



Historiography of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy: An Afrocentric Perspective

Paul Nwala

Department of History and International Diplomacy,
Faculty of Humanities, Rivers State University
Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt.

Email: princewillpaulnwala@gmail.com/nwala.paul@ust.edu.ng
+2348037750746

Abstract

This paper explores the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy through an Afrocentric lens, examining the complexities and nuances of diplomatic interactions involving African nations and their counterparts. Drawing on the rich tapestry of African history, culture, and intellectual traditions, the study offers a comprehensive analysis of how diplomatic relations and foreign policies have been interpreted, constructed, and understood from an Afrocentric perspective. The historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric viewpoint encompasses several key dimensions. It involves a critical examination of primary sources, including diplomatic archives, treaties, and correspondence, to uncover the agency and contributions of African actors in shaping global relations. This entails challenging Eurocentric narratives that often marginalize or overlook African perspectives and experiences in diplomatic history. The study examines the roles of African culture in shaping diplomatic interactions and foreign policies. It highlights the significance of cultural diplomacy and soft power in fostering cross-cultural understanding and cooperation between African nations and the global community. The historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective engages with the legacies of colonialism, imperialism, and neo-colonialism in shaping contemporary diplomatic dynamics in Africa. By centering African voices, experiences, and agency, it seeks to challenge dominant narratives and offer a more inclusive and holistic understanding of global diplomacy, illuminating the diverse ways in which African nations have shaped and been shaped by diplomatic interactions throughout history amongst others.

Keywords: Diplomacy, Foreign Policy, Historiography, Afrocentric, perspective.

Introduction

The historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy has long been dominated by Eurocentric narratives, which often overlook the significant contributions and perspectives of African civilizations and societies. However, in recent decades, scholars have increasingly turned to Afrocentric perspectives to challenge these conventional narratives and to illuminate the rich and complex history of diplomatic interactions and foreign relations in Africa. This introduction sets out to explore the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric standpoint, aiming to highlight the diverse array of diplomatic practices, strategies, and experiences that have characterized African engagement with the wider world. Throughout history, Africa has been home to numerous civilizations and societies with sophisticated diplomatic traditions and institutions. From the ancient kingdoms of Egypt, Kush, and Aksum to the medieval empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, African societies developed intricate systems of diplomacy to manage relations with neighboring states and distant powers. These diplomatic interactions were often shaped by factors such as trade, religion, ideology, and the quest for power and prestige. By examining these historical precedents, we gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of African diplomacy and the ways in which it both intersected with and diverged from global norms and practices, (Richard, 2023).

The impact of external forces, particularly colonialism and imperialism, has had profound implications for African diplomacy and foreign policy. The partition of Africa by European powers in the late 19th century not only disrupted existing diplomatic networks but also imposed new political boundaries and hierarchies that continue to shape interstate relations on the continent. Also, colonial rule often relegated African peoples to subordinate positions within the international system, limiting their agency and autonomy in diplomatic affairs. However, African resistance movements and anti-colonial struggles also gave rise to new forms of diplomatic engagement, as African leaders and intellectuals sought to assert their sovereignty and reclaim their place on the world stage. In the post-colonial era, African nations have grappled with the legacy of colonialism and sought to redefine their diplomatic priorities and strategies in a rapidly changing global landscape. Pan-Africanism emerged as a powerful ideology advocating for African unity and solidarity in the face of external pressures and internal divisions. Regional organizations such as the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its successor, the African Union (AU), have played key roles in fostering cooperation and integration among African states, while also addressing common challenges such as conflict resolution, economic development, and human rights. In recent years, Afrocentric approaches to diplomacy and foreign policy have gained renewed attention as scholars and policymakers seek to decolonize knowledge and center African perspectives in the study of international relations. By interrogating dominant narratives and amplifying marginalized voices, Afrocentric historiography offers new insights into the complexities of diplomatic engagement and foreign policy formulation in Africa. This introduction sets the stage for a deeper exploration of these themes, as we delve into the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective (Richard, 2023).

Conceptual Clarifications

The paper addresses three vital concepts, which provides clearer understanding of this subject matter of Afrocentric perspective of historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy, namely, historiography, diplomacy and foreign policy.

Historiography

Historiography is the study of the methods, principles, and theories used in writing and interpreting history. It examines how historical narratives are constructed, the biases and perspectives of historians, and the influence of cultural, social, and political factors on historical accounts. In essence, it's the history of history-how historical events are recorded, analyzed, and understood over time. Historiography is a multidimensional field within the discipline of history that encompasses the study of the methods, theories, and principles employed in the research, writing, and interpretation of historical narratives. It involves critically examining the ways in which history is constructed, recorded, and understood by historians, taking into account various factors such as cultural, social, political, and intellectual contexts. Historiography involves the exploration of the methods and approaches used by historians to gather, analyze, and interpret historical evidence. This includes the use of primary sources (original documents, artifacts, etc.) and secondary sources (interpretations by other historians), as well as the application of various analytical frameworks and techniques. It encompasses the study of different theoretical perspectives and paradigms that shape historical interpretation. This includes examining approaches such as Marxist historiography, postcolonial theory, feminist historiography, and cultural history, among others. Each of these frameworks offers unique insights into the study of history and influences how historical narratives are constructed. It involves analyzing the ways in which historical narratives are constructed and presented. This includes studying the choices made by historians regarding which events to include or exclude, the emphasis placed on certain themes or perspectives, and the language and rhetoric used to convey historical interpretations, (Richard, 2023).

It encompasses the study of different historical schools of thought and traditions, which reflect evolving intellectual trends and debates within the discipline of history. Examples include the Annales School, which emphasized the importance of long-term structural analysis, and the "turns" such as the linguistic turn and the spatial turn, which introduced new ways of conceptualizing and studying history. It involves considering the broader historical context in which historical narratives are produced. This includes understanding the social, cultural, political, and intellectual currents that shape historical interpretation, as well as the biases and assumptions that may influence historians' perspectives. It also examines the reception and influence of historical narratives over time. This includes studying how historical interpretations are received by different audiences, how they shape public memory and national identity, and their impact on subsequent historical scholarship and policymaking, (Richard, 2023).

In the context of history and international diplomacy, historiography plays a crucial role in shaping narratives and perceptions of diplomatic events and interactions between nations. It involves examining how historical events and diplomatic relations are portrayed, interpreted, and understood by historians, policymakers, and the public. Historiography in this context helps to uncover the underlying motives, biases, and perspectives that influence the writing and interpretation of diplomatic history. It explores questions such as why certain events are emphasized or downplayed in diplomatic histories, how different historical narratives affect diplomatic relations between countries, and how historical interpretations shape contemporary foreign policy decisions. Understanding the historiography of international diplomacy allows for a more nuanced and critical analysis of diplomatic history, helping to identify patterns, trends, and recurring themes in international relations. It also highlights the importance of considering multiple perspectives and sources when studying diplomatic history, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of past events and their implications for the present and future. Thus, historiography cuts across broad range of approaches, methods, and perspectives used in the study of history. It offers insights into the ways in which historical knowledge is produced, contested, and understood, highlighting the dynamic and interpretive nature of the discipline (Richard, 2023).

Diplomacy

The concept of diplomacy encompasses a broad range of activities and practices aimed at managing international relations, resolving conflicts, and promoting cooperation among states and other actors in the global arena. At its core, diplomacy is the art and practice of negotiation, dialogue, and communication between representatives of different political entities, often conducted through formal channels such as embassies, consulates, and international organizations. Diplomacy operates within a framework of established norms, protocols, and institutions, guided by principles such as sovereignty, reciprocity, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other states. It encompasses various diplomatic tools and techniques, including negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and the exchange of diplomats and official missions. Diplomats, as the primary practitioners of diplomacy, play a crucial role in representing their governments' interests, gathering information, building relationships, and advancing their countries' foreign policy objectives. Moreover, diplomacy extends beyond traditional state-to-state interactions to encompass a wide range of actors and issues in the international arena. Non-state actors such as multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international institutions increasingly play influential roles in shaping diplomatic processes and outcomes. Additionally, contemporary diplomatic efforts address a diverse array of global challenges, including but not limited to security threats, economic development, human rights, environmental sustainability, and public health. Overall, the concept of diplomacy reflects the ongoing need for dialogue, negotiation, and cooperation among diverse actors in the international community. It embodies the fundamental principle that peaceful resolution of conflicts and promotion of mutual understanding are essential for fostering stability, prosperity, and progress in an interconnected world (Elvin, 2016).

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy refers to a government's strategy and approach in dealing with other nations and international actors. It encompasses a wide range of actions, decisions, and initiatives aimed at promoting and protecting a country's interests, values, and security on the global stage (University of York, 2022). Elaborating on the concept of foreign policy involves exploring its key components, objectives, and applications in international relations:

Components of Foreign Policy:

- Diplomacy: Negotiations, dialogues, and interactions between governments to manage conflicts, establish alliances, and pursue mutual interests.
- Defense and Security: Policies and actions aimed at safeguarding a nation's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and national security.
- Trade and Economic Relations: Strategies for promoting trade, investment, and economic cooperation with other countries to enhance prosperity and economic growth.
- Multilateral Engagement: Participation in international organizations, treaties, and forums to address global challenges, such as climate change, terrorism, and public health.
- Cultural and Public Diplomacy: Efforts to promote a country's culture, values, and image abroad through cultural exchanges, educational programs, and media outreach (Dinesh, 2018).

Objectives of Foreign Policy

- National Security: Protecting the country from external threats, including military aggression, terrorism, and cyberattacks.
- Economic Prosperity: Enhancing economic growth, stability, and competitiveness through international trade, investment, and cooperation.
- Promotion of Values: Advancing democratic principles, human rights, and rule of law globally, often through diplomatic and humanitarian efforts.
- Regional Stability: Fostering peace, stability, and cooperation within a country's immediate geographic region to prevent conflicts and promote development.
- Global Leadership: Exercising influence and leadership on the world stage by shaping international norms, institutions, and policies (Kemdi, 2022).

Applications of Foreign Policy

- Bilateral Relations: Conducting diplomatic negotiations and engagements with individual countries to address bilateral issues and pursue shared interests.
- Multilateral Diplomacy: Participating in international organizations, such as the United Nations, World Trade Organization, and regional blocs, to collaborate on global challenges and shape collective responses.
- Crisis Management: Responding to international crises, conflicts, and emergencies through diplomatic mediation, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian assistance.
- Economic Diplomacy: Negotiating trade agreements, investment treaties, and economic partnerships to promote economic growth and development.
- Public Diplomacy: Engaging with foreign publics, media, and civil society to communicate a country's policies, values, and culture, and build positive relations.

Foreign policy encompasses a government's strategic approach to engaging with the international community, balancing its interests, values, and security considerations. It involves a range of diplomatic, economic, and security-related actions aimed at advancing a country's interests and objectives in the global arena (Adam, 2022).

Scholars Perspective

According to international relations scholars, foreign policy is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the strategies, decisions, and actions taken by governments to manage their relations with other states and international actors. Here's an elaboration on the concept of foreign policy from the perspective of international relations scholars:

Foreign policy involves the strategic decision-making process through which governments formulate and implement policies to pursue their national interests in the international arena. This includes identifying priorities, setting goals, and assessing the potential risks and benefits of different courses of action. At the core of foreign policy is the pursuit and protection of a state's national interests. These interests may include ensuring national security, promoting economic prosperity, safeguarding territorial integrity, advancing ideological objectives, and enhancing prestige and influence on the world stage. Foreign policy is shaped by the interactions and dynamics among various international actors, including states, intergovernmental organizations, non-state actors, and multinational corporations. Governments must navigate complex diplomatic relationships and negotiate with other actors to advance their interests and achieve their policy objectives. Diplomacy is a central instrument of foreign policy, involving negotiations, dialogue, and engagement with other states to resolve conflicts, establish alliances, and pursue mutual interests. Diplomatic efforts may take place through bilateral channels, multilateral forums, or informal networks, and may encompass a range of issues, from security and trade to human rights and environmental cooperation, (Adam, 2022).

Foreign policy also includes decisions related to military and security matters, such as defense spending, arms control agreements, peacekeeping operations, and responses to threats to national security, including terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and cyberattacks. Economic considerations play a significant role in foreign policy, as states seek to promote trade, investment, and economic cooperation with other countries to foster economic growth and prosperity. Foreign policy decisions may involve negotiating trade agreements, addressing currency issues, and managing economic sanctions and embargoes. Foreign policy extends beyond traditional diplomatic and military tools to encompass soft power and public diplomacy efforts aimed at shaping perceptions, influencing public opinion, and building goodwill abroad. This may involve cultural exchanges, educational programs, media outreach, and

humanitarian assistance to enhance a country's reputation and influence in the international community. Foreign policy also involves participation in global governance mechanisms and efforts to shape international norms and institutions. States collaborate with others to address transnational challenges, such as climate change, global health pandemics, and migration, through multilateral cooperation and diplomacy. Hence, foreign policy as understood by international relations scholars, encompasses a wide range of strategies, decisions, and actions undertaken by states to navigate the complexities of the international system, advance their national interests, and promote stability, security, and cooperation in the global arena (Adam, 2022).

Meaning of Historiography of African Democracy

The historiography of African diplomacy refers to the study of how the diplomatic relations, practices, and interactions involving African nations have been researched, documented, and interpreted over time. It encompasses the examination of historical sources, methodologies, and perspectives used by scholars to analyze the diplomatic history of Africa, including its engagement with other African states, colonial powers, neighboring regions, and global actors. Understanding the historical context in which African diplomacy evolved, including pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods, and how this context shaped diplomatic practices and interactions among African states and with external powers, (Mohd & Erica, 2022).

Examining the agency, strategies, and challenges faced by African leaders, diplomats, and societies in navigating diplomatic relations, asserting sovereignty, and pursuing national interests within the international arena. Analyzing the impact of colonialism on African diplomacy, including how colonial boundaries, treaties, and power structures influenced diplomatic relations and interactions both during and after the colonial period. Investigating Africa's diplomatic engagements with non-African actors such as European colonial powers, neighboring regions, global powers, and international organizations, including trade relations, alliances, conflicts, and cooperation efforts. Exploring the role of cultural and economic factors in African diplomacy, including the use of cultural exchanges, religious diplomacy, economic partnerships, and development cooperation to foster diplomatic relations and promote national interests. Studying regional dynamics and pan-African initiatives, including the role of regional organizations such as the African Union (AU) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in promoting unity, solidarity, and cooperation among African states, (Mohd & Erica, 2022).

Assessing the contemporary challenges and opportunities facing African diplomacy, such as conflict resolution, peacekeeping, human rights, development cooperation, and global governance, as well as the role of emerging powers and non-state actors in shaping Africa's diplomatic landscape. In essence, the historiography of African diplomacy provides insights into the diplomatic history of Africa, highlighting the complexities, dynamics, and contributions of African actors to regional and global diplomacy, while also shedding light on the challenges and opportunities facing African states in the pursuit of their diplomatic interests and objectives (Mohd & Erica, 2022).

Overview of Historiography of African Diplomacy

The historiography of African diplomacy encompasses the study of diplomatic relations, practices, and interactions involving African nations, both within the continent and with external actors, throughout history. This field of study involves examining how diplomatic history in Africa has been researched, documented, and interpreted over time, as well as exploring the methodologies, sources, and perspectives employed by scholars in analyzing African diplomacy.

Understanding the historical context is essential for studying the diplomacy of African nations. This includes considering pre-colonial diplomatic traditions and practices, such as trade networks, alliances, and treaty-making among African societies. It also involves examining the impact of colonialism on African diplomacy, including how colonial powers imposed new borders, treaties, and power structures that influenced diplomatic relations within Africa and with external actors. Historiographical studies of African diplomacy rely on a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including diplomatic correspondence, treaties, oral histories, archival records, and historical narratives. Scholars use diverse methodological approaches, including archival research, oral history interviews, comparative analysis, and interdisciplinary perspectives drawn from political science, anthropology, and cultural studies. A central focus of the historiography of African diplomacy is exploring the agency, strategies, and perspectives of African

leaders, diplomats, and societies in navigating diplomatic relations. This involves highlighting the contributions, challenges, and complexities faced by African actors in asserting sovereignty, pursuing national interests, and engaging with the international community, (Ihediwa, 2018).

The impact of colonialism on African diplomacy is a significant theme in the historiography of African diplomacy. Scholars examine how colonial rule disrupted existing diplomatic networks, imposed new political and economic systems, and shaped patterns of dependency and inequality in Africa's relations with the rest of the world. Post-colonial studies focus on how newly independent African states sought to assert their sovereignty, forge regional cooperation, and engage in international diplomacy to address the legacies of colonialism. Another important aspect of the historiography of African diplomacy is analyzing Africa's interactions with non-African actors, including European colonial powers, neighboring regions, global powers, and international organizations. This includes studying trade relations, diplomatic alliances, conflicts, and cooperation efforts between African states and external powers, as well as the impact of global events and power shifts on Africa's diplomatic relations, (Ihediwa, 2018).

Regional dynamics and pan-African initiatives play a significant role in African diplomacy, and scholars examine the history and impact of regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Southern African Development Community (SADC). Studies of pan-African diplomacy explore efforts to promote unity, solidarity, and cooperation among African states, including anti-colonial liberation movements, solidarity campaigns, and regional integration initiatives. The historiography of African diplomacy also addresses contemporary challenges and opportunities facing African states in the realm of diplomacy. This includes examining issues such as conflict resolution, peacekeeping, economic development, human rights, and global governance, as well as the role of emerging powers, non-state actors, and new technologies in shaping Africa's diplomatic landscape. Thus, the historiography of African diplomacy offers a comprehensive understanding of the diplomatic history of Africa, highlighting the diverse experiences, perspectives, and dynamics that have shaped Africa's relations with the rest of the world. By analyzing historical sources, methodologies, and perspectives, scholars contribute to a deeper appreciation of Africa's diplomatic heritage and its ongoing significance in shaping Africa's place in the global community (Ihediwa, 2018).

Meaning of Historiography of African Foreign Policy

African foreign policy historiography refers to the study and analysis of the historical development, trends, and dynamics of African states' interactions with other nations and international actors. It encompasses the examination of diplomatic strategies, foreign relations, and engagement with global issues from an African perspective, tracing the evolution of African states' foreign policies over time. It includes; analysis of how colonialism and imperialism influenced African states' foreign policies during the colonial era, including resistance movements, anti-colonial struggles, and the quest for independence. It also examines the challenges and opportunities African nations faced in shaping their foreign policies in the aftermath of colonial rule. Exploration of the ideologies and movements advocating for African unity, solidarity, and cooperation, such as pan-Africanism. This includes the role of regional organizations like the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU) in promoting regional integration, peace, and security on the continent. Examination of African states' strategies for economic development, trade, investment, and cooperation with other countries and international institutions. This includes analyses of trade agreements, economic partnerships, and initiatives aimed at fostering sustainable development and reducing dependency on external actors. Study of African states' approaches to addressing security challenges, conflicts, and crises within the continent and beyond. This includes analyses of peacekeeping missions, conflict resolution mechanisms, and efforts to promote stability and peace building in conflict-affected regions. Assessment of African states' participation in international organizations, forums, and multilateral diplomacy efforts. This includes analyses of Africa's influence in shaping global agendas, policies, and responses to transnational issues such as climate change, public health, and human rights. Exploration of how African states leverage their cultural heritage, arts, literature, and soft power resources to enhance their international influence, promote cultural exchange, and build relationships with other nations. African foreign policy historiography provides insights into the complexities, challenges, and opportunities inherent in Africa's engagement with the international community. It sheds light on the diverse array of diplomatic strategies, interests, and priorities pursued by African states throughout history, contributing to a deeper understanding of Africa's role in shaping global affairs (Andreas, 2017).

Overview of Historiography of African Foreign Policy

The historiography of African foreign policy encompasses the study of the strategies, decisions, and interactions that African nations have undertaken in their relations with other states and international actors throughout history. This field of study involves examining how African foreign policy has been researched, documented, and interpreted over time, as well as exploring the methodologies, sources, and perspectives employed by scholars in analyzing African foreign policy.

Understanding the historical context is crucial for studying African foreign policy. This includes considering pre-colonial diplomatic traditions and interactions among African societies, as well as the impact of colonialism and imperialism on Africa's relations with the rest of the world. The post-colonial period, marked by the struggle for independence and decolonization, is also pivotal for understanding the formation of modern African foreign policies. Historiographical studies of African foreign policy draw on a variety of sources, including diplomatic correspondence, government documents, archival records, memoirs, and oral histories. Scholars use diverse methodological approaches, including archival research, content analysis, case studies, and comparative analysis, to examine the evolution, drivers, and consequences of African foreign policies. A central focus of the historiography of African foreign policy is exploring the agency, motives, and perspectives of African leaders, diplomats, and policymakers in shaping foreign policy decisions. This involves considering the domestic, regional, and global factors that influence African foreign policy, as well as the role of ideology, nationalism, and identity in shaping diplomatic strategies and priorities. The impact of colonialism and imperialism on African foreign policy is a significant theme in the historiography of African foreign policy. Scholars examine how colonial rule disrupted existing diplomatic networks, imposed new borders and boundaries, and influenced the alignment of African states within the international system. Post-colonial studies focus on how newly independent African states sought to assert their sovereignty, promote regional integration, and pursue economic development and political stability through foreign policy, (James, 2019).

Another important aspect of the historiography of African foreign policy is analyzing Africa's interactions with non-African actors, including former colonial powers, neighboring regions, global powers, and international organizations. This includes studying trade relations, diplomatic alliances, conflicts, and cooperation efforts between African states and external actors, as well as the impact of global events and power dynamics on Africa's foreign policy. Regional dynamics and pan-African initiatives play a significant role in African foreign policy, and scholars examine the history and impact of regional organizations such as the African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Southern African Development Community (SADC). Studies of pan-African cooperation explore efforts to promote unity, solidarity, and cooperation among African states, including peacekeeping operations, conflict resolution mechanisms, and economic integration initiatives. The historiography of African foreign policy also addresses contemporary challenges and opportunities facing African states in the realm of foreign relations. This includes examining issues such as conflict resolution, peacekeeping, economic development, human rights, and global governance, as well as the role of emerging powers, non-state actors, and new technologies in shaping Africa's foreign policy priorities and strategies. The historiography of African foreign policy offers a comprehensive understanding of the diplomatic history of Africa, highlighting the diverse experiences, perspectives, and dynamics that have shaped Africa's relations with the rest of the world. By analyzing historical sources, methodologies, and perspectives, scholars contribute to a deeper appreciation of Africa's foreign policy heritage and its ongoing significance in shaping Africa's role in the global community (James, 2019).

Foreign Policy and Goals in African Perspective

In an Afrocentric perspective, foreign policy objectives and goals for African nations are framed within the context of advancing the interests, values, and development priorities of the African continent and its people. Here are key objectives and goals of Afrocentric foreign policy

1. **Promotion of Pan-African Unity and Solidarity:** One of the central objectives of Afrocentric foreign policy is the promotion of pan-African unity and solidarity. This involves fostering cooperation, collaboration, and mutual support among African nations to address common challenges, promote shared interests, and advance the African agenda on the global stage, (James, 2019).

2. **Advancement of African Sovereignty and Self-Determination:** Afrocentric foreign policy seeks to uphold the principles of African sovereignty and self-determination. This involves advocating for the recognition of African nations' right to determine their own political, economic, and social systems without external interference or coercion, (James, 2019).
3. **Economic Development and Prosperity:** A key goal of Afrocentric foreign policy is to promote economic development, prosperity, and self-reliance across the African continent. This includes pursuing policies and initiatives that enhance intra-African trade, investment, industrialization, and infrastructure development, as well as fostering partnerships with other regions and global actors that support Africa's economic growth and sustainable development, (James, 2019).
4. **Cultural and Intellectual Exchange:** Afrocentric foreign policy emphasizes the importance of cultural and intellectual exchange as a means of promoting mutual understanding, respect, and appreciation among African nations and with the rest of the world. This involves celebrating and preserving African cultural heritage, promoting cultural diplomacy, and fostering educational and academic exchanges that contribute to knowledge sharing and human development, (James, 2019).
5. **Peace, Security, and Conflict Resolution:** Afrocentric foreign policy prioritizes peace, security, and conflict resolution as essential conditions for stability and development in Africa. This includes supporting diplomatic efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, promoting disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs, and strengthening regional and continental mechanisms for peacekeeping, conflict mediation, and peace building, (James, 2019).
6. **Advocacy for Global Justice and Equity:** Afrocentric foreign policy advocates for global justice, equity, and equality for African nations and peoples. This involves challenging systems of oppression, exploitation, and marginalization, including colonial legacies, racial discrimination, and economic inequality, and promoting Africa's voice and representation in international institutions and decision-making processes, (James, 2019).
7. **Environmental Sustainability and Climate Justice:** Afrocentric foreign policy recognizes the importance of environmental sustainability and climate justice for the well-being and survival of African nations and future generations. This involves advocating for policies and actions to mitigate climate change, protect natural resources, and promote sustainable development practices that prioritize the needs and rights of African communities and ecosystems, (James, 2019).
8. **Promotion of African Diaspora Engagement:** Afrocentric foreign policy seeks to strengthen ties with the African diaspora and harness their talents, resources, and expertise for the benefit of Africa's development. This includes fostering partnerships, investment opportunities, and cultural exchanges with diaspora communities, as well as addressing issues of identity, citizenship, and belonging for people of African descent worldwide. Afrocentric foreign policy aims to assert Africa's agency, dignity, and contribution to global affairs, while advancing the interests, values, and aspirations of the African continent and its people in a rapidly changing world (James, 2019).

Significance of Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power In Fostering Cross-Cultural understanding and cooperation between African nations.

Cultural diplomacy and soft power play significant roles in fostering cross-cultural understanding and cooperation between African nations in the following ways;

1. **Promotion of Cultural Exchange:** Cultural diplomacy facilitates the exchange of cultural expressions, traditions, arts, and values between African nations. By showcasing their diverse cultural heritage through music, dance, literature, film, and visual arts, African countries can deepen mutual understanding and appreciation among their peoples, promoting a sense of shared identity and belonging, (Pepperdine, 2023).
2. **Building Bridges and Breaking Stereotypes:** Soft power initiatives help break down stereotypes and misconceptions by providing opportunities for people from different African nations to engage with one another directly. By highlighting the richness and complexity of African cultures, cultural diplomacy fosters empathy, respect, and tolerance, ultimately strengthening social

cohesion and unity across the continent, (Pepperdine, 2023).

3. **Enhancing Regional Integration:** Cultural diplomacy contributes to the promotion of regional integration and solidarity among African nations. By celebrating common cultural heritage and promoting cultural exchanges, African countries can build trust, strengthen relationships, and foster cooperation on shared challenges such as economic development, peace building, and sustainable development, (Pepperdine, 2023).
4. **Attracting Tourism and Investment:** Soft power initiatives that showcase Africa's cultural diversity and heritage can attract tourism and investment opportunities. By promoting cultural festivals, heritage sites, and artistic events, African nations can boost their economies, create employment opportunities, and stimulate local development while also fostering cross-border collaboration and exchange, (Pepperdine, 2023).
5. **Facilitating Diplomatic Relations:** Cultural diplomacy serves as a valuable tool for enhancing diplomatic relations between African nations. By organizing cultural events, exhibitions, and exchanges, African countries can build rapport, establish networks, and cultivate goodwill among foreign diplomats, paving the way for deeper cooperation and collaboration on political, economic, and security issues, (Pepperdine, 2023).
6. **Empowering Youth and Future Leaders:** Cultural diplomacy initiatives often target youth and young leaders, providing them with opportunities for cultural exchange, education, and leadership development. By engaging young people in cross-cultural dialogue and exchange programs, African nations can nurture a new generation of global citizens who are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and empathy needed to address shared challenges and build a more peaceful and prosperous future for Africa. Cultural diplomacy and soft power are powerful tools for promoting cross-cultural understanding, cooperation, and solidarity among African nations. By harnessing the richness and diversity of African cultures, countries on the continent can strengthen their relationships, enhance their influence, and contribute to a more harmonious and interconnected Africa (Pepperdine, 2023).

The Diverse ways in which African Nations have been shaped by diplomatic interactions throughout history

Throughout history, African nations have engaged in diverse diplomatic interactions that have both shaped and been shaped by their political, economic, and social contexts. Here are some examples of how African nations have influenced and been influenced by diplomatic interactions:

1. **Pre-Colonial Diplomacy:** Before the arrival of European colonial powers, African civilizations engaged in sophisticated diplomatic practices. For instance, the Kingdom of Mali, under the rule of Mansa Musa in the 14th century, established diplomatic relations with various Islamic states and conducted trade missions to the Middle East. Mansa Musa's famous pilgrimage to Mecca showcased Mali's wealth and power, enhancing its prestige and influence in the Islamic world, (Ian, 2018).
2. **Trans-Saharan Trade Routes:** Diplomatic interactions along the trans-Saharan trade routes facilitated cultural exchange and economic cooperation between African kingdoms and civilizations. The Ghana Empire, for example, benefited from its strategic location along the trade routes, engaging in diplomatic relations with Arab merchants and North African states. This trade network influenced the spread of Islam in West Africa and facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and technologies, (Ian, 2018).
3. **Colonialism and Resistance:** The era of European colonialism profoundly impacted African diplomacy. African nations were often subjected to treaties, agreements, and diplomatic manipulations that undermined their sovereignty and autonomy. However, African leaders and intellectuals also engaged in diplomatic resistance against colonial rule. For example, Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia successfully negotiated diplomatic treaties and military alliances to resist Italian colonization, preserving Ethiopia's independence, (Ian, 2018).

4. **Independence Movements:** Diplomatic interactions played a crucial role in the struggle for independence across Africa. Leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania engaged in diplomatic campaigns to garner international support for decolonization. They utilized platforms such as the United Nations to advocate for self-determination and condemn colonial oppression, shaping global perceptions of African liberation movements, (Ian, 2018).
5. **Pan-Africanism and Regional Integration:** African nations have pursued regional integration and cooperation through initiatives like pan-Africanism. The creation of organizations like the OAU and later the African Union (AU) facilitated diplomatic interactions aimed at promoting peace, security, and development on the continent. For instance, the AU's Peace and Security Council engages in diplomatic efforts to resolve conflicts and promote stability in African countries, (Ian, 2018).
6. **Economic Diplomacy:** African nations have utilized economic diplomacy to pursue their interests in the global arena. For example, South Africa, as one of the continent's economic powerhouses, engages in diplomatic relations to attract foreign investment, promote trade agreements, and strengthen economic ties with other nations. Similarly, Nigeria's leadership in organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) demonstrates its diplomatic efforts to enhance regional economic integration (Ian, 2018).

Relevance of Historiography of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy in Africa.

The relevance of the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy in Africa lies in its ability to provide insights into the historical, political, social, and economic dynamics that have shaped Africa's engagement with the international community, (Ian, 2018).

Understanding Historical Context: The historiography of African diplomacy and foreign policy helps in understanding the historical context in which diplomatic relations and foreign policies have evolved on the continent. By examining the historical roots of African diplomacy, including pre-colonial interactions, colonial legacies, and post-colonial developments, scholars gain valuable insights into the factors that have influenced Africa's diplomatic strategies, priorities, and challenges, (Daniel, 2010).

Informing Contemporary Policy Debates: The insights gained from the historiography of African diplomacy and foreign policy inform contemporary policy debates and decision-making processes. By examining historical precedents, diplomatic strategies, and foreign policy initiatives, policymakers can draw lessons and best practices for addressing current challenges, such as conflict resolution, peace building, economic development, and regional integration, (Daniel, 2010).

Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration: The historiography of African diplomacy highlights the importance of regional cooperation and integration in advancing Africa's interests and aspirations on the global stage. By studying historical examples of successful regional initiatives, such as the establishment of regional organizations like the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS, scholars and policymakers can identify opportunities for enhancing regional collaboration and addressing common challenges, (Daniel, 2010).

Enhancing Diplomatic Capacity and Agency: By examining the agency and perspectives of African leaders, diplomats, and policymakers in shaping foreign policy decisions, the historiography of African diplomacy helps in enhancing Africa's diplomatic capacity and agency. By learning from past successes and failures, African nations can develop more effective diplomatic strategies, strengthen diplomatic institutions, and assert their interests more assertively in the international arena, (Daniel, 2010).

Promoting African Voices in Global Governance: The study of African diplomacy historiography contributes to promoting African voices and perspectives in global governance. By highlighting Africa's rich diplomatic heritage, contributions to international diplomacy, and aspirations for a more just and equitable global order, scholars and policymakers can advocate for greater representation and participation of African nations in international institutions and decision-making processes, (Daniel, 2010).

Fostering Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power: The historiography of African diplomacy emphasizes the importance of cultural diplomacy and soft power in shaping Africa's relations with the international community. By studying historical examples of cultural exchanges, educational programs, and people-to-people interactions, scholars and policymakers can leverage Africa's cultural diversity and heritage to enhance its influence and reputation on the global stage, (Daniel, 2010).

Informing Conflict Resolution and Peace-building Efforts: Understanding the historical context of diplomatic relations in Africa is essential for informing conflict resolution and peace-building efforts on the continent. By examining past peace processes, diplomatic negotiations, and peace agreements, policymakers can identify lessons learned and best practices for resolving conflicts, fostering reconciliation, and building sustainable peace in Africa. For instance, the peace process in Liberia, which ended the civil war in 2003, drew upon lessons learned from previous peace initiatives in Africa, such as the peace agreement in Sierra Leone and the role of regional organizations like ECOWAS in mediating conflicts. By studying these historical examples, policymakers can identify effective strategies and mechanisms for promoting reconciliation, disarmament, and post-conflict reconstruction in other conflict-affected countries, (Daniel, 2010).

Promoting Economic Diplomacy and Development: The historiography of African diplomacy provides valuable insights into promoting economic diplomacy and development on the continent. By studying historical examples of trade relations, investment partnerships, and economic cooperation initiatives, policymakers can identify opportunities for enhancing Africa's economic growth, diversification, and integration into the global economy. For example, the formation of regional economic blocs such as the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is rooted in historical efforts to promote regional integration and economic cooperation. By studying the successes and challenges of these regional initiatives, policymakers can identify opportunities for enhancing intra-African trade, investment, and infrastructure development to stimulate economic growth and poverty reduction, (Daniel, 2010).

Strengthening Regional and Continental Integration: Understanding the historical dynamics of regional and continental integration efforts is crucial for strengthening Africa's unity and solidarity. By examining past initiatives such as the formation of regional organizations and economic blocs, policymakers can identify challenges and opportunities for deepening regional integration, harmonizing policies, and promoting intra-African trade and cooperation. For example, the African Union's Agenda 2063, which aims to achieve "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa," draws inspiration from historical efforts to promote pan-African unity and solidarity, such as the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963. By studying the historical context and evolution of regional integration efforts, policymakers can identify strategies for overcoming barriers to integration, harmonizing policies, and promoting cross-border cooperation in areas such as trade, infrastructure, and security, (Daniel, 2010).

Enhancing Diplomatic Training and Education: The historiography of African diplomacy contributes to enhancing diplomatic training and education programs in Africa. By studying historical case studies, diplomatic practices, and international relations theories, aspiring diplomats and policymakers can develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to navigate complex diplomatic challenges and represent Africa effectively on the global stage. It further encourages, encourages diplomatic innovation and adaptation in response to evolving global challenges and opportunities. By studying historical examples of diplomatic creativity, flexibility, and resilience, policymakers can identify innovative approaches to addressing contemporary issues such as climate change, cybersecurity, and global health pandemics, and adapt diplomatic strategies to meet the changing needs of Africa in the 21st century, (Daniel, 2010).

Empowering African Voices in Global Governance: The study of African diplomacy historiography is essential for empowering African voices and perspectives in global governance. By highlighting Africa's contributions to international diplomacy, advocating for reforms in global institutions, and promoting South-South cooperation, scholars and policymakers can work towards a more equitable and inclusive global order that reflects the interests and aspirations of African nations and peoples. For example, African nations have historically played a leading role in advocating for decolonization, human rights, and self-determination in international forums such as the United Nations. By highlighting Africa's contributions to global diplomacy, scholars and policymakers can advocate for reforms in global institutions to ensure

greater representation and participation of African nations in decision-making processes that affect the continent, (Daniel, 2010).

Preserving African Diplomatic Heritage: Finally, the historiography of African diplomacy is essential for preserving Africa's diplomatic heritage and promoting a sense of pride and identity among African peoples. By documenting and celebrating Africa's rich history of diplomatic engagement, scholars and policymakers can inspire future generations to continue the legacy of African diplomacy and contribute to shaping Africa's future in the global arena. For example, the legacy of African diplomats such as Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, and Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo serves as inspiration for future generations of African leaders. By documenting and celebrating Africa's rich history of diplomatic engagement, scholars and policymakers can inspire young Africans to continue the legacy of African diplomacy and contribute to shaping Africa's future in the global arena, (Daniel, 2010).

Addressing Colonial Legacies: The study of African diplomacy and foreign policy historiography sheds light on the impact of colonialism and imperialism on Africa's international relations. Understanding how colonial boundaries, power structures, and economic dependencies continue to shape Africa's diplomatic landscape is crucial for policymakers and scholars seeking to address the legacies of colonialism and promote Africa's sovereignty, unity, and development. The historiography of African diplomacy and foreign policy offers valuable insights into addressing contemporary challenges facing the continent. By analyzing historical precedents and diplomatic strategies, policymakers can better understand the root causes of current issues such as conflict, underdevelopment, and external intervention, and develop more effective policies and interventions to address them. It also helps in addressing colonial legacies and their impact on contemporary diplomatic challenges. For example, the arbitrary drawing of colonial borders in Africa by European powers has led to border disputes and conflicts, such as the ongoing tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea over the border town of Badme, (Daniel, 2010).

By understanding the historical context of colonial boundary-making, policymakers can work towards resolving such disputes through diplomatic negotiations and regional cooperation. In essence, the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy in Africa is relevant for addressing contemporary challenges, informing policy-making, promoting regional integration and economic development, empowering African voices in global governance, and preserving Africa's rich diplomatic heritage for future generations. By studying Africa's diplomatic past, scholars and policymakers can contribute to building a more peaceful, prosperous, and united Africa in the 21st century (Daniel, 2010).

Impact of African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy Historiography in Africa with Practical Examples

Conflict Resolution and Peace-building: Historiography of African diplomacy has played a crucial role in informing conflict resolution and peace-building efforts across the continent. For example, the peace process in Mozambique, which ended the civil war in 1992, drew upon lessons learned from previous peace initiatives in Africa, such as the peace agreement in Angola. By studying historical examples of successful peace negotiations and reconciliation efforts, policymakers and mediators can identify effective strategies and mechanisms for addressing conflicts and promoting sustainable peace, (Daniel, 2010).

Regional Integration and Economic Development: African diplomacy historiography has contributed to efforts to promote regional integration and economic development on the continent. For instance, the establishment of the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) was informed by historical precedents of regional cooperation and solidarity. By studying the successes and challenges of these regional initiatives, policymakers can identify opportunities for enhancing intra-African trade, investment, and infrastructure development to stimulate economic growth and poverty reduction, (Daniel, 2010).

Advocacy for Global Justice and Equity: African diplomacy historiography has empowered African nations to advocate for global justice and equity. For example, African leaders played a significant role in advocating for decolonization, human rights, and self-determination in international forums such as the United Nations. By drawing upon historical examples of African solidarity and activism, policymakers can continue to champion issues such as climate justice, debt relief, and fair trade agreements to address the needs and priorities of African nations and peoples, (Daniel, 2010).

Cultural Diplomacy and Soft Power: African diplomacy historiography has promoted cultural diplomacy and soft power as tools for enhancing Africa's influence and reputation on the global stage. For instance, historical exchanges of music, art, and literature between African nations and the rest of the world have fostered mutual understanding and appreciation of African culture. By highlighting Africa's rich cultural heritage and contributions to the global cultural landscape, policymakers can leverage soft power to build bridges, strengthen diplomatic relations, and promote Africa's interests and values in the international arena, (Daniel, 2010).

Diplomatic Innovation and Adaptation: African diplomacy historiography has encouraged diplomatic innovation and adaptation in response to evolving global challenges and opportunities. For example, African nations have adapted their diplomatic strategies to address contemporary issues such as climate change, cybersecurity, and global health pandemics. By studying historical examples of diplomatic creativity, flexibility, and resilience, policymakers can develop innovative approaches to addressing current challenges and advancing Africa's interests in the 21st century, (Daniel, 2010).

Preservation of Diplomatic Heritage: Finally, African diplomacy historiography has contributed to the preservation of Africa's diplomatic heritage and identity. For example, the legacy of African diplomats such as Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, Tanzania's Julius Nyerere, and Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo serves as inspiration for future generations of African leaders. By documenting and celebrating Africa's rich history of diplomatic engagement, scholars and policymakers can inspire young Africans to continue the legacy of African diplomacy and contribute to shaping Africa's future in the global arena. African diplomacy and foreign policy historiography have had significant impacts on conflict resolution, regional integration, advocacy for global justice, cultural diplomacy, diplomatic innovation, and the preservation of Africa's diplomatic heritage. By drawing upon historical lessons and examples, policymakers can develop more effective strategies and initiatives to address contemporary challenges and promote Africa's interests and values in the international arena (Daniel, 2010).

Preservation of Historiography of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy: An Afrocentric Perspective.

The preservation of the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective involves several key aspects aimed at safeguarding Africa's diplomatic heritage, promoting African voices and experiences, and ensuring that future generations have access to a comprehensive understanding of Africa's role in global affairs

1. **Documentation and Archiving:** One crucial aspect of preserving the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective is the documentation and archiving of historical sources, documents, and records related to Africa's diplomatic history. This includes diplomatic correspondence, treaties, official documents, memoirs, oral histories, and scholarly research that provide insights into Africa's diplomatic engagements over time. Establishing archives and digital repositories dedicated to African diplomatic history ensures that these valuable sources are preserved and made accessible for future research and scholarship, (Daniel, 2010).
2. **Research and Scholarship:** Another essential aspect of preservation is fostering research and scholarship on the historiography of African diplomacy and foreign policy. This involves supporting academic institutions, research centers, and scholars dedicated to studying Africa's diplomatic history from an Afrocentric perspective. Encouraging interdisciplinary research that draws upon historical, political, cultural, and social perspectives enriches our understanding of Africa's diplomatic heritage and its relevance to contemporary issues and challenges, (Daniel, 2010).
3. **Education and Curriculum Development:** Preserving the historiography of African diplomacy and foreign policy also involves integrating this knowledge into educational curricula at all levels, from primary schools to universities. Incorporating African diplomatic history into history, political science, international relations, and African studies programs ensures that students gain a comprehensive understanding of Africa's role in global affairs and its contributions to international diplomacy. Moreover, promoting critical thinking, analytical skills, and interdisciplinary approaches in the study of African diplomacy prepares future generations to

engage with complex diplomatic challenges and opportunities, (Daniel, 2010).

4. **Cultural Preservation and Promotion:** Preservation efforts should also include the preservation and promotion of African cultural heritage and diplomatic traditions. This involves celebrating cultural diplomacy initiatives, historical exchanges, and diplomatic practices that have fostered mutual understanding and cooperation among African nations and with the rest of the world. By highlighting Africa's rich cultural diversity and heritage, preservation efforts contribute to enhancing Africa's soft power and influence in the international arena, (Daniel, 2010).
5. **Public Awareness and Engagement:** Preserving the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective requires raising public awareness and fostering public engagement with Africa's diplomatic history. This can be achieved through exhibitions, conferences, public lectures, media campaigns, and digital platforms that showcase Africa's diplomatic achievements, challenges, and aspirations. By engaging policymakers, civil society, and the general public in discussions about Africa's diplomatic heritage, preservation efforts promote a greater appreciation of Africa's role in shaping global affairs and inspire action towards building a more just and equitable world. Preserving the historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective involves documentation and archiving, research and scholarship, education and curriculum development, cultural preservation and promotion, and public awareness and engagement. By safeguarding Africa's diplomatic heritage and promoting a deeper understanding of Africa's contributions to international diplomacy, preservation efforts contribute to empowering African nations, advancing African interests, and shaping Africa's future in the global arena (Daniel, 2010).

Conclusion

The *Historiography of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy: An Afrocentric Perspective*, provides a comprehensive understanding of the diplomatic history of Africa from the view of African agency, experiences, and aspirations. By examining Africa's diplomatic heritage within its historical context, this perspective offers valuable insights into the complexities, dynamics, and contributions of African nations and peoples to global diplomacy. In today's rapidly changing world, where Africa continues to play an increasingly important role in global affairs, understanding Africa's diplomatic past is essential for informing contemporary policy debates, empowering African nations to address current challenges, and shaping Africa's future on the global stage. The historiography of diplomacy and foreign policy from an Afrocentric perspective serves as a vital tool for promoting Africa's interests, values, and contributions to the international community, while also preserving Africa's rich diplomatic heritage for future generations. By embracing this perspective, scholars, policymakers, and practitioners can work towards building a more peaceful, prosperous, and united Africa within a fair and equitable global order.

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