

A successful summer school was held at Warwick between 9 and 20 July 2012 on *Reading Publics in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe*. The summer school followed two previous workshops, the first held at the Warwick on 11 November 2011, with 20 participants from the US and UK, focusing on reading publics and religious controversy in sixteenth-century Italy and England, and the second, held at the Newberry Library on 19 March 2012 with 22 participants, focused on paratexts and reading publics in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe. Details of the two earlier events are to be found on the Renaissance Centre website.

The summer school, organised by Simon Gilson together with Maude Vanhaelen and David Lines, benefitted from the expertise of nine invited guest lecturers who provided selected readings and then led and guided the discussion. We had six guest lectures at Warwick: Rhiannon Daniels (Bristol), Caroline Duroselle-Melish (Houghton Library, Harvard University), Stephen Clucas (Birbeck), Christie Henshaw and Chris Hilton (Wellcome Trust), Vivian Nutton (Wellcome Trust/Warwick), John Monfasani (Albany), Valerie Rees (independent scholar). The guest lecturers spoke on Boccaccio, Renaissance libraries, reading Plato in England and Hungary, the Plato-Aristotle controversy, printing and medicine. Eugenio Refini (Warwick) also gave a presentation. On the first day of the workshop the President of the Newberry Library, David Spadafora, gave a presentation to the participants.

In addition Rhiannon Daniels led a workshop in the Warwick Modern Records Centre that brought together the early printed works of Boccaccio and some other 16C prints collected in the holdings of the Warwick Library Special Collections. The minor works of Boccaccio were specially digitised for the workshop and are available via the Warwick Digital Library at <http://contentdm.warwick.ac.uk/cdm/>

Two excursions were held during the workshop. The first of these was a full-day workshop at the John Rylands Library in Manchester which offered further guest lectures from Guyda Armstrong (University of Manchester), Stephen Milner (University of Manchester) and Julianne Simpson (John Rylands Library), as well as the opportunity to see and examine closely rare prints for the collections across the three main thematic strands of the workshops. A special session was also devised that allowed participants to comment on books within their relevant fields of expertise, books that had been specially selected before the workshop but were not known to the participants. On the first Saturday, the participants were also able to see the Royal Shakespeare Company's performance of the *Tempest*.

The postgraduates and early career participants were an extremely lively and engaging group. They were selected by a committee chaired in the spring, during the Newberry workshop. We were extremely impressed by the quality of applications and by their number - we had over 50 applications in total. We selected 19 US participants and UK participants, most from the Newberry Consortium institutions, each of whom had the opportunity during the course of the summer workshop to present research papers based on their own work. The topics ranged from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries and covered: the reception of the *Liber de causis*; Aristotle's *Politics* in the Italian vernacular; communities of readers of More's *Utopia*; Cristoforo Landino; Marsilio Ficino; Pietro Bembo; Torquato Tasso; Ben Jonson; ekphrasis and Neopolitan Academies; literature on the Sack of Rome; Renaissance dialogues; Tudor Royal Proclamations; medical themes such as humours and physicians' casebooks; censorship; student notebooks; martyrologies. There was a wide and refreshing variety of geographical interests, from Italy and France to the British Isles.

In our group discussions we returned to some of the topics explored in earlier workshops but also expanded and refined the fields of enquiry raised here. Topics included: the respective role of print and manuscript in creating and reinforcing important networks of readers founded upon intellectual, social, and ideological interests; questions of material production, diffusion, and socio-cultural contextualisation; the realm of book consumption and its implications for the act of reading; the value, benefits and problems of digitisation of early print and manuscripts.

In line with the experience of previous summer schools, the fortnight was an exhilarating experience for the participants but was also physically demanding. The intense engagement of the participants was demonstrated by the creation of a blog/intranet for the use of the participants and for others following the workshop and in its aftermath: <http://renaissancepolyglot.wordpress.com/>

The participants' feedback was extremely positive. The following are some of the comments made on the evaluation sheets at the end:

*“Wonderful discussions, very in-depth and engaging ... the balance between guest speakers, participants' papers and faculty presentation was wonderful”*

*“Fruitful discussions ... connections made which proved that interdisciplinarity stimulates research which is usually quite limited to your own disciplinary-specific interests/paradigms”*

*“Introductions to specific collections (Newberry, Wellcome, Rylands) were helpful and inviting”*

*“I learned a lot about different ways of doing research, about different types of primary sources available, different traditions and strands of Renaissance thought, databases and working with digital resources etc”*

Five short fellowships were awarded to participants who wished to study during the Spring of 2012 at the Newberry and Warwick. The Fellows were Jacob Halford, Jonathan Olson, Jason Baxter, Gabriella Addivinola and Sarah Parker.

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