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OF THE SOCIETY FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIES

THE ANNUAL LECTURE
INGRID DE SMET

BRITISH SCHOOL AT ROME
PARTNERSHIP LECTURE
ANDREW HADFIELD

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

According to Henri Lefebvre, space is both a product and a means of production. Spaces are socially constructed and in turn determine the social and material exchanges that occur within them. Two features in this issue of the *Bulletin* think about varieties of spatial production. Andrew Hadfield takes a look at Rome as an imagined urban space in English Renaissance writings, a cityscape that everyone and no-one knew. And Ingrid de Smet pieces together the international political, cultural and scholarly network surrounding the first French ambassador to the Netherlands, a network that both comprised and shaped many individually significant points of social and epistolary contact. If network analysis is one current leading concern in spatial studies, the natural environment is another, as historical, cultural and critical studies seek to position humanity within a wider world. 'Between Apes and Angels' addresses this turn towards environmental history, ecocriticism and animal studies by giving us a glimpse of human-animal relations in the Renaissance.

The reports we print create their own map of the field of Renaissance studies and in this issue they show the healthy range of disciplines and topics in which scholars are working and engaging with the Society. The featured report 'Hearing the Voice, Hearing the Soul' treats the meeting of music, mind and body, while our other reports touch on science and medicine, religion and philosophy, art history, literary genre and theatrical performance. The subject of one – the Tuscan artist Piero della Francesca – was one of the great practitioners of linear perspective, a Renaissance invention that transformed our historical and artistic perception of space.

This is the last issue for one of our editors, Jo Craigwood, before she departs on maternity leave in mid-October. Matthew Woodcock, Senior Lecturer in English at the University of East Anglia, has generously agreed to serve as Acting Editor during her leave. Since Jo's stint as editor is almost at an end, we will be advertising for her permanent replacement on the editorial team in the April issue. While moving on to other adventures, work and familial, Jo will be leaving her work with the Society with some regret and many fond memories. For her, editing the *Bulletin* has been an opportunity to keep in contact with the current concerns of Renaissance studies and the wonderful people involved in running your Society. It has been a good space and a good network.

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LETTER FROM THE HONORARY CHAIR

THE RENAISSANCE was a period of recovery and revival but also of creativity. Today, educational administrators, some of whom have even read Renaissance theorists such as Guarino, Erasmus and Vives, are preoccupied with devising programmes which foster creativity. How can scholars of the Renaissance contribute to their deliberations?

One essential step is to think about how traditions work. The etymology of tradition suggests a handing on of forms, subjects and techniques from the past (in the case of the Renaissance, the very ancient past) to the present. But it may be more helpful to think of traditions as being largely constituted by their audiences and by later artists. The epic poets of the Renaissance chose Virgil and the makers of medieval romance to be their models for writing, even after the direct study of Homer could have played a much larger role. And they made that choice in the light of what they thought their patrons and readers would like to read.

In the second place one needs a receptive critical audience which will reject direct repetition and respond to new uses of comprehensible materials. Boredom can be a prompt for innovation. Artists are always implicitly critics of their predecessors but are often explicitly so as well. Vasari was a better critic than he was a painter. But he created a way of viewing the inheritance from the past and welcoming the new, where we would want to assert the value of different traditions. So creativity needs a plurality of critics and needs them to be welcoming of the new. We scholars can contribute to that criticism by explicating neglected Renaissance works.

Thirdly, creators need to learn technique. This should involve a combination of learning the forms which convey information and playing with the resources that the techniques of the art make available. Artists should be exercised in formal

drawing but should also take lines for a walk. Writers should understand the ways in which the poems, narratives and dramas of the past operate, but they should also play with language and observe the responses of their readers. Erasmus's *De copia* and Agricola's reflections on the role of thinking about the audience in planning texts and in composing narrative will do as models here.

Fourthly, there is the matter of material survival. We owe our numerous tablets of Gilgamesh to the practice of training clerks to write by copying out extracts from the poem. Without the copying of Latin manuscripts in ninth-century monasteries there would have been almost no Latin classical literature to recover. The case of Greek with its continuous literary tradition (at least up to 1453) merits separate and prolonged study. We thus need to maintain museums, libraries and repositories so that we retain the possibility of being inspired by the past.

Fifthly, creativity is stimulated by interchange between cultures and experiences. This means encouraging language learning, immigration, the purchase of foreign books and artefacts, and travel, but it also means resisting global uniformity. It mattered to the Renaissance that things seemed different in Greek, that the Greeks saw the world differently and that travellers brought objects and tales from India, Africa and America.

Patronage is the sixth of my headings. In the Renaissance, patronage was often competitive, inhering between different religious orders and cities as well as between individuals. In the modern world it may also be a matter of paying for time. For example, Elliott Carter (1908–2012) eventually earned the patronage of the great orchestras and philanthropists, but his breakthrough First String Quartet



resulted from a year in the desert in New Mexico, composing to please himself, funded by the Guggenheim foundation. The state must play a leading role but creativity also requires a variety of funding bodies and outlets for dissemination.

As a cadenza, two examples of near contemporaries whose original work relied on their understanding of the past. Dante knew everything about Florence and Italy around 1300 and had read voraciously in literature, science and philosophy. His incomparable poem is a seamless example of transforming what one inherits. Petrarch gathers together the major ideas, themes and techniques of the poetry of Provence, Sicily and the *dolce stil nuovo*. Great poet though he was, nobody would claim him as Dante's equal, and yet later poets were much more successful writing out of what Petrarch gave them.

Finally, a suggestion to ourselves. Perhaps we can foster creativity in our students by paying more attention to writing and to audience, by encouraging them to circulate their work and listen to responses, and by opening possibilities in our teaching and examining for creative projects in a range of media.

PETER MACK

SRS NEWS

Election of Vice Chair: Call for Nominations

The election of the next Vice Chair of the Society for Renaissance Studies will take place at the Annual General Meeting in May 2016. Nominations are invited for this position. The Vice Chair will be elected to serve for three years after which she or he will become Chair, in which capacity she or he will serve for three years and will not be eligible for re-election.

According to article IV of the constitution, 'after the agreement of the candidate has been obtained, each nomination, signed by six members, should reach the Secretary by no less than twenty-one days

before the Annual General Meeting'. If the election is contested, a ballot will take place at the Society's AGM in May 2016. At the meeting, ballot sheets will be distributed, votes counted and results announced before members disperse.

Nominations should reach the Secretary, Dr Paul Botley, by 31 January 2016 at the latest, at the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL. Nominations will be published in the April 2016 issue of the *SRS Bulletin*.

Prizes & Fellowships

Renaissance Studies Article Prize, 2014

We are pleased to announce that the 2014 essay prize winner is Dr Debra Blumenthal (University of California, Santa Barbara) for her article entitled 'Domestic Medicine: Slaves, Servants and Female Medical Expertise in Late Medieval Valencia', *Renaissance Studies* 28.4 (Sept 2014), 515–532.

SRS Postdoctoral Fellowships, 2015–16

Congratulations to James Cook and Róisín Watson, who have each been awarded one of this year's two Postdoctoral Fellowships. Dr Cook's project is entitled 'The Strange Disappearance of English Music'. It extends the findings of his doctoral studies on the impact of fifteenth-century English music on mainland Europe, which he completed at the University of Nottingham in 2014. Róisín Watson submitted her PhD on the Lutheran visual culture of the Duchy of Württemberg 1534–1700 at the University of St Andrews in 2015. Her Fellowship project addresses the relationship between the space of the church, its decoration and the administration of charity in early modern Lutheran Germany. Both

Fellowship reports will appear in the April 2017 issue of the *Bulletin*.

SRS Study Fellowships, 2015–16

This year's Study Fellowships have been awarded to Jamie Cumby (St Andrews), for her research into the book trade in sixteenth-century Lyon; Giacomo Giudici (Birkbeck), who is working on the Sforza Chancery archive; and Katarzyna Kosior (Southampton), to support her work on queenship in sixteenth-century Poland. Their reports will feature in the October 2016 *Bulletin*.

SRS 7th Biennial Conference

The Society's 7th Biennial conference will take place at the University of Glasgow 18–20 July 2016.

The themes of the conference are: Anachronisms; Imaging the Nation; Beasts; Conflict and Resolution; Reformations and Recusants; and Word and Image. The conference will also feature an open strand for papers which engage with themes other than those suggested. Plenary lectures will be given by Neil Rhodes (St Andrews), Willy Maley (Glasgow), and Evelyn Welch (KCL).

FUNDING & PRIZES

The Society funds a number of initiatives to support scholarship within the field of Renaissance Studies including:

- Postdoctoral Fellowships
- Study Fellowships to assist doctoral students undertaking research visits
- Grants for conference organisers
- A biennial book prize
- The *Renaissance Studies* Article Prize
- An undergraduate essay prize
- A bursary scheme to promote research by curators, librarians and archivists in museums, libraries and archives in the UK and Ireland

Details of how to apply for these schemes will be advertised in this section of the *Bulletin* when the competitions open. For further information, please also see the Society's website: <http://www.rensoc.org.uk/>

Further details (full programme, registrations forms and information about accommodation) will be posted on the SRS website as they become available. The Society is particularly keen to encourage postgraduates to offer papers, and we will be able to offer bursaries to cover travel, registration and accommodation.

If you have any queries, please contact the conference organisers, Mr Andrew Bradburn and Dr Tom Nichols, via the email address arts-rensoc2016@glasgow.ac.uk.

Politics, Letters and Religion: The Networks of Paul Choart de Buzanval

INGRID DE SMET

‘IN BUZANVAL’S COMPANY, one cannot but rub shoulders with the muses’, wrote the Leiden professor Joseph Scaliger to Isaac Casaubon in 1605. The warm friendship that these two scholars shared with Paul Choart de Buzanval (1551–1607), the first French ambassador to the Netherlands, has long been common knowledge. Yet, in spite of a rich and varied body of source material, intellectual historians continue to focus more on Buzanval’s contemporaries than on the man himself. My Annual Lecture examined how Buzanval developed into a figure of not just political but also of cultural mediation, and how he became the linchpin in a European network that encompassed political figures as well as scholars and merchants.

Paul Choart, ‘sieur de Granchamp et de La Grange-le-Roi’, was born in Paris in 1551, into a family with links both to the magistracy and the military, and very probably also with strong Protestant leanings. In 1568, aged seventeen, Paul matriculated at Heidelberg University, where he met well-known Huguenots such as Philippe Canaye de Fresnes, the more mature Jean-Jacques Boissard, and Philippe Du Plessis-Mornay. Buzanval’s Dutch contemporaries at Heidelberg included none other than the future statesman Johannes van Oldenbarnevelt. In 1572, however, the St Bartholomew’s Day massacres drove Buzanval along with other French Protestant students to Basle. The antiquarian Boissard followed suit in 1573; a liminary epigram by Buzanval in Boissard’s *Poemata* (Basle, 1574), as well as a further exchange of epigrams and a verse epistle addressed to him by Boissard testify to their friendship. Nevertheless, the Swiss university town still did not provide a safe harbour, and in 1574 Buzanval moved to Geneva.



Figure 1: Buzanval’s epitaph in Aernout van Buchel (1565–1641), *Inscriptiones monumentaque in templis et monasteriis Belgicis inventa* (Utrecht, University Library, Ms. 1648, fol. 46r). Image reproduced by courtesy of Utrecht University Library.

It is unclear how Buzanval earned his living over the next seven years, but his sojourn in Heidelberg, Basle and Geneva proved formative – it not

only consolidated Choart’s confessional identity, but also equipped him with contacts who would shape and facilitate his



Figure 2: Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655), *Silius Italicus: De secundo bello Punico* (1600), with dedicatory inscription to Buzanval. Image: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

later career. Buzanval notably first met Scaliger at Geneva but after a short period of fairly close acquaintance, the two men lost touch, until they would renew their friendship in Holland. Boissard's poetic letter to Buzanval, on the other hand, suggests an association with the protestant Matthieu Coignet III, sieur de La Thuilerie, former French ambassador to the Swiss cantons (or perhaps with his son, also named Matthieu [IV]). Certainly, a long Latin poem with the initials P. C. appears in Coignet's *Instruction aux Princes pour garder la foy promise* (Paris, 1584). Meanwhile, in August 1581, 'M. de Buzanval' is mentioned as a messenger, bearing a letter from the Duke of Anjou – then laying siege to Cambrai – to the Prince of Orange, and subsequently acting as a

spokesperson for Anjou with the Dutch States General. In 1583, however, Du Plessis-Mornay called Buzanval to the service of Henri de Navarre, for whom he carried letters and messages to Middelburg and the Palatine, to Henri's spouse Marguerite, as well as to the Princesse de Condé, and Catherine de' Medici. Tasked with couriating a letter on Navarre's behalf to the authorities in Geneva, he entered his name in the *album amicorum* of Jean Durant. Accordingly, in 1583 and 1585, Buzanval is listed in Navarre's accounts as a 'gentilhomme ordinaire de la chambre du roi'. From the summer of 1587 to 1589, Buzanval acted as Navarre's envoy to the Royal court of England, where he gained the confidence of Sir Francis Walsingham and delivered Henri's

urgent request for continued English support for the French protestant cause to the Earl of Leicester: 'I beg you to believe [Buzanval] as you would myself', wrote Navarre in his letter of presentation. Back in France, whilst at dinner with Du Plessis-Mornay during the Siege of Paris (1590), however, Buzanval committed a faux pas by ridiculing the English queen's pronunciation of French. The irreverent remarks were reported to Elizabeth, who bore a grudge against both the mocker and his host, and refused to accept Buzanval as an official ambassador when Navarre, now Henri IV of France, planned to send him back to England.

Thankfully, a new, defining chapter in Buzanval's career began in that same year, when Henri IV decided to dispatch him to the Dutch States

General. Initially, Louise de Coligny, the French widow of William of Orange (figure 3), was unimpressed by Buzanval's demeanour as an envoy, but unlike Elizabeth, she later changed her mind. From 1591 onwards Buzanval became a regular presence in The Hague, although it was not until the spring of 1592 that he was officially appointed as the French king's permanent ambassador there – a function he would fulfil for the next fourteen years, to the satisfaction of both nations. Everything suggests that Buzanval took his duties of representation seriously; for this reason he apparently 'never attended weddings, funerals, public or ceremonial assemblies, did not wear mourning attire, and did not even sit next to Count Maurice at religious services but had a separate seat'. This deliberate distance did not offend the Dutch States General, which on at least three occasions (in 1598, 1600 and 1601) regaled the French envoy with a gold chain and/or medallions as a token of their respect.

Buzanval's presence in the Low Countries was not quite as continuous as we are sometimes led to believe. His correspondence and other sources show that he made several journeys back to France, taking written and oral messages back and forth. In March 1598, for instance, Buzanval accompanied Dutch emissaries to France: the deputation, led by Oldenbarnevelt and Justin of Nassau, included the promising young scholar Hugo Grotius. The *Scaligerana* allude to another of Buzanval's trips, undertaken without furlough: 'ambassadors are slaves', commented the savant, 'they dare not leave unless they are recalled'. In effect, in 1602, the Papal Nuncio in France urged Henry IV to recall his envoy to the Dutch Republic and to dismiss the Dutch emissary from the French court, but the king refused to comply. Buzanval's posting in The Hague thus took on an emphatic, Gallican dimension. Tellingly, Jean Hotman de Villiers insisted in his treatise *L'Ambassadeur* (1603) on the common-sensical but nonetheless delicate point that a diplomat's religious beliefs should be acceptable

to the confessional environment of his mission.

Stating health reasons, Buzanval apparently took his final leave from the States General in November 1606, receiving a generous pension. Already in April 1607, however, Henri IV sent Buzanval back to Holland for six months to aid his envoys Pierre Jeannin and Elie de La Place, sieur de Russy, in their negotiations of a peace treaty between the Dutch Republic and Spain. Buzanval, however, suffered a fatal asthma attack and died on 31 August 1607 (O.S.), aged 56; he received the highly unusual honour for a foreign ambassador of a state funeral in his host country. His remains were buried in the Great Church (St James) in The Hague, where his (still extant) epitaph became a point of note for visitors. Grotius expressed his own lament on Buzanval's passing in a Latin *prosopopoeia*, in which Buzanval's ghost pleads with the King of France not to let Spain trample over his grave in his second fatherland, the newly-fledged Dutch Republic. Thus Paul Choart de Buzanval remained even in death an almost symbolic figure of early modern diplomacy, true to the personal motto – adapted from Juvenal's *Satires* VIII.84 – which he inscribed, very simply, in three Dutch *alba amicorum*: 'Nec propter vitam vivendi perdere causas' ('No, not for the sake of life lose that for which one lives').

Buzanval's early correspondence suggests he was involved in a close-knit network of Huguenot intelligence gatherers, and that he himself passed on (authorized) French intelligence, notably to Walsingham. The bulk of his surviving papers, however, relate to his embassy in The Hague. His frequent and lengthy reports to Secretary of State Nicolas de Villeroy have been partially published. They concern the comings and goings of other envoys, military developments, and reflections on the motivations behind political decisions, but also betray an interest in shipping and the merchant navy. In Holland, Buzanval also continued to receive letters directly from the French King, Henri IV; some of these were (partially) encrypted, but others were destined for the States General or had the

status of 'open letters'. One such letter, on the fall of Amiens, even made it into print. Further political correspondents in this period included emissaries, such as Christophe de Harlay, comte de Beaumont, and Jean de Thuméry sieur de Boissise, French ambassadors to England, or Antoine Lefèvre de la Boderie and Mathieu Brûlart de Berny, French envoys at Brussels.

The eighty surviving letters that Buzanval sent between 1595 and 1599 to the Leiden merchant Daniel van der Meulen (died 1600) are particularly illuminating of the day-to-day business of handling a brisk, informative correspondence over a short distance, but with a much further reaching hinterland and network, that included (amongst others) Jacques Bongars, the French envoy in Germany. For all their practicality, the tone of the eighty letters betrays a certain warmth and, increasingly also, trust between the two men.

Posted in Holland, Buzanval understandably remained an important contact for Du Plessis-Mornay. He also kept in touch – though not quite as regularly – with his former fellow-student Canaye de Fresnes, stationed in Germany and later (following his conversion) in Venice, the republic that served as a model for the emerging state of the United Provinces.

Unsurprisingly, Buzanval's residence on the Kneuterdijk in The Hague, which he shared with the English envoy, saw a steady stream of callers. Entertaining or aiding them put pressure on his resources, leading Buzanval to complain of his impecunious state to Villeroy (17 September 1600). Nonetheless, the ambassador's entertainment and his exchanges of foodstuffs (for example with Scaliger and Van der Meulen) were unquestionably a good investment and allowed Buzanval to cultivate new sources. In 1601, for example, one of Scaliger's less known pupils, the Rochelais Jacques Esprinard, sieur du Plomb (1573–1604), sent him 'deux grands discours de nouvelles' from Paris.

Private, commercial and scholarly matters were thus inevitably mixed in



Figure 3: Louise de Coligny (1555–1620). Engraving by Jan de Visscher (circa 1636–1692?), circa 1677.

with the politicking and hunt for intelligence. While in England, Buzanval prevailed on Walsingham to help others obtain a passport or an *imprimatur*, a practice that he continued during his years in Holland, when he seems to have found the time and social contacts to foster an image of himself as a ‘cultural ambassador’. His university education and mastery of Latin stood him in good stead in his dealings with the learned members of the Republic of Letters, such as the Utrecht physician Johannes Heurnius. Buzanval not only influenced the appointment of the protestant theologian and polemicist Pierre du Moulin as a professor of rhetoric at Leiden, but he was also instrumental in Scaliger’s recruitment to the Leiden academy.

Buzanval remained an avid reader throughout his life and must have built up a respectable collection of books. It is well known that Scaliger and he discussed Greek texts during their mutual visits; Buzanval may even have intended to bequeath part of his library to the scholar. In return, Buzanval frequently acted as a *porteur de livres*, receiving and distributing newly printed works by his erudite friends in France, such as Du Plessis-Mornay and Isaac Casaubon, and handling requests of books and other materials from Casaubon, Jacques Auguste de Thou and Christophe Dupuy on behalf of Scaliger and his pupil Daniel Heinsius. The ambassador’s own curiosity also stretched to numismatics and botany, another area of humanistic enquiry which

elicited much amateur attention at the time.

Predictably, Buzanval found himself, quite soon after his arrival in Holland, the recipient of book dedications and complimentary copies. The gifts came especially from among Scaliger’s young friends and students, such as Janus Dousa the Younger and his brother, Francis, as well as Grotius. The presentation copy of Heinsius’ *Silius Italicus* edition (1600), with an eye-catching, autograph Latin dedication, is now at Yale University Library (figure 2); the binding is stamped ‘P. S.’, reflecting the quaint spelling of Choart’s name as Schouart or Schouartius.

Buzanval emerges from all this as an important intermediary, operating between France, England, Germany, Switzerland and the Low Countries, as well as Italy and even Sweden. His education and his progression from a relatively modest background in the Parisian robe to one of Henri IV’s most trusted envoys exemplify many of the qualities that Jean Hotman de Villiers thought either necessary or highly desirable in an early modern ambassador. The information that flowed to and from Buzanval’s quarters in The Hague undoubtedly helped shape French politics vis-à-vis the Protestant states. But in the opening years of the seventeenth century, Buzanval also turns into a figurehead of the Huguenot exiled community: the prominent place which Buzanval occupied in the Franco-Dutch network of Casaubon, Scaliger, Baudius, the Dousa family, and Scaliger’s pupils Heinsius and Grotius, is evinced by the fact that in their letters they often referred to him not by name but simply as *Amplissimus* or *Optimus Legatus*, ‘the Eminent Ambassador’, as if Buzanval needed no further introduction.

Ingrid De Smet FBA is Professor of French and Neo-Latin Studies in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Warwick. She is Director of Warwick’s Centre for the Study of the Renaissance. She delivered the Society’s 2015 Annual Lecture at the Warburg Institute on 1 May following the Society’s AGM. This essay is an abridged version.

Renaissance England's View of Rome

ANDREW HADFIELD



Georg Braun (1541–1622) and Frans Hogenberg (1535–1590), Map of Rome from *Civitates orbis terrarum* (1572–1618). Image: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

BETWEEN SIR THOMAS WYATT'S 1527 visit, as part of Sir John Russell's diplomatic mission to try to persuade Pope Clement VII to annul the marriage of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, and the young John Milton's expedition in the autumn of 1638, very few English writers travelled to Rome. Anthony Munday (1560–1633), the prolific playwright, pamphleteer, translator, controversialist, double-agent and internationally renowned liar, certainly stayed in Rome from February to May 1579, as he wrote about his experiences in *The English Roman Life* (1582), but does he count as a major writer? And, of course, travel writers such as Fynes Moryson, George Sandys and William Lithgow left accounts of their visits to Rome, the most important of which was that of William Thomas, the mid-

sixteenth-century historian of Italy, who influenced everyone who came after him.

Rome loomed large in the English literary and cultural imagination, but not many people saw it first-hand. Rather, it existed as an imagined urban space, a cityscape that everyone and no-one knew, that provided a powerful image of what an ancient and modern city might look like. Of course, as modern theorists of the city after Lewis Mumford constantly remind us, our understanding of the great cities of the world is inevitably fictional, even if we happen to live in these cities. What really matter are 'urban imaginaries', images of cities that determine how we think of them as they are and in relation to other major cities. There can be no safe distinction between the factual and

the fictional in anyone's imagination of the city. As Andreas Huyssen, following Calvino, has stated, 'no real city can ever be grasped in its present or past totality by any single person'. The travelogue is just that, never a substitute for knowledge, which always makes the eyewitness account a problematic and vulnerable piece of evidence or testimony.

If that is true now when so many people travel, imagine how much more blurred the line was between fact and fiction, or a truthful account or image and an unsafe mechanical reproduction in times when virtually no one travelled, not even curious intellectuals. The imagined city assumes a far greater importance than its pale real imitation. Theories of urban space and the imagined cityscape have not had as much of an influence on our thinking about the

Renaissance and its understanding of cities as it might have done. In the end, does it matter which Englishmen actually went to Rome? We might want to ask what does one really learn from seeing a place anyway? How much local knowledge can one have? Do people copy accounts or do they actually need to see places for themselves?

In essence, there were two Romes, ancient and modern. Ancient Rome is easier to deal with and was frequently represented in English literature, art and pageants. This Rome was the city of Stoics, the dramatic beginning and end of its long republican period appealing to a wealth of writers, politicians and artists for a host of reasons. Shakespeare staged *Julius Caesar* in 1599, reflecting on the chaos that a change of dynasty could bring as the end of the century and the Elizabethan Age approached. James I, as numerous commentators have pointed out, identified with Augustus, the first emperor who brought peace after years of chaos and strife. The history was the same

even if the politics may have been different. Ben Jonson staged plays on failed conspiracies, *Sejanus* and *Catiline*, reflecting on the Essex conspiracy and the Gunpowder Plot; a sign that, whatever he was actually trying to do, the comparison between modern England and ancient Rome was part of the intellectual furniture.

The less developed comparison is that between London and modern Rome. Rome was notorious in sixteenth-century Europe as a city of ruins – as Edmund Spenser, translating Joachim Du Bellay, laments in his *Ruines of Rome*: ‘The corpes of Rome in ashes is entombed’ (V. 8). It developed spectacularly from the start of the sixteenth century to the seventeenth – as indeed did London, which probably more than quadrupled in size in the same period. The difference was that London developed through an influx of immigrants, becoming ever more crowded and squalid, a high birth rate making up for a massive death rate. Rome, in contrast, was already a

large city, it just lacked a large population, as the rest of Europe noticed. The problem was exacerbated by its being sacked by imperial troops in 1527 (the year Wyatt visited), immediately following which its population declined further.

The most significant eye-witness account of Rome by an English traveller emphasizes its ruin, destruction and fallen splendour. William Thomas (died 1554) was the first English historian of Italy. His account was based both on his travels there (1544–49) and Italian histories, such as that of Francesco Guicciardini; he also produced the first Anglo-Italian dictionary. Thomas’s work was widely read and shaped English perceptions of Italy until well into the seventeenth century. Thomas’s hopes that his work would have a significant impact on English government were cut short by the premature death of Edward VI in 1553, to whom he had become an unofficial mentor, and he was subsequently executed by the new Catholic English queen Mary I



Étienne du Pérac (circa 1525–1604), ‘Part of the Palatine facing towards the Forum’, from *I vestigi dell’ antichita di Roma* (1575; Rome, 1773). Image: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

for his part in the uprising led by Sir Thomas Wyatt the Younger, the son of the only major English writer to visit Rome in the sixteenth century.

Thomas's description of Rome sounds more like something out of 'Roma, Citta Aperta' than an encounter with the Eternal City:

Because that amongst al the citees of the worlde none hath been more famous than [Rome], I disposed my selfe to goe thither. But whan I came there, and behelde the wonderfull maiestee of buildynges that the onely rootes therof doe yet represent, the huge temples, the infinite great palaces, the vnmeasurable pillers, moste parte of one peece, fine marble, and well wrought, the goodly arches of triumphe, the baines, the conductes of water, the images as well of brasse as of marble, the Obeliskes, and a noubre of other lyke thynges, not to be founde againe thoroughout an whole worlde: imaginyng withall, what maiestee the citee myghte be of, whan all these thynges flourished.

Than didde it greeue me to see the onelie iewell, myrirour, maistres, and beautie of this worlde, that neuer had hir lyke, nor (as I thynke) neuer shall, lie so desolate and disfigured, that there is no

lamentable case to be harde, or lothesome thyng to be seen, that maie be compared to a small parte of it.

Neuerthelesse whan I remembred againe the occasions, wherof these gloriouse thynges haue growen, what noubres of warres the Romaynes haue mainteyned, with infinite bloudsheddyng, destructions of whole countreys, rauishmentes of chast women, sacke, spoyle, tributes, oppression of common welthes, and a thousande other tyrannies, without the whiche the Romaines could neuer haue achieved the perfection of so many wonders as mine eye dyd there beholde: Than perceiued I, howe iust the iudgement of god is, that hath made those antiquitees to remayne as a foule spoyle of the Romaine pride, and for a witnesse to the worldes ende of their tyranny.

(*The History of Italy* (1549))

There is much that could be said about this extraordinary passage, but what I'd like to register now is that this is how most English readers would have first encountered Rome. Thomas uses his rhetorical skills to enable his readers to understand how he felt when he first saw the ruined

city so that they can see Rome in the same way that he first did. The second point is how closely this resembles descriptions made of Rome by those who never actually visited the city, again illustrating the power of the Roman imaginary. Thomas certainly has every confidence that his description can stand in for a real encounter, and that what he understood could be reproduced easily enough.

For travellers and readers alike, Rome was a city of startling contrasts, extraordinary beauty juxtaposed with fierce cruelty, the traveller's desire to admire the sights compromised by the need for secrecy. In his fictional account, Thomas Nashe sees Rome as a place of beauty and death. Nashe's antihero, Jack Wilton, waxes lyrical about the wonderful gardens he encounters in Rome:

I saw a summer banketting house belonging to a marchant, that was the meruaile of the worlde, & could not be matcht except God should make another paradise. It was builte rounde of greene



Étienne du Pérac (circa 1525-1604), 'Remains of part of the Capitoline', from *I vestigi dell' antichita di Roma* (1575; Rome, 1773). Image: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

marble, like a Theater without, within there was a heauen and earth comprehended both vnder one rooffe, the heauen was a cleere ouerhanging vault of christall, wherein the Sunne and Moone, and each visible Starre had his true similitude, shine, scituation, and motion, and by what enwrapped arte I cannot conceiue, these spheares in their proper orbes obserued their circular wheelings and turnings, making a certaine kinde of soft angelical murmuring musicke in their often windings & going about, which musick the philosophers say in the true heauen by reason of the grosenes of our senses we are not capable of. For the earth it was counterfeited in that likenes that Adam lorded out it before his fall.

(*The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594))

Rome is replete with astonishing beauty that appears to undo the Fall itself.

But, as is ever the way with Nashe, things are not quite what they seem. The passage is, I think, a parody of Sir Philip Sidney's famous comments about poetry overcoming nature and enabling us to return to heaven by creating a golden world:

Nature never set foorth the earth in so rich Tapistry as diverse Poets have done, neither with so pleasaunt rivers, fruitfull trees, sweete smelling flowers, nor whatsoever els may make the too much loved earth more lovely: her world is brasen, the Poets only deliver a golden. [...] Neither let it be deemed too sawcy a comparison, to ballance the highest point of mans wit, with the efficacie of nature: but rather give right honor to the heavenly maker of that maker [...] set him beyond and over all the workes of that second nature, which in nothing he sheweth so much as in Poetry; when with the force of a divine breath, he bringeth things foorth surpassing her doings: with no small arguments to the incredulous of that first accursed fall of Adam, since our erected wit maketh us know what perfection is, and yet our infected wil keepeth us from reaching unto it.

(*Defence of Poesie* (1595))

Sidney's tract was not published until 1595, but Nashe had written the preface to a pirated edition of Sidney's sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, in 1591, so would have had more opportunity than most to access Sidney's treatise, which was circulating widely in manuscript.

Sidney also wrote about the poet being the greatest truth-teller because 'though he recount things not true, yet because he telleth them not for true, he lieth not', so Nashe is playing with Sidney's proposition, and inventing something that may be true – but undoubtedly isn't. And we know that Wilton is a great liar and thinks about what a lie might be.

But it is not long before Wilton's time in Rome turns much uglier with an outbreak of the plague. Nashe is referring to a real epidemic of 1522 that had a terrible impact (Nashe's chronology in *The Unfortunate Traveller* does not quite work, as it opened with Jack taking part in Henry VIII's campaign in France, which took place in 1523). We move rapidly from the beauties of the summer house to the horror of summer plague:

So it fell out, that it being a vehement hot summer when I was a sojourner there, there entred such a hotspurd plague as hath not been heard of: why it was but a word and a blow, Lord haue mercie vpon vs, and he was gone. Within three quarters of a yere in that one citie there dyed of it a hundred thousand: Looke in Lanquets Chronicle and you shall finde it. To smell of a nosegay, that was poysond: and turne your nose to a house, that had the plague, it was all one. The clouds like a number of cormorants, that keepe their corne till it stinke and is mustie, kept in their stinking exhalations, till they had almost stifled all Romes inhabitants. Phisitions, greedines of golde made them greedie of their destinie.

Nature returns with a vengeance to decimate Rome and the precious metals that had enabled man to supersede the beauties of the natural world are now handed over to unscrupulous – and unsuccessful – doctors.

Jack provides us with the sort of horrifying details that authenticate accounts of such catastrophic epidemics:

One graue was the sepulcher of seuenscore, one bed was the altar whereon whole families were offered. [...]. Some died sitting at their meate, others as they were asking counsell of the phisition for their friendes. I saw at the house where I was hosted, a maide bring

her master warme broth for to comfort him, and she sinke downe dead her self ere he had halfe eate it vp.

Of course, like traveller's tales, such details can just as easily be made up or appropriated as based on the observations of an eye-witness. Indeed, one hears echoes of the plague account that opens Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

But what Jack sees here probably had been witnessed by Nashe. London was subject to frequent outbreaks of the plague, one of which had occurred in the summer of 1592. Nashe had undoubtedly seen many examples of houses boarded up to keep the victims from spreading the disease with the words 'Lord Have Mercy Upon Us' written as a desperate warning. His play, *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, probably performed in early autumn of that year, makes use of these words as a refrain in Nashe's most famous poem, usually called 'A Litany in Time of Plague':

Beauty is but a flower
Which wrinkles will devour;
Brightness falls from the air;
Queens have died young and fair;
Dust hath closed Helen's eye
I am sick, I must die.
Lord, have mercy on us!

The two works are linked through their plague references. Nashe, I suggest, is carefully connecting London and Rome and he later quibbles on the river Tiber and Tyburn, the site of the London gallows from 1196 to 1783, inviting his readers to think about these imagined cityscapes together. Rome was the arrogant ruined city that veered between outrageous success and terrible disaster. It was also uncomfortably close to home.

Andrew Hadfield is Professor of English at the University of Sussex and Vice Chair of the SRS. He delivered the Society for Renaissance Studies – British School at Rome Partnership Lecture on which this article is based on 10 December 2014. It was entitled 'Renaissance England's Representations of Rome'.

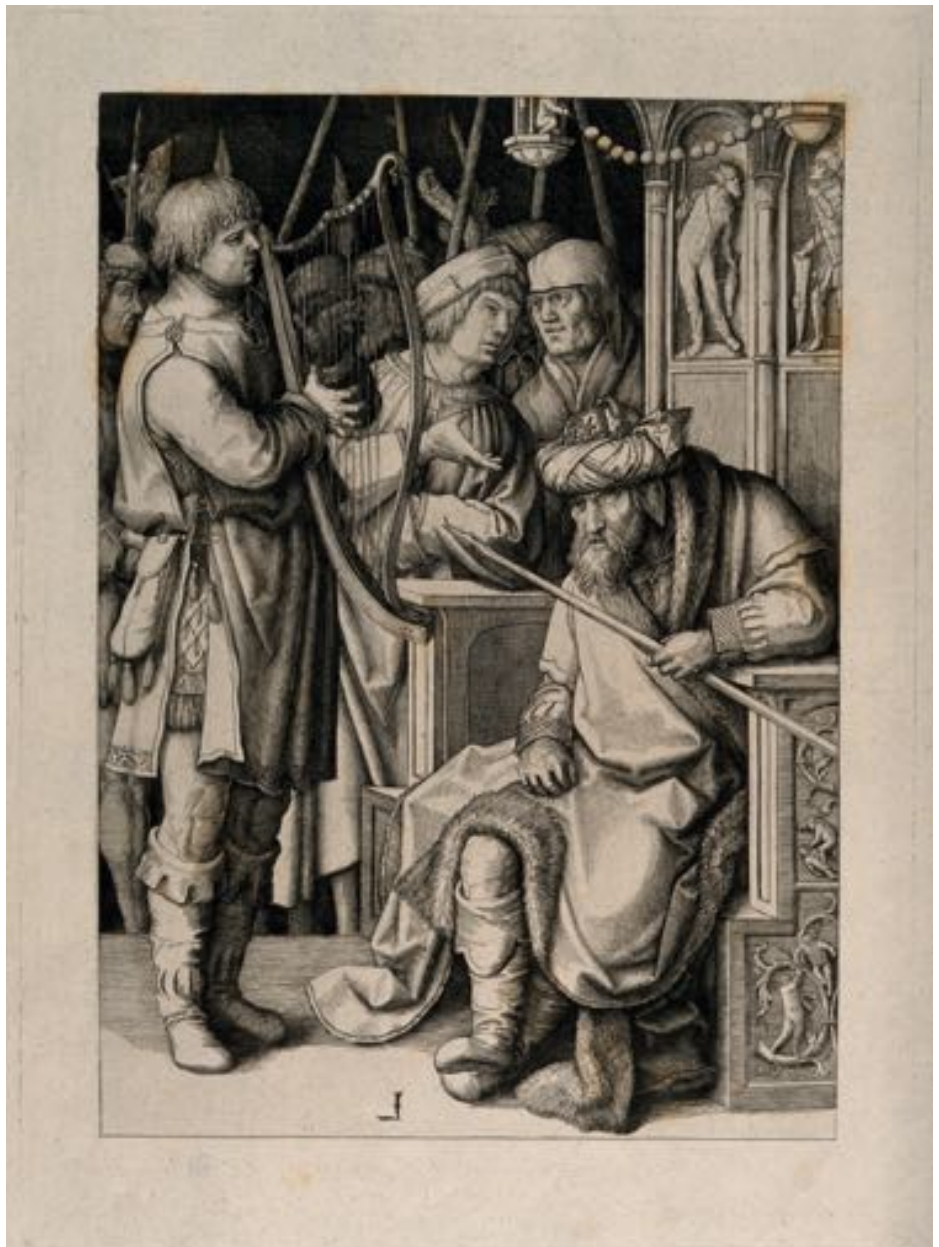
CONFERENCE REPORTS

Hearing the Voice, Hearing the Soul

JACOMIEN PRINS

THE IDEA for ‘Hearing the Voice, Hearing the Soul’ – a symposium which took place on 5 June at Warwick University and brought together delegates from the disciplines of classics, history of philosophy, music, literature, medicine and psychology as well as musicians – emerged out of my research project on music, health and happiness in Renaissance learning. Many philosophers, humanists and music theorists of the European Renaissance experienced difficulty in writing about the power of music because they found themselves caught in the Plato-Aristotle controversy, as Giuseppe Gerbino (Columbia University) explained during the symposium. They had to make a choice between two radically different theories of the constitution of the human soul: one originating in Plato’s *Timaeus*, which stated that music has a great influence on the human soul because they are similar, and one originating in Aristotle’s *De Anima*, which did not postulate any special relationship between music and the soul. Privileging one philosophical model over the other brought about entirely different beliefs about the nature of music, what it does, and what it should do.

The body of musical doctrine that grew around these two sources, combined with Christian medical and philosophical ideas about music and the soul, was highly influential until the beginning of the seventeenth century. This corpus united theories of music with ideas about the song of the soul and musical practices. It shaped perceptions of music as an embodiment of two worlds, one accessible to the senses, the other – whether internal or external – not. Yet by the beginning of the eighteenth century, to learn about music’s power meant turning not to ancient sources and their reception, but to works on the soul such as René Descartes’ *Passions of the Soul* (1649) and Thomas Hobbes’ *Human Nature*



David playing his harp for a disgruntled Saul in front of a crowd of courtiers and soldiers. Engraving after Lucas van Leyden, 1508. Image: Wellcome Library, London.

(1650). Although still steeped in humanist culture, writers now made musical experience and practice their starting point, not the authority of ancient and Christian doctrine.

I invited some of the leading experts in the field to the symposium, who put the specific historical and geographical settings of my own project into a wider perspective. They were asked to track and interrogate the nature, life span and eventual

radical transformation of ancient, medieval and Renaissance beliefs about music’s deep connections with human life. In so doing, they made the symposium a platform for asking why music has fascinated scholars in the Western world continuously for thousands of years, discussing both continuities and changes in scholarly explanations of its power.

Three themes emerged as particularly prominent and promising.



Apollo, Orpheus and Linus playing instruments on horseback. From Johannes Oettinger, *Warhafftige historische Beschreibung* (Stuttgart, 1610). Image: Yale Collection of German Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The first of these was that from antiquity onwards a strong humanistic tradition existed, in which music was conceived as no mere ordered sound, but as something which has a significant psychic, intellectual, emotional and social dimension. Yet given the non-representational character of music, we share the difficulties of Renaissance and early modern humanistic scholars in establishing how music and the inner world of man are connected. The second was the important role that new scientific and musical ideas and practices played in conditioning conceptions of the power of music in different historical and geographical contexts. And the third, the divergence within different historical periods in the use of vocabulary, and within different scholarly disciplines in methodological approaches.

Surveying the views on music and the soul found in Plato and Aristotle, Anne Sheppard (Royal Holloway) argued that the way in which the Neoplatonists of late antiquity combined Platonic and Aristotelian

theories paved the way for developments in the Renaissance and later. Wolfgang Fuhrmann (Humboldt University of Berlin) picked up on the comparable creative reception of the Ancient Greek doctrine of musical ethos, which attributed specific powers to specific musical modes. For example, the ancient 'Phrygian mode', which had been associated with negative mood, experienced a revaluation with the emergence of polyphonic music, leading to a new appreciation of a tonality ending in E within sacred music.

Next to the idea of music's ethical power to affect man's soul, the other vital musical concept handed down from the ancient world was the presence of harmony in the cosmos. This idea shaped the historical perception of music as an embodiment of a world that is inaccessible to the senses. In my paper I showed how two important Italian Renaissance scholars of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries used two entirely different interpretations of this elusive 'music of the spheres'

– from perfect harmony to sheer cacophony – to address physical and mental disease and the fear of death. Complementing this chapter in the history of the Western reception of ancient ideas about the healing power of music, Peregrine Horden (Royal Holloway) argued that theorizing music therapy in the Islamic Middle East appears a long continuous tradition because of its historical dependence on a few key early texts. However, that impression conceals a great deal: not only the lack of historical evidence for the practical realization of the theories, but also important differences between the contexts in which ideas about music therapy surfaced. Turning back to Western ideas about music therapy inspired by ancient musical doctrine, Andrea Korenjak (Austrian Academy of Sciences) opened the doors of a nineteenth-century Viennese asylum run by psychiatrists with a humanistic education. Music was integrated into the daily life of its wealthy patients as a means of promoting psychic health

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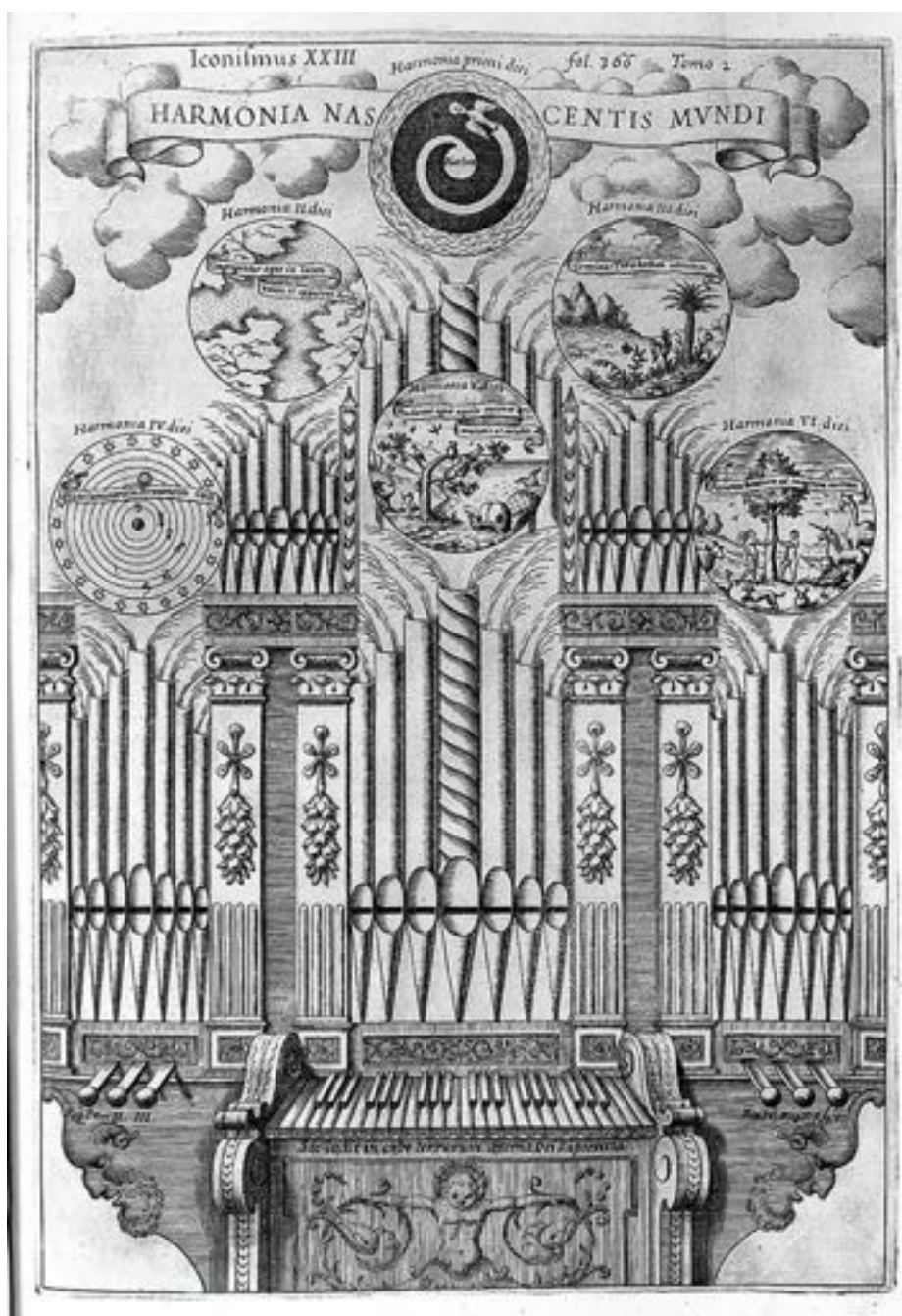
through treatment of the so-called *Gemüt* ('soul', 'heart' or 'mood'). The route to inner peace was tempering the soul with appropriate music.

In sixteenth-century England – as Katherine Butler (Oxford) observed – music was regarded as a remedy against evil spirits, with the biblical story of David playing the harp to drive away Saul's evil spirit cited as evidence. Contemporary explanations of music's anti-demonic powers relied on parallels between harmony and the divine order, but there were sceptics who wondered whether it really had been David's playing that worked Saul's cure. By the seventeenth century, the meta-physical powers of harmony were beginning to lose their explanatory force. Yet in his study of George Herbert (1593–1633) and song and suffering, Simon Jackson (Warwick) once again evoked the synthesis of classical and Christian concepts in the history of musical thought: these informed innovative ideas about the relationship between music, the body and the self in Herbert's poetry. Indeed, classical musical doctrine continued to influence Enlightenment theories of musical affect, as Tomas McAuley (Cambridge) argued. According to these theories, the purpose of music is to move its listeners to their physical and moral betterment, in a continuity with Renaissance thought often overlooked in secondary literature on the Enlightenment dominated by light and sight not sound.

Distant echoes of Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines can also be heard in modern theories about silence, the unsayable and the speechlessness of music. Yet whether the ancient 'music of the spheres' and the modern 'unsayable' have anything to do with each other is difficult, perhaps even impossible, to establish, as Julian Johnson (Royal Holloway) pointed out: these very terms acknowledge the non-representational character of music. Our Renaissance investigations of the reception of ancient ideas of music and the soul rest on the shoulders of such scholarly giants as D. P. Walker, who pioneered work in the interdisciplinary field of the history of music and philosophy. Penelope

Gouk (Manchester) argued that Walker's portrayal of Renaissance musical culture can also provide a starting-point for rethinking later historical engagements with world harmony and musical ethos, even at a time when these musical doctrines were supposed to have declined in influence. Her suggestions, together with all those offered by the around 40 participants of the symposium, will structure the programme for the international conference 'Music and Humanism', which will take place in the University of Warwick's Palazzo Papafava in Venice, 2–4 June 2016.

Dr Jacomien Prins is Global Research Fellow at the University of Warwick's Institute of Advanced Study (IAS) and Centre for the Study of the Renaissance (CSR). She is currently writing a book entitled 'A well-tempered life': Music, Health and Happiness in Renaissance Learning. Hearing the Voice, Hearing the Soul was supported by the SRS, the Royal Music Association, and the IAS, CSR and Humanities Research Centre at the University of Warwick. See: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/about_us/centrestaff/researchfellows/prins/hearingsymposium



Organ of world harmony. From Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia universalis* (Rome, 1650). Image: Wellcome Library, London.

Between Apes and Angels

SARAH COCKRAM AND ANDREW WELLS



Pieter van der Heyden, *Big Fish Eat Little Fish*, an engraving after a drawing by Pieter Bruegel the Elder, 1557. Copyright Trustees of the British Museum, London.

SCHOLARS of the Renaissance need not usually look far to find the animal in their work. Our research materials – even if not always bound in leather, inscribed on calfskin, or painted with squirrel-fur brushes – are packed with evidence of the proximity of Renaissance men and women to the natural world, whether encountered in the forest, the field, the barn, the street or under the study chair. When attended to, the ubiquitous creatures of the past shed new light on human history, indeed on what humanity might have meant, or might mean. We can ask what it is to live alongside non-human animals in the past and the present, and what it might mean for the animal to live with us.

With these tantalising possibilities,

historical animal studies has proven to be a remarkable growth area in recent years, and with it has come a renewed focus on questions concerning humanity, animality, society, culture, and nature. Since early works in the field, such as Clarence Glacken's *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (1967) or Keith Thomas's *Man and the Natural World* (1983), attitudes to animals have been interpreted as reflecting as well as constituting social, cultural, and intellectual currents. More recent work, at the hands of such diverse scholars as Erica Fudge, Virginia deJohn Anderson, Mary Fissell, Harriet Ritvo, and Donna Haraway, has expanded this range of perspectives into intellectual, philosophical, cultural, biological,

social, medical and technological spheres, and this shows little sign of slowing down.

The valuable, but potentially unidirectional, analysis of human attitudes to their fellow subjects in the animal kingdom is giving way to a richer and more nuanced understanding of the range of relationships between the two. The many illuminating studies of animals as symbols of the human or supernatural are increasingly complemented by work on the interaction between real animals and people, as well as analysis of interaction between different species of non-human animals. Beyond the fields of animal studies and environmental history, the fundamental significance of an understanding of human-animal

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relations and the animal as a key agent in human history is being recognised more broadly. The historical animal now ventures out of the corner to take centre stage in the classroom, prompting many students (and sometimes their teachers) to look with new eyes at our relationship with animals today.

The 'animal turn' shows little sign of receding. With the field of scholarship increasingly broad and ever maturing, yet still excitingly fresh, the conference 'Between Apes and Angels: Human and Animal in the Early Modern World', held at Edinburgh in December 2015, brought together interested scholars with two key purposes. The first was to establish the range and likely future directions of scholarly activity in historical animal studies. Second was to reflect critically from a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives on how we conduct our research in this field, on our diverse methodologies and sources, and the opportunities and challenges that these present. How, for instance, do we locate and interpret the animal in our sources? How do we give voice to animals? Is anthropomorphism always a pitfall, or can it be helpful? How do we work with our colleagues in the life sciences?

Our aim as conference organisers was to gain a picture of current research that was not simply a static snapshot of the respective interests and practices of the participants, a moment frozen in time. This conference was to be a vibrant, moving picture: ideas developed in new and unexpected ways over the three days of the meeting, with many new collaborations initiated. Pivotal to this sharing of intellectual energy and excursions into new terrain was the quality of the twenty-seven papers and two plenary lectures presented, the lively discussion and questions, and conviviality outside the conference room. A rich exchange of ideas and approaches was encouraged too by the diversity of the participants. Although regrettably of one species only – those liminal beings who sit between apes and angels – variety was

reflected in their international habitats and all career stages were represented, from students to professors emeriti. Their scholarly activities were also diverse, from disciplines including history, history of medicine, archaeology, philosophy, history of art, literary and cultural studies and geography, and roles including museum curator, vet and artist.

Beyond these human creatures, the papers introduced many more: avian, insect, equine, simian, canine, feline, bovine, piscine, and crocodilian. Some were imagined – heavenly, monstrous, or cross-bred with humans; some dead – dissected, skinned or roasted; and others very much alive – trotting, attacking, scuttling, slithering, performing or peaceably nestling in a lady's fur-



Albrecht Dürer, *Virgin and Child with monkey*. Copyright the Trustees of the British Museum, London.



Hat badge, Possibly from Italy or Spain, mid-16th century, The Conversion of St Paul. Copyright the Trustees of the British Museum.

lined sleeve. The many thought-provoking Renaissance offerings included papers on comparative

anatomy, monsters, companion animals at court, the animal as alter ego of the artist, Forest Law,

human-raptor relations in falconry, noblewomen riders, the Medici menageries, and spectacles of meat and feasting. In response to the enthusiasm of participants, the organisers have encouraged the continuation of the momentum and networks sparked by this event, and a collection of essays on *Interspecies Interactions: Animals and Humans between the Middle Ages and Modernity* is under contract under the editorship of Sarah Cockram and Andrew Wells.

Between Apes and Angels: Human and Animal in the Early Modern World took place 4-6 December 2015 at the University of Edinburgh. The conference was co-organised by Dr Stephen Bowd (University of Edinburgh), Dr Sarah Cockram (University of Glasgow) and Dr Andrew Wells (Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen). The organisers would like to thank the conference funders for their generous support. The event was funded by the SRS, who provided ten bursaries for postgraduate participants, the Wellcome Trust and the University of Edinburgh. For more information on the conference, please see: <https://apesandangels.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/baaaprogrammefinal.pdf>

Piero della Francesca and *disegno* JOCELYN ANDERSON

The role of design (*disegno*) is fundamental to understanding the working practice of the early Italian Renaissance artist, geometer and mathematician Piero della Francesca (circa 1415–1492). While none of his works on paper in preparation for his paintings survive, research conducted in the past decade by the Opificio delle Pietre Dure in Florence and the Sherman Fairchild Paintings Conservation Center at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art has revealed Piero's obsessive working and reworking of compositions. *Disegno*, in the period sense of the term, was also a problem-solving tool, a catalyst for invention, and an effective means of communication.

A conference on Piero's *disegno* at The Courtauld Institute of Art in June

this year created an opportunity to examine many different aspects of the artist's practice, including paintings, frescoes, drawings and treatises. Sessions considered the potential of new conservation studies and methods (including computer reconstructions); the multiplicity of meanings attributed to *disegno* when discussing Piero; the work of Piero's pupils in relation to Piero's own work; and the critical intersection of design, drawing and painting in Piero's understanding of architecture.

This event was an opportunity to continue the rich dialogue about the artist which has grown out of recent exhibitions and research projects. In bringing together an extraordinary group of scholars from several specialities and a wide range of

career stages, it sparked new conversations which will undoubtedly contribute to future projects.

Piero della Francesca and disegno took place at The Courtauld Institute of Art on 19–20 June 2015. It was convened by Professor Emeritus James R. Banker (North Carolina State University), Professor Tom Henry (University of Kent), Dr Machtelt Brügggen Israëls (University of Amsterdam), Dr Scott Nethersole (The Courtauld Institute of Art), Dr Nathaniel Silver (Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum) and Dr Caroline Campbell (National Gallery, London), through the Research Forum at The Courtauld Institute of Art and the National Gallery, London. The SRS funded postgraduate fee waivers.

A Game at Chess **STEVE ORMAN**

Thomas Middleton's play *A Game at Chesse* (1624) was a popular and controversial work of satire that dragged royal and noble personages onto the stage, using chess as an allegorical dramatisation of the stormy diplomatic relationship between England (white) and Spain (black) at the time of its writing. It also engaged with subjects and motifs commonly found throughout the corpus of English Renaissance drama. A symposium on the play held at Canterbury Christ Church University this summer sought to analyse both its contexts and its performative qualities. Papers covered Spanish literary parallels, chess and games in seventeenth-century England, the relationship between Middleton's text and

performance, and the challenges of teaching non-Shakespearean early modern drama in schools today. One major challenge is the unavailability of editions of non-Shakespearean drama suitable for teachers preparing classes and school students to use.

Michelle O'Callaghan (Reading) looked more closely at the play's libels in her keynote, arguing that the Spanish authorities and the English king James I were especially angered by its use of stage personation within an allegorical framework that required deciphering. 'The two work together', she argued, 'to give the impression that what is being dramatised onstage are scandalous "secrets of state"', which, in turn, are revealed to the audience. It is this "discovery" of court politics on stage that created a

sensation'. The afternoon saw a script-in-hand performance of *A Game at Chess* take place in St Gregory's Centre for Music – a converted nineteenth-century church – with parts taken by a combination of professional actors and delegates from the conference. Overall the papers and performance reflected both the complexity and ultimate stageability of Middleton's play.

Thomas Middleton's A Game at Chess (1624): A One-day Symposium took place at Canterbury Christ Church University on 4 July 2015. It was convened by Steve Orman (Canterbury Christ Church). The SRS and the Royal Historical Society funded bursaries for postgraduate students to attend the event.

Science, Scholarship and Religion **TOM ROEBUCK**

The lives and works of the two great humanist scholars Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) and Sir Henry Savile (1549–1622) provide insight into the broader histories of scholarly institutions and practice, confession-alization and politics in Renaissance Europe. The Genevan-born Huguenot Casaubon, a classical scholar and philologist who worked in France and then later in England, was regarded in his time as among the most learned men in Europe. Englishman Savile was likewise a classical scholar, and also a mathematician and educationalist, who served as provost at Eton and founded professorships in geometry and astronomy at Oxford among other scholarly achievements and legacies.

Last year, a conference on the relations between scholarship, science and religion in the age of Casaubon and Savile took place at Merton College, Oxford, where Savile had presided as a celebrated and controversial Warden from 1585 until his death in 1622. The conference shed light on the complicated interrelationship between specialist philological scholarship on the one hand and religious polemic on the

other. The persistence of legends surrounding the baptism of the Emperor Constantine despite their repeated dismantling by philologists, for example, showed philology's limitations as a means to settle arguments within the history of the church, as Richard Serjeantson (Cambridge) discussed.

The history of reading and textual editing proved another central concern. Both scholars' annotations of their books reveal a good deal about their reading and thought. The depth and precision of Casaubon's philological work by no means dissociated him from pragmatic humanist justifications for the study of antiquity, as Anthony Grafton (Princeton) argued from the evidence in his books. Savile's annotations of medieval works illuminate the Renaissance history of medieval scholarship, while his notes on his copies of Euclid show how he studied mathematics with his students. An associated Bodleian exhibition on Savile's books and manuscripts (curated by Tom Roebuck) brought the conference's work on the history of the book to a public audience.

Scholarship, Science, and Religion in the Age of Isaac Casaubon (1559–1614) and Henry Savile (1549–1622) took place at Merton College, Oxford, on 1–3 July 2014. It was convened by Professors David Norbrook (University of Oxford), and Mordechai Feingold (California Institute of Technology) and Dr Tom Roebuck (University of East Anglia), under the auspices of Oxford's Centre for Early Modern Studies, and supported by the SRS.

CONFERENCE FUNDING

The conferences featured in this section all received Society for Renaissance Studies conference grants.

To find out more visit:

www.rensoc.org.uk/funding-and-prizes/conference-grants

Sir John Cheke at 500 **FRED SCHURINK**

The year 2014 saw the 500th anniversary of the birth of Sir John Cheke (1514–57), one of the most

significant, but neglected, scholars of Renaissance England. In July last year, Cheke's old college, St John's,

Cambridge hosted a two-day conference to assess Cheke's achievements and the impact he and the group of scholars that formed around him at St John's (including Thomas Smith, William Cecil, Roger Ascham and Thomas Wilson) had on the intellectual and political culture of Tudor England. Speakers from both sides of the Atlantic covered a wide range of topics related to Cheke's life, career and legacy, including humanism at St John's, evangelical religion at mid-Tudor Cambridge, Cheke's Greek translations, the women in Cheke's life, the Greek pronunciation controversy of 1542, and the role of the Athenians in shaping the Elizabethan state. The conference concluded with a tour of Cheke's St John's, led by Dr Mark Nicholls, Fellow and Librarian of the College, and was accompanied by an exhibit of manuscripts and books related to Cheke and his Cambridge connections in the College Library. Professor John McDiarmid (New College of Florida) is currently preparing a collection of papers from the conference for publication.



Sir John Cheke. Engraving by Joseph Nutting, 1705. John Strype, *Life of Sir John Cheke*.

Sir John Cheke and the Cambridge Connection in Tudor England was held at St John's College, Cambridge, on 19–20 July 2014. It was convened by Professor John McDiarmid (New College of Florida) and Dr Fred Schurink (Manchester). An SRS grant funded postgraduate bursaries.

Romance and its Transformations **ALICE EARDLEY**

According to Northrop Frye, romance is the structural core of all fiction. In response to this statement, a two-day conference at Chawton House Library in Hampshire brought together an international group of scholars to explore how the genre of romance – and its central generic characteristics – were adopted and transformed in different contexts across the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Papers covered the influence of romance on other literary forms, such as ballads, drama and the novel; the ways

romance has been used to communicate social and political ideas; and the ways people have used the features of romance to make sense of their own lives and identities. Discussion explored the larger contribution that romance fiction has made to the development of British literature, as well as the ways individuals perceive themselves and the world around them. At the heart of this discussion was the role women have played in the development of a genre with which they are closely associated, both as readers

and writers, as befitting a conference held at a library dedicated to the study of historical women's writing. The conference included a public lecture and exhibition of romance works held at Chawton House.

Romance and Its Transformation, 1550–1750 took place at Chawton House Library on June 30 – July 1, 2014. It was convened by Dr Alice Eardley (formerly Southampton University) and Dr Julie Eckerle (University of Minnesota Morris) and sponsored by the SRS.

FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Medicine and the Bishop in England, c.1350-1550

KATHERINE HARVEY

IN 2013–14, I held a Society for Renaissance Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship, along with an Honorary Research Fellowship at Birkbeck, University of London. The fellowship provided me with a valuable support as I made the transition from recent PhD graduate to career academic.

My SRS Fellowship funded my work on ‘Medicine and the Bishop in England, c.1350—c.1550’, which served as a pilot study for a larger research project covering the same subject in the approximate period 1100 to 1500. I set out to explore the relationship between religion and medicine during the years between the Black Death and the English Reformation, primarily through an examination of the interactions between bishops, medical knowledge and the medical professions. My aim in undertaking the project was to shed new light on the links and potential tensions between spiritual and medical understandings of health and well-being as they existed in medieval and early modern England. I intend that my work on this topic will eventually encompass three broad themes: the bishop’s position as a beneficiary of medical knowledge and treatment; the extent of episcopal medical knowledge and the ways in which this knowledge was deployed; and the role of medical knowledge in the construction of episcopal reputations. During the course of my fellowship, I embarked on a set of three smaller studies, one for each theme.

The first of these focused on the bishop’s personal experiences, both in terms of preventative and curative medicine. This demanded work on a wide range of primary sources, with two types of document proving especially useful. Biographies of prominent bishops, such as George Cavendish’s *Life of Thomas Wolsey*, proved a particularly valuable source of information about individual lives.



Gioan Antonio Lorenzini (1665–1740), engraving of a Bishop Saint appearing to the sick, after F. Petrucci after J. Tintoretto. Image: Wellcome Library, London.

By reading household accounts, I found extensive records relating to the employment of physicians and

the purchase of medicines for sick bishops. I also paid some extremely informative (and enjoyable!) visits to

former episcopal residences, including the Bishop's Palace at Wells. Bishops did their best to avoid illness (for example, by ensuring that their palaces were kept clean, and thus free of bad air), but if they fell ill they were well-placed to receive the best-quality treatment.

I also completed a case study of episcopal medical knowledge and its applications within the diocese of Lincoln. The pre-Reformation bishops of Lincoln are a particularly well-documented group of prelates, and it was therefore possible to examine sources of medical knowledge (such as book ownership and correspondence with medical men) at an individual level. The extensive surviving registers of the bishops of Lincoln furnished numerous examples of bishops applying their knowledge of medical theory to situations as varied as the management of mad priests and the containment of the Black Death. The writings of Robert Grosseteste (1235–53) and John Russell (1480–94) were a particular pleasure to study, as they engaged with complex medical ideas such as circulation and digestion. I presented a preliminary version of this study at the 2014 International Medieval Congress.

During the course of my Fellowship, I became increasingly interested in the significance of food and drink to medieval bishops, and the ways in which their consumption of food and drink could influence individual reputations. The food practices of these men were shaped by religious thought, but also by contemporary ideas about the body, gender and social status. Pre-Reformation theology suggested that there was a close link between gluttony and lechery — the first of these sins led directly to the second — and this

theory was supported by medical theory, according to which semen was the product of excess, or excessively fine, food and drink. Consequently, long-term fasting could help the bishop to keep his vow of celibacy, and appearing abstemious could do wonders for an episcopal reputation. On the other hand, to accuse a bishop of enjoying his dinner (or to depict him as a fat man) was to imply that he was unchaste as well as greedy.

Unsurprisingly then, many pre-Reformation bishops were regular fasters, but there was also an awareness of the body's need for food; concessions had to be made to the bishop's high status and his strenuous occupation. Excessive fasting could cause a wide range of health problems, from digestive disorders to 'wandering of the brain', and consequently even the most pious prelates were obliged to allow themselves some indulgences. I gave talks on this topic at the Gender and Medieval Studies Conference in January 2014, and the Institute of Historical Research's History of Sexuality Seminar in October 2015. Towards the end of my Fellowship, I wrote a paper summarising my ideas on episcopal diets, which will be published as 'Food, Drink and the Bishop in Medieval England' in the Summer 2015 issue of *Viator*.

My SRS work has been disseminated to a wider audience through my involvement, as both contributor and editor, with NOTCHES (notchesblog.com), an international blog about the history of sexuality. My articles for the site include 'The Problematic Priestly Body: Celibacy, Sexuality, and the Trials of the Medieval Clergy', 'What was the Ultimate Medieval Aphrodisiac?' and 'Death by

Celibacy: Sex, Semen and Male Health in the Middle Ages.' I have also given talks to non-academic groups, including volunteers at the Bishop's Palace at Wells.

My SRS fellowship also gave me the opportunity to see publications based on my previous research through to press. My first book, *Episcopal Appointments in England, c.1214–c.1344* was published by Ashgate in January 2014. I completed the final version of an article on 'Episcopal Emotions: Tears in the Life of the Medieval Bishop' that spring, which was published in *Historical Research* at the end of the year.

Since September 2014, I have been employed as a Wellcome Trust Medical Humanities Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London. My time as a Postdoctoral Fellow of the Society allowed me to consolidate my research profile, and I am confident that it helped me to secure further research funding. My current work builds directly on my SRS studies, focussing on 'Medicine and the Bishop in Medieval England'. My year as SRS Fellow allowed me to carry out much of the preparatory work for this project, and allowed me to start my Wellcome Fellowship with a clear sense of my aims for the next three years. Many of my findings from my SRS year will be incorporated into my future publications on this topic, which will include a second monograph. Being awarded an SRS Fellowship will therefore continue to support my research and career development for years to come.

Dr Katherine Harvey was recipient of the SRS Postdoctoral Fellowship and is now a Wellcome Trust Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London.

STUDY FELLOWSHIPS

Gillian Jack

In January, I began a five-month archival trip to Florence, supported by an SRS Study Fellowship, to carry out research into the monastery of Sant' Elisabetta delle Convertite, a

nunnery for repentant prostitutes located in the Oltrarno district of Florence. The nuns of Sant' Elisabetta were unusual, former prostitutes (the *convertite*) from impoverished backgrounds, often with no familial connections to the city. A lay confraternity connected to

the nearby Augustinian monastery of Santo Spirito founded the nunnery in 1332. It closed during Napoleon's suppression of religious houses in 1808.

My original research intention had been to look inside the monastery. I hoped to gather information about

the women themselves: who they were; where they came from; how they came to be in Sant' Elisabetta; and what their lives were like there.

However, surviving records provide scant information about what life was like inside the walls, and biographical details about *convertite* are rare. The records, almost without exception, look outwards, to the monastery's relationships with the world beyond. This included records of silk work undertaken by the nuns; religious processions with which they were involved; escape attempts aided by outsiders; unusual payments, both in cash and victuals, from the government; and even two failed attempts to assassinate a recently admitted nun. These findings necessitated a change in the focus of my research, from looking inwards at the enclosed lives to looking outwards at the house's position in the local community and the wider city.

As I examined the records, it became clear that the civic government took an interest in Sant' Elisabetta from far earlier than I had expected. I uncovered evidence of regular payments made to the monastery by the government during the fifteenth century. No other religious institution was in receipt of these types of payments at the time



Robert van Audenaerde (1663–1748), Engraving of the penitent Saint Mary Magdalen (N.D.), after Carlo Maratti (1625–1713). Image: Wellcome Library, London.

and they point to a unique governmental interest in keeping the house open. The nuns were able to benefit from the government's interest in using the monastery as part of wider attempts to regulate the city's sexual economy and to ensure that institutions that provided care and/or custody of vulnerable groups, such

as ex-prostitutes, victims of sexual violence and orphans, remained financially solvent. There emerges a pattern of governmental involvement in regulating entry to Sant' Elisabetta and increasing availability of funding up until 1622, when the Grand Duchy took over the financial management of the convent. Thus, as Sant' Elisabetta was utilised by civic strategy, its often precarious financial position stabilised.

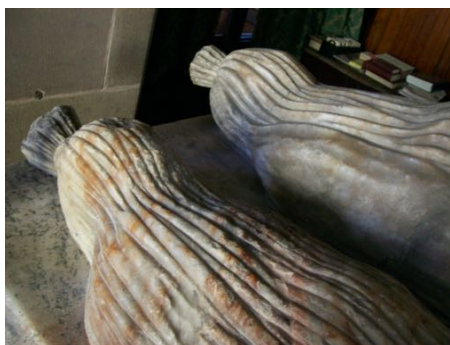
These and other records will allow me to argue that this monastery, often overlooked as a curiosity due to its atypical nuns, had an important role in local and civic life. The generous fellowship from the Society was vital to my research. Having five months in Florence, in the archives, gave me time to re-focus my research and follow numerous leads to uncover a broader picture of Sant' Elisabetta delle Convertite's place in the city and its history.

Gillian Jack is a second year PhD student in the School of History at the University of St Andrews. Her current research focuses on the nuns at Sant' Elisabetta delle Convertite in Florence between 1332 and 1622 and how the house became part of wider governmental strategies to protect vulnerable groups.

Elizabeth Norton

Cadaver tombs, in which the deceased is depicted as a corpse, are a rare and visually striking form of funerary monument in the Elizabethan period. They first appeared in Europe in the fourteenth century, but English examples did not appear until the early fifteenth century, when they provided a nuanced way (through their *memento mori* iconography) in which prayers could be solicited to speed the deceased through their time in Purgatory.

It has become a commonplace that the semantics of English tombs changed profoundly following the Reformation. However, in 1560 Elizabeth I issued a proclamation banning the destruction of tombs due



The disputed double-cadaver tomb at St Edmund's church in Fenny Bentley.

to their usefulness both in commemorating an individual and in providing information pertaining to lineage. In addition, despite Catholicism being outlawed in Elizabethan England by the first Recusancy Acts, a sizeable proportion of the population remained Catholic, as is well known,

albeit in accordance with a broader definition of the term. A belief in Purgatory remained a central and unifying tenet of the recusants' faith and as such it is to be expected that this would be reflected in Catholic funeral monuments of the period.

My project, which was supported by an SRS Study Fellowship, concerns the Blount family of the West Midlands, who were a Catholic gentry family in the sixteenth century and are the subject of my PhD. Two members of the family – Sir George Blount of Kinlet (died 1581) and Sir Thomas Blount of Sodington (died 1562) – were commemorated by cadaver tombs, which were erected soon after their deaths at Kinlet in Shropshire and Mable in Worcestershire, respectively. These two monuments together make up approximately a fifth of the surviving

STUDY FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

Elizabethan cadaver tombs and I therefore wanted to investigate them, and the other examples, to consider what the tomb patrons were intending to communicate in their choice of the form.

I was awarded my Study Fellowship in 2014 and during the autumn of that year I undertook a research trip to Derbyshire, to investigate the Elizabethan cadaver tombs at Fenny Bentley (for the Beresford family) and Chesterfield (for the Foljambe family). In both cases I examined the tombs and consulted the local archives on the families in the period. During the course of my research, it soon became clear that the double-cadaver monument at Fenny Bentley, which depicts a husband and wife entirely shrouded, cannot be reliably attributed to the Elizabethan period; indeed it is more likely that the tomb was created at different stages in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth

century. The Foljambe tomb, which is part of a large complex of monuments to the family, also harks back to the medieval iconography of Death personified – such as the Danse Macabre, the Grim Reaper, and the Three Living and the Three Dead – which proliferated in the aftermath of the Great Plague of 1348–49, and was associated with the wider *prosopopoeia* of Death. I also carried out research into the other surviving examples of cadaver tombs, including that of Sir Percival (died 1558/9) and Agnes (died 1588) Smallpage at St Bartholomew the Great in London, an interesting example of the form being used in a Protestant memorial context.

I am grateful to the Society for awarding me a Study Fellowship, which has enabled me to consider in detail some of the other surviving examples of Elizabethan cadaver tombs in order to compare and

contrast them with those of the Blount family. The Society's support has allowed me to prepare a paper which I will present at the European Reformation Research Group Conference in September 2015 (University of Birmingham). I have also prepared an article which is being considered for publication and hope to expand the project into further papers, as well as incorporating some of the material into my doctoral dissertation.

Elizabeth Norton is a PhD student at King's College London. Her thesis focusses on the Blount family, who were a West Midlands Catholic gentry family during the sixteenth century. Her work looks at the family's religion over the Reformation period, as well as their engagement in local and court politics and the military.

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