Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* : Jesuits, Martyrs, Print, and the Counter-Reformation

Karine Tsoumis

Department of Art History and Communication Studies
McGill University, Montréal

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RÉSUMÉ

Résumant cinq cents ans d'histoire paléochrétienne, l'*Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1583), gravé par Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, reproduit un cycle de fresques peintes dans l'église de San Stefano Rotondo à Rome. Appartenant au Collège Germanico-Hongrois de la Société de Jésus, la série, reliée en un livre, accompagnait des prêtes dans leur mission de prosélytisme dans le nord de l'Europe. Ce mémoire a pour but de déterminer la fonction de l'objet par rapport à des publics variés, en des contextes de réception différents. Principalement analysé comme objet de dévotion jésuite, il sera également situé en lien avec le mouvement de renaissance paléochrétienne promu par le pape Grégoire XIII (1572-1585) et considéré comme dépositoire de connaissances historiques. Un objectif ultime sera de situer l'*Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* parmi d'autres représentations de martyrs, autant catholiques que protestantes, afin de démontrer où il s'insère dans la culture de l'imprimé à la fois romaine et européenne de la fin du seizième siècle.

ABSTRACT

Five hundred years of Christian martyrdom are represented in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1583). Engraved by Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, the series that was bound into a book reproduces a fresco cycle in the church of San Stefano Rotondo in Rome. While the church belonged to the Jesuit German-Hungarian College, the book accompanied priests in their proselytizing mission in Northern Europe. This thesis will look at the function of the book in relation to various audiences, in different viewing contexts. Analyzed primarily in relation to the intended Jesuit audience as an object of devotion, the book will also be inserted within the Early Christian revival promoted by Gregory XIII (1572-1585). Finally, it will be looked at in relation to an audience composed of individuals interested in factual knowledge about Early Christian history and in the martyr as a historical figure. A general endeavor of the thesis is to situate the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in relation to late sixteen-century representations of martyrdom, both Catholic and Protestant, as well as in relation to other contemporary Roman printed works.

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Chaos and violence: these two words suffice to describe the atmosphere emanating from Richard Verstegan's representation of Elizabethan persecutions of Catholics in England (figure 1). With a view of the city of London far behind, different scenes are juxtaposed like independent vignettes and bound together into one composition. In the crowded picture, bodies undergoing the most creative tortures are those of nameless Catholics. Notwithstanding all the cruelty represented here, the print is far from being the most gruesome and violent representation in Verstegan's book, the *Theatrum Crudelitatum Haereticorum Nostri Temporis*. An Englishman devoted to the cause of the Counter-Reformation, Verstegan started to print illegal tracts in London in the early 1580s, a moment of intensified persecutions for the Catholic Church in England.[1] Printed at the Plantin Press in Antwerp in 1587,[2] his *Theatrum* functioned as a form of anti-Elizabethan propaganda and entered into a war of printed material, both Catholic and Protestant, either of texts or images, in which the martyr was put into center stage.[3] With a focus on contemporary Catholic martyrs, Verstegan's purpose is one of political denunciation. But representations of Early Christian martyrs also entered the flow of printed images, as vehicles through which Counter-Reformatory ideas could be disseminated. Published in 1583 in Rome, Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* is a case in point. Distributed throughout Europe, particularly in Jesuit Colleges,[4] Cavalieri's series of Early Christian martyrdoms served as a response to an outpouring of Protestant martyrologies. This book, which reiterated Catholic devotional practices and beliefs, will be the primary object of analysis in this thesis.

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[1] Christopher Highley, "Richard Verstegan's Book of Martyrs," *John Foxe and his World*, edited by Christopher Highley *et al.* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, c2002),183.

[2] Frank Lestringant, *'Le théâtre des cruautés des hérétiques de notre temps' de Richard Verstegan*, texte établi, présenté et annoté par Frank Lestringant (Paris: Éditions Chandeigne, 1995), 8-9. According to Lestringant, Verstegan is author of the text as well as engraver of the series. Verstegan had been trained as a goldsmith and copperplate engraver before he embarked in clandestine publishing activities.

[3] Highley, 185. While the first version of the book was in Latin, it was published in French in 1588; the book was republished in 1592, 1604 and 1697. The fact that it was never translated in English indicates that the book was for an European audience.

[4] Leif Holm Monssen, "*Rex Gloriose Martyrum*: A contribution to Jesuit Iconography," *The Art Bulletin* 63, no.1 (1981): note 36.

The book of martyrs emerged as a medium whereby Catholics and Protestants expressed political as well as religious arguments.[5] This preoccupation with the martyr grew strong from the 1550s, when Protestant martyrologies started to emerge. This category included the Calvinist Jean Crespin's *Histoires des martyrs,* published in 1554, and the English Protestant John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, published in 1563. All these books aimed not only to forge a sense of collective oppression, but also to fashion a Protestant identity and history. Since Protestant martyrologies very rarely featured images, John Foxe's book, illustrated with intensely realistic woodcuts, had a tremendous impact and propelled an outpouring of Catholic texts and images about ancient and modern martyrs.[6] The latter book stimulated the production of numerous martyrdom cycles in Rome during the last twenty years of the sixteenth century; those commissioned by different Jesuit Colleges are noteworthy.[7]

In the spring of 1584, Richard Verstegan travelled to Rome where he had the chance to see these frescoed martyrdom cycles. One of them, Nicolò Circignani's cycle in the ambulatory of the Jesuit church of San Stefano Rotondo, offered him the compositional model that he later used for the images of his *Theatrum.* He probably also saw the printed reproductions of the cycle: the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi,* engraved by Giovanni Battista Cavalieri. Verstegan appropriated this model to make it suit his own purpose: aggressive political denunciation that would forge a consciousness of shared oppression from which he hoped concrete actions would ensue.[8] He did so by presenting common individuals, priests and laymen, very frequently unidentified. By contrast, Cavalieri's martyrs are saints; saints that were worshipped and venerated. Whereas none of Verstegans' actors take predominance over the scene, Cavalieri's prints focus on the suffering and pain of a specific Early Christian martyr. In the fourth plate of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, for instance, the viewer's gaze encounters Saint Vitale at the threshold of the image (figure 2). The saint gazes upwards, his hands in prayer, and his

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[5] A.G. Petti, "Richard Verstegan and Catholic Martyrologies of the Later Elizabethan Period," *Recusant History* 5 (1959-60): 66.
[6] Highley, 186.
[7] Alexandra Herz, "Imitators of Christ: the Martyr-Cycles of Late Sixteenth Century Rome Seen in Context," *Storia dell'arte* 62 (1988): 54. More exactly eight painted martyrdom cycles were produced in Rome during these two decades. On the contemporary resurgence of interest in martyrdom in Antwerp, see David Freedberg, "The Representation of Martyrdoms During the Early Counter-Reformation in Antwerp," *Burlington Magazine* CXVIII, (1976).
[8] Highley, 186.

lower body already in the ground. According to his story, Saint Vitale was buried alive by executioners acting in the name of Emperor Nero. Nero's rule was a time of unrest for adherents to the new religion. The multiple torments he brought can be witnessed behind Saint Vitale where the viewer's gaze can travel from a group of Christians, captives of a fiery coliseum, to the tortures of Saint Thecla, a young virgin martyr, ferociously attacked by two oxen. In a glance, the plate provides a portrait of the Christians' combat for faith under Nero. The succession of pages, all of which are similar in composition to this one, allows the viewer to embark on a voyage through the history of the foundation of Christianity during the Roman Empire.

Giovanni Battista Cavalieri (c.1559-1601), the engraver of the *Ecclesia militantis triumphi,* was born in Villa Lagarina in the province of Trento.[9] The circumstances of his coming to Rome, where he was active from 1559, as well as details about his training are unknown. But early on in his career, he was noticed by Giorgio Vasari who mentioned him in the second edition of his *Lives* in 1568.[10] An engraver, printer and publisher, it is Cavalieri himself who published the first edition of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in 1583. The book consists of thirty-one unsigned etched and engraved plates, each reproducing a fresco with its accompanying inscriptions from the ambulatory of the church of San Stefano Rotondo in Rome.[11] The images each appear on the recto, thereby facing a white page. A frontispiece added to the series identifies Cavalieri as engraver of the series and Nicolò Circignani (1517/24-1597) as the painter of the cycle in the church. San Stefano Rotondo, a construction dating back to Early Christianity, had recently become a Jesuit church when Pope Gregory XIII gave it the German-Hungarian College. The printed series, which had been approved by the Society of Jesus and Gregory XIII, was dedicated to Stanislao Roscio, dean of Warsaw and secretary to the king of Poland.

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[9] The complete title as it appears on the frontispiece is: *Ecclesiae Militantis Triumphi Sive: Deo amabilium martyrum gloriosa pro Christi fide certanima: prout opera RR Patrum Societatis Iesu Collegii Germanici et Hungarici Moderator impensa S.D.N. Gregorii PP. XIII in Ecclesia S. Stephani Rotundi Romae Nicolai Circiniani pictoris manu vi: suntur depicta, Ad ex citandam pior devotionem a Joanne Bapta de Cavallerijs, aeneis typis accurate expressa Anno Dni MDLXXXV Cum Privilegio Gregorij XIII Pont. Max. Rmo D Stanislao Rescio S. Poeni tentiariae Sigillatori Decano Varsauieri et Scrini Poloniae Regis Secretario digniss DD. Romae ex Officina Bartholomaei Grassi.*

[10] Giorgio Vasari, *An Annotated and Illustrated Version of Giorgio Vasari's History of Italian and Northern Prints from his Lives of the Artists (1550&1568),* book 1, annotations by Robert H. Getscher (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 195.

[11] The dimensions of the images – of the plate marks – are approximately of 22 cm in height by 15 cm in width; dimensions vary by a few millimeters from one plate the other.

Two years after its first publication, another edition was published in 1585; to the series of engravings were then added four allegories of life, sin, death and grace. This edition, as well as the 1587 and 1589 ones, were not published by Cavalieri, but by the printer Bartolomeo Grassi.[12] The 1587 and 1589 editions differ from the first engraved series: they are of a smaller octavo format and the engravings are accompanied by poems by Giulio Rossi da Orte.[13] Outside Italy, Cavalieri's series was also republished by Jean Le Clerc in Paris, who had the series re-engraved. The frontispiece of the undated book – probably published around 1600 – makes no mention of the provenance of the images, of Nicolò Circignani nor of the German-Hungarian College.[14] Finally, a larger folio edition was re-engraved and published in 1766 in Rome: the 1585 images were here adapted with some liberty.[15]

The edition that I have consulted dates from the year 1585 – very few copies from 1583 have survived.[16] No text accompanies the series of images, except for the engraved text on the illustrated plates and the frontispiece. Circignani's frescoes were accompanied by identifying captions both in Latin and in Italian, whereas only Latin inscriptions appear in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*. This points to the fact that a wider European audience was targeted, and that the reproductions were intended to be distributed beyond Italy. While the book was received by the Jesuit colleges in the provinces of the Society, it also entered the shops of print sellers.[17] Moreover, each sheet was printed separately; for this reason Michael Bury suggested that the plates could have been purchased

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[12] On Bartolomeo Grassi very little is known; he was active in Rome between 1584 and 1589, were he worked in collaboration with Francesco Zanetti from time to time. Grassi also printed Cavalieri's *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophae* in 1584.

[13] The 1587 and 1589 editions were also published under a different title, *Triumphus Martyrum in templo D. Stephani Caelii Montis Expressus*, and dedicated to Cardinal Jacopo Savelli.

[14] Jean Le Clerc's work is entitled: *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi sive Deo amabilium Martyrum gloriosa pro Christi fide certamina. Les Triomphes de l'Église Militante, où sont représentez par figures les glorieux combatz des Martires bien aymes de Dieu pour la loÿ de Jesuchrist, durant les persecutions de l'Eglise. A Paris, chez Jean Le Clerc Rue St Jean de Latran à la Salmandre Royalle.* The fronstipiece is signed by Isaac van Haelbeek, and some of the plates are signed by Jean Le Clerc himself (see Lestringant, 198).

[15] Lestringant, 198.

[16] The book that I have consulted belongs to the Folger Shakespeare Library Collection in Washington.

[17] For instance, in 1587, Marcello Clodio sent from Rome six copies of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* to the print dealer Lodovico Quatrocha in Milan (Michael Bury, *The Print in Italy, 1550-1620* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 63). Eckhard Leuschner also posited that in the 1580s and 1590s, religious prints sometimes would have been partly commissioned by religious orders, while also partly produced for direct sale. He speaks of Antonio Tempesta's work, but this also probably applied to Cavalieri ("Censorship and the Market. Antonio Tempesta's "New" Subjects in the Context of Roman Printmaking ca. 1600," *The Art Market in Italy, 15th -17th centuries*, 69).

separately and then bound together. But frequently, they would have been sold already bound into books.[18] The four allegories that were added to some of the 1585 editions of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* did not feature in the book that I have consulted. Rather, this copy was augmented by another series engraved by Cavalieri, the *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophaea*, which reproduced a martyrdom cycle, also painted by Nicolò Circignani, for the English College in Rome.[19] It is strictly the series reproducing the cycle in the church of San Stefano Rotondo, along with its frontispiece, that will be analyzed in the following pages. I will not be concerned with the *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophaea*, or the allegories. Neither will I discuss the later editions of the series that were accompanied by Da Orte's poems.

The last decade has witnessed a surge of interest in Jesuit art, and Jesuit enterprises in general.[20] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Jeffrey Smith Chipps, Evonne Levy, and Walter S. Melion are among those whose recent publications have been concerned with far ranging issues, going from Jesuit propaganda to Jesuit architecture in India. Throughout my thesis, I will refer to some of their arguments when appropriate.

The church of San Stefano Rotondo, an Early Christian structure with a rich history, has been the object of numerous studies, dealing with architecture, archaeology, as well as with issues of restoration.[21] The fresco cycle has also engendered several studies. First, early twentieth-century scholars have looked at Circignani's detailed representations of martyrdom with disdain. For instance, in the 1920s, Herman Voss called them "repugnant" and "bloodthirsty," while Julius Schlosser described them as "crass paintings of torture."[22] A contemporary of Voss and Schlosser, Émile Mâle went beyond the display of violence and considered their function with regard to the mission of

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[18] Bury, 62-63.
[19] The complete title is: *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Trophaea, Sanctor Martyrum qui pro Christo Catholicae fidei Veritate asserenda antiquo recentioriq Persecutionum tempore mortem in Anglia subierunt Passiones.*
[20] See *The Jesuits/ Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540 – 1773*, edited by J.O'Malley S.J. *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).
[21] See Hugo Brandenburg, *Santo Stefano Rotondo in Roma. Archeologia, storia dell'arte, restaurao. Archäologie, Bauforschung, Geschichte. Atti del convegno internazionale, Roma 10-13 ottobre 1996*, edited by Hugo Brandenburg and Jòzsef Pàl (Reichert Verlag Wiesbaden, 2000).
[22] Leslie Korrick, "On the Meaning of Style: Nicolò Circignani in Counter-Reformation Rome," *Word and Image* 15, no. 2 (1999): 170-171.

the Society of Jesus, and in relation to the revived interest in martyrdom and Early Christian history in the late sixteenth century.[23] Thomas Buser, writing in the 1970s, stressed the didactic function of the frescoes in relation to the historical context as well as to the ongoing controversy against Protestants concerning the significance of saints and martyrs.[24] Up to now, Leif Holm Monssen is the scholar who has offered the most extensive study of the cycle. Having produced a complete catalogue of the series, as well as a few critical analyses, he remains a canonical source to which I will return in my text.[25] Another source on which I will draw is Gauvin Alexander Bailey's work on sixteenth-century Jesuit art.[26] Bailey has devoted a complete chapter on decorations for the churches of the German-Hungarian which includes many details on the commission. Although a useful study, he does not analyze the frescoes in depth, nor their printed reproductions. Leslie Korrick has also contributed with a study of the changing reception of Circignani's cycle at San Stefano Rotondo, asking why its appreciation in the late sixteenth century dramatically shifted in the mid-seventeenth century.[27] Finally the literature on the engravings is quite interrelated to that of the frescoes. The prints are mainly used in art historical studies as secondary evidence, instead of being the primary focus of analyses. Also, they have mostly been used as documents to recover the frescoes' original state, since these are now in a ghostly condition. Kirstin Noreen is the only author who has dealt exclusively with the function of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* which would have been taken by Jesuit priests from the German-Hungarian College back to the Protestant North.[28]

In contrast to Noreen, who focused on the four allegories of life, sin, grace and death that were added to the series, I wish to provide a thorough analysis of the book. On one level, I will look at the meaning of Cavalieri's series as a whole, while on the other, I

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[23] Émile Mâle, *L'Art Religieux après le Concile de Trente* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1932).
[24] Thomas Buser, "Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1976).
[25] Leif Holm Monssen, "The Martyrdom cycle in Santo Stefano Rotondo, Part I," *Acta ad archaelogiam et atrium Historiam Pertinentia 2* (1982); Leif Holm Monssen, "The Martyrdom cycle in Santo Stefano Rotondo, Part II," *Acta ad archaelogiam et atrium Historiam Pertinentia 3* (1983).
[26] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).
[27] Leslie Korrick, "On the Meaning of Style: Nicolò Circignani in Counter-Reformation Rome," *Word and Image* 15, no. 2 (1999).
[28] Kirstin Noreen, "Ecclesiae militantis triumphi: Jesuit Iconography and the Counter-Reformation," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no. 3 (1998).

will explore the ways in which the images functioned in relation to the viewer. The approach that I have favored for my analysis of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* is based on the premise that the same object can be understood differently by various viewers. Even though the intended function of the images would have been a devotional one, individuals appropriate and produce meaning in different ways according to their personal interests, social and cultural backgrounds. This approach relies upon Michel de Certeau's theory on consumption: cultural products are subject to an appropriation from the reader or viewer that might bring upon a deviation from the meaning intended originally by the producer.[29]

Because of the reproductive nature of the medium of print, it would be erroneous to consider spectators for the book as a homogeneous whole. The running thread of my analysis then consists of an exploration of the different meanings produced by three different groups of people: a Roman public, a Jesuit audience, and finally a group of individuals interested in facts and knowledge about history. In Chapter Two, I will look at the meaning of the series within Gregory XIII's (1572-1585) Early Christian revival which took shape in Rome. Here I will consider a Roman public who would have been witness to the physical changes occurring in the city of Rome: changes generated by the revival promoted by the Pope. I will also consider the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in relation to other contemporary printed works available in Rome. Next, I will look at the function of the book in relation to the first intended audience in the making of the reproductions: Jesuits belonging to the German-Hungarian College. The use of the series in relation to Jesuit devotional practices will be investigated in the second part of Chapter Two, while Chapter Three will be concerned with the function of the images taken separately in the context of meditation.[30] The representations of the saints and the viewer's experience of the images will be discussed in opposition to Protestant martyrologies, through the examples of Jean Crespin's *Histoire de martyrs* and John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. Finally, Chapter Four is concerned with the didactic aspect of the book and its mnemonic functions. First analysed in the context of devotion, it will then be considered in relation to my third audience: a crowd of humanists whose interests

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[29] Michel de Certeau, *Arts de Faire* (Paris: Union générale d'éditions, 1980).

[30] While a great part of my analysis is led in relation to a Jesuit audience, the masculine form may be used to refer to the viewer, since there is no women's branch to the Society of Jesus.

Cavalieri was serving with his diversified publications cataloguing Roman vistas, antique statuary or portraits rulers. These individuals may have been more interested in the series as a display of historical facts. It is therefore the martyr as a historical figure, more than a spiritual one, which will be explored in this last section. A general endeavour throughout the thesis is to situate Cavalieri's series in relation to other printed works in order to see where it stands in the Roman print production, but also within a wider European print culture. Establishing comparisons with the work of Cavalieri's contemporaries in Rome, with Protestant textual and figurative representations of martyrs, as well as with other engravings by Cavalieri, will enable me to better circumscribe the different meanings and functions that may have been ascribed to the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*.

Unfortunately, the great number of engravings forming the series will not allow me to provide a description and thorough discussion of each one. Among the thirty-one engravings composing the book, I have selected examples that will be discussed more thoroughly. My choice aims at providing a good picture of the object in its entirety. In Chapter Two, I will discuss the frontispiece, the first plate of the series as well as the last one. These plates stand out from the other prints forming the series, as they do not conform to the general compositional scheme that we see throughout the series. In Chapter Three, I will provide an in-depth analysis of two plates in particular, representing the martyrdoms of Saint Agatha and Saint Lawrence. Of course other prints will be brought forward in order to clarify parts of my arguments. But before embarking in the analysis of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, I begin the thesis by describing the historical context and by introducing some thematic problems that stem from the status of the book as a reproductive work and as a Jesuit object.

CHAPTER ONE: CONTEXT AND PROBLEMS

The description of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as a reproduction of a Jesuit martyrdom cycle has imposed limits on its analysis. The engravings have most often been treated as mere reproductions, and the function of the printed book overlooked. When I initiated my research, my first impulse was to detach the book from its prototype in the church of San Stefano Rotondo. Very quickly, this proved to be impossible. Indeed the relationship with the Jesuit church is deeply embedded within the fabric of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*. It is nevertheless crucial to recognize that its meaning goes far beyond that association, and that various meanings may have been produced by different individuals who would have understood the work according to their viewing contexts.

The present chapter will thus set out the historical and theoretical contexts in order to pave the way for my analysis. I will particularly explore issues concerning Jesuit art and the notion of the reproductive print. But prior to this discussion, I will provide some necessary information about the Society of Jesus, its foundation, mission and goals. In addition, I will briefly outline the founding history of the church of San Stefano Rotondo and the commission of the fresco cycle.

The Society of Jesus and its Mission

In 1534, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556) engaged himself as a servitor of Christ. Taking a vow along with five of his companions, he promised to live in poverty and chastity, and to pursue apostolic labours in the Holy Land. Because the political context prohibited the fulfilment of the last promise – because of an ongoing war between Venice and Turkey – the group instead decided in 1538 to embrace fully apostolic endeavours under the orders of the Pope in Rome. The Society of Jesus, as they called themselves, was approved verbally by Paul III Farnese (1534-1549) in 1539 and was later confirmed by him through the bull *Regimini militantis ecclesiae* in 1540. The following year, Ignatius was elected first general of the new Society. From the moment of its foundation,

the Society of Jesus had a particular relationship with the papacy. By taking a fourth solemn vow of obedience to the pope, Ignatius fulfilled his sincere wish to serve the Church and the papacy directly.[1]

During the first decades following its foundation, the Society grew exponentially. From 1556 to 1565, the number of priests and brothers belonging to the Society went from 938 to 3500, increasing to 15 544 in the year 1626.[2] This continuous growth was not the only distinctive characteristic of the order. Obedience as the prominent virtue, the renunciation of monastic life, of a fixed garb and of obligatory penances as well as Ignatius' strict refusal of founding a women's branch to the society, were some of the characteristics that made the order stand out from already existing communities. But above all – though this was not part of Ignatius' original plan – the Society soon became committed to education.

The cornerstone of the Jesuits' cultural and artistic mission was laid at the founding moment of what was to be their first collegiate institution in Messina, Sicily, in the year 1548.[3] From then on, the Society became the first "teaching order"; for the first time a religious congregation was seriously concerned not only with the education of diocesan priests, but equally with the education of lay students.[4] The two first Roman collegiate institutions were founded in 1551, as the Collegio Romano, and in 1552, as the German College.[5] Founded under Pope Julius III, the aim of the German College was to house German seminaries aged from sixteen to twenty-one under the tutelage of Jesuit supervisors. As the bull decreed at the moment of its foundation, the original intention of the German College was to fight Protestantism: to "search out the hidden venom of heretical doctrine, to refute it, and then to replant the uprooted trunk of the tree of faith."[6] Since the church of San Stefano Rotondo belonged to the German College – renamed as the German-Hungarian College when the Hungarian College merged with it in 1579 –

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[1] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Jesuits."
[2] Ibid.
[3] John W. O'Malley, S.J., " Saint Ignace et la mission de la compagnie de Jésus dans le domaine de la culture," *L'art de Jésuites*, sous la direction de Giovanni Sale S.J. (Paris : Édition Mengès, 2003), 22.
[4] O'Malley, "Saint Ignace et la mission de la compagnie de Jésus," 23.
[5] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 111.
[6] Ibid., 112.

this precise missionary goal will impinge upon my analysis of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi.*

The Church of San Stefano Rotondo and Nicolò Circignani's Martyrdom Cycle

The church of San Stefano Rotondo had first been given to the Hungarian College in 1573 by Gregory XIII (1572-1585) and later came into the possession of the German-Hungarian College in 1579 when the two colleges merged. It functioned as one of three satellite churches of the German-Hungarian College: the other two being San Apollinare and San Saba. In the year 1582, Nicolò Circignani, (1517/24-1597), a Tuscan from the city of Pomarance (also known as Il Pomarancio), was employed by the Society to decorate San Apollinare and San Stefano Rotondo. Like San Stefano Rotondo, San Apollinare was an Early Christian construction – founded by Pope Onuphrius I (625-38) – where Circignani executed a martyrdom cycle of twelve panels. Unfortunately, the frescoes in San Apollinare no longer exist; the paintings where first damaged by a flood in the year 1598, and the complete church was razed in 1740.[7]

The church of San Stefano Rotondo dates back to the fifth century. It is located within the walls of the city, on the Celian Hill (figure 3). The original plan of the church, consisting of a combination of circular and cruciform elements, was altered through the centuries so that the circular form predominates today (figure 4). In the central space of the church stands a tall rotunda that was originally covered by a dome instead of the present flat timber roof.[8] This central space, where a high altar is located, is separated from the concentric ambulatory running around it by a colonnade of twenty-two Ionic columns crowned with a marble architrave (figures 5, 6).[9] This ambulatory was originally surrounded by an arcade opening onto another concentric space which was punctuated by

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[7] Ibid., 130. The series in the church of San Apollinare was recorded by Cavalieri in a series of engravings entitled *Beati apollinaris martyris primi ravennatum epi res gestae.* The series was bound with some copies of the second edition of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in1585.

[8] Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 52.

[9] The high altar is situated within an octagonal space that is enclosed by a low chancel wall. In the sixteenth-century, this balustrade was decorated with chiaroscuro frescoes and molded plasterwork, among which we can see Gregory XIII's heraldic symbol.

four equally distant radial chapels. These rose higher than the roofed surface of the outer perimeter and created the cruciform element of the structure. By the twelfth century, this outer portion, including three of the four chapels, was in a state of ruins. Pope Innocent II's (1130-1143) renovations dramatically reduced the scale of the church; with the exception of the eastern chapel and its adjoining northeast sector, the outer parts were destroyed, and the outer arcade was consequently walled up.[10] While the cruciform element is not visible anymore, there is still a major axis which runs from the west to the east, where it culminates in the only surviving radial chapel.[11]

The founding history of San Stefano Rotondo is a controversial topic among scholars and is worth a short digression. It is due to the plan of the church that questions arose. The circular plan indeed suggests a martyrium, but the church was not built on a site of martyrdom or burial place. Scholars have thus had difficulty establishing what could have been the original function of the building as it was not built as a regular church with a resident clergy. The *Liber Pontificalis* of 481 tells us that Pope Simplicius (468-483) dedicated the church to Saint Stephen proto-martyr. Going against tradition, the church was consecrated without the presence of the patron saint's relics; the first Christian martyr, Saint Stephen's remains were discovered in Jerusalem, where he had died, in the year 415. The church did not hold any relic until Pope Theodore I (642-649) brought the relics of Saint Primus and Saint Felicianus and housed them in the only chapel that survives today.[12]

Notwithstanding Simplicius' consecration of the church, the initial founding moment of the church was pushed back to the time of Simplicius's predecessor, Pope Hilarius (461-468).[13] Furthermore, Caecilia Davis-Weyer has argued that a lay donor, who she identifies as the Emperor Anthemius, reigning form 467-472 on the Eastern and

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[10] Richard Krautheimer and Spencer Corbett, "S. Stefano Rotondo," *Corpus Basilicarum Christianorum Romae,* vol. IV (Città del Vaticano : Pontificio istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1970), 238. It is often erroneously thought, Krautheimer and Corbett add, that the ambulatory was walled by Pope Nicholas V in the 15th century. Nicholas V is rather responsible for the vaulting of the entrance, the construction of the vestibule and of the adjacent convent buildings.

[11] The chapel is not precisely oriented toward the east, but rather to the northeast, so that it is more exactly from the southwest to the northeast that runs the axis.

[12] Krautheimer and Corbett, 236-237.

[13] Richard Krautheimer, "Santo Stefano Rotondo: Conjectures," *Romisches Jahrbuch der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 29, (1994): 8.

Western Roman Empire, was involved in the church's construction.[14] But the centralised plan of the building has stirred up more questions still. The plan, in its original state, not only breaks with the local tradition of the basilica church but also stands apart from previous centrally planned churches because of the absence of a narthex or apse to obscure its symmetries.[15] Consequently, the centralized church, as opposed to the basilica, was not adapted to the needs of a congregation and mass, but ran counter to the principle of direct interaction between celebrant and congregation.[16] For this reason, many have assumed that the church was not built as a regular house of worship but as a martyrium, its round shape linking it to traditional martyr burial houses.[17] Richard Krautheimer did not accept this assumption and was puzzled by the extravagant waste of space generated by the layout of the church. When completed in 530, San Stefano Rotondo was Rome's third largest church with a capacity equal to that of the Lateran basilica.[18] Because of the discrepancy between form and ecclesiastical functions, Krautheimer argued that the intended function of the building was diametrically opposed to Christian worship. According to him, the structure was not planned as a church but was envisaged as a secular, non-ecclesiastical structure that was prompted by emperor Anthemius' neo-pagan inclinations. Anthemius, he alleged, had sought to create a spacious building strictly designed for receptions and formal banquets, instead of a church. Following Anthemius' rule, the church was left incomplete. Pope Simplicius took over what had been built and dedicated it to Christ in honour of Saint Stephen. The building was later decorated and adapted to Christian services.[19]

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[14] Caecilia Davis-Weyer, "S. Stefano Rotondo in Rome and the Oratory of Theodore I," *Italian Church Decoration of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance: functions, forms and regional traditions: ten contributions to a colloquium held at the Villa Spelman, Florence*, edited by William Tronzo (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale; Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, c1989), 64-68.

[15] Ibid,, 68.

[16] Richard Krautheimer, "Santo Stefano Rotondo: Conjectures," 8-9.

[17] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque,* 134; Stefan Grunmann, *The Architecture of Rome/An architectural history in 400 individual presentations*, edited by Stefan Grunmann (Stuttgart: Axel Menges, 1998), 80. Grunmann proposes the Anastasis as an architectural model, the church of Jesus' resurrection in Jerusalem which is now in ruin. Because San Stefano originally had a vault, he argues that the light coming form the vault would have had manifested symbolically the ideas of martyrdom and resurrection to which to structure is tied; John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 428. Paoletti also calls it an "Early Christian martyrial structure."

[18] Davis-Weyer, 69.

[19] Richard Krautheimer, "Santo Stefano Rotondo: Conjectures," 11.

Circignani's martyrdom cycle of thirty-one frescoes unfolds around the ambulatory (for examples of the frescoes, see figures 7, 8, 9). For perspectives and landscapes, Circignani was assisted by Matteo da Siena (1553-88). In addition, Antonio Tempesta (1555-1630) executed two separate scenes in the ambulatory and decorated the chapel of Saint Primus and Felicianus.[20] The cycle has been considered as a catalogue of Early Christian martyrdoms. Covering about five hundred years of history, multiple martyrdom scenes are represented on each of the panels, each framed by brick pillars and half columns. Martyrdoms attributed to the rule of one emperor unfold across the landscapes or architectural settings as distinct episodes. Red letters are inserted throughout the paintings; these letters refer to inscriptions written both in Latin and Italian on two separate panels located below the frescoes. Above each fresco viewers can read a short quote taken from varied sources: Sacred Scripture, the hymns, the Psalms and the Roman Breviary.

Entering the church through its single entrance, located north of the ambulatory, a visitor would turn left, walk in front of the chapel of Saint Primus and Felicianus before arriving in front of the first painting of Circignani's cycle: the Crucifixion of Christ surrounded by a group of saints. Walking clockwise, the observer would encounter an image of Saint Stephen (died c.32) next, and then Saint Peter (died c.64), up to the last fresco located just before the entrance portico.[21] The cycle concludes with a composition that is analogous to the first fresco, where a group of saints is represented, this time without Christ. The viewer can easily engage with the figures in the foreground as they are life sized and situated at eye level. The inscriptions below and above the panels can also be read from the viewer's position in the ambulatory. Reading the inscriptions is facilitated by the natural light that enters the church. The cylindrical clerestory wall of the rotunda was pierced by twenty-two windows; later, fourteen of these were walled in order to reinforce the structure.[22] Despite this, a substantial flow of light shines through the nine remaining windows. Along with the oculi and lunette windows at the top of each fresco, natural lighting would have been sufficient to see and read clearly.

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[20] See Antonio Vannugli, "Gli affreschi di Antonio Tempesta a S. Stefano Rotondo e l'emblematica nella cultura del Martirio presso la Compagnia di Gesù," *Storia dell'Arte*, no.48 (1983).
[21] John Delaney, *Dictionary of Saints*, s.v. "Saint Stephen," "Saint Peter."
[22] The cupola which originally crowned the central rotunda was replaced by a flat timber roof, which is what we can see today.

The program for the martyrdom cycle is the work of Michele di Loreto, who was the rector of the German-Hungarian College at that time. But Gregory XIII was also instrumental in establishing the program, an issue that will be discussed in Chapter Two. There are two sources to be taken into account with regard to the cycle: Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, and Jerome Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines.* Not only are these books important to our understanding of the cycle and its printed counterpart, but they were crucial to the development of Jesuit art in general. The tolerance and even promotion of images is the very foundation of Jesuit spirituality.[23] Therefore, I will pay particular attention to the *Spiritual Exercises* as they offered theoretical principles for the creation of mental images in the context of meditation. Although the Exercises were not illustrated until the seventeenth century, Ignatius stressed the importance of using devotional art and imagery, either real or imagined, in the context of meditation, as well as in ministry.[24] Composed between the years 1521 and 1548, the book contains instructions, admonitions, warnings, meditations and examinations of conscience. As it is constructed, the text is not directed to the practitioner of the exercises, but to the retreat master who would arrange the exercises of the day for the fruitful use of his pupil.[25] Putting himself in the presence of God, the devotee was instructed to relive and reenact in his mind the scenes from Christ's Passion, the torments of Hell, and the joys of Heaven.

The other book that held great importance in the domain of Jesuit spirituality is Jerome Nadal's series of illustrated meditations on the Gospels, the *Evangelicae historiae imagines* (1593). Jerome Nadal (1507-1580) had joined Ignatius in Rome in 1545 and was often identified as the "second founder of the Society."[26] He was particularly crucial for the promulgation of the constitutions of the Society as he traveled through Europe. The series of meditations, commonly referred to as Nadal's Bible, provided compositional models that were frequently emulated in Jesuit painting from 1582-1600. One of Nadal's innovations was the creation of a cross referential system of words and letters between the images and the text, that would confer a highly didactic value to the

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[23] Alain Besançon, *The Forbidden Image; an Intellectual History of Iconoclasm* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 179.
[24] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 8.
[25] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Spiritual Exercises."
[26] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Nadal, Géronimo."

images. I will discuss this strategy and its relation to mnemonics further in Chapter Four, where I return to Nadal's work.

Problems of the Theme

The context of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* raises a plurality of thematic problems that relate to the book's double status as a Jesuit work of art and as a "reproductive" work. In previous scholarship, the book was not considered as an autonomous work of art, as it has mostly been invoked in relation to the original frescoes. Furthermore, the frescoes' bad condition has encouraged many scholars to use the printed images as mere documents in order to fill in gaps of their sometimes obscure iconography. The engraved series thus falls within the contested category of "reproductive" printmaking. This category was termed by twentieth-century scholars in relation to prints produced in the second half of the Cinquecento which aimed at reproducing and documenting works of art. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's career then developed in response to the preoccupations with reproduction and documentation.

Francis Haskell described Cavalieri as "probably the single most significant figure of the whole sixteenth century to make visually accessible to a wide public throughout Europe the past personalities and glories of his adopted city."[27] When Giorgio Vasari mentioned Cavalieri in Marc'Antonio's life in the second edition of his *Lives* in 1568, Cavalieri's career was still emerging, but he had already set the tone of what he would accomplish until his death.[28] According to Vasari, Cavalieri's work was in line with that of Enea Vico. The latter "applied himself to the study of antiquities, and in particular of ancient medals."[29] In his text, after a long praise of Vico's work, Vasari turns to other engravers who, in the same type of enterprise, did not attain the same degree of perfection. Nevertheless, these less skilled engravers had the merit of bringing to the

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[27] Francis Haskell, *History and its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 43.
[28] On print collecting in the 16th century and Vasari's appreciation prints, see Michaal Bury, "The Taste for Prints in Italy to c. 1600," *Print Quaterly* II (1985): 12-26.
[29] Giorgio Vasari, *An Annotated and Illustrated Version of Giorgio Vasari's History of Italian and Northern Prints from his Lives of the Artists (1550&1568),* book 1, annotations by Robert H. Getscher (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), 193.

attention of intellectuals "scenes and other works of excellent masters" and the "various inventions and manners of the painters."[30] It is primarily because of the avarice of the printers, Vasari writes, that many of these plates are of poor quality. Nonetheless some were still worthy of attention. He then lists some of Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's work; among these he mentions "copper-plate engravings, besides other designs, of the Mediation of S. John the Baptist, of the Deposition from the Cross that Daniello Ricciarelli of Volterra painted in a Chapel in the Trinità at Rome, of a Madonna with many Angels, and of a vast number of other works."[31] However, Vasari's discussion still implied that Cavalieri's work remained inferior to Vico's; this comparison has also been made by more recent scholars who stressed Cavalieri's affinity to Vico in terms of themes and style, while pointing to an inferiority in style. [32]

According to Vasari's discussion, Cavalieri stands in a category of engravers who have the merit of recording and bringing knowledge to the world but not of creating original works of art in their own right, as Dürer and Lucas van Leyden had in the early sixteenth century. Aligned with Vasari, twentieth-century scholars have considered printmaking in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century a moment of innovation when artists of distinction made their prints after their own designs or worked closely with artist designers, as Marc'Antonio Raimondi had with Raphael. The realm of print production from the mid-sixteenth century on, conversely, has been seen by David Landau and Peter Parshall as being dominated by publishers who had already started to gain an increasingly important role by the 1530s and 1540s. The establishment of Antonio Salamanca and Antonio Lafreri's atelier particularly influenced the development of the print market in Rome. Print publishers were not only involved in the marketing of the prints, but also played a role in the understanding and encouraging of the Roman public's taste.[33] For Landau and Parshall, this shift in practice signalled a moment of decline; what they called "reproductive" printmakers came to replace the "original" printmakers of previous generations, and a highly commercialized system of production and diffusion came into

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[30] Ibid., 194.
[31] Ibid., 195.
[32] E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs,* s.v. "Cavalleriis ou Cavalieri (Giovanni-Battista de)"; Micheal Bryan, *Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers,* s.v. "Cavalleriis, Giovanni Battista De, or Cavalieri."
[33] David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470-1550* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 360-363.

being. Michael Bury strongly disagreed with the view that the period was dominated by print publishers, and that the characteristic type of print can be labelled as being "reproductive."[34] By contrast, Bury considered the period from 1550 to 1620 as one of great variety and collective enterprise, where reproduction also meant a creative and intelligent interpretation through which an object retaining a value of its own was produced. Furthermore, he argued that the category of the "publisher" is in itself an anachronism, because that category was not as clearly circumscribed in the sixteenth century as it is today.[35] These individuals did not work autonomously as the title of "publisher" implies, but frequently worked in agreement or partnership with engravers, book sellers and printers.

There is however a point upon which Landau, Parshall and Bury have agreed: that after 1550 the engraver had lost most of his independence. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's career exemplifies the only way an engraver could have gained a truly independent status: by embracing the varied activities of the print dealer and the printer. His success and prosperity also came from his many associations with several print dealers or publishers in collaborative enterprises within or outside Rome.[36]

In light of this debate, I will use the term "reproductive" only in order to situate the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in relation to the original work of art from which it derives. In accordance with Bury's claim, I will acknowledge the copy's own value as a new work. But while the uses and meanings of the book diverge from that of the frescoes, it nevertheless carries an association to the prototype. These associations have also influenced the interpretation of Cavalieri's series. For instance, the frescoes at San Stefano Rotondo, produced in 1582, have suffered from the art historical categories of "Renaissance" and "Baroque," as they fall in between. This in-between position is felt in large art historical surveys organised according to time periods. In John T. Paoletti and Gary Radke's survey of the Renaissance, the last decades of the sixteenth century are

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[34]Micheal Bury, *The Print in Italy, 1550-1620* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 9; See also David Alexander, "'After-Images': a review of recent studies on reproductive print-making," *The Oxford Art Journal* 6, no.1 (1983). Alexander also considers the categories of "original" and "reproductive" as being misleading.

[35] Bury, *The Print in Italy*, 9.

[36] Ibid., 124. Cavalieri had agreements with Perino Zecchini de'Guarlottis in Loreto in 1567, and with Girolamo Agnelli in 1577. He also at some point entered in a partnership with his bother-in-law Lorenzo Vaccari in the publication of engravings by Cornelis Cort.

discussed in the conclusion, where the frescoes are only briefly pointed to.[37] In Rudolf Wittkower's book on Baroque art, this discussion takes place in the introductory pages.[38] Already in the seventeenth century, critics, such as Giulio Mancini (1558-1630) and Giovanni Pietro Bellori (1615-96), had stigmatized the last four decades of the Cinquecento. The period spanning from about 1560 to 1600 was seen as a moment of artistic decline after the apogee of the Renaissance. This period was subsequently ignored and even detested by nineteenth-century and even twentieth-century art historians.[39] As Gauvin Alexander Bailey has argued, the use of highly charged stylistic labels and categories has been a misleading factor in the analysis of art from this period. Labels and categories are rather at odds with the proper acknowledgement of the coexistence of the diverse styles appearing in this period.[40]

The use of stylistic labels to describe the frescoes at San Stefano Rotondo has mostly been counter-productive. For instance Sydney J. Freedberg identifies Circignani as a Late Maniera painter and says of the frescoes at San Stefano Rotondo that they are "simplistic in form and mode of communication as a comic strip, and, save for the deftness of drawing of the good Maniera *praticante* that Circignani was, they verge on anti-art."[41] Thomas Buser, on his part, has pointed to the "late Mannerist style of Circignani's frescoes" adding that they have a "crude look" intended to emulate the catacombs that were discovered in 1578 in Rome.[42] These two authors used the term Mannerist to describe the style without bringing any nuance to it. Only recently has Leslie Korrick described with more precision and nuance this style which has been dually qualified as "crude" and "Mannerist" by Buser. Korrick avoided generalities and rather identified these "crude" motifs deriving from the art of the catacombs, as well as precise instances of appropriation of classical and contemporary sources.[43]

Another problem occurs when the paintings are seen as a literal response to the Counter-Reformatory demands on art expressed by the Council of the Trent. While

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[37] John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997).
[38] Rudolf Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1600 to 1750,* fifth edition (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1982).
[39] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 4.
[40] Ibid., 22-30.
[41] Sydney J. Freedberg, *Painting in Italy: 1500-1600* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), 448-449.
[42] Thomas Buser, "Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1976): 433.
[43] Leslie Korrick, "On the Meaning of Style: Nicolò Circignani in Counter-Reformation Rome," *Word and Image* 15, no. 2 (1999): 178.

Paoletti and Radke stressed their naturalism and journalistic quality, Rudolf Wittkower considered the frescoes at San Stefano Rotondo as conforming to the "pragmatic style" that developed in Rome under the papacies of Sixtus V and Paul V (1585-1621).[44] These scenes, which in his words have a "nauseating effect on the modern beholder,"[45] correspond to the decrees of the Council of Trent and subsequent reformers, providing a clear, realistic and emotionally appealing narrative.[46] Seeing the frescoes' style almost as a direct response to the Council of Trent has also been very limiting, as pragmaticism has been strictly discussed in relation to the union of text and image, of identifying letters and captions. Moreover, Cavalieri's style in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* has, independently from the frescoes, been qualified as "inartistic." The book has been considered as a response to the Catholic Church's hunger for religious images in the 1570s and 1580s, most of which are deemed to be intentionally simple and crude.[47] I do not intend to embark on a discussion of Circignani's style in this thesis; only Cavalieri's prints will be analysed. My aim is to bring the discussion beyond the pure application of the decrees of the Council of Trent, which I will acknowledge, in order to demonstrate how pictorial strategies are used to buttress Catholic doctrines which were reemphasised during the Counter-Reformation. Also, Cavalieri's style in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* will not be looked at in order to determine its artistic value, but instead defined in relation to the devotional function of the book.

Besides its relationship to an ill-considered prototype, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* has further suffered from its status as a Jesuit work. The notion of the Jesuit style has been unfavourable to the study of Jesuit objects. This concept, which developed mainly in relation to seventeenth century architecture but also to painting, referred to artistic decadence, luxury, extreme illusionism and vulgarity. Throughout the history of art the terms "Counter-Reformation," "Baroque" and "Jesuit Style" came to be intimately

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[44] Paoletti and Radke, 429; Rudolf Wittkower, *Art and Architecture in Italy 1600 to 1750*, 27. In this work, Wittkower mistakenly implies that the frescoes where produced during the reign of Sixtus V, when in reality, Gregory XIII was the reigning pope.
[45] Wittkower, 27.
[46] Ibid., 22.
[47] Eckhard Leuschner, "Censorship and the Market: Antonio Tempesta's "New" Subjects in the Context of Roman Printmakin ca. 1600," *The Art Market in Italy, 15th -17th centuries/ Il Mercato dell'Arte in Italia, Secc. XV-XVII,* edited by Marcello Fantoni *et al.* (Ferrara: Franco Cosimo Panini Editore. 2003), 69.

related as they pointed to a manipulative and insincere hegemony.[48] These ideas were already emerging in the late sixteenth century and seventeenth century as a counter-discourse to the one established by the Jesuits through their own publications; this counter-discourse created a myth of the Jesuits as devils, hungry for power and money.[49] Consequently, in the seventeenth century, anti-Jesuit terms, such as "Jesuitism" and "Jesuitical," that were tied to a critique of wealth and opulence of the Jesuit foundations emerged.[50] In 1773, an anti-Jesuit polemic led to the suppression of the order by Pope Clement XIV; this suppression lasted until 1814, when the Society was restored by Pope Pius VII.[51] In light of these events, the nineteenth century saw the growth of anti-Jesuit sentiments; hostility towards Jesuits notably took root in France and Germany.[52] While Catholics targeted the order because of their high number of members and their powerful connections, the public associated them with falsity, moral corruptness and imperialism.[53]

In an atmosphere of anti-clericalism, the idea of Jesuits as practitioners of an ignoble religion was embodied in their architectural forms. The public hatred of the Jesuits merged with the idea of architecture as a symbolic form and crystallized in the term *Jesuitenstil*.[54] Hyppolyte Taine's *Voyages en Italie*, published in 1866, played a role in the propagation of these ideas, qualifying the mother church of the Society, the Gesù in Rome, as "pompeux" and "somptueux." According to Carlo Galassi Paluzzi, Taine acted as a bridge between the errors and prejudices against clericalism of the era of Enlightenment and the following era of critique.[55] The negative notion of a *Jesuitenstil* as such, was consequently documented in German encyclopedias. It was seen for the first

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[48] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "'Le style jésuite n'existe pas,' Jesuit Corporate Culture and the Visual Arts," *The Jesuits/ Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540 – 1773*, edited by J. O'Malley *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1999), 39.

[49] John O'Malley, "The historiography of the Society of Jesus: Where Does it Stand Today?" *The Jesuits/ Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540 – 1773*, edited by J.O'Malley *et al.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 8.

[50] Bailey, "Le style jésuite n'existe pas," 40.

[51] O'Malley, "The historiography of the Society of Jesus," 11-12.

[52] From time to time, one even comes across terms such as "jésuitisme" in nineteenth-century French literature. I have myself been surprised to stumble upon this term when reading *La Duchesse de Langeais*, a novel by Honoré de Balzac written in the early 1830s. Balzac's main character is credited for having said "[un]admirable jésuitisme," meaning a hypocritical lie.

[53] Evonne Levy, *Propaganda and the Jesuit Baroque* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 21-22.

[54] Ibid., 26-27.

[55] Carlo Galassi Paluzzi, *Storia segreta dello stile dei Gesuiti* (Roma: Francesco Mondini Editore, 1951), 13.

time in 1878, in "Hand-Lexicon des allgemeinnen Wissens." The concept was there described as a degeneration of the Renaissance, the excessive use of ornamentation and illusion to manipulate the masses.[56] This type of description continued into the twentieth century. In 1951, Carlo Galassi Paluzzi was the first modern scholar to argue against the idea of a Jesuit style. The idea further lost its validity with the publication of Wittkower's and Jaffe's *Baroque Art and the Jesuit Contribution* in 1972 in which they demonstrate that the Society's art was not uniform and in fact shows deep differences in artistic taste.[57]

While the *Jesuitenstil* relates to the seventeenth century, Jesuit art of the sixteenth century has generally been disregarded. For example, Wittkower and Jaffe's work on the Jesuit contribution in art does not consider the artistic production of the late sixteenth century and strictly focuses on the art of the seventeenth century.[58] Gauvin Alexander Bailey was the first to devote a complete book to Jesuit art produced during the last decades of that century. In contrast to most scholars, who concurred that Jesuits did not have aesthetic intentions at that moment and that they hired second rate painters, Bailey worked against this issue of quality and showed that the Jesuits hired the same artists as other patrons in Rome, such as cardinals and popes.[59] Before Bailey, Thomas Buser had also hinted at the fact that "the use of art by the early Roman Jesuits was part of a conscious aesthetic program, which they employed [...] in a propaganda battle with the Protestants over the significance of the martyrs."[60] According to Buser, a new formula for religious art was introduced with Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines*. Another scholar to have brought up the issue of a Jesuit style in the late sixteenth century is Leslie Korrick who questioned the reasons for which the appreciation of Circignani's frescoes went from praise, at the time of their unveiling, to their mid seventeenth century's

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[56] Ibid., 14.

[57] For scholars of the past decades, the notion of a Jesuit style was deemed wrong. Evonne Levy on her part argued that it has been, in art history, a very fertile concept. In her book, Levy explores the relation of propaganda to the Jesuit Baroque. Thomas Da Costa Kaufman is another scholar who does not completely turn his back to the idea of a Jesuit style. While recent scholars sustained that seventeenth-century Jesuit architecture was motivated by practicality alone, Kaufman argued that in some cases propaganda for faith was more important than practicality and pragmatism, so that the choice of forms was often made to express a statement that might be confessional or even political in thrust (see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Circulation East and West: Jesuit art and Artists in Central Europe, and Central European Jesuit Artists in the Americas," *Toward a geography of art* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, c2004).

[58] Rudolf Wittkower and Irma B. Jaffe, *Baroque Art: The Jesuit Contribution*, edited by Rudolf Wittkower and Irma B. Jaffe (New York: Frodham University Press, 1972).

[59] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 16.

[60] Thomas Buser, 424.

consideration as mediocre. She argued that Circignagni was deliberately creating a distinct style for his commission at San Stefano Rotondo, and for other Jesuit Colleges he decorated, that resulted in the creation of a visual aesthetic intended to promote effective Jesuit meditation and memorial exercises.[61] On the basis of her comparison of Circignani's style through different commissions, Korrick proposed that the possibility of a Jesuit style in the late Cinquecento should be considered.[62]

In the present thesis, I do not intend to resolve the debate concerning seventeenth century Jesuit art and architecture, or the Jesuits' artistic intentions during the 16th century. Because past analyses of Cavalieri's book depended on a reading of the frescoes, I choose to underline some of these debates in order to show how the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* might have borne pejorative views which might have restrained other art historians from analysing it. In order to acknowledge properly the existence of the book as a work of art with its own meanings, however, it is crucial to think in terms of its functions and of the audiences it would have targeted as a printed work. For instance, how would the book have functioned to disseminate ideas on Catholicism and its place in relation to Christianity while penetrating the realm of print culture in Rome? Another question pertains to the way in which the pictorial representations would have transmitted Catholic doctrines when inserted within a wider European context where the figure of the martyr was used as a vehicle through which religious and political ideas were evoked. Finally, it is necessary to stress that the analysis of the book as an autonomous work does not require a complete caesura with its original prototype; in precise viewing contexts, the association with the frescoes might have oriented the viewer's understanding of the book.

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[61] Korrick, 176-179. In his *Considerazioni sulla pittura,* Giulio Mancini, an early 17th century critic, understood that Circignani adapted his style to the needs of different commissions, as his Jesuit commissions exemplify. But it is rather Giovanni Baglione's later text, his *Vite de'pittori scultori et architetti* (published in 1642) which suppressed the nuances that Mancini had brought, that later became the primary source to which early twentieth-century scholars turned to in order to judge the contemporary appreciation of the frescoes.

[62] Francis Haskell, in *Patrons and Painters*, stated that in San Stefano Rotondo "s'élabora, pour la première fois, un style proprement jésuite." But he does not describe further this style (*Mécènes et peintres: l'art et la société au temps du baroque italien,* traduit de l'anglais par Fabienne Durand-Bogaert, et al (Paris : Gallimard, c.1991), 136).

CHAPTER TWO: MEANINGS FOR THE SERIES; POPE GREGORY XIII AND THE JESUIT MISSION

The German-Hungarian College is represented in one of the peripheral scenes of a woodcut featuring a portrait of Gregory XIII (1572-1585) in its center (figure 10).[1] This posthumous portrait shows the pope in a three-quarter view surrounded with forty-one square and rectangular boxes in which are engraved scenes or buildings referring to specific acts of his papacy. In this print by Marc'Antonio Ciappi, the presence of the German-Hungarian College – frequently referred to as the Germanicum – as well as other Jesuit Colleges, such as the English one in the adjacent box, points to the Pope's particular ties with the Society of Jesus as well as the particular support he offered the order. Not only did he reaffirm the Germanicum's goal to combat heresy in Northern Europe, but he also supported Jesuit missions elsewhere in Europe and overseas. The Pope's wish to defend the Catholic faith with an effectively trained clergy spurred him to open several other Jesuit schools.[2] This close association between the Society of the Jesus and the Pope is also reiterated on the frontispiece of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, as the inscription stresses the pecuniary support the latter allocated to the fathers of the German-Hungarian College for the commission of the cycle in San Stefano Rotondo.[3]

These associations have compelled me to explore how the meaning of Cavalieri's series might have been fashioned in relation to Gregory XIII's pontificate and his Early Christian revival project. The impetus for a reform of the Christian Church had existed long before Luther first initiated the Reformation in 1517.[4] It was thought that this reform could be accomplished by a return to the Early Church, which was closest to Christ; the apostles' era and their immediate descendants were considered Christianity's Golden Age.[5] It has been argued already that the fresco cycle functions to link late sixteenth-century Catholicism with the Early Church and to celebrate the role of Rome and the

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[1] Throughout the thesis, I will use the term "Germany" to designate German speaking territories, while acknowledging that "Germany" as a unified entity did not exist in the sixteenth century.
[2] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Gregory XIII."
[3] Part of the inscription of the frontispiece reads: "prout opera RR Patrum Societatis Iesu Collegii Germanici et Hungarici Moderator impensa S.D.N. Gregorii PP. XIII in Ecclesia S. Stephani Rotundi."
[4] Alexandra Herz, "Imitators of Christ: the Martyr-Cycles of Late Sixteeth Century Rome Seen in Context," *Storia dell'arte* 62 (1988): 54.
[5] Ibid.

papacy as the legitimate and historical pillars of Catholicism.[6] I will now look at how the printed reproductions spoke to Gregory XIII's Early Christian revival as well as to the role of the papacy within Christianity, as they entered the network of printed images circulating around the city of Rome. The analysis of the book in relation to other printed contemporary images will be led with a larger Roman audience in mind: an audience accustomed to viewing prints and to the changes occurring in the city.

In his analysis of the frescoes in San Stefano Rotondo, Gauvin Alexander Bailey argued that scholars have overemphasised the anti-Protestant character and propagandistic function of the paintings, positing instead that they relate above all to Gregory XIII's Early Christian revival. But the case of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* is different; because of its reproducibility, an evaluation of its meaning within the Early Christian revival context in Rome, as well as its analysis as an instrument of propaganda, are both highly relevant. Consequently, in the second part of the chapter, I will consider the specific function of the series with regard to a Jesuit audience. I will analyse the use of the printed book by the Jesuits in terms of their understanding of the act of martyrdom, their daily devotional habits, and most significantly, in relation to the German-Hungarian College's specific mission and the liturgical practices taking place within the church of San Stefano Rotondo. Finally, this chapter focuses on the meaning of the series as a repetition of motifs. Because they set the themes of the series, only the first and last print of the book will be discussed in some detail in relation to the two different audiences mentioned above.

Gregory XIII and the German-Hungarian College; The Martyr in a Politico-Religious Program

Allegedly, the German-Hungarian College was Gregory XIII's favorite college among all those he founded in Rome.[7] As already mentioned, the German College was originally founded in 1552 by Pope Julius III. Very quickly, it faced a precarious

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[6] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 107.

[7] Ibid., 113; Leif Holm Monssen, "Triumphus and Trophaea Sacra: Notes on the Iconography and spirituality of the Triumphant Martyr," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 51 (1982): 11.

pecuniary situation and had to deviate from its founding purpose, the housing of German seminarians, to admit Italian students. The result was that in the 1570s, more Italian boys than German ones lived in the College. The problem was solved by Gregory XIII (1572-1585) in the year 1573, when he placed the institution under the jurisdiction of the Holy See and gave it cardinal protectors. No longer did the Jesuits have to assume financial responsibilities. Through the *Postquam Deo placuit,* the Pope re-founded the College, reaffirmed its original anti-protestant character and evicted non-German students. The students now had to take an oath of obedience to the pope after six-months; this oath was the promise "that they would receive holy orders and then return to Greater Germany to strike out heresy."[8] The merging of the Hungarian College – which had been founded in 1579, with the bull *Apostolici muneris sollicitudo* – with the German College in 1580, was also the work of Gregory XIII.

The curriculum was also modified so that the students' education in the Germanicum would be more specific to the goals of the College. Some classes, which aimed at training the students to fight Protestantism in their own countries, were added to their education at the Collegio Romano. In these classes focusing on controversial theology and Sacred Scripture, seminarians were taught "to refute the errors of Protestantism."[9] The state of Catholicism in Germany was as much a concern for Jesuits as it was one for Pope Gregory XIII, who paid particular attention to the matter.[10] While pessimism about the survival of the Catholic Church in Germany was widely felt, Jesuits thought that they were the only ones suited to save Catholicism in those lands.[11] For Gregory XIII, who sought to win back territories lost to Protestant hands, the German-Hungarian College was a "powerful symbol of the pope's benevolent rule and his role as defender of the faith against heresy and paganism."[12] In the end, the Germanicum was as much a papal institution as it was a Jesuit one. Marc'Antonio Ciappi, in his biography of

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[8] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 113.
[9] Ibid.
[10] *Dictionary of Popes and the Papacy*, s.v. "Gregory XIII." Gregory's success in re-catholicizing lost territories was partial; his interventions in Poland and Lower Germany were his most successful.
[11] Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship; Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 12.
[12] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 112.

the Pope, published in 1591, also implied that during Gregory XIII's pontificate, the papal association held preponderance.[13]

The representations of many Jesuit institutions in the peripheral scenes around Gregory XIII's posthumous portrait promote the papal implications of these foundations. While the Jesuit mission was tied to proselytization, the Pope's founding of colleges run by the order can also be seen as an expression of his personal and active involvement in establishing effective mechanisms to secure the future of the Roman Catholic Church. The foundation of a Jesuit house in Japan in the fifth box from the right upper corner attests to his commitment. But other scenes also relate to specific acts of his papacy that are tied to the sacred past of the Church. For instance, the translation of the relics of Gregory of Nazianzus, represented in one of the larger rectangular spaces directly above the portrait, points to Gregory XIII's appropriation of the historic past to buttress the Catholic Church's association with Early Christianity. The larger space it occupies is proof of the particular importance of this event which had been the occasion for processions and festivities.[14] The emphasis on a sacred past, of which the relics of the fifth-century saint are emblematic, became a strategy to bring to the fore the ancient foundations of the sixteenth-century Catholic Church in order to secure its validity in the present, as it had been contested by Protestant Reformers.

Gregory XIII's fashioning of his papal persona was thereby elaborated according to a particular religious program that sought a clear association between the Reformed Catholic Church and Christianity's Golden Age. Print culture held a predominant role in the propagation of these ideas, as series of images eloquently expressed a continuity with the past. Gregory XIII's personal association with respected church leaders of the past is one of the lines along which he orchestrated his revival. By aligning himself particularly with the canonized Gregory the Great he created for himself a noble ancestry, a purely symbolic genealogy. This illustrious association was also necessary in his case because he had to compensate for his lack of a politically powerful and noble family to act as a

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[13] Ibid.

[14] In 1580, Gregory of Nazianzus' remains were transferred in a triumphal procession from Santa Maria di Campo Marzo to the Gregorian Chapel in St Peter's. For a description of the procession, see Leif Holm Monssen, "Triumphus and Trophaea Sacra: Notes on the Iconography and Spirituality of the Triumphant Martyr," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 51 (1982).

support system for his rule.[15] He also chose Gregory the Great because he had, in his own time, restored Rome to its spiritual magnitude.[16]

Establishing a clear association with one of the greatest leaders of the Christian Church further sustained Gregory XIII's place as legitimate heir in an unbroken line in the papal succession. An engraved broadsheet by Ambrogio Brambilla speaks to this continuity from the founding moments of the church to late sixteenth-century Catholicism, through the successive portraits of the popes (figure 11). Published by Claudio Duchetti under Gregory XIII's pontificate in 1582, as the year of the privilege indicates in the bottom right vignette, this broadsheet records the succession of reigning popes starting with Jesus Christ as a point of departure in the top left square of the grid. The portrait of Jesus, in the upper left corner, is followed by the portrait of Saint Peter, the first bishop of Rome. The sequence unfolds through twelve horizontal lines and twenty vertical lines, for a total of 236 portraits, until the profile of Gregory XIII, which concludes the genealogy in the bottom right corner. While all the popes in the eleven first rows look to the right, the apostle Peter looks to the left, as if speaking with Christ who designates him as the spiritual leader on earth. The role of the figure of the pope is thus embedded in this sacred authority as every succeeding pope is represented as a legitimate descendant from Christ.[17]

What is striking in this broadsheet is the degree to which the popes are all individualised, as each box is one variation of the same type. Each silhouette is wearing different garments and headgears, with great attention paid to physiognomic details. The interest in recovering the pope's likenesses among Christian antiquarians, will be discussed in Chapter Four. While Brambilla's grid would have been accessible to many buyers, individuals who could afford books, which were more expensive, would have been able to purchase Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's book of papal effigies entitled *Pontificum Romanorum Effigies* first published in 1580, and dedicated to Cardinal

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[15]Nicola Courtright, *The Papacy and the Art of Reform in Sixteenth-Century Rome: Gregory XIII's Tower of the Winds in the Vatican* (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 11.

[16] Ibid., 15. Contemporary accounts make clear that Gregory XIII wanted to restore Rome's religious life in a way evocative of what Gregory the Great had done for Christianity; the emulation of his mentor's practice of charity was one aspect of that. Moreover, one chapter of Gregory XIII's biography is devoted to his similarities with his canonized predecessor; MarcAntonio Ciappi, the author, even says that he wanted to be "suo vero imitatore."

[17] In 1585, a second state of the plate with the portrait of Sixtus V (1585-1590) was published by Duchetti.

Andreas of Austria (figure 12).[18] The book consists of 230 numbered engraved portraits of popes on the recto of the leaves with text on the facing pages. The final page which represents Gregory XIII is typical of the portraits we find on each page of the book. In contrast to Brambilla's boxes, where we can only see the head and the upper shoulders of the popes, Cavalieri provides half-length portraits. Gregory XIII is represented seated in profile, with his coat of arms engraved at the level of his head on the upper left corner of the image, and his name inscribed on a parapet below him. His name is also indicated above the frame and titles the page.

In Brambilla's series and Cavalieri's book, continuity from the founding of Christianity to the late sixteenth century runs through the figure of the pope. Each of them is ascribed the same importance as they occupy the exact same space, a small box or a page. The series of popes thus comes to be envisioned as the backbone of the Church, as each man represents a vertebra that has contributed to keep the structure upright through the centuries. The importance of the pope as an historical pillar of Christianity is also expressed in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* series, even if Gregory XIII is not the focal point. While well known sanctified martyrs are represented in the foreground of each image – like Saint Vitale who dominates the second plate (figure 2) – Early Christian popes play an important role in the background of the scenes. Overall, fourteen of them appear throughout the series as secondary figures. Moreover, the representation of a few bishops and cardinals emphasize the importance of members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. For instance in plates fifteen and sixteen of the book, illustrating the martyrdoms of Saint Cecilia and Saint Agatha respectively, we can observe a total of four popes being tortured in the background landscapes: Urbanus, Pontianus, Fabianus and Cornelius (figures 13, 14). When viewing one of the portraits in Brambilla's large engraving or Cavalieri's *Pontificum Romanorum Effigies*, one would have reflected upon the personality of the individual or the characteristics of his papacy. Yet, the tiny figures wearing papal garments who are being persecuted in the background scenes suggest their active participation in the struggle to uphold Christianity during these crucial years.

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[18] The book was published by Domenico Basa. A second edition appeared in 1585, and a third one in 1595 in which portraits continued through Clement VIII (the latter was published by Bartolomeo Bonfadino). In 1588, Cavalieri's copper plates were also used as illustrations for Antonio Ciccarelli's *Le vite de pontefici*, published by Basa (see Ruth Mortimer, Catalogue *of Books and Manuscript: Italian 16th-Century Books*, Catalogue no. 117).

The importance of the pope as a participant in this battle culminates in Cavalieri's final print, where a group of seventeen martyrs are represented, sixteen men and one woman in all, standing frontally in two rows in the foreground (figure 16). This group concludes the series and focuses on those who will fulfill the goals of Christianity in the future. While the figures of the group are not clearly identified, the purpose of this image is not to reflect upon the tortures of particular saints and martyrs, but rather to convey, as Leif Holm Monssen observed, an "assembly of all the saints representing 'en bloc' the militant Church during the Middle Ages up to the present age."[19] The inscriptions, above the image, and particularly the longer one below the image, explain that after the martyrdoms of Christianity's Golden Age the Church had abolished the cult of demons. After this great period of turmoil, fewer martyrs gave up their lives for the sake of the Church. The inscription also reads that these martyrs are nonetheless of great virtue. What follows is a list of the names of some of the martyrs represented.[20] Interestingly, two popes are represented and one of them is the focal point of the composition, dominating the group in its center, as if the leader of this militant crowd. The prominence of the pope works in lieu of the Crucifixion of Christ that occupies the central place in the first plate of the series (figure 15). This parallel between Christ in the first image and the pope in the last, is analogous to the transmission of the sacred rule from Christ to Saint Peter in the upper left corner of Brambilla's engraving, and that runs through all the succeeding popes (figure 11).

Turning to Marc'Antonio Ciappi's portrait of Gregory XIII, we can notice, directly below him, scenes that illustrate his intervention for the liberation of prisoners held captives by Turks as well as his acts of charity towards the Roman people (respectively in the fourth and fifth spaces on the row below the portrait) (figure 10). These representations point to the Pope's benevolent nature. But the majority of this acts of papacy – the opening of new institutions, the restoration of old chapels or the creation of new roads – are not represented by scenes in which human figures take part, but rather

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[19] Leif Holm Monssen, "The Martyrdom cycle in Santo Stefano Rotondo, Part I," *Acta ad archaelogiam et atrium Historiam Pertinentia* 2 (1982): 308.

[20] The first part of the inscription below the image is the following: "Postquam Beatissimi Martires, quos aurea illa Christianor tulit aetas, debellatis infer orum monstris, et sublato daemonum cultu, Ecclesiae Dei pacem sua morte pepererunt alij deinceps non numero sed virtute pares, omnibus pena seculis, pro religionis sanctitate decertarunt."

through the illustration of buildings. All these physical and concrete changes, represented by the buildings surrounding Gregory, demonstrate the extent to which the image of the Pope was intertwined with that of the city of Rome.[21] Nicola Courtright has argued that the image of the Pope and the image of the city – its physical fabric – were both seen as the Counter Reformation's "'exempla virtutis', the fonts from which universal reform flowed throughout the world."[22] The image of the Pope surrounded by his accomplishments at different locations in the city aims, on the one hand, to proclaim the well-being of the Church through visible manifestations, while on the other, to emphasise the reform of the Church leader himself. Because the decay and destruction of Rome's public monuments had traditionally been associated to the moral weakness of its rulers, Gregory XIII's artistic and architectural projects thus function as visible proofs of reform and salvation, and of the Pope's moral character.[23]

To a contemporary viewer, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have referred to Gregory XIII's personal emphasis on ancient martyrdom sites and relics, and his use of Rome's sacred past and any remaining tangible proofs of this past to accentuate the idea of continuity. The printed book conveys this connection mainly through its frontispiece (figure 17). In the latter, the only reference to the series being a reproduction of the cycle painted in the church San Stefano Rotondo, is an association with the Pope's rebuilding and renovation projects accomplished on ancient sites.

To make Rome's sacred past visible, the Pope's building and renovation campaign was expanded around sites where miraculous and mystical events had occurred; for example, he erected new churches where miracles had occurred and restored churches already built on sites of martyrdom. Because miracles and martyrdom had great importance for Gregory XIII's politico-religious agenda, he also emphasised sacred relics, moving some of them to new locations to bolster their cult.[24] Interestingly, he also

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[21]For instance, on Gregory XIII's work at the church of the Lateran, see Jack Freiberg, *The Lateran in 1600: Christian Concord in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16-23.
[22] Courtright, 9.
[23] Ibid., 18.
[24] Ibid., 19.

commissioned the writing of the *Roman Martyrology*, an official record of saints and martyrs.[25]

The importance of martyrdom sites is also grounded on past practices developed by precedent popes, mainly as a tool for propaganda in order to unite Christians and enhance papal power. The sacrificial martyr was of great emotional appeal to Christians, because it provided a concrete example of the outcome of steadfastness in faith. For instance, Pope Damasus (366-384) had been the first to promote and enhance the cult of the martyrs through the elaboration of an artistic program in the city's catacombs located on the outskirts of the city, which were popular places for meditation and prayer.[26] The historian Mariane Saghy argued that in response to rival Catholic factions, particularly the Nicene Christian factions, Damasus took the cult of the martyrs under papal control.[27] While capitalising on the sacrifice of the martyrs, the catacombs became his chosen ground for papal propaganda. He then broadcasted a call for unity under his leadership through epigrams he himself composed and had engraved on the tombs of chosen martyrs by his artist Furius Dionysius Filocalus.[28] Gregory the Great, Gregory XIII's symbolic ancestor, also used the patronage of the martyr, as he was drawn into a form of competitive devotion and of "competitive generosity," in order to sustain his own authority as pope.[29] Gregory XIII's use of the martyrs is thus analogous to cult practices developed during the early medieval period. After a rupture within the Christian Church, caused by the Protestant Reformation, Gregory XIII capitalised on the holiness and sufferings of the martyrs in order to promote the sacred foundations of sixteenth-century Catholicism.

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[25] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Martyrologies." The complete martyrology was published in 1584, but a provisionary version had already been published in 1582.

[26] See Umberto Fasola, "The Catacombs," *The Vatican and Christian Rome* (The Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, c1975). The catacombs themselves had developed mainly because of the devotion to martyrs who had been buried there in times of persecution; the Christians' confidence in the martyr's power of intercession brought them to seek burial close to the martyrs' tombs, in order to be guaranteed salvation and protection.

[27] Marianne Saghy, "*Scinditur in partes populus*: Pope Damasus and the Martyrs of Rome," *Early Medieval Europe* 9, no.3 (2000): 273-275.

[28] Ibid., 277.

[29] Conrad Leyser, "The temptations of cult: Roman martyr piety in the age of Gregory the Great," *Early Medieval Europe* 9, no.3 (2000). When he took on papal power, Gregory's authority as bishop of Rome was precarious, and his ascetic circle of companions were unwelcomed by the Roman clerical hierarchy. Leyser argues that it is because the martyr cult was used by different factions that Gregory the Great was involved in a form of competitive devotion and drawn into "competitive generosity."

After having reorganized the German-Hungarian College, the Pope assigned it the church of San Stefano Rotondo on the Celian Hill. The ancient foundations of the church stand out as one of the most important reasons for the donation to this particular College which had as its objective the revival of Catholicism in German-speaking lands.[30] The Pope's involvement with regard to San Stefano Rotondo was also not limited to financial support. In his biography of Gregory XIII, Marc'Antonio Ciappi underlines his active participation in the planning of the decoration scheme.[31] By saying that in "S. Stefano in particular [...] he had decorated completely with noble pictures of the most celebrated histories of the Holy Martyrs of Christ,"[32] Ciappi closely associates the Pope with the church and its iconography.

A series of Early Christian martyrdoms, the iconography of San Stefano Rotondo is thus closely related to Gregory XIII's interest in ancient structures, and sites associated with martyrs. It is therefore convenient to propose that the cycle in the church would have been part of his propaganda program centered on miracles, martyrdom sites and relics, all of which became worthy tools to advertise the Catholic Church's claim to purity and sanctity. Hugo Brandenburg has argued that San Stefano Rotondo was probably the first church to commemorate a martyr within the walls of the city of Rome. Because of its large dimensions, it would also have functioned as a stational church, one that would have served on feast days according to the liturgical calendar. These ceremonies uniting the whole Christian community would have been guided by the pope.[33] The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi,* then, carries an association with the church of San Stefano Rotondo as an Early Christian site which had served important cultic functions in the past, while evoking the Gregory XIII's reconstruction of commemorative martyrdom sites. The series

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[30] Another reason for assigning San Stefano Rotondo to a College with Eastern European connections is that it had once belonged to an order of Hungarian monks. About the donation of the church to an order of Hungarian monks, the "Ordine di San Paolo I Eremita," by Pope Nicolas V in the fifteenth century, see F. Banfi, "La chiesa di S. Stefano e il monastero dei frati Paolini al Monte Celio in Roma," *Capitolium* 28 (1953).

[31] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque,* 125.

[32] As cited in Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 126.

[33] Hugo Brandenburg, "Santo Stefano Rotondo in Roma," *Mededelingen van het Nederlands Institut te Rome* 59 (1999): 32-33. For Brandenburg, the large dimensions of the church are justified by this function; in the early medieval period, the church, with its second ambulatory running around the first, would have had the capacity to house a great portion of the Christian community. Brandenburg is therefore against Richard Krautheimer's hypothesis that the church was initially a pagan building (as I have pointed to in Chapter One) and argued that it had been built from the start with commemorative and sational functions in mind.

of martyrs, unfolding around the ambulatory and through the pages of the book, would consequently have evoked the "purity" of Early Christian times.

One more piece of information appearing on the frontispiece of the book would have suggested an association with Gregory XIII: the name of the artist, Nicolò Circignani, who produced the cycle at San Stefano Rotondo. Circignani, who had come to Rome to work on a number of Gregory's projects, became a major figure in the campaign to decorate the Vatican palace during Gregory's papacy. His name was associated with Gregroy XIII's patronage in the Tower of the Winds – the building of which had been commissioned by the Pope. In 1580, Circignani worked on the decoration of the Meridian room in the Tower, which, as the center piece, was devoted to the promotion of the Gregory XIII's papal rule through the commemoration of his reform of the calendar: through his reform of the calendar, the Pope had sought to unify the Christian "imperium." Also called the *loggia dei venti*, the iconography of the room consists in the representation of events from the Old and the New Testament linked to the winds and the control of natural forces. By evoking past rulers' guidance of the Church in times of crisis, like Saint Peter and Moses, by means of miracles, the power of the Church is visually extended far back in time.[34] Here Circignani employed Early Christian sources, particularly by quoting the iconography from the newly discovered catacombs in 1578, in order to present visual evidence of the institution's eternal past, and to illustrate a major trajectory of Gregory XIII's papacy.[35] Moreover, Nicola Courtright has posited that "Circignani continued to produce art tailored to the devotion of the Boncompagni pontificate in work outside the Vatican as well: he became renowned for his emotion-provoking martyr cycles in churches belonging to the Jesuit colleges in Rome."[36] A link between Circignani's work and the Pope's artistic projects which aimed to proclaim his Catholic Reformation and papal power could thus have been established by a Roman viewer; an association that may have been perceived on the frontispiece of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*.

Finally, the name of the dedicatee appearing on the frontispiece of the book, Stanislao Roscio, would on its part have pointed to Gregory's political and religious

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[34] Courtright, 69-76.
[35] Ibid., 98.
[36] Ibid., 70.

interventions in Northern Europe. Stanislao Roscio was dean of Warsaw and secretary to the king of Poland, Stefan Batory.[37] This dedication would have thus recalled Gregory XIII's efforts in the re-catholicisation of some territories, while underlining one of the few successes of his Reform in Poland.

My analysis of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* within the context of Gregory XIII's Early Christian revival has first emphasized the Pope's association with the German-Hungarian College. With this association in mind, I sought to demonstrate how a Roman viewer, who would have witnessed the physical transformations that Gregory XIII's revival prompted, may have understood the series as a means by which these changes were advertised, as it would have recalled his many projects around martyrdom sites. Also, I aimed to demonstrate how the viewing of other printed material might have impacted the way in which a Roman viewer could have viewed the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*. The concern with continuity in papal succession, as expressed by other printed material, may have been transposed onto Cavalieri's images, so that the subtle but constant presence of the figure of the pope throughout the series would have stimulated a viewer to think about his role in late sixteenth-century Catholicism.

In Jesuit Hands; The Martyr in the Germanicum

In the previous discussion, I have highlighted how Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have been understood by a local Roman audience as an object that promoted the Early Christian revival during Gregory XIII's papacy. I will now turn to a more restricted audience: Jesuits from the German-Hungarian College. These young men would have come from Germany and Hungary to study in Rome, but also from territories such as Sweden, Finland and Denmark.[38] I will investigate how the Jesuits made sense of the book and how they used it as a tool for devotion according to their philosophy of martyrdom.

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[37] Interestingly, a contemporary work by Cavalieri, his series of rulers, *Romanorum imperatorum effigies* (1583, 1590, 1592), was dedicated to the king of Poland himself, Stefan Batory (see Mortimer, Catalogue no. 119).

[38] Francesco C. Cesareo, "The Collegium Germanicum and the Ignatian Vision of Education," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, no.4 (1993): 832.

The first and the last prints of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* do not follow the conventions regulating all the other images of the series (figure 15-16). The first plate features Christ on the cross surrounded by a group of fifteen martyrs, distributed in two rows, most of whom, in the foreground, hold a laurel crown while looking at the Crucifixion. Among these saints, we can identify Saint Peter on the far left holding the keys to paradise, and Saint Paul with his sword on the far right, who points to Christ with his right hand. Other identifiable figures are Saint Stephen and a sanctified pope (Saint Cletus or Saint Clement) on Saint Peter's left, and Saint Lawrence and Saint Ursula on Saint Paul's right.[39] At the foot of the Cross, a baby tightly wrapped in a cloth and a small standing child represent two of the Holy Innocents. On the vertical arm of the cross the inscription reads: "tu vincis in martyrum."[40] This inscription reinforces the theme of the triumphant martyr who, as a follower of the Saviour, completes Christ's own victory.[41] On one level of understanding this inscription refers to the saints around Christ. On another, the inscription speaks directly to the Jesuit beholder. Furthermore, two figures at each extremity of the group look at the beholder instead of directing their gaze towards Christ like the other figures. The two men, by establishing eye contact, function as rhetorical figures to reinforce the Jesuit viewer's identification with the Passion of Christ.

The final engraving acts as a mirror to the first: a group of individuals, who we can identify as ecclesiastical members and kings, is depicted but without the Crucifixion in the center. In contrast to the first print, where the emphasis is on a group of saints holding martyrdom crowns, this last plate, which concludes the series of martyrs, demonstrates that it is now the participating members of the Christian hierarchy who will contribute to the glory of Christianity. The absence of Christ demonstrates that the martyrs become a substitute for the Holy, showing that through their persecutions, they, themselves, abolish demons and obtain peace for the Church.[42]

In accordance with the nature of their mission in the Germanicum, Jesuits would have identified with this ecclesiastical cohort led by the pope. By the end of the sixteenth

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[39] Leif Holm Monssen, "*Rex Gloriose Martyrum*: a Contribution to Jesuit Iconography," *The Art Bulletin* 63, no.1 (1981): 133.
[40] "In martyrdom you will conquer."
[41] Kirstin Noreen, "Ecclesiae militantis triumphi: Jesuit Iconography and the Counter-Reformation," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no.3 (1998): 699.
[42] Ibid., 702.

century, more than a thousand priests had already graduated from the College. Catholics and Protestants alike viewed the College as an instrument of the Counter-Reformation.[43] The Jesuit historian James Brodrick, in *The Origins of the Jesuits*, called it a "great powerhouse of the Counter-Reformation."[44] The observations of contemporary Protestant preachers are also noteworthy; in 1594, an anonymous Protestant preacher remarked, concerning the returning Jesuits and their work, that they were "sent home to restore the papistry to its former place and to fight for it with all their might."[45] Another said that "these young men are like their teachers in diabolical cunning, in hypocritical piety, and in the idolatrous practices which they propagate among the people."[46] Although these citations express a pejorative view of the actions of Jesuits, they nonetheless prove that returning students where active in many of these areas.[47] These new priests going back to Northern Europe would have taken the book along with them.[48] There is some evidence that the book travelled outside Italy. For instance, according to sixteenth-century manuscript sources, the iconography of San Stefano Rotondo, known through the book, was influential in France and Germany. It was apparently used as a model for the decoration of the nave of the Cathedral of Hildesheim in Germany. [49]

In the late sixteenth century, the Catholic understanding of martyrdom, particularly the Jesuit one, was grounded in the Early Christian vision of the act. Early martyrs "were seeking by their death to attain to the closest possible imitation of Christ's passion and death."[50] It is also interesting to note that the enemy the martyr was fighting was not the authorities per se, or the Roman Empire, but rather the devil himself. And it is this victory over the devil which likens the martyr to Christ's victory against Satan.[51] In the end, the persecutors must be seen as tools of Satan, and martyrdom as one of Satan's stratagem – the others being vice and pleasure – to break down the Christians'

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[43] Cesareo, 832.
[44] Ibid., 830.
[45] Ibid., 829.
[46] Ibid., 830.
[47] Cesaro also argues that the high number of priests who assumed positions of high rank upon their return is a testimony of the success of the College.
[48] Noreen, 692.
[49] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 129. The Cathedral was destroyed during World War II and rebuilt in the 1950s.
[50] W.H.C Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church, a Study of a Conflict from the Maccabees to Donatus*, as cited in Herz, 55.
[51] Herz, 55.

steadfastness in faith.[52] Christ's followers must then be prepared to take up the cross, and to follow the pattern of Christ's sacrifice, so that they may help redeem all mankind, both from sin and from death.[53] During Early Christian times and during the medieval period, worshippers had learned from the Scriptures – read or listened to in Church – that the suffering permitted by God was a good and not an evil, and that suffering in the name of faith was a way to participate in Christ's sacrifice and victory.[54] Therefore, one important aspect of the cult of the martyrs was the psychology of the martyr which was the acceptance of suffering for faith. Martyrdom was seen as the ultimate expression of the fullness of Christian life; whatever the torture may be, the victims endured it with resolution and sometimes with joy.[55]

The Jesuits recuperated this idea. In his book entitled *La peinture spirituelle*, published for the first time in 1601, the French Jesuit Louis Richeôme considers martyrdom as a moment of spiritual rejoicing. Through his narrative of the massacre of Jesuit martyrs on their way to Brazil, in the year 1570, Richeôme teaches Jesuits not to fear martyrdom but to consider it a gift. In a section entitled "La mort cause d'allegresse,"[56] he tells fellow Jesuits to be happy in front of their companions' death: "vous devez neantmoins estre joyeux, par la consideration de leur pelerinage, si heureusement terminé au quarantieme jour de leur course, & au jour de repos; sachans que leurs tormens & leur mort, ont esté une voie, & une porte glorieuse à la vie, & repos éternel."[57] Farther in his text, Richeôme articulates how death, as the most horrifying thing mortals face, becomes, through martyrdom, a desirable and the most honorable spiritual experience.[58]

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[52] Ibid., 56.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Helen C. White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963), 7.
[55] Ibid., 41-43.
[56] Louis Richeôme, *La peinture spirituelle ou l'art d'admirer aimer et louer Dieu en toutes ses eouvres et tirer de toutes profit salutere* (Lyon : Pierre Rigaud, 1611), 209.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., 262. Louis Richeôme writes : "le Martyre, & la virginité sont deux prerogatives de la loi de grace; semblables en plusieurs tritre premierement en merveille. C'est merveille de voir que par le martyre, la mort qui jadis estoit la chose la plus espouvantable entre les mortels, soit devenue plus souhaitable, que la vie mesmes, & que ce qui avait este ordonné pour ignominie , & severe paine, soit l'estoffe du plus grand honneur, & bon-heur, qui se donne en terre pour le ciel."

Jesuit spirituality in its essence was close to the Early Christian philosophy of martyrdom. The profound sacrificial emphasis in the Society's apostolate originates from Ignatius of Loyola's vision at La Storta when he heard Christ on the crucifix ask that he serve him.[59] This vision consequently prompted him to found the order, and to define its very goal of "following Christ through the greatest persecutions."[60] Moreover, in his *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius presents the act of martyrdom as the result of a conflict between God and the devil who seeks to "turn man away from God."[61]

The series of frescoed martyrs in the ambulatory of San Stefano Rotondo then points to the repetition, the renewal and the completion of Christ's victory by his followers, making the martyrs' lives and death admirable and worthy of emulation.[62] Because every member of the Society was instructed to fight for God, to serve Christ, his Church and the Roman popes, German students returning to their homelands would be expected to identify with the first martyrs of Early Christianity, and were ready to sacrifice their own lives if necessary.[63] The idea of triumph in the name of God is intrinsic to the series, as the martyrs' representations are aligned with the iconographic category called the "ecclesia triumphans." This category refers to early medieval representations of saints, and is manifested in the church of San Stefano Rotondo in the seventh-century apse mosaic in the chapel of Saint Primus and Felicianus (figure 18).[64] In this chapel, the two martyrs represented in mosaics stand erect and victorious on each side of a gemmed cross.[65] The frescoes of saints in the ambulatory are variants of this category, as each martyr is understood as a victor in reference to the victory of Christianity.[66] The whole cycle becomes a display of trophies of martyrial triumphs over the suffering of torture and death. This meaning, Leif Holm Monssen suggests, is sustained by the inscriptions below the first panel which come from the hymn "Rex

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[59] Leif Holm Monssen, "*Rex Gloriose Martyrum,*" 134.
[60] Jerome Nadal, as cited in Monssen, "*Rex Gloriose Martyrum,*" 134.
[61] Herz, 57.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Monssen, "*Rex Gloriose Martyrum,*" 134.
[64] Between the years 642-649, Pope Theodore had the relics of Saints Primus and Felicianus who had been persecuted under Diocletian, transferred from the catacombs on Via Nomentana, to the his chapel at San Stefano Rotondo. This is the first example of translation of relics into the city.
[65] According to Emile Mâle this gemmed cross reproduces the cross on Mount Golgotha in Jerusalem, and points to Theodore's link with Jerusalem and the East (see Émile Mâle, *Rome et ses vieilles églises* (Paris : Flammarion, c1942).
[66] Leif Holm Monssen, "Triumphus and Trophaea Sacra," 11.

gloriose martyrum."[67] This parity of meaning between the mosaics in Theodore's chapel and the frescoes around the ambulatory is notable for it sustains the Jesuits' way of looking at martyrdom in terms of triumph complicit with the philosophy of Early Christianity.

The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, through the medium of print, further publicized the faith and steadfastness of Catholics who had been persecuted for their beliefs.[68] Since martyrs were understood as imitators of Christ, Jesuits were inspired to imitate them. This is not to suggest that they would be voluntarily seeking martyrdom. Rather, they would only be prepared to carry it out if necessary according to this theological understanding. The Jesuits would thus see the cause of these early martyrs as being contiguous with their own, since these martyrs had been tortured by pagan heretics. The Jesuits returning to Germany were put in a similar situation because they were a minority among Protestant "heretics."

In addition to the idea of victory and steadfastness in faith attached to the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, the function of the book would have been oriented according to the liturgical practices that took place inside the church. Not only did Jesuits engage with images of saints and martyrs in churches, but the day to day lives and devotions of the young men in the Jesuit colleges were punctuated by active encounters with images of saints. For instance, each dormitory room in the Seminario Romano had its patron saint. Its image would be the object of devotion every morning; students would pray to the patron saint of their bedroom, facing the image on the wall, while on their knees, all aligned in rows.[69] In the church of San Stefano Rotondo, Jesuits would not only have meditated on the images in the context of their own private devotions, but would also have experienced them during processions led around the ambulatory.

Monssen described the experience of the cycle in the church as a "private stational procession, a festive celebration of the Eucharist including the singing of All Saints Litany."[70] The Litany of the Saints was developed in the Middle Ages and was probably

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[67] Ibid., 12.
[68] Noreen, 698.
[69] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 122.
[70] See Monssen, "Triumphus and Trophaea Sacra," 12-13. Monssen argued that the frescoe cycle was influenced by two types of procession which were popular at the time, the *entrata,* and the *corpus domini.*

the most well known type of litany in the Western church.[71] In 1570, uniformity in the Litany of Saints was imposed; in its development, the form had been prone to local variations, particularly in the saints invoked and in their numbers.[72] The litany, which derives its origins in the procession, is a repetitive prayer characterized by a leader's invocation of a list of divine titles or saints' names, each of them followed by a congregational response.[73] While he defined the cycle as a procession, Monssen stressed how this kind of representation diverges from standard types. Usually, the pictorial representation of a procession would establish a continuum of contemporary scenes evolving in the space of representation.[74] The spatial continuum established in the image would become the processional pathway. On the contrary, the procession here does not guide the viewer through space and through time. The beholder is the dynamic element uniting each of the frescoes through his bodily movement (figure 5, 6).[75] Michele Di Loreto's diary also confirms that this type of performance would have taken place in the church; in the first place, mass would be sung, and then students would process from east to north, while saying the litany.[76]

For Jesuits who went back to their homeland to fight Protestantism, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would not only have provided a source of inspiration and assistance in their mission, but would also have enabled a private saying of the Litany of the Saints – as much a private as a communal form of devotion.[77] After the Council of Trent, the litany continued to be a very popular form of devotion. For simple worshippers, it prompted a religious experience in a more affective and intelligible manner than did official services, mainly because people could engage actively in it. The litany did not just appeal to the common public, but extended to a large proportion of Church members

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Students of the German College particularly contributed to the private celebration of the *corpus domini* which took place in the parish where the church of Sant'Apollinare was located.

[71] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Litany."

[72] Michael D. Whelan, "The Litany of Saints- Its place in the Grammar of Liturgy," *Worship* 65 (1991): 218.

[73] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Litany."

[74] See Vittore Carpaccio's cycle of the life of Saint Ursula (1495), for instance, where her life unfolds temporally through the panels.

[75] Monssen, "Triumphus and Trophaea Sacra," 13.

[76] Ibid., 12.

[77] Whelan, 217.

whatever their status or background.[78] Therefore, the association of the litany with the printed book could have easily been established, even to an audience who had never participated in the processional litanies led in San Stefano Rotondo. When using the printed book, the repetitive prayer unfolds through the flipping of the pages as it follows the structure of the litany, opening with a triple invocation of Christ, followed by the successive invocation of Saints and finishing by various petitions.[79] The first plate of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* acts as a counterpart to the saying of the Litany: the Crucifix on the first plate, followed by images of saints, provide a visual support to the initial invocation of Christ and the successive invocation of saints. Therefore, one of the theological presuppositions upon which the Litany of the Saints is rooted, is, to use Michael Whelan's words, the "mediatory role of the saints in light of the role of Christ Jesus as the one mediator,"[80] a notion that Catholics sustained, but that the Protestant Reformed tradition rejected. Since Protestant liturgies were cleansed of any invocation of the saints, because the Reformers rejected the mediatory role of saints, this type of prayer came to be associated with Catholicism.[81] Finally, because the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* sustained a form of prayer that had been rejected by Protestants, we will see in the following chapter, how each of the images articulates Catholic concerns with regard to the status of the saint as mediator.

In the first section of this chapter, I demonstrated how Cavalieri's printed book would have claimed Gregory XIII's great importance in the Catholic restoration after the Council of Trent. The second part of my discussion posited that the series' significance is reinforced when placed in Jesuit hands. While the Society's philosophy of martyrdom relied on the Early Christian one, the Jesuit viewer would have seen himself as a successor to the represented martyrs. One of the reasons for which Bailey has partly dismissed the anti-protestant argument is that very few persecutions actually took place in Germany. But as the religious climate was very turbulent elsewhere, particularly in

[78] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Litany."
[79] Whelan, 219.
[80] Ibid.
[81] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., s.v. "Litany."

England, hearing and reading accounts of these events would have encouraged missionary Jesuits to prepare themselves for the worst outcome ever. For instance, illustrated chronicles of English persecutions of Catholics, *De persecutione Anglicana Epistola*, by Robert Persons William Allen, had been published in Italy in 1582 and 1583. In Rome, it also inspired the frescoes in the church of San Tommaso di Canterbury which belonged to the Jesuit English College.[82] Furthermore, Richard Verstegan's *Theatrum Crudelitatum Haereticorum Nostri Temporis,* which I described in the introduction, later appeared in 1587 (figure 1). The profusion of printed tracts and books, therefore, along with painted images of martyrs around the city of Rome, would have contributed to fostering a feeling of fear and anguish in the hearts of students returning to Northern Europe following their education in Rome. Consequently, when viewing the last plate of the series representing a community of martyrs, a Jesuit from the Germanicum must have considered himself a possible successor to the martyrs. When put in the context of private worship, the meaning of the series was actualised in the present. Past and present were figuratively bound together, establishing a consistent progression and close correspondence between the Early Christian past and late sixteenth-century Catholicism.

[82] Philip Benedict, "Of Marmites and Martyrs: Images and Polemics in the Wars of Religion," *The French Renaissance in Prints from the Bibliothèque Nationale de France* (Los Angeles: University of California, Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, c1994), 125.

CHAPTER THREE: THE IMAGE; SACRED BODIES ON THE VIEWER'S PATH

In the year 253, during the rule of Emperor Decius, a young and beautiful noble virgin named Agatha was tortured under the orders of the prefect Quintianus in Sicily. Because she refused to deny her Christian beliefs, her breasts were ferociously squeezed and finally cut off. During the night, Saint Peter appeared to Agatha and healed her body; miraculously, her breasts were restored. In the foreground of plate sixteen of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi,* the exact moment of her torture is represented (figure 14). Tied to a column, hands behind her back and gazing upwards, the young virgin is the focal point of the image as she is surrounded by executioners and onlookers witnessing the event. Behind her, a vast space populated by separate groupings of figures opens up. The vista is closed off by the silhouette of rocky mountains at whose feet are located a castle onto the left, and a small village to the right. Other martyrdoms take place in the valley between Agatha and the background scenery. In the upper right corner, Saint Tryphon is hanging by his feet from a tree: two executioners are burning his body with torches. Behind them, Saint Fabian is kneeling on the ground, with his hands brought together in a gesture of prayer, awaiting the moment of his beheading. Nearby, Pope Cornelius' and Bishop Cyprian's already decapitated bodies lie on the ground like a pile of dirty clothes. Finally, at the left of the image, Saint Abdon and Saint Sennen are attacked by lions, while three seated executioners and two standing witnesses impassively await their imminent deaths.

This plate is representative of the images forming the core of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as it was first published in 1583. In 1585, when a second edition of the book was published, four printed allegories of life, death, sin and grace were added to the thirty-one original engravings. Kirstin Noreen has argued that these allegories modified the contextual and liturgical significance of the San Stefano Rotondo frescoes, as they served to illustrate the Tridentine debate on sin and justification in order to stress the joint importance of faith and works in the process of salvation.[1] These allegories are to be

[1] Kirstin Noreen, "*Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*: Jesuit Iconography and the Counter-Reformation," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29, no.3 (1998): 706.

understood in contradistinction to Protestant beliefs where justification comes through faith and grace alone.[2] Noreen's conclusions are significant for they shed light on the meaning of the printed series, as it would travel around Europe.

The affirmation of Catholic dogmas is not limited to these four allegories, however. This chapter will look at the ways in which the martyrdom plates in themselves function pictorially to sustain Catholic beliefs and practices rejected by Protestant Reformers. The focus will be on the status of the martyr as a saint and intercessor before God, as well as the practice of pilgrimage. These ideas will be explored through an analysis of the body of the saint and the viewer's embodied experience of the image.

In order to throw light upon the particularities of the representations of martyrdom in the series, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* will be analysed in contradistinction to the Protestant martyrology as a form that emerged in the second half of the sixteenth century. To demonstrate how Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's engraved images of saints functioned to support Catholic Counter-Reformatory positions, I will underline the goals of the Protestant martyrological enterprise, conjointly with the Protestant understanding of the martyr, as well as issues pertaining to the use of sacred images for devotion, to the cult of saints and to pilgrimage. What justifies this comparison with the Protestant martyrology is the fact that it is precisely a Protestant book, John Foxe's *Acts and monuments*, which served as influence, or rather as catalyst for the production of many martyrdom cycles in Rome. Nicolò Circignani's cycle at San Stefano Rotondo – as well as his other series in San Apollinare and San Tommaso – has been seen as a response to Protestant martyrdom books, in particular John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.[3] Richard Verstegan, author of the Catholic book of martyrs discussed in the Introduction, had the opportunity to see a copy of the book in the Jesuit English College when he was in Rome.[4] But it is the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, rather than the frescoes, which forcefully entered the ongoing printed propaganda battle led against Protestants over the significance of the martyr. Moreover, Thomas Buser has argued that the rapid circulation of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* is

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[2] Ibid.
[3] Thomas Buser, "Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome," *Art Bulletin* 57 (1976): 428-429.
[4] Christopher Highley, "Richard Verstegan's Book of Martyrs," *John Foxe and his World*, edited by Christopher Highley *et al.* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, c2002),187.

proof that there was from the start a deliberate propaganda purpose to the frescoes.[5] What interests me is thus the reception of the book by an audience who could have been confronted with Protestant views, and who would have been trained to refute them. Therefore, my analysis will be led in relation to the initial intended viewer for the prints: a Jesuit man who would have known the principles of the 'composition of place' as expounded by Ignatius of Loyola in his *Spiritual Exercises* and who would have used the book as a devotional tool in relation to his own proselytising mission in Northern European countries.

Meditating on the Body of the Saint

"Non sunt condigne passiones temporis. Rom. VIII." This short quote appears in the uppermost section of Saint Agatha's martyrdom (figure 14). Taken from the epistle to the Romans, the phrase – translated into English as "The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing"[6] – points to the way in which martyrdom ought to be understood in relation to this image as well as throughout the book; the tortures represented are worth being endured, as they are but one benign obstacle before Heaven will be revealed in all its glory. While the system of letters and captions functions to identify each event represented in the images – as most of the figures in the background are very sketchy and summary – the inscriptions in the upper part suggest a biblical understanding of the images.

With clear and direct information, this plate, as well as all the others in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, is in tune with the demands of the Council of Trent. During the twenty-fifth session of the Council in 1563, questions pertaining to the Catholic doctrine on images, cult of saints and relics were raised. The official text pinned down the decisions that established the difference between idolatry and proper veneration of

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[5] Buser, 428.

[6] The full passage from Romans is: "The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us, (Rom. 8:18)." (As cited in Leif Holm Monssen, "The Martyrdom cycle in Santo Stefano Rotondo, Part I," *Acta ad archaelogiam et atrium Historiam Pertinentia* 2, (1982): 239.)

images.[7] Sacred images were seen as a necessary extension of the cult of saints, as long as they were not part of idolatrous and superstitious practices, and did not display nudity.[8] What was reaffirmed was the emphasis placed onto the prototype of the image, so that "by means of the images [...] we adore Christ and venerate the saints whose likeness they bear."[9] Images should thus function as aids to memory, providing examples to follow and visual proofs of miracles performed by the saints.[10] This decree was subsequently expanded upon by Catholic Reformers who further emphasized in their treatises the didactic task of painting which was to guide the illiterate. For instance, in his *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane* of 1582, Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti particularly stressed the importance of the orderly rendering of sacred stories or mysteries by separating different moments of the narrative. Paleotti's suggestions of using several panels or differentiated spaces in order to avoid the confusion of sight and intellect, and to clearly identify figures in a convening place when they are not well known, are echoed in the church of San Stefano Rotondo.[11] It should also be mentioned that the Cardinal approved and was even moved by the frescoes when he saw them.[12]

In addition to the proper use of sacred images and appropriate veneration of saints, the Council of Trent also reemphasized the sacred value of Church history that is informed by unwritten traditions. This point is important in the context of my analysis as the stories of the saints fit into this category. Whereas Protestants rejected the veneration of saints and the use of sacred images, they also dismissed non-scriptural accounts such as the legends of the saints. This led a group of Lutheran scholars to rewrite their own Church's history; the first volumes of that Protestant history, entitled the *Magdeburger Centuries*, were published in Basle in 1559. Because it is the Word from sacred Scriptures that is the sole channel for salvation, accounts which were not part of the official Scritpures, such as the saints' legends, were rejected.[13] In response to the *Magdeburger*

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[7] Robert Klein and Henri Zerner, *Italian art, 1500-1600: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 119-120.
[8] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 14.
[9] *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, as cited in Klein and Zerner, 120.
[10] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque,* 15.
[11] Klein and Zerner, 127.
[12] Leslie Korrick, "On the Meaning of Style: Nicolò Circignani in Counter-Reformation Rome," *Word and Image* 15, no.2 (1999): 170.
[13] Nicola Courtright, *The papacy and the art of reform in sixteenth-century Rome: Gregory XIII's Tower of the Winds in the Vatican*, (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 134.

Centuries, Pope Gregory XIII commissioned a history of the Catholic Church to the Oratorian Caesar Baronius. This response resulted in what came to be considered the most important Catholic history of the Church, the *Annales Ecclesiastici* (1588-1607). In opposition to the Protestant history, non-scriptural accounts were not discredited and only revised; the stories of the saints were only made to be more historically accurate.[14] As mentioned in the previous chapter, Gregory XIII had also commissioned the writing of the *Roman Martyrology*, testifying to the importance of the saints and their feasts.

Consequently, Protestant martyrological works emerged as a reaction against the *Golden Legends*, or hagiographic works in general, and to practices of worship related to saints.[15] The *Golden Legends*, or *Legenda aurea,* were written by a Dominican preacher named Jacobus de Voragine, Archbishop of Genoa, between the years 1258-1270.[16] Jacobus' motivation in the making of this project was to provide a "legenda," or a lectionary, of the lives associated with the various feasts of the liturgical year. His intended audience consisted of lay people, and his main purpose was to educate them through fabulous stories. As a popular preacher, he was aware of the needs of this type of audience and was able to adapt the material to their particular spiritual needs.[17] The special position of saints at the heart of Christian religious life during the Middle Ages cannot be overstressed, as they held a place of first rank in the canons of the Mass as much as in private devotion. For instance, when seeking spiritual graces, worshippers would go to the martyr's tombs in order to make their supplications; when favours were granted, the martyr's tomb would again be visited to offer thanks. The martyrs' intercession was thus very frequently called upon in times of spiritual and physical need.[18] The remembering and honouring of the saints, their consideration as intercessors before God and the use of their stories by preachers as guides and models, were deeply embedded in people's devotional lives. The saints' and martyrs' legends were thus used

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[14] Courtright, 133.
[15] The popularity of the *Legenda aurea* can be sensed by considering the number of imprints produced in the fifteenth century in comparison to the Bible: 156 imprints of the *Legenda*, as opposed to 128 imprints of the Bible (see Helen C. White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963), 26).
[16] White, 25.
[17] Ibid., 26.
[18] Ibid., 15.

as instruments of propaganda in order to convey the excitement of conversion and the subsequent missionary zeal of the convert.[19]

Because these stories embraced the miraculous and the ideal, Protestant Reformers rejected them. Fantastic stories and "monkish tales" were held as symbols of a corrupted medieval past and of the papacy. The *Golden Legends* also became emblematic of early medieval thought which venerated the saints. The book became a major focus of Protestant attack, and the Reformers sought to distance themselves as much as possible from it by writing their own history.[20] The Protestant martyrology is thus expressive of their own understanding of the meaning of the martyr. While the genre evolved in concert with the nuances of each Reformed tradition, we can nevertheless observe that the rejection of an ahistorical, heroic and holy martyr was a thread running through different traditions, and was part of a larger revival of the Christian sense of history.[21] In opposition to hagiographic writings, martyrologies were concerned with more than the lives of suffering martyrs; the new Protestant martyrology opened its object of enquiry to encompass the history of the confessors and their confessions, the martyrs and their messages and the teachers of the faith and their teachings.[22] The new emphasis was then placed, not just on death, but also on witnesses and the saints were "given to us as an example not for their deeds but for their faith."[23] Therefore, no attempts at imitating their actions should be deployed.

The Protestant martyrology developed in accordance with the understanding of the martyr as a human witness, as opposed to the Catholic understanding of the role of the saint/martyr as intercessory being. Catharine Randall Coats has argued that because of this divergence in the meaning of the martyr, we ought to consider the hagiography and the martyrology as two distinct genres of writing; the former tied to the Roman Catholic tradition, and the latter to the Reformed tradition. The most important distinction between the two genres is an insistence on the word of the martyr as well as the Word of God in

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[19] Ibid., 21.
[20] Robert Kolb, *For All the Saints: Changing Perceptions of Martyrdom and Sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1987), 4.
[21] Ibid. Ludwig Rabus, a Lutheran Reformer in southern Germany, was the first Protestant to produce a book of martyrs in 1552.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Sergiusz Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts: The Protestant Image Question in Western and Eastern Europe* (London: New York, Routledge, 1993), 35.

the context of the martyrology, as opposed to the hagiographic focus on the image of the saint. In life as well as in death, the hagiographic text displays a particular interest in the containment of the body and its spatial location. This is expressed by tracing a textual portrait of the ascetic, praying saint in life, and by situating his bodily remains, or relics, in terms of containers or location, such as reliquaries, shrines, or basilicas.[24] Randall Coats further described the hagiographic narration as being so tightly linked to images, that it should be considered not as a form of writing so much as a portraiture project, where the body of the saint is always a framed, contained body.[25]

In the words of Brigitte Cazelles, "parler du saint, c'est parler du corps."[26] With quiet and dignified resistance with regard to the corporeal punishments imposed as the focal point of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, the bodies of the saints are depicted as zones of sanctity. It is by insisting on bodily tortures imposed on the saints, always impassive, that the spiritual is designated, thus echoing written hagiographies where "le conteur décrit le non-corps (le spirituel) en insistant sur le corps."[27] The body's insensitivity to pain is then evidence that the corporeal state has been overcome.[28] Prostestant martyrologists, such as the Anglican John Foxe and the Calvinist Jean Crespin, by contrast, use the body strictly as a point of departure for speech. As we shall see, the emphasis of these authors is not so much on the physical presence of the martyr, but on the words they utter.[29]

Looking back at Saint Agatha, we can see how the composition functions rhetorically so that the viewer of the image becomes attentive to the status of the saint's body, in life as well as in death. Six figures surround the young virgin. To the right of the picture plane, an old man approaches the saint as he extends his hands in her direction; a youngster restrains him physically from getting closer to the saint whose breasts have already been cut off. On Agatha's right, an executioner bends down to pick up one of the breasts lying at her feet with a pair of forceps, while holding her tunic against her chest, probably in order to absorb the blood. Another group of three individuals can be noticed

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[24] Catharine Randall Coats, *(Em)bodying the Word. Textual Resurrections in the Martyrological Narratives of Foxe, Crespin, de Bèze and d'Aubigné* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992), 2-6.
[25] Ibid., 17.
[26] Brigitte Cazelles, *Le corps de sainteté* (Genève: Librairie Droz S.A., 1982), 48.
[27] Ibid., 54.
[28] Ibid., 74.
[29] Randall Coats, 8.

behind the bending man at the edge of the picture frame; the man turning his back to us is probably also keeping two other witnesses from approaching the scene.

Two figures in the scene – the persecutor on the left who picks up Agatha's breast, and the old man in the right foreground – function especially to direct our attention toward the body of the martyr. These figures function as what Louis Marin has called figures of the frame. They enunciate to the viewer "how to see," and further emphasize the demonstrative function of the frame.[30] These figures of the frame thus function rhetorically. The old man who reaches toward Agatha stresses the idea of touching the saint. The executioner who picks up a fragment of her body while establishing eye contact with us seemingly invites us to touch the relic. Correspondingly, Cazelles has stressed the great interest in the fragmented body in the context of hagiographic writing: "le morcellement...[est] distribution et pierre angulaire d'une architecture prolongeable à l'infini."[31] The body of the saint may be dismembered, but this does not negate its overall holiness, as each part shares its power. By the dispersal of the relics, zones of holiness are engendered rather than dissipated.[32] The fragmentation of the body of Agatha in the foreground thus acts as a direct visual reference to the cult of relics that developed in relation to the cult of saints. Again, this reference is established through the executioner who offers us her breast as if it were a relic, while the old man by his movement toward her body recalls the pilgrim's desire to go to the saint, to approach the tomb or relic, to see or possibly also to touch the saint's remains. These figures also metaphorically embody the tensions that are inherent to the cult of relics: distance in proximity. On the one hand, the old man embodies this tension as he is physically close to Agatha but incapable of getting closer to her because he is held back. On the other hand, the frame of the picture also bears in itself this tension, as it functions to separate the beholder from the saint's relic held in the executioners' forceps, by re-emphasizing the boundaries of the representational realm.

Figures of display telling us "how to see" are not present in each plate of the book. In these cases, the body of the martyr itself functions as a demonstrative agent. For

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[30] Louis Marin, "The Frame of Representation and Some of its Figures," *The Rhetoric of the Frame: Essays on the Boundaries of the Artwork*, edited by Paul Duro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996), 83-84.
[31] Cazelles, 58.
[32] Randall Coats, 19.

instance, in plate twenty-nine, the very position of the fragmented bodies at the threshold of the image is itself an invitation to touch (figure 19). This print also points to a particularity of the series: a concern with reuniting the body by keeping dismembered body parts within the boundaries of the frame. This concern with the depiction of the saint in its integrality is analogous to the importance that hagiographic writing places on locating spatially the body after its death by pointing to the location of relics in shrines or basilicas. Saint John and Saint Paul lie in the very foreground, both decapitated, with their heads placed in close proximity to their bodies. This is significant, for only does beheading, in hagiographic legends, provoke the saints' death. The re-unified body also underlines the fact that the body may be fragmented, but the different parts may also miraculously come back together, such as heads coming back to their bodies.[33] For instance, in the seventh plate, Saint Dionysius walks away holding his head in his hands (figure 20). This also emphasizes the importance of the head, and upper body parts, as the *locus* of the sacred; by carrying his head, Saint Dionysius stresses the importance of keeping it close to his body. The pagan effort to dismember the body here remains unsuccessful.

The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* plates are thus constructed in contradistinction to the emerging Protestant martyrological tradition, as they display a concern with seeing, touching and situating the body of the saint, which stems from hagiographic writing. In Jean Crespin's martyrology, by contrast, the corporeal body, in the form of pictures, is suppressed in order to reinforce the idea that it acts only as a channel through which instructive words are spoken. Crespin was a Reformed editor from Geneva whose contribution to the history of the Reformation in the sixteenth century was his *Histoire des martyrs*. Through twelve volumes published from 1554 to 1597, Crespin wrote the contemporary history of the Calvinist Church. He also went back to the martyrs of the Early Church in order to recover the purity of the Christian foundations; he sought to demonstrate how the Catholic Church had deviated through the medieval period and that the Protestant martyrs were the direct descendants of the early martyrs. While Catholics and Protestants both traced an analogy with the Early Church martyrs, the point on which their approach differed was in the Protestants' rejection of them as holy beings to be

[33] Cazelles, 55.

worshipped. His martyrology was never published with illustrations, which certainly prevented the representation of the body from being imbued with a divine character. The emergence of martyrologies as imageless books is in accordance with the Protestant rejection of the use of devotional images. The Protestant position on the issue of images was far from homogeneous, as it varied from one Reformed tradition to the other, as well as throughout one Reformer's own thinking and throughout history.[34] In contrast to Luther's more tolerant position, Calvin's attack on Gregory the Great's argument that images are books for the unlearned was ferocious. For Calvin, images and idolatrous cults altogether belittled and denigrated the glory of God. He was therefore opposed to attempts to enclose the distant and transcendent holiness of God in visible material forms.[35]

Jean Crespin's martyrology does not consist of his own narrative of the martyrs' histories, but rather in the gathering of textual fragments ranging from records of trials and letters, to eyewitness accounts of the martyrdoms. As opposed to the way in which the frame works in Cavalieri's plates to reunite the fragments of the saints' bodies, Crespin's gathering of written material has the effect of reconstructing the martyrs' bodies in a textual form. In the words of Catharine Randall Coats, Crespin's "particular formulation is predicated on the collected corpus of testimonies becoming the *corps*, the corpse, of the dead who live again through their word."[36] For Catholics, the cutting of the saint's body in various pieces and the consequent dispersal of the body was seen as a triumph over space due to the enclosed presence of the saint in the relic. Protestants, for their part, did not acknowledge and venerate enclosed presence in this way; because fragments of martyrs' bodies could not function in the sense of relics, the re-assemblage of the body in its wholeness, as a speaking self from which the Word emanates, was required. It is therefore textually, through the union of textual fragments, that the body of

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[34] Daniel W. Hardy, "Calvinism and the Visual Arts : A Theological Introduction," *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, edited by Paul Corby Finney (Michigan; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company Grand Rapids, 1999), 8.
[35] Michalski, 64.
[36] Randall Coats, 58.

the martyr in Crespin's work is resurrected. The body recreated is not a corporeal form, but is rather displayed in the speech uttered while still alive.[37]

These two opposing views about the body also relate to the Eucharist dispute, which is linked to the image dispute, as it questioned the idea of the Real Presence.[38] While Catholics believed in Transubstantiation, the presence of Christ in the Host, Protestants rejected this idea. Correspondingly, the reading of the hagiographic text has been related to the act of the Eucharist, where the body displayed is meant to be received as sacred food, to be assimilated and digested.[39] In the plate depicting Saint Agatha, the idea of sacred Communion resonates in the visual offering of a part of her body by the executioner. Communion is also suggested through the positioning of the martyrs at the very threshold of the images. As each image presents more than one martyrdom, it is thus the first holy body in the foreground that is offered to the viewer, and that is received as "sacred food." By meditating upon the sufferings of the martyr, by feeling Agatha's pain for instance, the viewer enacts metaphorically a sacred communion with the saint.

The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*: An Invitation to Pilgrimage

I have up to now primarily paid attention to the focal point of the compositions, the saints represented at the threshold of the images. I will now turn to the viewer's experience of the plates as a whole. Randall Coats has described Jean Crespin's martyrology as a "textual body, one composed not of physical members, but rather of literary fragments; recorded testimonies, recited sermons, recuperated texts."[40] While the words of the martyr and the description of its experience is the focus of the work, the body of the martyr becomes a textual body with which the reader speaks. This emphasis on the words aims to directly counteract the Catholic reliance on meditation by making salvation directly accessible through reading, for there were no places to visit, no holy

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[37] Ibid., 61-62. On Crespin's martyrology, also see Catharine Randall Coats, "Reconstituting the Textual Body in Jean Crespin's 'Histoire des martyrs' (1564)," *Renaissance Quaterly* 44, no.1 (1991).
[38] On the history of these two theological questions, the image and the Eucharist, see Michalsky, 169-180.
[39] Randall Coats, 13.
[40] Ibid., 17.

bodies to touch and adore.[41] In contrast, visiting, touching, moving from one holy place to another is an idea intrinsic to Cavalieri's images. Each of them invites us to walk through the image and to visit single martyrs or groups of martyrs.

Returning to the image of Saint Agatha's martyrdom, the beholder is compelled to walk through the landscape punctuated by sites of martyrdom. While a single frame unites different occurrences in distinct locations, the image entices the viewer to embark on a spiritual pilgrimage. Walking through the image punctuated by specific sites all identified by letters and captions, the viewer becomes a pilgrim who overcomes spatial distances to visit relics of martyrs. For instance, Agatha was martyred in Sicily, whereas Saint Fabian, represented in the background, was martyred in Rome. By contrast to Protestant Reformers, the Catholic Church had reaffirmed the position of saints and martyrs as intercessors before God and pilgrimage, as it was related to the cult of saints and relics, continued to be practiced. In his four great tracts of 1520, Luther showed his antipathy toward the beliefs and practices associated with the veneration of the saints. The major charge against the cult of saints, as is well known, was that of idolatry and the abuses to which it led.[42] In his condemnation of pilgrimage, of the worship of saints and their "lying legends," Luther stated that the veneration of holy people and holy sites were offensive to God and were actions which undermined Christian piety.[43] He argued that these practices responded to the commandments of men, rather than God, that they did not glorify God, but rather served to exalt men before God, and finally that they distracted people for performing what was assigned by God.[44] This negation of the veneration of the saints is thus in keeping with the condemnation of the veneration of images, as they were both contrary to God's Word and in conflict with "God's working through his chosen instrument, the Word, in the world."[45]

With the help of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi,* the viewer can re-enact a spiritual pilgrimage, a type of pilgrimage that had developed for those who could not go to sacred sites. For instance, texts on the Passion of Christ – such as the fourteenth-century *Meditationes vitae Christi* – prompted the viewer to relive it by mentally

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[41] Ibid., 20.
[42] White, 77-78.
[43] Kolb, 12.
[44] Ibid., 17.
[45] Ibid., 13.

visualizing its different stages through meditation.[46] This notion was particularly important in the late medieval period, when the Passion of Christ was re-enacted within the walls of monasteries; friars and nuns would move through seven specific places in the monastery and spiritually visit relics and live a spiritual experience of pilgrimage.[47] Nina Miedema has argued that while this type of spiritual pilgrimage originated in convents, the existence of early printed texts proposing spiritual pilgrimages is proof that the audience went beyond the monastery.[48] In a very similar manner, the viewer who goes around the cycle within the church of San Stefano Rotondo is invited to visit different relics in different sacred sites. He is invited to mentally transpose himself within these sites as he navigates through the images. The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* thus becomes a device through which an individual can privately relive a pilgrimage through martyrdom sites. He does not need to go through the complete series; he can choose to experience only one of them at a time, as a single image provides a multiplicity of sacred sites, and of sacred lives upon which to meditate. The relation of the book to pilgrimage particularly echoes Ignatius of Loyola's conception of life; in his *Spiritual Exercises,* Ignatius describes life as a journey, or as a pilgrimage. In his autobiography he pushes the comparison further by describing his own life as a pilgrimage, as it had been punctuated by physical obstacles and instances of spiritual revelations.[49]

In the end, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* makes visible much of that which the Protestant imageless martyrology, such as Crespin's, sought to negate. Cavaleiri's plates suggest a martyr/saint who is an intercessor before God and sustain practices that have been abolished by Protestants: the cult of relics and of pilgrimage. While Crespin wished that his reader be inspired only by the words of the martyrs, Cavalieri's book, by contrast, compelled the viewer to have an embodied experience of the images. This experience, as we will see shortly, is not only determined by the Catholic beliefs articulated by the bodies of the martyrs and their presence in the space of the representation, but is also

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[46] Nina Miedema, "Following in the Footsteps of Christ : Pilgrimage and Passion Devotion," *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in the Late-Medieval Period* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), 76.
[47] Ibid., 86-87.
[48] Ibid., 89.
[49] Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship; Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 25.

tightly linked to the rules for meditation that were laid down by Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises*.

Reconstructing the Image: A Comparison with John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*

With only a scanty drapery covering his genitalia, Saint Lawrence gracefully reclines on a grill bursting with flames (figure 21). Three men stoke the fire which, very strangely, does not engulf the martyr's body. Serene, Lawrence calmly gazes upwards as he gestures toward the sky with his right hand. In the midst of his torture, the legend says, Saint Lawrence asked the prefect of Rome that his body be turned since he had already been broiled enough on one side. Saint Lawrence's death occurred in the year 258 under the emperor Valerian.[50] The miraculous endurance of the saint's body and his quiet agony stands in sharp opposition to the humanity of the Protestant martyrs represented in John Foxe's *Book of martyrs*. A juxtaposition of Cavalieri's saints to Foxe's martyr images will sharpen our understanding of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as a devotional tool which not only reiterates the saint's status as intercessor and the practices linked to the cult of relics that were repudiated by Protestants, but also functions as a series which responds to the requirements of the *Spiritual Exercises*. The engravings can thus be considered as the foundation upon which the viewer can fashion a corporeal experience of meditation. A close look at Foxe's images will serve to elucidate how the Italian plates served as a Catholic response within the printed propaganda battle over the significance of the martyr, while reflecting the centrality of image-making in Ignatian spirituality.

In the previous sections I have discussed the development of the Protestant martyrological tradition as an imageless one. But unlike Jean Crespin's *Histoire des martyrs*, John Foxe's work was illustrated from the beginning.[51] Popularly known as the

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[50] Saint Lawrence was a deacon of Pope Sixtus II who had been condemned to death in 258. While Sixtus II had predicted to Saint Lawrence that he would soon follow him, the latter sold all the Church's possessions and gave the money to the poor and the sick. The prefect of Rome, when he heard of Saint Lawrence's actions, claimed the treasures of the Church for himself. When Lawrence presented the people to the prefect as being the true treasure of the Church, he condemned Lawrence to death (see John Delaney *Dictionary of Saints*, 2nd edition, s.v. "Saint Lawrence").

[51] On John Foxe's life and personality, see James Frederic Mozley, *John Foxe and his book* (London: Society for promoting Christian knowledge, 1940).

Book of Martyrs, John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* was published in 1563 in London by the printer John Day.[52] An active and well-known Protestant leader, Foxe initiated his work in 1554 while he was in refuge on the Continent.[53] Established in Basel, he had begun to collect material on the Marian persecutions from 1555. Only after Queen Mary's death in 1558 did he return to England.[54] The text of the 1563 edition filled approximately 1800 folio pages, containing fifty-six illustrations. Among them forty-seven are large detailed scenes referring directly to the text and were newly commissioned for the book.[55] In the second edition, which appeared seven years later, in 1570, the total number of woodcuts amounted to one hundred and five – some of which are repeated more than once – within a volume of about 2300 folio pages.[56]

The images in Foxe's work spoke directly and persuasively to the reader/viewer. Through this visual record, along with the verbal one, Foxe contributed to the molding of the Protestant mind.[57] The martyr images we find in the book are of two types. The first kind displays one or a few martyrs at the stake, and the other consists in larger woodcuts which are historically specific and intimately tied to the text. In the first category the images are generic woodcuts, repeated more than once throughout the book without referring back directly to the event in the text. Margaret Aston posited that these stylized cuts acted as visual reinforcement. In a manner that is distinct from the larger and more descriptive images, these images functioned as mental references for the beholder,

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[52] The complete title is the following: *Actes and Monuments of These Latter and Perillous Dayes, touching matters of the Church, wherein ar comprehended and described the great persecutions and horrible troubles, that have been wrought and practised by the Romishe Prelates, speciallye in this Realme of England and Scotlande, from the yeare of our Lorde a thousande, unto the tyme nowe present. Gathered and collected according to the true copies and wrytinges certificatorie as wel of the parties them selves that suffered, as also out of the Bishops Registers, which wer the doers thereof.*

[53] For a concise account of the emergence of martyrological narratives in England during Henrican Protestantism, see Alec Ryrie, "The Unsteady beginnings of English Protestant Martyrology," *John Foxe: An Historical Perspective*, edited by David Loades (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1999).

[54] White, 132-135.

[55] James A. Knapp, "Stories and Icons: Reorienting the Visual in John Foxe's Acts and Monuments," *Illustrating the Past in Early Modern England. The Representation of History in Printed Books* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 133.

[56] Knapp, 134-35. Before the turning of the century, the following editions of Foxe's book appeared: 1570 (second, augmented edition), 1576, 1583, 1587 (after his death), 1596.

[57] Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram, "The Iconography of the *Acts and Monuments*," *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, edited by David Loades (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1997), 66-68.

implanting a generic image of martyrdom in one's memory.[58] I will compare Cavalieri's images to Foxe's second category of images, the larger historically specific woodcuts, as they tend to focus on one identified individual.

In a moment of intense condemnation of visual images, the choice to illustrate such a work was particularly audacious. The book was indeed subject to attacks because the images' potential was deemed dangerous.[59] The circumstances that allowed the project to include so many illustrations are worthy of a few words. Being the unique major martyrology to be illustrated, Foxe and John Day were going against a movement forbidding the illustration of religious books. But it should be mentioned that the first generation of the Reformation was characterized by an illustrative tradition supported by Luther in Germany. As noted above, Luther was not totally antagonistic to the image question as he had seized the image's potential in the context of propaganda. The inclusion of printed images in pamphlets is an expression of this.[60] Woodcuts were particularly adopted in the project of caricaturing the Roman Catholic Church where the pope frequently personified the antichrist.[61] Luther's own German translation of the Bible published in 1534 was also an illustrated work. According to Luther, printed images did not carry the same dangers as larger painted ones; printed illustrations in pamphlets did not invite adoration in the way that images disposed in a church would. Controlling meaning also was easier; text was used conjointly with the image in order to keep idiosyncratic interpretation to a minimum.[62] In the end, what Reformers sought to limit was the direct action of the image on the minds of the faithful; images always had to be balanced with verbal instruction.

According to Andrew Pettegree, the inclusion of illustrations in Foxe's book might be explained by the fact that it was published at a very favorable moment in the

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[58] Ibid., 80. Aston and Ingram point out that a third group of "marker" woodcuts appeared in 1570; these were large illustrations used to introduce different sections of the book, as it grew to larger proportions.
[59] Ibid., 69-70.
[60] On the use of woodcuts to spread Lutheran ideas to illiterate masses, see Christiane Andersson, "Popular Imagery in German Reformation Broadsheets," *Print and Culture in the Renaissance: Essays on the Advent of Printing in Europe,* edited by Gerald P. Tyson *et al.* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986). Andersson particularly stresses how familiar images known before the Reformation were adapted in polemical broadsheets combining text and image to support Reformed ideals.
[61] John Dillenberger, *Images and Relics: Theological Perceptions and Visual Images in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 17.
[62] Margaret R. Miles, *Image as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture.* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 115.

English book trade. The *Acts and Monuments* were published at a critical time when the book trade had acquired the adequate maturity – and the skills it lacked during the first generation of the Reformation – to assume a project of this amplitude. This was also a moment of tolerance toward images, before the iconophobia of continental Calvinism had reached England.[63]

An interesting example of a strategy that was later used by a Calvinist to address pictorially the issue of martyrdom can be seen in Theodore de Bry's illustrations for his *Grands Voyages*, published from 1590 to 1634.[64] The books consist of travel accounts to the Americas written by Protestants, all of whom were ferociously anti-Hispanic and anti-Catholic. Through written accounts and images, De Bry brought to the fore all the atrocities enacted by the pope in the New World.[65] In order to speak of Protestant martyrdoms he employed "le plus vaste détour allégorique qui soit: les Indiens d'Amérique prennent la place des huguenots persécutés en France et des protestants martyrisés de toute l'Europe."[66] Cultural, religious, and geographical distance, all worked to temper emotion, and limit identification.

The *Martyrdom of John Hooper* is one of the large historically specific illustrations that was part of the first 1563 edition of Foxe's book (figure 22).[67] With heightened realism, John Hooper is represented as he burns on a pyre. Below him, we see his left arm, which had fallen off when he knocked his chest with his fist. The execution scene is surrounded by a dense crowd. In the foreground and closest to us, are Hooper's persecutors; on the left side of the picture, authorities are on horseback, while on the

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[63] Andrew Pettegree, "Illustrating the Book: A Protestant Dilemna," *John Foxe and his World*, edited by Christopher Highley *et al.* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 134-135; On iconoclasm in England, see Dillenberger, 183-186. Iconoclasm in England resulted in the loss of art for the general public, expect for upper classes and the crown. The visual arts, in opposition to other Protestant territories on the continent, became largely absent from the lives of the people, whether public or private. Dillenberger explains that it is because of political policies that were normative for the entire land. On the contrary, in European lands, there were no political structures in which a total anti-image policy could win.

[64] The project was completed by Theodore de Bry's sons in the seventeenth century.

[65] Michèle Duchet, "Le texte gravé de Théodore de Bry," *L'Amérique de Théodore de Bry : Une Collection de voyages protestante du XVIe siècle*, sous la direction de Michèle Duchet (Paris : Éditions CNRS, 1987), 10.

[66] Frank Lestringant, *'Le théâtre des cruautés des hérétiques de notre temps' de Richard Verstegan*, texte établi, présenté et annoté par Frank Lestringant (Paris: Éditions Chandeigne, 1995), 43. The particular sequence of his *Grands Voyages* to which it applies is Bartolomé de Las Casas' *La Destruction des Indes*

[67] About the plannification of the illustrative scheme by John Foxe, and variations through the editions see Ruth Samson Luborsky, "The Illustrations: Their Pattern and Plan," *John Foxe: An Historical Perspective*, edited by David Loades (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 1999).

right, another man is busy activating the pyre. Within this fabric of individuals we can see some members of Hooper's community: the martyr John Hooper emerges from that circle. Because he is united with the group, Hooper's body does not acquire a sacred status. He is rather represented as one among others, as a person with whom members of his community could have identified.

In opposition to this very populated print, figures parsimoniously fill the representational space of Cavalieri's pictures. The identity of the onlookers and witnesses, as well as their allegiance, most often remain nebulous. We have indeed seen an old man who was compassionately gesturing toward Saint Agatha (figure 14), but it is fair to say that in the majority of cases, there is no sense of a sympathetic community as can be seen in Foxe's book. When there are witnesses, such as around Saint Cecilia's marmite, they do not display an emotion that allows us to identify them as grieving Christians, or pagans in accordance with her torture (figure 13). This works to emphasize the uniqueness of the saint, to set her body apart from the others represented in the image and finally to create a sacred distance between saint and beholder.

The martyrdom of Saint Lawrence is very characteristic of the series as he is surrounded solely by his executioners. The Early Christian meaning of martyrdom, as it was recuperated by the Jesuits in the late sixteenth century, is expressed here. The direct conflict between the martyr, imbued with the forces of the Holy Spirit, and the forces of evil, as personified by the persecutors, is represented. Saint Lawrence's steadfastness in faith allows him to triumph as his body seems miraculously to endure the tortures imposed by the flames. The inclusion of the prefect of Rome on the left, who points to Saint Lawrence in a gesture of condemnation, further emphasizes this conflict. John Hooper on the other hand is consumed by active flames, while the woman weeping in the surrounding crowd as she witnesses his death reemphasizes the status of the martyr as a witness to faith who is still tied to a specific community.

In Foxe's book, the visual representation of the martyrs makes clear that what is to be glorified is not a specific individual, but rather the idea which lay behind the events, and that is the True Church. Moved by the images, it is the virtue of the Church martyrs sacrificing their lives that the reader/viewer must embrace.[68] This virtue is particularly

[68] Knapp, 137.

expressed in the course of historical events, this is to say the moments of persecutions, from which the spirit of the True Church reveals itself. In other words, martyrdom is the visible through which the invisible manifests itself.[69] Foxe was vehemently denouncing the idolatry of the Roman Church and his woodcuts as such are constructed in order to counteract the idea of idolatry. His martyrs participate in precise moments of Christian revelation, moments when the atemporal truthfulness of the church is brought to the surface. For Foxe, it is this precise way of conceiving the martyr, as a vehicle for Christian revelation, that keeps the image from being idolatrous; it is not the victim of the persecutions who is the focus of the image, but the idea to which the martyr points. The martyr points toward the future, the moment when the truth of Christ's teaching is revealed and made whole.[70]

Most of Cavalieri's saints, when they are depicted alive, are caught in a moment of religious ecstasy; for instance the burning Saint Agnes looks up to the sky as she connects with the Holy Spirit (see Circignani's fresco of Saint Agnes, figure 9). In his narrative, John Foxe, and previously Rabus and Crespin, had no interest in the connection of suffering and religious ecstasy. As Knott has expressed it, his "protestant martyrs anticipate joining a perfected community of the faithful in heaven rather than achieving an ecstatic vision of God."[71] Visually, this has been translated by the direction of the martyr's gaze; Foxe's Protestant martyrs stare out at the reader, or at the onlookers represented within the scenes, rather than looking to heaven. This reinforces the link between martyr and community and grounds him within a specific reality. Therefore, Foxe's narrative and their accompanying illustrations function to reinforce this bond between the martyr and the community from which he or she emerged. Foxe considers this sixteenth-century community of persecuted Protestants as being the *locus* of the sacred. His emphasis is on the communal experience of a persecuted group, a "godly fellowship," rather than on the rapture of the individual transported soul.[72] In order to firmly ground his martyrs within a community of humans, the martyrs are shown as part of a tangible and material world. These men and women are humans, who, as Foxe's text

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[69] Thomas Betteridge, "Truth and History in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*," *John Foxe and his World*, edited by Christopher Highley et al. (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000), 147-148.
[70] Betteridge, 148.
[71] John R. Knott, "John Foxe and the Joy of Suffering," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 27, no.3 (1996): 726.
[72] Ibid., 728.

makes clear, are able to register pain, to hesitate and to doubt. Foxe also carefully establishes the dates and the settings of the examination and execution, including particularizing details about each martyr. This has the effect of making the protagonist seem like a familiar member of the community, playing a role that anyone in that community could have played.[73]

While the composition of Cavalieri's Saint Lawrence is open, that of Foxe's John Hooper is compressed. The vista that opens behind Saint Lawrence allows us, as previously discussed, to penetrate the image and to walk through it. In opposition, the figures around John Hooper are all squeezed together and fill the pictorial space, thus negating any depth to the composition, as our view to the background is completely blocked. These characteristics correspond to Foxe's representational strategies which sought to legitimate the inclusion of images. Besides preventing the glorification of the martyrs, Foxe had to limit the viewer's interpretation of the images and to fix their meaning.

Also, in Cavalieri's book, any information given about the circumstances of martyrdom remains very general. In the captions below the images, only the name of the martyrs, sometimes with the methods of their persecution, and the name of the emperor under whom the events took place are indicated. As a result, the martyrdoms are only vaguely situated in time. By contrast, Foxe used the word in order to fix the meaning of the image and to limit its interpretation. His textual strategy aimed to close off any temptation to idolatry. Here, the images, through their visual specificity, explicitly served as a way to document and authenticate this revisionist Church history.[74] Captions properly identifying the events represented and the text within the image – in the form of spoken words – are two devices which fix the meaning and keep the viewer from further interpreting the image. It is therefore this successful intertwining of the text and image that blocks the temptation of idolatry.[75] Finally, it is worth mentioning how the image also works as a stabilizing force with regard to the text. While the infusion of the image by the written word emphasizes the predominance of the text itself throughout the book, it has been argued that the image also works to stabilize the meaning of the text. For mid-

[73] Ibid., 729.
[74] Knapp, 142.
[75] Ibid., 144.

Tudor Protestants, images were not the sole bearer of a potential for idolatry; words and written texts also proved to be a source of anxiety.[76] The illustrations thus served as a partial solution to the problem of textual slippage, providing a guarantee of the "truth" of the words of the martyrs and of Foxe's history.[77]

This necessity to constrain a particular way of viewing in Foxe's book highlights the viewer's liberty when faced with Cavalieri's book of prints. The manner of viewing prompted by the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* resonates with the principles of the "composition of place" laid down by Ignatius of Loyola. In his *Spiritual Exercises*, only vague indications from which the worshiper could mentally recompose a scene are given. In his annotations preceding the actual exercises, Ignatius says that the instructor must provide the practitioner with only the general lines of the story or historical framework, leaving the particular characteristics of vision to the latter's discretion.[78] A few pages further, in the preludes to the first exercise of the first week, Ignatius speaks of the necessity of composing a place, whether by meditating upon a corporeal reality or an abstract one.[79] Constructing the scene and inserting the subject of meditation within an actual space would bring about a closer understanding of the stories. In the words of Jeffrey Smith Chipps, "through this process of individual particularization, the image activates the imagination. The animated memory brings one closer to spiritual understanding, to communion with God."[80]

The abstract quality of the frescoes in the church of San Stefano Rotondo echoes the *Spiritual Exercises*, as viewers are brought to see themselves within the scenes depicted, or to transform them according to their own imagination.[81] This generic and indeterminate aspect, with regard to places, figures and gestures is characteristic of this abstract style that is, according to Gauvin Alexander Bailey, typical of the Jesuit art of the first generation – that is prior to the 17th century. In Cavalieri's work, this abstractness is pushed even further, partly because of the limitation imposed by the medium of

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[76] Betteridge, 153.
[77] Ibid., 154.
[78] Ignace de Loyola, *Exercices spirituels*, texte définitif (1548), traduit et commenté par Jean-Claude Guy, (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 1982), par. 2.
[79] Ibid., par. 47.
[80] Smith, 35.
[81] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, "La contribution des Jésuites à la peinture italienne et son influence en Europe 1540-1773," *L'art des Jésuites*, sous la direction de Giovanni Sale S.J. (Paris, Édition Mengès, 2003).

printmaking with regard to the colours and textures, so that the contours are even more accentuated. But despite the changes imposed by the medium, other changes can be considered as the result of Cavalieri's sometimes subjective translation through reproduction, whereby the generic quality of the martyrs' faces was increased so that distinct types recur more frequently. Also, the background martyrs are even less perceptible as they are reduced to a few strokes suggesting the contours of their bodies, and often reduced in number. For instance, behind Saint Cecilia's martyrdom, the number of figures depicted, excluding those in the boat, went from nineteen in the Circignani's painting, to twelve in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (figures, 7, 13).

When going through the complete series, we can feel a certain sense of familiarity, as the same faces recur again and again. The figures do not display the specificities which are characteristic of the portrait, as different types recur through the plates. The young virgin, the persecutor, and the old man, are three examples of these types. For instance, Saint Cecilia, Saint Agatha, Saint Apollonia and Saint Catherine conform to the type of the young virgin (figures 13, 14, 23, 24).[82] Saint Agatha and Saint Apollonia's resemblance is particularly striking; beyond the facial features they share with the other female saints, they are both dressed long tunics, with their heads covered, and adopt the same bodily position, attached to a column or tree trunk, in the case of Apollonia, with their hands behind their backs. But the four saints all display the same expression of quiet ecstasy on their faces, as they look up to the heavens. Another example of a type is seen in the figure of the executioner. Executioners often have a very muscular and partly uncovered body and sometimes wear military Roman garb, such as a thorax and a short tunic. The executioners framing Saint Cecilia's martyrdom, the two at the extreme right and the one walking away from the scene on the left, are examples of this type. By comparing the frescoes with their printed reproductions, we can also notice how physiognomic specificities have been lifted. For instance, in the engraving, the executioner who picks up Agatha's breast from the ground, and the youngster who holds back the old man on the right share the same facial features: a chubby round face with a

[82] The martyrdom of Saint Catherine is the only plate where divine intervention is represented. Saint Catherine (d. c310), a young noble woman from Alexandria converted to Christianity after a vision. After she converted emperor's Maxentus' family to Christianity, the emperor ordered that she be put to death on a spiked wheel. The wheel miraculously broke when it approached her body (see Delaney, s.v. "Saint Catherine").

pointy chin and ringlets of hair on their foreheads (figures 8, 14). By contrast, in the corresponding fresco, these two figures have very different looks: the executioner – who does not even look at us – wears a head band and his face looks rather tense, whereas the young man holding back the elder has softer, more delicate facial features and wears a hat decorated with feathers. Finally, landscapes and cityscapes were also simplified through reproduction. Some architectural features situate us within the Roman Empire, but without knowing the history of the specific martyrdoms, nothing can tell us where the events occurred. In the end, these indeterminate figures and settings consist in the foundation, the material from which the viewer can construct his meditation. The latter ought to appropriate this information, manipulate it and reconstruct a new image from the given one.

The viewer's corporeal experience of the image that I have described with regards to Saint Agatha – the touching of her body or relic, the movement through the print – is justified by Ignatius's advice that mental representations of the life of Christ, for instance, should be felt by the imaginary senses. First, with the eye of the mind, the worshipper must contemplate each holy individual. Then, he must hear what they say and activate the senses of smell and of taste so as to smell the sweetness of their virtuous souls. Finally, Ignatius says that with the help of "interior touch," their clothes should be kissed, their footsteps touched; our whole bodies should be transposed in these imagined places. According to Ignatius, these bodily actions increase the effects of devotion.[83]

The goal of Ignatius's discourse was to encourage the practitioner to elaborate a new language of meditation. In the words of Roland Barthes, "le modèle du travail d'oraison est ici beaucoup moins mystique que rhétorique, car la rhétorique fut elle aussi la recherche d'un code second, d'une langue artificielle, élaborée à partir d'un idiome donné."[84] Ignatius' work is not a depository of images that Jesuits could use; rather, by way of rhetoric, the author stimulates the creation of images in the mind of his reader.[85] The style of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* therefore consists in a rhetorical mode, as it provides the viewer with what is necessary to articulate another mental image in his mind, one through which he will move. The range of types that recur, their generic facial

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[83] Ignace de Loyola, par. 121-126.
[84] Roland Barthes, "Loyola," *Sade, Fourier, Loyola* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1971), 51.
[85] Ibid., 55

expression and gestures, the form of the figures where the contours are accentuated and the very sketchy aspect of the martyrs in the background all relate, in my opinion, to the given idiom that Barthes speaks of, and from which the viewer can create a new language, a new image. The composition of the plates – consisting in the placing of one martyr in the foreground, and of successive martyrdoms dispersed in an opened space – allows the viewer to insert himself in the empty spaces, so that he can live the martyrdom stories with the saints themselves.

In the end, by entering the printed warfare between Catholics and Protestants, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* first functioned to reiterate the Catholic belief in the saint as intercessor, by representing his body as a site of holiness, and to validate practices such as the cult of relics and pilgrimage. Furthermore, stylistic particularities create a rhetorical mode of image-making, where the beholder uses the image that is offered to him as a foundation from which he creates his own imaginary image, the ultimate image to be considered. This image is to be lived in a highly sensory manner. This manner would have been too active in the Protestant view, as it not only emphasized the importance of sight, but also called upon the use of other senses. The association of sight with activity, and hearing with passivity, played a preponderant role in the theology of Luther and other leaders; for them, Christians ought to be passive in worship and salvation, and totally dependent on God. Access to salvation was to be found in God's Word uniquely.[86]

Conclusion: The Reproduction and the Problem of the "Aura"

We have seen in Chapter Two how the experience of the cycle in the church of San Stefano Rotondo was intrinsically tied to the rituals and religious practices which were taking place around its ambulatory; the series was thus specifically elaborated to suit the ceremonial needs of the Jesuits. The aura of the frescoed cycle is thus closely linked to the space within which it is grounded. According to Walter Benjamin the existence of a work of art can never be completely separated from its ritual function. A unique

[86] Miles, 101.

existence, a presence in time and space, are Benjamin's prerequisites for an aura.[87] The frescoes thus partake in the aura of the architectural structure itself. Without speaking of the concept of the aura per se, Federico Zeri has argued that Jesuits capitalised on the suggestive power of the unusual architecture of the church as well as from its state of ruin in 1580. The remoteness of the site – the Celian Hill was one of the most deserted regions of Rome – also contributed to this power.[88]

Therefore, the cycle's aura is not independent but strongly embedded within the aura of the Early Christian structure. According to Benjamin's legendary theory, through reproduction, the aura of a work of art is diminished or completely eliminated, and that is because the reproduced object lacks a unique existence and presence. If we were to follow Benjamin's theory, the publication and dissemination of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have signalled the death of the aura. But a consideration of David Freedberg's critical revision of the theory is enlightening. The problem of the diminution of the aura was reconsidered by the latter in relation to pilgrimage images; Freedberg sought to understand why secondary pilgrimage images held a power that was comparable to that of their archetypes. His conclusion is that "adequate reproduction achieves a power and efficacy that may closely approximate that of the image represented."[89] The repetition that is generated by reproduction "engenders a new and compelling aura of its own."[90]

What happens then with the printed reproductions of the frescoes? What I am positing is that the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* still conserves an aura. But I do not think that this aura is felt in terms of power – in the sense of the miracle-working images discussed by Freedberg. It is rather about the devotional potential of the prints, their capacity of stimulating the creation of new mental images that Jesuits would experience through their imaginary senses. Therefore, because the engravings' style is even more suited to a type of meditation that is encouraged in the *Spiritual Exercises,* the images acquire an aura of their own. The small size and portability of the engravings, as opposed

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[87] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, edited and introduced by Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 220-224.
[88] Federico Zeri, *Pittura et Controriforma. L'arte senza tempo di Scipione da Gaeta,* (Torino: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1957), 56. Even today, it is very calm and set apart from the turbulence of the city.
[89] David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 126.
[90] Ibid.

to the static frescoes in the church, also contribute to this aura by allowing the viewer to use them in a state of isolation that is very often recommended by Ignatius.

CHAPTER FOUR: MEMORY AND DIDACTICISM; STIMULATING DEVOTION OR LEARNING HISTORY

As a devotional work, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* does not call for passive contemplation but rather stimulates active viewing. While meditating on one image, the beholder's gaze is never at rest; it travels from one letter inserted into the image, to its corresponding caption, and back again to another letter. Only when he has duly identified the figures in the image and secured their identity in his memory, can he experience that image and activate it in his imagination. We have seen in the previous chapter how the images are brought to their full potentiality when viewed in conjunction with the principles of the "composition of place." Ignatius of Loyola's precepts are grounded in the ancient art of memory where sight holds a predominant role in the stimulation of artificial memory.

An exploration of the ideas pertaining to mnemonic practices of meditation in the Middle Ages, as they have been expressed by Thomas Aquinas, along with the principles of the classical art of memory, will bring me to discuss the function of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as a mnemonic tool adapted to the needs of devotion. In the light of these ideas, I will come back to a discussion of the viewer's experience. Comparing an image from the book to what has been taken as model for the frescoes – Jerome Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines* – will prove very fruitful in order to understand the mechanism at work within each plate.

It is in relation to the audience that would have used the book as a devotional object, that ideas pertaining to memory and didacticism will be discussed in the first section of this chapter. Up to this point, my discussion has focused on the spiritual significance of the martyr. The remainder of this chapter will in turn look at the martyr as a historical figure. In the words of Helen White, "like the martyr, the legend has a foot in two worlds, the world of historical fact and the world of spiritual significance."[1] Thence, the reception of the book by another audience, a non-Jesuit one, will be discussed. I will interpret the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as a book documenting works of art in the city

[1] Helen C. White, *Tudor Books of Saints and Martyrs* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1963), 4.

of Rome, as well as a purely historical narrative: one concerned with a fragment of Early Christian History. Up to now, little attention has been paid to the context of production of the series and its engraver, Giovanni Battista Cavalieri. A look at his career, his general endeavours and clientele is now necessary since I will argue in favour of an alternative audience for the printed book. In the production of other printed books, Cavalieri often served an elite and largely humanist audience. I will then raise the question of how the book functioned in relation to an audience interested in factual knowledge about martyrdom.

Ignatius of Loyola, Thomas Aquinas and the Classical Art of Memory

In sixteenth-century culture, both secular and religious, the ancient architectural metaphor for memory still held validity. The mind was represented as something that was situated in space, and the processes of perception and of the intellect were described in terms of motion within that space.[2] The spatial metaphor for memory was given particular expression in Giulio Camillo's Memory Theatre which makes visible "the stage spectacle overseen by memory inside of man."[3] Camillo (1480-1544), a man of great influence in the sixteenth century, applied the classical art of memory to order the whole universe. He sought to build a wooden structure where an individual could penetrate. Standing in the centre, the individual would have been surrounded by a semi-circular structure, reminiscent of a Roman amphitheatre, where things and ideas, represented by images, were classified on grades and gates, acting as memory places. His Theatre represented a microcosm tied to a divine macrocosm; as a system for memory places, it offered a vision of the world and of nature seen from above.[4] The spatial organisation of the cycle at San Stefano Rotondo generates a similar experience to the one Camillo's Theatre would have prompted if it had been built. Although the church was not related to the occult activity of classifying the complete universe, as was Camillo's project – one of the most remarkable

[2] Lina Bolzoni, *The Gallery of Memory: Literary and Iconographic Models in the Age of the Printing Press* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001 [1995]), 238.
[3] Ibid., 241.
[4] For a description of Camillo's Memory Theatre, see Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974 [1966]),129-159.

uses of the art of memory in the Renaissance – the cycle still worked to impose order on a fragment of Early Christian history that is displayed in the circular space of the church.

When standing in San Stefano Rotondo, one is faced with a circular space where memory places unfold around the ambulatory (figure 5). An individual can thus walk from the empire of Alexander, where he would find the images of Saint Cecilia, Saint Urbain and Saint Maximus, to the empire of Decius, where he would see Saint Agatha and Saint Fabian, among others. This simple process of recollection is grounded on an ancient tradition that not only dictated ways of establishing order among "things" and ideas, but that also proposed strategies for making these "things" memorable. For sixteenth-century viewers, the ancient art of memory would thus have resonated in the cycle at San Stefano Rotondo as a means to facilitate the remembrance of events.[5]

Remembering is at the basis of Ignatius of Loyola' *Spiritual Exercises*. Central to his writing is the belief that visual remembrance is a powerful tool to focus one's thoughts in the absence of the original stimulus. As a mnemonic tool, sight is the most efficacious of all our senses; sight, more than any other of our sensual perceptions, activates a deeper realm of understanding that is then interpreted by our intellect or soul.[6] This explains why Loyola, and consequently Jerome Nadal, accepted the use of the external senses in order to be acquainted with the mysteries of God.[7]

In the first prelude of the first exercise of the first week, Ignatius taught Jesuits the rudiments of the "composition of place." By exposing this notion at the very beginning of the book, Ignatius expressed its great importance; he particularly emphasized that Jesuits should master the technique before embarking in the complete Exercises.[8] The purpose of creating mental images through the "composition of place" was to prevent the worshipper's mind from slipping away from the object of devotion. This use of images was also shared by Nadal. While Ignatius' work purveyed a theoretical foundation for the creation of mental images, Nadal took this a step further by establishing a more concrete relationship between the engaged mind and the pictorial arts by providing compositional

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[5] Leslie Korrick, "On the Meaning of Style: Nicolò Circignani in Counter-Reformation Rome," *Word and Image* 15, no.2 (1999): 173-175. Korrick underlines this affinity between San Stefano Rotondo and the ancient art of memory.
[6] Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship; Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 38.
[7] Ibid., 39.
[8] Korrick, 172.

models.[9] With his *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, which serve as illustrations to the *Adnotationes et meditationes*, Nadal initiated a new genre of literature that relies upon the imagining potential of the engraved images.[10]

To return to Ignatius, it should be noted that the preponderance of the sense of sight in his writing was far from novel. In fact, this stance derived from Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), who had relied on the classical art of memory to formulate his own thought. Ignatius was indeed familiar with Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae,* where he advocates the use of memory gained through sensual perceptions in order to stimulate spiritual memory.[11] In the Medieval period, the Roman orator's art was transformed to suit spiritual intentions and piety.[12] Thomas Aquinas was particularly important for the transformation of the classical art of memory, which had originally been invented to suit the needs of rhetoric, into an art suited for preaching and devotional purposes. It is under the virtue of Prudence that Aquinas addressed the issue of memory in his *Summa Theologiae*.[13] In his four precepts for memory, two foundations of the ancient artificial memory systems appear, namely "place" (*loci*) and "image." For his "place" rule, Aquinas followed Aristotle's assertion in *De memoria* (384-322 B.C.) that establishing an order for "places" helped one memorize them and facilitated the process of recollection; order also enables an easy movement from one *loci* to another. Aquinas sustained his advocacy of the use of images in the artificial memory system with the belief that man reaches the "*intelligibilia* through the *sensibilia* because all our knowledge has its beginning in sense."[14] Aquinas' rule for the composition of images echoes the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* – the earliest Roman work on the art of rhetoric, long thought to be by Cicero – in choosing striking and powerful images because they are more likely to adhere to memory for a long period of time.[15] The anonymous author of the *Ad Herennium* (first

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[9] Smith, 40.
[10] Ibid., 43.
[11] In writing the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas' goal was provide a clear and ordered exposition of sacred doctrines, that would be used to instruct beginners in the matters of Christian religion.
[12] Yates, 76.
[13] Ibid., 70.
[14] Thomas Aquinas, as cited in Yates, 78-79.
[15] In the *Ad Herennium*, *memoria,* is among the five parts of rhetoric, the others being *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *pronunciatio*. The Ad Herennium is among the three canonical sources for the classical art of memory (the two other sources being from Cicero and Quintilian). It is on this particular source that the memory tradition was developed in the Middle Ages (see Yates, 26).

century B.C.) posits that, in order to act as a stimulus for memory, the images should be provocative and have a strong emotional impact.[16]

Loci and *imagines agentes* were the main elements of the ancient art of memory taken up by Aquinas, and these are given visual manifestation in the church of San Stefano Rotondo. Each fresco panel acts as a distinct *locus* and the complete series of *loci* is organised according to a chronological sequence corresponding to the rule of the emperors. The cycle begins in the north-east end of the ambulatory, just after the chapel dedicated to Saint Primus and Felicianus, with the representation of Christ's Crucifixion. Under each of the following panels, is the name of the emperor, or sometimes emperors, under whose reign the persecutions occurred. Each fresco is a distinct *locus* where *imagines agentes* are inserted. With its series of *loci*, all of which are separated by embedded columns, the overall effect of the interior of the church of San Stefano Rotondo has been described as a concrete expression of a classical "memory palace."[17] The use of architectural models to represent memory, such as a palace or even a simple house, was favoured by the ancients who advised that we picture these compartmented spaces in our minds. Each room of the house becomes a depository of knowledge, a specific *locus* into which "things" are inserted, and we can walk mentally from one room to the other in order to recollect the information stored in each of them. At San Stefano Rotondo, the house or palace that authors of treatises on rhetoric advised orators to reconstruct is physically expressed. But instead of moving from one room to another, we encounter a succession of inter-columnar spaces. Interestingly, the use of columns and the insertion of arguments within inter-columnar spaces was one of the strategies proposed by the author of the *Ad Herennium* in order to classify ideas in our heads.

While San Stefano as a "memory palace" is in accordance with the principles outlined by the ancients, the reproduction of the cycle into a printed mnemonic tool to suit devotional needs speaks to sixteenth-century concerns with the elaboration of strategies in order to render knowledge easily accessible and retrievable. Lina Bolzoni has demonstrated how printed mnemonic and rhetorical tools emerged in the sixteenth century, in the context of religious and secular cultures. In the Renaissance, the ancient

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[16]Yates, 9.

[17] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque: Jesuit Art in Rome, 1565-1610* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 137.

art of memory was translated in diverse ways in order to serve the needs of literary production and collecting in particular. Rhetorical tools included things such as tables, grids, wheels and charts: repertories which helped recuperate arguments from ancient sources, providing a quick and simple path to knowledge.[18] The emergence of the illustrated compendia and catalogue – such as those created in the context of natural sciences – was also embedded in the tradition of mnemonics, and seen as part of the construction of places of memory. It is by their very organisation as systems of classification, that these devices can be associated with artificial systems of memory. Jesuit colleges shared similar concerns. With classical rhetoric as part of the curriculum of Jesuit colleges, students were introduced early on to the ancient systems of memory. Primary texts such as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and works on rhetoric by Cicero were read. In the 1560s, a text on rhetoric, *De arte rhetorica*, written by Cyprian Soarez, a Jesuit priest, linguist and teacher, was also made mandatory: this text particularly stressed the importance of memory.[19]

Since they would have been introduced to these mnemonic methods, Jesuits would have been able to understand the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as a mnemonic tool cataloguing Early Christian martyrs, all classified chronologically. Each page is a *locus* where scenes of martyrdom, as *imagines agentes,* appear. The martyrs' representations are worth looking at again, for the principles of the art of memory, as they were adapted by Thomas Aquinas in the medieval period, provide a justification for the striking depictions of violence and torment.

In plate twenty-three of the book, soldiers are pouring burning lead on the body of Bishop Erasmus who lies on his back in a box. Behind him, along the perspectival view of the city, we encounter Saint Blaise being lacerated while attached to a tree trunk; Saint Eustachius and his companions lie dead on the ground, while others burn on a pyre behind; and finally we see Saint Barbara, whose armpits are being burned with a torch (figure 25). All of these macabre tortures correspond to distinct *imagines agentes* that fulfill the requirements of the *Ad Herennium.*[20] The anonymous author writes that active *imagines agentes* – images that are exceptionally ugly or incomparably beautiful – help

[18] See Bolzoni, "Trees of Knowledge and Rhetorical Machines," in *The Gallery of Memory*, 23-82.
[19] Korrick, 175-176.
[20] Ibid., 175. Korrick underlines this association in relation to the frescoes in San Stefano Rotondo.

"memory by arousing emotional affects through striking images."[21] These images should take the form of human figures of unusual character. Setting them in dramatic situations further enhances their chances of being imprinted in the individual's mind.[22] While the ancients were concerned with the orator's art and the elaboration of rhetorical strategies, Thomas Aquinas gave the rule a devotional twist. His images "are turned into 'corporeal similitudes' through which 'simple and spiritual intentions' are to be prevented from slipping from the soul."[23] Aquinas also adds to his precepts that frequent meditation helps to preserve our memories of the things we wish to remember.[24] Aquinas' art of memory in the context of devotion can then be summarized as follows: images of beautiful or hideous human figures representing spiritual intentions – tied to Heaven or Hell – are to be memorized within a particular order, "in some 'solemn' building."[25]

When not represented in a moment of heightened drama, as are the figures in the plate described above, the martyrs appear as corpses, as in the twenty-ninth plate (figure 19). Traditionally, martyrs were represented as triumphant and victorious as well as physically intact heroes. Martyrs were mostly represented accompanied by symbols of their martyrdom, but very seldom depicted in the throws of persecution. A fresco by Girolamo Siciolante da Sermoneta (1521-1580) depicting Saint Lucy and Saint Agatha in the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva in Rome, dating form the second half of the Cinquecento, is a good example of a more conventional representation (figure 26).[26] The two virgin saints are seen with the symbols of their martyrdom instead of being represented in the act. To the left, Saint Lucy holds her eyes in a silver plate; to the right, Saint Agatha presents her truncated breasts to the viewer. Émile Mâle has argued that the detailed representations of martyrdom of the late sixteenth century relate to the new interest in the recovery of Early Christian history with accuracy.[27] Gregory XIII's commissioning of the writing of the Roman Church history, through the *Annales Ecclesiastici* and the *Roman Martyrology*, speak to that. In my opinion, these

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[21] Yates, 10.
[22] Ibid., 13.
[23] Ibid., 75.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid., 77.
[26] On Girolamo Siciolante see S. J. Freedberg, *Painting in Italy: 1500-1600* (Hardsmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), 339-341.
[27] Émile Mâle, *L'Art religieux après le Concile de Trente* (Paris : Librairie Armand Colin, 1932), 122-147.

representations of martyrs as tormented bodies do not strictly refer to the interest in historically accurate stories of martyrdom. Rather, the detailed representations of the tortures served the purpose of enhancing their potential in order to stimulate memory and facilitate remembrance.

As we can see, it is not the facial expressions of the martyrs which works to stimulate one's memory, but rather the amount of violence and repugnance that is brought to an extreme. The cruelty of the scenes, of the actions posed against the martyrs' bodies, takes precedence over the faces of each individual. According to Bailey, the martyrs' appear neutral and almost emotionless.[28] Perhaps one would expect a higher state of ecstasy, fear, anguish in accordance with the context in which the martyrs are situated. But it is unfair to call the martyrs emotionless; their emotions are muted in comparison to their extreme circumstances. Terms such as serenity, resolution, confidence and even quiet ecstasy better describe their state of being.

In the same way that the physical appearance of the martyrs is quite generic, as underlined in Chapter Three, their facial expressions remain constant. Most of them, if not the majority, direct their gazes towards the sky, or the heavens, establishing a contact with Christ. The repertory of gestures is also limited. Most of them have their hands placed in a position of prayer, joined together at the level of their chests, like the aforementioned Saint Erasmus, or in an "orans" position, like Saint Agnes and Saint Catherine (figures 9, 24). Serene and peaceful facial expressions – as we can more clearly observe in the figures in the foreground – and hand gestures of prayer, run throughout the series as a constant, and work to crystallize the essence of the experience of martyrdom. As I have discussed in Chapter Two, the Early Christian philosophy of martyrdom was revived in the late sixteenth century; martyrdom was understood as an imitation of Christ and a renewal of his Passion. While they resolutely accept death as an expression of their faith, the martyrs' expressions of serenity and peace are emblematic of their steadfastness in faith.

Aquinas transformed the ancient rule of image making – striking *imagines agentes* in dramatic action – into the establishment of corporeal similitude in order to express spiritual intentions. The corporeality of the martyr is thus the vehicle through which

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[28] Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque*, 138.

steadfastness in faith is exemplified. Steadfastness in faith and sacrifice for one's beliefs is the spiritual intention of the whole cycle, which is reemphasised through the expression of serenity of each of the martyrs. In the end, details of martyrdom – violence, methods of persecution, executors – function as ornaments which enable the spiritual essence and intent of the representations to be recorded in one's mind.

Breaking the Narrative: Classifying *Imagines Agentes*

The establishment of distinct *imagines agentes* that are independent in terms of exact temporality and spatiality function to negate, as a result, the idea of painting as a window opened onto the world, where a coherent and unified narrative unfolds. This type of image works differently from what Leon Battista Alberti had called *istoria* in his treatise *On Painting*, and from what artists of the Renaissance had sought to do.[29] The intrusion of letters in the picture frame further negates the Albertian window.[30] Rather than isolating an *istoria* from the outside world, the frame of the picture here acts as a container where images are inserted. For instance, the second plate of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* is divided into distinct sections that are not united in the creation of a narrative whole (figure 27). Every scene remains autonomous so that the stoning of Saint Stephen does not interfere with the flagellation of two apostles framed by an arched entranceway on the right, or with the martyrdom of James outside the city walls. Here, the representations of individual martyrdoms take priority over the construction of a coherent narrative.

The experience of each of the constitutive components of the plate as independent units is all the more striking when juxtaposed to what has been identified as its compositional model: Jerome Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines.* This book had a strong influence on Jesuit art in general, as each Jesuit house around the world was

[29] On Alberti's concept of *istoria* see Anthony Grafton, *Leon Battista Alberti: Master Builder of the Renaissance*, New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 122-133.
[30] Korrick, 171. Korrick points to the intrusion of key letters only as a negation of the Albertian window.

equipped with at least one copy.[31] Nadal's Bible – produced at the behest of Ignatius himself and composed between the years 1568-77 – consists of exegetical annotations and interpretative meditations on a series of detailed images.[32] The series of 153 images holds a central position in Nadal's program; this series, entitled *Evangelicae historiae imagines,* was actually issued on its own, without the written meditations, in 1593, two years before the *Adnotationes et meditationes* was printed at the press of Martin Nutius.[33] While the images can be seen without reference to the text, their full potential is only realised when used in conjunction with it.[34] It is also in direct reference to the original series of drawings by Livio Agresti (produced c.1555-62) that Nadal composed the annotations and meditations.[35] Nadal thus shared Ignatius' belief that images were necessary in order to prevent the mind from slipping away when meditating.

The influence of Nadal's *Imagines* is evident in the choice of the vertical format for the frescoes at San Stefano Rotondo, in the segmentation of the scenes, and through the use of key letters.[36] Gauvin Alexander Bailey has pointed to the similarities in composition, mainly in the spatial organisation of the background, between Cavalieri's image of the Stoning of Saint Stephen and the second plate of Nadal's work, entitled *In die Visitationis* (figures 27, 28). *In die visitationis* tells the story of Mary's visit to Elizabeth after the Annunciation. The narrative starts with the Annunciation in Nazareth (letter A); we are then pointed to Mary and Joseph's voyage to the country of Judea (letter

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[31] The high number of copies, editions, editions, and reproductions are telling of the importance of the plates as models and of their success; the influence of the plates resonated in India, China and Japon (see Marie Mauquoy-Hendrickx, "Les Wierix illustrateurs de la Bible dite de Natalis," *Quaerendo* 6, no.1 (1976): 60).

[32] Walter S. Melion, *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels, Volume I, The Infancy Narratives*, translated and edited by Frederick A. Homann, S.J. Introductory Study by Walter S. Melion (Philadelphia: Saint Joseph's University Press, 2003), 1.

[33] Ibid., 1-3.

[34] Smith, 43. In the 17th century, the system of lettered illustrations became common in Jesuit and other Catholic publications, particularly in emblem books.

[35] After Nadal's death in 1580, the book had not yet been published, and Agresti's drawings were still being reworked by the Jesuit Giovanni Battista Fiammeri (1579-81). The series of *modelli* the latter produced was not deemed perfectly appropriate and it is Bernardino Passeri who, in 1587, produced the final series that would be engraved. This series was also supplemented by a few drawings by Marten de Vos. The complete set of images was then mainly engraved by the Wiericx brothers of Antwerp; some engravings were also the work of Adrian and Jan Collaert, and Karel van Mallery. On the commission for engraving the drawings and the choice of engravers in Antwerp, see Mauquoy-Hendrickx, 28-34.

[36] Bailey, 137. It is not certain whether the use of key letters first appeared in Nadal's images; it is possible that the key letters first appeared in the frescoes at San Stefano Rotondo, which would have influenced the inclusion of captions directly below the engravings of the *Imagines*.

B, right of the image). Arriving in the house of Elizabeth and Zachary, events unfold, leading to the birth of John. The final episode consists of Mary and Joseph's return to Nazareth (letter I, in the window frame). Walter S. Melion argued that through his images, Nadal embraced pictorial artifice as a tool for spiritual conversion. The images with their captions map the peregrinations of Christ, the Virgin and their followers. The viewer is invited to memorize, consider and retrace the specific Gospel narratives. Attached to each image with captions we find corresponding annotations and meditations (the portion entitled *Adnotationes et meditationes*). The annotations further organize the votary's meditation as a mnemonic itinerary, and develop the viewer's attention to memorable places; these annotations expand upon the captions as they follow the alphabetical order established in the images.[37] In the meditations, Nadal compels the viewer to transport himself into the itinerary, where a transition from Gospel *lectiones* to Gospel *meditatio* occurs.[38] Therefore, Nadal's mnemonics consist in a first iteration of the journey through image and captions, and a reiteration of the journey through the text. Each caption becomes a specific place, a sacred place, and the viewer ought to follow the alphabetical sequence in order to recreate the sequence of place and events of each narrative. Each place is a transit point that is part of a considered order, echoing Aquinas' prerequisite to memory.[39]

In order to transpose himself mentally within this representation, the worshipper must follow the itinerary mapped by the letters. In contradistinction with his experience of a cohesive narrative, the viewer of Saint Stephen's plate in the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* faces a series of disunified acts of martyrdom. The key letters then do not prescribe the viewer's way of engaging with the image, but rather function as a mode of identification and classification. The beholder freely transposes himself into the image and strolls around it in his own manner, creating the route of his own pilgrimage. His voyage is more about visiting different sites than reliving a particular narrative. The narrative element of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumpi* is thus not present within each of the plates; rather, the viewer senses a narrative only when flipping through the pages of the

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[37] Walter S. Melion, "Artifice, Memory, and *Reformatio* in Hieronymus Natalis's 'Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia'," *Renaissance and Reformation* 23 (1998): 6-9.
[38] Ibid.,10.
[39] Ibid.

series. Moving from one page to another, an Early Christian narrative unfolds, along the temporal continuum established by the rule of Roman emperors.

In conclusion, San Stefano Rotondo is a concrete example of the architectural metaphor the ancients advised orators to construct in their own minds. The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* consequently served as a mnemonic tool organised along topical headings. The images inscribed within each *topos* conform to Aquinas's rule for constructing effective *imagines agentes*, of "clothing" spiritual intentions with representations that would stick in the mind. Finally, because of the independence of each image – martyr or event – the plates of the book are more akin to cataloguing and classification, than to the creation of a complete narrative. As there is no fixed *istoria*, these independent *imagines agentes* provide the matter from which the viewer can mentally reconstruct his own mental image of the scene of which he will have an embodied experience, as discussed in Chapter Three. Because of this negation of narrative in favour of classification, I will argue in favour of a different type of use for the book.

The Martyr as Historical Figure: Mnemonic Tools for Christian Antiquarians

The reception of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* has been analysed in relation to an audience primarily interested in the devotional potentiality of the images. I will now turn to the reception of the book by an alternative audience. This alternative audience would have used the book for its documentary value in relation to a particular taste for the reproduction of works of art in the second half of the Cinquecento and in the context of the rise of Christian antiquarianism. As a series of works which rely on the principles of the classical art of memory, I will demonstrate how the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* can be inserted into a humanist, more or less secular culture, concerned with knowledge, learning and classification. This type of audience would be interested in mnemonic tools as artificial memory systems in order to facilitate any intellectual endeavour.

Social status, background and cultural habits are elements which impact upon the production of meaning by different groups of people. The same cultural product, as

Rogier Chartier has demonstrated, can stimulate completely different understandings.[40] The two audiences with which we have been concerned in the preceding chapters were tied to the religious realm while their understanding stemmed from religious practices and Catholic beliefs. The first part of Chapter Two analyzed the reception of the book by a Catholic Roman audience familiar with Gregory XIII's papal propaganda. The Jesuits constituted another group of spectators in relation to which the book was analyzed in this chapter as well as in Chapter Three. Viewers from this group would have been familiar with Ignatius's principles of the "composition of place" and would have used the images with a devotional intent. Furthermore, Jesuits traveling to German-speaking lands would not only have experienced the images in terms of Ignatian spiritually, but would have understood the images in relation to their own mission. The alternative audience I propose here includes individuals interested in facts and knowledge; a crowd of humanists whose interests Cavalieri was serving with publications on antique statuary, Roman vistas, or series of rulers. In the late sixteenth century, the Roman print industry was propelled by the viewers' interest in documenting endeavors related to history, antiquarianism, contemporary works of art and current events. This alternative audience was interested in this type of work and it is very likely that the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have fallen in the hands of these kinds of patrons. In this case, the documentary character of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* may have overshadowed the devotional aspect of the prints, since this audience would have been looking for reproductions of decorations in a well-known church in the city of Rome, and appreciated these as historical documents establishing a chronology of Early Christian martyrs.

It is the very structure of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* plates that allows me to stipulate that this other layer of interpretation exits. Let us look back at Saint Cecilia boiling in the foreground of plate fifteen (figure 13). This plate conforms to the ruling principles along which each image is organised. The frame of the representation is divided into three distinct spaces: in the upper part, appears a short quote from the gospels, in the large central section are multiple scenes of martyrdom where one better known saint predominates in the foreground, and finally the lower section bears the name

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[40] See Roger Chartier, "From Court Festivity to City Spectators," *Forms and Meanings: Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press,1995).

of the emperor under whose reign these tortures occurred, as well as identifying captions corresponding to the letters inserted in the representational space. In a devotional context, the three parts would have been given equal attention: a Jesuit viewer using the book for devotional purposes would have identified the events taking place in the image, and then would have proceeded to his meditation on the image which he would have activated in his own imagination through the principles of the "composition of place."

Interestingly, the set of conventions I isolated in relation to the image of Saint Cecilia displays a striking affinity to those that form the emblem, more precisely the *emblemata triplex*. The system of the *emblemata triplex* consists of three parts – a title (*inscriptio*), an engraved figure (*icon*), and an epigram (*subscriptio*) – which interact as one visual and intellectual whole.[41] The title on plate fifteen indicates the subject matter, that is, different persecutions under the emperor Alexander. The top of the image, where we read an inscription taken from the Psalms, can then be seen as the equivalent of the epigram (*subscriptio*) of the emblem. This phrase – "We went through fire and through water to a spacious place, Ps. 65."[42] – suggests a devotional reflection on the subject matter represented by the figures in the middle section. Each of the parts interact in the formation of a whole; the viewer using the image in the context of worship would have meditated upon the meaning of this quote from the Psalms in relation to the saints clearly identified by the system of captions and letters. The quote emphasises that after their bodies were tormented, the martyrs' souls reached a new space, a heavenly realm. But it would be erroneous to stipulate that every viewer would have united the three parts in such a way, or even that they would have considered each of them if they wished to put the image to devotional use. Because the relationship between image, caption, and quote is left to the reader/viewer's own subjectivity, the page is unstable and its meaning may vacillate from one beholder to another.

The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* therefore distinguishes itself from the way in which the Jesuits appropriated the form of the emblem in the context of devotion. While Cavalieri's engravings retain their unstable nature, in their uncontrolled union of image

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[41] Jean-Marc Châtelain, "Lire pour croire: mises en texte de l'emblème et art de méditer au XVIIè siècle," *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartres* 150, juillet-décembre (1992): 326. It is in the context of Alciato's *Emblemata* in 1531, that the original system of the emblemata triplex were first established.

[42] Monssen, Leif Holm. "The Martyrdom cycle in Santo Stefano Rotondo, Part I," *Acta ad archaelogiam et atrium Historiam Pertinentia* 2 (1982): 234.

and text, the way Jesuits fused the emblem with the art of meditation from the beginning of the seventeenth century, sought "un renforcement de l'encadrement théologique et dogmatique de la meditation."[43] This meant that the emblem's meaning came to be controlled and delimited through the addition of a text that would guide the reader's interpretation and impose a theological understanding.[44] By inventing a new formula of 'mise en texte" – the superposition to the emblem of a theological argument in the form of a "narratio"– the Jesuits aimed at countering the process of "braconnage" to which the emblem is vulnerable, and to which Cavalieri's plates are still prone.

Michel de Certeau's "braconnage" is a process of appropriation. "Braconnage" inscribes itself into the consumers' consumption of imposed cultural forms. Within an imposed field of action, in front of cultural products, the consumer produces something new, as each individual, through his own tactic, can make different use of the same cultural form.[45] De Certeau describes this new form of production, qualified as consumption, as being characterized by "ses ruses, son effritement au gré des occasions, ses braconnages, sa clandestinité, son murmure inlassable, en somme une quasi-invisibilité puisqu'elle ne se signale guère par des produits propres [...] mais par un art d'utiliser ceux qui lui sont imposés."[46] "Braconnage" is then about taking different fragments in our trajectory and uniting them according to our subjectivity; this notion is particularly valid with regard to reading. Readers travel through what has been written by others, "ils circulent sur les terres d'autrui, nomades braconnant à travers les champs qu'ils n'ont pas écrits."[47]

The set of conventions behind the design of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* plates is itself evidence that their original meaning could have been transformed by a viewer through a process of "braconnage." A look at Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's career further justifies my claim for an alternative audience. Cavalieri's career in the second half of the Cinquecento indicates that his oeuvre was in tune with the intellectual climate of

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[43] Châtelain, 331.
[44] The Jesuit Jan David, the first author from the Society to have seized the form of the emblem in the context of a book of meditation, altered the standard conventions of the emblem by the addition of a text which would impose a theological understanding following the emblem page. He established his new formula for the first time in his *Veridicus Christianus* published in 1601 (see Châtelain, 332).
[45] Michel de Certeau, *Arts de Faire* (Paris : Union générale d'éditions, 1980), 82-89.
[46] Ibid, 79.
[47] Ibid., 292.

his age. His success was closely tied to the Roman elite circle around which he gravitated. With acquaintances and even friendships in the ecclesiastical, political and aristocratic spheres, the subject matter of his engravings responded to the tastes of his elite public. Individuals such as Cosimo de Medici, the king of Poland, Cardinal Alessandro Farnese and Maximilian II are some of his most common dedicatees.[48] The political and religious climate of the period was another influence in Cavalieri's choice of subject. Indeed, as the Council of Trent brought a rather pious and belligerent conservatism in Rome, engravers increasingly turned their attention to projects such as the documentation of the remnants of Antiquity, as they felt a growing inhibition towards invention and interpretation on secular themes, myths and religious stories.[49] Francesco Barberi has also considered the taste for ancient works as a catalyzing force for the expansion of the printing industry in Rome. Along with the papacy, the humanist taste for the Antique have been "due filoni inesauribli – l'uno connesso alla Roma antica e monumentale, l'altro all'attiva presenza della Chiesa"[50] upon which lay the Roman printing industry for four centuries.

Conforming to the main tendencies in the field of printmaking, Cavalieri's work can be qualified as being two-fold; on the one hand, he documented Roman history, through volumes on antique sculptures, monuments, portraits of emperors, while on the other, he contributed to the propaganda of the iconography of the Reformed Catholic Church following the Council of Trent.[51] Because these two programs were tightly related during this period, the dual glorification of Rome, as *Città Eterna,* and of the Catholic Church, must be considered a unified enterprise in Cavalieri's work. The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* serves this dual glorification of Rome: the martyr and the church of San Stefano Rotondo refer simultaneously to the illustrious past of the city, and to the continuing presence of the Church. On the one hand, the images of the frescoes refer to works of art produced under the papacy of Gregory XIII, and would, at the same time, have related to the particular proselytising mission of the Jesuits. On the other, the series of martyrs drafted a history of the Early Christian Church, whose thread runs along

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[48] Paola Pizzamano, "Giovanni Battista Cavalieri dal Trentino a Roma tra il sentimento dell'antico e lo spirito della controriforma,"*Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, un incisore trentino nella Roma dei Papi del Cinquecento* (Rovereto; Nicolodi editore, 2001), 23.
[49] David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470-1550* (London; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 361.
[50] Francesco Barberi, "Libri e stampatori nella Roma dei Papi," *Studi Romani* 13 (1965): 442.
[51] Pizzamano, 15.

different persecutions under subsequent emperors. Furthermore, the printed book would have carried an association with the church of San Stefano Rotondo, a very ancient structure in itself.

According to Paola Pizzamano, what distinguished Cavalieri's work from others was not the novelty of his choice of subjects but rather his systematic approach toward documentation in his numerous volumes of engravings.[52] Anne Liénardy has situated the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in relation to the rise of demand for the reproduction of ancient works of art and portraits of illustrious men in the second half of the sixteenth century. The archaeological fervour which started to flourish in the early Cinquecento (continuing on into the nineteenth century) led to the emergence of the particular genre of highly illustrated surveys.[53] Liénardy suggests that the art book could have originated from that period. What she defines as "livres d'art" are albums of figures with a reduced and purely explicative text, where the illustrations form a homogeneous whole.[54]

Cavalieri's first work to bear his name as engraver and publisher set the tone for what he accomplished in his career. This work, *Antiquarum statuarum urbis romae* (1561/2) was a series of documentary prints in three volumes recording antique sculpture in Rome, targeting the tastes of humanists and antiquarian scholars (figure 29).[55] A page which features the Farnese Hercules, engraved on a completely white background and identified through a short inscription in the bottom of the plate, is representative of the way antique sculpture is classified throughout the book dedicated to Cardinal Ludovico Madrucio. Cavalieri employed a similar mode of classification in his in *Urbis romae aedificorum illustrum* (1569), dedicated to the duke Cosimo di Medici, where the city is represented into fragmented scenes (figure 30). The viewer can encounter Roman vistas, such as a view of the Tiber island, as well as architectural remnants, like the Column of

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[52] Ibid., 24.
[53] Barberi, 441.
[54] Anne Liénardy, "Ecclesiae militantis triumphi – Rome- 1585," *Bulletin de l'Institut historique belge de Rome* (1985): 85-86. Francis Haskell on the other hand considers the art book as being different from the type of collections Liénardy refers to. According to Haskell the art book emerged at the end of the 17th century and took its full expression at the end of the 18th century; for him, the art book as such is not concerned with ancient art or documentation, but rather concerned with artists and their stylistic differences (see Francis Haskell, *The Painful Birth of the Art Book* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987).
[55] Micheal Bury, *The Print in Italy, 1550-1620* (London: The British Museum Press, 2001), 124. On the history of the *Antiquarum Statuarum Urbis Romae*, the different editions and the reuse of Cavaleiri's plates through the 16th and 17th century, see Thomas Ashby, "Antiquae Statuae Urbis Romae," *Papers for the British School at Rome* 9, no. 5 (1920).

Trajan. In these engravings, human figures also inhabit the scenes; a child, for instance, is about to dive in the Tiber, while a man, lying in the foreground, sunbathes. These publications met the interests of humanists and antiquarians whose activities consisted in the collecting of coins, of antique architectural and sculptural fragments and their subsequent cataloguing and classification. Their interests also included the lives of past rulers and emperors. For instance, in 1517, Andrea Fulvio had created the first compilation of rulers, entitled *Illustrum Imagines*, which was based on coins and ancient medals.[56] Whereas humanists had deployed much effort to recreate the true likenesses of rulers and emperors, little attention had been directed to finding out what were the true likenesses of the popes. In the second half of the Cinquecento, antiquarian scholarship spread to other facets of the past; its concern with accuracy and precision came to be expressed in the domain of ecclesiastical history. For instance, Onofrio Panvinio, one of the leading scholars and Christian antiquarians of the late sixteenth century, was the first to engage in the recovery of original sources of the popes' likenesses. These were engraved by Cavalieri in the work entitled *Pontificum romanorum effigies* (1580) that I briefly discussed in Chapter Two. Panvinio claimed that the series constituted a complete set of authentic portraits of all the popes.[57] Brambilla's broadsheet of popes is also tied to this new systematic approach toward Christian history (figures 11, 12).

While the new systematic approach to history impacted upon Early Christian history, the discovery of the catacombs of Priscilla in Rome in 1578 also stimulated interest in Early Christian martyrdom. The Oratorian Antonio Gallonio expressed an interest for martyrdom in the form of a treatise on martyrdom instruments. Illustrated by Antonio Tempesta and published for the first time in 1591 (figure 31), Gallonio's *Trattato de gli instrumenti di martirio, e della varie maniere di martoriare usate da'Gentili contro Christiani,*[58] has not received much attention. The treatise is not organized according to the martyrs' lives, but rather according to their modes of death and torture, by the types of sufferings imposed, the instruments of torture used, or types of attacks by animals. Figure

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[56] Francis Haskell, *History and its Images. Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (London; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 28.
[57] Ibid., 43.
[58] The complete title on the frontispiece is: *Trattato de gli instrumenti di martirio, e delle varie maniere di martoriare usate da'Gentili contro Christiani. Descrite et intagliate in rame. Opera di Antonio Gallonio Romano Sacerdote della congregatione dell'oratorio. In Roma, Presso Ascanio, e Girolamo Donangeli. 1591.*

twenty-nine corresponds to the cutting of body parts. This plate follows a text concerned with this mode of martyrdom. Whereas the text does mention the names of saints who had experienced the forms of torture represented, the figures in the plate are not identified according to their names but according to their modes of torture: the cutting of the tongue and of the breast and the pulling of teeth, as identified in the page facing the plate. Because of the system of referential letters, and of the generic look of the figures, Tempesta's engravings have been associated with Cavalieri's images.

Tempesta's illustrations are evidence of the interest in factual knowledge about religious history. While Gallonio's treatise catalogues martyrs according to the different modes of torture, Cavalieri's series is also a work which functions to classify martyrs, this time according to the rule of successive emperors. But the "cataloguing" of saints and martyrs is not only related to Christian antiquarianism, as it also speaks to the preoccupation with the classification of human subjects. Sixteenth-century books of trades and costumes have shown how the impulse in ordering the world was transmitted to the organization of human types according to defining characteristics. An example that is contemporary with Cavalieri's book of martyrs is Ambrogio Brambilla's broadsheet of street sellers of Rome, *Ritratto di quelli che vanno vendendo* (1582), where tradesmen were classified according to characteristic tools of their trades (figure 32).[59] Costume books also functioned in the same manner, where costumes became markers of difference and *loci* of identity among generic types.[60] In the same way, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* presents the martyr as a generic type that is identified according to the way in which he or she was tortured. Distinct tortures, which are also briefly described in the captions, thus emerge as the primary markers of difference; for instance, Saint Lawrence is identified through his torture on the grill, Saint Catherine by her wheel, Saint Vitale through his burial while he was still alive and so on.

In the end, a viewer interested in knowledge about Early Christianity, as it may have been the case with some of Cavalieri's clientele, could have appropriated the plate with Saint Cecilia's martyrdom and only considered the image and the identifying

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[59] On street criers see Dwight C. Miller, *Street Criers and Itinerant Tradesmen in European Prints,* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1970); Karen F. Jones, *Kankfrufe und Strassenhändler: eine Bibliographie / Cries and Itinerant Trades: a bibliography,* (Hamburg: Hauswedell, 1975).

[60] See Bronwen Wilson, "Reproducing the Contours of the Venetian Identity in Sixteenth-century Costume Books," *Studies in Iconography* 25 (2004).

captions in the lower part. Through this "braconnage," this plate becomes a specific *locus* where different historical occurrences are classified, rather than active *imagines agentes* that would have stimulated piety. The series could also have been appreciated for its documentary aspect, as prints reproducing works of art, contemporary or ancient, were in demand by collectors of prints.

The ancient art of memory was adapted to serve the concerns of sixteenth-century secular and religious cultures. The goal of this chapter was then to demonstrate how the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* functioned as a mnemonic and didactic tool: in a Jesuit devotional context and in relation to the rise of Christian antiquarianism. In a devotional context, the series of *loci*, brings forth stimulating *imagines agentes* that are emblematic of the idea of steadfastness in faith. Whereas the martyrs' calm and serenity is a constant, the violence surrounding them functions to make this spiritual intention memorable. By featuring *imagines agentes* that are independent from one another the plates can be experienced freely by the viewer. This also comes as a prerequisite to the exertion of the "composition of place," where the worshipper who, while given the foundations of his meditation, is prompted to unite the parts himself and to recreate a new mental image. Instead of following a prescribed path, as in Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, the viewer traces his own route, his own spiritual pilgrimage from one martyr to the other. Being deprived of a fixed narrative, by contrast with Nadal's work, the plates therefore function as *loci* of classification for the martyrs. Moreover, this classifying aspect has led me to introduce an alternative audience, one that would have been interested in facts and knowledge about Christian history. For this type of viewer, the plates would have been used as a work cataloguing historical figures and would have worked as a mnemonic tool related to Christian antiquarianism. This way of ordering human figures also speaks to an impulse, expressed in the context of book of trades or of costumes, of classifying humans according to specific markers of difference.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have analysed Giovanni Battista Cavalieri's *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in order to understand what meaning it would have conveyed when entering a Roman as well as a larger European culture of print. What distinguishes my approach from previous scholarship lies in the consideration of multiple audiences for the book. The principal informing the course of my reflection was the premise that upon the encounter of the same object, different individuals, or audiences, produce various meanings; meanings that are tied to their contexts of viewing, interests, status or background for instance. This approach, based on Michel de Certeau's theory of "braconnage," is all the more appropriate when pursuing the analysis of a printed object, which, because of its reproducibility, would have been widely distributed. Penetrating different realms of understanding, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have been used by various audiences according to their interests and expectations. As my discussion unfolded, I have scrutinized Cavalieri's printed series in relation to three audiences. In the context of each audience, I have sought to provide an analysis of the series as a whole and of the images constituting the series. I have paid attention to the historical and religious context, to the emerging Protestant martyrological tradition, to Ignatian spirituality as well as to issues pertaining to mnemonics and didacticism.

A large part of my discussion has nevertheless been concerned with the use of the book by its first intended audience: the Jesuits from the German-Hungarian College, priests who would have returned to Northern Europe in order to accomplish their proselytising mission. I have demonstrated how they would have understood the series in relation to the Society of Jesus' philosophy of martyrdom which was akin to the Early Christian one: the imitation and renewal of Christ's passion. Jesuits would have identified with these martyrs and considered their mission as being analogous: while the Early martyrs died at the hands of pagan emperors, the Jesuits feared death caused by Protestants. In reality, few Catholics were persecuted in comparison to Protestants during the sixteenth century, but a plethora of printed texts and images would have stimulated a sense of fear and anguish in the hearts of Jesuits. Furthermore, the book would have been

used in the context of private devotion; emulating practices that would have taken place in the church of San Stefano Rotondo, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have buttressed private repetitions of the Litany of Saints through a sequential invocation of saints, which found a figurative counterpart in each plate. While this type of litany is grounded on the status of the saint as intercessor before God, a belief denied by Protestant Reformers, the book would have served to reassert Catholic beliefs that were supported by the Council of Trent.

The litany pertains to the function of the series as an entity, as a repetition of motifs through the thirty-one plates. Consequently, in Chapter Three, my goal has been to explore what would have been a viewer's experience of each image. By focusing on two plates – featuring Saint Agatha and Saint Lawrence – which I analysed in contradistinction to the Protestant martyrological enterprise and in relation to the written hagiography, I have argued that Catholic doctrines and practices reiterated by the Council of Trent were given shape through the representation of the body of the saint. The intercessory status of the saints, the cult of relics, and the practice of pilgrimage are further articulated through the viewer's own embodied experience of the images. Moreover, I have analyzed the images in terms of Ignatian spirituality. I have argued that the images provided the foundation upon which the viewers were encouraged to reconstruct mental images. As advised by Ignatius of Loyola in the *Spiritual Exercises*, worshippers should not only create mental images, but ought to insert themselves within their new mental images in order to live and feel the stories through their imaginary senses. The style of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* – characterized by an abstraction in physiognomies, the repetition of generic types, of gestures and settings, and the independence of each episode in a same plate – has thus been looked at in relation to the function of the images. I have argued that Cavalieri's style, in this context, functions as a rhetorical mode bringing forth the creation of new images.

Ultimately, in Chapter Four, I have explored the function of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* as a mnemonic devotional tool. While each page of the book is a distinct *locus* into which are inserted various *imagines agentes*, I have argued that the degree to which violence and torment is brought to an extreme responds to Thomas Aquinas' demand of expressing spiritual intentions through corporeal figures of extreme

beauty or ugliness in order to stimulate memory. The spiritual intention of steadfastness in faith – expressed through the martyr's serenity, state of quiet ecstasy and insensitivity to pain – is a constant that runs throughout the book, whereas the violence displayed – through fragmented bodies or the acts of the executioners – functions as an ornament rendering the images more memorable. Another aspect that I have stressed is the degree of independence between each *imagines agentes*, which by denying a fixed narrative, compels the viewer to manipulate the image and reconstruct it mentally so that he can live it through a spiritual pilgrimage.

The two other audiences in relation to which my analysis has unfolded are less circumscribed. The first one consists of a Roman public going beyond the Jesuit sphere, encompassing viewers of print who would have witnessed Gregory XIII's physical restoration of the city. The second one was introduced in Chapter Four, and consists of individuals that Cavalieri served as a printmaker, consisting of humanists or Christian antiquarians.

Pope Gregory XIII was "one of the central figures in the development of the Counter-Reformation vision of Church Triumphant."[1] In the first place, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* would have promoted the papacy as historical pillar of Catholicism and would have buttressed the idea of continuity from Early Christianity to late sixteenth-century Catholicism. The same notion of continuity in papal lineage would also have been evoked in relation to other printed series. The book also had connections with Gregory XIII's Early Christian revival project: a connection expressed through the identification of the original works in San Stefano Rotondo, as well as through the artist, Nicolò Circignani, who had been implicated in other papal commissions in the Vatican.

The tripartite organization of each plate, where image and text are united freely by the viewer, has brought me to argue that the images of the series could have been appropriated in a way that would have elided the devotional aspect. By sublimating the inscriptions from the gospels, the focus would then have been placed uniquely on the facts deposited in each *locus*. I have therefore argued that the book could have appealed to Christian antiquarians who would have approached Christian history in a more

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[1] Jack Freiberg, *The Lateran in 1600: Christian Concord in Counter-Reformation Rome* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16.

pragmatic manner. The *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* then becomes a series of *loci* where martyrs, as historical figures, are classified. I have also demonstrated how this way of ordering martyrs was in accordance with the sixteenth-century impulse of cataloguing human types, in books and broadsheets, according to their defining characteristics.

In Chapter One, I have underlined many thematic problems, such as questions of style and reproduction, which I hope to have countered in my discussions. In order to go beyond the analyses of the frescoes in the church, I have focused on the viewer's experience of the prints in order to determinate how this experience might have been tied to the stylistic qualities of the prints. My aim was to counter labels that had been used to describe the frescoes, such as "Counter-Reformatory" or "late-mannerist." To do so, my strategy was to look at the prints from the point of view of Ignatian spirituality. Doing so, I have demonstrated how the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* displayed a style that conformed to Ignatius' notion of image-making: by lifting visual specificities of the already "abstract" frescoes, the prints became empty vessels to be filled by the Jesuit viewer's imagination in the course of his meditation.

Another thematic problem that I have approached relates to the "reproduction" and the "original." Whereas my discussions have revealed the impossibility of detaching completely the reproductive work from its original, I have nevertheless demonstrated how it acquires independence when subjected to different uses. This independence also increases through geographical distance. For instance, when viewed by a Roman public, associations with the church and Gregory XIII's Early Christian revival may have been easily established. But for Jesuits from the German-Hungarian College going back to Northern Europe who would have used the book in the context of their devotion, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*'s meaning would have stemmed uniquely from their private use of the object. Another issue that I have explored in relation to the reproductive work had to do with the aura, or the loss of the aura through reproduction. Relying on David Freedberg's critique of Walter Benjamin's assertion about the loss of the aura, I have argued that reproductions do conserve an aura. What I have taken as the aura in the context of the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* does not relate to "power" but rather tied to the devotional potential of the images, which, through reproduction, increases, as they become even more suited to the needs of Ignatian spirituality.

Finally, a larger aim of my thesis was to situate the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* in relation to printed representations of martyrs, both Catholic and Protestant. Antonio Gallonio's treatise has been underlined as evidence of a shared interest in details of martyrdom among a Roman antiquarian public. Richard Verstegan's book of martyrs has also been invoked at the very beginning to point to the use of print and of the figure of the martyr as a form of political denunciation. But my choice of leading part of my analysis in contradistinction to Protestant written or pictorial representations of martyrs, with Jean Crespin's and John Foxe's work, aimed at demonstrating how the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi*, presenting martyrs that are saints, fit within the flow of images and texts about the martyr. In two different ways, the series functioned to refute Protestant positions on saints and images. On the one hand, when penetrating a European outpouring of representations of martyrs, Cavalieri's work, as a devotional work, reaffirmed the Catholic acknowledgment of the saint as intercessory being and reiterated related practices. On the other, as a Jesuit object, the *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* proclaimed the Jesuits' full embrace of the use of images in the context of devotion.

Figure 1. Richard Verstegan, *Theatrum crudelitam Haereticorum Nostri Temporis* (1587), persecutions of Catholics in England.

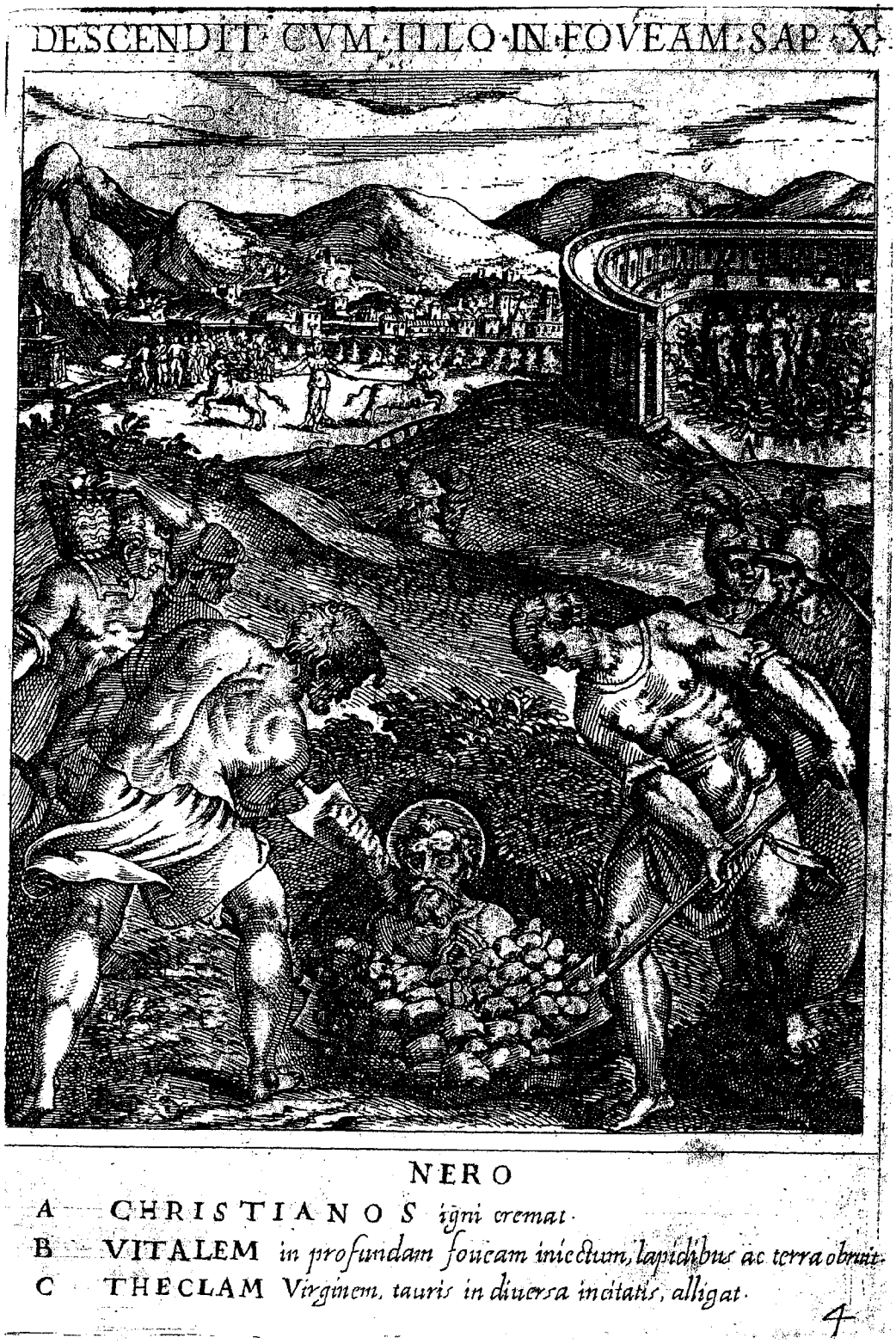

Figure 2. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 4, martyrdom of Saint Vitale.

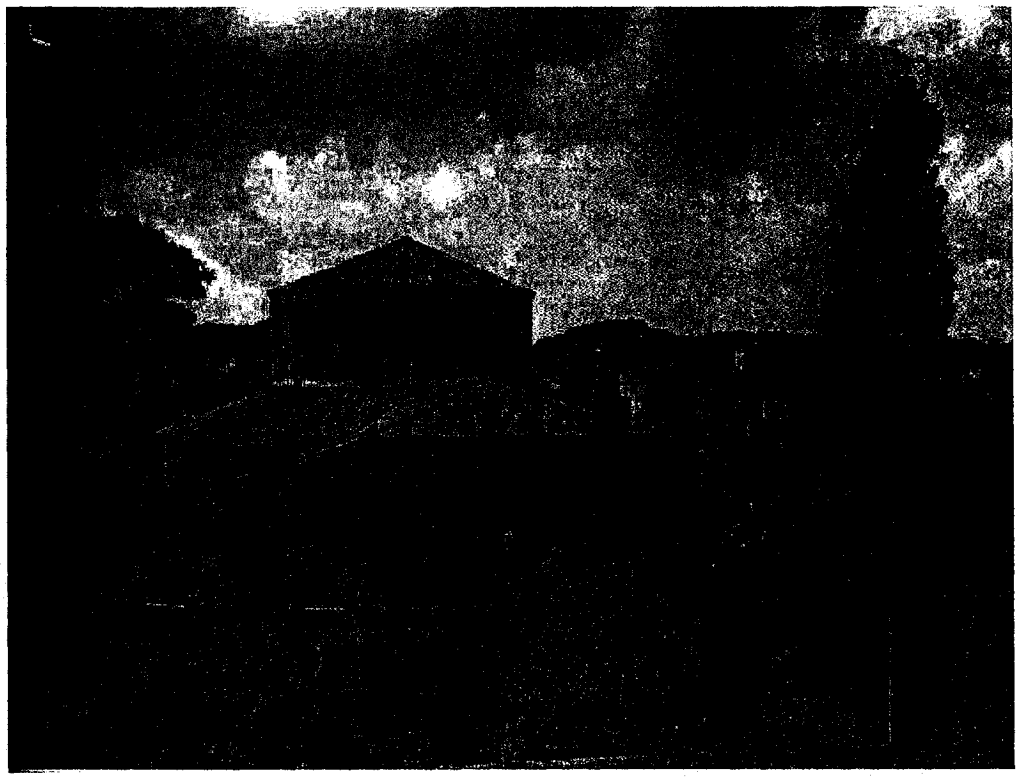

Figure 3. Church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome, exterior view.

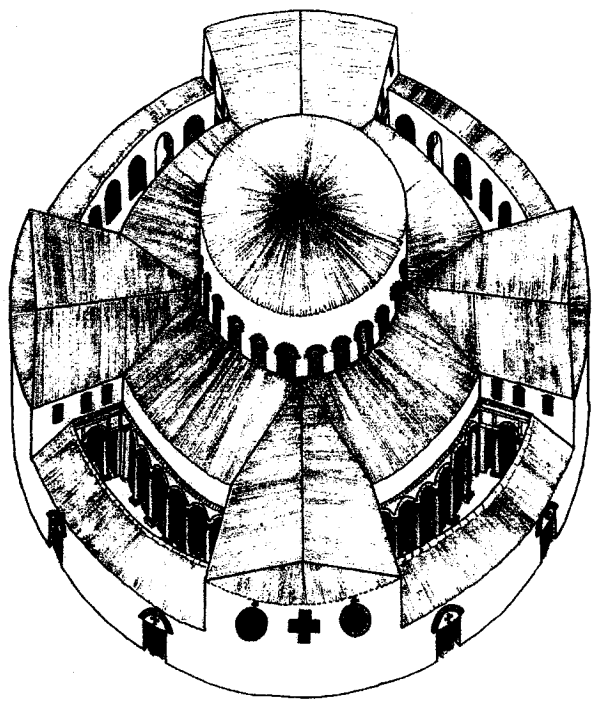

Figure 4. Church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome, reconstruction of the original church.

Figure 5. Church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome, view of the interior (from the chapel of Saint Primus and Saint Felicianus).

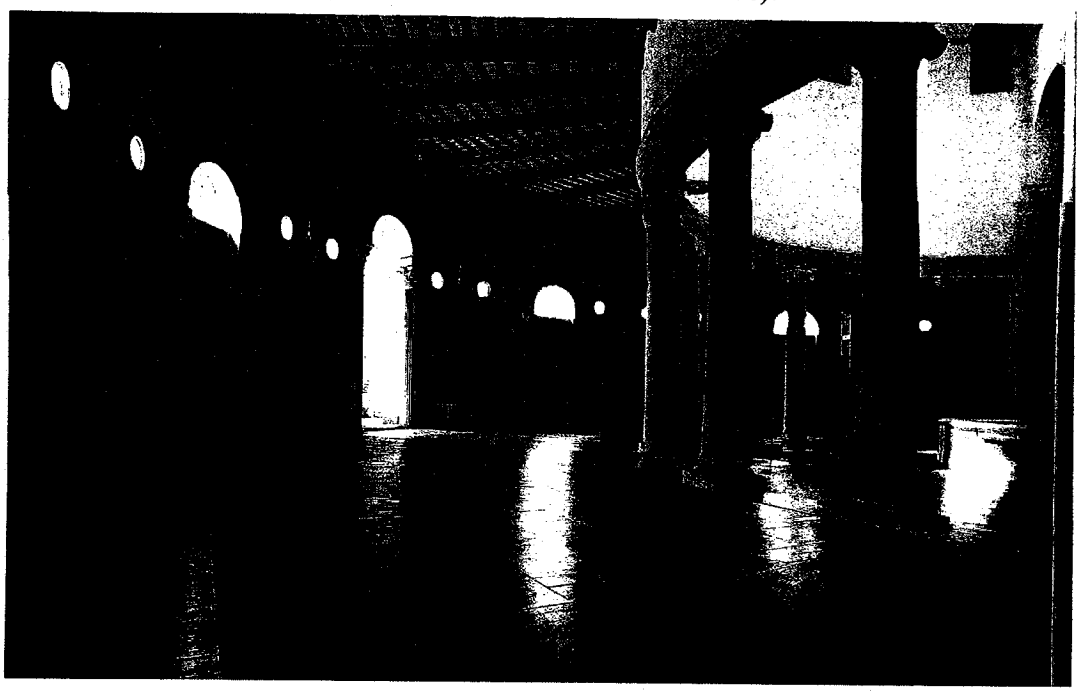

Figure 6. Church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome, view of the ambulatory.

Figure 7. Nicolò Circignani, *Martyrdom of Saint Cecilia*, ambulatory fresco, church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome (1582).

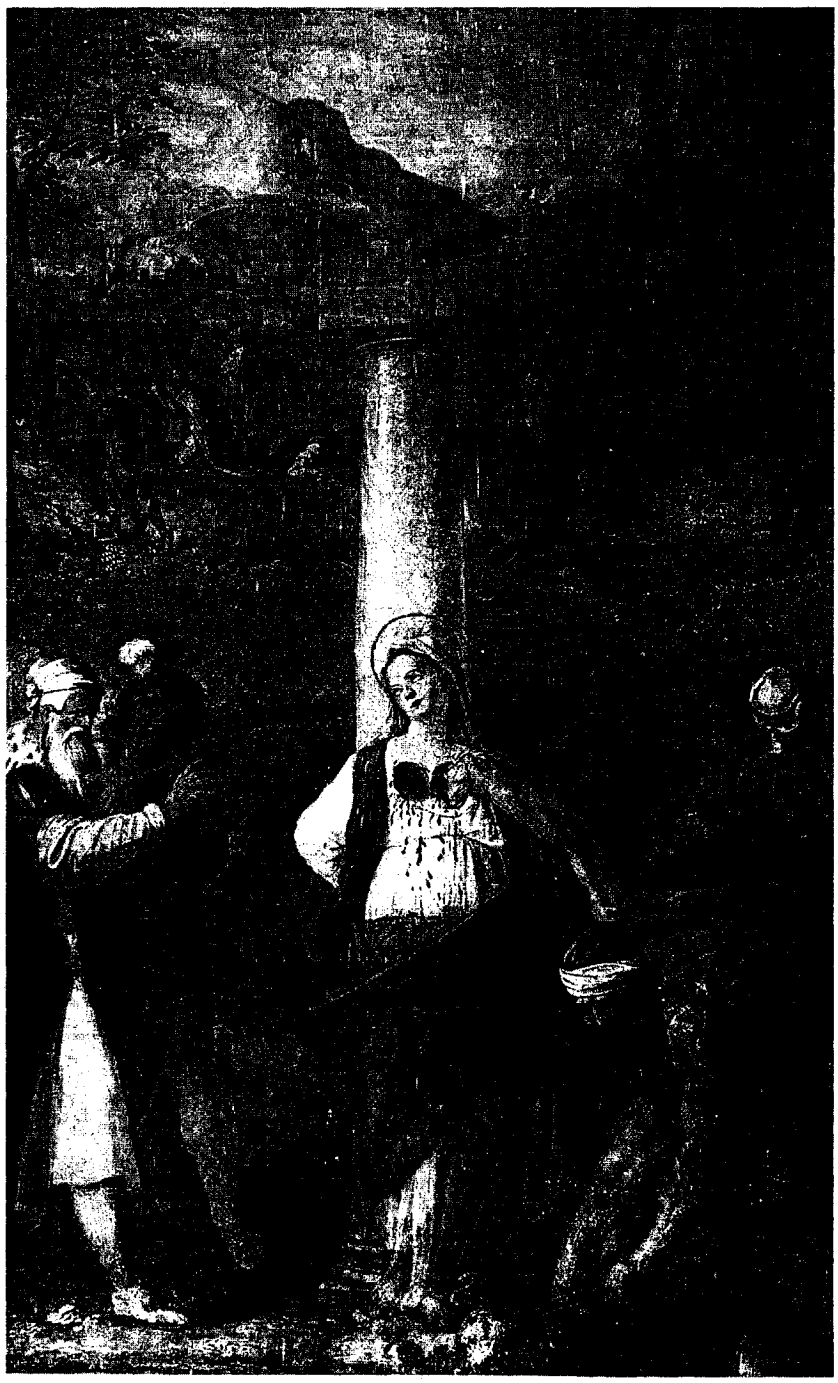

Figure 8. Nicolò Circignani, *Martyrdom of Saint Agatha*, ambulatory fresco, church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome (1582).

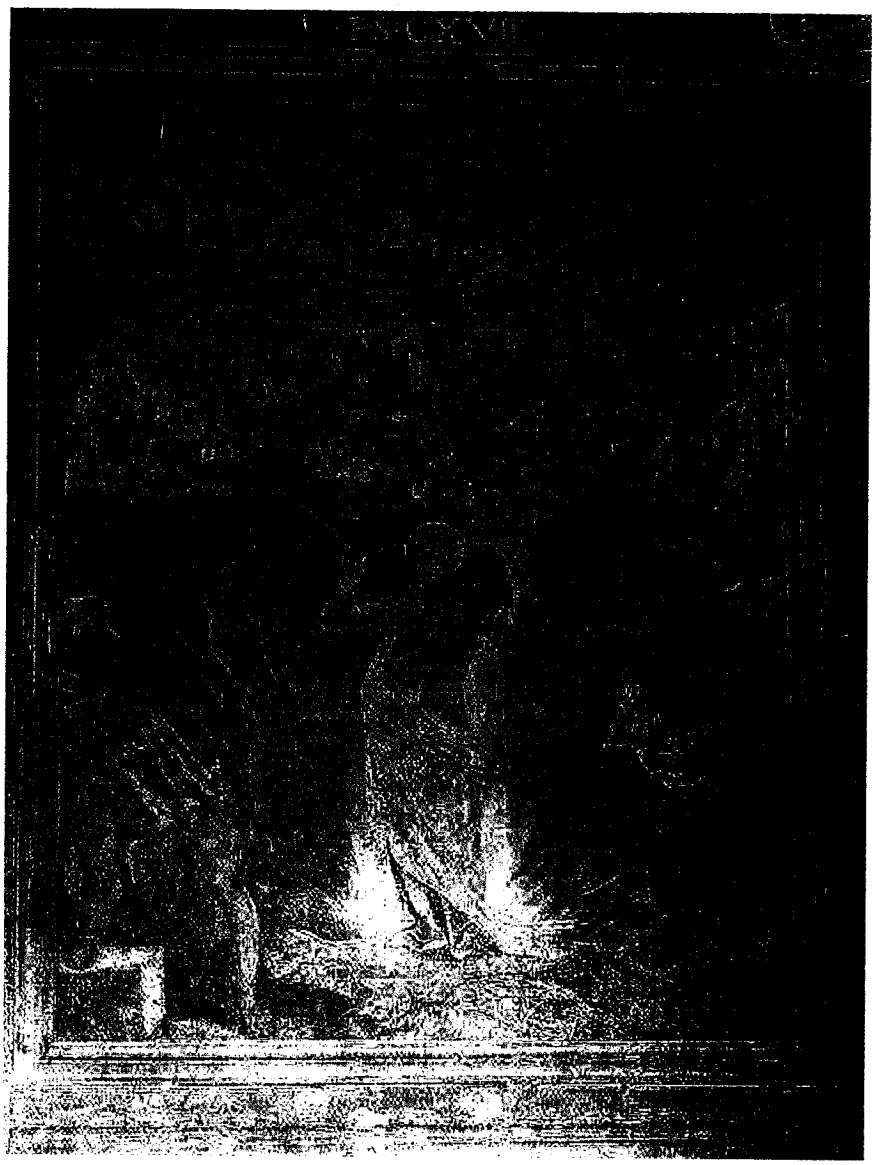

Figure 9. Nicolò Circignani, *Martyrdom of Saint Agnes*, ambulatory fresco, church of San Stefano Rotondo, Rome (1582).

Figure 10. Marc'Antonio Ciappi, *Portrait of Gregory XIII and his Deeds* (c1590).

Figure 11. Ambrogio Brambilla, *Portraits of the Popes* (1582).

Figure 12. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Pontificum Romanorum Effigies* (1585).

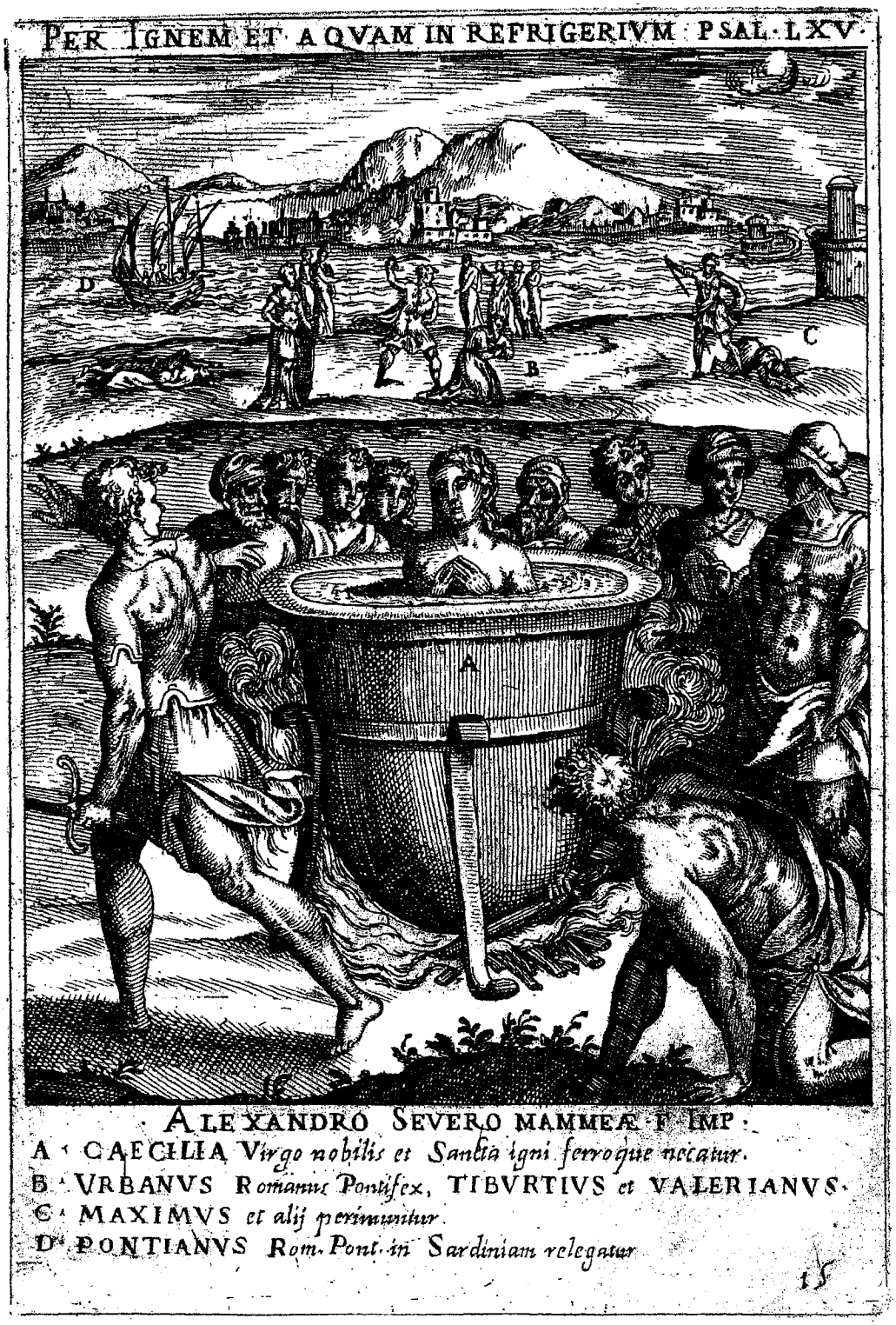

Figure 13. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 15, martyrdom of Saint Cecilia.

Figure 14. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 16, martyrdom of Saint Agatha.

Figure 15. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 1, Crucifixion.

Figure 16. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 31.

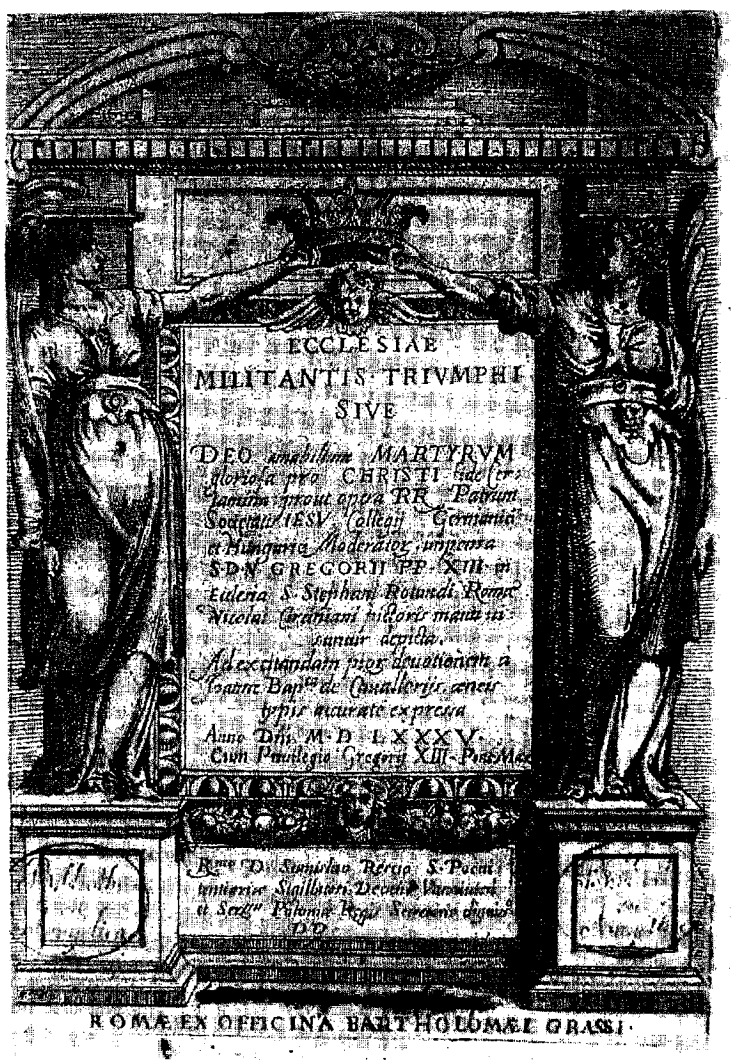

Figure 17. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), frontispiece.

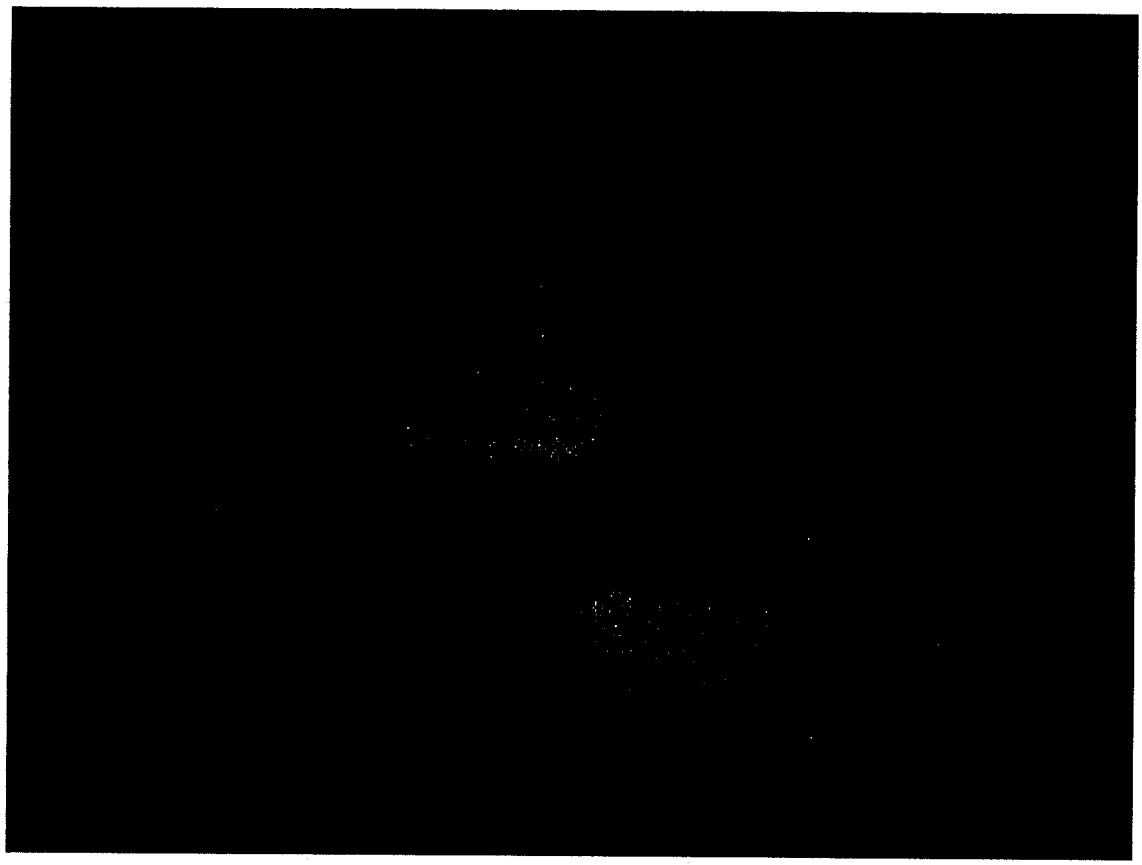

Figure 18. Saint Primus and Saint Felicianus, apse mosaic, chapel of Saint Primus and Felicianus, church of San Stefano Rotondo.

Figure 19. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 29, martyrdoms of Saints John, Paul, Bibiana and Artemius.

Figure 20. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 7 martyrdom of Saint Dionysius.

Figure 21. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 18, martyrdom of Saint Lawrence.

Figure 22. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1563), the burning of John Hooper.

Figure 23. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 17, martyrdom of Saint Apollonia.

Figure 24. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 27, martyrdom of Saint Catherine.

Figure 25. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 23, martyrdom of Saint Erasmus.

Figure 26. Girolamo Siciolante, *Saint Lucy and Saint Agatha*, fresco, church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, Rome.

Figure 27. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Ecclesiae militantis triumphi* (1585), plate 2, martyrdom of Saint Stephen.

Figure 28. Jerome Nadal, *Evangelicae historiae imagines* (1607), On the Day of the Visitation, engraved by Hieronymus Wiericx.

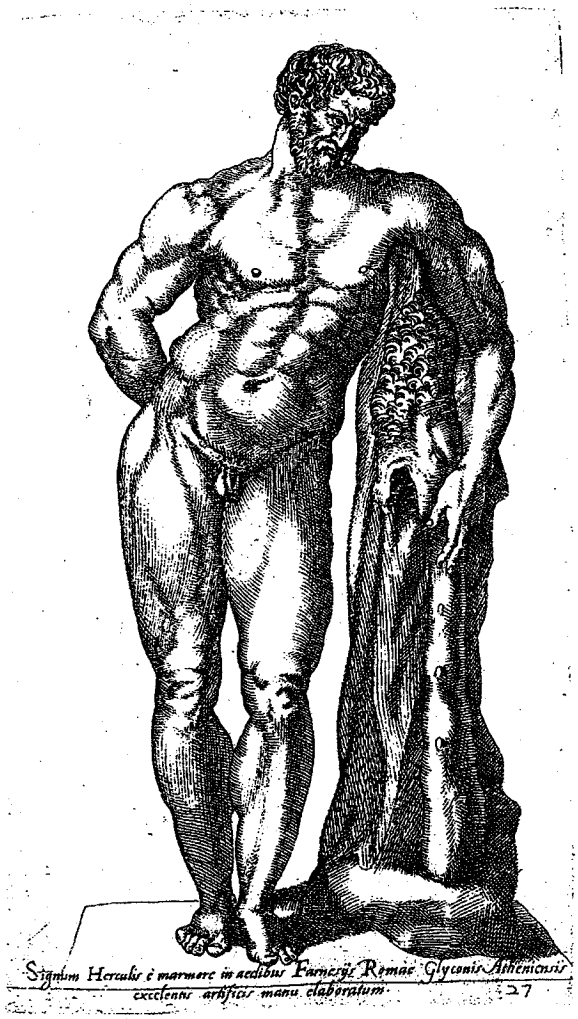

Figure 29. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Antiquarum statuarum urbis* (1585), the Farnese Hercules.

Figure 30. Giovanni Battista Cavalieri, *Urbis Romae aedificorum illustrum* (1569), the Column of Trajan (top), a view of Rome with the Tiber (bottom).

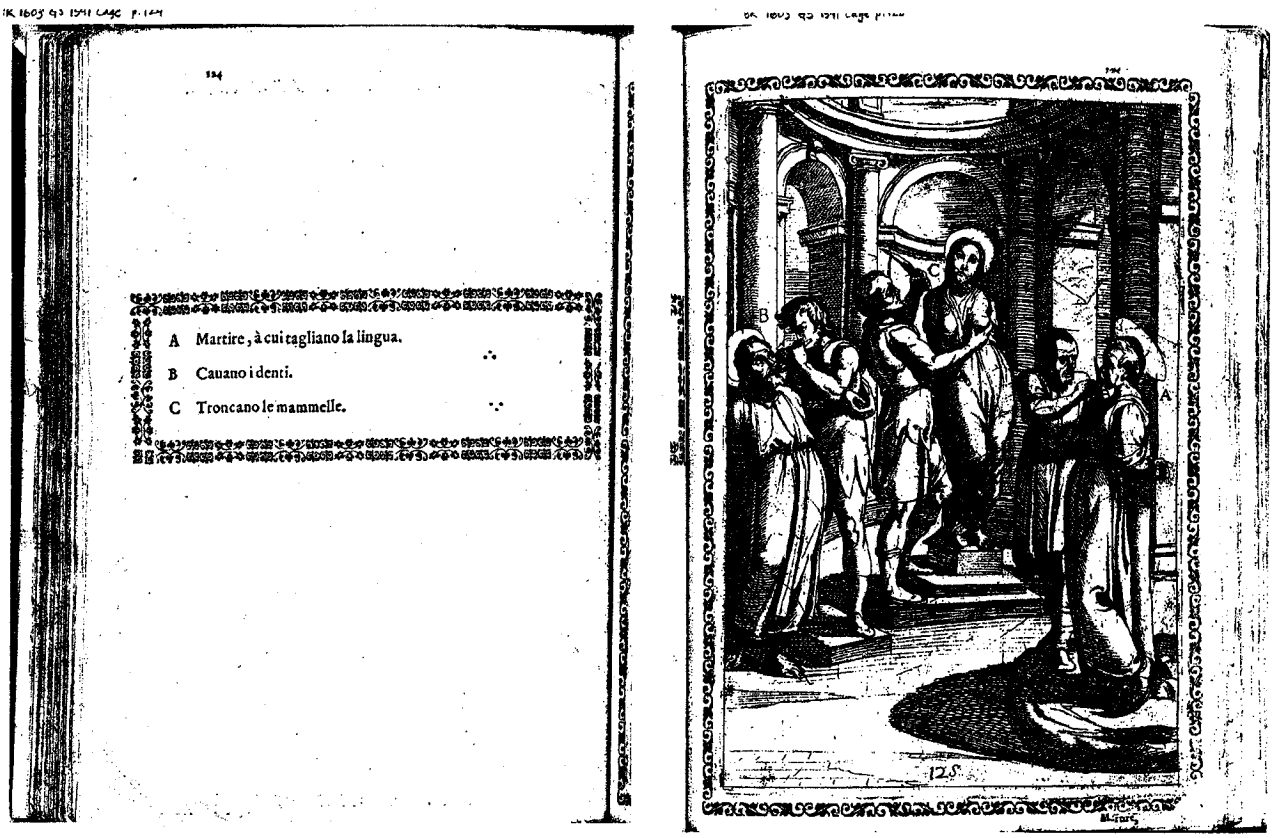

Figure 31. Antonio Gallonio, *Trattato de gli instrumenti di martirio*, engraving by Antonio Tempesta (1591), martyrdoms with legend on the facing page.

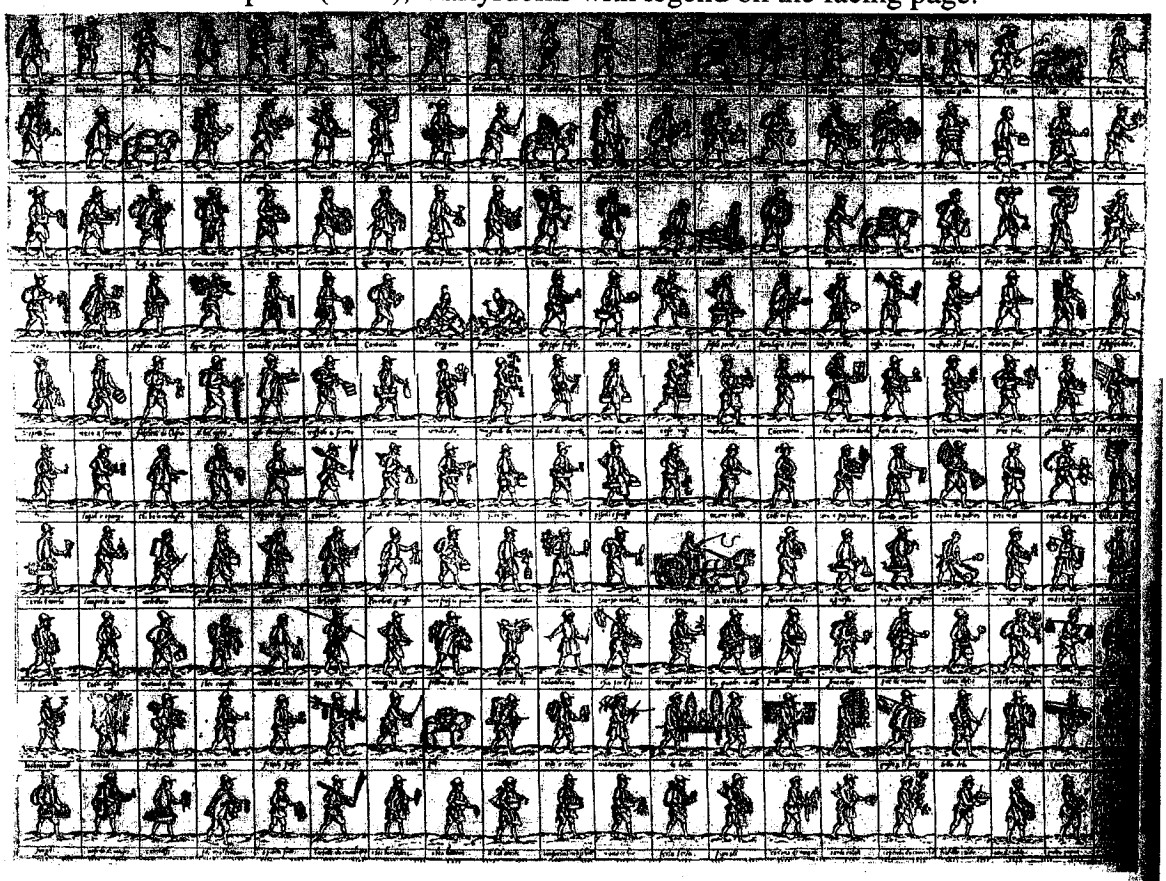

Figure 32. Ambrogio Brambilla, *Street Sellers of Rome* (1582).

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