

## **Textual Ambassadors Workshop Two: Theories and Methods**

The network's second workshop was held at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge on 14-15 April 2014. We welcomed and thanked a representative of our funders the AHRC at the event: Professor Charles Forsdick, leader of the AHRC 'Translating Cultures' theme, attended the workshop and chaired our panel on Translation. Below is a summary of the workshop. It first describes themes that emerged across the whole workshop, drawing especially on the workshop's roundtable discussion on the future of the field (Session 6). It then provides short summaries of major ideas from each of the themed panels. Contributions to these panels took the form of pre-circulated readings of primary texts (up to 2 pages) or notes on a short thought-piece (1 page), which panellists briefly introduced then all participants discussed at length during the workshop.

This report is indebted to our two research assistants at the workshop, Jennifer Bishop and Amy Bowles, who ably entered notes on discussion into the online network forum during the workshop.

### **1. Themes across the workshop**

#### **The place of literature**

The central question of how literary culture related to diplomatic culture was at the heart of this workshop's interdisciplinary reflections. Warren Boutcher suggested that the textuality of early modern diplomatic culture might provide one way to think about the relationship. José María Pérez Fernández highlighted the many points of interface between texts and individuals: bureaucratic agents of diplomatic exchange corresponded widely and handled diplomatic paperwork (see below for further discussion) while aristocratic agents of exchange included book collectors, cultural brokers and historians involved in diplomatic work. Christine Vogel (among others) reflected on the interface between this textuality and orality: ambassadorial reports are translations of face-to-face interactions into texts which may in turn be read aloud in a return to orality, and each stage has intended readerships and audiences. John Watkins observed that many early modern literary writers were also diplomats and wondered whether this preponderance of writer-diplomats was restricted to the period, given the persistence of diplomats writing novels, poems and plays over time. Tracey Sowerby noted that the proportion of writer-diplomats taken across the diplomatic corps might have decreased even if the practice persisted. Jan Hennings wondered whether, if we were to quantify literary output that related to diplomacy, it would decrease towards the end of the eighteenth century. He also highlighted the importance of asking how those literary writings and skills were used within the diplomatic sphere at different points. José María noted that rhetorical skills were central to both diplomacy and literature in this period.

John suggested that the relationship between archiving and canonisation—the national formations of diplomatic textual archives and literary canons—provided one way of pulling these ideas together. A common mentality went into the formation of a literary tradition and the creation of accessible archives, and the literary canon now provides us with a textual and diplomatic archive. Jo Craigwood observed that the English sense of inferiority about its literary tradition compared to continental literatures in this period provided a prompt for English canon formation linked to international cultural relations. Tracey noted that the widening of the range of texts studied by literary critics over recent decades has changed the way we think about the canon, and the way these different kinds of texts interact is particularly interesting: literary conceits emerge that are knowing about diplomatic modes of writing. Guido van Meersbergen reminded us that many of the fringe figures involved in diplomacy were far from the literary canon yet served as textual intermediaries of various forms.

Jan proposed another solution to the question of why literature was quite so important to diplomacy in the early modern period given that diplomacy is always textual in character: ambiguity. Literature

and diplomacy both share ambiguity; diplomacy is always ambiguous, but was particularly marked by ambiguity in the early modern period, while undergoing rapid changes and expansion, but before its full professionalization in the eighteenth century, a process that eradicated some ambiguities. It was not clear who was part of a ritual and who was not, who was a sovereign and who was not; literature and literary tropes could be used to negotiate this ambiguity.

Using the workshop area on the network forum, Warren reflected retrospectively that there were at least six different ways in which we were relating ‘literature’ to ‘diplomacy’ at the event:

- the literary arts (especially rhetoric) as crucial for diplomatic practice and the figure of the orator-ambassador;
- literary representations of diplomatic scenes or of the workings of international law in fictional or imaginative texts;
- textual analysis of the written documents which effect, facilitate or describe diplomatic transactions and which are often archived as records of such transactions;
- the literary entertainments and literary exchanges embedded in the conduct of court diplomacy;
- the fictional, performative or ambiguous aspects of diplomatic practices or texts (e.g. self-fashioning, ‘golden world’ visions of peaceful international relations)
- canonical texts or translations which come to represent a given nation in international cultural competition with other nations.

As Warren also observed, ‘literature’ and ‘literary’ are slippery terms with both early modern and modern meanings. There may be further work to be done explicitly differentiating these forms of literary-diplomatic interaction and establishing whether (and if so how) they all fit together.

### **Paperwork**

Pursuing ideas about the textuality of diplomacy and the link between archiving and canonisation, Edward Wilson-Lee observed that critics and historians have linked the emergence of the early modern self and early modern state to the accumulation of paperwork (letters, diaries, records, archives) and the subsequent navigation of those archival resources to construct narratives of selfhood and statehood. The ambassador—as the individual representative of the polity—and the growing diplomatic archive provide a middle ground between the paper emergence of early modern selves and states. However, John cautioned that there were also medieval diplomatic archives and notions of self and state. Discussion covered the archival afterlife of early modern diplomatic texts: what happened to them?; how were they used after receipt?; what happens to the different versions of documents (rough drafts, foul copies etc.)? Giulia Galastro observed that keeping a record is a ritual act and part of diplomatic ritual. Glenn Richardson noted that diplomatic letters and records, such as the Venetian *relazioni*, could be read by a number of permitted people, re-consulted, even consciously used as a means of propagating a certain image or identity by the subjects, writers or recipients of the reports. Christine pointed out that late in the period parts of diplomatic correspondence are published in journals, becoming widely available to the public sphere, with implications both for diplomatic interaction and for the emergence and function of the state.

### **Bureaucracy**

The idea of diplomacy as a bureaucratic practice concentrated questions about chronological change and social status while developing discussions about paperwork and the involvement of literary writers with diplomacy. José María and Alexander Samson observed that considerations of social status were important in changing diplomatic bureaucracies. In Spain, for example, lower-rank secretaries of Latin letters or foreign papers supplemented aristocratic ambassadors in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; later, one of the great governmental changes was the replacement of the aristocracy on state councils with middling sort university-educated lawyers. These produced some

of the most significant literary texts of the period. More generally, as Alexander noted, social status differentiates royal and aristocratic diplomatic culture from many writers of what we now consider to be the literary canon. John and Will Rossiter challenged the idea that diplomacy simply moved from an aristocratic to a bureaucratic culture over the early modern period, since medieval clerks (like Chaucer) frequently undertook diplomatic work, and suggested that we also ask when diplomacy began to have an aristocratic bias. Guido suggested that reading sequences of diplomatic reports and instructions would give a sense of how and when institutional memory and practices became standardized in different places; Edward Holberton added that comparing bureaucratic frictions between countries with different protocols would refine that chronology. Jan noted that the Russians might have been the first to make that comparison in the period, and Alexander that the Venetians had a set format from early on. André Krischer added that we should acknowledge the informal criteria for diplomatic work (such as abilities to converse, perform, and understand behavioural codes), especially since the world of informality was an integral part of early modern politics. Tracey suggested that we relate these bureaucratic chronologies to others—such as the Reformation, Renaissance, Enlightenment—that describe changes in ways of thinking and acting.

### **Gender**

Joad Raymond challenged the group to continue the conversation about gender begun at our first meeting. He asked whether thinking about textuality might be one way of doing so, given that one major outcome of expanding the literary canon has been to increase the number of texts we read written by women. Tracey suggested that we do so in conjunction with thinking about the more informal agents of diplomatic exchange, asking (for example) what ambassadors' wives write about, and how gender relations are constructed through women's correspondence. Guido and Edward W-L observed that the wider networks of informal diplomatic agents—patrons, cultural brokers and agents, secretaries, translators—included many women. Tracey noted that existing work on diplomacy and gender is still largely focused on obvious individual female figures like royal mistresses without thinking about the broader influence of gender dynamics on our understanding of diplomatic practices. Guilia and John suggested that we pursue the investigation of masculinity and homosociality in diplomacy, and Glenn noted that the considerable study of masculinity and kingship did not extend to wider diplomatic networks.

Tracey broadened the discussion to consider the gendered academic field of diplomatic history and studies, noting that it was interesting that gender disappeared from view between the first and second workshops, and asking how we embed an understanding of gender into a subject which is inherently a 'boys club'. John agreed that the new diplomatic history of the premodern period had not heavily engaged with gender, and that gender tended to become a secondary question when it did appear. He suggested that scholars who wanted to write about gender were not interested in engaging with diplomatic history; or perhaps a younger generation of historians was moving past the identity questions that were formerly central to gender study. Alexander suggested that the expansion of the field beyond Europe might compliment gender approaches, with different cultural settings providing different gendered spheres of political influence, e.g. harem diplomacy.

### **Other themes**

Network members also contributed the following thematic areas and questions as important to the future of the field during brainstorming at the beginning of the roundtable discussion (Session 6).

- The multiple moments (spaces, places and times) of transformation in the relations between early modern literature and diplomacy, including the origin of bureaucracy.
- The spaces of interpretation: the tensions between translocal and transnational models, and the role of centres and peripheries, in understanding diplomatic and literary-diplomatic relations; the networks and relationships that conveyed and transformed information and

intelligence; the multiple reinterpretations of diplomatic events and information across different private and public sites and the developing public sphere.

- The importance of time: questions of periodization and modernity; the ritual and generic times of diplomacy; institutional memory; diplomacy as an endless process.
- As a particular application of both spatial and time concerns, the role of the state, and the linked problem of what statehood was in early modernity: is the fledgling state the producer or the product of diplomacy, and the creator, product, consumer, manipulator or archivist of literary and diplomatic texts and information?
- The role of our narratives and terminologies – such as inherited Eurocentrism – in our analysis, and the importance of creating a tentative lexicon of concepts that we find both in primary sources and in the meta-language that common scholarship uses to describe and set out that analysis. The extent to which disciplinary histories dictate histories.
- Understandings of textuality and the importance of approaching textual sources in different ways from those traditionally applied in the history of diplomacy.
- The centrality of ideas and practices of translation, semiotics and theories of communication.
- The nature of representation and the representative including the role of ritual practice and ritual communication.

## 2. Panels

### Session 1: Translation

**José María** reflected thoughtfully on the relationship between diplomacy, war and cultural translation, and the symbolic capital involved in the construction of national identities, drawing on extracts from Edward Hoby's 1597 translation of the military commander and ambassador Bernardino de Mendoza's *Theorica y practica de Guerra* (1596). José María reflected on these extracts as evidence of translation and diplomacy as war by other means, resonating with Emily Apter's approach to the untranslatability of peace, and contrasting with other cases in which translators and diplomats appear as agents of peaceful agreements inhabiting an intercultural third space.

**Rebekah Clements** spoke about poetry and translation within the diplomatic communications of early modern East Asia. Since diplomacy was conducted by *literati* who were used to using poetry as a means of socializing, poetry also became an important part of diplomatic exchanges within the region. Presentation poems and other diplomatic documents were written down using the common writing system (known in English as 'classical Chinese', 'literary Chinese' or 'Sinitic'), but each individual read and understood it in the language of his own country. This 'brush talk' supplemented verbal translation by trained interpreters and challenges traditional understandings of what constitutes a 'lingua franca' and 'translation'.

**Warren** introduced a letter from Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli, Venetian Secretary in England, to the Doge and Senate, dated 1603. Scaramelli was on a semi-private mission regarding pirating of Venetian ships that became a public mission when Elizabeth I died and the Senate charged Scaramelli with negotiating with the new King, James I. The letter concentrated evidence about the role of translation (since Scaramelli spoke no English) and the relationship between orality and textuality and information gathering. Warren questioned the role of on-the-spot translators, drawn from the London community of expatriate Italians, in mediating the exchange.

**Edward H.** introduced extracts from a translation addressing Anglo-Swedish relations in the hand of the English poet Andrew Marvell, from around January 1658, while he was working in the Latin

office of Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate, which dealt with diplomacy and intelligence. Ed asked how this translation's composition, style and circulation might be historicized in relation to changes in diplomatic theory and practice; and how Marvell's secretarial and bureaucratic practices might shine a light onto his other writings.

An exceptionally rich **discussion** picked up on questions of orality and textuality; translation, mistranslation and untranslatability; and symbolic, ritual and honour exchange. In all of these areas the diplomatic value of ambiguity, indirection, allusion and strategic misunderstanding was apparent. At the same time, participants commented on the marked degree of unintentional misapprehension, indeterminacy and flux in early modern diplomacy; for example, Scaramelli struggled to transcribe English names he has heard, making individuals almost unidentifiable in his letters. Modern terms may add to the confusion since (as Joad observed) they often had different, perhaps even many different, meanings. Participants discussed the 'third space' as one in which the common language might be one of ritual, symbolic or polite exchange, and not a verbal language. As Jan observed, the diplomatic third space does not presuppose a community of shared interests but rather describes an emerging community in which conventions and semantics converge, which might also comprehend a community of enemies.

## **Session 2: Material Texts**

**Tracey** explored the visual aspects of diplomatic texts through a thought-piece supported by pictures of decorated English diplomatic documents from the 1520s and 1530s. Drawing together approaches from art history, the history of material texts, diplomatic history, and close reading of the texts, she asked how the non-verbal messages of the material text interact with its verbal messages, how the visual markers on such documents would have been understood, and what they can tell us about diplomatic relations, and especially the rituals surrounding the exchange of documents.

**Will** introduced an extract from Pietro Aretino's dedication to Henry VIII in the second volume of his published letters praising the English Reformation. He questioned the relationship between diplomacy, international patronage and 'soft power' given an earlier payment made to Aretino by Thomas Cromwell for supporting Henry's divorce in the preface to a 1534 publication and the Protestant translation of Aretino's penitential psalms by Thomas Wyatt, who also enjoyed Cromwell's patronage.

**Robyn Adams** drew on her research into the correspondence of two Elizabethan diplomatic agents—the intelligencer William Herle and the ambassador Sir Thomas Bodley—to speak about the rounded material life of diplomatic correspondence. She highlighted the archival afterlives of diplomatic texts from their first reception, through their wider circulation as evidenced by marginalia, to their current archival existence among the state papers or elsewhere. She asked what the relationship was between these letters and the discrete material objects (e.g. books, maps, artefacts, plants, food, other letters) with which they were grouped at the moments of transmission, receipt and archiving?

**Joad** introduced a selection of extracts that provided a neat example of texts involved in diplomatic exchanges: Milton's international polemic *Defensio* (1651), written as part of his diplomatic work for the Commonwealth as Secretary of Foreign Tongues; the English ambassador Bulstrode Whitlocke's journal of his embassy to Sweden recounting exchanges about the *Defensio*; and Milton's *Defensio Secunda* (1654). Whitlocke's account of the role the *Defensio* played in his embassy's reception in a small town while journeying through Sweden suggests the reach of international polemic and the responses it elicited in both higher and lower levels of government.

**Discussion** explored the various functions of the material aspects of diplomatic texts. Tracey reflected that these textual interactions with visual and material cultures allowed writers to express aspects of relationships that they could not make verbally explicit. Material objects also served as a physical means of conveying secret information (for example, through letters hidden in the bindings of books sent in diplomatic packets). Material gifts enclosed with letters mediated both international relations and patron-client relations within one national diplomatic body. Tracing the production, circulation and reception of the material text also highlighted the many intermediary figures acting on the edges of formal diplomacy, in information communities through which texts accrued meaning, and emphasized the comparative speed with which some transmission networks (such as news networks) operated. Material culture was at the heart of the early modern diplomatic process; in the eighteenth century, the decoration of diplomatic documents became less common, but other material emphases—such as archival storage—developed.

### **Session 3: Forms of Representation**

**Christine** explored early modern ambassadorial reports as self-narratives produced in the specific context and for the particular needs of early modern European court societies, taking seventeenth-century French ambassadorial reports from the Ottoman Empire as her example. Far from home, the ambassador was still subject to the social logic of court factions, clientele and family networks and competition for prestige. She asked whether the ‘self’ emerging from the ambassadorial letters was a specifically ‘diplomatic’ one and how the analysis of diplomatic correspondence as self-narratives might change our understanding of early modern diplomatic practice.

**Jason Powell** (who called into the workshop via Skype) introduced two examples of the relationship between the literary and diplomatic through four short extracts: Thomas Sackville’s account of an interview with Catherine de Medici and Catherine de Medici’s account of the same interview; a letter from Thomas Wyatt to Thomas Cromwell and the literary source for an anecdote in Wyatt’s letter. Using these examples, Jason asked, firstly, whether and how ‘literary’ and ‘diplomatic’ categories of representation differ in meaningful ways; and secondly, whether ‘literary’ and ‘diplomatic/historical’ categories of representation are equally conditioned by situation, memory, convention and audience.

**Guido** gave a thought-piece on diplomacy and cultural commensurability informed by his research into diplomatic contact between English and Dutch trading companies and Mughal India. Guido’s comparative analysis questioned the authority given to Roe’s journal as the quintessential account of Euro-Asian diplomacy and challenged the concept of cultural incommensurability often associated with Roe’s journal as a productive analytical framework. He showed that Roe’s narrative in many ways diverted from the norm, a variance caused in part by Roe’s exceptional position as a royal representative, and magnified by differences of genre, intended readership and editorial mediation.

**Edward W-L** introduced an extract from the Earl of Essex’s entertainment Elizabeth I’s 1595 Accession Day celebrations depicting the arrival of an ‘Indian Prince’ at the English Court. He raised questions about the treatment of representation and self-representation in the passage and highlighted the appropriation of earlier cultural and narrative phenomena (pilgrimage, oracle, miracle) in the service of presenting diplomatic realpolitik more palatably.

**Discussion** questioned whether representation is a productive term for thinking about the intersections between literature and diplomacy given the fluidity of the term; however, various diplomats discussed found it useful to manipulate ideas about representation and drew on literary expectations and allusions to do so. Diplomatic self-styling (including the projection of social ease and literary knowledge), the diplomatic negotiation of intended and unintended audiences, and the manipulation of evolving genres of diplomatic reporting, all offered more precise ways of thinking

about the broad topic of representation. The cultural sphere of the audience mattered: European diplomatic ceremony was not as important for Europeans to maintain outside Europe since it did not have the same implications for honour and hierarchy, and yet Western diplomats resident at the Ottoman court also used performed a European theatre precedence among themselves. Discussion raised instances of divergent theory and practice, the influence of factional interests, and the importance of tracing evolving relations and practices over time.

#### **Session 4: Literary-diplomatic Time and Space**

**Jane Newman** (via Skype) introduced extracts from the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). She suggested that the differential timing of when a religious (or any other) conflict can be said to end for the various parties involved, indeed, the differential implications of what actually constitutes a diplomatic settlement about matters sacred or profane, is one of the questions that the German ‘mourning-plays’ (*Trauerspiele*), written around the time of Westphalia, might help us pose. In particular, Jane suggested that we might productively juxtapose the Treaty with Andreas Gryphius’ *Catharine of Georgia, or Constancy Maintained*.

**Timothy Hampton** (via Skype) gave a thought piece on international envoys and domestic space in early modern drama. In many plays the diplomat or ambassador functions as a kind of domestic gatecrasher (e.g. in Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII*). The way in which ambassadors link different spatial dimensions of the play leads to thinking about the diplomatic figure as a mediator between closed, private, domestic spaces and larger political theatres. This mediation also raises the question of how we might pursue issues of spatial organization, and inject international dimensions into the work already done on private space and centralizing polities in the early modern period.

On behalf of **Susan Brigden** (*in absentia*), Tracey introduced an extract from *Newes from Pernassvs* (1622). Traiano Boccalini’s *I Raggvagli di Parnasso* is principally a satire of reason of state and was popular in English translation throughout the seventeenth century. The extract parodied a newsletter about a diplomatic encounter, and could be compared both to literary satires of diplomacy and ambassadors’ self-conscious parodies of their work in their correspondence. What does the proliferation of satires of diplomacy in various genres tell us about the diffusion of diplomatic knowledge, and how does this in turn shape expectations of diplomacy and the ways that diplomats themselves write about their experiences?

**Discussion** covered the different spaces and times typical to different genres (tragedy, comedy, satire, moral allegory) as different, complementary or conflicting, ways of viewing diplomatic activity; the need for diplomacy to be taken seriously to achieve its aims and the internal need for humour to defray or direct its tensions; and the continuous nature of diplomacy, in which treaties are merely movements. Discussants also highlighted the ways in which Westphalia looked back to Augsburg and to the various resolutions of the French Wars of Religion, as yet another temporary attempt to establish the peace of Europe, within a sacred timeframe in which peace is always provisional until the reunification of Christianity. Tracey asked what happens when a treaty appears within a play—a text within a text—and Tim and Jane responded that such representations raise questions about the politics of interpretation (how we interpret a treaty, who has authority to speak definitively, sign or guarantee a treaty, what subversive readings are possible).

#### **Session 5: Cultural Encounters**

**André** introduced extracts from the Journal of Admiral Sir Roger Curtis relating to his embassy to the Emperor of Morocco, 1783. He first asked what such texts describing diplomatic interactions were doing beyond merely conveying the event, raising questions of readership, medium as message,

and narratives of textual production. He then asked whether recent work on diplomacy and early modern intercultural exchange had missed the subtle penetration of these exchanges with European concepts, logics and practices – a question that sought *not* a return to older Eurocentric assumptions but an awareness of hidden power relations in early modern diplomatic encounters.

**Jan** introduced an extract from the seventeenth-century manuscript account ‘A Perfect Relation of The Reception, Audience, and Dispatch, of All Ambassadors from Foreign Princes, sent unto The Emperour of All Russia etc.’ The detailed notes on protocol, free from cultural commentary, are likely based on the Earl of Carlisle’s embassy, though his more personalized account of his embassy is contrastingly judgmental, while the more ‘literary’ account by his secretary Guy de Miedege was influential in shaping the image of Russia in England. Jan asked in what ways this extract is a text about Russia, how it compares with other kinds of literature, and to what genre the text belonged.

**Alexander** introduced an extract from English ambassador Sir Walter Aston’s letter about two performances in the Palacio Real in Madrid which provides little information on the content of the plays, even though he spoke good Spanish. Alexander asked how the use of entertainments for diplomatic purposes shapes their nature, staging and importance, and how Aston’s account can help us to assess the legibility or commensurability of European court cultures in the seventeenth century.

**Glenn** introduced extracts from the letters of Venetian ambassadors to France and England in 1515. He highlighted the textual reporting by ambassadors of behavioural and gestural projections of monarchy: Henry VIII, for example, presents himself as a courtly lover, as in touch with the people, and so on, through symbolic gestures. He asked to what extent Henry was manipulating a wider diplomatic audience, given his knowledge that the letters of Venetian ambassadors would have been aloud to the Senate, reported at the French court, and copied to send to the Papacy.

**Discussion** on intercultural encounter and European models of diplomacy highlighted the importance of avoiding projecting later power structures and differentials back to a time when European powers were not globally dominant, and the importance of observing the different non-linear chronologies of global diplomatic relations, especially at a time when global histories have become dissatisfied with the projection of European paradigms. Both Giulia and Edward W-L highlighted the importance of the language and history of the senses to many of the extracts in the panel. Meanwhile, the account of the Spanish court masques emphasized the socio-political aspects of the diplomatic performance of masques. Jan pointed out that the descriptions of the hall, space and decoration were related to the grammar and syntax of political language, indicating the status of those present, with the drama providing a reason to display political hierarchies, and Alexander agreed that the occasion was ritualized. Jo highlighted the importance of such visual and gestural markers to both drama and rhetoric, and John the role epistolary convention played in reporting such events.

### **Session 7: Law, Justice and Literariness**

**Mark Netzloff** (via Skype) gave a thought-piece exploring the problematic status of the religious and political exile in early modern theories of diplomacy and ‘international law’. Traditions of refuge and hospitality, accusations of treason, and the correlation of exiles with unjust enemies denied status in the law of nations were all brought to bear. Mark also highlighted the ‘literariness’ of the law of nations—not only in the ways that theoretical works support legal arguments through recourse to literary texts and traditions, but also in their imaginative dimensions, particularly when attempting to work through conceptual impasses such as the status of exiles.

**John** gave a thought-piece on Sidney’s *Arcadia* and the problem of compliance in international law. John raised questions of compliance that trouble international law: why do states abide by their

agreements? Is it simply the fear of sanction? Or is there an underlying legal consensus? He suggested that Sidney's *Arcadia* works through this problem in the international actions in which its heroes Musidorus and Pyrocles become involved. John concluded that, like Sidney's 'poesy', international law establishes normative ideals but cannot guarantee that people will abide by them.

**Jo** reflected on origin myths about diplomacy cited in early modern diplomatic treatises. These re-appropriated classical myths relate the invention of diplomacy to the invention of rhetoric, and sometimes also song or poetry, and relate both to the civilizing of warring brute nature and the origin of socio-political institutions. In creating and sustaining norms for diplomatic communities, and underwriting aspects of diplomatic ritual (in a myth-ritual approach), these adopted myths seek to present the 'literary' qualities of diplomacy as essential.

In **discussion**, participants noted that all three papers were interested in the distinction between the 'golden world' theory wished to create and the messiness of practice. In relating legal theory to diplomatic practice, evasiveness and productive ambiguity were important tools. The personal circumstances of individual theorists were also relevant: Gentili was a religious exile and wrote more extensively on exile but distinguished political from religious exile. Discussion then moved to the legacy of both classical and early modern law of nations in the construction of contemporary international law, which is however also indebted to Europe's later colonial experiences. Participants further discussed the provisional character of international law, given its lack of enforceability, and fiction as the place where the diplomatic or legal ideal can have some life, with myth often functioning as an ideal put in place to explain a nasty reality in a palatable manner, and emulation of ideals potentially valuable in encouraging compliant behaviours.



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