**Call for Papers:**

**Early-Career Researchers Day-Conference on the History of Celebrity**

Keynote Speaker: Professor Antoine Lilti, Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris

Venue:            Institute of Historical Research, London

Date:               Wednesday 29th March 2017

Time:              10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.

Deadline for abstracts: 15th February 2017

Among the most significant recent contributions to ‘celebrity studies’ and the early history of celebrity is Antoine Lilti’s *Figures publiques. L’Invention de la célébrité (1750-1850).*The English translation forthcoming in 2017 is eagerly awaited. Professor Lilti will give the keynote address, entitled 'Public figures and private lives: the invention of Celebrity', at this day-conference in which postgraduate and post-doctoral researchers are invited to contribute papers.

Lilti’s *Figures publiques*offers a genealogy of the concept of celebrity in French, British and North American societies dating back to the eighteenth century when it emerged alongside notions of increased selfhood and personal authenticity. This emergence, Lilti also shows, was linked to a ‘media revolution’ that democratised access to portraiture, and a growing taste for biographies, autobiographies and private lives. Lilti revisits Jürgen Habermas’s notion of the ‘public sphere’, but argues that while the development of new forms of ‘publicity’ may have facilitated rational debate and criticism, it also stimulated prurient curiosity and trivia. In the new, affective and intimate relationship now conjoining celebrities and their public, members of the general public wanted to meet and become acquainted with famous people, and thought about them in a familiar, informal manner. Celebrities too had to accept that the expanded public would comment and criticise them, and they thus had to contend with detractors as well as fans.

This day-conference seeks to offer an overview of the history of celebrity from the beginnings sketched out by Lilti and through to the present day. How has celebrity been understood? What forms has it taken? Can we detect stages in its development?

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

* The representation of celebrity
* The perception of celebrity by contemporaries
* The legacy of celebrities
* Semantic studies on celebrity
* How people lived celebrity
* The representation of celebrities in print
* Comparative studies of reputation/celebrity/glory

We particularly encourage papers from early career scholars working on Europe and North America from the eighteenth century to the present.

The conference is co-organized by Anaïs Pedron (Queen Mary University of London, [a.c.pedron@qmul.ac.uk)](mailto:a.c.pedron@qmul.ac.uk)) and Dr Clare Siviter (Université Blaise-Pascal, [clare.siviter@univ-bpclermont.fr)](mailto:clare.siviter@univ-bpclermont.fr)). The workshop is generously funded by the Society for the Study of French History, the School of History and the Eighteenth-Century Seminar at Queen Mary University of London.

The deadline for submissions is 15th February 2017. Abstracts of up to 300 words should be sent to the conference organisers at [queenmaryfrenchforum@gmail.com](mailto:queenmaryfrenchforum@gmail.com)

Attendance is free. There is no registration fee but due to limited space, advance registration is required.

Please send enquiries to [queenmaryfrenchforum@gmail.com](mailto:queenmaryfrenchforum@gmail.com).

Antoine Lilti is one of the foremost social and cultural historians of eighteenth-century France and the Enlightenment. He is attached as directeur d’études to the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris. Among his many publications are *Le Monde des salons. Sociabilité et mondanité à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (2005), translated as *The Society of Salons : Sociability and Worldliness* (Oxford University Press, 2015) and *Figures publiques. L'invention de la célébrité (1750-1850)*, (2014; English translation forthcoming, 2017).