

Communicating Diplomacy

Global comparisons of oral, written, and material early modern negotiations

December 1–2 2022, Uppsala, Sweden.

A conference arranged by the Global Diplomacy Network

(<https://globaldiplomacynetwork.wordpress.com/about/>)

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This conference aims to profoundly explore communication in premodern diplomacy from a global perspective. Acts of communication, be they oral, written, or material, are often arenas of strife and conscious misunderstanding while at the same time they negotiate new practices. Combining local, regional, and international perspectives, this conference engages with the diversity of forms of communication and explores language variants considered to be minority languages, dialects, or lingua franca, as well as vastly different communicating practices ranging from formalized written correspondence to oral and performative acts.

Stimulating global comparative approaches in cultural history and translational history (Zupanov 2007), as well as intellectual history and the history of science (Sarukkai 2013) have created an awareness of the far-reaching impact of translations and mistranslations (Liu et al 1999). In this conference, we delve deep into the political dimension, and we do so at the cultural fault lines, where conflicts arise (see Hellman, Tremml-Werner 2021). Drawing from Early American Studies (Merrell 1999; Ellis 2020; Carayon 2021) we align this conference with works stressing the roles of indigenous actors, local conditions, and the political and cultural complexities of language use and translation in diplomatic exchanges (Afinogenov 2022; Harrison 2021).

This conference aims at stimulating dialogue in the realm of language use, translation and interpreting practices, the actors involved and the type of knowledge that informed individual translation processes or speech acts and ideally bridge out to larger-than-local processes and consequences. Scholars working on indigenous-colonial/hegemonic negotiations and frontier relations are particularly encouraged to submit papers. We seek papers examining language use within global encounters in the seventeenth and eighteenth century from an emic point of view, thus taking seriously verbal cultures of negotiations, non-

written practices, performative acts, and the material aspect of a linguistic exchange as well as the negotiations that took place through classic language use (e.g. in Mandarin, Malay or Latin) and vernaculars. By analyzing both embodied practices and word choices in diplomatic conflicts, we can discuss the strategic use—and misuse—of communication within early modern global history.

Questions include, but are not limited to:

- How do specific episodes of on-the-ground translation or interpretation play out in global connections?
- How did different parties gather knowledge for what could be considered successful negotiations through foreign language use?
- Which groups had the power to escalate or deescalate conflicts by way of translation?
- Who managed patterns of communication and language use and who classified knowledge?
- Were conflicts created by language choices or could language help to solve conflicts?
- What was the relationship between power rivalries and knowledge rivalries in diplomatic interpreting?
- How did the translation of language and non-verbal processes influence processes such as jurisdiction and indirect rule?

For environmental reasons, the conference will be carried out in a hybrid format. However, GDN will seek funds for speakers wishing to attend in person. Please indicate your preferred type of participation when submitting a 300-word abstract no later than **15 August 2022** to either birgit.tremmlwerner@lnu.se or lisa.hellman@hist.lu.se.