

### **The Summary of My Writing Sample**

This essay explores the diplomatic histories of China and Germany, focusing on a Chinese diplomat, Xi-hong Liu, and a German diplomat, Max von Brandt. By applying the “threshold principle” theory of Hobsbawm and an American Historical Writing conceptual framework developed by Paul Cohen, personal studies for Liu and Brandt were conducted, primarily through use of the diplomats’ diaries. Comparing their relationships with the diplomatic group leader, the differences between Liu and Brandt become apparent, whereby the diplomatic behaviours and ideas were shaped by their own models of nationalism, thus suggesting their causes.

Most importantly to Liu’s diplomat career, Liu fostered a relationship with his commanding officer, the first ambassador of Britain, named Song-tao Guo, which later deteriorated. There are both Chinese and Japanese historiographies detailing their clash. This essay combines their arguments and introduces a further explanation and supporting evidence. By contrast, Brandt maintained a positive relationship with Eulenburg, the leader of “Preußische Ostasienexpedition” (the Prussian Special Diplomatic Group Sent to East Asia). He fought for the interests of Deutschland, which accorded with German unification and Prussian expansionism. The success of Brandt and the failure of Liu corroborate each other. Liu retained his position of political nationalism throughout the domestic political struggles and the passive treatment and defense toward the West. Brandt took an objective viewpoint toward the East and the transition of nationalism, while other Great Powers had already established a modern nation.