

## Diplomacy and Culture in the Early Modern World

The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities 31 July to 2 August.

This conference is dedicated to diplomacy in the early modern world. It will build upon the recent 'cultural turn' in diplomatic studies that has seen more innovative, interdisciplinary approaches to a subject that was once viewed in heavily bureaucratic and constitutional terms. Scholars are increasingly appreciating the importance of ritual and other forms of symbolic communication in diplomatic practices and the role of diplomatic processes in cultural exchanges. Diplomats were important political brokers whose actions could have profound implications for international relations, but they played an equally important role in the transfer and adaptation of cultural ideas and artefacts through their activities as cultural agents, authors and brokers. The profound impact of diplomacy on culture in this period is, moreover, seen in the increasing prominence of representations of diplomacy in literature and a range of other media. The aim of this conference is to further our understanding of early modern diplomatic practices, of the dynamics of diplomatic exchanges both within and without Europe, and how diplomatic ideas and practices interacted with other cultural and political processes. The keynote address will be given by Professor Christian Windler (University of Bern). The conference will feature two extended panel discussions. One, led by Professor John Watkins (University of Minnesota), will be dedicated to new approaches to diplomatic studies. A second will examine Professor Timothy Hampton's idea of a 'diplomatic moment' in Renaissance literature. The conference marks the culmination of the AHRC-funded international research network 'Textual Ambassadors' ([www.textualambassadors.org](http://www.textualambassadors.org)) and aims to set its findings in broader cultural context.

We will consider proposals for papers and panel on any aspect of early modern diplomacy, but we will particularly welcome proposals for papers that take innovative approaches or address the following topics:

- The impact of literary developments on, and use of literary texts in, diplomatic practice
- The role of diplomatic processes and channels in the circulation of texts and literary ideas
- Diplomacy and translation
- Representations of diplomacy in literary texts and art
- The wider cultural reception of diplomacy and evolving diplomatic practices
- The material culture of early modern diplomacy
- Ritual and protocol in diplomatic encounters
- Diplomatic personnel, training, and careers
- Diplomacy and cross-cultural exchange
- Cultures of diplomatic practice
- Gender and diplomacy
- Early modern legal and philosophical attitudes to, and influences on, diplomacy

Proposals for 20 minute papers or panels of 3-4 papers should be sent to Tracey Sowerby [tracey.sowerby@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:tracey.sowerby@history.ox.ac.uk) and Jo Craigwood [jeie2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jeie2@cam.ac.uk) by 21 March 2014. Individual paper proposals should be no more than 300 words. Panel proposals should include abstracts of all papers (max 300 words) and a brief rationale (max 100 words) for the panel. All proposals should be accompanied by a short statement of affiliation and career. Delegates will be notified by 15 April 2014. All enquiries should be addressed to [tracey.sowerby@history.ox.ac.uk](mailto:tracey.sowerby@history.ox.ac.uk).