

## The scope of diplomacy in seventeenth to nineteenth century insular Southeast Asia: from treaty making to land bargaining (double session panel)

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Speakers: Elsa Clavé (Hamburg University), Stefan Eklöf Amirell (Linnaeus University, Sweden), Ariel Lopez (University of the Philippines, Diliman), Maarten Manse (Leiden University) and Birgit Tremml-Werner (Linnaeus University, Sweden)

Discussant: Kathryn Wellen (KITLV)

Chair: Preedee Hongsaton (Lund University/Linnaeus University)

In recent years the study of historical diplomatic relations has been revitalized. Inspired by actor-based and discourse critical approaches, historians, anthropologists, and international relations scholars have expanded the study of Southeast Asian inter-polity relations, highlighting the importance of kinship, opportunist alliances linked to colonial power dynamics, local religious concerns, and flexible ad-hoc strategies of gift-giving. From the sixteenth century onwards, negotiation processes using traditional, imported and hybrid practices alike left a lasting imprint on the socio-economic realities on the ground. Consequently, a versatile set of foreign policies, diplomatic practices including soft power, conflict management and knowledge gathering, and spatial relations developed in maritime Asia. The aim of this panel is to discuss the 'political cultures' implied by these usages. It intends to bring to a better understanding and a better definition of the relationships between Europeans and Southeast Asian rulers, often described along the simple dichotomy of superiority versus inferiority. Instead of domination, which already set the mode of interpretation, the panel proposes the use of negotiation and conciliation as a frame of analysis to consider the versatility of the relation, while at the same time being attuned to the significance of unequal power relations and coercive practices, such as 'gunboat diplomacy'. Discussing the concepts of power, authority and sovereignty, this panel will focus on uncovering the implication of words and acts in diplomatic and trading relations between Southeast Asian rulers and their counterparts, to bring new lights on Euro-Asian encounters and potentially reshape our understanding of its nature.

This interdisciplinary panel addresses theoretical and methodological questions on how we ought to understand practices of negotiations and bargaining on the very local level. Each of the four contributions will start off with micro studies before putting them again in a larger frame.