoys. When Sultan Mahmud plundered the
communicating link among different countries. The functions performed by the Dūtas in ancient India are not basically different from those of modern times. Their functions may be divided into four basic phases, viz., representation, carrying on negotiations, gathering information and safeguarding the interests of their country and the people living in foreign land.¹⁹¹

In ancient India, Sāramā and Agni in the Rīg Veda,¹⁹² Hanumāna and Angaḍa in the Rāmāyana,¹⁹³ Krishna and Sanjaya in the Mahābhārata¹⁹⁴ were all the spokesmen of their
temple of Somnath, he took the image of the god to Ghazni and placed the same on the footsteps of the mosque so that it might be treded upon by people on their way to mosque. Hearing this, the Hindus sent envoys to the Sultan offering gold weighing twice the stone idol demanding its return. The Sultan accepted the proposal and sent the envoys to his favourite Salar Masud with whom the idol was kept. Salar Masud cordially welcomed them, sprinkled sandal water over them, and served them with betel leaves. This reception naturally impressed the envoys and they put their demand. Masud said that they had eaten up the idol with its dust mixed up with lime and nuts of betel leaves. ED. II. 625-26. Such an instance of insult to envoys is seldom found elsewhere.

¹⁹¹ AFS, Childs, 69
¹⁹² RV. X. 9.9. 2-5; III. 2.5.4.
¹⁹³ Tulsi, 1, 753, VR, cited Tulsi. 805.
¹⁹⁴ Mbh. Udyoga, 6,20-21
masters. Diplomatic agents representing their rulers are found in different places, such as, the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, Markandeya-Purāṇa, Devi-Bhāgavatam and Skanda-Purāṇa.

In inter-state relation it is through the medium of ambassadors that negotiations are conducted. In the Rig Veda, Sarama represented Indra to the court of Pāṇiḥ with negotiation. The divine messenger (Deva-dūta) Agni carried oblations to gods. In the Rāmāyana, Hanumāṇa and Angada represented Rāma to Rāvana. Drupada's ambassador, the Brahmin priest, Krishna and Sanjaya all tried to negotiate to avert war.

In diplomatic relation Manu recognises Dūtas as the most important medium through whom delicate negotiations between kingdoms were to be carried on. He says that a diplomat should try to enter into friendly terms with the hostile enemy and make alliances with a friendly country on demand of situation. The ambassador, like a spy.
furnished his master with all sorts of information of the
country where he was accredited. He was to furnish details
to his master about the king, the strength and weakness of
his policy, use the dismissed and disaffected elements of
that king to serve his own purpose. He was also to station
his own spies to keep a sharp watch over the acts and in-
tentions of the enemy. Sometimes the ambassadors set up
a network of spies to gather information about the enemy.
Kautilya suggested the ambassadors to employ spies disguised
as ascetics, physicians, traders, as well as the ubhaya-
vetana chāra (spies paid by his own master and at the same
time by the enemy) to sow dissension in the enemy country,
keep watch over the disaffected persons and important offi-
cials of the enemy. He himself should also try to leak out
the secrets of the enemy from delirious talks of lunatics,
drunkards, beggars or persons babbling in sleep, seeing the
signs made in temples or sacred spots or by deciphering the
secret writings or paintings (chitraqudha lekhva-saminābhi).

The king, on the other hand, is advised to keep a
watchful vigilance over the enemy envoys as a precaution
against any possibility of endangering the security of his
kingdom by them. He was advised to employ envoys, spies,

204 Manu. VII. 104-153
205 ASI. XVI
206 Ibid. I. XVI
open-guards and secret watchers in the kingdom of the enemy. "The king", it is said, "must first see the charas or secret commissioners and then the dutas or ambassadors for information regarding the strength and otherwise of the enemy", i.e., "Pas'vet chārānta".

As regards the functions of ambassadors, Kamandaka says that they should know about the military strength, sources of wealth, forts, vulnerable frontiers either through spies or himself acting as a spy.

Kautilya says that the Dutas before their departure to a foreign country, were to be given instructions regarding their behaviour and courtesy in the foreign country. In the foreign land he was to try at first to win over important nobles and officials, forest guards, security guards and other royal personages. He was to get an idea about the places of encampments, field of operations, garrisons, forts, defence, military strength, products of the mines, sources of wealth and points of weakness of the enemy. The Duta should not stay long in the enemy country. He should seek the permission of the king there to leave as soon as his task was over.

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207 AS. 1-2, 3
208 HAI, 288; Vide. R.N., 50; Yaj. 1.328
209 HIPI, 370; Cf. Kamandaka
210 AS. XVI
211 Ibid, XVI.
212 Ibid.
was not to be moved by honour and hospitality shown to him by the enemy. He should remain calm and bold if treated adversely, indifferent to women and wine; sleep in a secluded single apartment, because a sleeping or a drunken man is liable to have divulged secrets in babbling or delirium.\footnote{213}

The Dūta, says Kautilya, should always communicate the message in the manner and language directed by his master even if his security is in danger. If the enemy king gives him warm reception, listens to him patiently, enquires about the health of his master, gives him honoured seat, invites him to dinner and social festivals, then it is clear that the enemy king was cordial. If the situation be adverse, the Dūta should remind the hostile king that it was his bounden duty to communicate the message of his master. He was only a 'mouthpiece' of his king.\footnote{214}

So far we have discussed the views of ancient political thinkers regarding the qualifications, functions and other aspects in connection with diplomacy and diplomatic agents. Now let us see how far the theory was applied actually.

\textbf{The Epics}: It is well established that there was the existence of Dūtas in the Vedic age. In the epic period the diplomatic agents played a more important part

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\footnote{213 AS\textsuperscript{XVI}}\footnote{214 Ibid, I. XVI}
in war and politics. In the Rāmāyāna we find that Rama preferred the application of diplomacy through envoys to avoid the crisis of war. The dutas, he says, should be sent to enemy country to speak highly about the strength of his master, win over the enemy by flattery and know public opinion.215 Hanumāna was excellent as a secret agent as well as a diplomat. While wandering in search of Sita, Rāma and Lakshmana came to Rishyamuka mountain. Sugriva suspected them as the spies of Vālī.216 He decided to send Hanumāna, who was endowed with physical fitness, geographical knowledge about routes and land and also the capacity to study human character, to enquire about the actual intention of the strangers.217 Hanumāna disguised himself as a mendicant and came to Rāma and Lakshmana as a messenger of Sugriva with the proposal of friendship of his master.218 Rāma spoke highly about Sugriva's messenger. He said to Lakshmana that Sugriva's Dūta was well-versed in the Vedas, had mastery over language. He was a good orator. He was really worthy to be a Dūta of high order.219

215 Rām, Yuddha, 1.18.16
216 Rām, K.K. 34-7
217 Bhattikāvyya, tr. 177 - "Visvāsa pradaveso hasau pathiprajña samahitah. Chittasamkhvoyā jigicunam utpadapatā nabhastalam".
218 Rām, tr. RB, K.K. 194-195
219 Ibid, K.K. 194-95
Even Rāvana appreciated Hanumāna when he came to his court as Sugriva’s envoy to secure the release of Sita through open negotiations. Hanumāna conveyed his message very boldly even at the risk of his life. From a conversation with Rāvana, he could understand that the demon king would not come to any settlement through peaceful negotiations. So, war was the only alternative. He could smell danger and left Lanka without formal permission of the king. Angada was also deputed to Rāvana with the same purpose but his mission, too, failed. Thus the Dutas were despatched not only to furnish details of the enemy country but also to settle disputes through peaceful negotiations. If their peace mission failed, they declared the ultimatum of war.

Before the outbreak of war diplomatic agents were deputed to friendly countries for support and military assistance. On the eve of Kurukshetra war, Drupada proposed before the assembly of kings to send messengers to the monarchs named Bhagadatta of eastern coast, Hardikya, Ahuka, Rochmeña, Brihanta, Senābinda, the Chedi king of Supāṃśva, Suvāhu, Paurava, the Saka, Pallava and Kalinga kings, seeking their assistance and friendship. Drupada sent an erudite Brahmin priest to Drona, Bhismā and to

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220 Rām. tr. K.K. S.K. 49-51, 273
221 Ibid, 16-18. V. 34
222 Ibid, 16-18. V. 34
223 Ibid, 3.
Duryodhana. Arjuna went to Krishna at Dvārka.

A common courtesy was to accord warm reception to a ṛūta. When Sanjaya approached Yudhisthira on behalf of the Kauravas with peace proposal from Dhrītarāṣṭra, he was given cordial reception by Yudhisthira. Krishna himself went to the Kaurava camp as the ṛūta of the Pāṇḍavas. When Vidura came to learn that lord Krishna was coming to Duryodhana with peace negotiations, being accompanied by Nārada, Tumburu and Parasurāma, he ordered the royal officials to make arrangements for their reception and entertainment. When Krishna had arrived at Hastināpura, Duryodhana invited him. But Krishna refused to accept the invitation unless and until his mission was successful. Sakuni advised Duryodhana to send Uluka as an envoy to the Pāṇḍavas. He faithfully communicated the message of his master to Yudhisthira.

PURĀNAS: The system of sending ambassador to conclude peace treaty or declare war was a traditional practice, and continued throughout ages. In the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, the Pundra king Vasudeva is found to have cherished a desire to establish his sway over Dvārakā. He deputed a highly accomplished

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224 Mbh, K.P.S. III, 4
225 Ibid, 3
226 Ibid, 25
227 Benissamhāram, Tr. Act.I, 362
228 Mbh, K.P.S., 92
229 Ibid, 151
envoy to Krishna, the king of Dvārakā, commanding either to surrender or pay tributes. Krishna, in reply, sent the ultimatum of war through his envoy. In a tough battle between the two, Krishna came out victorious.230

In the Markandeya Purāṇa, we are told that Suvānu, the eldest son of Madālasā, wanted to dethrone the younger brother Alarka. Suvānu sent his messenger to his elder brother with the ultimatum "Fight or submit". Alarka preferred fighting but was defeated and fled away.231 In the same, we have similar instances of sending dūtas. All the gods except Durgā encountered defeat at the hands of two asuras, namely, Sumbha and Nisumbha. Sumbha sent his dūta Sugriva to Durgā demanding her immediate surrender. Durgā listened to Sugriva very calmly and sent the reply that she would surrender to the asura only when defeated. Sumbha sent his able generals to drag the goddess by hair and bring her to him. The goddess killed all of them and also destroyed Sumbha.232 Mahisāsura also sent his proposal to goddess Goury to surrender through his envoy. The goddess turned down his proposal and sent an ultimatum of war through her envoy Vānaramukha.233

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230 VP, 34
231 Mār P, Chpt. 37.
232 Ibid, Chpt. 85-87
233 SP, AM, X, 62-87
THE BUDDHIST PERIOD: In the Buddhist period the ambassadorial system in relation to foreign affairs became a regular feature of administration. The central assemblies of the Buddhist republics dealt with foreign affairs and received ambassadors and princes from other countries. When the situation in relation to foreign affairs became serious, the central assembly vested its power to a small body of "Ambassadors" who were the leading members of the central assembly. Such a body of ambassadors were deputed by Kshudraka Buddhist republic to Alexander with peace negotiations. The ambassadors had the discretionary power to conclude treaty and decide grave questions on war and peace. As success in foreign policy depended on its secrecy, the main questions on war and peace were not discussed before the general assembly and were decided by the executive. But only a few ganas attained success in foreign policy. Most of them could not maintain the secrecy of their policy though they were warned again and again by the framers of their constitution.

In the Buddhist Jataka, envoys are said to have been despatched to declare war. In the Asatarupa Jataka, we find

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234 Jataka IV. 145 (No.465)  
235 LB, Rockhill, 118-19  
236 AI, Mc Crindle, 154  
237 SGAI, Altekar, 85
that the Kasi ruler Brahmmadatta’s son Bodhisattva sent his envoy to the king of Kosala asking him either to yield or fight. The Kosala king marched with his army against Kasi. He came to the city gate and sent a very accomplished messenger to the ruler of Kasi with the proposal either to give up his kingdom or to fight. Thus the traditional practice of sending ultimatum through envoys continued till Buddhist period and onwards.

Bimbisāra, the Buddhist king of Magadha had friendly relations with different countries. He received as well as despatched ambassadors. The Gandhāra king Pukkusauti sent him envoy, asking help against his number of enemies, "including the mysterious Pāṇḍavas" who possessed Sākala (in the Punjab) at the time of Ptolemy. Bimbisāra obliged his Gandhārian friend by accepting the embassy. But he could not help because he was involved in problems arising out of his conflict with his eastern neighbours.

In the earliest period we find mention of Sūta whose functions are said to have been performed later on by the Dūtas. In the Arthasastra, Kautilya refers to a class

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238 MJ, Cowell I, 130
239 PHAI, 182
240 Ibid
241 VE, I, 371
of publicity officers, namely, Paurānikas, Sūta and Maqadha. They occupied a very distinguished position in the royal court, and their functions were similar to those of envoys. They were highly paid. Apart from "giving publicity to the power of the king to associate with gods throughout his territory", they were appointed for "spreading the news of gods appearing before the conqueror and of his having received weapons and treasures from heaven". In this way, they helped the king to maintain "internal peace and order and external grip". Later on, there was deterioration in the position of these officials and they did not involve themselves in politics.

Coming down to the historic period, we find that India had established diplomatic contact with a number of countries from a very early time.

**RELATION WITH CEYLON**

From inscriptive evidences, particularly from the Mahāvamsa, we come to learn about diplomatic relation existing between India and Ceylon. A story tells us that in about 543 B.C. Vijaya and his followers occupied the island of Ceylon. He was a North Indian prince. His father banished him from the kingdom.

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242 V.P.I 5
243 Ibid., 5.
He at first came to the southern part of Magadha. He sailed to Ceylon with seven hundred soldiers, defeated there the Yaksas and settled there. The Ajanta fresco illustrates this story.

**RELATION WITH PERSIA AND GREECE:** The great Persian monarch Cyrus is believed to have received an embassy from an Indian king. The Greek physician Ktesius who stayed at the court of Arta Xerxes II, Mnemon (405-358 B.C.) wrote a book on India from the knowledge gathered from Indian envoys who came to the court of the Persian king as tribute bearers. In the third century B.C. the works composed by the Greek, Syrian and Egyptian ambassadors visiting the court of Pataliputra served as important sources of information about India.

A more systematic diplomatic contact between India and Greek kingdoms is found to have been established with Macedonian invasion of Alexander. Generally, dignified and highly qualified persons were deployed for diplomatic services. Curtius refers to Indian ambassadors who had dignified and handsome features and were hundreds in number.

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244 WAI, 291  
245 Xenophon, Cyrop, VI. 2. 1-11.  
246 PHAI, 215  
247 TDK, 3-4  
248 CHI, I, 253
They were clad in purple and gold and rode in chariots.\textsuperscript{249} We have evidences that a 'Pandion king' i.e., a Pandya ruler had despatched envoys to the court of Augustus Caesar in 20 B.C.\textsuperscript{250} "Besides the Mālavas and Ksudrakas, a host of other kings and rulers solicited the good offices of envoys to negotiate treaties with Alexander, and hence from the point of view of the growth and development of diplomatic traditions and conventions, Alexander's invasion must be looked upon as an important historical event".\textsuperscript{251} "With the descent of Alexander the Great upon the Punjab, a new period indeed had commenced, for India entered into far more intimate relations with foreign countries than had hitherto been the case."\textsuperscript{252}

\textbf{CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA:} During Chandragupta Maurya there was the existence of an elaborate foreign office to realise the end of the state. The foreign policy seemed to have been based on the principle "Never despise an enemy nor trust a friend".\textsuperscript{253} India's diplomatic relations

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{249} Curtius, 9.8.
  \item \textsuperscript{250} Strabo XV, Chpt. 4, 73
  \item \textsuperscript{251} ILISRAI, 50
  \item \textsuperscript{252} HAI, 5
  \item \textsuperscript{253} Jataka, II, 165
\end{itemize}
had reached such a height that Chandragupta Maurya set up a separate board to look after the comforts and conveniences of ambassadors and foreigners. The most distinguished ambassador visiting India at the reign of Chandragupta was Megasthenes, despatched by Seleucus of Syria. The account of Megasthenes about India may be regarded as the most authentic source of information of Mauryan India. We have also reference of envoys despatched from the kingdom of Abhisara to Greece. The accounts of the famous Greek ambassadors like Megasthenes and others are evidences to show that they gathered all the details of India's navigable rivers, natural products, minerals, different classes of people, defence of the cities, particularly, the capital city of Pataliputra, and different executives of the government including spies.

254 MA, Mc Crindle, 42-6
255 Ibid, I, 365
256 Ibid, 362
257 Ibid, 362-63
258 Ibid, 64
259 Ibid, 367-369
260 Ibid, 369
261 PHAI, 266
Apart from gathering information of a country, the ambassadors exchanged cultural views, rare articles from one country to another. The different civilizations of the world came in close contact with each other through ambassadors, particularly during peace time and, as a result, they saw the exchange, enrichment and assimilation of art and architecture, literature and religion, science and philosophy.

BINDUSĀRA: India maintained diplomatic relations with the Hellenic kingdoms throughout the entire Mauryan period. She had also friendly ties with other countries. The Syrian king Antiochus I despatched an ambassador named Doimachus to Bindusāra. Athenaios refers to friendly relation of Bindusāra with Antiochus. Hegesander tells us that Bindusāra despatched a personal letter to Antiochus requesting him to send him sweet wine, dried figs and a sophist. The latter sent wine and figs but not the sophist because it was prohibited in Greek law. Dion Chrysostom tells us that the translation of Homeric poetry was sung by the Indians in their own style. According to Pliny, Ptolemy Philadelphos the king of Egypt (285-247 B.C.) sent his envoy Dionysus to India. The Egyptian envoy visited India probably at the time of Bindusara.

262 PHAI, 266
263 Inv Alex, McCrindle, 409
264 AI, McCrindle, 177; Grote XII, 169
265 PHAI, 266
testimonies it is further proved that such diplomatic ties were based on mutual commercial interests. In and about the early phase of third century B.C. the Indian goods were carried through the river Oxus to the European market by the way of Caspian and the Black Sea. 266

**ASOKA:** The exchange of ambassadors with foreign countries continued during the reigning period of Asoka. 267 Among the important twelve royal officers (nikava) of Asoka, the dutas find place. 268 They were divided into three classes, viz., Miserishtarthah or plenipotentiary, Parimitsarthah or Charges d'affairs or Sasanharas - conveyors of royal writs. 269 Asoka maintained diplomatic contact with the southern kingdoms of India, and also with Antiochus II, Teos the Syrian king and Western Asia, Ptolemy Philadelphos, the emperor of Egypt, Megas of North Africa, Antigonus Gonatas, king of Macedonia. 270 His envoys were despatched to Ceylon. 271 Asoka's envoys, however, extended the influence of Buddhism in the West Asian country. But Asoka's law of piety and the policy of non-violence could hardly

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266 CHI, I, 389-390  
267 PHAI, 270  
268 Ibid, 281  
269 Ibid, 284-85  
270 HCRC, 294-95  
271 Ibid, 295
impress the Greeks. With Asoka’s withdrawal of army from the north-west frontiers, the Greeks exploited the situation, attacked Kabul valley, the Punjab and even ventured to penetrate in Madhyadesa. They created great troubles in those places. But Asoka’s envoy Mahendra was able to convert the Ceylonese king Tissa and a large number of his subjects. Asoka sent Sanghamitra to propagate dhamma in Lanka (Ceylon) and Svaranbhumi (Burmah).

PUSHYAMITRA SUNGA: The last Mauryan king Brihadartha was assassinated by his general Pusyamitra who occupied the throne and founded a new dynasty. Under his son and successor Agnimitra, Central India entered into a glorious epoch. The Central Indian cities like Vidisa and Bharhut became important centres of literary, religious and cultural activities. The Bactrian Greeks of Western Punjab being defeated by Pusyamitra’s general and torn by internal dissensions, renewed their friendly relations with the rulers of the plains of the Ganges. This cordial relation was continued by the Greeks, even with the successors of Agnimitra. The Besnagar inscription tells us that during the reigning period of

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272 PHA, HCRC, 296
273 Ibid
274 D K. Pargiter, 56-74; BS. Kern. 98
275 PHAI, 350
Kasiputra Bhāgabhodra of Sunga dynasty, Heliodorus, a native of Taxila, came to his court as an envoy of Antiolkidas. Later on Heliodorus embraced Bhāgavat religion which was a very popular religion of the age, and set up a Garuda Pillar at Besnagar in honour of Vasudeva Krishna.

RELATION WITH ROME: India's diplomatic contact with Rome and China was very old. In the Mahabharata and literary fragments of the later period, there is frequent mention of Romaka people (Romans). India's first diplomatic relations with Rome can be traced from the early days of Augustus in about 27-20 B.C. An Indian embassy came to his court. Another embassy from India was received by Trajan shortly after 99 A.D. Strabo, Pliny and the author of Periplus confirm that flourishing trade was carried on between India and Rome. The Kusān ruler Kadphises I imitated Augustus and his successors especially Claudius in issuing coins.

THE KUSĀNAS: Kanishka the great Kusana ruler after his conversion to Buddhism sent envoys for the propaganda of Buddhist faith to China, Japan, Tibet and Central

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276 PHI, 350
277 Ibid, 351
278 MBh. II. 51.17
279 JRAS, 1860, 309 ff; CHI I, 597
280 JRAS, 1904, 591; IA, 5.281, 1923
281 Ibid, 1912, 679; 1918. 912; CH (S.H.) 74-75
Asia. From a Chinese account we come to learn that a Kusana king named Po-tiao identified as Vasudeva was threatened by the increasing power of the Sassanids and sent an embassy to the Chinese king in 230 A.D., seeking help.

The Gupta Age: In the Gupta period, the department of foreign affairs was placed in charge of the Minister called Samdhivigrahika, i.e., minister of war and peace—a foreign minister. "The minister of war and peace (foreign minister) should be a man who understands well the expedients to be used by a king in foreign politics such as, sandhi (alliance), viroha (war), jana (march or expedition), āsanam (halt), sanshrava (seeking shelter) and dāidha (duplicity)." This reflects that the foreign minister was to be well-versed in the art of diplomacy. In the Gupta era he was one of the higher officials. He accompanied the king in the battlefield many a time. The samdhivigrahika could perform the task of Kumaramantya (cadet minister) and Mahādandanayaka (great commander of the army).
The Gupta monarchs maintained regular diplomatic contact with foreign countries. The great conqueror Samudragupta had established relation with Daivaputra Shāhi Shāhānushahi of the North-West, the Śaka-Murāndās - the Śaka chiefs of the North, Surāstra and Central India, Ceylon and other islands of South-East Asia. The contemporary ruler of Samudragupta in Ceylon was Meghavarna. He sent an ambassador to Samudragupta seeking his permission to build a monastery near Bodhgaya for the Buddhist pilgrims of Ceylon. He secured Samudragupta's permission to build a magnificent abode for the Buddhists there.

It is significant that the observations of Fa-hien, the celebrated Chinese Buddhist pilgrim visiting India at the time of Chandragupta II, served as the most important information to the outside world about contemporary India. The inscription of Jivitagupta II refers of Dūtas in the list of officials.

The contribution of the Guptas in the field of diplomacy is worth mentioning. The Gupta rulers, especially Samudragupta resorted to diplomacy for conquests, i.e., *yuddha vijaya*.

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288 HIAL, 483
289 Ibid, 483
290 Ibid, 482
292 CA, III. 353
The other ruling dynasties such as the Maitrakas of Valabhi had a well-organised central government. In their administrative records there is the mention of Mahā-sandhi-vigrahakshāpatadhi-pati, i.e., foreign minister. Among the high royal officers during the time of Harshavardhana, Bana refers to Mahāsandhi-vigrāḥādhikrita. Harsa's diplomatic relations with China became intimate by the visit of the celebrated pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang. His account about India, says R.K. Mookherjee, may be considered as a "Gazetteer in the scope of its enquiry and its wealth of details". He stayed for a considerable time in India, visited many places and learnt Indian language. He gave the most authentic and reliable information about social, religious, economic, cultural and administrative aspects of India in the seventh century A.D. He gives vivid description of the towns and villages which were defended by high walls and inner gates, peoples, houses, buildings, various kinds of fruits and vegetables, resources of wealth, religion, industries and administration. Hiuen-Tsang says about Harshavardhan, "If it was necessary to

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293 CA, III, 353  
294 Ibid, 354  
295 Ibid, 355  
296 Ref. HI, Mahajan, 290  
297 HI, 292-93
transact business, he employed couriers who continuously went and returned. If there was any irregularity in the manners of the people of the cities, he went among them. Wherever he moved, he dwelt in a ready-made building during his sojourn... during the excessive rains of the three months, he would not travel ....". He gives the details of Harsha's army, the number of soldiers, elephants, different kinds of arms, frontier guards and palace guards. As an ambassador, he acquired knowledge about India minutely, and also spoke highly about the power and prestige of the Chinese emperor. All these observations of Huen-Tsang reflect his calibre as a diplomat of high order. Harshavardhan established diplomatic contact with China by sending an envoy to the Chinese court in 641 A.D. In return, the Chinese emperor sent an embassy under Li-y-piao to Harsha asking him to surrender to the Chinese emperor. Harshavardhan was astonished at this and came to learn on enquiry from his officials that no such Chinese envoy had come to India with an order from China from time immemorial. Harshavardhan, however, as marks of courtesy and politeness, accepted the Chinese emperor's decree

298 PAAI, 84 ff
299 HI, 294
300 Harshavardhan, Ettinghausen, 54-57
301 IC, P.C. Bagchi, 82
302 CA. III, 120
303 Ibid, 120
very humbly and placed it on his head. The second embassy from China under Li-y-piao and Wang-Liuen-t'se reached India in 643 A.D. This time they brought back with them the Brahmin ambassador despatched earlier to China by Harśavarman after his acquaintance and intimacy with Hiuen Tsang. Harṣa, this time too, received the embassy with traditional courtesy and honour.

When Hiuen Tsang returned home in 645 A.D., he furnished information regarding Harśavarman to the Chinese emperor and as a result, the third embassy was sent to India under Wang Liuen-t'se who had come earlier to India. This Wang-Liuen-t'se has left an account of Chinese invasion of India after Harṣa's death probably in 647 A.D. The original account of Wang-Liuen-t'se is lost. Matwan tells us that Wang-Liuen-t'se attacked India when Harṣa's minister usurped the throne and there was political turmoil. After a pitched battle, Harṣa's minister was defeated and taken a prisoner in 648 A.D., to China where he remained for the rest of his life. But we are not, however, sure about this Chinese raid and the historians consider this account as romantic and fictitious.

304 C.A. III, 120-121
305 Ibid, 120-121
306 Ibid, 120-121
307 Ibid, 124
308 Ibid, 124-125
309 Ibid, 124-26
We are not going into any controversy regarding the truth of this Chinese raid. If it is a fact, does it not show that the Chinese emperor cherished a desire to invade India for which he sent frequently the diplomatic agents to study the actual political condition?

Besides maintaining diplomatic relations through ambassadors, sometimes a particular message was carried on by Dūta. Harsavardhan once sent such a Dūta to the king of Kāmarupa, Bhāskaravarman to bring back Hiuen Tsang who was then at the latter's court. But Bhāskaravarman sent reply through Harga's messenger that he would not let Hiuen Tsang go even at the cost of head. Out of anger Harga ordered the king to send his head through the messenger. At this Bhāskaravarman went to Harsavardhan accompanied by Hiuen Tsang. 310 Again, when the Chinese pilgrim was at Nalanda, Bhāskaravarman sent a messenger to Silabhadra, the head of the monastery, requesting him to send Hiuen Tsang to his court. Silabhadra turned a deaf ear to his order. Bhāskaravarman threatened to destroy the monastery. Hence, Hiuen Tsang was sent back by Silabhadra. 311

Pulakesin II of the Chālukya dynasty was a contemporary ruler of Nargavardhana in the south. His fame spread beyond the limits of India. According to Muslim historians, he sent

310 CA, 140; ANAI, 265
311 CA, III, 139-40
an embassy to the Persian king Khusru II in 625-26 A.D. According to some authors the reply of Khusru II given to Pulakesin II by the Persian ambassador is shown in a fresco painting of Ajanta cave.\textsuperscript{312} We have more evidence of diplomatic relations maintained by other important monarchs of India for political purposes. The greatest ruler of Gāhadvāla dynasty of Benaras "Govindachandra's success as a conqueror and imperialist was to a great extent the outcome of his judicious diplomatic relations with some of the neighbouring dynasties".\textsuperscript{313} We have already observed that marriage was a diplomatic tie for the extension of territories. Govindachandra married Kumāradevi, the niece of Rāmapāla and grand-daughter of Mathanadēva. As a result of this marriage alliance, the Pāla-Gāhadvāla conflict was checked for sometime. It also offered Govindachandra the opportunity to conquer Uttarasamudra from Kirttipāla and also some part of the kingdom of the Kalachuris.\textsuperscript{314} The Gāhadvāla kings had diplomatic, cultural and friendly relations with the neighbouring kingdoms.\textsuperscript{315} The great diplomat, warrior and the author of Kṛtyakalpataru, Lakshmidhara was the

\textsuperscript{312} CA, III, 240
\textsuperscript{313} H.G.O, 79
\textsuperscript{314} Ibid, 79
\textsuperscript{315} Ibid, 82
Mahāsandhivigrahika of Govindachandra.\textsuperscript{316} Lakshmidhara helped Govindachandra to attain highest glory. He also fought with the enemies of Kasi and attained success.\textsuperscript{317}

Lakshmidhara gives a list of amātyas in which the most important was the Mahāsandhivigrahika i.e., the minister for war and peace. He was to be thoroughly proficient in sixfold policy and a diplomat.\textsuperscript{318}

Dūtā was mentioned as a royal official of the Gahadvālas. From contemporary record it appears that the Dūtā was an envoy or ambassador and held high position among the top officials. Lakshmidhara says that he was to be highly qualified and a man of character.\textsuperscript{319}

The Pālas ruled for nearly four hundred years and established a stable government in Bengal. Their administrative machinery assumed a definite form. Bengal and Bihar were directly ruled by the Pālas, and they extended their sway over a large area of Northern India.\textsuperscript{320} The central administration was highly developed. The system of government was monarchical and the increased royal power was reflected in the assumption of high-sounding

\textsuperscript{316} H.G.D. 83; Vide, Cf "Tat sarvam khalu yasya mantra-mahima scrayam sah Lakshmidharah".
\textsuperscript{317} Ibid, 83; Vide Cf. "Nīta kasy adhipasya yena ripavaste brahmacaryaparam".
\textsuperscript{318} HGD, 155; Vide, Rājдраhma Kānda, tm.83
\textsuperscript{319} Ibid, 154
\textsuperscript{320} HAB, R.C.R. 303
titles like Parama-snvara-Paramabhattaraka Mahārājādhīhirāja.

We come across a number of top ranking royal officials among whom is mentioned Sandhivigrahika. He was in charge of foreign affairs and dealt with war and peace. Sometimes the prefix Mahā was attached to Sandhivigrahika. Mahā means head of the department. Therefore, it may be presumed that Mahāsandhivigrahika was the head of the department of foreign affairs. To this department belonged the Dūta or envoys.

The office of Mahā-Sandhi-Vigrah-adhikrita or Mahāsandhivigrahika was old as well as important. "It was perhaps the most onerous of all, requiring the guidance of the complete 'sixfold' state policy with Sandhi and Vigrah or two of its main constituents. Although we find the policy enunciated in Kautilya's Arthasastra ..., the designation Sandhivigrahika does not appear until the Gupta period. Presumably the Mauryan king was his own Sandhi-vigrahika, while the Gupta monarchs broadened the base of governmental responsibility by instituting the new office. By the seventh century titles had become more grandiloquent." Avanti was Haraśvardhana's minister of foreign affairs, war and peace. He assumed the title of Mahā-Sandhi-vigrah-adhikrita. He had a number of Sandhivigrahikas under him. In later period Mahāsandhivigrahikas

321 Cf. SHAIB. Vide Irdā Copper Plate. B-92
322 HPS, 174
or Sāndhivigrahikas were employed by the monarchs to carry on diplomatic relations. Like their Northern rulers, their Southern brethren also employed Sāndhivigrahikas to maintain interstate relations.\textsuperscript{323} The Rashtrakuta monarch Krishna III's foreign minister Narayana has been described as his right hand. "Tasya yah pratihastobhutiprayo dakshina hastavat."\textsuperscript{324}

The Bhanduṭi plates of Chittarajadeva show that Sihapeya was the chief Sāndhivigrahika and Srikapardin was the foreign minister of Karnataka. The Gurjar Pratiharas, the Rāṣṭra-kūtas, the Pāllavas had the department of foreign minister. The Rāṣṭra-kūtas had at least half a dozen foreign ministers.\textsuperscript{325} The foreign minister was accorded a very high position in administration. He was so important that "the well-being and prosperity of the kingdom depended upon him. He often enjoyed status of a Samanta entitled to the Panchamaḥa savda under the Rāṣṭra-kūta administration".\textsuperscript{326}

"As he had to draft foreign despatches, he was to be skilled in penmanship".\textsuperscript{327} The foreign ministers as we find with Harsa, often "advised him on the exchange of political, cultural and commercial missions......"\textsuperscript{328}

\textsuperscript{323} HPS, 174; Vide, EI, XIII. 41
\textsuperscript{324} RTT, Altekar, 160, Vide EI. IV. 60
\textsuperscript{325} RTT, 167
\textsuperscript{326} Ibid, 167, EI. X, 89
\textsuperscript{327} Ibid, 167. Vide, Nītivākyamṛtā, XXXII. 2, 163
\textsuperscript{328} HPS, 174
From different evidences it is clear that the Mahāsandhi-vigrahika or the Sāndhivigrahika occupied a very significant place in administration beginning from the Gupta period down to the Pālas and Senas.

We often find reference to Dūta-Praisinika literally meaning "sender of messenger". But some historians hold the view that Dūta and Praisinika were two different officers resembling ambassadors sent to foreign country with a definite mission.

The Pala records refer to four classes of ambassadors, viz., Dūta, Khola, Gamāgamika and Abhittaramana. In relation to foreign affairs the Dūta was the highest in rank. Along with him is referred Khola. The exact functions of Khola cannot be definitely ascertained. He has often been referred to as a spy. It is probably because the ambassadors were found to have employed spies to know the political secrets of a foreign country. The Gamāgamika carried on messages of the central government to the provincial and district authorities and vice versa. The Abhittaramana was the bearer of urgent messages.

329 IB II, 174, NGM. 185
330 HAB, R.C.M. 313
331 Cf. SHAIB; HB. DHNI, I. JIRI, I, 122
332 JIRI, I, 122
333 HAB, 314
334 JIRI, I, 122
The Mahāsandhivigrahika occupied the most significant position among the high ranking officials during the Pālas, the Senas and some other minor dynasties. Ādideva was the Sandhivigrahika of some unknown king of Vanga.335 His grandson Bhavadeva Bhatta of the Bhuvaneswara Prasasti was the Sandhivigrahika of Harivarmanadeva, a ruler of Eastern Bengal.336 Sankaradhara337 was the Mahāsandhivigrahika of the kingdom of Gauḍa. He is said to be the head of a hundred mantrins.338

The Sena grants designated Sandhivigrahika as Dūtaka.339 Generally, grants and charters were issued from the office of Dūtaka.340 Sometimes Yuvaraja, the crown princes served as Dūtakas. Tribhuvanapala and Rājyapala probably the heirs of Dharmapāla and Devapāla were the Dūtakas of Khālimpur and Monghyr grants.341

The Pāla and the Sena rulers had relations with neighbouring kingdoms. The Pāla rulers were exponents of

335 JIRI, I, 116
336 Ibid, 116
337 Ibid, 116
338 EI, XXVI, 10.13
339 HAB, 327
340 JIRI I, 116
341 Ibid, 112-113
Mahāyāna Buddhist faith and popularised the same in Suvarnadwipa and the adjoining regions.\(^{342}\) Bālaputradeva, the king of Suvarnadwipa sent his ambassador (Dūtamukhena) to Devapāla seeking his permission to grant four villages for the maintenance of a Buddhist monastery. Balavarman, the governor of Vyaghratimandala and the most favourite (daksinahastavi) of Devapāla was Dūtaka of the royal grant of the villages.\(^{343}\) It is to be marked that ambassadors who carried on communications with foreign kings were learned, possessed good manners and had to learn the etiquette of the court.\(^{344}\)

The Pāla kings sent a number of Bengalee Buddhist scholars to Tibet, such as Santanasila, Kamalasila, Atisa etc. They championed the cause of Buddhism there and transmitted Indian civilisation and culture.\(^{345}\)

In the middle of the 11th century A.D., Buddhism in Tibet was reduced to Tantric practices and Bon-mysticism. In order to reform this debased form of Buddhism the Tibetan king Ihalama ye-ses-hod sent two envoys to India to invite some Indian scholars to Tibet.\(^{346}\) On their arrival to the monastery of Vikramshilā, they came to learn about the great

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\(^{342}\) JIRI I, 122  
\(^{343}\) Ibid, 122  
\(^{344}\) Ibid, 122  
\(^{345}\) Ibid, 582-83  
\(^{346}\) Ibid, 585
When the Muslims came to India the ambassadorial system along with espionage continued with full vigour. Diplomacy and espionage were essential adjuncts of Muslim administrative system. About diplomatic agents it is said, "We must remember that the real object of foreign envoys is not only that they should convey message from their governments but if we were to look deeply into their purpose, a number of secret information as well, for they wish to know exact position and condition of the roads, paths,
valleys, canals, tanks, whether they are fit for the passage of troops, and whether fodder is available anywhere near them. They also seek to know something about the ruler of the country and the exact state of the army and other equipments, the feelings of the soldiers as well as of the common people and all about the wealth of the subjects and the comparative population of the different districts. They try to penetrate into the working of the government of the country and to know whether ministers are honest or dishonest and whether the generals are experienced or not. The real object of all these investigations is that, if it were the programme of their native country to fight the country to which they have been accredited or to occupy it, then all this information might prove helpful to their country."^{349}

The Muslim conception about the functions of an ambassador was similar in many respects to that of India. The honour and security of the diplomatic agents as prescribed by the Hindus, were also accepted by the Muslims.\textsuperscript{350} When the Muslims established their power in India, they introduced a system of administration based on the model of the government of the Caliph.\textsuperscript{351} The well organised administrative system of India had a great influence upon them. They also inherited some practices and conventions of their own race. Thus there was a synthesis of the two systems - the Hindu and the Islam.\textsuperscript{352}

\begin{flushright}
349 Siyasat-Namah, 68-69  
350 K. and D. II, 535  
351 HI, 296  
352 Ibid, 296
\end{flushright}
In Muslim administration the foreign minister Diwan-i-risalat occupied a very important position. Under him worked the ambassadors and envoys. Elsewhere, we find that Diwan-i-insha, the department of imperial communication was under the charge of Dabir-i-khas, "the confidential clerk of the state". The Dabir-i-khas reminds us of Vallabhaññañchārīnāna who were "careers of royal orders". In the department of Dabir-i-khas worked the dabirs (similar to Lekhakes in ancient India) who had to master the art of letter writing. It was through this department that the Sultan's correspondence, whether formal or confidential, with foreign rulers, his own officials and tributaries were carried on. The first correspondence office Diwān-i-khātem established by Muawiyah was later termed Diwān-i-rāsāil. According to Dr. Qureshi, this department was under Dabir-i-khas. The Ghazni rulers called this department Diwān-i-rasāil. It carried on royal correspondence. Similar system of correspondence, as we have already pointed out existed in ancient India from the days of the Mauryas to keep the central government alive about the affairs of the kingdom. "It is likely that the Mohammedan administration must have borrowed the system from the Hindu predecessors".

353 HI, 301
354 Utbih 30, Qasa'id-i-Badr i-chach, 4
355 RTT, 184
356 HS, 414
357 Utbih, 362
358 Baihaq-i-164.165.333
359 ASD, 84
360 RTT, 184
The exchange of envoys and ambassadors was a regular feature of administration of the Sultans and the later Mughals. The detailed accounts about India of the long period of Islamic rule left by a series of foreign ambassadors helped the Europeans to find out routes to India.

**EMBASSY:** Although diplomatic negotiations were carried out through ambassadors, we cannot trace out the existence of embassy or office of an ambassador till the 17th century A.D.\textsuperscript{361} It is also not clear whether any definite rules of law existed to regulate inter-state relations such as inviolability and safety of ambassadors even during war which are at present guaranteed by international law.\textsuperscript{362}

With the growing complexities of modern politics and international relations, the need for exchange of diplomatic agents has become more vital. One of the main functions of modern ambassadors, as in ancient period, is to keep keen observation on political, economic and military conditions of the country where they are accredited.\textsuperscript{363} A close watch is also kept over foreign diplomats by the government.\textsuperscript{364} If the foreign envoys are

\textsuperscript{361} CE, 543  
\textsuperscript{362} CA II, 317  
\textsuperscript{363} CE, 543-44  
\textsuperscript{364} Ibid, 543
suspected to have carried on espionage by a government, there is demand for the withdrawal of the embassy.\textsuperscript{365} The break of diplomatic contact between two friendly countries does not take place. But when two countries are fighting with one another, the relation is cut off.\textsuperscript{366} The ambassadors, even today, as in ancient India, are responsible to their foreign ministers.\textsuperscript{367} The ancient Indian usages of exempting Dūtas from death punishment and other physical torture are recognised by international law of the modern world. They were also exempted from search, arrest, customs regulations and censorship.\textsuperscript{368}

Like the Dūta of ancient India, the modern ambassadors' personality and prestige, on the other hand, may play an important part in making the views of the government understood and his first-hand knowledge of the country to which he is accredited may enable him to influence his government's policy decisively.\textsuperscript{369} The message on behalf of his country should be put forward in such a manner that

\textsuperscript{365} CE, 543-44
\textsuperscript{366} Ibid, 543-544
\textsuperscript{367} Ibid, 544
\textsuperscript{368} Ibid, 544
\textsuperscript{369} Enc. Br. I: 293-94
it may impress the other party. Man has learnt from experiences that even the most delicate and intricate questions can be dealt with and war can be averted if the presentation of matters is done in a polished manner. We have seen that for successful negotiation and to avoid war, great stress was laid on good oratory, fine speech, pleasing manners and attractive personality of ambassadors in ancient India too.

From our discourse about espionage and ambassadorial systems, one thing is reflected that both of them perform similar functions with a few exceptions. The ambassadors are the honourable spokesmen of a country and, as such, they are given warm reception and their lives are sacrosanct. As they are officially recognised they are given all sorts of protection by the government of the country where they are accredited. But the spies, though used by all countries to secure internal and external information, are liable to any kind of punishment, even death sentence, if detected, because their services are not recognised by international laws.

There are some other differences regarding the functions of spies and ambassadors. The ambassadors are authorised by the government to carry on negotiations with the countries where they are deputed. They can also declare ultimatum of war if diplomatic negotiations
fail. But the spies are employed only to know the secrets of the countries with which their mother country has diplomatic ties and other countries too.

An ambassador, on the other hand, can contribute something permanent to socio-cultural and aesthetic field through diplomatic mission. But a spy confines his range of activities only to gather secret information—both internal and external. A great honour is shown to an ambassador, while a stigma is generally attached to the activities of a spy. Some of the celebrated ambassadors have left a permanent record of their mission and enriched the world of culture. If India was not visited by Megasthenes, Fa-hien, Hiuen Tsang or Al Beruni, there would have been a wide gap of historical knowledge. The accounts left by them about social, political, economic and cultural details which are not always found in indigenous sources, are the most dependable historical source materials of ancient India.