

caricatures of sovereigns during the same period. No consideration of the royal portrait during the Napoleonic period would be complete without taking into account the work of Canova, sculptor to both usurpers and usurped, and who so deftly and diplomatically managed to negotiate conflicting commissions. Yet the Canova literature has been unwaveringly monographic in nature, with little attention paid to considering his work in relation to more popular and ephemeral forms of visual culture. This project seeks to rectify this, situating Canova's work, and particularly his highly distinctive working technique, within the broader contemporary currency of portraiture.

My tenure as a Rome Awardee, supported by the collegiality of the BSR community, furnished me with the evidence and confidence to consider the Canova canon from this novel perspective. The research undertaken was premised on the notion that Canova's unique working practice — his treatment of drawings, prints and gessoes that preceded and succeeded his marbles as 'layers' of the finished compositions — safeguarded contingency and allowed for a certain degree of mutability that lent itself to the precarious political situations that unfolded in the course of completing a given work. This approach was endorsed by my observations of the primary source material (both visual and textual) in Rome and further afield: drawings in the Museo Civico di Bassano del Grappa and the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome; plaster models and copies in the Museo e Gipsoteca Canova, Possagno; prints after Canova's work in the Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica, Rome; correspondence and archival records in the Biblioteca ed Archivio di Bassano del Grappa and the Archivio di Stato di Napoli. Being able to trace the development of a work through these various visual and textual records highlighted how unstable such commissions were. Parallel to this research I was also able to consult the collections of Italian print culture from the pertinent period housed in the Museo Napoleonico, Rome, and the Raccolta delle Stampe 'Achille Bertarelli', Milan. This was particularly valuable as much of this material is now extremely rare and remains unpublished in the secondary literature. Reading Canova's working process in tandem with contemporary print culture throws into relief questions of the sovereignty of the portrait that resonate with analogous political questions exploited in visual satire. It reveals a certain mode of viewing by layers that serves as a visual strategy for thematizing sovereignty and legitimacy at a time when crowns were being toppled and swapped at an astounding frequency.

ALLISON GOUDIE (2012–13)

(Department of History of Art, University of Oxford)

allison.goudie@history.ox.ac.uk

doi: 10.1017/S0068246213000408

The hyper-literate: humanists and diplomats in Renaissance Europe

I am a political historian of Renaissance culture: I take a 'diplomatic' approach to cultural production, by which I mean that I view the creation and exchange of objects, artefacts and language as forms of diplomacy, making links, sending messages and accentuating connections between different interested parties. I am currently exploring the relationship between Italian humanism and the development of diplomatic practices,

two contemporary movements deeply integrated into most interpretations of the Renaissance. This relationship has, nevertheless, often been treated as coincidental, rather than in any way instrumental. I aim to show how a common diplomatic culture coloured by humanism went so far as to shape the European political scene. To do so, I focus on the ‘hyper-literate’, my term for the transnational European élite that was defined and distinguished (in a Bourdieuvian sense) by its common cultural codes, and, from the later fourteenth century onwards, increasingly by its acquisition of humanistic letters.

The hyper-literate was engaged in nascent statecraft, and a byproduct of humanism was that it provided its students with old/new vocabularies of the state. Yet the real importance of humanism to the world of early Renaissance diplomacy was as a ‘common denominator’: connections between distinct parties required such cultural commonalities, which then became ongoing factors in the diplomatic relations that developed between states. The most provocative part of my project, however, is the exploration of how hyper-literate culture inherently embodied a rejection of the process of state differentiation in which, due to its diplomatic function, the hyper-literate class was nevertheless implicated. Indeed, though it was a weapon in the arsenal of Renaissance diplomacy, and thus in the development of early modern states, latent within this culture was the seed of opposition to the new order. Yet its centrality to diplomatic processes justified its continued survival, despite the essential contradiction. As the common property of a pan-European élite, it belonged to a transnational world that otherwise was being replaced.

At this stage in my project, I am focusing mainly on the Quattrocento, with which my doctoral dissertation, on the Italian cultural-political networks surrounding René of Anjou (exiled king of Naples, 1409–80), was concerned. In short, by revealing the influence of humanistic practices on diplomatic ones, this present work aims to upset one of the longest-standing totems of Renaissance scholarship: the Peace of Lodi (1454) and the Italian League as the *fons et origo* of modern diplomacy and statecraft. My Rome Award at the British School at Rome enabled me to collect a significant amount of material towards this goal from a wide range of manuscripts at the Vatican Library: a humanist miscellany containing official Genoese diplomatic correspondence; a Latin oration given by the Duchess of Milan; a humanist’s edited letter-book pertaining to a recent mission as an ambassador; and so on. I used the opportunity of being in Italy to take a week-long research trip to Modena to consult the diplomatic archives of the Este, the celebrated dynasty that ruled in Ferrara. Read alongside material from other libraries and archival collections — in Florence, Manchester and Paris, amongst other places —, what I gleaned during these three months will provide me with a strong foundation for much research to come. Some of this material will feature in the upcoming monograph based on my doctoral dissertation as well.

Developing relationships with other institutions in Rome, including other foreign academies, was another benefit of my Award. Even more important was the chance to meet such an exciting group of future colleagues at the BSR, which would not have been possible without its generosity.

OREN MARGOLIS (2012–13)

(Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Neo-Latin Studies, Vienna)

oren.margolis@neolatin.lbg.ac.at