

SPLENDID ENCOUNTERS VIII: LES GESTES DE LA DIPLOMATIE / THE GESTURES OF DIPLOMACY, GIFTS, CEREMONY, BODY LANGUAGE (1400–1750), Conference, 30–31 May 2019, Toulouse, University Toulouse Jean Jaurès

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The international conference *Splendid Encounters VIII: Les Gestes de la Diplomatie / The Gestures of Diplomacy Gifts, Ceremony, Body Language (1400–1750)* was held on 30–31 May 2019 in Toulouse at La Maison de la Recherche of the Université de Toulouse Jean Jaurès. It was organised jointly between the Premodern Diplomats Network (represented by Bobby Anderson) and by Université de Toulouse Jean Jaurès and Laboratoire Cultures Anglo-Saxonnes (represented by Nathalie Rivere de Carles). The Splendid Encounters conference is an annual meeting organized by the Premodern Diplomats Network and various partners.

The conference commenced with two panels. Bobby Anderson (Bath Spa) chaired the panel *Diplomatic Receptions*, during which Kutse Altin (Szeged) presented the paper ‘The Reception of John Sigismund Szapolyai in Hungarian and Ottoman Chronicles’. Mahmut Halef (Izmir) Cevrioglu’s paper was entitled ‘Meeting the Second Man at the Ottoman Court: the Grand Viziers’ Reception of European Ambassadors in the First Half of the 17th Century’. The final speaker, Jiří Kubeš (Pardubice), delivered a paper on ‘Development of the Reception of Imperial envoys at the English/British royal court (1660–1750)’. These first presentations served as an introduction to the discussion on the self-representation and creation of early modern ambassadors.

The parallel session (*Imp*)*Politeness & Gestures I*, chaired by Nathalie Rivere de Carles (Toulouse), comprised papers by Thalia Brero (Gent) ‘La politesse des rois. Salutations et gestes d’accueil lors des rencontres entre princes (1400–1550)’;

Delphine Chiocci (Padova–Grenoble) jointly with Pierre Nevejans (ENS-LSH) ‘Des mots pour des gestes et des gestes pour des mots. Politesse et cordialité dans la correspondance politique de Bernardo de’ Medici, ambassadeur florentin à la cour de France (1544–1545)’; and Damien Fontvieille (Sorbonne) ‘À travers les yeux de l’ambassadeur. Les gestes curiaux, témoins des relations entre deux États: l’exemple de l’ambassade de Michel de Castelnau en Angleterre (1575–1585)’.

The second part of the panel theme (*Imp*)*Politeness & Gestures* opened with the “Saluted me with a kisse and boad me welconne”. Lady Anne Cobham’s recollections of her first reception at the court of France, 14 February 1580’ given by Charles Giry Deloison (Artois), followed by ‘The Ambassador’s Two Bodies: Tracing the Republic of Venice’s Symbolic Rebuke of Louis XIV and French International Relations During the Embassy of Michel-Antoine, Sieur d’Amelot’ delivered by Sherrod Brandon Marshall (NYC).

These two panels were followed by a plenary lecture given by Ellen R. Welch (North Carolina), the author of *A Taste for the Foreign: Worldly Knowledge and Literary Pleasure in Early Modern French Fiction* (2011) and *A Theater of Diplomacy: International Relations and the Performing Arts in Early Modern France* (2017). Her paper, entitled ‘In the French Style: Fashion, Sociability, and Femininity in the Letters of Marquise de Villars, Ambassadrice in Madrid’, was a perfect introduction to a long plenary discussion about the literal and symbolic forms of the gestures of diplomacy. The letters written by the Marquise de Villars are a fascinating source which helps us investigate the role of gifts and objects as meaningful gestures at the Spanish court. Ellen Welch also drew our attention to the role of fashion as a means of unspoken feminine communication.

The section *Writing and Representational Models* presided over by Jiří Kubeš, featured papers by Laurent Héry (Brest): ‘La figure de l’ambassadeur dans le Discours des cérémonies du sacre et mariage d’Anne de Foix (1502) du héraut “Bretagne”’: dits et non-dits’; Gábor Kármán (Budapest): ‘Writing when the prince would not write: Alternative correspondents in Transylvanian foreign policy during the Thirty Years War’; and Nela Michalicová (Pardubice) ‘Ceremonial as a Welcome Theatre. Ceremonial Entries and First Public Audience of Imperial Ambassadors at the Court of the Polish King in the first half of the 18th century’.

One of the last two panels on the first day was about *Representations & Perceptions*, chaired by Suna Suner (Vienna). It featured talks from Paola De Santo (University of Georgia) ‘Nonostante il mio abito’: Clothing the Ambassador’s Body in Renaissance Venetian Viaggi’; and Zsuzsa Cziráki (Szeged) ‘The Silent Language of Robes: The Semiotics of Clothing in the Seventeenth-Century Habsburg Diplomatic Missions at the Sublime Porte’. As with Professor Welch’s lecture, this panel stimulated a very interesting discussion about the importance of dress code as a useful message during embassies. Laura Turchi (Modena e Reggio

Emilia) also delivered a paper called 'Argument and Emotion, Culture and Rank: Two Este Envoys in Venice at the end of the 15th Century'. The second part of this panel was chaired by Juliette Souperbie (Toulouse) and featured papers from Emmanuel Lemée (Sorbonne) 'Le langage de l'incognito dans la diplomatie de la fin du XVIIème siècle' and François Barouch (Nanterre) 'Louis XIV, Mamamouchi: une désagréable expérience diplomatique'.

The second and final day of the conference began with sessions devoted to gifts and communication. *Gifts and Objects* was chaired by Bobby Anderson and featured talks from Beatrice Saletti (Indep Sch.) 'The Gifts of Borso D'Este to Uthman, the Caliph of Tunis'; and John Condren (Limerick–Oxford) 'Receiving Louis XIV's ambassadors at Italian princely courts: some examples from the years 1659–1701'. Özden Mercan (Florence) in her talk 'Diplomacy Woven with Textiles: Florentine Gifts to the Ottoman Court in the second half of the 16th century' explained how Florentine textiles became a crucial instrument during Ottoman-Florentine negotiations in 1578. In the parallel session, the first paper was given by Magdalena Jakubowska (Warsaw), under the title 'What kind of objects make an Early Modern Diplomat? Three Polish-Lithuanian embassies to Bakhchysarai in 1601–1602'; followed by Daniele Argenio (Paris–Rome) 'The policy of gift in the diplomatic mission of Antonio Rincon'. The last session devoted to gifts was conducted in French, and featured papers from Chloé Rivière (Orléans) 'Parures et bijoux: dire la puissance du prince par les présents diplomatiques au XVIIe siècle – France, Angleterre, Espagne'; Maelig Chauvin (Paris) 'Le cadeau diplomatique: l'objet matériel au cœur de la stratégie pontificale en Europe (1605–1721)'; and Juliette Souperbie 'Le portrait royal: un simulacre au cœur des pratiques diplomatiques'.

The panel *Communicating and Intelligencing* presided over by Jeanne Mathieu and consisted of papers given by Darren Smith (Sydney) 'Learning performance and ceremony: French diplomats at the Ottoman court, 1570–1630'; Amélie Balayre (Artois) 'J'eusse esté fort empesché en cet affaire pour n'avoir esté nourry a tel exercice': L'apprentissage de la représentation diplomatique en Angleterre par le marquis d'Effiat (1624–1625); and Janos Szabados (Szeged) 'Flow of Information between Vienna and Constantinople in the Mid-17th Century – Routes and Tendencies'. The panel on *Symbolic Communication*, again chaired by Suna Suner, featured a presentation from Daniella Gutierrez Flores (Chicago) "'Nos podrían dejar morir de hambre": Food, Diplomacy and the Narratives of Conquest in Hernán Cortés' Segunda Carta de Relación'. Christoph Würflinger (Salzburg) also gave a talk, this one on 'Symbolic Communication in Habsburg-Ottoman Relations – The Reports of Johann Rudolf Schmid zum Schwarzenhorn, Imperial Grand Ambassador to Constantinople 1650/51'.

John Condren presided over an afternoon panel devoted to *Ottoman Encounters*, which contained a paper on 'The Medici–Mamlük Connection' by Bradley Cavallo

(Indianapolis). The other two papers in this session were ‘Por ser hombre platico e inteligente’: the Habsburg Practice of Diplomacy with the Ottoman Governors of Algiers during the Harbingers of Lepanto (1567–71)’ by Francesco Caprioli (UA Madrid); and ‘A Ceremony in the Making: The Exchange of Ottoman-Habsburg Envoys along the Border in the 17th Century’, given by Özgür Kolçak (Istanbul).

One of the last two panels was the *Clientage & Pictorial Diplomacy* session chaired by Bobby Anderson – it featured papers from Francesca Mavilla (Ind. Sch.) ‘Promoting artists as an integral part of Diplomatic Networking. Chiappino Vitelli and Federico Zuccari at the court of Elizabeth I’; and Diana Barreto Avila (Roma) ‘Presence and absence of artistic representations of indigenous royal women: The cases of Isabel Moctezuma and Beatriz Coya’. Sheila Ffolliott (Fairfax) gave a fascinating presentation entitled ‘Ambassador, Ambadress, Portraits, and Precedence: on the Move at a Soirée chez Catherine de’ Medici’ which gave rise to a discussion of the diplomatic activity of the Queen of France’s household.

The final panel, concerning confessional diplomacy, was perhaps one of the best during the two days. The first talk was given by Loek Luiten (Oxford), and was entitled ‘With Voice Aquiver and Eyes Full of Tears’: The Culture of Penance and the Politics of Clemency at the Renaissance Papal Court’. The second paper came from Béla Mihalik (Budapest) “‘Ministry of Silly Walks”. A Scandalous Corpus Christi Procession in Rome (1696–1697)’; and the last one was delivered by Pierre-Olivier Ouellet (UQAM) ‘Entre pouvoirs temporels et spirituels: la diplomatie coloniale associée au tableau intitulé La France apportant la foi aux Hurons de la Nouvelle-France’.

The closing speech was given by organisers Nathalie and Bobby, who thanked all the speakers and attendees. The speakers were invited to consider submitting their papers for a special issue of *Legatio: The Journal for Renaissance and Early Modern Diplomatic Studies*. On behalf of the Premodern Diplomats Network, Bobby formally announced that the next conference in the series, Splendid Encounters IX, will be held in Dubrovnik in 2020.