

Tracey A. Sowerby

Introduction to Textual Ambassadors Workshop One

The State of the Field

[I just want a few words about why I think it is a propitious time to be working on this topic. I by no means have time to cover everything and there are no doubt other trends and other works that network members can think of that are equally pertinent to our themes and concerns.¹]

Over the last decade a range of scholars as diverse as Karl W. Schweizer, Matt J. Schumann, and John Watkins have called for new methodological and conceptual approaches to diplomatic studies.² For some, particularly IR scholars, this call was linked to a greater recognition that diplomats should be studied as part of international interaction, not least as a means of understanding the gap between theory and practice.³ But Karen Gram-Skjoldager restated the point as recently as two years ago in relation to the historical study of C20th diplomacy.⁴ While praising the increasing interaction between literary and historical studies, John called for scholars to adopt a broader multidisciplinary approach to early modern diplomatic studies. Although few scholars have so far achieved (or even attempted) this, there have been considerable developments within the field of early modern diplomatic studies over the last two decades.

Early modern diplomatic studies had long been dominated by Garrett Mattingly's seminal *Renaissance Diplomacy* (1955), which traced the emergence of modern diplomacy in the early modern period.⁵ In the last decade and a half, however, many of Mattingly's conclusions have been questioned. The chronological framework Mattingly proposed for the 'New Diplomacy' has received compelling challenges from scholars such as Riccardo Fubini and Andreas Osiander, problematizing on the one hand the neat narrative of the rise of resident ambassadors in fifteenth-century Italy after the Peace of Lodi on the one hand and the emergence of a new 'states-system' with the Peace of Westphalia on the other.⁶

¹ Like this survey in general, the references supplied in the footnotes that follow are far from exhaustive. I am grateful to the AHRC for funding this network and to TORCH for providing additional sponsorship for our Oxford based events.

² See for example K.W. Schweizer, M.J. Schumann, 'The Revitalisation of Diplomatic History: Renewed Reflections', *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 19.2 (2008), pp.149-186; J. Watkins, 'Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, xxxviii (2008), pp. 1-14.

³ See for example P. Sharp, 'For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations', *International Studies Review*, 1.1 (1999), pp. 33-57; idem., *Diplomatic Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge, 2009) explores a 'diplomatic theory' of IR rooted in his analysis of what diplomats have said about international relations. For an anthropologically influenced study of modern diplomats and their agency see I.B. Neumann, 'What does it mean to be a diplomat?' *International Studies Perspectives*, 6.1 (2005), pp. 72-93.

⁴ See K. Gram-Skjoldager, 'Bringing the Diplomat Back In: Elements of a New Historical Research Agenda' EUI Working Papers (2008). Available at: http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/15952/RSCAS_2011_13.pdf?sequence=1

⁵ G. Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Boston, 1955). The accounts of early modern diplomacy in almost every survey of diplomacy written in the past half decade have been heavily reliant upon Mattingly's work. See for example M.S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450-1919* (London, 1993).

⁶ D. Frigo, 'Introduction', in idem. (ed.), *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 1999), pp.1-24; A. Contini, 'Aspects of Medicean Diplomacy in the Sixteenth Century', in *ibid.*, pp. 49-94; R. Fubini 'Diplomacy and Government in the Italian City States of the Fifteenth Century (Florence and Venice)', in *ibid.*, pp. 25-48; idem, 'La 'residentialité' de l'ambassadeur dans le mythe et dans le réalité: une enquête sur les origins', in L. Bély, I. Richefort (eds.), *L'invention de la diplomatie: Moyen Age-temps modernes* (Paris, 1998),

Meanwhile, recent scholarship has challenged just how modern the diplomacy that emerged during the Renaissance was. Lucien Bély proposed that we should still consider the post-Westphalian world as a ‘society of princes’ and see international relations as influenced by the dynastic considerations of monarchs, considerations that were sometimes in tension with the emerging mechanisms and court protocols of the centralising states over which they presided.⁷ Daniela Frigo, meanwhile, has demonstrated that in some of the smaller states of Italy, early modern diplomatic activities co-existed with a range of other political duties and that the diplomats employed in might best be understood to have more in common with medieval *procurators* than with the resident ambassadors of the modern world.⁸

Bély and other scholars have also considerably broadened the field of analysis, moving beyond the concerns addressed by Mattingly,⁹ while subsequent scholarship has also considerably expanded the geographical spectrum addressed by early modern diplomatic studies, belying Mattingly’s almost exclusive privileging of the western European states.¹⁰ The ‘New Diplomatic History’ that has emerged integrates broader concerns into a field that was once dominated by the study of bureaucracy and foreign policy. For the modern period this has often meant a focus on integrating a consideration of economics, new tools of communication and the soft power of ‘cultural diplomacy’ into historical analysis.¹¹

Whatever period is being addressed, practitioners of the ‘New Diplomatic History’ have drawn on a range of interdisciplinary models. So, for instance, scholars such as Svante Norrhem and those involved in the *Weibliche Diplomatie* project led by Hillard von Thiesen and Christian Wieland are addressing the role of women in diplomacy and analysing diplomatic processes using insights from gender studies.¹² There has also been a greater recognition that successful diplomacy depended, at least in part, on the contacts and personal

pp. 27-46. See also the essays by F. Bosbach and M. Rohrschneider in C. Kampmann et al (ed.), *L’art de la paix: Kongresswesen und Friedensstiftung im Zeitalter des Westfälischen Friedens* (Munich, 2011). Challenges to Mattingly’s chronology from IR specialists include A. Osiander, ‘Sovereignty, International Relations and the Westphalian Myth’, *International Organization*, 55.2 (2001), pp. 251-287; S.D. Krasner ‘Rethinking the Sovereign State Model’, *Review of International Studies*, 27 (2001), pp. 17-42.

⁷ L. Bély, *La société des princes, XVIe–XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1999); See also idem., *Les relations internationales en Europe: XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles* (Paris, 1992).

⁸ D. Frigo, ‘“Small States” and diplomacy: Mantua and Modena’, in in idem. (ed.), *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 147-76.

⁹ For example L. Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs au temps de Louis XIV* (Paris, 1992); L. Bély, I. Richefort (eds.), *L’invention de la diplomatie*; C. Kampmann et al (ed.), *L’art de la paix*. The concern with material culture that underpins several studies also marks a significant advance from Mattingly’s understanding of the diplomatic process. Such concerns are addressed in works such as O. Dmitrieva, N. Abramova (eds.), *Britannia and Muscovy: English Silver at the Court of the Tsars* (New Haven, 2006) and that on diplomatic gifting such as Maija Jansson ‘Measured Reciprocity: English Ambassadorial Gift Exchange in the 17th and 18th Centuries’, *Journal of Early Modern History*, ix (2005), pp. 348-70 and A. Cutler, ‘Significant Gifts: Patterns of Exchange in Late Antique, Byzantine and Early Islamic Diplomacy’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 38.1 (2008), pp. 79-101. See also T.A. Sowerby’s forthcoming article ‘“A memorial and a pledge of faith”: Portraiture and Early Modern Diplomatic Culture’, which is due to appear in the *English Historical Review* in 2014.

¹⁰ Relevant studies include and are by no means limited to: N. Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Ithaca, 2012); C.P. Mitchell, *Sir Thomas Roe and the Mughal Empire* (Karachi, 2000); C. Windler, *La diplomatie comme expérience de l’autre : consuls français au Maghreb (1700-1840)* (Geneva, 2002); I. Ebl, ‘Cross-Cultural Trade and Diplomacy: Portuguese Relations with West Africa, 1441-1521’, *Journal of World History*, 3.2 (1992), pp. 165-204; N.R. Farooqi, ‘Diplomacy and Diplomatic Practice under the Mughals’, *The Medieval History Journal*, 7.1 (2004), pp. 59-86.

¹¹ K. Urbach, ‘Diplomatic History since the Cultural Turn’, *Historical Journal*, 46.4 (2003), pp. 991-7; T. Riotte, M. Mösslang, eds., *The Diplomats’ World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815-1914* (Oxford, 2008).

¹² I am grateful to Svante Norrhem for letting me read his forthcoming essay ‘Frauen und Außenbeziehungen: Schweden in den 1690er Jahren’. For the Weibliche diplomatie project see:

http://www.hist.unibe.ch/content/forschungsprojekte/weibliche_diplomatie/index_ger.html

resources on which diplomats could draw. Networks have been considered by scholars such as Hillard von Thiessen and Jennifer da Silva, who have demonstrated the importance of familial and patronage bonds to a diplomat's effectiveness and room for manoeuvre.¹³ Others such as Ruth Kohnndorfer-Fries have considered the intellectual contacts of individual diplomats.¹⁴

One of the major foci of 'new diplomatic history' concerning the early modern period has been symbolic communication. Several essays and books have addressed issues such as ritual, protocol, and spatial hierarchies.¹⁵ Collectively, these studies have enhanced our understanding of the centrality of non-verbal communication to the relations between princes and demonstrated that ceremony and ritual were not merely representative of international hierarchies, but also a means by which such hierarchies were mediated. Several other recent works have shown a commitment to considering other aspects of political culture as demonstrated by the work of scholars such as Daniela Frigo, Maija Jansson and Glenn Richardson.¹⁶ Meanwhile Christian Windler has offered the important insight that we should consider embassies as sites of cultural exchange. Windler's analysis of French consuls in Tunisia demonstrated that through repeated diplomatic interaction, political actors from different cultures could forge a shared understanding of political processes.¹⁷ An appreciation of the role of embassies in cultural exchange has concurrently emerged in a different context: the art-historical interest in ambassadors as cultural agents. There has been a considerable volume of recent scholarship on the role of ambassadors as art, or broader cultural, agents for their rulers and high-ranking courtiers at home. This has fostered an appreciation that diplomats were not only the intermediaries of material cultures between polities, but also that they could use art and material goods in order to advance their own political careers.¹⁸

¹³ C. Windler, H. von Thiessen (eds.), *Akteure der Außenbeziehungen. Netzwerke und Interkulturalität im historischen Wandel* (Cologne, 2010); H. von Thiessen, *Diplomatie und Patronage: Die spanisch-römischen Beziehungen 1605-1621 in akteurszentrierter Perspektive* (Epfendorf, 2010); J. DeSilva, C. Fletcher, 'Italian Ambassadorial Networks in Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 14.6 (2010), pp. 505-12; J. DeSilva, 'Official and Unofficial Diplomacy between Rome and Bologna', *JEMH*, 14.6 (2010), pp. 535-557; C. Fletcher, 'War, Diplomacy and Society Mobility: The Casali Family in the Service of Henry VIII', *JEMH*, 14.6 (2010), pp. 559-78; K. Prajda, 'The Florentine Scolori Family at the court of Sigismund of Luxemburg in Buda', *JEMH*, 14.6 (2020), pp. 513-33. Networks also feature in D. Riches, *Protestant Cosmopolitanism and Diplomatic Culture: Brandenburg-Swedish Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Leiden, 2013).

¹⁴ R. Kohnndorfer-Fries, *Diplomatie und Gelehrtenrepublik: die Kontakte des französischen Gesandten Jacques Bongars (1554-1612)* (Tübingen, 2009).

¹⁵ W. Roosen, 'Early Modern Diplomatic Ceremonial: A Systems Approach', *Journal of Modern History*, lii (1980), pp. 452-76; L. Bély, 'Souveraineté et souverains: la question du cérémonial dans les relations internationales à l'époque moderne', *Annuaire-bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France* (1993), pp. 27-43; A. Krischer, 'Ein nothwendig Stück der Ambassaden. Zur politischen Rationalität des diplomatischen Zeremoniells bei Kurfürst Clemens August', *Annalen des Historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein*, ccv (2002), pp. 161-200; J. Hennings, 'The Semiotics of Diplomatic Dialogue: Pomp and Circumstance in Tsar Peter I's Visit to Vienna in 1698', *International History Review*, xxx (2008), pp. 515-44; Windler, 'Diplomatic History'; N.F. May in Kampmann et al (ed.), *L'art de la paix*.

¹⁶ D. Frigo, 'Prudence and Experience: Ambassadors and Political Culture in Early Modern Italy', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, xxxviii (2008), pp. 15-34; G. Richardson, "'Your most assured sister'", Elizabeth I and the kings of France', in A. Hunt and A. Whitelock, eds, *Tudor Queenship, The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (London:Palgrave Press, 2010), ch.12; M. Jansson 'Measured Reciprocity'; C. Fletcher, "'Furnished with gentlemen": The Ambassador's House in Sixteenth-century Italy", *Renaissance Studies*, 24.4 (2010), pp. 518-35.

¹⁷ C. Windler, 'Diplomatic History as a Field for Cultural Analysis: Muslim-Cultural Relations in Tunis, 1700-1840', *Historical Journal*, xlv (2001), pp. 79-106.

¹⁸ D. Howarth, *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance, 1485-1649* (Berkeley, 1997), pp. 234-45; R. Hill, 'The Ambassador as Art Agent: Sir Dudley Carleton and Jacobean Collecting', in E. Chaney, ed., *The Evolution of English Collecting* (London, 2003), pp. 240-255; M. Keblusek, B. Noldus, eds., *Double Agents: Cultural and Political Brokerage in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2011); M.J. Levin, *Agents of*

Despite these considerable advancements, there remains surprisingly little historical scholarship on the role of language and literature in diplomatic practice. Given the focus on collecting, for instance, one might expect there to be more scholarship on diplomats' roles as bibliophiles and bibliographers. Even though Martin Lowry has demonstrated that Italian diplomats were instrumental in the spread of the printing press,¹⁹ few scholars have followed up on his insights to further excavate the relationship between diplomacy and print.²⁰ Most work in this area focusses on the role of diplomats in sending books across borders.²¹ Yet investigations into the relationship between diplomacy and the press in later periods suggests that it would be profitable to explore further the relationship between diplomatic practices and print culture. Scholars such as William Mulligan and Dominik Geppert have, for instance, suggested that the mass media of the nineteenth century made diplomatic expertise even more important.²² We might ask how did early modern governments react to the development of print in the early modern era, the impact of which was less expansive, but no less important?

There has obviously been a major shift in approaches to diplomatic history. As a historian looking at literary studies, it strikes me that there are several recent developments that make the 'Textual Ambassadors' network timely for literary scholars too. One is the renewed interest in travel and travel literature evident in the works of scholars such as Anna Suranyi and Melanie Ord, who have sought to understand early modern travellers' engagement with the foreign cultures they encountered and how this shaped the texts they subsequently produced.²³ Indeed, many of these studies have been concerned, at least in part, with how overseas travel shaped travellers' understandings of their own national and cultural identities. The ongoing activities of the Hakluyt Society and projects such as Nandini Das' investigation of Renaissance travel and cultural memory will no doubt do much to further this field.

Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy (New York, 2005), ch. 7; D. Carrió-Invernizzi, 'Gift and Diplomacy in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Italy', *Historical Journal*, li (2008), pp. 881–99; H. Jacobsen, *Luxury and Power: The Material World of the Stuart Diplomat 1660-1714* (Oxford, 2011).

¹⁹ M. Lowry, 'Diplomacy and the Spread of Printing', in L. Hellings, J. Goldfinch (eds.), *Bibliography and the Study of 15th-century civilisation* (London, 1987), pp. 124–37.

²⁰ Rare exceptions include T. A. Sowerby, "'All our books do be sent into other countreys and translated": Henrician Polemic in its International Context', *English Historical Review*, cxxi, 1271–99.

²¹ L. Parmelee, *Good Newes from Fraunce: French Anti-League Propaganda in Elizabethan England* (Woodbridge, 1996), ch. 2; M. Keblusek, 'Book Agents: Intermediaries in the Early Modern World of Books', in H. Cools, M. Keblusek and B. Noldus (eds.), *Your Humble Servant: Agents in Early Modern Europe* (Hilversum, 2006), pp. 104–7; J. Craigwood, 'Diplomats and International Book Exchange', in A. Thomason, S. Burrows and E. Dziembowski (eds.), *Cultural Transfers: France and Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 57–69; M. Levin, *Agents of Empire: Spanish Ambassadors in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Ithaca, 2005), ch. 7.

²² W. Mulligan, 'Mobs and Diplomats: The Alabama Affair and British Diplomacy', in T. Riotte, M. Mösslang (eds.), *The Diplomats' World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815-1914* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 105–32; D. Geppert, 'The Public Challenge of Diplomacy: Dealing with the Press 1890-1914', in *ibid*, pp. 133–62; *idem.*, *Pressekriege: Öffentlichkeit und Diplomatie in des deutsch-britischen Beziehungen, 1896-1912* (Munich, 2007). See also D. Brown, 'Diplomacy and the Fourth Estate: The Role of the Press in British Foreign Policy in the Age of Palmerston', in J. Fisher, A. Best (eds.), *On the Fringes of Diplomacy: Influences on British Foreign Policy, 1800-1945* (Aldershot, 2011), pp. 35–52.

²³ A. Suranyi, *The Genius of the English Nation: Travel Writing and National Identity in Early Modern England* (Newark, 2008); M. Ord, *Travel and Experience in Early Modern English Literature* (New York, 2008). See also T. Betteridge, *Borders and Travellers in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2007); S. Juall, *Encounters with Alterity in Early Modern French Travel Literature* (Baltimore, 2008); J.P.A. Snell, *Rhetoric and Wonder in English Travel Writing* (Aldershot, 2006); D. Crey, C. Jowitt (eds.), *Richard Hakluyt and Travel Writing in Early Modern Europe* (Farnham, 2012); F. Tinguely, *L'écriture du Levant à la Renaissance: enquête sur les voyageurs français dans l'empire de Soliman le Magnifique* (Geneva, 2000); G. Hooper, T. Youngs (eds.), *Perspectives on Travel Writing* (Aldershot, 2004); N. Matar, *In the Lands of Christians: Arab Travel Writing in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 2003).

There also seems to be a willingness to explore different types of literature in historical context and with a new critical eye in the post-new historicist world. Most pertinently, there is a willingness to embrace a wider corpus of forms of writing within literary studies. Hence ethnographic literature, correspondence, and even diplomatic and intelligence reports are receiving considerably more attention from literary scholars than they have hitherto.²⁴ Moreover, those engaged in literary criticism are more not only increasingly engaging in detailed analysis of the circumstances of creation and the archival record of the texts, but are also increasingly attentive to the implications of their material and physical nature.²⁵ This has been matched by an equally strong interest in the reception of texts, both their social circulation and the manifold ways in which readers responded to them.²⁶

Another development within literary studies that strikes me as providing fertile ground for this project is the expansion within translation studies in recent years. For instance Brenda Hosington's project on *Cultural Crossroads* at Warwick has undertaken a widespread examination of Renaissance translations.²⁷ Even a fleeting glance at the wealth of literature on early modern translations in England demonstrates the vibrancy of this field of research as scholars, including several network members, have considered the intellectual, social and political contexts for the translations undertaken.²⁸ To date, the role of diplomats in translation studies has received surprisingly little attention, but this looks set to change. A project currently underway in Germany, for example, is investigating the role of translation in early modern peace treaties.²⁹

Furthermore there is an increased interest in the circulation of information across Europe and the impact this had on literary productions of various kinds.³⁰ Joad Raymond's *Early Modern News Networks* is seeking to rewrite the history of early modern news by developing new approaches to the networks that underpinned the spread of news in its various forms

²⁴ See for example the work of the Centre for Editing Early Modern Lives and Letters:

<http://www.livesandletters.ac.uk/>

²⁵ For example J. Daybell & P. Hinds (eds), *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture: Texts and Social Practices, 1580-1730* (Basingstoke, 2010) and the items cited in n.25 below. For a case study of how material evidence can be deployed to expertly change our understanding of a specific text see J. Powell, 'Thomas Wyatt's Poetry in Embassy: Egerton 2711 and the Production of Literary Manuscripts Abroad', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67.2 (2004), pp. 261-84. The strength of this trend is such that some publishers, like Ashgate, have recently established book series devoted to material readings in early modern culture.

²⁶ For example A. Grafton, L. Jardine, "'Studied for action": how Gabriel Harvey read his Livy', *Past and Present*, 129 (1990), pp. 30-78; W.H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, 2008); idem, 'What did Renaissance readers write in their books?' in J. Andersen, E. Sauer (eds.), *Books and Readers in Early Modern England: Material Studies* (Philadelphia, 2002), pp. 119-37; J.N. King (ed.), *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge, 2010).

²⁷ <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/projects/culturalcrossroads/> S. Barker, B.M. Hosington (eds.), *Renaissance Cultural Crossroads: Translation, Print and Culture in Britain, 1473-1640* (Leiden, 2013). The project has also produced a useful database of translations: <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/rcc/>

²⁸ For example P. Burke, R.Po-chia Hsia, *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2007); M. Walsby, G. Kemp (eds.), *The Book Triumphant: Print in Translation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden, 2011), part 3. Michael Wyatt, *The Italian Encounter with Tudor England: A Cultural Politics of Translation* (Cambridge, 2005); M. Pincombe (ed.), *Travels and Translations in the Sixteenth Century: Selected Papers from the Second International Conference of the Tudor Symposium (2000)* (Aldershot, 2004); C. di Biase (ed.), *Travel and Translation in the Early Modern Period* (Amsterdam, 2006); F. Schurinck (ed.), *Tudor Translation* (Basingstoke, 2011); G. Braden, R. Cummings, S. Gillespie (eds), *Oxford History of Literary Translation into English v.2 1550 to 1660* (Oxford, 2010).

²⁹ http://www.staatsgalerie.de/forschungsprojekte_e/

³⁰ See for example Brian Dooley (ed.), *Dissemination of News and Emergence of Contemporaneity in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2010); J. Raymond (ed.), *News Networks in Seventeenth-Century Britain and Europe* (London, 2006); S. Baron, B. Dooley (eds.), *The Politics of Information in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2001).

across and within political boundaries.³¹ Meanwhile scholars such as Andrew Pettegree and Jason Peacey are also investigating the transnational circulation of news in the early modern period. From what I have been hearing about such projects, it is clear that diplomatic networks were often an instrumental component of such processes. The interest in the transnational circulation of news has been complemented by studies of the role of intelligence gathering. While historians have turned a critical eye to the role of intelligencers in early modern governmental processes,³² literary scholars have examined representations of intelligence gathering in various genres of Renaissance literature and the relationship between the methods of intelligencers, such as encryption, and literary forms.³³

Crucially, Timothy Hampton's *Fictions of Embassy* has opened up a new series of avenues in literary studies. Hampton's work has compellingly demonstrated a powerful symbiotic relationship between diplomatic and literary culture. He has shown that developments in Renaissance diplomacy had a profound effect on the composition and structure of numerous literary genres as diplomatic tropes were adopted at a formal as well as a thematic level. Moreover, Hampton's study has shown this influence was at work across a wide range of European cultures.³⁴ Hampton's 'diplomatic moment' has brought actual negotiations and diplomatic processes into much sharper focus within literary studies.³⁵ Hampton's work is also suggestive of the benefits for diplomatic historians of paying closer attention to both modern methods of literary analysis and early modern representations of diplomacy not least because, as Hampton reminds us, diplomacy was, amongst other things, a practice of writing. Explicit concern with this aspect of diplomatic practice is beginning to emerge, but there remains much work to be done.³⁶

The influence of diplomatic considerations on early modern literature has been further explored in several recent works which have examined a broad range of literary genres. John Watkins and Jo Craigwood have explored representations of diplomacy in several of Shakespeare's history plays,³⁷ while Mark Netzloff has examined a comedy about a fictional

³¹ The *Early Modern News Networks* project website includes a handy bibliography of literature on the history of news in early modern Europe. To learn more, visit the project's website <http://newscom.english.qmul.ac.uk/> and blog <http://earlymodernnewsnetworks.wordpress.com/author/joadraymond/>

³² See for example S. Alford, *The Watchers: A Secret History of the Reign of Elizabeth I* (London, 2012); D. Szechi (ed.), *The Dangerous Trade: Spies, Spymasters and the Making of Europe* (Dundee, 2010); Bély, *Espions et ambassadeurs*; A. Hugon, *Au service du roi catholique : honorables ambassadeurs et divins espions* (Madrid, 2004).

³³ See for instance J.M. Archer, *Sovereignty and Intelligence: Spying and Court Culture in the English Renaissance* (Stanford, 1993); R. W. Maslen, *Elizabethan Fictions: Espionage, Counter-espionage and the Duplicity of Fiction in Elizabethan Prose Narratives* (Oxford, 1997); See also the essays by P. Banerjee and M.G. Aune in Charry and Shahani (eds.), *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture* and those by N. Akkerman, R. Adams, A. Stewart and H. Crawforth in R. Adams, R. Cox (eds.), *Diplomacy and Culture in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, 2011). The Folger Shakespeare Library will shortly be hosting an exhibition on early modern codes and ciphers 'Decoding the Renaissance' curated by Bill Sherman. For more information see: <http://www.folger.edu/wosummary.cfm?woid=877>.

³⁴ T. Hampton, *Fictions of Embassy: Literature and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe* (London, 2009); idem., 'The Diplomatic Moment: Representing Negotiation in Early Modern Europe', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 67.1 (2006), pp. 81-102.

³⁵ I see this as an important move away from the seemingly pervasive 'negotiations' of the new historicists, which often appear to denote any mediation of any power relationships and where 'diplomacy' is often taken in its broadest possible social meaning, rather than denoting the means by which international, interstate or inter-princely relations were conducted, towards a more concrete focus on actual diplomatic negotiations and more precise terminology.

³⁶ For example the historical study by R. Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke, 2012).

³⁷ J. Watkins, C. Levine, *Shakespeare's Foreign Worlds: National and Transnational Identities in the Elizabethan Age* (Cornell, 2009), ch.2; J. Craigwood in J. Powell, W. Rossiter (eds.), *Authority and Diplomacy from Dante to Shakespeare* (Aldershot, 2013).

diplomat.³⁸ Several scholars, including several members of this network, have been concerned with the relationship between diplomatic service and the composition of poetry, how embassies influenced English poetry, and how diplomatic sources can shed new light on poems.³⁹ Others have paid attentive detail to the diplomatic tropes and contexts for works as diverse as literary advice to princes, treatises on the role of ambassadors, and Sidney's *Arcadia*; and have even addressed how the curious omission of overt diplomatic discourse in Castiglione's *Courtier* might itself be partially occasioned by the text's diplomatic context.⁴⁰ A broader interest in the relationship between diplomatic activity and documents and forms of representation, whether political or literary, has further marked several recent studies as has the performative aspect of diplomatic practice.⁴¹

Many of these pieces have suggested that literary analyses might simultaneously offer insights into diplomatic attitudes and international developments. Equally, considerations of types of diplomatic discourses by scholars such as Randall Lesaffer, Jean-Claude Wacquet, and Izabella Lazzarini have offered important insights into shifts in late medieval and early modern diplomatic practice.⁴² So, while many people in this network have long been interested in diplomats who are also writers (I'm thinking here in particular of Susan and her magnificent study of Thomas Wyatt, or Jason's ongoing edition of his work⁴³) and have analysed their subjects with due sensitivity to the diplomatic context, the cumulative force of the new scholarship in both history and literature means that the time is ripe to turn a fresh critical eye on the relationship between literature and diplomacy. It is clear that successful diplomacy depended on successful textual strategies that created shared understanding between often quite different political and literary cultures. And it has become evident that developments in the history of diplomacy can help us to understand the international context for literary texts.

Tracey A. Sowerby
Oxford, 2013

³⁸ M. Netzloff in Powell, Rossiter (eds.), *Authority and Diplomacy*. Diplomacy has necessarily influenced many studies of plays such as Middleton's *A Game at Chesse*.

³⁹ W. Rossiter, J. Powell and J. Watkins in Powell, Rossiter (eds.), *Authority and Diplomacy*; S. Brigden, *Thomas Wyatt: The Heart's Forest* (London, 2012); J. Powell, "'For Caesar's I am': Henrician Diplomacy and Representations of King and Country in Thomas Wyatt's Poetry', *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36.2 (2005), pp. 415-31; idem., 'Thomas Wyatt's Poetry in Embassy: Egerton 2711 and the Production of Literary Manuscripts Abroad', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 67.2 (2004); E. Holberton, *Poetry and the Cromwellian Protectorate* (Oxford, 2009); M. Rodman Jones in Powell, Rossiter (eds.), *Authority and Diplomacy*.

⁴⁰ K. Ash in Powell, Rossiter (eds.), *Authority and Diplomacy*; D. Pirillo in ibid.; J. Craigwood in Adams, R. Cox (eds.), *Diplomacy and Culture*; D. Biow, 'Castiglione and the Art of being Inconspicuously Conspicuous', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, xxxviii (2008), pp. 35-55.

⁴¹ See for example the essays by J. Burton, A. Loomba and V. Vaughan in B. Charry, G. Shahani, *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture* (Farnham, 2009); C. Beem, *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I* (Basingstoke, 2011); the essays by N. Matar, A.R. Bertolet, B. Andrea, N. Das in C. Beem (ed.), *The Foreign Relations of Elizabeth I* (New York, 2011); M. Netzloff in Adams, R. Cox (eds.), *Diplomacy and Culture*; S. Schülting, S.L. Müller, Ralf Hertel (eds.), *Early Modern Encounters with the Islamic East: Performing Cultures* (Farnham, 2012).

⁴² R. Lesaffer, *Amicitia in Renaissance Peace and Alliance Treaties (1450-1530)*, *Journal of the History of International Law*, 4 (2002), pp. 77-99; J-C Wacquet, in Windler, von Thiessen (eds.), *Akteure der Außenbeziehungen*. In 'Argument and Emotion in Italian Diplomacy in the early Fifteenth Century: the case of Rinaldo degli Albizzi (Florence, 1399-1430)', a paper delivered at All Souls College, Oxford in May 2011, Isabella Lazzarini pointed to the introduction of humanist language and rhetoric in Florentine diplomatic reporting. The paper is currently available on Academia.edu:

http://www.academia.edu/2384007/Argument_and_Emotion_in_Italian_Diplomacy_in_the_early_Fifteenth_Century_the_case_of_Rinaldo_degli_Albizzi_Florence_1399-1430 Douglas Biow and Sven Extembrink have also discussed the relationship between humanism and diplomacy. See: D. Biow, *Doctors, Ambassadors, Secretaries: Humanism and Professions in Renaissance Italy* (Chicago, London, 2002); S. Extembrink in Windler, von Thiessen (eds.), *Akteure der Außenbeziehungen*.

⁴³ Brigden, *Thomas Wyatt*; J. Powell, *The Complete Works of Sir Thomas Wyatt* (OUP, forthcoming).