

Session at RSA (Boston, 31 Mar–2 Apr 16)

Boston, Mar 31–Apr 2, 2016

Deadline: Jun 1, 2015

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Artistic Negotiations: European Art Trade and Diplomacy in the Early Modern Period

Around 1600 cultural interchange within Europe intensified, owing largely to diplomats and art dealers.

The reasons were manifold: Political and confessional tensions turned the era before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War into a high point of diplomacy, and the number of embassies grew with the rising potential for conflict. At the same time improvements in the postal system and more rapid channels of communication enabled the transmission of political and cultural information without the need to travel in person. With the war's outbreak the mobility of cultural assets increased with the demand for valuable gifts, which also had a symbolic function, for diplomatic as well as military missions. The single protagonist responsible for the exchange of both information and objects has recently become known as a "double agent" (Marika Keblusek). A characteristic of these "double agents" was that they could easily cross courtly, ritual, political, or confessional boundaries. Because of their cultural role they could use their political influence and act in the shadows more easily than an official ambassador. They also could place top ranking cultural assets or arrange their exchange more smoothly.

We welcome papers treating figures like Hans Khevenhüller, Jacopo Strada, Nicolò Stoppio, Anton Meuting, Hans von Aachen, Peter Paul Rubens and Philipp Hainhofer from Habsburg and German-speaking lands, Henry Wotton and Dudley Carleton in England, Michel Le Blon and Pieter Isaacz for Northern Europe, or Daniel Nijs for Venice. Papers concerning individual case studies and art objects are also welcome.

Interested participants should send proposals, of no more than 150 words, and a short CV as a list of no more than 300 words, to the organizers, Mara R. Wade, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Urbana, Illinois (mwade@illinois.edu) and Michael Wenzel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel (mwenzel@hab.de) by 1 June at the latest.

Reference:

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