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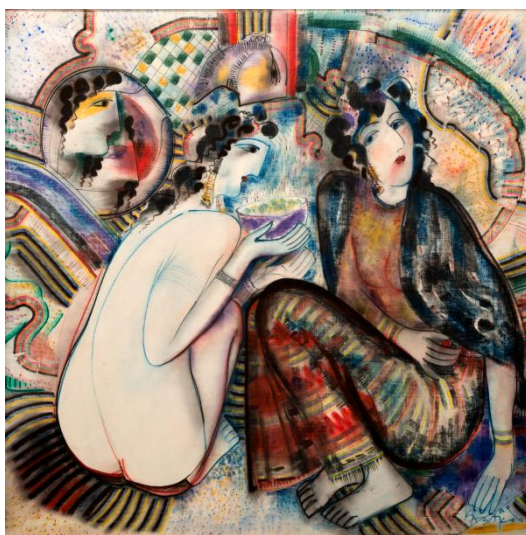
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), Grant Agreement No. 101063851

9th International Conference on Arts and Humanities

The Art of Mediation: agents, practices and afterimages of intercultural dialogue

24th – 26th September 2026

Marietta-Blau Saal, University of Vienna, Universitätsring 1,
1010, Vienna, Austria



Program & abstracts

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A Word of Welcome

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to *The Art of Mediation: Agents, Practices and Afterimages of Intercultural Dialogue*. It is our great pleasure to welcome you to this conference, organised within the framework of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) with the support of the European Commission and in scientific partnership with ICSAH. We are delighted to bring together scholars from a wide range of disciplines, institutions, and countries to share research and engage in discussion over the coming days.

Throughout history, people, objects, texts, images, institutions, and practices have connected different cultural worlds, enabling dialogue, negotiating conflict, transmitting knowledge, and shaping identities. Examining these many forms of intercultural mediation across time enables us to gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which cultures encounter, influence, and transform one another, while also opening new perspectives for future scholarship.

The promise of this perspective is reflected in the papers presented here. Although they draw on diverse periods, regions, sources, and methodologies, they repeatedly confront common questions concerning the processes of mediation, its agents, and its cultural afterlives. Bringing these perspectives into dialogue is one of the central aims of the conference. We hope not only to compare case studies but also to develop a shared conceptual language for understanding intercultural mediation across disciplinary and historical contexts.

To encourage exchange between history, archaeology, anthropology, art history, literature, religion, law, heritage, medicine, psychology, and other fields, the program follows a narrative of mediation structured around a series of interconnected questions.

We begin with **Authority**, which asks *who has the right to speak for the Other?* The first panel explores legitimacy, representation, expertise, and the individuals and institutions that claim the authority to mediate across cultural boundaries.

The second panel, **Translation**, asks *how does meaning travel?* It examines the movement of ideas, beliefs, images, texts, languages, and cultural practices across different societies, showing how mediation is never a simple transfer but always a process of interpretation and transformation.

The panel **Embodiment** asks *how mediation is lived and materialised?* It shifts attention to bodies, objects, artistic practices, and material culture as active sites through which intercultural encounters are experienced, negotiated, and remembered.

The panel **Frontiers** asks *where mediation takes place*? It turns to borderlands, migration, diplomacy, diasporas, and spaces of encounter, highlighting mobility and cultural brokerage as fundamental conditions of historical exchange.

Finally, the panel **Memory** asks *what remains after encounters have taken place*? It explores the memories, identities, narratives, collections, archives, and new forms of knowledge that continue to shape societies long after the original encounter.

We hope that this structure will help participants discover unexpected connections between disciplines, periods, and regions, and inspire conversations that go beyond individual case studies while encouraging new ways of thinking about intercultural mediation and its lasting impact on cultural memory.

We warmly thank all speakers, participants, reviewers, and members of the organising team for their commitment and enthusiasm, and we wish you an inspiring conference filled with stimulating discussions, fruitful exchanges, and new collaborations that we hope will continue well beyond the conference itself.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Alina Dimitrova, University of Vienna
Prof. Umberto Mondini, President of ICSAH
Assist. Prof. Christakis Christofi, University of Cyprus

Program

DAY 1. Thursday, 24 September

PANEL I: AUTHORITY. <i>Who Has the Right to Speak for the Other?</i> Legitimacy, Power and Representation		
09.00-09.20	Registration	
09.20-09.40	Welcoming notes	
Session 1	Representation and the Making of the Other	<i>Chair: Christofi</i>
09.40-10.30	KEYNOTE LECTURE Hermann Mückler: Stereotypes of a Paradise	
10.30-10.40	<i>Opening discussion</i>	
Coffee Break		
11.00-11.20	Claudia Luchetti: Divine and Human Levels of Mediation	
11.20-11.40	Janeen Green: Race, Religion, & Embodiment	
Session 2	Negotiating Authority in Social Contexts	
11.40-12.00	Claire Ayelotan: Mediating After Accusation	
12.00-12.20	Tianyi Wang: Infrastructure, Art, and Affective Mediation on Naoshima	
12.20-12.40	Anna Marie Larsen: Leadership, Gender, and Well-being	
Lunch Break		
Session 3	Mediation, Expertise, and Institutional Authority	<i>Chair: Kamenou</i>
14.00-14.20	Clementine Tong: Rethinking Neutrality in Family Mediation	
14.20-14.40	Paride Bollettin: Encounters between Scholars and their Others	
14.40-15.00	Pedro Bossada: Dreaming Against the State	
15.00-15.20	Viviane Etoa-Deyle: La Travailleuse Sociale et l’Artisanat de la Médiation Institutionnelle	
Coffee Break		
Session 4	Religious Authority and the Construction of Difference	
15.40-16.00	Giuseppe De Spirito: Hic invenit...	
16.00-16.20	Margherita Cecchelli: Un Lungo Duello Tra Due Papi	
16.20-16.40	Evangelos Yfantidis: Ortodossia, Eresia e Pastorale	
16.40-17.00	Aziza Aimukhambetova: The Digital Minbar: the Islamic Discourse in Kazakhstan	
17.00-17.30	<i>Final Discussion</i>	
CONFERENCE DINNER		

DAY 2. Friday, 25 September

PANEL II: TRANSLATION. How Does Meaning Travel?		
Session 5	Translating Across Languages, Religions and Civilisations	<i>Chair: Dimitrova</i>
10.00-10.20	Dongxuan Zhao: Transcultural, Intermedial Re-interpretation of Sunzi Bingfa	
10.20-10.40	Iulian Toma: Écrits Poétiques Hétérolingues	
Session 6	Translation Through Performance, Literature and Cultural Forms	
10.40-11.00	Antonios Fragkakis: Médiation culturelle et Savoir Pharmaceutique à l'Opéra	
10.00-11.20	Christakis Christofi: La Triple Épreuve de la Rencontre	
11.20-11.40	Elena Daniela Grigorescu: Assumer l'Autre en Soi	
11.40-12.00	Krste Iliev & Natalija Pop Zarieva: The Face of the Hybrid	
Lunch Break		
PANEL III: EMBODIMENT. Material Practices of Mediation		
Session 7	Images, Objects and Material Translation	<i>Chair: Li</i>
13.20-13.40	Marco Musillo: Garments for Mediation: the Tenshō Embassy in Europe	
13.40-14.00	Chrysovalantis Steiakakis: From National Costume to Cosmopolitan Elegance	
14.00-14.20	Tatjana Mićević-Đurić: Painting Between East and West	
14.20-14.40	Orly Nezer: Mediating European Modernism through Pottery	
14.40-15.00	Chiara Velicogna: Berthold Lubetkin Mediatore	
15.00-15.20	Julia Secklehner: Craft's Hidden "Others"	
Coffee Break		
Session 8	Vulnerable Bodies, Medical Knowledge and Gendered Encounters	
15.40-16.00	Giulia Freni: Faciamus Experimentum in Corpore Vili	
16.00-16.20	Olha Morozova: Living as the 'Other': Vera Gedroits' Experience	
16.20-16.40	Samuel Lazar: Subaltern Misfits	
16.40-17.00	<i>Final discussion</i>	

DAY 3. Saturday, 26 September

PANEL IV: FRONTIERS. Mobility, Diplomacy and Hybrid Identities		
Session 9	Migration, Diaspora and Negotiated Belonging	<i>Chair: Lizska</i>
09.00-09.20	Donato Sitaro: Long Knives, Blue Books, White Settlers	
09.20-09.40	Marek Liszka: Polish Orava and Polish Spisz Górale Diasporic Communities in Chicago	
09.40-10.00	Hanna Bereźnicka: Cultural Mediation in the Cold War	
10.00-10.20	Natálie Hlavatá: The Reciprocal Gaze	
10.20-10.40	Giulio Dalla Grana: Ethnogenesis and the Paradoxes of 19 th c. Cosmopolitical Nationalism	
Coffee Break		
Session 10	Diplomacy, Mobility and Cultural Brokerage	
11.00-11.20	Barbara Pulcini: La versione di Livio Andronico	
11.20-11.40	Roberto Dibiasi: Jacopo Stefaneschi Mediatore Culturale fra Roma e Avignone	
11.40-12.00	Maretta Johnson: Mediating War and Memory	
12.00-12.20	Ivy Li: Art as Mediation: Jesuit Knowledge Networks and the Visual Translation of China	
12.20-12.40	Preston Iha: Ichariba Chōdē: Ryūkyūan Mediation	
Lunch Break		
PANEL V: MEMORY. Afterimages of Encounter and production of new knowledge		
Session 11	Remembering Conflict, Empire and Political Encounters	<i>Chair: Dimitrova</i>
14.00-14.20	Ming Liu: Sino-Japanese Co-productions on War Orphans as Forms of Mediation	
14.20-14.40	Felice Ferraro: Constructing the ‘Other’: Enzo Sereni’s Discourse on the Binational State	
14.40-15.00	Olga Bolibok: Memory Heritage Diplomacy	
Session 12	Memory, Identity and Cultural Transmission	
15.00-15.20	Luca Salvatelli: Scriptura et Imago	
15.20-15.40	Domenica Stornelli: Pietro Baldassarre Ferrero as an Artistic Mediator	
15.40-16.00	Małgorzata Dajnowicz & Adam Miodowski: Vectors of Modernity	
16.00-16.30	<i>Closing Roundtable</i>	

POSTER SESSION (24-26 September)

	Poster session
	Raffaella da Vela & Petra Amann: Cultural misunderstanding or a wholly different story?
	Naz Defne Kut: Venetian Dragomans in Constantinople
	Maria Sandali: The “other” Briseis and Andromache
	Kerasia Stratiki: S’appropriier l’“autre”
	Khoren Grigoryan: Producing the ‘other’ within
	Krzysztof Ulanowski: Encountering the Other