

Centre for Early Modern Studies – End of Year Newsletter 2021-22

This has been a busy and exciting year for Oxford's Centre for Early Modern Studies. We have managed a return to predominantly in-person gatherings that has been stimulating and rather unnerving by turns. We have all been in the process of working out how our academic lives will look in these new conditions, and this has been a good opportunity to find ways for CEMS to bring together early modern scholars in Oxford in different and inspiring configurations.

The 2021-22 academic year saw the creation of a new organisational structure for CEMS with the formation of a steering committee, drawing upon energy and expertise from across the Faculties affiliated with the Centre – Classics, English, History, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Theology and Oriental Studies. The committee has met termly, and will continue to develop projects facilitating cross-disciplinary activities within Oxford.

CEMS continues fulfilling the important function of gathering and communicating information on early-modern research events across different disciplines and discrete institutional spaces of Oxford University. In 2021-22 CEMS advertised seminars in, for example, early modern French literature, early modern German culture, religion in the British isles, Greek and Latin reception, early modern intellectual history and medieval and Renaissance music. CEMS's core communications role makes research events research events in different disciplines across the collegiate University more visible and accessible, especially to newcomers and visitors. We urge convenors of any early modern seminars not so far represented to send term cards to the CEMS research co-ordinator.

The annual Funding Competition elicited an extremely strong and exciting set of applications, and we were delighted to support a variety of events covering a wide range of topics including Anglo-Venetian cultural exchanges (spanning Art History, Music, History and Literary Studies), material space and literary production, and the histories of science and medicine in relation to theatre: full details can be found [here](#). The Funding Competition offers opportunities for graduate students and ECRs across the university to engage in planning research events. This year's winners came from History, Music and English.

A busy Hilary term saw the launch of a new CEMS initiative, the first Early Modern Masterclass, which was convened on this occasion by Joe Moshenska and Kathryn Murphy, and led by Brian Cummings (University of York) and Anita Traninger (Freie Universität, Berlin), who shared their respective work in progress on Erasmus and led a lively discussion on a selection of the *Adages*. These gatherings are intended to draw on the energy and expertise of scholars visiting Oxford for research and allow them to share their work in a somewhat more relaxed and expansive (though still intellectually rigorous!) environment than the standard research seminar. We plan for future sessions to vary in their geographical, linguistic and disciplinary focus.

Hilary also featured the interdisciplinary, hybrid-format conference on Hormuz, co-organised by Edmund Herzig (Oriental Studies, Oxford Nizami Ganjavi Centre) and Ladan Niayesh (Université Paris Cité) and supported by CEMS. It drew together scholars from a wide range of fields and institutions, using its tight geographical focus as an occasion for far-ranging historical and methodological discussion. Hormuz proved an exemplary object for cross-disciplinary conversations and a *cas d'école* of early modern connected histories at work, bringing together the very small scale of a barren island strategically positioned at the entrance of the Persian

Gulf, and the very large scale of the Asian and European empires of trade and power involved in its (re)capture four hundred years ago from Iberian hands by the joint forces of the Persian Safavids and the English East India Company. ERC TIDE and the Hakluyt Society were also collaborators and proceedings will be published through the British Institute of Persian Studies. Other CEMS-supported opportunities for discussion across regions and periods included the Early Modern Literature Seminar's roundtable on global early modern drama (Portuguese, Chinese and English), and, in Trinity Term, the special lecture by Jeff Dolven (Princeton) on Philip Sidney and turn-taking.

The CEMS website also underwent a significant revamp this year, most obviously in the redesign of the 'People' section of the website, which is now a flexible grid of profiles organizable by subject area, which individuals can edit and update. This better reflects our community than the older list, organized by faculty affiliation. Further updates to the website are planned for next year.

The website update was undertaken by Leah Veronese-Clucas, the culmination of her brilliant work as CEMS research co-ordinator. Leah will step down from this role following the completion of her DPhil, and we would like to thank her for all of the time and energy that she has devoted to CEMS. We would also like to thank the steering committee members, faculties and departments who have contributed to CEMS this year, and all those who have organized and participated in events. We have promising plans afoot for next year for a further masterclass and a CEMS 'global conversation' which we will circulate in due course and are also open to suggestions for activities, especially those that bring people together from different intellectual, national and linguistic traditions, so please let us know if you have ideas in this area!

Lorna Hutson, Director, CEMS

Joe Moshenska, Acting Director, CEMS (Hilary and Trinity Terms 2022)