

Cesar Guillen-Nuñez

Macao's College and Church of St. Joseph: Splendor of the Baroque in China. Macao: Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Macao S.A.R. Government, 2017. Pp. 199. Hb, MOP\$180.

The churches built in Macao by the Society of Jesus provide a view of how European architectural forms were translated and accommodated at sites around the globe. Cesar Guillen-Nuñez's previous book, *Macao's Church of St. Paul: A Glimmer of the Baroque in China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2009), explored the first church constructed by Jesuit missionaries in Macao—the church of the Madre de Deus, also known as St. Paul, built in the seventeenth century under the direction of the Italian Jesuit Carlo Spinola. His new book, *Macao's College and Church of St. Joseph: Splendor of the Baroque in China*, admirably ventures into the eighteenth century to consider the second church, which is dedicated to St. Joseph, patron saint of China.

The book is laid out in two parts: the first section provides a wealth of background material essential for understanding the building itself, which is the focus of part two. The front matter includes a preface and acknowledgements section by the author, along with lists of abbreviations and illustrations. Endnotes, a selected bibliography, and an index follow the text. The book is well-designed and beautifully printed. All of the forty-seven illustrations are in full color.

The two chapters in part one effectively set the stage. A lot of ground is covered quickly in an effort to prepare the reader for the specific examination of the church and college of St. Joseph that follows. While the material may not be necessary for the highly specialized reader, it provides important background for a more general audience. First, the Age of Enlightenment is explored, both in Europe and in China, through an overview of significant people and events. Of particular focus is the role of the Jesuit missionaries in China, their relationship with the Chinese emperors of the Qing dynasty, and conflicts such as the Rites controversy. The larger issue of scientific and mathematical advancements of the era of rationalism in potential contrast to the religious ideals of the Society is also considered. The second chapter provides a broad overview of late baroque (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) architecture, again, in both Europe and Asia. The consideration of Italian and Portuguese examples is especially important for understanding the buildings constructed by the Jesuits in China and Macao. One criticism of this section would be that while the Italian examples, which are generally well-known, are illustrated thoroughly, there are no comparable images included of the Portuguese works.

This hinders appreciation of structures such as the Palace-Monastery of Mafra, near Lisbon. This project was designed by Johann Friedrich Ludwig, a Bavarian goldsmith who worked in Italy (including at the church of Il Gesù in Rome) before the Jesuits brought him to Portugal. While Guillen-Nuñez's description of his work is detailed, it would be enhanced greatly by illustrations. In general, the examples included provide a backdrop for the subsequent examination of a church complex built by an Italian architect in a Portuguese outpost. The rest of the chapter examines Jesuit art and architecture in China, including the three eighteenth-century churches constructed by the Society in Beijing. As two of these were constructed under the Portuguese *padroado*, as was the church in Macao, they are important comparative examples.

The second part of the book begins with a transitional chapter considering the iconography of St. Joseph, to whom the church and college were dedicated. St. Joseph gained popularity and prestige in the early modern era, especially in Spain and Latin America. But at the Canton conference of 1668, he was declared the patron saint of China as well. Numerous artistic depictions of Joseph date from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, and illustrations here chronicle his changing and developing iconography in an informative chapter. The importance of his role as the earthly father to Jesus Christ is considered, as is devotion to the saint by Teresa of Ávila, and her connection to the Jesuits.

Chapters four and five are devoted specifically to the church and college of St. Joseph in Macao. Both chapters are illustrated with plans and photographs of the complex that substantially augment the text. Even for the reader who has not seen the complex in person, it is easy to match up word and image and emerge with a clear picture of the construction. The residence was constructed first, in the 1720s. The church was an entirely new Jesuit foundation, and designed by Florentine engineer Francesco Folleri in the Roman high baroque style. Planning began in the 1730s, the foundation stone laid in 1746, and the building was completed in 1758. Situated atop a set of high stairs, the church dominates its environment, as the earlier church of St. Paul in Macao had done. The dome is not visible from most exterior vantage points due to precautions taken by Folleri to ensure that it would not be damaged by high winds on the hilltop location. But from the interior, the dome—a real one, not the painted, fictive domes of Andrea Pozzo so popular in European Jesuit churches—resembles that of the Pantheon. This and other details are examined in relation to European models in order to understand how the Jesuits in Macao attempted to transport architectural ideals and engineering concepts, and make them viable in the China mission.

Shortly after the completion of the church and college of St. Joseph, the Society of Jesus was suppressed, and the Jesuits expelled from Macao. The

complex here was abandoned for approximately twenty years before becoming a seminary for native clergy in 1784. After this point, various renovations took place, including several in the twentieth century. The last, completed in 1999, has allowed the complex to be returned to its eighteenth-century glory and become designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site (2005). Guillen-Núñez's engaging and informative book will allow the reader to understand the history and significance of this site, one of the last built by the Old Society in the context of the missions in Asia.

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