

eastern Mediterranean. Different contracts recorded Genoese merchants active in Egypt, shedding light on the Genoese trading community of Alexandria.

At the library of the *École Française de Rome*, I examined publications from the Centre d'Études Alexandrines. The results of archaeological excavations and extensive historical research on Islamicate Alexandria provided valuable insights into the city's geographies and the institutions affiliated with the Genoese and Egyptian administrations.

Traditionally, the history of diplomacy and commerce in the medieval Mediterranean has been influenced by nationalist views, producing a dichotomy between a 'Christian West' and an 'Islamic East'. Consequently, Egyptian and Italian communities in Alexandria have often been depicted as competing and opposing groups. This perspective originated from a 'top-down' approach, focusing on state narratives and neglecting the multi-layered structure of diplomacy and commerce.

More recently, scholars have challenged these conservative views, but Genoa has been largely excluded from these new inquiries. My project addresses this gap and reverses the old rhetoric of divisions and antagonisms between Egyptians and Genoese, highlighting cross-cultural and trans-Mediterranean interconnections. It presents a more nuanced and comprehensive view of this shared, composite whole.

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ROME AWARDS

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Identity and community in the immigrant artisan population of early modern Rome

During my time as a Rome Awardee at the British School at Rome, I investigated immigrant artisan communities in Rome from 1550–1650. In particular, I was interested in the German communities of Early Modern Rome, who, whilst seeking to maintain a strong national identity, especially through the preservation of the German language, also formed an important part of the artisanal workforce and contributed to the creation and development of culture. In general, I was interested in understanding more about how these 'national' groupings developed, and how they intersected with craft, neighbourhood and confessional identity. By exploring how immigrant artisans assimilated into Roman communities, I wanted to understand more about how those in Rome interacted with other cultures. I was interested in looking at both master artisans, who made their homes within Rome and joined trade organizations, and journeymen passing through the city.

I completed my fellowship at the British School at Rome amid the pandemic in the autumn of 2020. Whilst I had planned to spend much of my time at the BSR examining archival collections, because of strict regulations related to the coronavirus pandemic, I was only able to spend a limited amount of time in the Archivio di Stato di Roma at the beginning of my stay in Rome. This necessarily altered the scope of my research. Nevertheless, in the time that I was able to have in the archive, I identified some interesting material. I focused my attention on the Collegio dei Notai Capitolini.

Three sets of documents within this archive were of particular interest, within which I found information related to different trades. The most interesting set of documents I found relates to building work on the convent of Santa Maria del Popolo, including evidence of building costs, information about the artisans involved in the building process, many of whom were from outside of Rome, and notes of sale from artisans across Italy. Although further time in the Archivio di Stato in Rome will be necessary to continue this research, this initial investigation demonstrated that, while immigrants often associated themselves with their 'national' church and related communities, artisans from a number of different crafts came together in particular on building projects, meaning that immigrants from across Italy and the rest of Europe often worked alongside one another.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the BSR for allowing me the opportunity to be part of such a unique community. The multidisciplinary environment at the BSR provides fertile ground for the historian and I found the insights of the artists and scholars at the BSR to be enriching for my research. The staff and fellows went above and beyond to keep the research and creative community thriving during this difficult time, allowing me the space to complete my studies and companionship whilst doing so. Since completing my fellowship, I have been an Assistant Professor at the University of Cambridge, and in October 2022 I started a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship at the University of Oxford, continuing my research into German immigrants in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy.

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Black Rome: the Second Congress of Black Writers and Artists (Rome, March–April 1959)

My research focuses on labour narratives, anticolonialism and black cultures in post-war Italy. During my research stay at the BSR, I worked on a small research project devoted to one event that marked a crucial moment in the mediation and production of black cultures in Italy: the Second Congress of Black Writers and Artists. This took place in Rome in late March 1959. It was organized by the journal and publisher *Présence Africaine* and by the Société Africaine de Culture, in collaboration with the then Istituto Italiano per l’Africa. The event, which hosted more than 100 intellectuals and artists from Africa, the Americas and Europe, revolved around the crucial theme of the unity of black cultures. My research project maps out the main archival sources available on the event and the coverage of the Congress by the Italian periodical press by looking at a corpus of newspapers and cultural journals across the whole political spectrum. It reconstructs the networks that made the event possible and that led to the choice of Rome as its venue. It demonstrates how the Congress was not only thoroughly documented and discussed but also used self-reflectively by Italian intellectuals from different political backgrounds as an occasion to look at Italy’s own present, a century after the unification.