4 / 2020 LEGATIO The Journal for Renaissance and Early Modern Diplomatic Studies

Nathalie Rivère de Carles
Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès

FOREWORD

Despite the tropic image of the ambassador as a human letter, studies on diplomacy often focus on the ambassadors' words rather than their objects or their actual bodies. Symbolically, an ambassador was offered as an object for the foreign master to read, observe and manipulate in space as well as to listen to. The ambassador's body as a language and the use of objects to produce a diplomatic language may then prove more eloquent than what the diplomatic agents said. Mirella Marini highlights the specific symbolic language ambassadors had to use: 'The aristocratic diplomats were not necessarily there to draft the papers. The professionals handled the legal work, but the courtiers were there to use a specific "court language".'[1] This 'specific court language' was not only verbal, but physical and material, and it was not limited to the confines of the court. Conversely, this non-verbal language was not only produced by the court but penetrates the latter from other economic, social or religious circles. This issue's contributions aim to bridge the gap between seminal works produced on the material economy of diplomacy such as *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture* and the actual semiotic language implied by moving bodies in a diplomatic context.[2] They confront the expectations regarding the material and

[1] Mirella Marini, 'Dynastic Relations on an International Stage', in *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500*, ed. by Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James (Farnham: Routledge, 2015), p. 99.

[2] Brinda Charry and Gitanjali Shahani, *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, Traffic, 1550–1700* (Farnham: Routledge, 2009; 2016).

physical language of diplomacy with practical examples unveiling the impact of diplomatic body and material languages.

Following the approach of New Diplomatic History and using the full spectrum of diplomatic literature, the ten articles deal with official and non-official forms of diplomacy.[3] They broaden the perspective on early modern non-verbal diplomacy, the education and the practice of ambassadors as well as the evolution of their identity. Pairing diplomatic history with other disciplinary approaches and methodologies such as political communication and science, strategic studies and semiotic and literary analysis, they offer new perspectives on well-known diplomatic events such as the escapade of the future Charles I and the Duke of Buckingham to Spain in 1623 or Louis XIV's diplomacy of munificence. They also analyse never or seldom studied data such as the account of the visit of Spanish merchants-turned-diplomats to Ottoman Algiers in the 1560s, Ottoman accounts of the visit of foreign representatives at the Porte between 1612 and 1643, and the colonial diplomacy of New France in the 1660s. Thus, the ensemble sheds new strategic light on a part of diplomatic activity often seen as merely ornamental.

Focusing mainly on seventeenth century western and eastern diplomacy, the issue gathers established and emerging researchers whose studies uncover in the first section the forms and goals of non-verbal material and gestural diplomacy. So as not to limit the scope of our study to European perspectives, the second section contrasts ceremonial diplomatic strategies in the Mediterranean and the Orient with the views of and on European representatives. The mirror of cross-confessional diplomacy is a steppingstone to uncover real strategic outlooks and tactics used in the early modern world. The issue's last section offers then a synthetic look at the evolution of material and artistic diplomacy from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century and confirms the change in diplomatic identities and practice with a view of speaking to the public sphere. This last section not only considers art in diplomacy but diplomacy in works of art. Material and gestural diplomacy is in the end not considered solely in terms of political agency but of creative power.

[3] John Watkins, 'Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 38, no. 1 (2008), 1–14.

This issue's first section is dedicated to the 'Language of Hard and Soft Power'. Although it may look strange to use the singular to qualify what seems to refer to several types of language, this section wishes to analyse diplomacy as an absorptive language articulating several diplomatic or non-diplomatic languages with a particular focus on non-verbal communication tactics. It shows how verbal and non-verbal diplomatic languages can be significantly exploited in asymmetrical contexts.

Emmanuel Lemée's 'The Language of *Incognito* in Late Seventeenth--Century Diplomacy' prolongs Maija Jannsson's work and furthers her analysis by using Timothy Hampton's prism of the diplomat as 'a maker and reader of fictions, as an exchanger of signs and constructor of narratives'.[4] He thus defines the practice of *incognito* as a 'shared fiction, an assumed identity the public both knew to be fictional while pretending it was true' (p. 16). Diplomacy is already a 'legal fiction', and Lemée adds *incognito* as its fictional double enhancing their main difference: the representative's anonymity. *Incognito* is 'a concerted suspension of the rules of princely society' (p. 17) used to resolve a protocol problem, cut or avoid the cost of power displays and to downplay the importance of an encounter. Thus, Lemée analyses how diplomatic *incognito* is an 'emancipation of language' which gives the diplomatic agent an unprecedented leeway despite the rules and decorum presiding over the *incognito*. Again, he stresses that diplomatic activity relies on a *shared* fiction: it is a two-way conversation needing to find a *common* communication, cultural, religious, economic or simply political framework. Lemée's article employs various examples of macro- and micro-states' use of this method and shows how it defined their respective political identity as well as their relations. If Lemée points out that *incognito* is a paradoxical form of diplomatic language, he also explains how it can easily be distorted to 'paralyse a negotiation' (p. 27). In the end, *incognito* is not only a fiction but a true language. It acts as a 'political index establishing a non-verbal language of political power' (p. 34) developed in an asymmetrical context.

[4] Timothy Hampton, *Fictions of embassy: literature and diplomacy in early modern Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), p. 25.

If *incognito* is a fiction and a language dressing hard power in the trappings of soft power, Chloé Rivière's article 'Displaying the Prince's Identity: Textile Accessories and Fineries in Seventeenth-Century Diplomatic Gift-Giving' focuses on the material language of early modern strategies of soft power. Based on Christian Windler's, Harriet Rudolph's and Gregor M. Metzig's approaches to material culture in diplomacy, Rivière delivers a 'systematic contextualised study' (p. 39) of textiles and fineries categorised in volume 2037 of *Présents du Roi* (1662–1715).[5] Drawing from theories of political communication and articulating them with new diplomatic history, Rivière posits diplomatic gifts 'as brands representing not only the prince but the country that sent them' (p. 41). She chooses to focus on gloves, ribbons, and decorative fineries as means to assert and recreate genealogical identities. They were 'material reminders of individual and family identity' turned into 'political messages' (p. 50). The asymmetry evoked in Lemée's article re-emerges in Rivière's article in terms of public communication. Her analysis of Philip V's gift of a Spanish-style dress to his French bride shows how textiles put the private at the service of a public communication that often went beyond the limited sphere of the court.

The analysis of body and material languages and their impact on the articulation of private and public spheres in seventeenth diplomacy is put into another perspective in Amélie Balayre's 'The Education of an Ambassador: The Marquis d'Effiat in England (1624–25). This article gives the perspective of an early modern ambassador on the use of soft power in a hard power context. Balayre gives a forensic analysis of the correspondence between Antoine Coiffier de Ruzé, Marquis d'Effiat, and Louis XIII with a particular focus on the literary strategies the one-time ambassador uses and on his meticulous report of the material and gestural environment of his mission to England. After establishing the development of a non-verbal diplomatic language from a strategic point of view, our view shifts to the ambassador's own perception.

[5] Christian Windler, 'Tributes and Presents in Franco-Tunisian Diplomacy', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 4, no. 2 (2000), 168–99; Gregor M. Metzig and Harriet Rudolph (eds), *Material Culture in Modern Diplomacy from the 15th to the 20th Century*, Series: Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte / European History Yearbook, vol. 17 (Berlin; Boston, MA: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2016).

The choice of a trainee ambassador emphasises the importance of material and gestural diplomacy in the education of the changing early modern ambassador. Balayre's article echoes Stephen Greenblatt's writings on Renaissance self-fashioning and shows how diplomatic agents used personal correspondence as self-promoting instruments.[6] However, she does not limit her study to this aspect and shows through Effiat's anxious and lengthy reports to his king how sensitive the issue of non-verbal language was in sometime tense hard power contexts.

The last article in this section completes the perspective by focusing more closely on the senders' and the recipients' use of material diplomacy. Beatrice Saletti's 'Imitation Games: Some Notes on the Envoys sent by Borso d'Este to Uthman, Ruler of Tunis' illustrates how both Borso and Uthman viewed gifts and their diplomatic use. This article shows how fundamental material and gestural diplomacy was in the Mediterranean context and how it constituted a true non-verbal lingua franca. Saletti also points out that ambitions were somehow modest in terms of outcomes; hard power goals were often left aside in favour of targeted commercial gains.

The second section on 'East–West: Symbolic Diplomatic Communication, Practical Memories and New Agents' prolongs Saletti's case-study and shows the actual benefits of material and gestural diplomacy in cross-confessional contexts. Switching the perspective to the Mediterranean and the Middle Eastern regions reveals the importance of non-verbal language in fashioning a shared fiction enabling, at least temporary, forms of ententes. This section also shows how material and gestural diplomacy took unexpected forms under the influence of non-traditional diplomatic agents whose practices and tactics durably impacted diplomacy beyond the Mediterranean.

Christoph Würflinger's 'Symbolic Communication in Habsburg--Ottoman Relations. The Grand Embassy of Johann Rudolf Schmid zum Schwarzenhorn (1650–51)' examines the nature of the communication between Habsburgs and Ottomans during Johann Rudolf Schmid zum

[6] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

Schwarzenhorn's seldom studied mission to Constantinople. Würflinger focuses on three major events: the border exchange ceremony, the entry into Constantinople, and the audience with the sultan. He analyses how this symbolic communication partakes of a peace strategy and how codified and non-codified symbols created a sense of formal permanence to otherwise non-permanent diplomatic missions. As Saletti's and Caprioli's articles, Würflinger's text stresses that the chosen ambassador 'did not come from a noble background' but was chosen for 'his intercultural expertise' as well as his capacity to consider the complexity of the regime he was dealing with (p. 101). This new diplomat's analytical mind was paired with a sense of the material and the symbolic that added to his previous expertise of the Ottoman theatre of diplomacy. Würflinger's piece insists on Schmid's ability to distinguish between 'ordinary presents' (p. 112) and exceptional ones, and how they constituted a significant non-verbal language for the Sublime Porte. The article thus demonstrates how the non-verbal tactics of the Sublime Porte became the chosen language to test European polities' diplomatic endurance and savviness. Würflinger's study of symbolic communication in Habsburg–Ottoman diplomatic relations relied on 'parity, friendship, and displays of imperial power' (p. 115), and came to redefine the diplomatic concept of friendship. Like Rivière, Würflinger also shows that the purpose of this symbolic communication echoes the 'purpose of his mission [which] was also to present the peace to the public' (p. 115).

Mahmut Halef Cevrioğlu's 'Grand Vizieral Reception Ceremonies of European Ambassadors in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century' begins with what Würflinger and Caprioli's articles also suggest that diplomacy with the Orient and Oriental diplomacy heavily relied on ceremonial diplomacy. The perspective is now shifting from a European vision to an Oriental vision. Cevrioğlu's article examines seldom-studied accounts of the visit of selected 'Venetian, Austrian, French, Swedish, Polish-Lithuanian, Muscovite and Dutch diplomatic representatives to the Porte between 1612 and 1643' (p. 124). It focuses on the 'theatricality of the diplomatic representatives and state actors' (p. 125) and thus adopts more of literary approach to the historical data. Cevrioğlu, therefore, details the step-by-step progression of a diplomatic visit. Besides, he includes unprecedented views on the strategy of fascination

and subjugation of the Sublime Porte from both the addressor's and addressee's perspective. Cevrioğlu's approach adopts a narratological approach to the diplomatic mission and tries to deliver a more holistic view of ceremonial diplomacy.

Francesco Caprioli's '*Por Ser Hombre Platico*': Francisco Gasparo and the 1569 Spanish Negotiations with the Ottoman Governor of Algiers' also unveils the strategic structure of Mediterranean diplomacy involving Ottoman and European actors. Reverting to an earlier European perspective, Caprioli's article mirrors Cevrioğlu's in terms of the forensic analysis of the Spanish diplomatic strategy and tactics when dealing with Ottoman interlocutors. In the wake of Tijana Krstić and Maartje van Gelder's studies of cross-confessional diplomacy,[7] Caprioli views 'cross-cultural contacts [as] the proof of an informal diplomacy used by contemporary pre-modern states to cross frontiers and overcome political and religious obstacles during the age of confessionalisation' (p. 145). Clearly adding the religious dimension as both a motivation and an obstacle in otherwise very pragmatic negotiations, Caprioli focuses on the role of new diplomatic agents – merchants – in the development of the Mediterranean diplomatic *lingua franca*. Relying on the functional hybridity of the actual verbal language called *lingua franca* and the fundamental role of memory in diplomacy, Caprioli shows how the Spanish crown planned and articulated verbal and non-verbal tactics and used the practical expertise of new agents. The article thus succeeds in identifying and analysing the tenets of a practice-based strategy underpinning early modern confessional diplomacy and influencing general diplomatic practice.

The last section of the issue, 'The Diplomacy of Art', moves the creation of a hybrid language mixing the verbal and the non-verbal to the visual level. Visual diplomacy relying on works of art from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century is now examined in a westward looking perspective as it starts with the papacy and Elizabethan England

[7] Tijana Krstić, and Maartje van Gelder, 'Introduction: Cross-Confessional Diplomacy and Diplomatic Intermediaries in the Early Modern Mediterranean', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 19 (2015), 93–105.

and ends with visual representations of colonial diplomacy in North America. These articles analyse the confessional aspects of material and gestural diplomacy through the prism of the artists and the artistic tactics used in the works exchanged between powers or partaking of a proto public diplomacy. It is not so much the object as tactic that this section deals with but the tactics in the objects.

Maëlig Chauvin's 'The Language of Papal Gift-Giving in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: An Example of Soft Power?' reprises the concept of soft power exemplified in terms of material and non-verbal tactics analysed in the first section. However, she projects the concept not only on objects but on their content and intrinsic material economy. Chauvin illustrates how diplomatic presents 'constituted a boon to diplomacy' (p. 185). She shows the agency of objects as they generate movements and speeches redefining both the private and public rituals of many countries at once. The article gives precise examples how objects not only relied on but also influenced timing and articulated competition and amity. As in Chloé Rivière's article, Chauvin's piece shows the impact of material and gestural diplomacy beyond the strict geopolitical confines, how it structures cultural communication and creates a shared language between distinct interlocutors.

Francesca Mavilla's 'Promoting an Artist as an Integral Part of Diplomatic Networking: Chiappino Vitelli and Federico Zuccari at the Court of Elizabeth I' focuses on a slightly earlier period but completes Chauvin's perspective by focusing on the actual artist. Vitelli and Zucarri's English journey at the Elizabethan court echoes Caprioli's and Würflinger's analyses of new diplomatic agents. Mavilla shows that Medici diplomacy already relied on non-aristocratic agents such as Vitelli to assist more traditional agents in arduous contexts. Considering 'the complicated relations between the English court and Florence' (p. 193) during the sixteenth century, Vitelli's production became instrumental in striking a different type of relations with the English monarch. It also deepened Florentine understanding of political changes abroad as well as promoting Florentine artistic expertise, subsequently benefiting the Florentine economy.

With Pierre-Olivier Ouellet's 'Between Temporal and Spiritual Powers: Colonial Diplomacy Associated with the Painting *France Bringing Faith to*

The Huron-Wendats of New France (c. 1666)', we move to the diplomatic content of paintings. Ouellet puts diplomacy in a confessional perspective, but this time within Christendom. He observes the diplomacy in the painting thus concluding this last section by turning diplomacy into an artistic instrument. It examines how 'this painting [seemed] intended to be sprinkled with a wealth of visual information, holding much potential in terms of historical relevance and significance' (p. 211). The need to promote seventeenth century French expansion in Canada is the strategic goal of this visual public diplomacy. However, the originality of Ouellet's study is that it examines the other side of this coin and shows how diplomacy was represented and how it influenced pictorial composition. The non-verbal diplomacy of the object is now the creative substance of the work of art.

Beyond its strict analytical scope, this final study as well as that of Lemée's, Cevrioğlu's, Caprioli's and Balayre's, raise an important methodological point concerning the multidisciplinary nature of the vibrant field of Diplomatic Studies. They all exemplify the fertility of disciplinary toing-and-froing and/or articulation when studying diplomatic data whether written or unwritten. Timothy Hampton recently explained how 'the diplomat brings the possibility of literature itself' to his trade.[8] Emulating the diplomat's method according to Hampton, this issue offers a practical assessment of early modern diplomacy based on multidisciplinary cross-fertilization. It uses the non-verbal to understand both the strategies and tactics underpinning verbal diplomacy. Thus, it recalls how diplomacy fashions non-verbal political and aesthetic languages beyond its own scope.

Nathalie Rivere de Carles – Associate Professor in Early Modern English Drama and Diplomatic Culture at Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès. She authored books and articles on theatre history, early modern theatre and history, theatre and diplomacy: *Early Modern Diplomacy, Theatre and Soft Power: The Making of Peace* (Palgrave, 2016), *Time's Up for the Duchess: Malfi in Conversation* (*Scene Focus*, CNRS, 2019), 'Diplomatic *Parrhesia* and the Ethos of Trustworthiness in Hotman's *The Ambassador* and Shakespeare's *Henry V*' (*Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, Duke University Press, 2020).

[8] Joanna Craigwood, Tracey Sowerby, *Cultures of Diplomacy and Literary Writing in the Early Modern World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), p. 53.