

genauere Angaben auf Grund der bekannten „hier seit Jahrhunderten praktizierten Ortsliturgie“ (S. 129) unterließ, muss wohl offen bleiben.

Die von Beate Braun-Niehr beschriebene außergewöhnlich aufwändige Gestaltung der Handschrift weist jedoch darauf hin, dass der Gebrauch des Rituale nicht nur für einen begrenzten Zeitraum gedacht war. Die Frage, ob es darüber hinaus Gründe gab, die die Herstellung der Handschrift gerade in diesem Zeitraum erklären könnten, wird vorerst nicht gestellt und muss weiterer Forschung vorbehalten bleiben.

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Benjamin Paul: Nuns and Reform Art in Early Modern Venice: The Architecture of Santi Cosma e Damiano and its Decoration from Tintoretto to Tiepolo; Farnham (GB): Ashgate Publishing Limited 2012; 314 p., 93 b/w + 9 color ill., ISBN 978-1-4094-1186-4, US \$ 124,95

The reformed Benedictine nuns of Santi Cosma e Damiano in Venice oversaw a remarkably coherent and consistent decorative program for their convent church over three centuries. From the convent's establishment in 1481 to its dissolution in 1806, they employed some of the best artists working in Venice and the Veneto: Giovanni Buonconsiglio, Palma il Giovane, Jacopo Tintoretto, Alessandro Varotari (il Padovanino), Sebastiano Ricci, Giuseppe della Porta, Gerolamo Pellegrini, Antonio Zanchi, Antonio Molinari, Sebastiano Ricci, Angelo Trevisan, Giambattista Pittoni, Giovanni Battista Crosato, Girolamo Brusaferrero, Pietro Liberi and Giambattista Tiepolo. The structures of this once prominent convent and its church are now publicly accessible since the 2008 completion of a restoration campaign begun in the 1990s. While the restored structures and affiliated publications offer new clarity about the evolution of this complex, Benjamin Paul's book does far more to resurrect Santi Cosma e Damiano as an important Venetian monument. Most of the church's decoration is dispersed, and its structure suffered irreparable damage from use as a military hospital and barracks in the nineteenth century and as a knitwear factory until 1982. Paul's new book offers a skilled historical, visual and iconographic analysis of every aspect of the church's structure and decorative program, reinterpreting it for the first time in the context of the nuns' distinctive Benedictine reform ideology. In addition, the book's thorough documentation allows Paul to correct misattributions in both past publications and recent ones celebrating the restoration work. Even more significant are Paul's contributions to the state of research on early modern religious reform identity and to a growing body of literature on nuns in early modern Italy.

Paul's precise historical reconstruction and reinterpretation of this complex in light of Benedictine reform theology is a substantial scholarly achievement. (Indeed, he seems to leave no archive unvisited, no document unconsulted, no map unstudied, and no page unturned.) In its own right, the detailed analysis of the nuns' intentional

adherence over generations to a program of building and decoration that both incorporated and personalized the ideology of the reformed Cassinese Congregation of Benedictines, with which they proactively affiliated themselves, is valuable and important. In addition, this book explicitly connects that reconstruction with the important, larger concerns that this work informs: religious reform identity, the art and architecture connected with it, and the self-realization of nuns in early modern Venice. It informs a larger body of study about monasticism and reform in which religious women and men navigate the complexity of group identity and the way they adhere to it, craft its evolution, posture their individual stances in relation to the group ideology, and represent themselves and their beliefs publicly and privately. His account sheds light on questions of corporate religious identity in art and architecture. For example, the Santi Cosma e Damiano nuns were similar to their contemporary Benedictine sisters in cities like Parma and Milan in that their church decorations both adopted and adapted the distinctive Cassinese reform ideology of the larger congregation with which they were connected.¹ Paul's analysis offers new information that will inform future studies of individual and group identity and the representation of it in the early modern era.

The book also contributes to a growing body of scholarship on nuns in Italy, to which it offers insights about how these early modern women navigated their environments. Paul's research on how the nuns oversaw the business of church building and decoration contributes important information that sheds light on larger questions about the educational, religious, artistic and social networks to which nuns belonged. Like well-educated, socially connected Benedictine nuns across northern Italy, those of Santi Cosma e Damiano exercised considerable autonomy in their patronage, taking full advantage of their education and other resources they brought from outside the convent walls as well as their communications with spiritual advisors, congregational overseers, family and friends. Paul avoids the temptation to cast his nuns in the roles of either cloistered prisoners or empowered enclave, perhaps oversimplified characterizations to be found in past studies of early modern nuns. Instead, he describes a more multi-dimensional existence in which the Santi Cosma e Damiano nuns negotiated changing regulations and relationships over centuries. Paul offers a detailed reconstruction of the nuns' considerations and decisions about their monastic complex and its decorative program that parallels the equally detailed and valuable reconstruction of its building and decoration in the context of the nuns' reform ideology. His account will inform further analyses of how both convents and networks of them functioned as patrons of architecture and art.

The volume is divided into two main sections of five chapters each. Part I reconstructs the founding and construction of the convent and church, while Part II offers an exceptionally detailed reconstruction and reinterpretation of the church's

¹ MARY-ANN WINKELMES: *Taking Part: Benedictine Nuns as Patrons of Art and Architecture*. In: *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. by Geraldine Johnson, Sara Matthews Grieco; Cambridge 1997, p. 91–110.

decorative program from its fifteenth-century beginnings through the eighteenth century.

The first five chapters explicate the founding of the monastery and the development of its structures, within the rich historical contexts of monastic foundation stories, female monasticism in Venice, and Cassinese reform-style architecture. The strong personality of Marina Celsi, her wisdom about the successes and failures of contemporary convents in her city, and her clarity about documenting her choices on behalf of the convent allow Paul to demonstrate the strength of the early community's reformed Benedictine theology that would persist to guide nearly all its decisions about its buildings and decoration in the following centuries. After leaving two convents that were, in her view, failures, Celsi returned to secular life and later decided to found a convent that she explicitly affiliated with the Cassinese Congregation of reformed Benedictines headquartered in nearby Padua. Her lengthy spiritual testament of 1 August, 1508, which Paul transcribes in full in the first of nine appendices, would remain a touchstone for future generations of nuns at Santi Cosma e Damiano. In it, Marina calls for the placement of her tomb where all the sisters would pass by it regularly and remember her. (Appendix 1, p. 270) Marina Celsi and her early sisters may consciously have linked their foundation story, which includes Marina's own physical labor, to the *ora et labora* motto of the early Benedictines whom their reformed Cassinese Congregation emulated. In addition, it is worth noting that the nuns presented a *proto* or builder with their own design for their church, perhaps consciously paralleling the process by which the mother church of the Cassinese Congregation, Santa Giustina in Padua, was designed and constructed.²

Paul's chronology of the piecemeal acquisition of the site and the construction of its first structures relies on a wealth of plans, sketches, documents of purchase, diagrams and maps of the convent's buildings and grounds, many of them published here for the first time. In Appendices 5–8, Paul provides complete transcriptions of the notations on five of these drawings, allowing readers to follow his argument with ease, and also to use these sources for future study. Such notations are often quite difficult to decipher in reproductions, although Ashgate's reproductions of these plans and maps are of very high quality.

The architecture of Santi Cosma e Damiano, as Paul explains, incorporates many characteristics of the Cassinese Congregation's church buildings shared by reformed Benedictine convent churches in Venice, Santa Croce della Giudecca, and the Ognisanti, also affiliated with the Congregation, including a tri-lobed apse, simple and visible interior geometry, a dome over the altar, and plenty of natural light through clear glass windows. The distinctive architecture of Cassinese reform-style churches borrowed aspects of the church buildings that Cassinese leaders associated with their spiritual exemplars, including the early Greek Fathers – particularly Paul – as well as Saint Benedict, and earlier Benedictine reformers including the Cistercian and Clu-

² MARY-ANN WINKELMES: Form and Reform: Illuminated Cassinese Reform-style Churches in Renaissance Italy, *Annali di Architettura* 1996, p. 63.

niac Congregations.³ Paul documents the intentionality of this architectural similarity of Santi Cosma e Damiano to the nearby Cassinese-affiliated convent church of Santa Croce della Giudecca (p. 108, n. 5) and points to the Santi Cosma e Damiano nuns' emphatic advertisement of this reform-style architecture on their church's façade. In later centuries, the church of Santi Cosma e Damiano, like its Cassinese monastic counterparts, would have a darker interior, in contrast to the wishes of the reform movement's founders for brightly lit interiors. In Cassinese churches including the Congregation's mother church of Santa Giustina in nearby Padua, many windows were later walled in, while at Santi Cosma e Damiano, budgetary limitations prevented the installation of the intended windows in the drum of the dome.

Paul's detailed reconstruction of the church's fabric provides documentation about the chronology of the construction and its place in the context of Cassinese reform-style church building activity in and around Venice. This allows him to see the chronological and stylistic impossibility of a recent, post-restoration attribution to the architect Antonio Abbondi (called Scarpagnino).⁴ (pp. 5, 91–93) I find Paul's attribution to a close follower or student of Mauro Codussi rather than to Abbondi or Guglielmo de Grigi (suggested by Giulio Lorenzetti long before the restoration)⁵ convincing. Codussi's relationship with the Benedictine nuns of San Zaccaria in Venice and the later affinity of Cassinese reform-style churches with Codussi's style would further support Paul's attribution. Paul's research allows him to link the building project with workers who were employed at other structures affiliated with the Cassinese Congregation, including Bartolommeo Bon, Giovanni Buora, and the stonemason Bortolo.

Part II of this volume contains five chapters that trace the decoration of the church's altars, walls and ceilings from 1497, when Buonconsiglio completed the high altarpiece for the first church, until the c. 1734 completion of Tintoretto's Brazen Serpent frieze for the nuns' *barco* or elevated choir in the third and final church. The reconstruction of the church's decoration, now largely dispersed or destroyed, requires Paul's diligent analysis of altar fragments, related drawings, documents, descriptions, pastoral visit records, and site observations. The fruits of his labor are provided in a diagram of the church's interior where every altarpiece and painting are labeled and located (pp. 220–221), and also illustrated in a generous number of black and white and color photographs.

While Paul makes no grand claim for an explicit and coherent program for all the church's decoration, he indicates that across three centuries, most of it – including three altarpieces funded by private patrons – conforms with remarkable consistency to the themes of penitence and reform that were important to the convent's foundress, Marina

3 For analysis of the Cassinese architectural traits associated with Benedictine spiritual exemplars, see: WINKELMES 1996, pp. 61, 66–78, and BARBARA KILIAN: *S. Giustina in Padua: Benediktinische Sakralarchitektur zwischen Tradition und Anspruch*; Frankfurt/Main, 1997.

4 *La chiesa dei Santi Cosma e Damiano a Venezia: Un tempio benedettino 'ritrovato' all'Giudecca: Storia, trasformazioni e conservazione*, ed. by CLAUDIO SPAGNOL, Venice 2008.

5 GIULIO LORENZETTI: *Venezia e il suo estuario. Guida storico-artistica*; 3d edition Rome 1963, p. 777.

Celsi, and the Cassinese Congregation of Benedictines, while allowing for some personalization with the addition of nuns' name saints. While the nuns could turn for architectural models to existing church buildings belonging to or affiliated with the Cassinese Congregation, no such examples of a consistent Cassinese decorative program were available to them. At its high point, the Congregation preferred largely undecorated, white interiors for its churches, and decoration in such buildings appeared mostly after the Congregation's reform efforts began to decline in the late 1540s.⁶

The thematic consistency of the decorations for Santi Cosma e Damiano thus indicates the community's conscious adherence across centuries to Cassinese reform ideology and specifically the ideas of penitence and reform central in the spiritual testament of their foundress, Marina Celsi, a document that was studied carefully by every subsequent abbess and read aloud to all the women in the community. Celsi virtually pre-ordained her lasting memory by specifying the location of her tomb near the first sacristy, where all the nuns could walk past and sprinkle her tomb with holy water, so as never to forget her: "[...] azò mai niuna se posa desmentegar dela sua chara madre [...]" (Appendix 1, p. 270) The tomb inscription offers a bold reminder for her followers of their foundress's lasting gift to them: "She erected it from the foundations with her labor and industry." (p. 9, n. 30) Perhaps Celsi and the sisters who insured the prominent placement of her tomb slab in the nave of the later church, beneath their elevated choir, were aware of the location of the tomb of the founder of the Cassinese Congregation, Ludovico Barbo, in the center of the monks' choir at the Congregation's mother church of Santa Giustina in Padua.

The consistent reform iconography in their church's decoration, overseen by generations of nuns at Santi Cosma e Damiano reflects their considerable control of the iconography, placement and perhaps even design of the paintings they commissioned. As Paul indicates, only three altars in the church were financed directly by secular patrons, whose concerns would have factored to some degree in the appearance of those altarpieces (p. 142). And only one of these three outside patrons (Benedetto Moro, donor of Palma Giovane's lost high altarpiece for the new church) lacked close ties to the community.

All that remains of the first church's decoration are two fragments of Buonconsiglio's high altarpiece, depicting a Madonna and Child and also Saints Cosmas and Benedict and a female saint. The remaining altarpieces, along with frescoes in the presbytery and dome, were painted from the mid-sixteenth through the mid-seventeenth centuries. Chapters 7 and 8, which began as a chapter in Paul's doctoral dissertation on Tintoretto's apocalyptic women, examine Tintoretto's two altarpieces for the church, a *Crucifixion* and a *Saints Cosmas and Damian*. Despite the demise of the Cassinese Congregation beginning in the 1540s and the attack on its Pauline theology by Rome, the *Crucifixion* that Tintoretto painted for the nuns around 1548 for the chapel to the left of the main altar emphasized a Pauline view. Chapter 7 argues that the archaizing style and theology of this painting reveal the nuns' preference for the

⁶ WINKELMES 1996.

generous and undeserved forgiveness offered in Pauline dogma, favored by the Cassinese and the nuns of Santi Cosma e Damiano, as opposed to the salvation through good works advocated by Rome and the mendicant orders.

Relying on payment records, Renaissance chronicles, the altar's inscription, the historical record and multiple contemporary painted versions of this subject, chapter 8 examines Tintoretto's second altarpiece for the church in the full richness of the historical and visual context. Paul offers a convincing identification of Saint Secondo (whose relic the nuns had acquired after their foundress dissolved the failed convent of San Secondo in Venice) and Saint Marina (the name saint of their foundress), the absence of whose martyrial palm blurs her identity more closely with Marina Celsi. Intended as the main altarpiece for the new church, Tintoretto's painting references its predecessor by depicting Cosmas and Damian in Venetian ducal robes, as they appeared in the nuns' earlier main altarpiece by Buonconsiglio. These two medical saints can also be viewed, as Paul explains, as intercessors for the people of Venice at a time when Venetians were acutely conscious of recent plague outbreaks. Paul's analysis is sensitive to the placement of the altarpiece in its immediate surroundings, too. He indicates that the figure of Saint Cecilia (another nuns' name saint) points with her organ pipes to the nuns who would have produced music during liturgical ceremonies in the church.

The recently restored, sixteenth-century frescoes in the church's dome and presbytery allow Paul to connect his visual analysis with the historical record, correcting a recent misattribution of the *Annunciation* fresco to Francesco Salviati, who had left Venice before it was painted (pp. 216–217).⁷ Paul convincingly suggests Salviati's student, Giuseppe Porta, as author of this and the *Four Evangelists* frescoed in the dome's pendentives.

A second major decorative campaign spanned the late seventeenth century and first half of the eighteenth. Its development is traced in Chapter 10. In this period the nuns rearranged existing paintings and commissioned new ones to complete a decorative program for the church that offered a comprehensive statement of their reformed theology, with an even more prominent emphasis on the central themes of penitence and reform. Antonio Zanchi's (now lost) Old Testament scenes in the nave depict episodes from the life of King David, considered by Benedictines to be the author of the 150 Psalms that they were meant to chant every week as per Saint Benedict's instructions. Relying on drawings and remnants of frescoes in the church, Paul reconstructs a pairing of scenes that emphasize apology, penance and eventual forgiveness, at a time when the nuns felt an acute need for all three. A year earlier, precisely on the feast day of the Exultation of the Cross (14 September, 1671) lightning struck the campanile's iron cross, collapsing the roof of the nuns' church!

Gerolamo Pellegrini's now damaged 1672 fresco of the *Holy Trinity* in the high-altar chapel may commemorate foundress Marina Celsi's wish, denied by Doge Giovanni Mocenigo, to dedicate this convent to the Holy Trinity. Pellegrini's *Assumption of the Virgin* fresco in the dome highlights nuns' name saints, Cecilia and Magdalene.

⁷ Amalia Basso in SPAGNOL, 2008.

Painted long after the demise of the Cassinese Reform movement, it depicts the Greek Church Fathers favored by reformed Cassinese Benedictines. The more forgiving views of the Greek Fathers, who advocated justification by faith alone (without the necessity of good works) must have been especially appealing to the nuns, who may have viewed the lightning strike on their church as a form of divine retribution (pp. 222, 225–226). In Sebastiano Ricci's three large paintings for the nave, Paul underlines the theme of the tenuousness of the covenant with God and necessity of constant effort to maintain it. This allows him to make sense of the previously misunderstood subject of the *Moses* painting, which Paul convincingly describes as Moses on the verge of smiting the rock against God's will (p. 231).

The concern with penitence, reform and redemption continues in additional paintings for the church's nave. Giambattista Pittoni's *Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes* (late 1720s) and Angelo Trevisani's *Cleansing of the Temple* (1732) were placed across the nave from Ricci's Old Testament scenes, offering New Testament correspondences to the themes of penitence and forgiveness. Tiepolo's long, narrow *Brazen Serpent* painting of c. 1734 spanned the front of the nuns' choir, below the grills. Paul describes this work as the culmination of the nuns' reformed Benedictine decorative program. Tiepolo's illusionism places Moses inside the space of the nuns' choir, elevating the serpent on its metal cross in a location corresponding to the cross on the altar within the nuns' choir. This visual link between the serpent that Moses raises in a gesture of reparation with God and the nuns' own cross in their choir underlines Pauline theology of the cross and doctrine of justification by faith alone that was important to the nuns' foundress, Marina Celsi and the Cassinese Congregation with which she affiliated the convent.

The volume's nine appendices offer essential primary sources transcribed in full: Marina Celsi's spiritual testament, a description of the church's altars from Patriarch Giovanni Vendramin's 1610 visit to the church, Pietro Petrelli's transcription of the nuns' petition to the Senate for land at the church's site, a 1579 expense account for an altar, complete notations from four plan drawings of the complex, and finally Anton Maria Zanetti's 1733 description of the decoration of the church. These appendices allow readers to follow and evaluate Paul's argument by weighing much of the evidence themselves. The appendices make these sources readily available for further use in future studies.

Several additions might have enhanced Paul's rich analysis. A consideration of the liturgy as it was celebrated in the church of Santi Cosma e Damiano could have helped readers understand more about how the nuns and secular visitors moved around and through the spaces of the complex. Aspects of the liturgy might have called attention to particular parts of the decorative program. While Paul does consider the cult of the Eucharist and the teachings of the Cassinese founder, Ludovico Barbo, in relation to the decorative program, a look at liturgical books and manuscripts of the time, particularly for the celebration of the Exaltation of the Cross, might have lent further insights. Similarly, some insights about the music the nuns sang in the choir might have shed further light on Paul's analysis of the Saint Cecilia in the

main altarpiece and perhaps other parts of the decorative program. Finally, several disparate observations about the nuns' finances and expenditures describe them acquiring land (pp. 39 – 44), relying on donations (39–47, 142–143), paying workers (Appendix 4), borrowing and repaying money to the treasury of the Cassinese Congregation (p. 123), and even using Patriarch Vendramin as something of a modern-day collection agent who put pressure on the underperforming donor Lunardo Morosini (p. 150). Although these varied activities might warrant it, the book does not contain an explicit, cohesive analysis of the Santi Cosma e Damiano nuns' overall financial planning strategy, or financial relationships they might have had with other Benedictine convents in the city of Venice.

Such discursions, however, were not Paul's purpose. His focus is on the nuns' conscious sense of their identity as part of a larger religious reform with specific allegiances to their foundress's ideals, and their remarkable persistence in adhering to their ideals in the art and architecture they commissioned across several centuries.

A significant departure from his solid earlier studies on Tintoretto, Paul's book is a work of mature scholarship that engages important questions of historical identity formation while it simultaneously stakes out an expanded identity for Paul himself as a fully fledged scholar not only of Renaissance art but also of architecture and history with a range from the Renaissance through the eighteenth century. This book offers multiple, valuable contributions: a reconstruction and reinterpretation of the architecture and decoration of an important Venetian monument, new information that sheds light on early modern nuns' self-realization and self-representation, new understandings about the adaptation and representation of religious reform ideologies in art and architecture, and new and accessible transcriptions and reproductions of significant documents from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries.

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Tobias Lander: Coca-Cola & Co. Die Dingwelt der Pop Art und die Möglichkeiten der ikonologischen Interpretation; Petersberg 2012; 400 Seiten, 455 Farbbildungen, Hardcover; ISBN 978-3-86568-135-5

Der Kunsthistoriker Tobias Lander hat mit *Coca-Cola & Co. Die Dingwelt der Pop Art und die Möglichkeiten der ikonologischen Interpretation* einen opulenten Bildband vorgelegt, der auf 400 Seiten und mit 450 Abbildungen eine beeindruckende Annäherung an das scheinbar ausgereizte Thema der Pop-Kunst unter ungewohntem methodischem Vorzeichen wagt. Scheint das Themenfeld Pop Art längst weidlich abgegrast, wie die höchst umfangreiche Literatur zu dieser populären Kunstrichtung vielleicht vorschnell vermuten ließe, schöpft Lander die Legitimation für eine neuerliche – diesmal ikonologische – Auseinandersetzung aus dem, was er zutreffend einen „*blinden Fleck*“ in der Wahrnehmung nennt. Der Autor strebt damit nicht weniger als eine