

Foreign Communities, Collective Identities, and the Arts in Early Modern Rome

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Foreigners in Rome

[1] The meeting of different cultures in cities with a high proportion of immigrants poses new challenges in the globalized world of the twenty-first century. But already in large urban centers of the Early Modern era, much thought was given to forms of coexistence between people of different origins. The most important questions about foreignness were similar to those we face today: exclusion and acceptance, boundaries and their crossing, cultural identity with respect to the other, the exchange of goods and ideas, communication with words and images, and the fostering of harmony among diversity. Since the Middle Ages, large Italian port cities like Venice, Genoa and Naples have hosted the transfer of people and goods and been characterised by a numerically large foreign presence. In the Early Modern period, the population of Rome itself was also comprised mainly of non-locals, but in contrast to the port cities, only a small percentage was involved in trade. The vast majority of foreign visitors to the city were attracted by the presence of the papal court. Thus, many curial officials, churchmen, and pilgrims numbered among them.

[2] Since the early Middle Ages, foreigners with the same origins residing in Rome came together to form collectives with structured forms of organization. These entities were for the most part lay confraternities and religious institutes that maintained pilgrimage hospices with adjacent churches for people of common provenance. Analogously to what was usual for university and mercantile spheres, from the fifteenth century at the latest, communities of individuals with the same geographic origins were termed 'nations' (in Latin *nationes*).¹ In

¹ On Early Modern notions of nationhood and national identity see: Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, UK, and New York 1990; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford 1983; Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London 1991; Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, Munich 2007; Anthony D. Smith, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations. Hierarchy, Covenant, and Republic*, Malden

addition to their geographical roots, members of these groups shared cultural attributes such as language, customs and traditions, as well as a collective background of remembrance, and common figures of identification, such as 'national' saints and heroes.² The 'nations' in pre-modern Rome produced and passed down rich source materials that lend themselves to a broad-based, interdisciplinary study of the themes of foreignness and collective identity, and thus they have received new attention in recent scholarship. Historians, musicologists, and art historians have approached the topic from different perspectives, gathering new findings while also formulating new questions for future study.³

[3] The contributions presented in this Special Issue were produced within the framework of the research project "Roma communis patria" of the Bibliotheca Hertziana - Max Planck Institute for Art History in Rome.⁴ The scope of the project is a comprehensive and comparative study of the foreign communities present in Rome between the Middle Ages and the Modern Era. The central question is

and Oxford 2008; Caspar Hirschi, *The Origins of Nationalism. An Alternative History from Ancient Rome to Early Modern Germany*, Cambridge, UK 2012. On collective identities between the Middle Ages and the Modern Era see Paolo Prodi and Wolfgang Reinhard, eds., *Identità collettive tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna, Atti del convegno internazionale di studio, Bologna, 28-30 settembre 2000*, Bologna 2003.

² On foreigners in medieval and Early Modern Rome see: Egmont Lee, "Foreigners in Quattrocento Rome", in: *Renaissance and Reformation* 19 (1983), 135-146; Gabriella Rossetti, ed., *Dentro la città. Stranieri e realtà urbane nell'Europa dei secoli XII-XVI*, Naples 1989 (*Europa Mediterranea*, 2); Donatella Calabi and Paola Lanaro, eds., *La città italiana e i luoghi degli stranieri (XIV-XVIII secolo)*, Rome and Bari 1998 (*Biblioteca di cultura moderna*, 1141); Paul Berbée, "Von deutscher Nationalgeschichte zu römischer Lokalgeschichte. Der Topos vom 'nationalen Pilgerheim' am Beispiel des deutschen Frauenhospizes St. Andreas in Rom (1372-1431)", in: *Römische Quartalschrift* 86 (1991), 23-52; Anna Esposito, "I 'forenses' a Roma nell'età del Rinascimento: aspetti e problemi di una presenza atipica", in: *Dentro la città. Stranieri e realtà urbane nell'Europa dei secoli XII-XVII*, ed. Gabriella Rossetti, Naples 1999, 179-190; Knut Schulz, "Was ist deutsch? Zum Selbstverständnis deutscher Bruderschaften im Rom der Renaissance", in: *Päpste Pilger, Pönitentiarie. Festschrift für Ludwig Schmutge zum 65. Geburtstag*, eds. Andreas Meyer, Constanze Rendtel und Maria Wittmer-Butsch, Tübingen 2004, 135-167; Irene Fosi, "Roma patria comune? Foreigners in Early Modern Rome", in: *Art and Identity in Early Modern Rome*, eds. Jill Burke and Michael Bury, Aldershot 2008, 27-43; Irene Fosi, *Convertire lo straniero. Forestieri e inquisizione a Roma in età moderna*, Rome 2011; James Nelson Novoa, *Being the Nação in the Eternal City. New Christian Lives in Sixteenth-Century Rome*, Toronto and Peterborough 2014 (*Portuguese Studies Review Monograph Series*, 2); Elisabeth Lobenwein, Martin Scheutz and Alfred Stefan Weiß, eds., *Bruderschaften als multifunktionale Dienstleister der Frühen Neuzeit in Zentraleuropa*, Vienna 2018 (*Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 70); Matteo Sanfilippo, "Discovering Migration in the Seventeenth Century: Propaganda Fide, the Holy Office, and Foreigners", in: *Luke Wadding, the Irish Franciscans, and Global Catholicism*, ed. Matteo Binasco, New York and London 2020, 61-76.

whether and to what extent the artistic products emerging from these groups can be understood – like language – as carriers of collective identity.⁵

[4] Common to all of Rome's confraternities of foreigners was that they were religious in nature and fundamentally pursued charitable goals. The motivating idea was to provide mutual assistance among compatriots. The essential infrastructure to achieve this aim was a church or oratory for services and meetings, and a building for the accommodation of pilgrims and care of the sick. In addition, a basic source of funding was required, in most cases provided by private donations and the rental income from real estate. Recent research has shown that the many 'nations' of Rome varied greatly in both size and function, but above all in social composition and administrative structure. These differences arose primarily in relation to the numbers of travelers coming from a given geographical region. Certain groups were so minimal in size that only a small confraternity with unstable funding could form, without the possibility of manifesting in the cityscape through representative buildings or elaborate processions. Small communities of this kind were, for instance, those of the Armenians and Bohemians, or those composed of migrants from the Italian cities

³ Georges Brunel et al., eds., *Les fondations nationales dans la Rome pontificale. Actes du colloque de Rome (16-19 mai 1978)*, Paris and Rome 1981 (*Publications de l'École française de Rome*, 52); Sebastiano Roberto, *San Luigi dei Francesi. La fabbrica di una chiesa nazionale nella Roma del '500*, Rome 2005; Michael Matheus, ed., *S. Maria dell'Anima. Zur Geschichte einer 'deutschen' Stiftung in Rom*, Berlin and New York 2010 (*Bibliothek des Deutschen Historischen Instituts in Rom*, 121); Alessandro Serra, "Le confraternite nazionali 'italiane' a Roma (secoli XVII–XVIII). Territori, devozioni, identità", in: *Italia sacra. Le raccolte di vite dei santi e l'invenzione delle regioni (secc. XV–XVIII)*, eds. Tommaso Caliò, Maria Duranti and Raimondo Michetti, Rome 2013, 25-54; Id., *La mosaïque des dévotions. Confréries, cultes et société à Rome (XVIe–XVIIIe siècles)*, Louvain-la-Neuve 2016; Alexander Koller and Susanne Kubersky-Piredda, with the collaboration of Tobias Daniels, eds., *Identità e rappresentazione. Le chiese nazionali a Roma, 1450–1650*, Rome 2016; Antal Molnár, Giovanni Pizzorusso and Matteo Sanfilippo, eds., *Chiese e nationes a Roma. Dalla Scandinavia ai Balcani. Secoli XV–XVIII*, Rome 2017 (*Bibliotheca Academiae Hungaricae – Roma. Studia*, 6); Sara Cabibbo and Alessandro Serra, eds., *Venire a Roma, restare a Roma. Forestieri e stranieri fra Quattro e Settecento*, Rome 2017; Irene Fosi, "A proposito di Nationes a Roma in età moderna: provenienza, appartenenza culturale, integrazione sociale", in: *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken* 97 (2017), 383-383; Michela Berti and Emilie Corswarem, *Music and the Identity Process: The National Churches of Rome and their Networks in the Early Modern Period*, Turnhout 2019; Anna Esposito, "National Confraternities in Rome and Italy in the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period: Identity, Representation, Charity", in: *A Companion to Medieval and Early Modern Confraternities*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler, Leiden 2019, 235-256.

⁴ "Roma communis patria. Die Nationalkirchen in Rom zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit", principal investigator: Susanne Kubersky-Piredda, project id BH-P19-29. The project was sponsored by the Minerva program of the Max Planck Society between 2011 and 2016. Versions of the essays published here were presented as papers at the 61st Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America held in Berlin in 2015.

of Norcia, Bergamo and Brescia, or the regions of Calabria, Sardinia and Sicily.⁶ Other groups, such as those from the Iberian peninsula, the French territories, the regions of the Holy Roman Empire and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, had larger and more diversified demographics. These communities were so large and heterogeneous that they split into territorial or professional sub-groups, each of which created its own institution to adequately represent its own interests. Points of contact for travelers from the Empire were, for example, the two large confraternities of Santa Maria dell'Anima and Santa Maria della Pietà del Camposanto Teutonico, among whose members were many curial officials. But there was also a confraternity of German bakers, as well as several other smaller 'Teutonic' institutions. The Spanish were divided into Castilians and Catalans, each with their own church and affiliated hospice, respectively San Giacomo degli Spagnoli and Santa Maria di Monserrato, but they also had a variety of smaller religious institutes.⁷ For the French, besides San Luigi dei Francesi, there was also the Minim church of Santissima Trinità dei Monti, as well as the smaller confraternities of Burgundians, Bretons and Lorraines.

[5] The size and social composition of these institutions also determined their objectives, financial possibilities and representational needs. Although most of the 'national' institutions were private foundations, each had its own greater or lesser ties with the papal court, with the governments of their respective home territories and with certain religious orders. From these entities financial support was rarely received, but such relationships were of great importance for the decision-making processes within the institutions and for their self-representation vis-à-vis the outside world.

[6] With the establishment of the system of permanent embassies, some of the 'nations' based in Rome – above all those of the great European powers – took on political relevance in the local urban context. The rivalries between these foreign institutions reflected the political dynamics between the ruling houses, and also

⁵ Publications resulting from the project include: Koller and Kubersky-Piredda, eds., *Identità e rappresentazione*; Susanne Kubersky-Piredda, ed., *Il Collegio di Sant'Isidoro: laboratorio artistico e crocevia d'idee nella Roma del Seicento*, Rome 2019; Susanne Kubersky-Piredda, "Roma communis patria. Comunità straniera nella Roma di Gregorio XIII", in: *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 42 ([2015/16] 2018), 383-386; see also the articles by Camilla Fiore and Giulia Iseppi in the same volume, 387-481; Tobias Daniels, "Nationale Bruderschaften in Rom (14.-17. Jahrhundert)", in: *Bruderschaften als multifunktionale Dienstleister der Frühen Neuzeit*, eds. Lobenwein, Scheutz and Weiß, 339-355.

⁶ Overviews on Rome's national churches can be found in the following partially outdated publications: Oreste Ferdinando Tencajoli, *Le chiese nazionali italiane in Roma*, Rome 1928; Luigi Salerno, *Roma communis patria*, Bologna 1968; Carlo Sabatini, ed., *Le chiese nazionali a Roma*, Rome 1979.

⁷ Carlos José Hernando Sánchez, ed., *Roma y España. Un crisol de la cultura europea en la Edad Moderna*, Madrid 2007; Alessandra Anselmi, *Le chiese spagnole nella Roma del Seicento e del Settecento*, Rome 2012.

had an impact on forms of artistic representation. Both the Curia and the European royal courts attempted to control the foreign communities in Rome through their cardinal protectors and ambassadors. Not always did these outside influences meet with the goodwill of the confraternities, who were reluctant to relinquish their autonomy. The architecture and artistic decoration of the national churches, as well as the ephemeral decorations used in festivals and processions, visualized the collective identities of the communities and their rival relationships with one another. In the 16th century the power play of nations was particularly evident in Piazza Navona and its environs, where the churches of San Giacomo degli Spagnoli, Santa Maria dell'Anima and San Luigi dei Francesi were built in direct competition and reference to each other.⁸ From the seventeenth century onwards, the area around Piazza di Spagna became a similarly conflict-ridden junction, with the French church Santissima Trinità dei Monti and the Spanish embassy standing on opposite sides of the square.⁹

[7] The research contributions presented here treat the institutions of six different foreign communities resident in Rome during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, focusing on the question of how national identity was visualized through art and architecture, but also by performative actions such as religious services, rituals and processions. Three central themes emerge from these analyses: 1) siting, demarcation, and interaction in the urban context; 2) interactions between internal and external identity; and 3) cult of images and national identity.

Siting, demarcation, and interaction in the urban context

[8] Usually, communities of foreigners in Rome in the Early Modern period could not freely choose where to build their hospice or church. Some had inherited

⁸ Jean-François Bernard, ed., *"Piazza Navona, ou Place Navone, la plus belle & la plus grande". Du stade de Domitien à la place moderne, histoire d'une évolution urbaine*, Rome 2015; Susanne Kubersky-Piredda, "Chiese nazionali fra rappresentanza politica e Riforma cattolica: Spagna, Francia e Impero a fine Cinquecento", in: *Identità e rappresentazione*, eds. Koller and Kubersky-Piredda, 17-64.

⁹ Dietrich Erben, *Paris und Rom. Die staatlich gelenkten Kunstbeziehungen unter Ludwig XIV.*, Berlin 2004; Elena C. Napolitano, "Erasing Papal Presence: the Minims and the Marking of French Territory on the Pincio, 1662-1670", in: *La chiesa e il convento della Trinità dei Monti. Ricerche, nuove letture, restauri*, eds. Sebastiano Roberto and Colette di Matteo, Rome 2016, 44-48; Margaret A. Kuntz, "Celebrating the Surrender of La Rochelle in Rome: Urban VIII, the French National Churches, and Bernini's Barcaccia Fountain", in: *ibid.*, 57-67; Alessandra Anselmi, *Il palazzo dell'Ambasciata di Spagna presso la Santa Sede*, Rome 2001, 172 and note 17. See also Elena Napolitano, "'Exposed to everyone's eyes': The Urban Prospect and the Publicity of Representation in Israël Silvestre's Profile of the City of Rome, 1687", in: *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, eds. Angela Vanhaelen and Joseph P. Ward, New York 2013, 151-172; Elena Napolitano, *Prospects of Statecraft: Diplomacy, Territoriality, and the Vision of French Nationhood in Rome, 1660-1700*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto 2012, URL: https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/67304/1/Napolitano_Elena_C_201211_Ph_D_thesis.pdf (accessed 1 April 2020).

medieval buildings that they could replace with larger, updated structures. In other cases, the Holy See assigned them a building lot or an already existing empty church. The distribution of the pilgrims' hospices in the city center shows that pragmatic criteria played a major role in their siting. A fairly large number were located along the axes of the new sixteenth-century streets, such as the Via Giulia and Via Leonina (today's Via Ripetta), which among other functions served to channel the streams of pilgrims during Holy Years.¹⁰ Beyond these practical aspects, however, the siting of the communities could also take on a symbolic significance.

[9] In 1576 the Bolognese pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585) assigned a small church tucked behind Palazzo Farnese to the newly founded confraternity of the Bolognese in Rome, and dedicated it to saints John the Evangelist and Petronius. Subsequently, however, the Buoncompagni pope withdrew his attention from his compatriots, dedicating all of his efforts in honor of his native city to the Apostolic Palace, where he commissioned the decoration of the Sala Bologna. Nonetheless, Gregory XIII did take advantage of the Bolognese nation for his own ecclesiastical and political purposes: Giulia Iseppi argues in her article that the location of the church – in addition to its dedication to the Evangelist – played a significant role in this strategy, since the surrounding district was then a center of Filippo Neri's spiritual activity and in this respect could become a vessel for the expression of post-Tridentine ideas such as the revival of the Early Christian Church, and the ideal of spiritual renewal.

[10] The potentially symbolic meaning of a building site is also treated in Andrea Bacciolo's essay dealing with a small oratory on the Via Appia erected, following the author, as early as 1537, by the English cardinal Reginald Pole (1500–1558). The English nation had long been established in Rome, but during the sixteenth century its relations with the Curia were strained, as a consequence of the Reformation. After Henry VIII (1491–1547) subtracted the Church of England from papal authority, the Catholic members of the English Hospice, traditionally attached to the royal court, became exiles who faced persecution on their return to their home territories. Their oratory, called *Domine quo vadis*, was built on a site closely linked to the cult of Apostle Saint Peter, and may also commemorate the 1536 triumphal entry of the Emperor Charles V into Rome along Via Appia. According to Bacciolo, there are three plausible ways to interpret the building: firstly, as an early materialisation of the identity of English Catholics in Rome; secondly, as an advocacy of Catholicism with respect to the English Crown; and thirdly, as an appeal to Charles V as a potential ally in the struggle against

¹⁰ On Via Giulia see Luigi Salerno, Luigi Spezzaferro and Manfredo Tafuri, eds., *Via Giulia: una utopia urbanistica del '500*, Rome 1975; Maurizia Cicconi, "E il papa cambiò strada: Giulio II e Roma. Un nuovo documento sulla fondazione di via Giulia", in: *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 41 ([2013/2014] 2017), 227-259. On Via Ripetta see Vitale Zanchettin, "Via di Ripetta e la genesi del Tridente: strategie di riforma urbana tra volontà papali e istituzioni laiche", in: *Römisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 35 ([2003/2004] 2005), 209-286.

Protestantism. This was expressed in particular through the architectural form of the oratory as a circular temple reminiscent of San Pietro in Montorio.

[11] A third case in which the urban context played a special role is the Spanish Augustinian church of Santi Ildefonso e Tommaso da Villanova, erected in 1667–1672 in Via Sistina, in the immediate vicinity of the Pincian Hill between Piazza di Spagna and Piazza Trinità dei Monti, an area claimed by both the French and the Spanish in open rivalry. González Tornel argues that the intention of the new religious complex was to demonstrate loyalty to the Spanish Crown and to widen the Spanish sphere of influence in the area. The altarpieces in the church are also to be interpreted as expressions of an unmistakable *Pietas Hispanica*.

[12] Alliances and rivalries between several communities of Italian *forestieri*, on the other hand, can be observed along the Via Giulia. Here, in the sixteenth century, the Florentines, Genoese, Sieneese and Neapolitans built churches and hospices, as did the confraternity of Brescians, founded on initiative of Cardinal Giovanni Francesco Gambara (1533–1587).¹¹ In his essay, Giuseppe Bonaccorso analyzes the construction between 1576 and 1578 of the Brescians' church, Santi Faustino e Giovita, on the foundations of the never completed, early sixteenth-century Palazzo dei Tribunali. Formally, the Brescians were subjects of the Republic of Venice, and the members of this foreign community belonged mainly to the artisan milieu. According to Bonaccorso's thesis, the commission to the young architect Carlo Fontana (1638–1714) to modernize the church in 1663 represented an important step in furthering his career, as it enabled him to establish contacts with the Venetians and other Italian communities resident in Rome.

Interactions between internal and external identity

[13] An investigation of the concept of nationhood in the Early Modern period must begin with the question of which factors laid the basis for the sense of belonging within the various foreign communities. For this purpose it is useful to distinguish between internal and external collective identities. The identity internal to a foreign community was based on the members' need to maintain their native traditions and cults and to speak their own language even while living abroad. The external identity, on the other hand, arose from the desire to manifest the traits of the community's culture for an external audience, and thus it had a more representational character. This distinction can be exemplified by the use of language: foreigners used their home idiom for communication amongst each other and for religious functions, provided they had received papal authorisation to do so (internal identity). On the other hand, when they wished to address a wider public, for example in the inscriptions on the façades of their churches, they always used Latin (external identity). In the same way, with regard to visual culture it may be useful to examine whether the images used within the circle of the confraternity members had a different identitary valence

¹¹ Travelers originating from the Italian peninsula were defined as *forestieri*, non-Italian immigrants as *stranieri*.

than the images shown at processions and feasts for the urban public. With the altarpieces in the national churches one gains the overall impression that an attempt was made to mediate between the two spheres of identity. On the one hand, iconographic elements were used that were meaningful only to confraternal members, such as scenes from the legends of local saints. From a formal or technical point of view, on the other hand, the art works they commissioned usually followed current artistic developments in Rome and Italy that corresponded to the viewing habits of the general public. External and internal identities were thus closely bound and cannot always be neatly separated. As tools of analysis, however, they can be useful for defining the role of images in the self-representation of 'national' communities.

[14] The fact that collective identities emerged not only from the communities themselves, but were also subject to external pressures is demonstrated in several of the contributions presented here. The popes, European sovereigns, cardinal protectors and other influential personalities repeatedly exerted their influence on Rome's foreign communities and attempted to use them for their own representational purposes, while the confraternities often lacked the political and financial means to resist such outside interference.

[15] In her essay, Camilla S. Fiore presents the case of the Greek church and seminary of Sant'Atanasio dei Greci. The institution was founded by Gregory XIII with the aim of promoting the unity of the Western and Eastern Churches, as decreed by the Council of Trent, and to express this unity through the building itself. A key figure mediating this concept was the institute's Cardinal protector Giulio Antonio Santori (1532–1602). The architectural solution of a church with a floor plan that combined a Latin and a Greek cross in order to meet both Greek-Byzantine and Roman Catholic liturgical requirements contained a clear ideological statement. The new church building and its artistic program, however, found only reluctant acceptance within the Greek community, as it did not meet their traditional liturgical needs. Their critical reactions indicate that collective identities are based on traditions rooted in history, and that new traditions cannot easily be imposed 'from above'.

[16] The construction of the Croatian church of San Girolamo degli Schiavoni is yet another example of papal patronage driven by political motivations, as Jasenka Gudelj argues in her contribution. The community of immigrants from the region of present-day Croatia, who settled on the banks of the Tiber near the Ripetta port, was too impoverished to afford the construction of a church based only on contributions from their rank and file. Their assignment of a church by Pope Nicholas V (1447–1455) in 1453 was part of his program to renew this degraded area, but the measure was also closely linked to papal policy after the Fall of Constantinople. A century and a half later, Pope Sixtus V (1585–1590) commissioned a new representative church for the Croatian community, and founded an adjacent seminary for future missionaries. The fresco program in the church, dedicated to Saint Jerome, illustrates the post-Tridentine aspiration to spread the Catholic Church's claims to universality in Eastern Europe, and especially in areas bordering Muslim and Orthodox strongholds.

Image cult and national identity

[17] Members of foreign communities usually felt a special attachment to their national patron saint, other local saints, and miraculous images from their homeland. Painted or sculpted representations of these subjects could not be absent from the decorative programs of the national hospices and churches. These works were placed on altars, carried through the city in processions and festivals, and were depicted as recognizable emblems on façade reliefs and banners. By enhancing a sense of belonging among the members of foreign communities and representing their institution in the eyes of the public, these images and their cult played a fundamental role in identity building.

[18] One such example is the high altarpiece of the church of Santa Croce e San Bonaventura, built by the Lucca community in Rome. This early seventeenth-century painting represents the medieval crucifix known as the *Volto Santo* conserved in the Cathedral of Lucca and venerated as an *acheiropoieton*.¹² Another such case is the copy of the miraculous image of the *Madonna di San Luca* that is documented in the oratory of the Bolognese nation in Rome during the seventeenth century. As Giulia Iseppi shows, this was a replica of a thirteenth-century icon from the homonymous sanctuary in Bologna. On feast days, the Bolognese confraternity placed a second smaller copy of the same image on the façade of their church. The image served a double function, responding both to the devotional and representational needs of the Bolognese community. Another instance of this phenomenon is manifested by the cult images in the Spanish Augustinian church, Santi Idefonso e Tommaso da Villanova, studied by González Tornel. During the seventeenth century, two copies of New World devotional images, the *Holy Virgin of Copacabana* and the *Holy Virgin of Guadalupe*, were made for the church. Beyond their cult function they also clearly symbolized the global claims to power of the Spanish crown.

[19] It was a great honor for every foreign community when saintly individuals from their home territories were canonized. On such occasions, extensive celebrations with ephemeral decorations and processions were organized, and images of the new saint were thereafter venerated in the church. These then became an integral part of the decorative program which defined the community's collective identity. One new post-Tridentine saint of special significance to a foreign community was the Florentine Andrea Corsini (1301–1374), whose canonization in 1629 was celebrated with great rejoicing in the national church of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini. The Bolognese nation, too, had a saint from its own ranks: Caterina de' Vigri (1413–1463), a Poor Clare who was canonized in 1712 and to whom a chapel was dedicated in the church of Santi Giovanni Evangelista e Petronio, as discussed by Giulia Iseppi. With regard to the Spanish, Pablo González Tornel reports that one of the main goals of Iberian diplomacy was to obtain as many canonizations of compatriots as possible, evidently a policy of great success considering that in the seventeenth century alone, fifteen new Spanish saints were canonized. One of these was the

¹² Zu dem Altarbild von Francesco Buonamici vgl. Stefan Albl, "Sulle orme di Luigi Lanzi. Notizie sulla pittura a Lucca nel Seicento", in: *Proporzioni* 13/14 (2012/2014), 116-126.

Augustinian Tommaso di Villanova (1486–1555) in 1658, as discussed in González Tornel's contribution.

[20] In conclusion, the validity of a comparative approach for exploring notions of nationhood in the Early Modern period becomes evident in this collection of essays. Although the six foreign communities treated here differed greatly in size, financial means and power to influence, all shared common features – language, traditions, memories, venerated figures – essential to the formation of collective national identities. Art and architecture, it emerges, played a crucial role in the process of identity building through the use of recognizable semantic formulas that bypassed the barriers of language.

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