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BULLETIN

SRS IN SHEFFIELD
MARCUS NEVITT, TOM RUTTER,
JAMES SHAW, CATHY SHRANK

RSA AT SRS LECTURE
STEPHEN J. CAMPBELL

ALSO INCLUDES: CONFERENCE REPORTS, FELLOWSHIPS
AND MORE.

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the 2018 SRS Conference issue of the *Bulletin*. Those members who attended the conference which was held at the University of Sheffield in July, and brilliantly organized by Prof. Cathy Shrank and her team, will no doubt look back on it as one of the most intellectually exciting, inclusive, and collegial of Society occasions. Indeed, this year's biennial conference was a vivid illustration of what it means to be part of the Society for Renaissance Studies, marked as it was by a clear sense of community, mutual support and interest, and goodwill.

   This issue aims to encapsulate some of the event's excitement and its sense of the *bonum commune communitatis*. At its centre is the report from the organizing committee on the biennial conference, recording its challenges and achievements, and the importance of scheduling a simultaneous England World Cup victory. Accompanying this piece is Prof. Stephen J. Campbell's RSA/SRS lecture, delivered on the final day of the Conference, on painting as object and meta-object in the work of Andrea Mantegna. This is the second RSA/SRS lecture, an event which was instituted to reaffirm the closeness between our two learned societies. In addition to our SRS Conference material, we also have our customary wealth of conference reports from all over the SRS, showcasing the fascinating work being carried out by our members. We also have our Study Fellowship and Postdoctoral Fellowship reports, which relay the exciting new work being undertaken by early career members. Indeed, this year's biennial saw the introduction of the conference essay prize for postgraduate and ECR speakers. The winner of this competition will be announced on the SRS website and in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

   This is also a very significant issue of the *Bulletin* for the current editors, as we step down from our roles after six and three years respectively. We have been honoured to serve the Society as the *Bulletin* editors during this time, to have been in a unique position whereby we could witness so much of the groundbreaking work being carried out by our members. We are enormously grateful to everyone who sent us such brilliant copy material over the years, and hope you all enjoyed reading it as much as we did. We are delighted to introduce our successors, Dr Sophie Butler (UEA) and Dr George Oppitz-Trotman (Cambridge), who have worked alongside us on this issue, and whose emails can be found at the bottom of the page for correspondence. Finally, we hope to see many of you in Norwich in 2020 when we along with our colleagues host the ninth biennial conference at UEA.

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LETTER FROM THE HONORARY CHAIR

I am delighted that so many members were able to enjoy such a wonderful biennial conference in Sheffield, and to see so many familiar faces along with many new ones. It felt like a proper gathering of the Society at which we were able to discuss, plan and enjoy ourselves as Sheffield basked in weather more commonly found in Nice or Naples.

As always, these events take a serious amount of planning which, if successful, should be invisible. It is therefore important to thank all the members who worked hard to make it a great success. We are particularly indebted to our colleagues at Sheffield: Marcus Nevitt, Emma Rhatigan, Tom Rutter, Rachel Stenner, James Shaw, and above all, Cathy Shrank; and to James Cook and Rachel Willie. I also extend thanks to the four plenary speakers who gave such varied and fascinating papers, combining time periods, subjects, and approaches to provide an exemplary combination of interventions which represented the Society very much as it should want to be represented. Feisal Mohamed discussed the significance of wardships in the development of political culture and representation in seventeenth-century England, posing a series of vital questions for anyone interested in philosophy, history and literature. Stephen Campbell – who gave the inaugural SRS-RSA lecture in the UK – examined the career of Andrea Mantegna with the aid of a superb collection of slides that enabled him to discuss the tiniest details of the pictures, as he made his case that Mantegna was a critical thinker whose challenging art is a world away from his reputation as a skilled craftsman whose desire was to ingratiate himself with the aristocracy. Emma Smith spoke with great passion, verve and style about the ways in which the rise of English studies nearly 150 years ago had much to do with divergent and queer approaches to the Renaissance, speaking to the fraught and complicated times in which we live

and work. Lyndal Roper provided us with a wonderful slide lecture detailing the history of the portraits of Martin Luther from Cranach to East Germany, concluding with feminist representations of Luther revealing him in a less flattering light than many of his Protestant admirers. Not only were the lectures crammed with knowledge and insight, but they were all, in their different ways, delivered with wit, patient explanation and good humour. I cannot think of the last time I attended a conference when the plenaries all established the nature and style of the event so well and were so deservedly appreciated by their audiences.

I attended as many papers as I could and was delighted also with the standard of the panels. I learned about the Reformed Church in Lithuania; Humanism in Poland; John Donne and theology; the career of Thomas Churchyard; the significance of translation; the plague; pastoral care; and much more, still having time to attend a grand dinner and lavish reception. I hope other people enjoyed themselves as much as I did.

It was also a great pleasure to announce the Society's prizes: to Katherine Ibbett for her book, *Compassion's Edge*, which the judges praised because of its brilliant interdisciplinary range and relevance. Ibbett provides an illuminating and sophisticated discussion of the meaning and limits of compassion in France between the Edict of Nantes in 1589 and its Revocation in 1685. Through a focus on the feeling, rather than on charitable activities presumed to be motivated by such a sentiment, she provides a new interpretation of how early modern communities negotiated the difficult terrain of toleration and co-existence in the aftermath of Europe's Reformations. This book promises to inspire fresh scholarship in early modern French history, the history of emotions and Renaissance Studies.

The runner up, which would also have been a worthy winner, was

Susanna Berger's *The Art of Philosophy: Visual Thinking in Europe from the Late Renaissance to the Early Enlightenment* – singled out by all three judges as a visually stunning volume – which considers the interplay between philosophy, ways of thinking and visual representation with lucidity and ambition. Berger draws attention to the engraved plural images and tableaux which illustrated philosophical works as expressions of key concepts, as well as the role played by art in the development of ideas, both of which constituted 'visual thinking'. A wide range of source material is used to great effect, including student lecture notebooks, friendship albums, printed books and broadsides.

The SRS essay prize was won by Sarah Cockram for 'Interspecies Understanding: Exotic Animals and their Handlers at the Italian Renaissance court'; the runner up was Stefano Dall'Agio, for 'Voices Under Trial: Inquisition, Abjuration, and Preachers' Orality in Sixteenth-Century Italy'.

As I am writing this, just before heading off for my holiday on the Isle of Orkney, I have received a series of vibrant blue posters for the next SRS conference, which will be held in Norwich, 7-9 July 2020. As we are instructed, 'Save the Date'.

ANDREW HADFIELD

SRS NEWS

Prizes and Fellowships

SRS Book Prize, 2018

As detailed in the Chair's letter, the 2018 SRS book prize was awarded to Katherine Ibbett for *Compassion's Edge: Fellow-Feeling and its limits in Early Modern France* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017). One further book was highly commended: Susanna Berger, *The Art of Philosophy: Visual Thinking in Europe from the Late Renaissance to the Early Enlightenment* (Princeton University Press, 2017).

Renaissance Studies Article Prize, 2018

The winner of the 2018 essay prize is Sarah Cockram (University of Edinburgh) for 'Interspecies Understanding: Exotic Animals and their Handlers at the Italian Renaissance Court', *Renaissance Studies*, 20.2 (2017), pp. 277-96.

SRS Postdoctoral Fellowships, 2018–19

Dr Eleanor Chan and Dr Amy Lidster, have each been awarded one of this year's two Postdoctoral Fellowships.

Dr Chan received her PhD from the University of Cambridge, for her study 'Mathematics and the Craft of Thought in England and the Low Countries, circa 1570-1630'. Her postdoctoral project examines pattern relative to reading and musical understanding. Reading in early modern Europe – whether the thing read was composed in words, paint, stitches, warp and weft, etching, engraving, carving, or indeed in musical notation – was a peculiarly patterned exercise. Pattern, and disruptions of pattern captured the imagination across media, evidenced in the popularity of the rhetorical tropes of structure, periodos, parison, epistrophe, antimetabole, in poetry, and in the rise of imitative counterpoint in the music of this period. It allowed for intervention, for creativity, for the reader to adopt the

trajectory of their choice, rather than as directed, and to entwine diverse threads of knowledge in performance. The importance of pattern has been explored in single disciplinary contexts, in the work of those such as E.H. Gombrich and Brian Boyd. However, seldom has the cross-media, multisensory nature of pattern's totalizing influence – and its importance to musical comprehension – been explored. Ellie's project proposes to do so, at precisely the point at which several of these media collide: in the vocal motets, madrigals and psalm settings of the period, where poetic, verbal, aural and visual patterns were styled side by side.

Dr Amy Lidster completed her PhD at King's College London in 2017. Her thesis offered a reappraisal of the history play as a genre, both on the stage and in print. Amy's new postdoctoral project is entitled Challenging authorship and authority in early modern playbook paratexts.

Early modern playbook paratexts are sites of transformation and transaction: they position and frame the main text, and affect the ways readers engage with the play as a printed book. Strikingly, a majority of these paratexts concentrate on issues of authorship, authority, and the transmission of plays from stage to page. In a period when the legal rights to publish a text resided with the publisher rather than the author, playbook paratexts reveal a varied and lively discourse concerning who owned, edited, compiled, improved, destroyed, elevated, and 'authorized' a text. This project represents the first sustained examination into this group of materials and the ways in which they debate ideas of authorship and authority, featuring playbooks printed between 1584 (when the first professional plays were published) and 1660 (when the theatres were reopened following the Civil War).

One of the project's main aims is to question key critical concepts such as 'author', 'playwright', 'authorization', and 'authority', and

evaluate how they are explored in playbook paratexts. This study will examine how a range of individuals – dramatists, publishers, patrons, censors, and theatrical companies – 'authorize' a text through their inclusion in or contribution of paratexts. By analysing paratextual discourses, the project will have important implications for understanding early modern perspectives on who controls and owns printed plays, and how readers' experiences were shaped by these materials.

SRS in Sheffield: The Eighth Biennial Conference

MARCUS NEVITT, TOM RUTTER, JAMES SHAW, CATHY SHRANK

OVER 230 DELEGATES from all over the world gathered at the University of Sheffield between 3-5 July 2018 for the Society's eighth biennial conference, some travelling from as far afield as South Korea and Australia, as well as Canada and the USA. The final programme comprised 192 papers delivered over sixty-seven panels, one round-table, four plenary lectures, and two workshops: one allowing delegates the opportunity to trial the AHRC-funded 'Linguistic DNA' database; the other, a session on 'Getting Published', run by Matthew Frost (Manchester UP), Rebecca Guest (Taylor and Francis), and Tom Rutter (editorial board, Shakespeare). Audience members left the latter with invaluable information about what journals and publishers are looking for; free books (given as prizes in the MUP quiz); and thought-provoking statistics about the ongoing popularity of the printed text in the digital age.

Disciplines from the full range of Renaissance studies were represented at the conference: art history, architectural history, literature and language (from various European traditions), music, philosophy, digital humanities, and history of various stripes, from social and economic to cultural history. The topics addressed by papers ranged geographically – from the New World to the Ottoman empire – and chronologically, from the fifteenth to the early eighteenth century: a long, and global, vision of the Renaissance. Plenary lectures were given by Professor Lyndal Roper (Oxford), Professor Feisal Mohamed (CUNY), Professor Emma Smith (Oxford), and Professor Stephen Campbell (Johns Hopkins). Professor Roper, whose talk was also the annual SRS lecture, spoke on 'Portraits of Luther: Then and Now'. In this, she demonstrated the significance of Luther's visual image to the spread of his ideas, and in particular, the importance of his long-term collaboration with the painter and print-maker Lucas Cranach,

Sheffield Steel: Detail from Enea Vico (1523–1567), after Parmigianino, *Venus and Mars Embracing as Vulcan Works at His Forge* (1543). Image: Metropolitan Museum of Art (Elisha Whittelsey Collection).

Luther's near neighbour in Wittenberg. Professor Roper traced how Luther's image moved through various phases: steely-eyed monk, bearded outlaw, increasingly jowly scholar and married man (in a series of double portraits with his wife, Katharina von Bora, before her image was displaced by Luther's pairing with his fellow-Reformer Philip Melancthon), and – finally – by his corpse. Many of these images were crudely executed, but they travelled widely.

The lecture culminated with a postscript on portrayals of Luther, five hundred years after the publication of his Ninety-Five Theses: contemporary images which variously depicted Luther as a fist, or as radio chat-show host, flanked by a Cranach-inspired Adam and Eve.

Professor Mohamed's plenary – 'Sovereignty Disembodied: Hobbes and Lord Saye' – took up a question that has figured prominently in debates on early modern political philosophy: the nature and impact of the 'mechanization of the state', or the extent to which sovereign power was expressed in ways unattached to the personal authority of the monarch. As two case studies in this phenomenon, he explored the Court of Wards and Liveries and the corporation. Both of these played a significant role in the disparate careers of Thomas Hobbes and William Fiennes, Lord Saye and Seale. In Hobbes' thought, Professor Mohamed argued, we see a strong impulse to address the perceived absence of feudal dependence on the sovereign, and to adapt political philosophy to a society where obligation often came via contract and corporate association. With his involvement in Providence Island Company, Lord Saye and Seale forged the working relationships vital to Puritan opposition to the king in the Long Parliament. He was also for a time Master of the Court of Wards and Liveries, though defied Charles I's order to move the court to Oxford. In his career we see Hobbes' worst fears realized: that disembodied authority could dilute a sense of obligation to the sovereign, with open resistance not far behind.

Professor Smith's lecture, entitled 'Whose Renaissance?', elegantly and provocatively combined historicist scholarship with an urgent emphasis on current priorities. On the one hand, she surveyed the origins of Renaissance Studies as a discipline, highlighting the homophobia expressed by nineteenth-century scholars in response to the work of Walter Pater and John Addington Symonds. The route to academic respectability for those working in our field evidently required the purging of Renaissance Studies of its queer associations. At the same time, however, Professor Smith's lecture surveyed the present state of academia, post-USS strike and with the TEF impending. It considered the implications of treating scholarship as a vocation, both for academics and for students, and posed difficult questions about what scholars value (and expect students to value) in what they do. This was a deservedly well-received plenary that challenged and informed in equal measure.

Professor Campbell's plenary, 'Andrea Mantegna: Painting as Object and as Meta-Object', was sponsored by the Renaissance Society of America. In it, Professor Campbell treated the conference to a dazzling display of renaissance colour and scholarly critique. Art historians have long regarded Mantegna's work as pedantic, antiquarian and rule-bound. Ignoring the principles of good composition, his paintings are crowded with a gothic profusion of obscure details. His figures, stiff 'lapidary men', are like statues, lacking animation, lost in a cabinet of antique fragments. Yet Mantegna's paint – like smoke – expresses the interchangeable nature of all matter. The 'thing-like' quality of his painting connects to contemporary atomistic ideas, circulating in the poetry of Lucretius, and pessimistic views of the human condition. It is for this reason that his 'triumphs' leave a bitter taste, for the passing of all things, where only the divine is stable.

The conference hashtag, #SRS2018, was buzzing: testimony to the rich variety of papers on offer, but also due to the excitement caused by the conference bags, featuring the truly splendid tabby cat from Edward Topsell's *Historie of Foure-Footed Beastes (*1607), an image reproduced courtesy of the University's Special Collections (cue many cat-related puns). The sale of 'variant' cat bags—complete with typo—raised money for a prize to be awarded for the best paper delivered at the conference by a postgraduate student or Early Career Researcher: the results are to be announced in the early autumn. Many thanks to all those who donated to this fund.

The conference organising committee – Tom Leng, Marcus Nevitt, James Shaw, Tom Rutter, Cathy Shrank, and Rachel Stenner, as well as James Cook (before his appointment to a lectureship at the University of Edinburgh) – would also like to thank everyone who helped to make the conference such a success. This includes colleagues in Sheffield (in Special Collections, print and design services, finance, accommodation, catering, portering, and their own departments of English and History) who provided essential practical support; members of the SRS Council for their advice, encouragement, and financial backing; Wiley-Blackwell for sponsoring the first night's reception at Sheffield's Winter Gardens; Liz Goodwin, Jamie Graves, Amy Jackson, Cora James, Elena Johnson, and Helen Newsome, who ran the registration desk so efficiently; everyone who volunteered to chair sessions; and, above all, the delegates, for their papers and for creating a supportive environment for intellectual exchange, through contributing to discussions during Q&As and more informally over coffees, lunches, dinners, and drinks. Oh, and thanks also to Gareth Southgate and the England football team, whose World Cup success on the first night – particularly as it involved penalties – was as unexpected as the unbroken sunshine of a nationwide heatwave.

The next SRS conference will take place at the University of East Anglia, Norwich, on 7-9 July, 2020.

The Eighth Biennial Conference of the Society for Renaissance Studies took place at the University of Sheffield from 3-5 July 2018. The conference organising committee was comprised of Dr Tom Leng, Dr Marcus Nevitt, Dr James Shaw, Dr Tom Rutter, Prof. Cathy Shrank, and Dr Rachel Stenner (University of Sheffield), as well as Dr James Cook (University of Edinburgh). The SRS conference representative from 2016-18, to whom especial thanks are given, was Prof. Cathy Shrank.

RSA at SRS: Plenary Lecture

Divine Proportion in Renaissance Venice: Bellini, Carpaccio and Luca Pacioli
STEPHEN J. CAMPBELL

Andrea Mantegna, *The Triumphs of Caesar (1487-1505) V: Elephants* (Royal Collection, Hampton Court). Image: Wikimedia Commons.

2017 saw the delivery of the inaugural SRS/RSA lecture at the Renaissance Society of America's annual conference, representing a renewed relationship between our two societies. At the SRS biennial conference in Sheffield in July of this year the second lecture in the series was delivered, being the first RSA lecture at SRS. What follows is a synopsis of the lecture delivered by Prof. Campbell.

ART HISTORY HAS HAD A problem coming up with the terms to characterize the monumental series of nine canvases that Mantegna executed at the conclusion of his career, between 1487 and 1505, and known as the *Triumphs of Caesar*. Here, with consideration of a previously unpublished drawing for the Triumphs, the series is considered as a pictorial summa of a category of

artistic representation coming into existence over the previous century or more, and one which Vasari would proceed to define in a written form.

In its unprecedented evocation of the world of things, the *Triumphs* offer a programmatic pictorial characterization of what we now call "Renaissance art," engaging its stylistic desiderata, its technical accomplishments – and, in ways that exceed any theory committed to

writing – its ideological implicatedness. The processional motion of the *Triumphs* is also programmatically about the "bringing back" of the riches of a lost world: Mantegna has visualized a whole world of lost visual and material culture: statues, paintings, vases, coins, buildings (carried as miniature trophies), and precious metalwork. The processional movement across open countryside implies that this rebirth is also a relocation or *translatio* (in this case, from Rome to Mantua). Yet Mantegna invites us to consider this array of objects (paintings, sculptures, objects in precious metals, even architectural models) in two ways – on one hand, in terms of the pathos of their displacement, bearing traces of a lost culture, as objects which need to be read or interpreted – and on the other, in terms of the levelling effect produced by the triumphal display of plundered riches. In the former case, the objects possess semiotic virtuosity as bearers of knowledge; in the latter, they are mere objects, inter-changeable for one another. This is precisely the tension that besets the history of collecting in the 1400s and 1500s. However manifold in their origin or purpose, weapons, coins, artefacts, they may be subject to the levelling category of the trophy, of luxury objects at the disposal of the elite, which might be sold or exchanged or salvaged for their materials. Mantegna's creation of a series of large canvasses was a way of accommodating the rising demand for portable works of art that facilitated the adornment of courtly environments. Yet in a way that differs from the production of small sculptures by his colleague Antico or the Paduan Riccio, or the Milanese Caradosso, Mantegna's works emphatically control their environment, and resist being subsumed into an environmental continuum, a kind of high-art "wallpaper". (The extent to which Mantegna might have been responding to the prestigious environmentally-defining art of tapestry can also be considered.) Several of Mantegna's late works, such as *The Introduction of the Cult of Cybele to Rome,* seem pre-occupied by the nature of the artistic

A wealth of 'made things': Detail from Canvas 2 ('The Statue Bearers') of the *Triumphs* (Royal Collection, Hampton Court Palace). Image: Wikimedia Commons.

object and its ability to survive displacement or commodification. His paintings resist "objecthood" by being meta-objects, reflections on the nature and potential of made things.

Stephen J. Campbell is the Henry and Elizabeth Wiesenfeld Professor of Art History at Johns Hopkins University. He delivered the 2nd SRS/RSA lecture on 5 July 2018 as part of the Eighth SRS Biennial Conference.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Thomas Nashe and his Contemporaries

KATE DE RYCKER AND JENNIFER RICHARDS

Adriaen Brouwer, 'The Smokers' (c.1636). Image: Metropolitan Museum, New York, Open Access licence.

'GATHER YOUR SELVES together in a ring … for here it is in my sleeve … some part of the Epistle I have read to you heretofore'. This is how Thomas Nashe, the *enfant terrible* of Elizabethan literature, invites the readers of *Have with you to Saffron-Walden* (1596) to join him in ripping into rival Gabriel Harvey's most recent pamphlet, a 'Gargantuan bag-pudding' filled with 'dogs-tripes, swines livers, oxe galls, and sheepes guts'. Anyone who has engaged with Nashe's writing will recognise this insistence on his reader's attention, as he challenges us to follow his lively style. Previously considered an esoteric figure, in recent decades Nashe has proved himself instead to be a useful guide through the Elizabethan literary landscape. So embedded is he within his culture, that the editors of the *New Critical Edition of Thomas Nashe* (OUP, c.2021) understand his work requires a great deal of contextualisation for new readers. The 'Thomas Nashe and his Contemporaries' conference held at Newcastle University this July has therefore been one in a series of public and scholarly events from which we are learning more about Nashe's world.

One reason why Nashe had been marginalised by twentieth-century critics was that he was regarded by C.S. Lewis as a literary stylist with nothing to say. Another reason was that he was a prose writer considered to have contributed nothing to the golden age of English drama, save for one play published under his name – *Summers Last Will and Testament* (1600) – a generic oddity which does not conform to a Shakespearean model of drama. And yet, as this conference's speakers made clear, these are misconceptions.

In his keynote lecture, Perry Mills spoke about directing the Edwards' Boys 2017 production of *Summers Last Will*, arguing that the play, seemingly flat on the page, comes alive in performance. (See https://research.ncl.ac.uk/thethomasnasheproject/performancesevents for a recording.) Despite Nashe's peripheral status as a dramatist, several speakers explored the inherent theatricality of his prose, and his importance as a documenter of the growing theatre industry. He defended the public stage and the practice of dramatic improvisation, ultimately treating printed pamphlets as a 'paper stage' on which he could perform his own extemporal style, as Andy Kesson and Callan Davies (Roehampton) invited us to consider. As Kesson argued, for Nashe theatricality was a precondition of literature. Theatrical culture was clearly important to Nashe, but, as Cathy Shrank (Sheffield) explained, performativity was not in any case limited to the stage. It was a central part of the academic culture and Nashe's polyvocality, ventriloquism and switching of registers derive from the Tudor classroom. The conference's emphasis on performativity saw many papers attentive to a host of early modern

soundscapes. The focus of Bob Hornback's (Oglethorpe) paper on clowning gave us a new context to explain Nashe's vocal style, while Esther Osorio Whewell (Cambridge) turned to Welsh poetry to help us hear Nashe's patterned prose.

Other speakers looked at Nashe as a co-author, and questioned how we might recover evidence of collaboration. Brett Greatley Hirsch (Leeds), Rachel White (Newcastle) and Darren Freebury Jones (Shakespeare Institute), explored different methodologies for authorship attribution, and suggested alternative forms of authorship (as a 'plotter' of plays, for example). We know that Nashe contributed to the now-lost *The Isle of Dogs* (1597), and the first act of *1 Henry VI* (1592), but there is less certainty about how (and if) he collaborated with Marlowe on *Dido Queen of Carthage* (1594). Can current methods of authorship attribution actually help us, or do we need to think in more challenging ways about what authorship meant in this period? In their keynote, Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith (Oxford) reminded us that our current model of collaborative authorship as 'single authorship, multiplied', indicates our discomfort with the protean complexity of both Elizabethan and modern processes of writing. Both Marlowe and Nashe confront us with uncertainty when identifying authorial traits, Nashe especially. The question then is, can our scholarship of Nashe accommodate him, rather than insist that he or indeed any other non-canonical writer, fit within our academic paradigms of single authorship?

Notwithstanding Nashe's combativeness, explored by Eric Vivier (Mississippi State), an unexpected theme emerged at this conference: his generosity. Nashe's discussion of the materiality of print is often interpreted as part of a simplified shift from patronage to the marketplace; yet speakers drew attention to Nashe's emphasis on wit not as economic commodity, but rather as cultural capital which regenerates through circulation. This seemed to be true whether Nashe is discussing the recycling of his paper
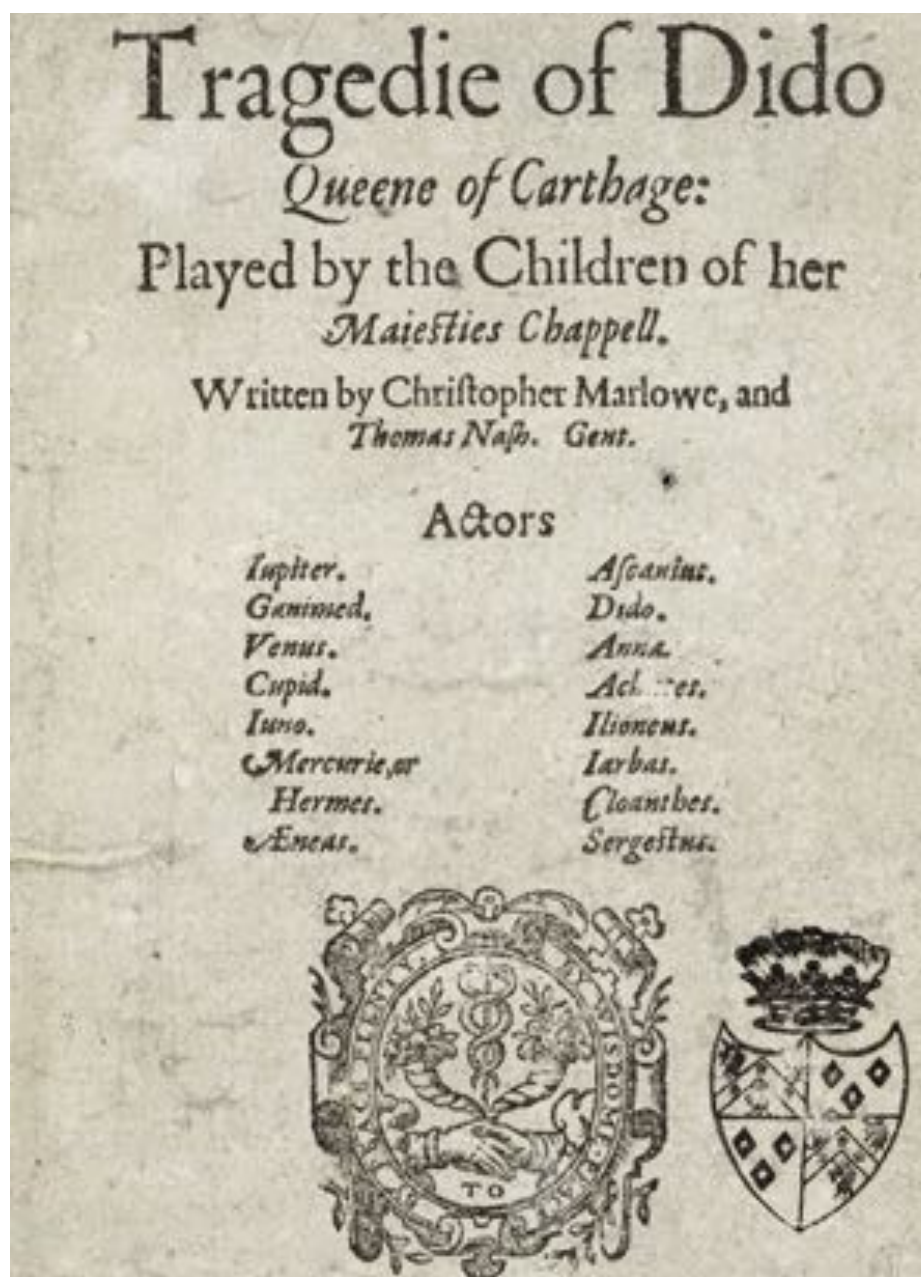
Title page of *Dido Queen of Carthage* (1594). Image: Folger Shakespeare Library Creative Commons licence.

pamphlets versus their stagnation when hoarded by their owners, as Anna Reynolds (York) demonstrated, or when he portrays his linguistic coinages as a form of lexical generosity, as argued in papers by Chris Stamatakis (UCL) and Emily Rowe (Newcastle).

The editors of the Nashe edition are under no illusion as to the difficulty of the task that lies ahead, and we were reminded by Henry Woudhuysen (Oxford) of the many achievements of R.B. McKerrow's edition, as well as his honesty about which puzzles he could not resolve. The mammoth task of meeting Nashe on his own terms and making his writing accessible to a new generation of readers, and the

ability to resolve puzzles that McKerrow left unresolved, now rests on our endeavours and the scholarly community's willingness to exchange ideas at events such as this one. We believe that with this help we are beginning to make the voice of Thomas Nashe tangible again.

Burckhardt at 200
STEFAN BAUER AND SIMON DITCHFIELD

THE BICENTENARY of the birth of the Swiss scholar, Jacob Burckhardt (25 May 1818 - 8 August 1897), author of *Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860), seemed an appropriate moment at which take stock and consider whether the idea of an 'Italian Renaissance' is still a hermeneutically helpful one. This conference adopted the strategy of looking at Burckhardt's classic book to understand his methods and intentions as well as to judge his continuing relevance. Burckhardt's Civilisation has been described as both 'the supreme expression of the nineteenth-century fantasy of the Italian Renaissance' and as a 'dark, disturbing classic of modernism' which located 'the shock of the new' in Italy's sleepy ruins. For this citizen of Basel, who watched with mounting alarm as Germany transformed itself from a cultural idea into a political empire, his account of the potential of humans to remake an expanding world in their own, individualistic and secular image had its origins in the ferocious political rivalry of Italian city states which sought to claim their legitimacy by every means at their disposal. Burckhardt's depiction of amorality and violence, as well as his powerful praise of artistic achievements, have fuelled a cult of the Renaissance since the late nineteenth century.

An interdisciplinary line-up of speakers critiqued Burckhardt's themes from the perspective of their own current research, not only in art history but also in the fields of religion, literature, political theory, and cultural history. Mikkel Mangold (Basel) laid foundations for what followed by presenting the new critical edition of the *Civilisation* in its original German form (*Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien*); the text should be perceived as a living process from its very first conception. Robert Black (Leeds) pointed out that when Burckhardt entitled the first section of his book as 'The State as a Work of Art', he conceived of the state in the modern sense as the supreme public embodiment of

power. Marco Gentile (Parma) probed developments in Italian scholarship on political life and institutions of Italy in the age of the Renaissance – and Burckhardt's role in them.

Burckhardt's famous thesis about the development of the individual was approached from particularly innovative angles. Virginia Cox (NYU Florence) reflected on ways in which developments in communications technology inflect identity formation, and using this tool as a way of analysing the dynamics of identity formation in Renaissance Italy. Wietse de Boer (Miami University, Ohio) focused on Burckhardt's claim that the Renaissance marked a turn toward introspection and exploration of human nature.

In a section on the 'revival of antiquity', William Stenhouse (New York) looked at how Burckhardt differed in emphasis from the work of

his predecessors (such as Georg Voigt and Jules Michelet). Barbara von Reibnitz (Basel) dealt with the impact of antiquity and humanism on Burckhardt's construction of the Italian Renaissance. Jill Burke (Edinburgh) took up the example of Michelangelo, whom the Swiss was not as fond of as he was of Raphael, to investigate how Burckhardt's periodization of classical revival was closely tied to a moral framework: short-lived perfection and balance themselves contained the seeds of the decadence and chaos that was to follow. The 'discovery of the world and of man' was, for Burckhardt, the description of a new intellectual attitude. Joan-Pau Rubiés (Barcelona) pointed out that much of the context for this change of attitude was not simply the recovery of classical antiquity, but also the dramatic expansion of Europe's

Burckhardt chocolate has been produced in Basel to celebrate the bicentenary of the Swiss scholar's birth. It was modelled on the medal created by the artist Hans Frei for Burckhardt's first centenary in 1918. Image: © Verein Burckhardt200.

geographical horizons and subsequent colonial experience. Giuseppe Marcocci (Oxford) reflected on the continuity between world and man, as well as the emphasis on geography and natural sciences, which encouraged an understanding of the Renaissance as a turning point in the master narrative of European modernity.

Burckhardt's representation of fifteenth-century Italian festival culture guided another very influential cultural historian, Aby Warburg, onto the path of his lifelong research interests. Claudia Wedepohl (Warburg Institute) showed how Warburg's notions on the origin of rituals, theatre, tournaments, motion and emotion and their and influence on Italian Renaissance visual culture were inspired by, but differed from, Burckhardt. Sarah Ross (Boston College) showed that the *commedia dell'arte* may ultimately offer better evidence for his own thesis than the civic festivals he preferred. As Mary Laven (Cambridge) argued, Burckhardt's treatment can be enriched by reconsidering the role of religious objects in bringing sacred order to the domestic space.

The last section of Burckhardt's *Civilisation* dealt with morality and religion. According to Nicholas Terpstra (Toronto), when Burckhardt framed his Renaissance dialectically, it was inevitable that what was new, rational, deliberate and free would need to mark a departure from what was tired, incurious, superstitious and corrupt. Stefan Bauer (York) argued that Burckhardt, as a young man, had suffered a religious crisis and that, throughout his life, he reflected on the relationship between religion, secularization, the State and culture. His presentation of the Reformation went strongly against the blueprint of positive Protestant historiography.

The concluding roundtable, chaired by Brian Cummings (York), sparked an extremely rich discussion. It was felt, overall, that 'Renaissance' as a concept of historical periodization has lost its validity; however, it is very much alive as a term describing a movement in history. It became clear that Burckhardt remains an inspiration for scholars today for two reasons: firstly, because of his interdisciplinarity; secondly, because of his ambivalence and irony towards the Renaissance phenomena which he himself described. His combination of these two tones makes him a classic, as Peter Burke (Cambridge) noted. Finally, Burckhardt was both precocious and prescient in pointing out the inherent contradictions of the so-called 'civilising process' of early modern Europe, with which scholars from different disciplines are still struggling to come to terms.

'Burckhardt 200: The "Civilisation of the Italian Renaissance"' was hosted by the British Academy on 31 May-1 June 2018, with further financial support from the SRS, CREMS York, the Warburg Institute and the Embassy of Switzerland. It was convened by Simon Ditchfield, Stefan Bauer (both York) and Michelle O'Malley (Warburg Institute).

Literary Form After Matter, 1500-1700
DIANNE MITCHELL AND KATHERINE HUNT

WHAT DOES FORM MEAN at a time when the materials of Renaissance literature 'matter' more than ever? This conference gave scholars working at the fraught interface of formalism and the study of the material text a chance to consider the role of form in the wake of the 'material turn'. Sophie Butler's opening keynote on the relationship between messy manuscript sheets and the intellectually flexible essay exemplified a recurring theme of the conference: materiality's capacity to shape literary forms. But as our respondent, Adam Smyth, noted, questions of form quickly became questions of materiality. Literary 'texts' such as Renaissance 'characters', satirical portraits sometimes inscribed on dishware for after-dinner performance, challenged our capacity to distinguish between the effects of form and matter. Participants also demonstrated tensions between form and matter, as when instalments of serialized romance were read in the 'wrong' order, or when our own or early modern readers' expectations about what Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, our second keynote speaker, has called 'the work of form' affect how literature is materialized on the page. Conversations continued over an exhibition of rare materials in the library, while questions drawn from a 'casket of inquiry' at the conference's end raised further issues to be explored, we hope, in new settings.

'Literary Form After Matter, 1500-1700' was held at The Queen's College, Oxford on 22 June 2018. It was organized by Katherine Hunt and Dianne Mitchell (both Queen's, Oxford), and generously sponsored by SRS, the Oxford Centre for Early Modern Studies, and The Queen's College.

Image taken from a *Poetical Miscellany,* c. 1690-1730. Image copyright: Folger Library, MS V.a. 308, fol. 91v.

Musical Culture in the Wars of Religion, 1550-1650

TOM HAMILTON, ALEX ROBINSON, EDWARD WICKHAM

MUSIC WAS A CRUCIAL battleground in the Wars of Religion. Historians and musicologists have, however, rarely combined their approaches to understand the full significance that music had in the civil wars. Historians have primarily studied how music shaped confessional identities, for example, as Protestants sang the Psalms together in worship or on the battlefield, to express their solidarity and take comfort in their faith despite persecution. Musicologists, on the other hand, tend to concentrate on the most important composers from this time (such as Eustache Du Caurroy or Pierre Guédron), the genres in which they wrote (like ballets or airs de cour), or issues associated with the performance of this repertoire.

This conference aimed to overcome the boundaries that remain between these scholarly disciplines. Discussions focused on the various contexts within which music was used and considered its impact in the Wars of Religion, exploring the role of music from all sectors of society, from the royal courts to the city streets, and from both Protestant and Catholic perspectives. Who sang music and for what aims? What was the relationship (if any) between the performance of music in elite circles versus the use of this art form among the wider public? Did music solidify or traverse confessional divisions? And how far can modern performers recreate sixteenth- and seventeenth-century soundscapes?

Historians and musicologists approached these questions from different perspectives within a shared conversation. The question of royal authority is central in debates about early modern French culture, but contrasting approaches between the disciplines led to sometimes surprising conclusions. For historians, the *Te Deum* ceremony has long been seen as a cornerstone of royal absolutist ideology, but Peter Bennett (Case Western Reserve) showed how the musical performance of this hymn instead placed supplication to God at the centre of the ceremony. Musicologists have studied in detail compositions such as Clement Janequin's 'La Guerre', and contextualised it with songs composed by everyday soldiers – 'aventuriers' – during the Italian wars, yet David Potter (Kent) brought to bear his expertise as a military historian in showing how the soldier's authorial voice was most likely a fiction to reinforce royal power, since soldiers were more likely to ask for their wages than praise their sovereign after a long day's campaigning.

One of the most productive points of comparison came in the exploring dynamics of musical performance and its reception. Alex Robinson (Cambridge) analysed the participation of musicians and singers in the 1594 Avignon entry of

François Dubois, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre* (c.1572-84). Image: Wikimedia Commons.

Cardinal Ottavio Acquaviva d'Aragona, while Melinda Latour (Tufts) discussed ways in which late-sixteenth-century polyphonic compositions supported a royal programme of moral reform in the French kingdom. By contrast, Margaret McGowan (Sussex) focused on court ceremonies and royal entries that failed to achieve their goals, most tragically in the festivities of peace that accompanied the marriage of Henri de Navarre and Marguerite de Valois in August 1572, and so immediately preceded the St Bartholomew's Day massacres. Tom Hamilton (Cambridge) similarly showed how royalist collectors of Catholic League song-sheets adapted these ephemeral texts to undermine their confessional claims. The long-term legacy of the civil wars transformed urban soundscapes, as David van der Linden (Groningen) explained in his paper on the memory of the civil wars in seventeenth-century Montpellier, while Kat Hill (Birkbeck) explored the case of radical Protestants who travelled to North America, but whose song-singing tied them back to Europe. It was in performing music from the period of the Wars of Religion that the importance of interdisciplinary connections in this field became most apparent. Edward Wickham (Cambridge) introduced the St Catharine's College choir in their performance of Psalm settings composed by Claude Le Jeune, a Protestant who rallied to Henri IV at the end of the civil wars. As Daniel Trocmé Latter (Cambridge) showed, Le Jeune was one distinguished Protestant composer among many working to adapt the Psalms for the French-speaking Protestant community. Discussing this performance in a historical perspective, and comparing it with Catholic songs introduced by Emilie Murphy (York), we explored established topics for the cultural history of religion in a new light. Historians often talk about the importance of collective memory in establishing group identities, especially confessional identities. But this seems obvious to musicians, who know through experience how singing together can build group bonds, and how the demands of practice and repetition cultivate deep familiarity with message of a piece.

Overall, the conference left us with the striking conclusion that, however much music pursuing peace had failed to bring an end to the Wars of Religion – most strikingly in the festivities preceding the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre – musicians and their patrons never gave up on the transformative potential of music. Instead, they resolved to continue composing and performing with increased vigour, to sing the praises of peace and (in Le Jeune's case) royal authority as the only path to find virtue amid the violent struggles of the civil wars.

Reimagining Records
ABIGAIL DORR

AS HISTORIANS, the creation of innovative methodologies and approaches to the limited sources at our disposal is crucial for enhancing our understanding of the past. The authenticity, legibility, survival and availability of evidence poses a continuing challenge for those seeking to bring the Middle Ages and Renaissance period to life. 'Reimagining Records' was a two-day conference and series of workshops that not only opened new opportunities for historical research, but also encouraged delegates to rethink and evaluate the possibilities and potential of the records with which they are familiar. It was a celebration of creativity in the disciplines of medieval and early modern history and allowed researchers to showcase their own innovative approaches to records and record production. The event cultivated inspiring and thought-provoking discussions on how historians can best access voices and lives hidden within the formulaic language and administrative processes of day-to-day records. The conference encouraged a re-consideration of the purpose of records and of what archived documents have to tell us beyond the initial reason for their creation. The National Archives at Kew was a perfect location for an event centred on the use of evidence, with a huge collection of documents and manuscripts being available for scrutiny throughout the day. Delegates had the opportunity to partake in a series of hands-on workshops investigating royal inventories, controversial law cases, and the last will and testament of Henry VIII. 'Reimagining Records' brought together scholars from all over the world, studying a range of disciplines from Anglo-Saxon semantics to the signatures of late-medieval cloth merchants.

Fashioning the Early Modern Courtier
VALERIO ZANETTI

Maerten de Vos (attr.), *The Vanity of Women: Masks and Bustles* (c.1600). Image: Wikimedia Commons.

EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN courts have been traditionally described as crucial sites for the elaboration and diffusion of specific codes of behaviour aspiring to shape the ideal man and woman. Such models were deeply embodied, the diktats of etiquette relying upon corporeal mastery acquired through strict training. In this vein, the study of fashion has become crucial insofar as clothing provides a very material setting with the power to promote specific patterns of thought and action. This conference explored the ways in which clothing contributed to the gendered fashioning of the courtier in early modern Europe between 1550 and 1750.

Several papers examined how male and female courtiers skilfully constructed their identity and negotiated their social status through sartorial trends and beautification techniques. Mark De Vitis (Sydney) analysed how the rivalry between Louis XIV's mistress Madame de Montespan and his sister-in-law the duchess d'Orléans was articulated through sartorial choices. General alterations in court fashion often accompanied momentous political changes, such as James VI's accession to the English throne. Jemma Field (Brunel) discussed how relocation of the Scottish royal household to London was accompanied by a re-styling of female courtiers' dress. Clothing also played a key diplomatic role in relationships between foreign powers, especially when leading actors came into physical contact. Lena Dahrén (Uppsala) revealed the complex sartorial planning which accompanied the 1559 embassy of Duke Johan of Sweden to England. Beth Walsh (UEA) carefully examined the complex meaning of the lace cravats en gros point de Venise conspicuously displayed by exiled Stuart kings during the late seventeenth century. Isabella Rosner (Cambridge) shed new light on the curious fashion for needlework frog pouches in Stuart England.

Sovereigns could assert their power by clothing the royal entourage and enforcing vestiary policies. Catherine Stearn (Eastern Kentucky) argued that Elizabeth I went as far as controlling the outfit of her ladies-in-waiting, turning them into 'queenly surrogates' able to act in her stead on minor ceremonial occasions. Influence in sartorial matters could be exercised formally through an official appointment within the royal household such as the Master of the Wardrobe, whose function at Louis XIII's court was investigated by Marc Jaffré (St Andrews).

Abigail Gomulkiewicz (Cambridge) drew attention to the complex network built around the informal, yet highly ritualised practice of gift-giving at the Elizabethan court. Fashioning of the early modern courtier, however, did not simply constitute a sartorial and outwardly turned political strategy. Embracing a corporealist perspective, some speakers endeavoured to integrate a semiotic reading of dress with accounts of its fundamentally embodied nature, both in its creation and in its wearing. Symbolic sartorial practices in fact engaged directly with the material body, re-shaping and de-forming the silhouette. Clothes and accessories could provide support and protection, whilst sometimes constituting a hindrance to even the simplest of movements. They also performed the crucial function of articulating sexual difference by clearly distinguishing male from female bodies.

Our speakers' exploration of court fashions' meanings, production and circulation was accompanied by two keynotes. Evelyn Welch (KCL) invited dress historians to test their findings against cutting-edge sociological research into the dynamics regulating information flow and consumer behaviour. Maria Hayward (Southampton) presented a detailed study of the Scottish court between 1542-1701 that revealed the remarkable versatility of courtiers' behaviours and their ability to re-fashion their sartorial habits according to changes in circumstances, political as well as personal.

At the conference's close, a panel comprised of the two keynotes and Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge) addressed central issues within the fields of early modern fashion history and court studies. What emerged as the marking feature of the conference was a general willingness to challenge traditional top-down models of fashion circulation at court and provide a more nuanced and inclusive narrative able to account for all the actors involved. The reconstruction of the social and cultural background of the elite consumer, traditionally at the core of research in fashion history, has been accompanied by an unprecedented attention to the activity and agency of craftsmen and merchants. The role of the maker has been the subject of much investigation; a shift which has no doubt been triggered by the growing interest in the material qualities of the fashionable object and a desire to understand the manufacturing process in all its phases. The emphasis on 'making' has also drawn scholars' attention towards the benefits that are to be gained from approaching reconstruction and re-enactment as epistemological tools in historical research. Dress, in the words of Susan Vincent, creates 'a setting in which only certain activities and patterns of thought will be congruent, or meaningful', and a study of the clothed body provides a privileged gateway into the world of court politics and a unique opportunity to access courtiers' embodied experiences.

Cities of Strangeness
ANNIE DICKINSON AND LAURA SWIFT

NOTIONS OF 'STRANGENESS' of are receiving increased attention in early modern studies as a means of considering questions of race, identity, community, and spectacle. This conference brought together scholars from a range of disciplines to illuminate the strangeness of the early modern urban environment. It explored the increases of those considered 'strangers' (a term which could refer to somebody from outside of the parish, as well as to a foreigner) in early modern cities, the extent to which urban living involved estrangement or alienation, and the strange ways in which literature and art responded to the transformation of early modern cities across Europe. Panels focused on topics including strange relations that emerge between the urban and domestic in dramatic space; the significance of strange objects, goods, and entertainments in representations of cities; and the impact of influxes of strangers on urban communities. Discussions arising from such panels developed new and often surprising perspectives on the ways in which the strange and familiar blur in early modern cities, and on the continuing advantages of thinking about the historical in strange ways.

Athanasius Kircher, *Arx Babylonica à Semiramide, exstructa* (1679). Image: New York Public Library Digital Collection.

On Belonging: English Conceptions of Migration and Transculturality, 1550–1700

LAUREN WORKING AND NANDINI DAS

T HE ONLY SURVIVING LINES written in Shakespeare's own hand are a poignant speech voiced by the character of Sir Thomas More, who delivers a passionate defense of strangers: 'Wither would you go?' More asks the angry crowd. 'What country...Should give you harbour? Go you to France or Flanders...Nay, anywhere that not adheres to England,/ Why, you must needs be strangers…[spurned] like dogs, and like as if that God/ Owed not nor made not you'. Questions concerning the status of foreigners and their willingness to assimilate recur frequently in public and academic discourse. What does it mean to belong to a city, a state, a nation? Can one be a citizen of everywhere, or of nowhere? In what ways has migration shaped concepts of Englishness and national heritage?

The early modern period took shape through a rich tapestry of global exchange, at a time when English political and legal systems were becoming increasingly codified. More's plea to show empathy to refugees goes to the heart of English tensions between assimilation and exploitation. Attitudes to immigration in Tudor and Stuart England were ambiguous and at times contradictory: the state welcomed Protestant refugees and offered patents and naturalization to migrant craftspeople while retaining a deep mistrust in non-English ways of life that seemed threatening to governing regime. At the same time, the cross-cultural engagement that shaped this period profoundly impacted English daily life. English trade and expansion facilitated the movement of people and a myriad of goods from tobacco to translated books, contributing to new ideas and experiences of human diversity that questioned religious and political assumptions behind established notions of Englishness. These historical perspectives on encounter and responses to migration can shed light on current debates and anxieties about English
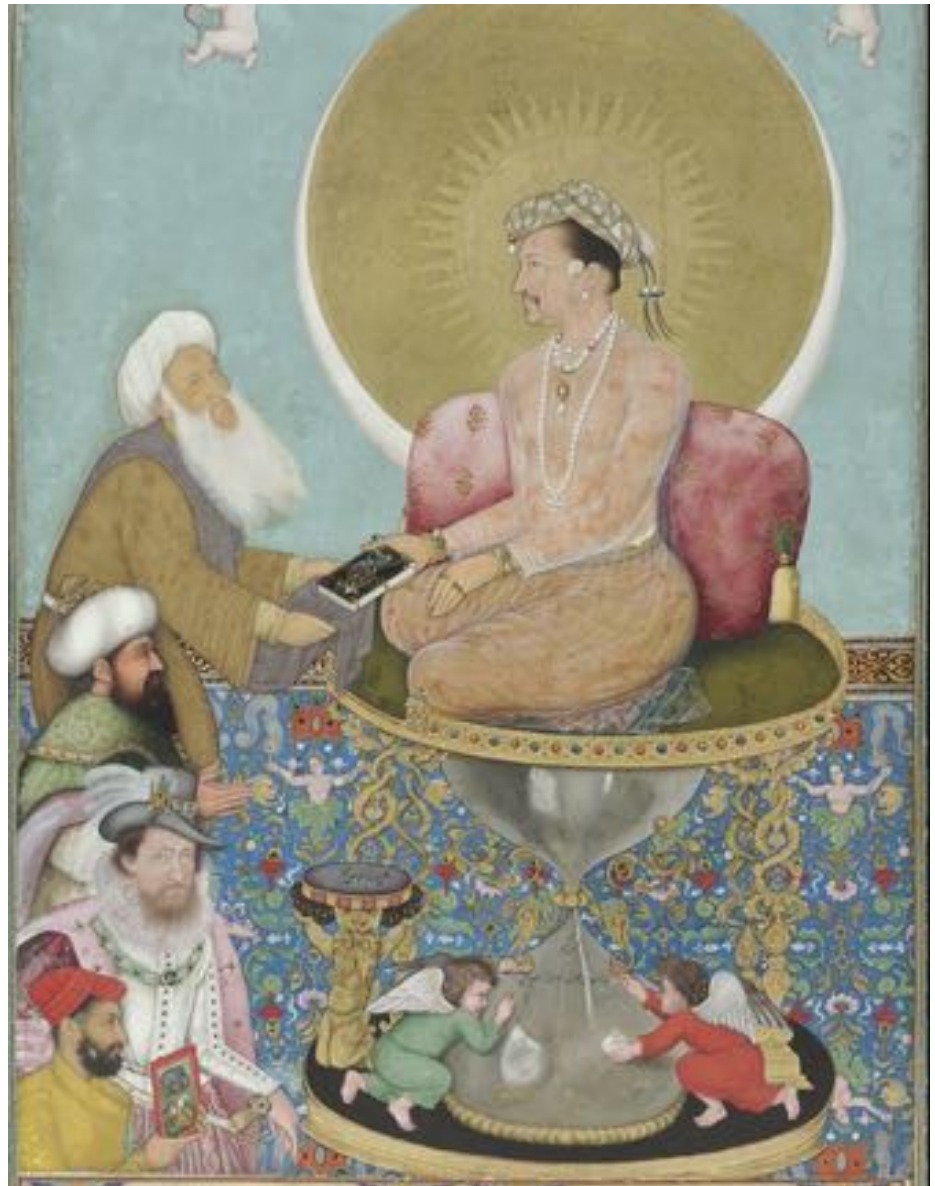
Jahangir preferring Sufi sheikhs over the Ottoman Sultan and King James I of England, by Bichitr, c. 1620. Image copyright: Freer/ Sackler (Smithsonian Museum of Asian Art).

identity, citizenship, and the rights of first- and second-generation migrants in England.

Organized by the European Research Council-funded project 'Travel, Transculturality, and Identity in England, 1550–1700' (TIDE), 'On Belonging: English Conceptions of Migration and Transculturality, 1550–1700' sought interdisciplinary perspectives on early modern transculturality. Scholars from a range of disciplines and institutions across the UK, Europe, America, and India examined transcultural figures and

debated key conceptual frameworks around travellers, aliens, strangers, citizens, and denizens. Day one of the conference focused on concepts and frameworks that set the stage for subsequent dialogues on transcultural agents and go-betweens on day two, and imaginative or creative responses to transculturality and new social habits on day three. As several speakers argued, migrants brought technical innovations but also a keen 'eye' for depicting English society in ways that the English themselves could not, or did not, always do.

Cup with cover made with Indian mother-of-pearl. Originally worked by Gujarati craftsmen in Western India, then dismantled and re-worked in London, probably c. 1590s. Image copyright: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

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   Discussions brought insight into a range of immigrant cultures and attitudes, including tensions between national and cosmopolitan allegiances, with an attention to nuance. English encounters with the Ottoman empire involved a sustained discussion about English knowledge on Kurdistan, for example, and on information-exchange between intellectuals and diplomats in the wider Middle East. The effects of mobility on travellers' mental and physical health generated a discussion on grief and sickness, but also came into conversation with other panellists about the experiences of women travellers. Transcultural objects and social practices were related to sociability, from the religio-economic context of consuming fish to the fashion for specific types of drinking vessels. Other approaches involved thinking about ships as transcultural agents, or about how community networks fostered by merchants and sailors in

Europe shaped their relations with the English state. Keynotes by Imtiaz Habib (Old Dominion University) and Beverly Lemire (Alberta) explored the possibilities and challenges of giving voice to non-European historical actors, whether Indian sailors classified as 'blacks' (Habib) or to the increased presence of non-European slaves and servants who changed experiences of domesticity in English households at home and abroad (Lemire). At the conference's public lecture, Dame Marina Warner, president of the Royal Society of Literature, examined the figure of Dido and the influence of classical literature on early modern and

Chinese porcelain ewer mounted by English goldsmiths, c. late sixteenth century, thought to have belonged to William Cecil, Lord Burghley. Image copyright: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

contemporary discourse about migration. The conference also raised questions about exclusion and suppression, and the ways in which English men and women fashioned themselves and their nation at the expense of others. Contributors proposed new ways of approaching the archives, paying attention to silences and absences, mistranslations and acts of erasure. How can we give voice to those lives we can only glimpse in fragments? Can things, like people, be multilingual?

'On Belonging' concluded with the poet Sarah Howe, author of *Loop of Jade* (2015) and TIDE's writer-in-residence for 2017/18, presenting her work with TIDE and the World Museum (National Museums Liverpool). The museum intends to reconfigure its ceramics display using poetic responses by Howe to invite visitors to identify with, and respond to, the transcultural objects in the case. Research that emerged from this conference can contribute to public engagement, education, and policy initiatives about diversity and English heritage in contemporary situations, where the entangled voices of go-betweens can bear witness to history, and successfully query the canon.

'On Belonging' was held from 26-28 July 2018 at the University of Liverpool's London campus. Funding from SRS and the University of Liverpool supported bursaries for early career researchers. Real-time tweets about the conference presentations can be followed by searching #OnBelonging on Twitter. For more information on TIDE, including a full conference programme and free access to the TIDE: Keywords resource, see www.tideproject.uk.

All of the conferences featured in this section of the *Bulletin* received Society for Renaissance Studies conference grants.

To find out more visit:

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

Crossing Boundaries
RICHARD MORRIS AND MARGARET SHEWRING

IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD, festivals and occasions of diplomatic ceremonial often involved the movement of people and courtly retinues across various forms of borders. They could therefore serve as sites of interaction between religious, political, linguistic, visual, musical, literary, theatrical and material cultures. In many ways, the movement and physical presence of rulers was also in itself an act of tracing borders and asserting sovereignty. Often, these interactions and delineations of jurisdiction were accompanied by underlying tensions which could be made more or less explicit in the diverse languages of festival.

Interactions could be direct, in the case of people physically travelling between territories to attend or participate in festival and diplomatic occasions, or indirect, through performed representations of other cultures. They occurred not only within Europe but in relation to other areas of the early modern world with which Europeans came into contact. Such occasions might involve claims to and negotiations of status, precedence or material advantage, and entail multiple layers of meaning.

This interdisciplinary conference of the Society for European Festivals Research (SEFR) focused on the period from c.1450-1750. What emerged from the conference was not a conventional catalogue of the manifestation of power, but a much more nuanced picture of the use of the elements involved in the performance of festival and diplomatic occasions to challenge and critique those expecting to assert their authority as well as to exclude some participants and spectators from a full understanding of the sentiments being expressed. The tensions between the local and the more universal and generic languages of festival interactions also came to the fore.

William O'Reilly (Cambridge) illustrated how difficulties in establishing precedence and correct protocol in uncertain situations could lead to hasty improvisations or even attempts to avoid festive and diplomatic encounters as Archduke Charles, self-styled King of Spain, travelled on the eve of the War of the Spanish Succession seeking allies for his cause. Nikola Piperkov (University Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne) spoke about the use of festival as a strategy for humbling rather than glorifying a dignitary, in relation to the entry of a Papal Legate into Lyons in 1664.

This conference went beyond traditional scholarship by setting the functioning of European courts within a more global perspective. Richard Morris (Cambridge)—focusing on festivals in the Holy Roman Empire during the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries—discussed not only interactions which could take place between Christian European states as part of these occasions, but also multifaceted direct and indirect encounters with the Ottoman Empire and the inhabitants of the New World. Jonathan Dixon (Cambridge), meanwhile, highlighted a little-known late-fifteenth-century interaction between Pope Sixtus IV and Ethiopians who were taken to be representatives of 'Prester John' – an encounter fusing political reality with popular legend and European misunderstandings of Africa.

In an age of Atlantic discovery and the associated foundation of colonies in the Americas, European forms of festival could be reinterpreted and translated in new contexts. This was explored by Elena Mazzoleni (Bergamo) in her paper on 'The seventeenth-century réceptions in Nouvelle France: sociopolitical, cultural and theatrical crossings'. The movement and translation of material culture, too, is crucial in understanding the inter-connectedness of the early modern world as seen through festival occasions. This was exemplified by Leah Clark (Open University) in her paper 'Objects of Encounter: Diplomatic Entanglements in Renaissance Naples'. A number of papers presented at the conference, revised, expanded, and fully referenced for publication, together with a scholarly introduction, are to appear as an edited volume.

Space, Place and Interface   ERICA ASKEW-JONES

IN THIS ITS THIRD YEAR, the contributors to the annual Exeter Centre for Early Modern Studies Conference came from as far as Edinburgh and Munich to discuss a range of topics linked by the theme of 'Space, Place and Interface: Being in the Early Modern World'. Sessions explored interfaces between human and non-human, and the living and the dead; places such as Devon, London, Marseille and Spain; and the representation and use of space on the stage. Plenaries featured Vanessa Harding (Birkbeck) on constructing households in early modern London, and Philip Schwyzer (Exeter) speaking on the extent to which Shakespeare influences current archaeological narratives. A fruitful exchange of ideas illuminated important connections between identity and location, both in the past and into the present day.

Medieval and Early Modern Spaces and Places
LEAH CLARK AND HELEN COFFEY

THIS CONFERENCE AIMED TO build on the interdisciplinary research undertaken in early modern studies, to provide an intellectual framework for individuals working on the themes of spaces and places, and to identify potential future projects on these themes. Theoretical approaches have informed new ways of thinking about the social production of space (from Henri Lefebvre to David Harvey) and recent research networks have also stimulated novel approaches to early modern spaces. The conference examined how early modern spaces were mutable and permeable, and how new technologies, objects, and social formations played a role in defining spaces as well as identities. Papers examined life in buildings, institutions and broader geographical areas from a range of perspectives. Speakers addressed how medieval and early modern spaces were adapted and transformed through the movement of material and immaterial things. They considered which aspects of political, social and economic infrastructures enabled the exchange of objects and ideas, and to what extent a sense of place depended upon the activities taking place there.

Early modern bodies were scrutinised as agents, which moved across spaces, demarcating them as well as contaminating others. Sick bodies were housed in hospitals that could be spaces of intellectual exchange, while plagued bodies provided new ways to conceptualise memory and space, and thus gave rise to new pictorial forms of representation. Criminal bodies hanging on the gallows demarcated the civilised and uncivilised spaces of cities and yet were also the sites of public gatherings. The significance of city walls was considered, pointing to the movement of bodies across space, where travellers might be both feared or welcomed, appearing as tropes in literature and art of the time. Rituals performed and the objects housed in spaces during the

A section of Norwich's city walls near Conesford gate. Image: Editor's own.

Reformation were considered in literature of the period as indicators of one's faith, gender, and political allegiance. Domestic spaces were explored as communicators of identity via the design and objects displayed in galleries (interior and exterior) and through the rooms used to accommodate guests such as the great hall. The role of public spaces in the communication of individual and civic identity was considered, and the careful regulation by city authorities of the objects and architecture contained within each urban space. Finally, differing eyewitness accounts of theatrical and private musical performances underlined how observers would take away very different impressions from a single cultural encounter. Just how all these spaces were experienced, reflected upon, and represented were key issues addressed throughout.

Papers covered a wide range of geographic spaces from Italy to England to the Netherlands, and interdisciplinarity was at the heart of the conference with speakers considering spaces from a variety of perspectives. Such a range of approaches allowed for fruitful discussions that demonstrated the fluidity of geographical and spatial boundaries, and the co-existence of the literary, musical, architectural, artistic and religious features of a single space. The conference's interdisciplinary nature allowed participants to think more broadly about the medieval and early modern individual's senses and experiences: from looking closely at pictures and touching objects that adorned a domestic space, to listening carefully to the public and private performances of musicians, reading and hearing literary texts, tasting the food provided by a king, masquerading in gardens to walking beside the wearisome traveller upon the road. These experiential and interdisciplinary approaches provide a key step towards the theme of next year's conference on Experiencing the Court, where the emphasis on the senses will be particularly important.

An informal poster session allowed participants to share news of recent publications as well as of public-facing initiatives of the Open University, such as co-production of the BBC series *Civilisations* and the OU's open access films on Open Arts Objects. The conference not only brought together PhD students and established scholars in the presentation of their research, but also established a new network of scholars working within the broad field of spaces and places, which now has a JISCMAIL mailing list (MEMSPACES@JISCMAIL.AC.UK). The range of papers and lively discussions of the conference confirmed that there is still much to explore on historical spaces and places.

Borders and Crossings
GABOR GELLÉRI

BORDERS AND CROSSINGS is the largest regular gathering of specialists of travel and travel writing. In 2017, the event was held for the first time in Wales, and the organizer ensured that the setting played a substantive role. Participants had the option to attend a free Welsh class, and the conference was accompanied by a range of satellite events, including a concert by local band Three-legg'd Mare; and an exhibition by Welsh artists reacting to Thomas Pennant's Welsh tour. All plenary lectures were open to delegates and the public. Another main goal was to create a space of cross-fertilization between scholars and creative practitioners. There were several panels on creative writing, and one of the plenary speakers was a cartoon artist (Caryn Leschen, San Francisco). One of the plenaries (by Wendy Bracewell, UCL), and about a third of the talks were on early modern themes. We were also very happy to encounter an unusually large variety of disciplines, and this was probably the first time that 'Borders and Crossings' had delegates representing health studies and international politics.

The Culture of Literature and Language in Medieval and Renaissance Scotland
THEO VAN HEIJNSBERGEN

THIS WAS THE FIFTEENTH in a series of triennial International Conferences on Medieval and Renaissance Scottish Literature and Language (https://icmrsll.org) that have charted how late medieval Scotland, propelled by sustained humanist interests in learning and language, developed a literature characterised by an independent articulation of identity and nation in the long sixteenth century. The conference highlighted how non-canonical topics now rival contributions on established topics such as epic-chivalric texts or 'Chaucerian' Scots (Henryson, Dunbar). Plenaries focused on performativity and on the imposition of periodization following tensions between centre and margin. Particularly striking was the number of papers on Gavin Douglas, translator of Virgil's *Aeneid* (1513). The depth of expertise on display bodes well for the future of Older Scots scholarship and boosts its conceptual relevance to Renaissance studies elsewhere in areas such as the continuity between court and non-court cultures or the heavy dependence in Scottish lyrical expression on manuscript miscellanies.

Ruling Sexualities

ELENA WOODACRE

THE INITIAL *KINGS AND QUEENS* event in 2012 led a series of initiatives to provide platforms for disseminating and developing research in this new field, including the establishment of the Royal Studies Network (which now has c. 450 international members), the *Royal Studies Journal* and the conference series itself. Each conference in the series has had a distinct theme designed to encourage research in aspects of the field in need of further study or greater focus. This year it was decided to explore aspects of LGBTQ history, hence the theme of 'Ruling Sexualities', which encouraged delegates to engage with this understudied, yet incredibly central element of royal lives. Another aspect of this particular conference was the collaboration between the University of Winchester and Historic Royal Palaces. The research team at HRP were particularly interested in the focus on sexuality and LGBTQ history as it resonated with their own ongoing projects as well as plans for future research. The collaboration with HRP was also an opportunity to add a new dimension to the Kings & Queens series by fostering a deeper connection with the heritage sector.

Both elements – LGBTQ studies and engagement with the heritage sector – were reflected in the first day of the conference, which took place at Hampton Court Palace. Matthew Storey's opening lecture 'Researching & Interpreting Gender & Sexuality at Historic Royal Palaces' set an excellent foundation for the conference by exploring some of the challenges in both researching and presenting the sexuality of royal figures. He discussed fundamental debates with regard to terminology, arguing that 'queer' can be a useful term as it embraces non-normative sexual behaviour and is less tied to modern definitions of sexuality which would not have been recognized in earlier periods. Delegates had the opportunity to take specially designed tours led by the curatorial and conservation teams at Hampton

Court, including tours on LGBT history and art. A roundtable of speakers from across the heritage sector including Tim Powell (HRP), Zorian Clayton (V&A and BFI), Rachael Lennon (National Trust) and Sacha Coward (Royal Museums Greenwich) discussed their experience of presenting events which engaged with LGBTQ history. They discussed the mixed reaction received from the enthusiastic reception by the LGBTQ community to some negative comments in the media and social media to the NT's 'Prejudice and Pride' programme of events. The panel and audience engaged in a dynamic discussion around how to engage with wider audiences and new places as well as how to handle the difficult issue of attempting to understand the sexuality of royal figures of the recent and distant past.

The remaining three days of the conference at the University of Winchester demonstrated the varied possibilities offered to interpret the theme of 'Ruling Sexualities'. One aspect reflected upon was the relationship between monarchs and favourites, both in terms of same-sex relationships and the ever-popular topic of royal mistresses. Intriguingly, several papers highlighted relationships which fell outside the typical spectrum, provoking queries about how we name or describe these liaisons. This included Jonathan Spangler's paper about

Henry VIII's Great Hall, Hampton Court Palace. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

homosexuality at the court of Versailles, in which he coined the term 'maître en titre' to reflect the long-term relationship between Philippe d'Orleans and the Chevallier de Lorraine. Like the official role of 'maîtresse en titre' to the French king, their relationship was widely acknowledged by Louis XIV and his courtiers. In a very different context in terms of period, place and gender, Miriam Shadis explored the situation of Urraca of León-Castile and her half-sister Teresa of Portugal; both were regnant queens who had long-term lovers with whom they had children out of wedlock during their reign. There was an intensive discussion after the paper, which carried on into social media afterwards, about what these men should be called: lovers, paramours, consorts and partners were all rejected for overly negative or modern connotations. Both papers engaged with the difficulties posed in researching and writing about non-normative sexual relationships of royal figures of the past.

Other fruitful strands that tied directly into the main themes of the conference, or highlighted other areas in need of further research, included panels on the impact of sexuality on the reputation and representation of royal figures in contemporary literature, art and modern media, particular dynasties such as the Bourbons and the Borgias, royal marriages and the economic aspects of royal studies. A special session encouraged delegates to 'pitch a project' to fellow attendees, reflecting the ethos of the Network and conference series as a venue to foster research collaboration. A call for papers for Kings & Queens 8 was launched; this event will be held at the University of Catania on 24-27 June 2019 with a theme of 'Resilience'.

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POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP REPORT

Recantation in Reformation Britain
JONATHAN REIMER

IN 1528, the royal printer Richard Pynson printed a short verse tract entitled *A Replycacion Agaynst Certayne Yong Scholers Abiured of Late*. Composed by the renowned poet John Skelton and likely alluding to the submissions of the Cambridge scholars Thomas Bilney and Thomas Arthur before Thomas Wolsey the previous November, this pamphlet hauntingly expressed in a rhyming couplet the choice facing those forced to recant: 'To beare a fagot or to be enflamed/ Thus are they undone or utterly ashamed'. On the eve of Henry VIII's Reformation, Skelton saw recantation as a means of combating Lutheran heresy, largely comparable to how the English Church had suppressed the teachings of Lollards for the past hundred-and-fifty years. He could not, however, had anticipated how this practice would become part of the confessional struggle over the English Church for the next hundred-and-fifty years.

During my tenure as SRS Postdoctoral Fellow I examined the phenomenon of forced religious recantation in Reformation Britain: from the Lollard submissions of the fifteenth century to the non-conformist and Jesuit abjurations of the seventeenth century. While recantations could be made by all members of society, they were more often obliged of popular authors, leading intellectuals, eminent courtiers, high-ranking clergymen and other taste-makers liable influence those around them. They took place in significant venues, such as Paul's Cross, the open-air preaching cross located in the churchyard of St Paul's Cathedral in London, adjacent to the central hub of booksellers in the capital. The texts of these submissions circulated among the British populace as print and manuscript propaganda. They also played an important role in polemical works written by religious exiles living on the continent – first

Anon., woodcut of the Protestant martyr, James Bainham (*d*. 1532). Image: National Portrait Gallery (NPG D24912).

Protestant and then Catholic. In short, recantations played an integral, but largely overlooked, part in the negotiation of religious identity in Tudor and Stuart Britain.

This research project provides the first comprehensive study of recantation in Reformation Britain.

Previous analysis of this subject is cursory at best, often overlooking it altogether in favour of accounts of persecution and martyrdom. However, this phenomenon is worthy of in-depth study for three principal reasons. First, it sheds significant new light on the careers of key political and ecclesiastical figures, including Thomas Cranmer, John Cheke, Nicholas Shaxton and John Jewel, to name only a few. Second, the practice of recantation was both more widespread and had a much greater impact on the British Reformation(s) than has been previously appreciated. Third, it offers a unique opportunity to examine religious conformity, the elusive default position of the majority of the British population during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Recantations furnish rare instances when religious compliance and the complex motivations behind it are visible to historical inquiry. Those who abjured were often lightning rods for discussions over whether or not religious dissimulation was acceptable. Concurrently, public submissions were a powerful tool for regimes – alternatingly Catholic and Protestant – to discredit their confessional adversaries and to promote doctrinal uniformity and cultural cohesion. Recantations, therefore, furnish insight into the process of religious change and new evidence for both the possibilities and pitfalls of religious conformity in early modern Britain.

One particularly striking revelation of this research has been how the practice of recantation evolved in light of Reformation politics. Consider, for example, the case of William Tolwyn, the parson of St Antholin in London, who was arrested for allowing Alexander Seton, the evangelical chaplain to the Duke of Suffolk, to preach in his parish without a license from Edmund Bonner, the conservative bishop of London. In the wake of his apprehension, Tolwyn was forced to recant publicly his failure to celebrate traditional ceremonies as well as his ownership of heretical books forbidden by both episcopal injunction and royal proclamation. His submission was published as a pamphlet and it was circulated widely enough that it reached John Bale, a Protestant exile living on the continent. On reading this document, Bale protested that the charges faced by Tolwyn were notably different from the articles abjured by Lollards in previous centuries. While his point was tendentious, Bale was certainly correct that the polemical aims of this submission outstripped the traditional aim of recantations to repress heresy. Neither was this an isolated incident. In the same year that Bale wrote his rebuttal of Tolwyn's abjuration, the pamphleteer Thomas Becon was made to recant about misleading his readers about his knowledge of Greek. This charge sought to tarnish the reputation of a leading evangelical author and had more to do with a debate over the pronunciation of this language raging at Cambridge than his particular writing. By examining the development of this practice throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, my research offers new insight into the 'culture of persuasion' that shaped Reformation Britain.

Three types of publications will result from this research project: journal articles, academic resources, and a monograph. I am currently finishing articles revising the scholarly interpretation of Becon's recantation in light of newly discovered print and manuscript evidence and examining the use of Tolwyn's abjuration in confessional polemic in mid-Tudor England. These articles will be followed by the completion of several academic resources, including an annotated transcription of the three manuscripts describing the recantation of the popular London preacher Robert Wisdom (British Library, MS Harleian 425, fols. 4r-7v; London Metropolitan Archives, DL/C/B/MS09171001, fols. 44r-45v; Emmanuel College Library, MS 261, fols. 88r-130v). These publications will lay the groundwork for a comprehensive monograph examining the evolution and significance of recantation in Reformation Britain. This study is tentatively entitled *A Hand in the Fire: Religious Recantation in Reformation Britain*, in reference to the arresting woodcut included in John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* showing Cranmer plunging his right hand into the fire as a repentant offering to God for having signed recantations of his Protestant faith. The award of this SRS Fellowship, therefore, has not only supported my own career and academic development, but also will continue to illuminate an integral, but understudied, phenomenon shaping Reformation Britain.

The burning of Thomas Cranmer as depicted in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563), p. 1572. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

Dr. Jonathan Reimer received his PhD in History from the University of Cambridge in 2017.

STUDY FELLOWSHIP REPORTS

Jesuit Privileges
JESSICA DALTON

AN SRS STUDY FELLOWSHIP allowed me to complete my doctoral research on the Society of Jesus's efforts to fight spreading religious disobedience in post-Reformation Italy. My thesis illuminated the Jesuits' role by offering the first extensive history of a remarkable papal privilege that allowed members of the Society to absolve and reconcile heretics in the absolute secrecy of sacramental confession. Popes, churchmen, secular rulers, ordinary laymen and the Jesuits themselves saw those who had erred from Catholic orthodoxy as a grave threat to the salvation of souls and the stability of society. It was for this reason that Pope Paul III established the Roman Inquisition in 1542, to investigate, convert and, sometimes, punish heretics. But after Pope Julius III conceded the Jesuit privilege in 1551, heretics on the Italian peninsula could avoid detection and trial by the popes' own inquisitors by seeking a secret reconciliation from a Jesuit confessor.

This privilege, therefore, represents an anomaly in traditional narratives of the Catholic response to heresy in Italy, showing that the Church employed varied, compromising and contradictory methods to bring errant souls back to the fold, rather than a monolithic, coherent and pre-dominantly judicial approach. It is for this reason that the privilege has been noted with interest by scholars of both the Society and the Roman Inquisition, though none have investigated its nature and impact in depth.

My research traced the solicitation, use, revocation and afterlife of this unique privilege in letters, treatises and other unpublished manuscript documents in the Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede (ACDF), Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (ARSI), Archivio della Penitenzieria Apostolica, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Archivio di Stato and Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in Rome, and in state archives across Italy. The SRS Fellowship allowed me to finish this research, funding a two-

Francisco Zurbaran, *St Ignatius of Loyola* (c.1635-50). Image: Wikimedia Commons

week trip to Rome to transcribe a crucial cache of documents sent by the Jesuits to the Inquisition in 1585-6, now held at the ARSI and ACDF. The authors of these documents contested the proposed revocation of the privilege, reflecting on how the power had furthered efforts to stem religious dissent over more than three decades. Indeed, the documents offer an unusually thorough account of the privilege from the point of view of the Jesuits, who usually discussed the power with circumspection. They also indicate which arguments the Jesuits thought would be most compelling to the Roman Inquisition. This final research trip was, therefore, fundamental to establish why the Jesuits continued to solicit the privilege, as well as the arguments that Sixtus V rejected when he finally revoked the power in 1587.

Overall, my thesis showed that the first Jesuits were not subservient Roman agents in the fight against heresy. By examining the entire history of their papal privilege to absolve heresy, using sources produced by Jesuits, inquisitors, popes and secular

rulers, I illustrated that, far from being servants of the Inquisition or even the pope, the first Jesuits used the privilege to secure autonomous jurisdiction over heresy, successfully converting and reconciling numerous heretics because of their perceived and actual independence from Rome.

This conclusion bolsters recent research on the heterogeneity, ambivalence and disobedience of the early Society, and negates existing explanations of the privilege, which suggest that the power facilitated the Jesuits' function as obedient servants of popes and inquisitors. In doing so, my research enhances our understanding not only of this particular privilege, but also of the relationship between the Jesuits, papacy and Roman Inquisition, during a period that was formative and transformative for all three institutions.

Dr Jessica Dalton completed her PhD, on Jesuit confession and the private absolution of heresy in sixteenth-century Italy, at the University of St Andrews.

Pierfrancesco Riccio
DÉSIRÉE CAPPA

Agnolo di Cosimo alias Bronzino, *Crossing of the Red Sea* (detail): Portrait of Pierfrancesco Riccio as the Old Testament priest, Eleazar (1541-42), Palazzo Vecchio, Florence. Image: Wikimedia Commons.

THANKS TO THE SRS Study Fellowship (2017) I was able to spend an eight-week research period in Florence visiting the National Archives to complete research for my PhD thesis.

My doctoral thesis reconstructs the life and career of Pierfrancesco Riccio (1501-64), a plenipotentiary ducal secretary in the service of duke Cosimo I de' Medici. The research focuses on Riccio's involvement in the consolidation of duke Cosimo I de' Medici's power between 1537-44. Riccio is used as a case study to illustrate the role of bureaucracy in the management and shaping of power in sixteenth-century Florence. The ducal secretaries played an important role in preventing the Florentine state from falling apart in the delicate first years of Cosimo's reign. Secretaries managed power through their accounting and administrative activities and unified and harmonized the state, until then still too fragmented in negotiations between the dominant city and local centres of power.

The fellowship allowed me to build the last chapter of my thesis – an analysis of 'the mechanics of political communication', with reference to the exchange of information between duke Cosimo and his bureaucrats. During my research at Florence's National Archives, I consulted the sub-fonds Carteggio dei Segretari, Registri, copie di lettere, Appendice al Carteggio di Cosimo and the fonds Miscellanee Medicee. These sources reveal how the Medici ducal secretaries – real 'professionals of written communication' – controlled strategic information exchanges across the dominion and managed political communication within Florence. By relying on complex and shared communication webs connecting power and individuals, secretaries were able to influence decisions and shape political power.

Particularly, Pierfrancesco Riccio's correspondence illustrates how he controlled the Medici propaganda and was at the centre of a network of informers and spies. Riccio meticulously recorded every piece of information he received, from apparently insignificant events – such as the family history and love affairs of a Greek immigrant in Pisa – to the main historical, political, and social events across the Italian peninsula – such as movements of troops or the spread of epidemics. In addition, his papers gives us details on the people involved in his network, on how information was gathered and on how trustworthy the sources of information were. Streets, for example, were an exceptional source of news, as they worked as a palimpsest for messages of various kinds, mainly through graffiti or placards. Sixteenth-century Florence really comes to life in Riccio's letters, which gives us a vivid view both on private or community concerns and on Florentine politics from below.

Overall, my research trip to Florence allowed me to engage with primary source material, which helped me to shed light on political life of duke Cosimo's Florence by focusing on bureaucracy and its many roles within early modern governing practices.

Désirée Cappa is a fourth-year PhD student at The Warburg Institute, London. The title of her thesis is Pierfrancesco Riccio: The Rise of a Bureaucrat in the Service of the Medici Family (1524-44).

Shrovetide Festivity

TAYLOR AUCUIN
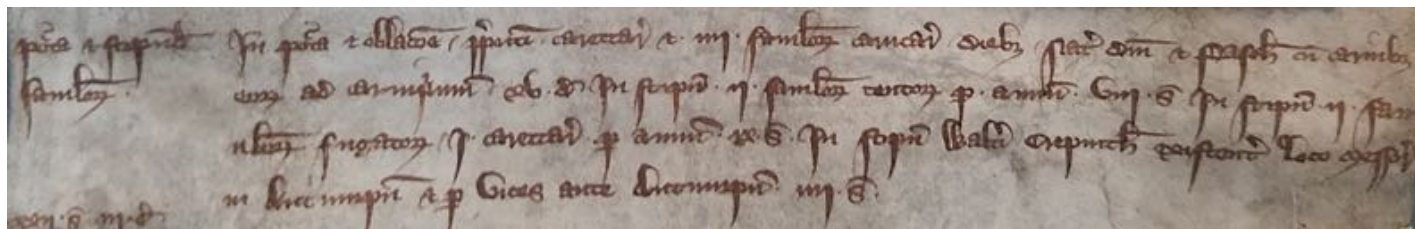
Account of *carnisprivium*, the Shrovetide feast of meat, as recorded at New Grange, Monmouthsire. Image: National Archives, London.

MY DOCTORAL THESIS explores the social efficacy of festivity in medieval and early modern Britain, or how past peoples interacted with festive time and customs to change or maintain themselves and their societies. Specifically, the thesis focuses on Shrovetide (pre-Lenten) traditions of food-gifts and feasting, civic sponsored sports, courtly spectacle, and urban rioting, examining the potential of each festive practice to impact surrounding social structures. Using sources ranging from financial accounts to literature, I map the history of each custom, identify changes and stasis, and analyse these within specific case studies. In 2017–18, the generous SRS fellowship enabled archival research for my chapter on Shrovetide food-gifts and feasting.

By the seventeenth century, Shrove Tuesday was firmly established as a holiday for youths and workers, evident in such works as Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and the annual riots of London apprentices and craftsmen during the festival. In many ways my research this past year has been concerned with the origin of this 'worker's holiday', and the capacity of festive culture to create, perpetuate and alter social bonds and obligations over centuries. From August 2017 to June 2018 I made six trips to London and Kew to conduct research at The National Archives, the London Metropolitan Archives, and the Guildhall Library. Prompted by a few examples from published accounts, I aimed to collect further evidence and details of Shrovetide gift-giving to children and wage-earners. The bulk of my study centred on a regionally diverse sample of late medieval (c. 1300–1500) manorial accounts in England and Wales, complemented by additional civic material.

This work uncovered much new evidence that has formed the basis of my thesis chapter. At manors like New Grange in Monmouthshire, wage-earners (*famuli*) received offerings of drink money at Christmas and Easter, with an additional feast of meat at Shrovetide (*carnisprivium*). Accounts from the numerous manors of Ramsey Abbey suggest how such feasting could sometimes take place: pork or lard was set aside in the stock account each Shrovetide for the entire household to indulge in together. Such rural findings are complemented by urban ones: London Bridge accounts reveal annual gifts to hired labourers at Shrovetide in the fifteenth century, while the Grocers' Company often furnished a 'Bachelers revell at Shroftide'.

These findings help show that, while Christmas and Easter were characterized by multidirectional giving (high to low; low to high; peer to peer), Shrovetide was overwhelmingly characterized by unidirectional giving from high to low. Underpinned by ideas of charity, hospitality and good house-keeping, Shrovetide food-gifts and feasting solidified social contracts and identities. They also fostered a sense of privilege on this 'worker's holiday' which harnessed by the lower orders many times during this period.

The fellowship has facilitated the writing of my final thesis chapter on the history of Shrovetide, but it has also helped me collect a wealth of primary material for future work on the economy of festive giving in late medieval and early modern Britain. I am grateful to the Society for its support.

Taylor Aucuin is a final-year doctoral candidate completing his thesis on the history of Shrovetide at the University of Bristol. His research interests lie in the cultural and social history of festive traditions and play.
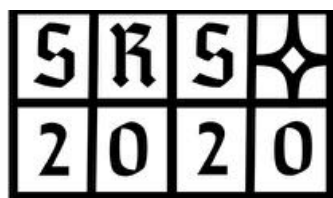

Peter Bruegel the Elder,_*The_Strife_of_Lent_with_Shrovetide* (1550-60). Image: Wikimedia Commons.

NINTH BIENNIAL SOCIETY FOR RENAISSANCE STUDIES CONFERENCE

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