



ARTS OF POWER

*Statecraft and
Diplomacy*

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CONTENTS

Foreword <i>by Richard H. Solomon</i>	v
Preface	ix
Introduction	3
THE POWER OF THE STATE	7
National Interests and National Concerns	9
National Power	15
Intelligence, Espionage, and Covert Operations	23
Political Actions and Measures	33
Cultural Influence	41
The Use of Economic Measures	45
The Nonviolent Use of Military Power	53
The Use of Force	61
DIPLOMATIC MANEUVER	69
Diplomatic Strategy and Tactics	71
Diplomatic Maneuver	77
Diplomatic Negotiation	87

Relations between States	93
The Use of Diplomats	99
☛ ☛ ☛	
THE SKILLS OF THE DIPLOMAT	105
Tasks and Skills of Diplomacy	107
Agency	111
Advocacy	115
Diplomatic Dialogue	121
Reporting and Analysis	125
Counsel	129
Stewardship	133
Reason of State, System, and Relationship	137
☛ ☛ ☛	
Index	141





FOREWORD

In the late seventeenth and the eighteenth century, the so-called Westphalian system of international relations was created through a series of peace treaties among major European powers. Shortly after the signing of these treaties a spate of books appeared in Europe on how to do diplomacy. Written by practitioners of the day, and intended in part as manuals for aspiring diplomats, these works signaled the advent of not just a new international system but also a new profession—diplomacy.

The intense political interdependence of the then-new European state system necessitated constant negotiation, and the diplomat became the professional entrusted with management of the system. The greater and lesser European powers established permanent embassies at one another's courts and capitals, staffed them with a growing corps of men who made their careers in what soon would be known as diplomatic service, and articulated principles and practices that in many cases still characterize the profession of the diplomat today.

Some of the works written three centuries ago continue to appear on the syllabi of today's foreign service institutes as guides for the young men and women who embark on careers as professional diplomats. The durability of these books is only partly explained by their quality; it is also a reflection of a surprising absence of modern works on the practice of diplomacy. With a few distinguished exceptions, including Harold Nicolson's classic *Diplomacy* and the collection of portraits edited by Gordon Craig and Alexander George entitled *The*



Diplomats, recent practitioners have not attempted to update the classic texts. This is unfortunate, especially because in recent years the conditions that structure diplomatic practice have changed greatly. There has long been need for an updated manual on the practice of statecraft by diplomats.

Ambassador Chas. W. Freeman, Jr.'s *Arts of Power* admirably fills this gap in the professional literature. The author draws on decades of personal experience in the U.S. Foreign Service. His missions in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East have provided him with unusual breadth of vision, and the lessons he has distilled from this experience go far beyond an American perspective. Always seeking the broad conceptual formulation, Freeman has encapsulated much accumulated wisdom into his contemporary analysis of the profession of statecraft.

An assiduous researcher, Freeman first assembled a large collection of observations about statecraft expressed by professionals in the practice of power from many cultures throughout the ages. Organized in dictionary form, these became a companion volume to the present work, recently published in a revised edition by the United States Institute of Peace as *The Diplomat's Dictionary*. Freeman now has distilled that compendium into a series of pithy, acute statements about the various facets of the diplomat's work.

Writing in a tradition that goes back to Hobbes and Locke, one that is reminiscent in places of Machiavelli's advice to princes, the author establishes his definitions and proceeds to apply them to the problems encountered by the modern practitioner of the arts of statecraft. The result is an arresting volume that illuminates the principles and uses of power that shape international relations today. *Arts of Power* will be of prime interest to practitioners of diplomacy and to readers who want a sense of what it's like to represent the interests of a major power in today's world.

Arts of Power also represents a significant contribution to the Institute's ongoing Cross-Cultural Negotiations project. Like *The Diplomat's Dictionary*, this book should be of particular utility to those called upon to serve as mediator, negotiator,

governmental envoy, consul, or ambassador—anyone who may be called upon to deal with complex and challenging situations in cross-cultural circumstances.

Arts of Power also complements Raymond Cohen's book *Negotiating Across Cultures*, to appear this year in a revised edition from the Institute of Peace Press—and forthcoming country studies of negotiating behavior in Russia, Japan, and North Korea. These volumes reflect the Institute's continuing attention to research and training on cross-cultural negotiating skills—an issue whose currency can only increase as the twentieth-century age of ideological clashes gives way to the more complex encounters across cultures that characterize the post-Cold War world.

The Chas. Freeman volume, together with other works from the Institute Press, will significantly enhance our understanding of how to build bridges across cultural divides, and thus minimize the mutual incomprehension that often lies behind or fuels violent conflicts.

Richard H. Solomon, President
United States Institute of Peace



PREFACE

The art of statecraft and the craft of diplomacy are as old as human civilization. Statecraft is concerned with the application of the power of the state to other states and peoples. Diplomacy applies this power by persuasive measures short of war.

War, which has been much studied by its practitioners, is an element of statecraft. As Sunzi, one of the earliest and greatest students of the art of war, pointed out millennia ago, however, "weapons . . . are not the tools of the enlightened." He stressed that "to win without fighting is best." Through the ages, enlightened statecraft has viewed the resort to force as an exceptional means rather than the normal way by which to attain its ends. Statecraft has preferred the arts of peace to those of war. It recognizes that there are many tools other than weapons with which to change men's minds.

Generals and admirals understand that the fundamental principles of war, like campaign plans, seldom leave the battlefield unwounded by contact with the enemy. Military commanders nonetheless find inspiration in books of professional maxims as they ponder strategy and tactics by which to prevail in combat. From the time of Sunzi, many members of the military profession have attempted to set down the essentials of the art of war for the edification of commanders and as a stimulus to planning by them.

When I entered the profession of diplomacy, I naturally began to look for something similar on international statecraft and diplomacy, directed at statesmen and diplomats. I did not find it. There are, to be sure, a number of renowned works on the



practice of statecraft, such as the Chinese classics, the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, the didactic sections of the *Shah Nameh*, Nizam al-Mulk Tusi's *Stiyasat-Namah*, and Machiavelli's *The Prince*, that deal in part or in passing with the arts of power as they are applied between states. But the focus of these books is the art of government, or rulership, not international relations. Similarly, there are many works on the practice of diplomacy, dating from the rise of modern diplomacy half a millennium ago. But few of these books attempt to state principles, and fewer still to relate diplomacy to the power of the state it serves. Unlike the modern professions of the law and military science, diplomacy has not developed a case method of instruction. Nor has it matched other professions in the effort to derive principles from cases.

In these circumstances, practitioners of statecraft and diplomacy have been left with a choice between deriving inspiration from their own studies of history or questing for it in academic theories about international relations. (Such theories, while interesting in their own right, are generally so far removed from the world of practitioners as to offer little, if any, stimulus to problem solving.) Yet it is not unreasonable to believe that statesmen and diplomats, like generals and admirals, might—as they make decisions—benefit from a handy means of revisiting the fundamental principles of the arts of power they practice.

The Diplomat's Dictionary, revised and republished by the United States Institute of Peace Press in 1997, was an effort to collect the lore of these arts of power. It may be read, in a sense, as the footnotes to this volume. *The Diplomat's Dictionary* cited observations by practitioners of statecraft and diplomacy in ancient India, China, Greece, and Rome, the Islamic world, and modern Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, as well as my own observations from professional experience. This book distills those observations and restates them in short essays. They may be read separately or as a whole.

I wrote *Arts of Power* during a year as a senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace. I am very grateful to the Institute for that year. I also very much appreciate its willingness to



PREFACE

publish this work. What I have written does not in any way purport to represent the views of the United States Institute of Peace. The writing of *Arts of Power* was very much an individual effort, with all the limitations and opportunities for oversights, errors, and omissions that such an effort implies. I hope for the assistance of readers in improving subsequent editions, if there is a demand for them.



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