

Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



Wolk-Simon, Linda, ed., with the collaboration of Christopher M. S. Johns. The Holy Name: Art of the Gesù: Bernini and His Age

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Volume 42, numéro 4, automne 2019

Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1469–1533): Faith, Antiquity, and the Witch Hunt

Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1469–1533) : Foi, Antiquité et chasse aux sorcières

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1068622ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1068622ar>

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Éditeur(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (imprimé)

2293-7374 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Steinacher, C. (2019). Compte rendu de [Wolk-Simon, Linda, ed., with the collaboration of Christopher M. S. Johns. The Holy Name: Art of the Gesù: Bernini and His Age]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 42(4), 277–280. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1068622ar>

Chapter 4 (“I nunzi ed il tortuoso riposizionamento di Firenze nell’orbita asburgica”) presents readers with a period of relative serenity in the final years of Ferdinando’s reign, which saw Tuscany coincide with the designs of the Holy See in many matters in the wake of Henry IV’s marriage to Maria de’ Medici in 1600. Despite diffidence on the part of the grand duke towards Spain, with the fear of a possible invasion of his territory, Ferdinando gradually adopted a reconciliatory attitude towards Spain which prevailed until his death. As Vitaly shows, Rome did its best to assuage Medici concerns over their support of the grand duchy through its diplomatic agents, and hence contributed to the transformation of Medici policy in this regard. The final years of Ferdinando’s reign were not devoid of conflict with Rome, as the stringent defense of orthodoxy on the part of the nuncios demonstrates: in particular, the increase in Roman Inquisitorial activity in Pisa in response to the arrival of foreign merchants (especially Jews and *conversos*) to Pisa and Livorno following the 1591 and 1593 *livornine* edicts.

Vitaly’s book will be useful to scholars of Tuscany, Mediterranean history, early modern diplomacy, and Rome. His vivid evocation of Rome’s men in Tuscany under Ferdinando I in those crucial years is a joy to read and goes a long way to fleshing out that historical context. This book is as much a portrait of those men as of Ferdinando’s changing and complex political will. It is a welcome addition to the body of literature on that grand duke, papal diplomacy, and early modern Europe at the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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Wolk-Simon, Linda, ed.

The Holy Name: Art of the Gesù: Bernini and His Age. With the collaboration of Christopher M. S. Johns.

Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts 17. Philadelphia: Saint Joseph’s University Press, 2018. Pp. xv, 639 + 246 colour ill. ISBN 978-0-916101-00-8 (hardcover) US\$50.

This tome comprises fourteen chapters by twelve authors; it contains a solid overview of early Jesuit history, biobibliographies, and case studies of specific

artworks. It expands a basic catalogue for an eponymous exhibition organized at Fairfield University Art Museum by focusing on four historical figures who dominated the Jesuits' rise and the creation of their mother church, the Gesù: Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598–1680), Giovanni Battista Gaulli (1639–1709; nicknamed “Il Baciccio”), Gian Paolo Oliva (1600–81), and Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709). The book deals broadly with Renaissance and Reformation spirituality, including the Jesuits' pedagogical and aesthetic strategies. Bernini is indeed central, although “the Jesuit artist” is an overstatement; there is no evidence that Bernini engaged in Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (207). It is odd, given his prominence in the material, that Oliva's name is not included in the title. Similarly, Pozzo has two chapters devoted to him, but is absent from the title. This omission runs contrary to the book's affirmation that the Gesù's art was a product of group labour, not just superstars.

Scholars recently have placed more emphasis on the Jesuits' artistic endeavours. The relative neglect of this is understandable, as the arts did not figure prominently in the Society of Jesus' early activities. This tome redresses the imbalance. Diminished emphasis on the arts did not reflect lack of exposure; many upper-class recruits possessed arts training. When the Jesuits featured the arts, they were pragmatic, such as missionaries' use of music or the staging of week-long dramatic events in Europe (extensions of medieval morality plays). Prior to Oliva, there had been little interest in aesthetic embellishment. This is not surprising, because Counter Reformation figures like Loyola valued simplicity and functionality.

A major turning point for the Jesuits' use of the arts was the erection of three prominent churches in Rome: the Gesù (consecrated 1584), Sant'Ignazio (completed 1670), and Sant'Andrea al Quirinale (completed 1671). Part of the rebuilding after the Sack of Rome, their construction positively impacted the city's economy. Their designs, influenced by the likes of Peter Paul Rubens, in turn were emulated across Europe. These structures possessed superior acoustics, in keeping with the Society's homiletical emphasis; sermons tended to be performances, with emphasis on dramatic gesture and speech. Oliva preached particularly effectively, mastering both content and delivery. Few so decisively transformed the Jesuits' public image as he.

The Gesù embodied the lavish and ornate baroque style, a break from simpler Renaissance models. The order's mother church (and first

post-Reformation church built in Rome), its splendour rivalled St. Peter's. Although never an "official" Jesuit style, the baroque manifested the emotive, visual language typical of Jesuit didacticism, with particular emphasis on visual veracity and the affective properties of colour. Readers are cautioned to assess the Gesù's fabric not by current standards but as contemporaries received it.

From the start, the church attracted pilgrims visiting Rome. Its pictorial devotional cycles encouraged inner, mystical pilgrimage. The goal was a sense of awe, leading to greater submission to Roman authority. The annual liturgical cycle of readings was reinforced by representations of biblical scenes in the building's fabric. The building contributed to a distinctly Ignatian iconography, one directly linked to Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* and their expectation of intense immersion into the biblical narrative through imaginative visualization. The Christogram "IHS" became the Jesuits' logo, useful both for teaching and propaganda. Indeed, the decoration, created when Catholic powers reasserted authority both within Europe and against Muslim foes, encapsulated a renewed crusading spirit.

Even one never-completed project, Joshua's victory over the Amorites, is discussed as an entry-point into Oliva's overall vision for the Gesù. In Joshua's tale, sun and moon imagery comports superbly with pre-Tridentine representations of the Crucifixion, thus reinforcing visually the etymological link between the names "Joshua" and "Jesus," while aligning with Christian exegesis of Joshua's story. The *Quarant'ore*, or Devotion of the Forty Hours, figured highly in seventeenth-century Jesuit spirituality, so it is treated at length by more than one contributor. Observance, an extension of medieval Good Friday vigils, entailed continuous display of the sacrament for forty hours, symbolically representing Christ's entombment. Temporary staging created by the likes of Bernini and Pozzo engaged the senses yet also sought to create an "interior theatre" of intellectual and mystical engagement (353). The structures' ephemerality contrasted sharply with the Tridentine emphasis on the timelessness and permanence of Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist. The ritual provided a form of guided meditation of the Eucharist as instantiation of the mystery of Christ's sacrifice.

This sumptuously-illustrated volume will appeal to a broad audience across a wide range of disciplines. While a number of authors lament the relative paucity of primary source material to flesh out ideas, the volume provides

readers with a cohesive understanding of the Gesù's decoration. A glossary of art terms and definitions would have helped the non-specialist reader.

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