

Early Modern Jesuit Arts and Jesuit Visual Culture

A View from the Twenty-First Century

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Abstract

This stock-taking of research on the arts and visual culture of the Society of Jesus since the turn of the twenty-first century entails an assessment of the status of the big questions about the existence, nature, and purposes of the Jesuit use of things visual. It is a propitious moment to reflect on whether there have been gains for the definition of our subject from the visual turn in the humanities. Rather than surveying a wide and diffuse field of publications published in a rather short span of time, here a handful of issues are isolated that have attracted particular intensity of research or that pose significant questions for the future. These issues include much continuing research into the central regulation of and the architectural dialogue between the worldwide foundations of the Society, the widespread adoption of the *Spiritual Exercises* as an *explanans* for Jesuit pictorial cycles, and related issues around meditational images. A clear articulation is called for of the extent to which Jesuit “images” were embedded in discourses around art, or not, and the varied classes of images (propaganda, scientific, etc.) outside of the discourse of art so that we might arrive at a definition of a Jesuit visual culture.

Keywords

art – architecture – Spiritual Exercises – visual culture – meditational image – propaganda – cult image

To take stock of research on the arts and visual culture of the Society of Jesus since the turn of the twenty-first century entails, above all, an assessment of the status of the big questions about the existence, nature, and purposes of the Jesuit use of things visual. It is a propitious moment to reflect on whether there

have been gains for the definition of our subject from the visual turn in the humanities. Rather than surveying a wide and diffuse field of publications published in a rather short span of time, I have attempted to isolate a handful of issues that have attracted particular intensity of research or that pose significant questions for the future.

As we proceed, we must keep in mind who is asking the questions, for Jesuits trained in art history are few, although Jesuit scholars writing about the arts (such as Joseph Braun, Pietro Pirri, and Pio Pecchiai) established a strong documentary foundation that continues to shape today's debates. But where the art historical debate goes depends on how the questions that emerged from the archive bump up against the values, questions, and ever-changing approaches of the disciplines of art and architectural history. The terms of debate can change when in the hands of art historians less invested in Jesuit questions or, conversely, in the hands of Jesuit scholars or lay historians who are not invested in art history.

Roman Foundations: Architectural Studies

The inaugural debate in the nineteenth century over a "Jesuit style" in architecture (later extended to painting) that long structured art historical investigations of the architectural production of the order (and the Baroque in general) has finally subsided. There is now a general consensus that the *noster modus* was a guiding practice with which we should be concerned. Richard Bösel, the most authoritative voice on Jesuit architecture, long ago redirected the study of Jesuit style to architectural typologies, and referred to the complex of forms and practices as constituting a "Jesuit architectural culture."¹ Most recently he has proposed that we consider Jesuit building practices a "ratio aedificiorum."²

1 Richard Bösel, "Grundsatzfragen und Fallstudien zur Jesuitischen Bautypologie," in *Die Jesuiten in Wien: Zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte der Österreichischen Ordensprovinz der Gesellschaft Jesu im 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Werner Telesko and Herbert Karner (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2003), 193-209. Idem, "Typus und Tradition in der Baukultur gegenreformatorischen Orden," *Römische historische Mitteilungen* 31 (1989): 239-253.

2 Richard Bösel, "La ratio aedificiorum di un'istituzione globale tra autorità centrale e infinità del territorio," in *La arquitectura jesuítica. Actas del Simposio Internacional celebrado en Zaragoza, el 9, 10 y 11 de diciembre de 2010*, ed. María Isabel Álvaro Zamora, Javier Ibáñez Fernández, and Jesús Criado Mainar (Zaragoza: Institución "Fernando el Católico," 2012), 39-69.

Constitutive of this *ratio aedificiorum* was the approval, coordination, and archiving of design projects worldwide from the Jesuit Casa Professa in Rome where expertise in architecture was always at hand. The consistency of these practices compel an ongoing investigation of corporate rules, values and, especially, of the dense thicket of interrelated Jesuit works. Because these practices were centered in Rome, and because of the symbolic importance attached to the Society's organizational home, the Jesuits' Roman building projects continue to be scrutinized and fundamental questions debated. Were these buildings conceived as paradigmatic *a priori*? Given the necessity of patronage from outside the Society, to what extent did Jesuit needs (practical and ideological) assert themselves? And what was the role of a Jesuit versus a lay architect in carrying out Jesuit designs?

The Roman Gesù has a unique exemplary status for Jesuits as the church on the site of Ignatius's permanent home for the Jesuit curia, and as the church he desired. The church continues to be investigated today for it is not so well documented that we have definitive answers to questions pressed upon us by its history: to what extent did the plans evolve, contingent on property acquisitions, with input from patrons and Jesuits alike and from a diverse group of architects? With the participation of so many actors, what makes a work of architecture Jesuit? Following the wave of ground-breaking studies of the 1990s (Thomas Lucas on the urban siting, Klaus Schwager continuing to refine the building history established by Pio Pecchiai, Clare Robertson asserting the role of the Farnese patrons),³ two recent contributions to the discussion of Vignola and Della Porta's Gesù are worthy of note. In a new account of the building's history, with many illustrations of the key moments in its design, Klaus Schwager (who has been preparing a monograph on the Gesù for decades) and Hermann Schlimme emphasize the contradictory and heterogeneous pre-history of the building, such that the "path to a definitive statement was not clear."⁴ If the path was not clear, does this mean that the Jesuits did not

3 For an assessment of the literature on the question circa 1980-2000, see Evonne Levy, "Architecture and Religion in Seventeenth-century Rome," *Studiolo* 2 (2003): 231-235. See also Thomas Lucas, *Landmarking: City, Church & Jesuit Urban Strategy* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1997); Pio Pecchiai, *Il Gesù di Roma* (Rome: Società Grafica Romana, 1952); Clare Robertson, "Two Farnese Cardinals and the Question of Jesuit Taste," in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*, ed. John W. O'Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven J. Harris, T. Frank Kennedy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 134-147; and idem, *Il Gran Cardinale: Alessandro Farnese, Patron of the Arts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

4 Klaus Schwager and Hermann Schlimme "La chiesa del Gesù di Roma," in *Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola*, ed. Richard J. Tuttle, Bruno Adorni, Christoph Luitpold Frommel, Christof Thoenes

have *a priori* architectural principles? And if not, how did experience of contingency, that is, the history of architectural deeds and works, form the principles by which the buildings of the rest of the Society were watched over and shaped from Rome?

The differences in the accounts of Schwager, an architectural historian, and Giovanni Sale, a Jesuit historian and theologian, are telling. Sale subtly reformulates the problem of the known building history, arguing that the Jesuits did have *a priori* ideas and practices (*un modo nostro*) but that Jesuit architectural culture was expansive enough to abide by different principles, depending on the patron (and budget) with which they were working. Pauperism could coexist with the lavish without betraying a religious principle.⁵

In addition to the Gesù, the Collegio Romano, founded by Gregory XIII, is the Roman foundation whose plan was most often taken as exemplary, its design referred to as guide and model. Richard Bösel has elaborated on Gregory XIII's insistence on redesigning the college façade in a more sumptuous fashion than the Jesuits wished, and on the afterlife of that imposition as another example of a paradigmatic building coming into being to some extent against the Jesuits' own wishes.⁶ While the history of the Collegio Romano remains sparsely documented, our knowledge of the monumental church of St. Ignatius attached to it opened up with Richard Bösel's 2004 monograph on its architect, the Jesuit polymath Orazio Grassi.⁷ His study was occasioned by the spectacular discovery of a cache of 150 drawings and thirty-nine seventeenth-century engravings of architectural subjects that likely belonged to Grassi. Amongst these, twenty-seven drawings can be connected to the heretofore poorly

(Milan: Electa, 2002), 272-299. Schwager noted that much archival research could not be included.

- 5 Giovanni Sale, *Pauperismo architettonico e architettura gesuitica*, with an introduction by Sandro Benedetti (Rome: Jaca Book, 2001). The two parts of Sale's book were condensed and sumptuously illustrated in "Architectural Simplicity and Jesuit architecture," and "The design of the Gesù in Rome: a difficult collaboration," in *The Jesuits and the Arts, 1540-1773*, ed. John O'Malley and Gauvin Alexander Bailey (Philadelphia: St. Joseph's University Press, 2005), 27-44, 45-62, respectively.
- 6 Richard Bösel, "Meglio soli che 'boncompagnati'? La facciata del Collegio Romano tra magnificenza papale e pauperismo religioso," *Römische Historische Mitteilungen* 52 (2010): 147-198. See also now Roberto Luciani, "Il Collegio Romano: l'architettura e il tempo," in *Il Collegio Romano dalle origini al Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali*, ed. Claudia Cerchiai (Rome: Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Direzione Generale per gli Archivi, 2003), 57-98.
- 7 Richard Bösel, *Orazio Grassi. Architetto e matematico gesuita: un album conservato nell'Archivio della Pontificia Università Gregoriana a Roma* (Rome: Argos, 2004).

documented church of St. Ignatius, proving once and for all that Grassi was the architect of record. However, Bösel's analysis of these drawings in relation to the architectural competition for the project in which Maderno, Domenichino, and Borromini participated showed that the competition was used to cull ideas, which were then synthesized by Grassi, who also contributed his own inventions. Such an arrangement helps to break down a persistent polarity we find in the literature between the purportedly disciplined and uninventive path of the Jesuit architect and the aesthetic freedom of the lay architect. In my 2004 *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque*, I arrived at similar conclusions around the competition for the design of the Chapel of St. Ignatius in the Gesù, ultimately executed by the Jesuit architect Andrea Pozzo, tensely poised between invention and obedience.⁸ Both cases point to the need to explicitly thematize the problem posed to architectural history of how our notions of authorship can be reconciled with the kind of corporate authorship that a *ratio aedificiorum* implies.

Bösel's study of Grassi is also important for its revisionist view of the dynamic (and direction) of interchange between Rome and the other Jesuit provinces. Grassi's unusual design (which was not executed) for a three-story façade, was likely inspired by the very similar design of the Flemish Jesuit François de Aguilon (conveyed by Jesuit architect Pieter Huysens, then in Rome) for the church of St. Ignatius in Antwerp. It would have produced a filiation of churches dedicated to Ignatius. More to the point, the presumption of a univocal movement to other center or to "periphery" in matters of design is challenged by this instance, and many more, of a dynamic exchange in both directions.

The Jesuit novitiate and church of S. Andrea al Quirinale received its first full and thoroughly documented monographic treatment by Johannes Terhalle in this period.⁹ Here, too, the building complex on the Quirinal is examined with the full range of "Jesuit" problems in mind. Its strength lies in its thorough investigation of the slow growth and transformation of the complex through the first half of the seventeenth century as property was acquired. This is a familiar story for the Roman foundations. But in this case, because the process extended almost to 1650, the work was built too late to serve as a model for other novitiates in any foundational way.

8 Evonne Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), chap. 3 ("The Propagandist").

9 Johannes Terhalle, *S. Andrea al Quirinale von Gian Lorenzo Bernini in Rom: von den Anfängen bis zur Grundsteinlegung* (Weimar: Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2011).

Jesuit Architecture and its Decoration Worldwide

The heart of the study of the art and architecture commissioned by the Jesuit order are the foundations: the global network of churches, colleges, professed houses, and novitiates, and the rich archival sources (especially plans and documents) preserved in the Roman and provincial archives all over the world. The gold standard for the study of the architectural corpus was established in 1986 by Richard Bösel with the first volume of his *Jesuitenarchitektur in Italien (1540-1773)*, on the Roman and Neapolitan provinces, the second volume of which (on the Milanese provinces) appeared in 2007, coauthored by Herbert Karner.¹⁰ Bösel, who has an unparalleled knowledge of the Jesuit building corpus, has demonstrated that the study of Jesuit architecture is a cumulative enterprise that must begin with a thorough knowledge of the works themselves and their documented building histories.

The Jesuit colleges, amongst the most thoroughly documented Jesuit buildings and still inadequately integrated into the larger discussion of Jesuit architecture, have profited recently from Bösel's emphasis on the typological study of Jesuit architecture. Rui Lobo's study of two Jesuit college courtyards in Évora and Coimbra in Portugal, for example, insists that a particular disposition of chambers arose from a pedagogical model of the tutorial as seen in plans of a prominent Colégio das Artes in Coimbra that immediately preceded them. That college was modeled, in turn, by the Portuguese pedagogue brought in to supervise the project, André de Gouveia (principal of colleges in Paris and in Bordeaux), on an explicitly non-monastic typology for French secular schools.¹¹ Krista de Jonge's study of Jesuit schools in the Low Countries (where the densest group of colleges in Europe was established) gave a taste of a comprehensive study of Jesuit college types: she looked to the *Ratio Studiorum* for indications of spatial requirements, to local architects' knowledge of the Roman College, for similarities to local secular building types, and to colleges built by other religious orders (Augustinians in Brussels), drawing the

10 Richard Bösel, *Jesuitenarchitektur in Italien (1540-1773)*. Part I, *Die Baudenkmäler der römischen und der neapolitanischen Ordensprovinz*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1986); Idem and Herbert Karner, *Jesuitenarchitektur in Italien (1540-1773)*, Part 2, *Die Baudenkmäler der mailändischen Ordensprovinz* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007).

11 Rui Lobo, "Jesuit School Courtyards at Évora and Coimbra and their secular origin and function," in *Public Buildings in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Konrad A. Ottenheim, Krista De Jonge and Monique Chatenet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 297-306. The author draws here on his monograph, *Os Colégios de Jesus, das Artes e de S. Jerónimo* (Coimbra, 1999).

sensible conclusion that “If there is no unique model, there is a common basic type.”¹²

One of the most important publications on Jesuit architecture issued in the past decade constitutes both a substantive contribution in itself and a promise of research to come. The collection of essays in *La arquitectura jesuítica. Actas del Simposio Internacional*, are the first results of a European research project (I + D Corpus de Arquitectura Jesuítica) led by María Isabel Álvaro Zamora, which intends to bring to publication, in a systematic way, the many plans and documents related to Jesuit architecture in six countries.¹³ The project builds on Vallery-Radot’s 1960 catalogue of the nearly 1,000 drawings, largely plans, originally archived by the Society in Rome in the approvals process.¹⁴ That fundamental catalogue, which did little more than identify the plans, was a starting point that is finally to be elaborated (the digitization and posting online in 2011 of the entire Jesuit corpus by the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris was a happy coincidence).¹⁵ The availability of a vast range of plans and documents, showing local deliberations and communication with Rome, will help us to explore key issues. For, as is increasingly acknowledged, Jesuit theory was derived from praxis as the institutional architectural memory extended over time.

The Zaragoza project encompasses research on the Jesuit corpus in Belgium, Poland, Portugal, France, Italy, and Spain. The Spanish leadership of this project is very encouraging as not only were the Spanish buildings foundational for the Society but the extent to which their influence radiated to the Spanish Americas has been difficult to gauge. An archivally-informed monographic treatment of the numerous Spanish foundations—including their even less studied retables and decorations—remains a strong desideratum in the field.

Krista de Jonge and Joris Snaet’s overview of the vibrant program of research in Belgium, where there is a large cache of drawings and other evidence of Jesuit design, promises new perspectives.¹⁶ For example, the emerging types of architects—trained builders versus theoretical architects schooled in mathematics—are being parsed, with implications for the use and symbolism of

12 Krista de Jonge, “The First Jesuit Schools in the Southern Low Countries (1585-1648),” in Ottenheim et al., *Public Buildings in Early Modern Europe*, 318.

13 Zamora et al., *La arquitectura jesuítica*.

14 Jean Vallery-Radot and Edmond Lamalle, *Le Recueil de plans d'édifices de la Compagnie de Jésus conservé à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris* (Rome: IHSI, 1960).

15 The collection is searchable under the designation “FOL-HD-4(1)” on the website gallica.bnf.fr (last accessed 4 July 2013).

16 Joris Snaet and Krista de Jonge, “The Architecture of the Jesuits in the Southern Low Countries. A State of the Art,” in Zamora et al., *La arquitectura jesuítica*, 239-276.

light as well. One consequence of this concerted research program is that the Antwerp church of St. Charles Borromeo (ex-St. Ignatius) is emerging as the most studied Jesuit church of all time, surpassing the Roman Gesù.¹⁷

Outside of Europe on the missions, questions around Jesuit rules and models and adaptability to local circumstances are coming into sharper focus. Paulo Varela Gomes has been a leader in the research of the architecture of the Jesuits in the Portuguese empire. His contribution, co-authored with Rui Lobo, to the Zaragoza *Actas* takes as its point of departure George Kubler's dictum that political borders are not congruent with aesthetic borders.¹⁸ Sixteenth-century Jesuit churches in Portugal had distinctive plans, and some of the Brazilian churches of the later period are immediately recognizable as derivative (some were designed and their marble façades shipped directly from Portugal). In Portuguese India, by contrast, an already hybrid European vocabulary (Dutch, Italian, Portuguese) developed into a distinctive vocabulary of forms responsive to the local climate and to expectations for monumentality in the local elite culture.¹⁹

The architectural challenges faced by the Jesuit missions to Japan and China are slowly being addressed in greater detail in the wake of Gauvin Bailey's compilation of much previous scholarship, though the paucity of surviving buildings and documentation poses ongoing challenges.²⁰ Because the Jesuits were not in control of their buildings, closely regulated by the local authorities, the assumptions of Jesuit architecture and the extent to which accommodations to other religions were possible, are laid particularly bare.

17 Piet Lombaerde, ed., *Innovation and Experience in the Early Baroque in the Southern Netherlands. The Case of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008); Joris Snaet, "De bouwprojecten voor de Antwerpse Jezuïetenkerk," in *Bellissimi ingegni, grandissimo splendore. Studies over de religieuze architectuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden tijdens de 17de eeuw*, ed. Krista de Jonge, Annemie De Vos, and Joris Snaet (Leuven: Symbola Facultatis Litterarum Lovaniensis, 2000), 43-66; Joris Snaet, "Case Study: Rubens's 'Palazzi di Genova' and the Jesuit Churches of Antwerp and Brussels," in *The Reception of P.P. Rubens's 'Palazzi di Genova' During the 17th Century in Europe: Questions and Problems*, ed. Piet Lombaerde (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 161-182.

18 Paulo Varela Gomes and Rui Lobo, "Arquitectura de los jesuitas en Portugal y en las regiones de influencia portuguesa," in Zamora et al., *La arquitectura jesuítica*, 497-521, with further bibliography.

19 An argument taken up for Jesuit and other churches in Paulo Varela Gomes, *Whitewash, Red Stone: A History of Church Architecture in Goa* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2011).

20 Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art on the Jesuit Missions in Asia and Latin America: 1542-1773* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Pedro Luengo, "Arquitectura jesuita en Filipinas y China," in Zamora et al., *La arquitectura jesuítica*, 523-540.

Anyone studying the Spanish American Jesuit foundations will be frustrated by the difficulty of finding full photographic surveys of buildings, as well as a general lack of building histories based on archival research. One of these problems has been beautifully addressed in Luisa Elena Alcalá's *Fundaciones Jesuíticas en Iberoamérica*, a survey of Jesuit buildings in Latin America for which new photographic campaigns were organized.²¹ With but a handful of photos of the buildings and major works of art in each of the thirty-nine buildings (thirteen in Mexico, ten in Peru, four in Argentina, three each in Brazil, Colombia, and Bolivia, one each in Paraguay, Chile, and Ecuador), the book is an enticing *amuse-guele*. But the brief bibliographies accompanying the short and general essays on each building speak volumes for the state of the field, which Alcalá outlined in her contribution to the *Zaragoza Actas* (a contribution apart from the *Zaragoza* project, which unfortunately, does not reach across the Atlantic).²²

Some of the difficulties of reconstructing the history of the American foundations are evident in the exhibition, *The Arts of the Missions of Northern New Spain*. Here Clara Bargellini and Michael Komenecky publish the fruits of intensive research over decades of Jesuit and Franciscan foundations (studied comparatively), focusing on the relatively modest furnishings of the missions, geared to the liturgy (with essays on the architecture as well).²³ Interestingly, in Gauvin Bailey's *Andean Hybrid Baroque*, a study of eighteenth-century Andean ornamented church façades, Jesuit buildings are swept into a narrative that is not specific to the Jesuits or to any of the orders. As "hybrid" ornament is seen as a by-product of the labor system, Bailey here conforms to Wittkower's view of Jesuit art as absorbed into a larger phenomenon.²⁴

While there is an enormous amount of research presently being conducted, the fruits of deep and thorough work on Jesuit foundations worldwide—that is, a much needed panorama in microscopic detail—has been slow to emerge. Jeffrey Chipps Smith's *Sensuous Worship* (a culminating work after intensive

21 Luisa Elena Alcalá, with contributions by Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Clara Bargellini and Luis Eduardo Wuffarden, *Fundaciones Jesuíticas en Iberoamérica* (Madrid: Ediciones de Viso, 2002).

22 Luisa Elena Alcalá, "De historias globales y locales: una aproximación a la historiografía de la arquitectura de los jesuitas en Hispanoamérica," in Zamora et al., *La arquitectura jesuítica*, 473-496.

23 Clara Bargellini and Michael Komanecky, *The Arts of the Missions of Northern New Spain: 1600-1821*, exh. cat. Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso (Mexico City: Antiguo Colegio de San Ildefonso, 2009).

24 Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *The Andean Hybrid Baroque: Convergent Cultures in the Churches of Colonial Peru* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2010).

study of the German Jesuit foundations in the 1990s) which looks at the whole context of the churches in the German provinces (both in their architecture and decoration), might provide a very useful model for the study of the architectural cultures of other provinces.²⁵ But while archival research is most likely to be framed by regional perspectives, what is desperately needed are scholars who are both willing to work synchronically to reconstruct the Jesuit architectural culture in distinct moments and who are able to cross as many borders as did the Jesuits.

Meditation and the Image

One of the most vibrant areas of investigation in the past decade, and one that witnesses the most border crossings by art historians to Jesuit spirituality and theology, has undoubtedly been the theory and use of images in Jesuit meditational literature. The considerable production by Jesuit authors of outstanding illustrated books, especially out of the Society's "Second Rome," Antwerp, has been at the center of a number of important studies taken on by a handful of scholars who possess the crucial knowledge of Latin.

Most important in this respect is Ralph DeKoninck's at once synthetic and detailed monograph, *Ad Imaginem. Statuts, fonctions et usages d l'image dans la littérature spirituelle jésuite du XVIIe siècle*, which reorients the question of a "Jesuit art" (to which I will return below) to that of a "visual culture."²⁶ Setting out to avoid either underestimating or overestimating the specificity of a Jesuit approach, DeKoninck takes prints in illustrated books as his material evidence: the first systematic view of this considerable corpus. DeKoninck's parsing of the literature into images that appeal to the memory, to the intelligence, and to the emotions, offers an alternative to the common recourse to the tripartite function of images from rhetoric (*movere, docere, delectare*). In art history, there is far more emphasis on the function of *movere* than any other category, but DeKoninck's account should press the point that it is but one function amongst several and that there are a myriad of ways in which image, allied to text, can move the devout (e.g. a pictogram of instruments of the passion are to be composed into a prayer, the most moving form of "spiritual soliloquy," using one's own words). Many of the illustrated works under examination

25 Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship: Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

26 Ralph DeKoninck, *Ad Imaginem. Statuts, fonctions et usages d l'image dans la littérature spirituelle jésuite du XVIIe siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 2005).

attempt to make visible the interior processes described in the texts: they are marked, writes DeKoninck, by the “habitual convergence of image and word” characteristic of the “audio-visual culture of the Jesuits.”²⁷ The Jesuit position on images, DeKoninck concludes, has something profoundly pragmatic about it: images are “a practical matter rather than a question of laws or essences.”²⁸

No one has taken the purpose, structure, and functions of images and their allied notations for meditation more seriously than Walter Melion, who, in a series of edited books and articles starting in 2003, has restored to many engravings their original meditative functions in all their complexity. At the beginning and center of his investigations is Jerónimo Nadal's sumptuously illustrated *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp, 1595), the recent translation of which by Frederick A. Homann, S.J. with an extensive introduction by Melion, will be key to future research on the subject.²⁹ Nadal's engravings did not only fuel the solitary meditator, for these rich engravings in the form of continuous narratives became a fertile source of pictorial compositions for artists worldwide, a function the authors originally saw as beneficial and art historians have long noted. Melion has restored the original intention of these illustrations to the art historical gaze: to aid in the meditations on the Gospels by young seminarians. He is also owed credit for his explication of the types and complex function of the variety of texts that accompanied them.

One theme that Melion identifies in Nadal's *Adnotationes* (as well as in other texts) is the role of sight in spiritual discernment as exemplified, in word and image, by Christ's use of his own eyes. Focusing on chapters in Scripture that focus on seeing and sight, he argues that there is a constant circulation (and endorsement) of looking between text and image, subject and object. A similar argument is made by Melion for the foundational Ignatian hagiographic text written by Pedro de Ribadeneyra and accompanied by a series of illustrations of Ignatius's life, which are not usually classified as meditational.³⁰ Melion demonstrates the virtual cataloguing by Ribadeneyra of the types of images in Augustine's theory of spiritual images, allowing us to see in the *Life of Ignatius* a constant movement between inner and outer senses and vision.

27 Ibid., 376. Translation mine.

28 Ibid., 375. Translation mine.

29 Jerome Nadal, *Annotations and Meditations on the Liturgical Gospels*, trans. Frederick A. Homann, S.J., 3 vols. (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2003-5). Three key parts are translated, accompanied by fine illustrations of the whole series in CD-Rom.

30 Walter S. Melion, “In sensus cadentem imaginem”: Varieties of the Spiritual Image in Theodor Galle's *Life of Blessed Father Ignatius of Loyola of 1610*,” in *Sensing the Divine: Religion and the Senses in Early Modern Europe*, Wietse de Boer and Christine Göttler, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 63-110.

He opens our eyes to how the Flemish engravers distinguished between revelations, illuminations, sight through the spiritual eye and the bodily eye through rays, aureoles, and clouds. Melion concludes that the spiritual images of Ignatius in Ribadeneyra's text were aniconic, but not imageless. Insofar as an aniconic Ignatius would have made the production of an illustrated version of his hagiography even more problematic, Melion reasons that Ribadeneyra attributes to Ignatius a view of his life as a series of dynamic visualizations, which "sanctifies" the cycle of engravings. Is it not possible, though, that Ribadeneyra's generation insisted on (or needed) something that Ignatius had not? Another essay by Melion on Peter Canisius's *De Maria Vergine* (1577/83) takes a similar view of this treatise on the Virgin as serving a meditational purpose, reading its handful of striking woodblock illustrations as the entry point into this function.³¹ Similar to his reading of the seeing Christ in Nadal, Melion argues that the reader's viewing of images of the subject (Mary) is justified by her embrace of images; that Mary was "viewer of images and an epitome of contemplative image making."

If Melion strikes as iconodule, a few scholars (including those cited above), building on Pierre-Antoine Fabre's foundational work on the *Spiritual Exercises* of the 1990s,³² take a more icono-skeptic position. This thread in the recent literature is not so much iconoclastic as attentive to the tensions present in the Jesuit literature on images, to the recognition of the limits of images. Andrea Catellani addresses this issue very effectively in an essay on what he terms the "fifth space" of the image (beyond the material, illusionistic, and surface spaces): to the space of the image made present to the conscience, that is the space of an image activated in one's mind.³³ He gives the example of Nadal's inscription of this fifth space in his meditational texts which underlines the limits of image by calling on the viewer to complete a scene; or Jan David's

31 Walter S. Melion, "'Quae lecta Canisius offert et spectata diu': The Pictorial Images in Petrus Canisius's 'De Maria Virgine' of 1577," in *Early Modern Eyes: Discourses of Vision, 1500-1800*, ed. Walter S. Melion and Lee Palmer Wandel (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2009), 207-266.

32 Pierre-Antoine Fabre, *Ignace de Loyola. Le lieu de l'image. Le problème de la composition de lieu dans les pratiques spirituelles et artistiques jésuites de la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1992); idem, "Les *Exercices Spirituelles*: sont-ils illustrables?," in *Les Jésuites à l'âge baroque*, ed. Luce Giard and Louis de Vaucelles (Paris: Jérôme Millon, 1996), 197-209.

33 Andrea Catellani, "Before the Preludes: Some semiotic observations on vision, meditation, and the Fifth Space in Early Jesuit Spiritual Illustrated Literature," in *Ut Pictura Meditatio. The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500-1700*, ed. Ralph DeKoninck, Agnes Guiderdoni-Bruslé, Walter S. Melion (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 157-202.

Veridicus christianus (1601), which calls upon the reader to visualize value schemes; or Antoine Sucquet's *Via vitae aeternae* (1620), which invites the viewer to "paint" into his heart a scene within the scene. Catellani shows that up until the mid-seventeenth century the meditator is offered "a position from which to imagine his own spiritual activities and practices in the fifth mental space." Frédéric Cousinié takes up precisely "The Mental Image in Representation" as a "limit-object for representation": how does one represent that intangible image of the mind?³⁴ While this essay treats seventeenth-century French book illustrations produced outside of the Jesuit milieu I raise it because he identifies a persistent polarity also operative in the Jesuit literature: between exterior and interior, material versus immaterial, concrete versus aniconic image. Cousinié argues that it is not a question of one or the other but of a "tensive and ambivalent" character that continually defines itself in relation to this double polarization.

This double polarization is the subject of the historian Wietse de Boer's subtle reflection on the role of the senses in the *Spiritual Exercises* and other foundational texts by Ignatius and other Jesuits.³⁵ This duality, he notes, was not systematically sorted out at the time and he cautions us to resist the urge to systematize: "Rather than reconciling complexities and ambiguities in the historical record, it is worth seeing them as potential evidence of tensions in early Jesuit spirituality—not merely of interpretive or analytical difficulties, but of problems in devotional practice itself." This is not the place to rehearse De Boer's argument *in toto* but it is important to note that what he adds to the literature is the presence in the text of a tradition from the penitential literature of the examination of the sins of the senses, a reminder of the tensions in Ignatius's text around sight. De Boer also invokes the debates in the late sixteenth century about the anagogical and mystical in the *Spiritual Exercises* which resolved in the 1590s towards more literal forms.

In reading in this literature I have the feeling that there is an overcompensation going on, a need to justify the surfeit of images in the meditational literature of the Jesuit milieu. Given the explosion of images in the early modern era, it has been too easy to underestimate the dematerializing potential (or even goals) of many of these texts that trouble the very images they contain. In a careful analysis of Louis Richeôme's *La Peinture Spirituelle*, Judi

34 Frédéric Cousinié, "The Mental Image in Representation," in Melion et al., *Ut Pictura Meditatio*, 203-246.

35 Wietse de Boer, "Invisible Contemplation. A paradox in the *Spiritual Exercises*," in *Meditatio—Refashioning the Self. Theory and Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual Culture*, ed. Karl Enenkel and Walter S. Melion (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 235-256.

Loach shows just how perilous a literal interpretation of engraved illustrations may be if the text they accompany is not carefully studied in its entirety.³⁶ In this case the book's structure, an itinerary through the Jesuit novitiate complex in Rome, should not be taken literally; the book is only loosely based on pictures present in the complex and therefore cannot be used, as it has been, as the basis for a historical reconstruction of the novitiate. That the book was directed at the novices being trained, in the Roman way, in the very first French novitiates, founded at the moment of the re-establishment of the Society in France in 1603-1605, brings the point home about the ideal nature of the locale. What is more, "peinture spirituelle" does not refer to paintings of things spiritual, but is figurative: the apprentice's study of painting as an exemplar for the novice's apprenticeship in spiritual matters. In other words, while paintings are invoked ekphrastically by Richeôme, the book's intention is to point away from material things towards the immaterial, a spiritual understanding made and seen in the mind. For this reason Loach concludes that the absence of painted imagery in the Lyon novitiate may not have been a lack for the novices; it may also explain why, in subsequent editions, the illustrations disappeared. Richeôme's *Peinture* is a treatise that may start with paintings but ends without them.

The Nine Lives of the Spiritual Exercises Explanans

There is much at stake in establishing Ignatius's attitude towards images for the whole enterprise of interpreting the Jesuit use of images. Jeffrey Chipps Smith, to cite one recent example, characterized Ignatius as first and foremost a "sensualist" in his study of the German Jesuit churches under the rubric "Sensuous Worship."³⁷ I think it can be said that the attribution to Ignatius of such an attitude serves art history as an alibi for Jesuit art. In support of this all too unquestioned equation of the use of the senses and the use of art, art historians have relied heavily on the *Spiritual Exercises*, a text that serves more than just the discipline of art history as a shorthand for a Jesuit spirituality. There have been many unexpected and problematic ramifications of what has become nothing short of art history's sweeping *explanans* of the entire phenomenon of the Jesuit arts. While the investigations into meditational prints, as we have seen, have seen a balanced assessment of the thesis, the scholarship on Jesuit painting has not.

36 Judi Loach, "An Apprenticeship in 'Spiritual Painting,' Richeôme's 'La Peinture spirituelle,'" in Melion et al., *Ut Pictura Meditatio*, 337-399.

37 Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship*.

The most ambitious project on Jesuit painting in this period, the exhibition *Baroque Vision Jésuite* organized by Alain Tapié, also marks a high water mark in the extension of the *Spiritual Exercises* into the realm of the visual arts.³⁸ Tapié argues that Ignatius was the originator of the Jesuit “vision”: the founder’s brief period in Venice, city of picturesque vistas and host to a school of naturalistic painting, is posited as the foundational moment for the spiritual practices (including the *imagination de lieu*) around which a Jesuit “vision” was organized. Ignatius was responsible for a new visual episteme, Tapié argues, which filtered down to artists: the sensual naturalism of Venetian painting passes then, via the *Exercises*, to the close-up realism of Luis de Morales and every other iteration of an expressive, naturalistic baroque painting. Having established the priority of painting and the picturesque city in generating the *Spiritual Exercises* and, in turn, the priority of the *Exercises* in directing Baroque painting, the exhibition’s principle of the Baroque as a “Jesuit vision” are in place. The thesis of the show merges what have been, heretofore, two diametrically opposed views: that visual artists influenced the Jesuits’ own spirituality, and that the Jesuits’ *Spiritual Exercises* could not help but have determined the style of baroque art.

The *Spiritual Exercises* are at the core of the exhibition’s thesis, governing baroque painting from its production to its reception. With two exceptions,³⁹ the *Exercises* provide a structural analogy for pictorial idioms throughout the catalogue, for the organization of decorative programs, and for the effect of paintings on viewers. Writing about Gaulli’s frescoes in the Roman Gesù, Claudio Strinati (co-organizer of the exhibition) writes: “It is legitimate to sustain that the entire decoration of the Gesù can be interpreted as a translated prayer, in partial application of the *Spiritual Exercises*.”⁴⁰ The Jesuit scholar Heinrich Pfeiffer writes similarly about the Jesuit Andrea Pozzo painting an inner vision dictated by the *Spiritual Exercises*. And for Odile Delenda and Gauvin Bailey the *Exercises* governed the choice of imagery and the programmatic coherence of pictorial cycles.⁴¹

The *Spiritual Exercises* thesis was known to most scholars in the Caen catalogue (and elsewhere) from Howard Hibbard’s 1972 essay on the decoration of

38 Alan Tapié, ed., *Baroque Vision Jésuite: Du Tintoret à Rubens* (Paris: Somogy éditions d’Art, 2003). *Il Barocco nella visione gesuita. Da Tintoretto a Rubens*, exh. cat. Musée des Beaux-Arts de Caen (Paris: Somogy, 2003).

39 Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Denis Lavalley do not subscribe to this use of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

40 Tapié, *Baroque Vision Jésuite*, 87 and 91.

41 *Ibid.*, 243, 155–156.

the Roman Gesù.⁴² In that essay, which has remained a touchstone for the study of the church, Hibbard relied on several analogies to describe the painted program of the church as thoughtful and concerted: his main analogy was to the sermon, a flexible instrument that brings together still other types of theological and devotional texts into an artful ensemble. He only secondarily related the decorations of this church to the *Spiritual Exercises*. But the analogy to the *Spiritual Exercises*, to its progressive regime of vivid internalized meditations, caught on amongst art historians as a seductive explanation for Jesuit church programs both as pre-conceived wholes and as fundamentally Jesuit in nature: both points that Hibbard made when our knowledge of the decorations was much scantier.

The *Spiritual Exercises* thesis continues to mushroom, flattening out the variety and richness of texts and practices (including catechisms, sermons, the liturgy, and theological works and arguments, among others) that influenced specific projects of decoration even when scholars have convincingly shown that there was a program drawing on diverse sources and motivations, theological, political, local, and otherwise. One of the weaknesses of the *Spiritual Exercises* thesis is that it cannot explain programmatic choices for works of art nearly specifically enough: Why this scene with this other scene, in this position, frame, and manner, and why now? Most worryingly, the *Spiritual Exercises* thesis turns a blind eye to the historicity of the *Exercises*, to the specificity of their ideal site of locution (in an unadorned room and never in a church), as well as to the designated functions of churches, designed for sermons and, above all, for the Mass. I am not alone in wishing that the *Spiritual Exercises explanans* could be retired.

Visual Culture: Image versus Art

1 *The Jesuit Image (Kultbild) after the Era of Art*

At the beginning of this essay I posed the question whether there were any gains from the visual turn in the humanities for the study of a Jesuit visual culture? Luisa Elena Alcalá aptly observed that whereas architecture dominated the study of Jesuit visual culture in the Americas during the twentieth century, recent scholarship is dominated by a consideration of the “image.”⁴³ It is an apt

42 Howard Hibbard, “*Ut picturae sermones*: The First Painted Decorations of the Gesù,” in *Baroque Art: The Jesuit Contribution*, ed. Rudolf Wittkower and Irma Jaffe (New York: Fordham University Press, 1972), 29–49.

43 Alcalá, “De historias globales y locales,” 475.

choice of words for there is a tacit understanding that images deployed on the missions, in the churches, and patios, were instruments of the cult and divine worship, an extension in the Americas of what has come to be referred to—following Hans Belting’s famous formulation—as the era of the image (*Bild*) long after the era of art began in Europe.⁴⁴ Nowhere is this clearer than in the monumental publication of the imagery, mostly painted, of colonial Peru in the two-volume study edited by Ramón Mujica Pinilla, *El Barroco Peruano*.⁴⁵ This iconographically-oriented work contains a veritable corpus of Jesuit imagery (mostly paintings), although there is no single essay that isolates the pictures commissioned by the Society. A cult image the Society of Jesus was particularly invested in promoting in Mexico was that of the Virgin of Loreto and the Santa Casa which will be explored by Luisa Elena Alcalá in her much anticipated book, *Guadalupe’s Other: Art, Devotion, and The Virgin of Loreto in 18th-Century Colonial Mexico*.

2 *The Jesuits and the Art Discourse*

Let us take as a counter-example to the virtual absence of an “art discourse” in the Spanish Americas the example of the Jesuit painter Giuseppe Castiglione (1688-1766), the renewed investigation of whose work has been stimulated by a release by the Chinese of new documents relating to works he produced for the Imperial Palace in Beijing, though a canon of his post-1720 works remains far from settled. As Susan Naquin has shown in a valuable historiography of Castiglione studies, the study of his activities in Europe and China has been hampered by the very different linguistic and historical expertise required.⁴⁶ Naquin notes that the interest in Castiglione’s works as “elegant act of translation” or “syntheses” of “unified integrations” of Chinese and Western art, is relatively new.

The stakes of the China mission for the question of Jesuit arts (and here I use the word purposefully) are perhaps the highest of all. The debate over Western perspective brought out in the Chinese treatise on perspective by Nian Xiyao,

44 Hans Belting, *Bild und Kult: eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990).

45 Ramón Mujica Pinilla, ed., *Barroco Peruano*, 2 vols. (Lima: Banco del Crédito, 2002-3).

46 Naquin highlights the contributions of Marco Musillo and Michele Pirazzoli-t’Serstevens’s readable *Giuseppe Castiglione, 1688-1766: peintre et architecte a la cour de Chine* (2007). Much archival work and the completion of a catalogue raisonné remain desiderata. Susan Naquin, “Giuseppe Castiglione/Lang Shining A Review Essay,” *Young Pao* 95 (2009): 393-412. For the uninitiated, her account of the Chinese historiography, according to the vicissitudes of museum policies and interests, regimes, and varying degrees of openness to the West, is particularly welcome.

in dialogue with Castiglione (recently fully translated into French and interpreted by Jacques Giè and into English by Hui Zou), brought to a head differences between Chinese and European modes of subjectivity.⁴⁷ The attitudes of the Chinese towards European art conveyed in the letters of the French Jesuit painter Jean-Denis Attiret (discussed by Léo Keller in *La chair et la verbe* [2008], essays on the Jesuit image in eighteenth-century France) provide evidence of a very sophisticated debate on the Jesuit mission to China over Western and Chinese aesthetics: differences in the ranking of pictorial genres, the Chinese perception of Western shadows as “dirty,” and their figures as overly animate (almost idolatrous), and the European view of Chinese painting as misunderstanding the human figure.⁴⁸ Hui Zou’s well-documented study of the Western portion of the imperial gardens, designed by Jesuit artists, brings to bear knowledge of both European and Chinese aesthetics, especially around Western perspective and Chinese conventions and theories of landscape composition.⁴⁹

These are not aesthetic matters to be cordoned off into a realm of taste. They point to an early modern geography of art; a cross-cultural discussion capable of exposing the racial, class, and theological undergirding of European aesthetic theory. It is sobering and instructive to see that on the mission in which the arts were not simply a tool of missionary instruction but were substantively in play as their own category, the Jesuit artists found the tables turned. Attiret, forced to adopt Chinese style and ever judged inadequate for it, felt enslaved by the Ming emperors, and doubted such work was “for the greater glory of God.” The idea that the arts could not reside outside of power has long been embedded in the modern debates over hybridity, and *mestizaje*, accommodation versus acculturation in the Americas. In considering the culture wars that took place on the China mission we need to arrive at a position that is something more realistic than the rosy idea of “partnership” (Bailey) or the neutral characterization by some of cultural differences as matters

47 Jacques Giès, “Perspectiva ou *Science de la vision* de Nian Xiyao (?-1739). Le paradoxe récurrent de la rencontre Chine-Occident,” in *Les Très Riches Heures de la Cour de Chine. Chefs-d’oeuvre de la peinture impériale des Qing 1662-1796*, ed. Marie-Catherine Rey, exh. cat. Musée des arts asiatiques Guimet (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2006), 13-43.

48 Léo Keller, “Un pinceau utile pour le bien de la religion.’ Jean Denis Attiret (1702-1768) dit Wang Zhicheng, peintre jésuite à la cour de Chine,” in *La chair et la verbe. Les Jésuites de France au XVIIIe siècle et l’image*, ed. Édith Flamarion (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2008), 47-74.

49 Hui Zou, *A Jesuit Garden in Beijing and Early Modern Chinese Culture* (West Lafayette, Ind: Purdue University Press, 2011).

of “taste.” Marco Musillo, for instance, saw Castiglione’s usefulness to the emperor, who in this way “contained and controlled” Europe.⁵⁰

3 *Visual Culture: Propaganda Images, Scientific Images*

There are, of course, other categories of image use that cannot be classified as connected to either art or to cult. A notable intervention in this direction is a recent interdisciplinary collection of essays edited by the art historian Elisabeth Oy-Marra and the historian of science Volker Remmert, *Le monde est une peinture: Jesuitische Identität und die Rolle der Bilder*, whose premise is that images—frontispieces of scientific works, botanical illustrations, illustrated meditational tracts, and other types of images—effectively produced a Jesuit identity.⁵¹ In my contribution to that volume I endeavored to show that the Jesuits had an ambivalent relation to distinct and identifiable Jesuit forms, starting from the way they dressed, but the Society itself operated within a mimetic tradition of reform. Jesuits, their churches, their bodies, and their souls, were all understood as forms in a dynamic process of form-making.⁵² But there were no specified forms, just the process of bringing forms to perfection. That there was both a problem of identifying Jesuits in the absence of a clear corporate requirement of uniformity (in dress) and a need to do so, is proven by the Lutheran anti-Jesuit imagery. The visualization of a Jesuit identity (in word and image) is also demonstrated from the Lutheran point of view in the catalogue of 200 examples of German anti-Jesuitica, mostly broadsheets (1568-1785), assembled by Michael Niemetz in *Antijesuitische Bildpublizistik*.⁵³ The author, an art historian, characterizes this work as “kulturwissenschaftliche Bildgeschichte” (a variant of the German Bildwissenschaft or visual culture), historical contextualization and iconographic interpretation.

50 Marco Musillo, “Reconciling Two Careers: the Jesuit Memoir of Giuseppe Castiglione Lay Brother and Qing Imperial Painter,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42 (2008): 53. This interpretation of the Memoria penned by an anonymous Jesuit would benefit from an investigation into the topoi of Western artists’ biographies, especially Bernini’s, whose relationship and service to successive popes offers many interesting parallels to that of Castiglione.

51 Elisabeth Oy-Marra and Volker Remmert, eds. with the collaboration of Kristina Müller-Bongard, *Le monde est une peinture: Jesuitische Identität und die Rolle der Bilder* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2011).

52 Evonne Levy, “Jesuit Identity, Identifiable Jesuits? Jesuit dress in theory and in image,” in Oy-Marra et al., *Le monde est une peinture*, 127-152.

53 Michael Niemetz, *Antijesuitische Bildpublizistik in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Regensburg: Schnell and Steiner, 2008).

Images that drove confessional politics and which have a marginal relationship to art outside of their production by artists have been unproblematically classified by historians as forms of propaganda. The historian Anne Dillon in her meticulous study, *The Construction of Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1535-1603*, for example, included the first truly rigorous look at the martyrdom scenes in the Jesuit English College in Rome (and elsewhere) amidst a massive production of both texts and images, printed and painted.⁵⁴ She showed the pointed propagandist use of the image, circulated almost as news broadsheets, with potent political effects. That the Jesuits understood that an “aesthetic” discourse was not only not incompatible with but also assisted the propaganda-function of images in certain places was one of the points of my *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque*. This point is taken up by Eckhard Leuschner in an analysis of the functions, political and otherwise, of engraved images of the Jesuit church of St. Michael in Munich.⁵⁵

While I have emphasized a broader field of images here, equally if not more important are the kinds of analysis this expanded field of imagery attracts. An outstanding example is Jeffrey Muller’s demonstration of how the conventions of almanac illustrations were adopted for catechism manuals in Counter-Reformation Flanders, or in the arrangement of images to aid in processes of memory embedded in oral instruction.⁵⁶

4 *The Persistence of Style*

In this day and age of visual studies and visual culture, the old debates over whether the Jesuits invented and systematically diffused a Jesuit style, or the Baroque, or were merely amongst the many institutions and individuals that contributed to it, may seem very old-fashioned. Let us try to understand, then, how the two major publications in this period on Jesuit painting positioned themselves around the terms of style. The Caen exhibition reinstated the Jesuits as the inventors of the Baroque after Rudolf Wittkower reframed the Jesuit role in the Baroque as a contribution (rather than the cause) in *Baroque*

54 Anne Dillon, *The Construction of Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1535-1603* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

55 Eckhard Leuschner, “Propagating St. Michael in Munich: The New Jesuit Church and Its Early Representations in the Light of International Visual Communications,” in Oy-Marra et al., *Le monde est une peinture, 177-202*.

56 Jeffrey Muller, “Jesuit Uses of Art in the Province of Flanders,” in *Jesuits II. Cultures, Sciences and the Arts, 1540-1773*, ed. John O’Malley, Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven J. Harris, T. Frank Kennedy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 113-156.

Art: The Jesuit Contribution (1972).⁵⁷ What is new here is that it is not the scheming, manipulating, hierarchical, soul-robbing Jesuits that lurked behind the designation of a Jesuit style in the nineteenth century, but good St. Ignatius, the imaginative founder. In Caen, the *Spiritual Exercises* thesis recast Ignatius himself as the inventor of Baroque art.

In his *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome 1565-1610*, Gauvin Bailey also shows a large investment in sorting out the historical role of the Jesuits in art history's procession of styles.⁵⁸ Countering claims made fifty years ago about the lack of originality and quality of Jesuit painting (much of which does not survive), Bailey rejects old-fashioned style history while nevertheless structuring his work around terms of style, as the title makes clear. Here too the *Spiritual Exercises* thesis achieves its apotheosis, with strong claims that they constitute the very "key to understanding the painting commissions undertaken by the Jesuits in their first half century," especially for the unified church program. Unfortunately, students will be tempted to take this compendious volume, which compiles much data scattered across a large literature, as an advance in the study of Jesuit art. But issues that no longer animate the field are rustled up, bogeymen are created, and many judgments are hastily made on a wide range of topics outside of Bailey's area of expertise. Unfortunately, *Between Renaissance and Baroque* sets the field back fifty years rather than moving it forward.

Final Thoughts

In speaking of an early modern Jesuit visual culture I have made a point of distinguishing between works of art (and architecture) and images, or works whose instrumentality or whose existence outside of a discourse of art put them in the realm of visual culture (including the specific case of the *Kultbild* after the era of art). In my view, the study of the Jesuit image-world would benefit from an open discussion of these issues, for at times the classification of all images under the category of art loosens them from their functions and fails to capture the sophistication of the Jesuits themselves in thinking about these matters. Conversely, there are times when the tensions in the Society around expenditures on art, around idolatry and too much enjoyment, have

57 Rudolf Wittkower, "Problems of the Theme," in Wittkower et al., *Baroque Art: The Jesuit Contribution*, 1-14.

58 Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

been too readily swept under the rug in the face of so very many images. How can there have been a problem when the practice was so very widespread? The reception of Jesuit images as art is not just a modern art historical question. Around it the Jesuits (and others) drew the line between the European and non-European, good and bad, morally pure and impure, civilized and uncivilized.

If this line were pursued it would also be possible to write a history of the contributions of the Jesuits not just to the history of art and image-making but also to the philosophy of aesthetics. Maarten Delbeke's new book on the Jesuit theologian Sforza Pallavicino and Bernini, lays out the contribution of a Jesuit theologian to the terms and debates of poetics and the visual arts in seventeenth-century Rome (as they rub up against the biographical legacy of Bernini in particular).⁵⁹ Think of this world of texts in connection to the reports written by Jesuits on the French China mission which were a principal stimulus to the European phenomenon of *Chinoiserie*. And imagine a history of architecture that considered the one-time Jesuit Marc-Antoine Laugier's foundational work of architectural theory, *Essai sur l'architecture* (1753) and its famous image of the primitive hut, as issuing forth from the archives of Etienne Martellange and other French Jesuit architects that are now coming to light.⁶⁰ It may turn out that the experience of Jesuits with the arts had a larger impact than we realize in setting out the terms and debates of modern aesthetics.

Finally, all of the scholarship pouring out about the arts and the Society of Jesus are already testimony to the rich opportunities its history poses for art history and allied image-gazing disciplines. But Jeffrey Muller was right to say that the study of images in the Jesuit milieu cries out for a disciplined interdisciplinarity.⁶¹ Some of this occurs in the thematic parsing of the material—many of the studies of the meditational image have work by art historians alongside historians of other stripes. But the history of the Society of Jesus inherently sets out an interdisciplinary research agenda, which needs to be addressed again and again in all of its layered and historical complexity.

59 Maarten Delbeke, *The Art of Religion. Sforza Pallavicino and Art Theory in Bernini's Rome* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

60 Alexandre Gady and Pascal Julien, "L'architecture jésuite en France: état de la question et perspectives de recherches," in Zamora et al., *La arquitectura jesuítica*, 193-312.

61 This point is demonstrated by Muller's polemical discussion of types of Jesuit images, art, and artifacts according to the twelve labors of the Jesuits in restoring the Spanish Netherlands to Catholicism. Muller, "Jesuit Uses of Art in the Province of Flanders."