

# MARRYING CULTURES

## QUEENS CONSORT AND EUROPEAN IDENTITIES 1500–1800



### OBJECTIVES

This project investigates the role of foreign consorts as agents, instruments or catalysts of cultural and dynastic transfer in early modern Europe (1500–1800). The project team includes scholars from the UK, Germany, Poland and Sweden, each of whom is conducting research into a transnational case study. The consorts studied have been chosen because they reveal cultural synergies between northern (Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Britain), eastern (Poland-Lithuania), and southern (Italy, Spain, Portugal) Europe and this has enabled the team to interrogate modern notions of centre and periphery, nationhood and dynasty. The team has investigated how texts, material culture, music and architecture are interconnected manifestations of the cultural encounters brought about by dynastic marriages and has peeled back the map of Europe with its discrete nation states to reveal an earlier one with different linguistic, cultural and political borders to those of today.

The project members are: Dr Jill Bepler (Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel), and Maria Skiba (Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien, Hanover); Dr Almut Bues (German Historical Institute, Warsaw) and Urszula Zachara-Związek (Warsaw University); Professor Svante Norrhem (Lund University) and Dr Elise Dermineur (Umeå University); Professor Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly and Dr Ewa Kociszewska (University of Oxford); Dr Adam Morton (Newcastle University). Partners in the project are Kensington Palace, the National Portrait Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Livrustkammaren (The Royal Armoury), Stockholm; the Museum of Polish History, Warsaw.



### KEY FINDINGS

The project has

- expanded the definition of cultural transfer
- interrogated the notion of the court as a transnational space
- re-evaluated the role of the consort to show how politically active she was in ways not revealed before
- shown how the dynastic networks cemented by royal marriages link European territories and give them a shared history
- worked with colleagues in museums and libraries to understand and present the objects in their collections in the context of dynastic history and the cultural input of the consort

### OUTPUTS

*Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, 1550-1750*. Edited by Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly and Adam Morton, to appear with Routledge in October 2016.

*Telling Objects: contextualizing the role of the consort in early modern Europe*. Edited by Jill Bepler and Svante Norrhem, to appear in the series of the Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, to be published by Harrassowitz Wiesbaden in 2017.

*Frictions and Failures. Cultural Encounters in Crisis*. Edited by Almut Bues, to appear in the series ‘Quellen und Studien’ of the German Historical Institute Warsaw, to be published by Harrassowitz Wiesbaden in 2017.

*Queen Luise Ulrike. Gender and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Sweden*, by Elise Dermineur. To be published by Routledge in 2017.

*Zofia Jagiellonka, verheiratete Herzogin von Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel (1522-1575). Akten betreffend Hochzeit, Tod und Erbe*. Edited by Almut Bues, to appear in the series ‘Quellen und Forschungen zur Braunschweigischen Geschichte’.

In addition scholarly articles and chapters by each of the members of the team

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public presentations at Skarhult Castle, Sweden, in 2014; Concert in Oxford, UK, in 2015; Exhibition in the Royal Castle Warsaw, Poland in 2016; Competition for Polish schoolchildren Poland in 2016; Public Concert in the Augusteerhalle, Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel, in 2016; Podcast for Ashmolean Museum, Oxford; Input into permanent exhibition at the Livrustkammaren (Royal Armoury), Stockholm, Sweden

