

Cultures Of Bureaucracy

Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference
Toronto, March 17, 2019 — Sheraton Centre, Willow East



For questions, please contact:

Organizers: Giacomo Giudici, Rachel Midura,
& Luca Zenobi
Email: info.culturesofbureaucracy@gmail.com

During the last forty years, scholars have applied a cultural-historical perspective to the production, reception, and use of textual objects in a number of domains, yet the cultures of Renaissance administration remain largely unexplored. The very notion of “bureaucracy” seems to run counter to themes of cultural history: hierarchy in place of agency, exclusion in place of collaboration, and formality in place of negotiation.

A cultural approach to the people, practices, and material texts of Renaissance bureaucracy has the potential to challenge traditional notions of early modern statecraft and administration. Local and regional officials, secretaries and clerks, diplomats and couriers weathered the storms of war, the upset of regime change, and the occasional bankruptcy of their employers. Tax records, chancery documents, and ample official correspondence show an ongoing tension between ideals and customs in the worlds they moved between.

How did notions of publicity and privacy, patronage and service, honor and dishonor guide documentary production, reception, and use? How do seemingly formulaic texts demonstrate both cultural influence and individual ambitions? How did protocol and administrative ideals shape the private lives of bureaucrats?

Featuring Thomas de Keyser, Portrait of Constantijn Huygens and his Clerk (1627) from the National Gallery, London, U.K. (Front) and Ambrogio Lorenzetti, The Allegory of Good and Bad Government (1338) from the Fondazione Musei Senesi, Siena, Italy (Back).



THE WARBURG
INSTITUTE

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



All panels will take place March 17th in the Sheraton Centre, Room Willow East

Panel 1: Information & Communication (9:00-10:30)

- Aidan Collins (University of York): "The Administration of Bankruptcy in the English Court of Chancery, 1680-1750"
- Jan Hillgaertner (University of St. Andrews): "Communicating Policy: Agents and Diplomatic Networks in the Press of Seventeenth-Century Germany"
- Rachel Midura (Stanford University): "The Postmistress and the Spy: Patronage, Politics and the Post in Spanish Milan"
- Rupali Mishra (Auburn University): "Intelligence, Information Gathering, and the English East Indies Trade in the Early Seventeenth Century"

Panel 2: Practices & Textuality (11:00-12:30)

- Rebecca Carnevali (Warwick University): "Red Tape in Print: Printing, Bureaucracy, and the Public Sphere in Bologna, 1570s-1630s"
- Giacomo Giudici (The Warburg Institute): "Stronghold of the Authority or Site of Mediation? Political and social practices of document-making in the chancery of the Sforza (1450-1499)"
- Elaine Tierney (Victoria & Albert Museum): "Meetings and the Performance of Organisation: Designing Celebrations in London and Paris, 1660-1715"

Panel 3: Movement & Space (2:00-3:30)

- Sabrina Baron (University of Maryland): "The Politics of Proximity: Charles I and Georg Rudolph Weckherlin, 1625-49"
- William Caferro (Vanderbilt University): "The Bell Ringer goes to Avignon, the Cook to Hungary: The Florentine Bureaucracy (1345-1354)"
- Cristina Setti (Scuola Normale Superiore): "Itinerant Bureaucracy in the Venetian *Stato da Mar*: Culture, formation and identity of clerks and legati around the *Inquisitori* in Levante (16th-17th century)"
- Luca Zenobi (Oxford University): "Bureaucracy on the Move: The European Activities of Milanese Agents (c. 1450-1535)"

Panel 4: Performance & Perception (4:00-5:30)

- Lucy Clarke (Oxford University): "Public Men, Public Stage: Failures of magistracy in two domestic tragedies"
- Fabrizio Pagnoni (Università degli Studi di Milano): "*Oculi Camerae* or Insatiable Jaws of the Roman Curia? Papal Collectors in Fourteenth Century Italy"
- Jonathan Patterson (Oxford University): "Colbert's Police Files: *une littérature moraliste?*"
- Ceri Sullivan (Cardiff University): "Prayers for, Advice to, and Jokes about the Bureaucrat of Shakespeare's Day"



THE WARBURG
INSTITUTE

SCHOOL OF
ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON