

I am enormously grateful to the BSR for the opportunity to undertake this research in a stimulating and supportive environment. The conversations with scholars and artists that are an intrinsic part of life at the BSR helped to shape and reshape my thinking and I rediscovered the joy of being part of a scholarly community after the challenges of 2020. The foundational research that I was able to complete allowed me to be successful in securing a British Academy Small Research Grant that will enable me to complete my viewing of archived programmes in Rome and to produce a general-interest podcast on Italian television to mark the 70th anniversary in 2024.

RACHEL HAWORTH

(Organisational Development and Professional Learning, University of Leeds)

r.a.haworth@leeds.ac.uk

doi: 10.1017/S0068246223000181

Sanctity and the refashioning of early modern Catholicism: Saints and their causes between Rome and locality

Why did the Catholic Church, a faith defined by its cult of saints, find it so difficult to create new ones at the time of its greatest crisis? Historians have long noticed a long gap in saint-making following the Reformation. After 1523 there were to be no new saints for 63 years, a situation Peter Burke memorably attributed to a ‘failure of papal nerve’. The hesitant resumption of saint-making in 1588 created the modern machinery of canonization, but few benefited. The path to sainthood was beset by bureaucratic hurdles and roadblocks, which remained in place until Pope John Paul II transformed canonization into a veritable assembly line. The first post-Reformation saint, Carlo Borromeo, was not created until 1610; in 1634 a papal bull *Cælestis Hierusalem Cives* imposed further restrictions targeted explicitly at other *beati moderni* and was followed by another nearly 25-year pause.

So why was saint-making so difficult? I arrived at this question as a result of my interest in a group of Netherlandish martyrs, a diverse group of seventeen priests who died in 1572 and who were beatified by Pope Clement X in 1675. The witnesses who testified during their canonization proceedings offer valuable and vivid testimony of the violence of the Dutch Revolt, but I quickly realized that what set their cause apart was the fact it was successful at all. The so-called martyrs of Gorkum were the only Catholics killed by Protestants to be beatified — beatification was also part of the seventeenth-century reorganization of saint-making — before 1700. *None* were canonized. Only one other martyr, Fidelis of Sigmaringen, was successful before the mid-nineteenth century. The absence of such martyrs is a mystery. Narratives of martyrdom, of extreme violence and exemplary victimhood, stood at the centre of early modern religious conflict. Why were the martyrs of Gorkum the exception rather than the rule?

A comparative approach must be key to answering all of these questions. On the one hand, causes competed against each other — they could not all be successful at the same time. On the other hand, they were also cumulative, setting precedents that later causes could cite. My Balsdon Fellowship allowed me to move beyond the trial documents I already knew and explore the causes of other aspiring saints, in particular other

martyrs. In the Vatican archives I read witness testimony gathered from places as diverse as Nagasaki, Goa and Zaragoza. For my original martyrs of Gorkum project this wider set of sources helped me to identify factors that set the Dutch martyrs apart, and to realize what their beatification actually was: an attempt to regulate and control a cult that had grown too big to be stamped out. That insight, plus visits to a host of other church archives — including those of the Inquisition — offers the beginning of an answer to the question with which I started: the thirst for new saints was, in fact, a dangerous thing. By resuming saint-making the papacy unleashed forces that it struggled to control.

These are questions that I hope to explore as part of a larger research project in conjunction with the British School. Whatever the outcome of those future external grant applications, I am very grateful to the BSR for its generosity. My Balsdon Fellowship proved to be an exceptionally enriching experience not just for my research, but also for me.

JAN MACHIELSEN

(School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University)

Machielsenj@cardiff.ac.uk

doi: 10.1017/S0068246223000193

Visual cultures of landscape in the Fascist imaginary

During my fellowship, I began a major project on how art and visual culture informed the politicization of the Italian landscape during the period of Fascist rule (1922–43). From the claiming of the mountain landscapes that had been nationalized by World War I, to the discourse of internal colonialism that framed land reclamation projects, and the projection of overseas imperial ambitions onto the country's extensive coastline, Italy's land mass was appropriated by Fascism in both concrete and symbolic terms. To investigate the function of landscape for Fascism, my research focuses on works of art and visual culture, which were central to the regime's new model of image politics. In bringing landscape into dialogue with art and visual culture, my aim is to create new knowledge about the role of both nature and images in Fascism's political project, and thus to ask new questions about the nature of Italian Fascism itself.

To examine the proliferation of visual media under Fascism, my research analyses a wide range of visual objects, from picture postcards and illustrated magazines to mosaics and mural paintings. By considering the public and the monumental alongside the intimate and the everyday, my research explores the extent to which visual media shaped and staged Fascist conceptions of the Italian landscape. As such, my three months at the BSR were focused on identifying and studying primary visual sources across this range of objects. In Rome, I consulted period magazines and tourist literature in library and archive collections, as well as works of landscape art *in situ* and in museums. With the support of research funding from the School of Cultures, Languages and Area Studies at the University of Nottingham, I was able to undertake a series of short research trips from Rome to Florence, Milan, Palermo, Rovereto, Trento and Venice. These allowed me to visit site-specific works and to study at first hand a very wide range of landscape art in temporary exhibitions and museum collections.