standing the papacy and aristocracy and the Borghese. Although details may be familiar, they are conveniently arranged to inform a wealth of original material concerning the Borghese family. Although much is known of Paul V’s efforts to modernize Rome through technological advances, architectural commissions, and intellectual and cultural activities, Ehrlich makes us privy to his more private strategy. Unsatisfied with previous Borghese residences, such as the Quirinal Palace, a Pincian villa, and Villa Como, Scipione purchased the Villa Mondragone, complete with two palaces, for 300,000 scudi. Scipione’s building program at Villa Mondragone included the construction of a third palace in an effort to catapult the Borghese family from ecclesiastical nobility into the secular aristocracy. As Ehrlich points out, Scipione was inventing a “Roman pedigree” (45).

Shifting focus away from Rome in part two, “The Frascati in the Renaissance: Tuscolo Restituito,” considers the revival of the ancient villa culture, or villeggiatura, and the first papal villas. As the author deftly narrows the perspective from broad villa culture to architectural content, the reader begins to discover less the rehashing and more the reshaping of history. Avoiding pedantry, Ehrlich emphasizes the activities as much as the features of each villa, providing evidence for the villeggiatura that galvanized papal interest in Frascati.

Part three, “Frascati in Its Heyday: The Borghese at the Villa Mondragone,” deals directly with the renovation and expansion of the Villa Mondragone by the Borghese. From multiple perspectives—architecture, ceremony, leisure, and politics—Ehrlich provides broad and deep insight into the development of this landscape for a pope by his cardinal-nephew. Here is where the author best excavates the past, detailing each of the three palaces that comprised the domain, as well as their gardens. As discussed in chapter five, Scipione and his architect Jan van Zanten reconfigured the entire estate to create a more holistic interpretation of his own ambitions and values, which favored scale, antiquity, and ritual above iconography. Ehrlich attributes any modest features remaining after Scipione’s improvements to the influence of Paul V, whose unaltered papal apartment retained a simpler character. As recounted in chapter seven, banquets, music, hunting, collecting antiquities, contemplation, and other activities of seasonal living at Villa Mondragone occurred across the vast acreage of the grounds, yet after the death of Paul V in 1621, “Scipione knew that his power to command Roman social circles and European politics was ephemeral” (193). Although Scipione was central to the design of this papal retreat, the pope had made Scipione’s achievements possible.

Part four, “Land, Landscape, and Family Lore,” addresses the Villa Mondragone as an agricultural and aristocratic landscape. Cognizant of the villa’s role in symbolizing his family’s place in Roman society, Scipione cultivated goods and pleasure equally at his estate. The Villa Mondragone was profitable as a vast vigna, a dynastic seat, and an artistic and cultural artefact.

In a triumphant final chapter, “Land into Landscape,” Ehrlich distills the otherwise dizzying, complex discourse of cultural landscape history. Scipione Borghese presented Romans with a new paradigm, a hybrid baronial estate, religious retreat, and classical villa. Ehrlich presents historians with a more lucid understanding of the evolution from Renaissance to Baroque landscapes. If “landscape is a construction that depends on symbolic and cultural meanings that human beings impose on the countryside” (242), then the Villa Mondragone is centered at the nexus between past and present, form and ritual, society and religion, and land and landscape. A visitor in 1659 referred to the villa’s view of the plains of the Roman Campagna as “the most beautiful prospect in the world” (264). Ehrlich’s study creates a rival prospect, providing 360-degree views of Baroque Rome in the foreground and the discipline of landscape studies beyond.

NINA ANTONETTI
Smith College

Richard Bösel

Orazio Grassi, architetto e matematico gesuita. Un album conservato nell’Archivio della Pontificia Università Gregoriana a Roma


The volume under review marks the first extended study of the work of the Jesuit Orazio Grassi, who served the Society of Jesus in various capacities—as architect, mathematician, consiliarius adificitorum, college rector—in Rome and Liguria. Richard Bösel’s study is timely, since Grassi is the kind of figure who has seized the attention of scholars who have learned from Michel Foucault that our interests should lie in the epistemological project of the Baroque rather than its inevitable demise. This project was embodied most notably in the life’s work of Athanasius Kircher, a wide-ranging Jesuit intellectual, about whom there has been a recent renaissance of scholarship.1 Very few architects pertained to such a category, as was made evident a few years ago in an exhibition about Francesco Borromini co-curated by Bösel that presented him as uomo universale, whose work touched on diverse aspects of early modern science.2 With this book we can now add Grassi to the short list of Baroque architect polymaths, for, in addition to being an architect, he was a key contributor to the Catholic debates on astronomy, a geometer, cartographer, inventor of objects and ornaments, theo-
rlist, and writer on various topics (he produced a lost dictionary of architecture, a commentary on Vitruvius, and at least one key sacred drama).

This monograph, mostly in the form of a catalogue, was occasioned by the discovery—at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome—of a portfolio of 150 drawings and thirty-nine seventeenth-century engravings of architectural subjects that likely belonged to Grassi. Prior to the discovery of these objects (not all by Grassi and some only tentatively attributed to him), Grassi’s work was known primarily through the drawings attrib-
uted to him that formed part of a much larger cache of plans for Jesuit foundations preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (twenty-four of which, in Bösel’s view, are attributable to Grassi). The drawings range in complexity from presentation drawings to ideal plans (for villas) to fragmentary sketches. Some of the items in the Gregoriana portfolio can be connected to highly visible projects that are poorly documented (the Roman church of St. Ignatius, the Collegio Romano, various phases of ideation of the chapel of St. Ignatius in the Roman Gesù, and Jesuit churches and colleges in Genoa, Savona, and Siena), among other architectural and figurative drawings of widely varied subject matter. There are, in addition, a group of designs for palace façade decorations, fresco decorations for palaces, and book illustrations attributed to Bernardo Castello and Giovanni Maria Botalla. The catalogue, following a widely researched and richly documented introductory text by Bösel synthesizing Grassi’s activities and oeuvre, comprises the bulk of the volume. The texts range from the rich and complex discussion of the best documented projects to largely descriptive entries, some quite brief. Seventeen of the catalogue entries on nonarchitectural subjects were written with more or less conviction by Ursula Fischer Pace (a figurative drawings specialist), Magda Tassiniari (whose work concerns Liguria), Filippo Camerota, and Furio Ciciliot.

Bösel is uniquely qualified to write this catalogue. The preeminent specialist in Jesuit architecture, he has brought formal and archival rigor to its study. What is more, he has done much to recast the characterization of the subject in terms of a “Jesuit architectural culture,” away from the controversial designation of “Jesuit style.” Unlike Bösel’s previous institutionally oriented studies that foregrounded the corporate nature of Jesuit design, this collection, centering on a single personality, has occasioned a different perspective. The drawings reveal a wide-ranging curiosity and a high quality of inventiveness and refinement in Grassi’s graphic work (including—in addition to plans and elevations for religious and secular buildings—architectural ornament, ships, theater design, maps, perspective, and decorative arts), particularly in his drawings for architectural ornament. Yet Grassi was a company man, the purveyor, in Bösel’s estimation, of a quiet refined classicism, inventive in the details but not at all bold in the broad gestures. Hence at the core of this monographic study lies an unresolved tension: how to describe an individual in all his inventions and uniqueness, who was embedded in a corporate culture that employed him to regulate institutional practices (when he was Jesuit architectural advisor) and help to create a recognizably Jesuit architecture.

At the heart of this examination, and its most important contribution, are the twenty-seven drawings (not all by Grassi) connected to the Roman church of St. Ignatius. Bösel reminds us that this building, whose construction started in 1626 at the behest of the Ludovisi family, was the single largest church built ex nihilo in seventeenth-century Rome, as important as St. Peter’s and the Lateran. Authorship of the church has been traditionally ascribed to Grassi (who was involved with its design from 1629 to his death in 1654); the attribution has been vague since Dagobert Frey uncovered documents about an architectural competition and drawings by Francesco Borromini, Domenichino, and others that suggested a complex multiauthored process of design. With the discovery of this new cache of drawings, Bösel can now trace the genesis of the plan in detail, opening up a series of questions difficult to answer but well worth asking. The St. Ignatius project is important as much for its prominent cast of characters as for the complex issues it poses: What were the roles and meanings of Jesuit prototypes in the design of Jesuit churches? What is the nature of authorship in projects that were collectively designed? Did design circulate from prototypes in the center to buildings in the periphery?

The question of Grassi’s authorial role in the design of the church of St. Ignatius is a core question. Autograph drawings and documents make it clear that Grassi was the Jesuit architect in charge of the church’s design after the first competition in the 1620s. However, a close reading of drawings by Borromini and Domenichino shows that important ideas were contributed by other architects before and after Grassi became the Ludovisi architettura di fidelia. From this Bösel concludes (and he is not the first to do so) that the Jesuits redefined the architectural competition as a collective endeavor meant to generate rather than eliminate design ideas. To this way of thinking, Grassi’s role was less that of inventor than of great synthesizer of designs by more original architects. Yet, Bösel points out, Grassi was also self-consciously inventive, proposing design elements that were “beautiful” and did not conform to the use commune on which the Jesuits, on other occasions, were content to rely.

How little or much to rely on “common practice,” structurally necessary for institutions, was a central architectural question for the Jesuits, and the church of St. Ignatius is a prime example of the problem. St. Ignatius is, if not the most precise version of the Gesù (the mother church long erroneously considered a hard and fast prototype for all Jesuit churches), then the nearest, located just a few hundred meters away. Bösel masterfully proposes a wide variety of sources, references, and citations—direct and indirect—suggested by the Grassi drawings (supplemented by additional objects from a group of Jesuit drawings identified with the Jesuit Enrico Laloyau, now in a private collection in New York). For example, he asks whether the paired columns lining the spaces between the chapels are from St. Peter’s, or derive from a synthesis of the Gesù and St. Peter’s at the Jesuit church of S. Lucia in Bologna. Insofar as the Jesuits were, around this time, thinking about their ideal church, and considered the church of S. Lucia a perfected version of the Gesù (as Bösel showed in an earlier publication), what is the role of exemplars and the meaning of their citation?
The meaning of citation is particularly pointed in the interpretation of the two designs by Grassi for a three-story version of the façade, which would have been very unusual for Rome. In considering the various signal European churches Grassi may have referenced or drawn from, important questions come into focus. Three-story façades had been designed for the duomos in Florence and in Milan but the one closest to Grassi’s is at the Jesuit church of St. Ignatius in Antwerp, whose architect was in Rome in the 1620s. Bösel also considers that such a façade had been designed for the Gesù. Here we have a project in the “center” contributed to by an artist or artists working in Rome (Borromini, Grassi, and Maderno) and others from the “periphery” (Antonio Grassi—the architect of S. Lucia—and Pieter Huysens of Antwerp). Are the ideas coming directly from the Roman architects or from Jesuit architects whose works outside Rome were already synthesizing Roman influences?

The design for the church of St. Ignatius shows what I call the Jesuits’ “institutional memory,” which is at work in the portfolio as well. Among the engravings are other Jesuit buildings, and among the unidentified drawings are some that may have been made by Grassi (or other architects) after other Jesuit buildings. An additional unpublished portfolio of drawings assembled at the end of the seventeenth century by the Jesuit architect and woodworker Enrico Laloyau includes drawings after Grassi’s plans for the church of St. Ignatius (invoked by Bösel to document lost plans). The collections of drawings together reveal layers of historical accretion in the institutional repertoire and, for us, attendant difficulties of attribution. With the church circulating its archive of design over time, it is easier to imagine a “Jesuit style,” which relieves us of the burden of identifying individuals in a corporate culture that was just as comfortable doing without them at times.

Though not a catalogue raisonné, Orazio Grassi is the first serious study on a Jesuit architect to have appeared since Pietro Pirri published his studies of Giovanni de Rosis, Giovanni Tristano, and Giuseppe Valeriano in the 1950s. Bösel’s strength, apparent in his masterful evisceration of the St. Ignatius design process, lies in his broad and detailed knowledge of seventeenth-century architecture and his ability to show the dense intertextuality of Grassi’s design. In this study he is less interested in the motivations and meaning of citations in Jesuit buildings, although he himself has contributed to the archival foundation on which such discussions are based. If the diversity of the Gregoriana drawings, and the difficulty of identification and attribution in some cases, makes for a rather fragmentary study, the portfolio’s heterogeneity presents other opportunities. These include Grassi’s emergence in his drawings as a wide-ranging polymath and his ambiguous position as a Jesuit corporate author.

**EVONNE LEVY**

University of Toronto

**Notes**

1. For an overview of Kircher scholarship, see Michael John Gorman and Nick Wildung’s online publication of Kircher’s correspondence at http://www.stanford.edu/group/STS/gorman/novocapitisneukircher/#110A.


Dorothy Metzger Habel

**The Urban Development of Rome in the Age of Alexander VII**


Those who have traveled to Rome and wandered admiringly through the Campus Martius will have noticed a certain congruity in the urban fabric. It can be discerned in cornice heights; in the proportional scansion of stories, columns, pilasters, friezes, and rustication; and in the discreet projections of window surrounds and doorways. As one absorbs and commits to memory and expectation largely unconscious perceptions, no single detail seems to conform to a rigid pattern; instead, each element corresponds to others with a magical ease.

The weaving of the hidden tissue that lends Renaissance and Baroque Rome its coherence—the result of concentrated and concerted efforts—is the subject of Dorothy Metzger Habel’s book. She considers the Quirinal Palace (where Alexander VII preferred to live), the Piazza del Popolo (where travelers from the north caught their first glimpse of the Eternal City), the via del Corso, and that street’s southern terminus, the Piazza S. Marco. The projects discussed unfolded simultaneously, and Habel rightly contends that their separate analysis should blind us neither to Alexander VII’s synchronous thinking about architecture nor to the relationship of unrealized schemes to completed commissions, such as Gianlorenzo Bernini’s Piazza S. Pietro.

At the Quirinal, interventions carried out under Paul V and Urban VIII located the palace within a capillary system of small yet important streets and anchored its main entrance. In the expanded manica lunga (long sleeve) that fronts the east-west spine of the homonymous hill, Alexander VII enlarged areas dedicated to service quarters and accommodations for the papal household. Plans for a monumental gateway (perhaps meant to include the