



Historical Treaties of Southeast Asia

A research project in global diplomatic history

Treaties and Tributes

Asian agency and performativity in cross-cultural diplomacy,
c. 1400–1975

Thammasat University, Bangkok (on site only), 19–21 February 2027

Call for Papers

International history in Asia is the history of cross-cultural diplomacy. Inspired by recent developments in global and connected history and New Diplomatic History, researchers have in recent years begun to explore the long history of diplomatic interaction in Asia since around the turn of the fifteenth century. In doing so, they have started to pay more attention to the interests, motivations, and worldviews of Asian actors in shaping interpolity relations involving Asian as well as, from the turn of the sixteenth century, European parties. As a result, the contours of a more nuanced and less Eurocentric understanding of the history of interpolity relations – including diplomatic interaction and performativity, tributary relations, and treaty-making – in which the agency of Asian actors is given due attention, is beginning to emerge.

The conference *Treaties and Tributes* aims to assess the current frontlines of research on the history of diplomatic and interpolity relations in Asia. It explores the ways in which Asian actors negotiated tributary relationships and treaties and, in doing so, contributed to the formation of interpolity law and relations as well as commercial contacts over long and short distances. The conference focuses on the agency and perspectives of Asian actors, including both formal political and diplomatic actors such as rulers, courtiers, ministers, officials, envoys and ambassadors, and less formal ones such as royal family members, servants, interpreters, scribes, merchants and religious teachers.

Scholars of all career levels and based anywhere in the world are invited to submit proposals. In particular, we would like to encourage young scholars and PhD students based in Asia to participate. Contributions may consist of panels or individual presentations of original, empirically grounded research or theoretical, methodological, or historiographical reflections. Some of themes that we expect to be covered during the conference are:

- Asian norms and practices of tributary relations, treaty-making and diplomacy
- cross-cultural perceptions of key concepts in interpolity relations
- performative aspects of diplomacy, such as the role of ceremonies, gifts, and protocol
- interpersonal relations and emotions in diplomacy and treaty-making
- sites of diplomacy and the role of sensory experiences
- commercial aspects of treaties and tributary relations
- religious elements in diplomacy and interpolity relations
- linguistic and cultural translation and interpretation
- forms and practices for preserving the memory of interpolity relations and agreements
- gender dimensions of diplomacy and interpolity relations
- the potential of diplomatics as a method for studying treaties and other key diplomatic documents and artifacts
- theoretical and methodological implications of recent research on Asian diplomatic history, tributary relations and treaty-making



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- the physical properties of treaties, tributes and other key diplomatic documents and artefacts
- non-textual and unconventional sources to diplomatic history and interpolity relations

How to Participate

Panel Proposals

Proposals for panels should focus on a coherent theme, concept, theory or method. Comparative perspectives across regions, countries and time periods are especially welcome. Panels should consist of between three and five presentations, preferably from two or more institutions and/or countries. In addition, a chair and a commentator may also be included in the panel. Proposals for panels should be submitted as a Word document and include the following information:

- Panel organiser and contact person (title, name, affiliation, e-mail)
- Panel members (titles, names, affiliation, e-mail, function in the panel)
- Panel title
- Panel abstract (200–400 words)
- Individual papers (title of paper, name/s of presenter/s, abstract of 100–300 words per paper)

Individual Paper Proposals

Individual papers may be combined to form panels or be included in open slots in accepted panels. Paper proposals should be submitted as a Word document and include the following information:

- Paper presenter/s (title, name, affiliation, e-mail)
- Paper title
- Paper abstract (100–300 words)

Submission Format and Deadline

All proposals should be sent as a Word document to 2027conference@sea-treaties.org. Deadline for submission is 1 September 2026. Applicants will be notified by the end of September.

Practical Information

Conference Location

The conference will take place on site only at the [Faculty of Political Science, Pridi Banomyong International College, and Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University, Bangkok](#). The campus is located in central Bangkok and several accommodation options are available near the site of the conference, ranging from inexpensive hostels and guesthouses to four-star hotels.

Costs and Scholarships

The conference is free of charge for participants who present a paper or participate actively in a panel in another capacity (e.g. as chair or commentator). Interested scholars and students who do not present a paper or participate in a panel may attend by paying a fee when registering. All participants will be expected to pay for their own travel and accommodation.

A limited number of scholarships intended to cover travel and inexpensive accommodation may be available for scholars from Asian low or mid-income countries according to the [OECD's list](#). PhD



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students and young researchers will be given priority. The call for scholarships will open after the deadline for submissions and will be open to scholars and students whose papers have been accepted.

Organisation

The conference is organized by the [Faculty of Political Science](#), [Pridi Banomyong International College](#), and [Thai Khadi Research Institute](#), [Thammasat University](#), in collaboration with the research program [Historical Treaties of Southeast Asia](#), financed by the [Swedish Research Council](#) and hosted by [Linnaeus University](#). It is the second of a series of three conferences on cross-cultural diplomacy, interpolity relations and treaty-making in Asia, following the first successful conference [Treaty-Making and Cross-Cultural Diplomacy in Asia \(16th-20th centuries\)](#) which was held at the [University of the Philippines](#) at Diliman, the Philippines, 29 February – 2 March 2024. The third conference is expected to be held in Sweden in 2028.

Organising committee

- Prof. Dr. Stefan Eklöf Amirell, Linnaeus University
- Dr. Thomas Bruce, Pridi Banomyong International College, Thammasat University
- Assoc. Prof. Dr. Peera Charoenvattananukul, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University
- Asst. Prof. Dr. Ornthicha Duangratana, Pridi Banomyong International College, Thammasat University
- Dr. Preedee Hongsaton, Linnaeus University
- Dr. Wirawan Naruepiti, Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University.

Inquiries and more information

General inquiries should be sent to 2027conference@sea-treaties.org.

For more information and updates, see the conference website:
<https://sea-treaties.org/index.php/conferences/2027-conference>.