

Call for Papers

Politeness Crossing Times and Spaces

Workshop organised at the Collaborative Research Center (CRC) 980 “Episteme in Motion. Knowledge Transfer from the Ancient World to the Early Modern Period”, to be held at Freie Universität Berlin on 11-12 June 2018.

Workshop description

In modern-day Humanities, questions of verbal and nonverbal politeness have been explored from many different perspectives. However, the vast majority of existing studies are restricted to the synchronic analysis of relatively stable norms of polite behaviour in historical or modern speech communities, whereas changes in politeness are only rarely looked at.

With our interdisciplinary workshop “Politeness Crossing Times and Spaces” we aim at filling this void by bringing into focus the so far rather neglected dynamic nature of politeness in the pre-modern world, which can be observed on at least two levels:

On the vertical level, norms of politeness are affected by changes in society. We want to examine how different hierarchical structures of pre-modern societies and changes thereof affect the forms and functions of politeness; and how new forms of polite behaviour retroact on a society.

On the horizontal level, different concepts of politeness interact with each other in situations of cultural and linguistic contact. Contact situations not only allow for the simple transfer of patterns from one speech community to another, but also for the emergence of entirely new forms, as transfer processes always carry a certain creative potential in them.

The objective of the workshop is to shed light on these two dimensions of politeness change from an interdisciplinary perspective; we hope to address some of the following questions:

- What sources are useful for the study of historical politeness? How are these different sources interrelated and how do they interact with each other?
- Who are the agents establishing and promoting politeness? What are the respective roles of teachers, diplomats, interpreters and travellers? Do authors reflect change and variation – especially in situations of cultural contact? How do they negotiate accommodation processes in cases of conflicting norms? How do they express and substantiate their claims of validity when postulating certain norms?
- How are claims of (cultural) superiority conveyed and negotiated through politeness? In what way do, e.g., eurocentrism and orientalism already surface in pre-modern times?
- How do the transmission and dissemination of changing norms throughout society function?
- What are the actual linguistic properties of politeness that are at stake? What concrete forms are relevant?

Call for Papers

We welcome contributions from researchers in a range of disciplinary backgrounds, whose work focuses on politeness in pre-modern societies.

Papers should be 30 minutes + 15 minutes for discussions. Abstracts of max. 300 words (references excluded) can be sent to histling@zedat.fu-berlin.de. The deadline for abstract submission is **25 February 2018**. Notification of acceptance will be sent in early March 2018.

For all workshop participants, the CRC 980 will pay an appropriate travel allowance and provide accommodation and meals for the duration of the workshop.

Invited speakers

Eleanor Dickey (University of Reading)

Andreas Jucker (University of Zurich)

Dániel Z. Kádár (Hungarian Academy of Sciences & Guangdong University of Foreign Studies)

Francesco Mari (Freie Universität Berlin)

Annick Paternoster (Università della Svizzera italiana)

Kim Ridealgh (University of East Anglia)

Birgit Tremml-Werner (University of Zurich)

Organisers

Linda Gennies, Julia Hübner, Horst Simon

For more information, please contact linda.gennies@fu-berlin.de.