THE JESUITS II

Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540–1773

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9 / Art in the Service of God: The Impact of the Society of Jesus on the Decorative Arts in Portugal

NUNO VASSALLO E SILVA

In this article I examine the art produced in Portugal under the patronage of the Society of Jesus. Particular emphasis will be placed on the so-called decorative arts, especially the metalwork in silver and gold that was used in the celebration of the Eucharist.

The history of art in Portugal cannot be recounted without underlining the central role played by the Society of Jesus. From 1540, when the Society reached Portugal – under the patronage of King João III – until 1759, when the Jesuits were expelled, they were among the leading patrons of art. As is well known, the Jesuits' impact was due not merely to the quality and quantity of the work they commissioned, but, above all, to the innovative role they assigned to the arts, one that soon spread beyond the Society to influence all religious art in Portugal.

As José Eduardo Horta Correia has accurately noted, two major and novel aspects of the Society would have a direct influence on subsequent artistic programs in Portugal. First, the order is fundamentally a priestly one, centred on the altar, the confessional, and the pulpit. Second, the followers of St Ignatius of Loyola considered education of particular importance and had adopted the pedagogical achievements and educational reforms of humanism.[1] Both these aspects of the Society meant that art would become a sophisticated tool in the teaching of doctrine.

The Glory of the Eucharist: Wood Carving, Tiles, Textiles, and Furniture

A visit to the church of the Casa Professa of São Roque in Lisbon (built 1555–73), which includes the essential elements that enable us to speak of Jesuit architectural design and has a significant number of works of art, offers an overview of the Jesuits' use of the decorative arts in Portugal. In contrast to other

Jesuit colleges and churches, São Roque and its works of art escaped almost unscathed after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759. The first pieces to be lost were those made of precious metals, which were unable to withstand the depredations of human avarice, specifically the war tax imposed by the French during their first invasion of Portugal in 1808, and again following the triumph of the liberal forces in 1834. None the less, some reliquaries did manage to survive.

The remaining altars, carvings, tiles, hardstone inlays, reliquaries, balustrades, and sacristy furnishings all combine to create a unique and visually striking atmosphere. It is difficult (if not impossible) to gain a complete understanding of or to contextualize this concentration of the visual arts, since it is an authentic example of the 'total work of art,' or *Gesamtkunstwerk*. As such, however, the church with its contents can be used to establish parallels with other works of art in other churches built by the Society in Portugal and the Portuguese colonies. Using a little artistic licence, we can claim that it allows us to 'visualize' the art described in the inventories of the Jesuit colleges drawn up in 1759, when the Society was expelled from Portugal. These inventories, now at the Arquivo do Tribunal de Contas (Public Accounts Archive) in Lisbon, are the only source available for any attempted reconstitution of the interiors and decoration of Jesuit churches. All the items described share rich and varied decoration and materials, demonstrating a magnificent use of ornament and a high level of decorative sophistication under the Jesuits.

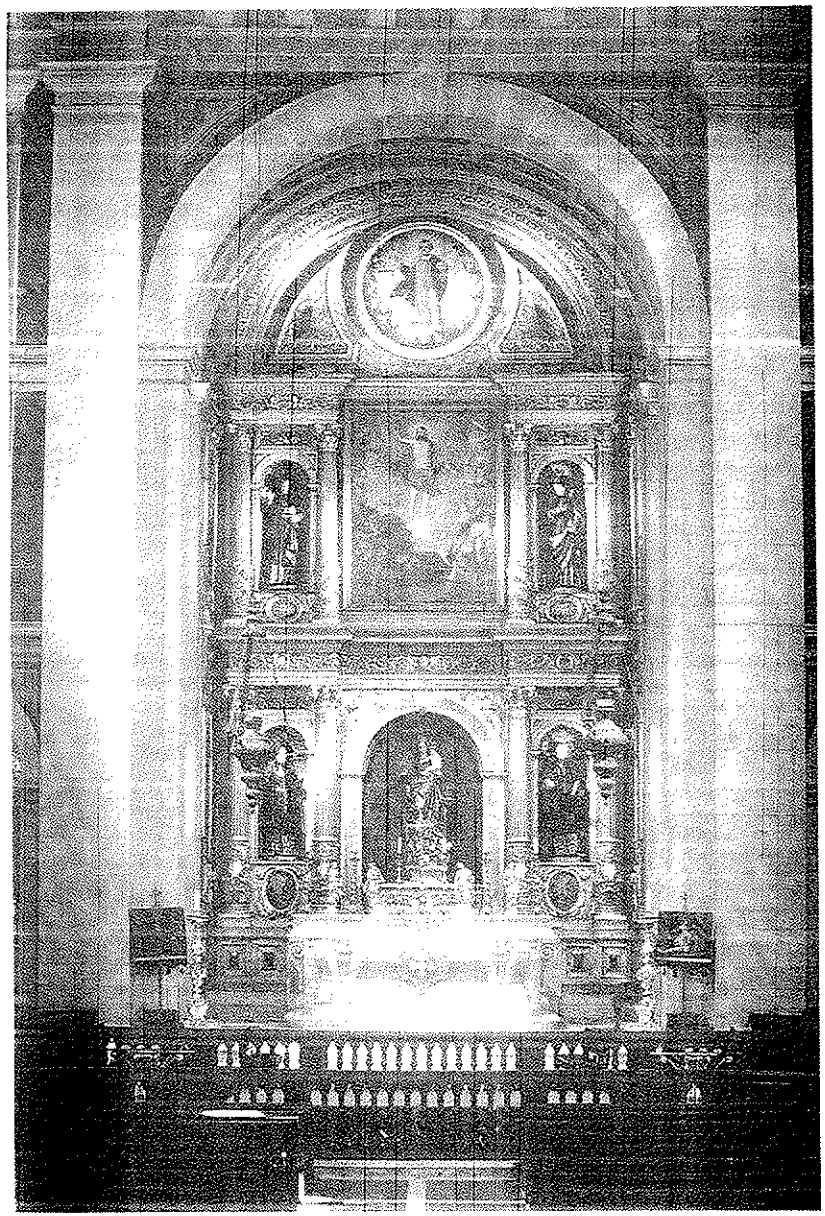
Wood Carving

The carved altars in the Jesuit churches in Portugal almost all date from after the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

The large altarpiece in the main chapel at São Roque was produced between 1625 and 1628, some fifty years after the church was built (fig. 9.1). The Late Renaissance decorative grammar, later copied in many Jesuit churches, could lead an unwary observer to think the altarpiece was from an earlier period.

The pairs of Corinthian-composite columns at the outer sides, the tondos, and the niches holding figures of the Society's saints suggest that some artistic options reflected on the exterior stone facades were projected into the interior of the church. Altarpieces of this kind cannot legitimately be claimed to have originated with the Jesuits, since earlier examples are known, but there can be no doubt that the Jesuits knew how to maximize their effect so as to heighten the importance of their saints and to emphasize the sacrarium.

Baltazar Telles's description, published in 1645, lists the altarpiece's components and the suitably adapted classical roots that would be recognized by everyone: 'It is the most delightful and imposing altarpiece in Lisbon; it consists



9.1. Altarpiece of the main chapel at São Roque, Lisbon, 1625–8.
Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

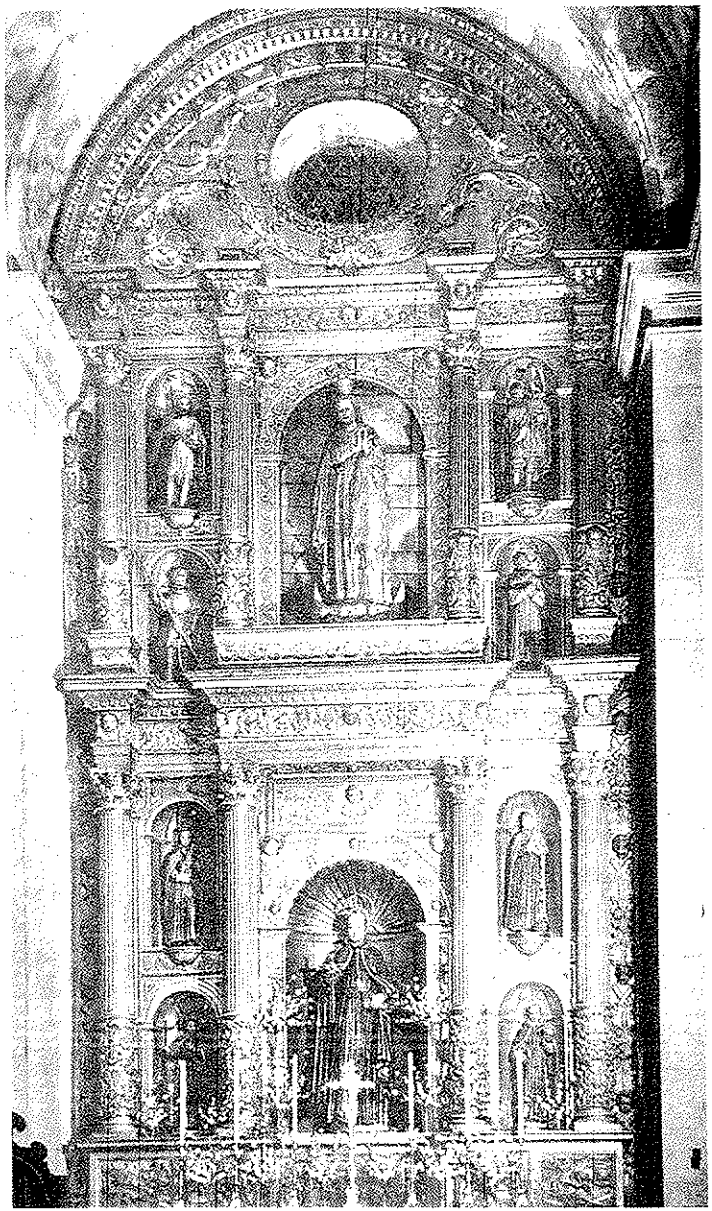
of two sections and their respective finishes, with several columns, whose fluted shafts are finely worked, and there are magnificent Corinthian capitals and architraves on the columns. The friezes are carved in good Roman style, and the ornamental cornices are in fine relief. There are fluted niches between the columns, which are also fluted, and their half-domes are decorated with fleurons, while the bases have curious borders with excellent relief foliage and fruit.'[2]

In addition to the sculptures, which perhaps represent the chief innovation introduced by the Jesuits, the São Roque altarpiece has a tribune in the centre for displaying the Blessed Sacrament. Although the tribune was uncovered only during the Corpus Christi celebration, its central importance justifies the altar's entire structure and the decorative magnificence of the classical architectural orders, which were deemed the most appropriate.[3] Seven large canvases by seventeenth-century Portuguese masters, showing scenes from the life of Christ that marked the liturgical calendar, covered the tribune during the year, creating a spectacular setting that has - surprisingly – survived until today.

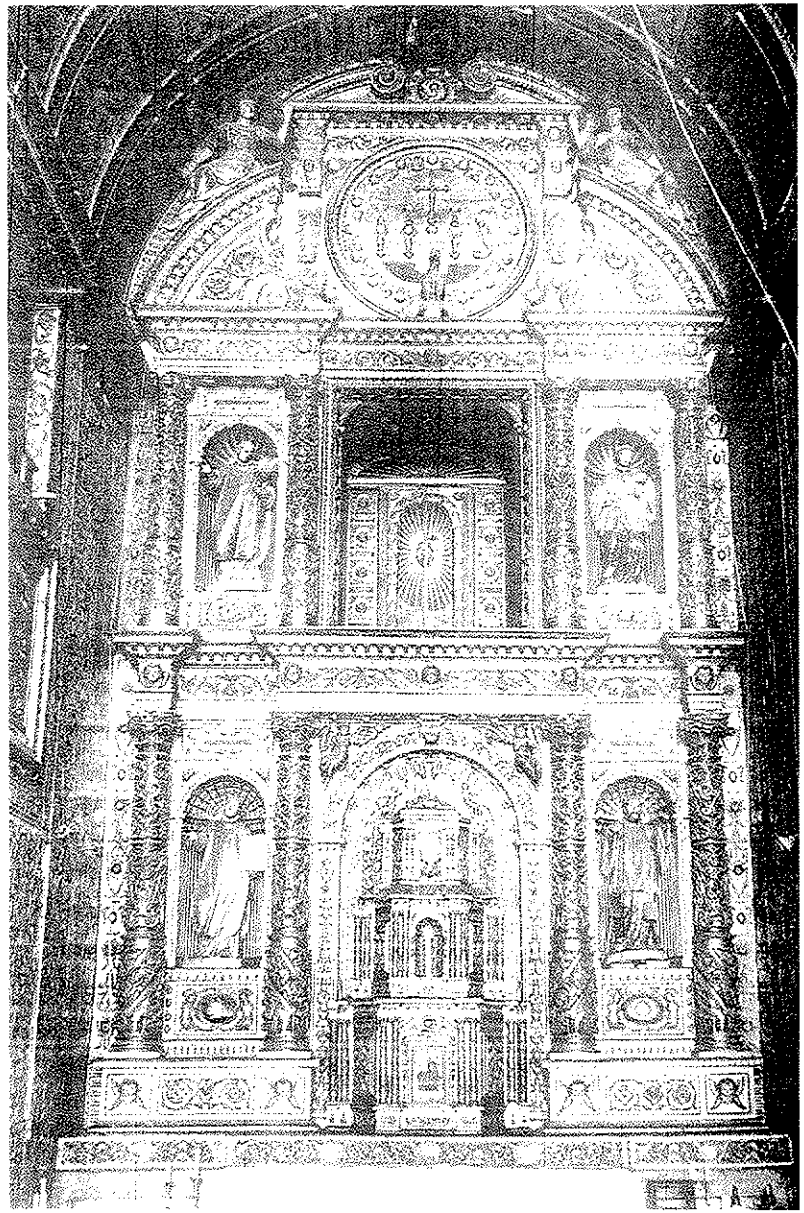
The same model would be used – albeit without the same scenographic impact – in other altarpieces at São Roque, namely, those in the Chapel of the Holy Family, built in 1634, and the Chapel of St Francis Xavier, presumably from the same date. Both altarpieces reveal exceptional levels of architectural and decorative sophistication. Churches outside São Roque also adopted this model. Two examples are the main chapel of the church at the Colégio do Espírito Santo, Evora, and the church of the former Colégio das Onze Mil Virgens, Coimbra, founded in 1542, which became the city's cathedral after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759.[4]

The main altarpieces in the cathedral's side chapels (of the Blessed Sacrament, St Ignatius, St Anthony, the Resurrection, and Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception) were produced between 1640 and 1670, and all adopt the model from the Casa Professa in Lisbon (fig. 9.2)[5] – confirmation that successful models were consistently adopted. Rather than establishing an artistic canon, the Jesuits took the highly practical approach of using tried and true formulas, a feature commonly found in Jesuit artistic programs. Significantly, there is an enormous contrast between the decoration of Jesuit churches and the *estilo chão*, or 'plain style,' to quote George Kubler, of the architecture that flourished under the same order.[6] The eminently functional architecture contrasts with the wealth of the interior decoration, but only in formal, not symbolic, terms.

The influence of São Roque is also perfectly evident at the Colégio de São João Evangelista, Funchal (Madeira). Building work on the college started in 1599, and the result is an eloquent homage to the decorative options used in the Lisbon church.[7] Both the carving and the 'decorative paintings,' produced using inlaid marble and patterned tiles, attempt to re-create the visual experience of São Roque (fig. 9.3).



9.2. Chapel of St Ignatius at Coimbra Cathedral (former Colégio das Onze Mil Virgens), Coimbra, 1640–70. From Robert C. Smith, *A talha em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1962).



9.3 Altarpiece of the main chapel at the church of the Colégio de São João Evangelista, Funchal (Madeira). From Smith, *A talha*.

The chapel in the Colégio Jesuítico on Ilha de Moçambique, on the far western border of the Portuguese State of India, confirms that the Lisbon model spread through the Portuguese colonial empire well after the end of the seventeenth century.[8]

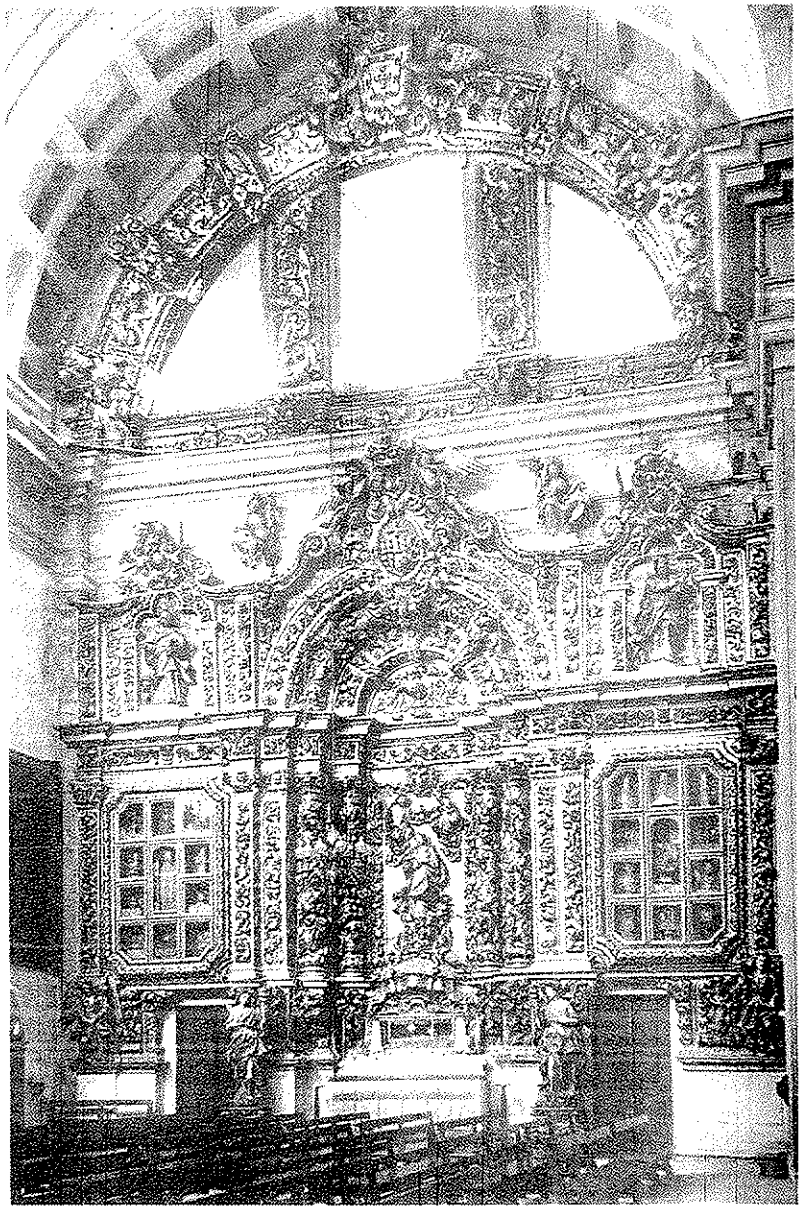
The structure of the Jesuit altarpieces would be adapted to produce reliquaries in ebony and gilded bronze. These altarpiece-style pieces had flanking columns and lintels, the form of which varied according to fashion, surmounted with pediments. Some of these reliquaries, which look like small altarpieces, can be seen in the collection at São Roque, as will be shown below.

The eighteenth century saw the art of gilded wood-carving in Portugal reach one of its high points. The Jesuits adopted the models found in the rest of Portugal's churches, carved in the so-called national style, as can be seen in the large altarpiece of the main chapel at the Colégio de Coimbra (c. 1698) and in those of the church's colossal transept chapels, flanked by shrines with reliquaries (fig. 9.4). The altarpieces of these chapels feature the characteristic Solomonic columns decorated with plant motifs as well as putti and birds, supporting an entablature under concentric arches that crown the altar. The keystone is decorated with a spectacular medallion bearing the arms of the Society, flanked by angels and surmounted by the royal crown. The Coimbra work, which naturally includes, in lateral niches, the iconographic constant of figures depicting the Society's most important saints, is a close copy of the altarpiece produced shortly before for the Colégio de Jesus in Elvas (1692).[9] The same 'national style' would also be adopted at São Roque, specifically for the new altarpieces built in the last decades of the seventeenth century. The chapels of Our Lady of Doctrine (1688–90), of the Assumption of Our Lady (c. 1690) – now the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament – and of Our Lady of Piety (1709) are all examples.

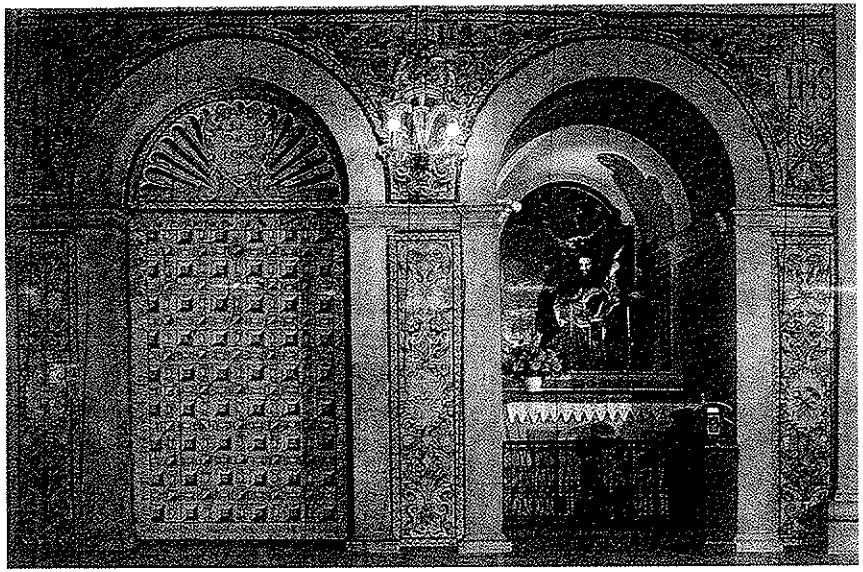
The erudite style of the Jesuits' early projects was diluted in the eighteenth century, as it blended with the large-scale Portuguese production of altarpieces, apparently losing its individuality. But its special character was preserved in the distinctive iconography of the Society and its saints. Images of St Ignatius and St Francis Xavier were a constant presence, their numbers followed by those of images of St Aloysius Gonzaga and St Francisco Borja.

Tiles

Apart from those at São Roque, the Jesuits are not known to have commissioned any tiles in the sixteenth century. The panels on the walls of the lower choir are especially noteworthy (fig. 9.5). Produced in Lisbon and dated 1595, the majolica painting combined the symbols of Christ's passion with the arms of the Society to produce a magnificent decorative effect. [10]



9.4 Transept chapels in the Colégio das Onze Mil Virgens, Coimbra, c. 1700. From Smith, *A talha*.

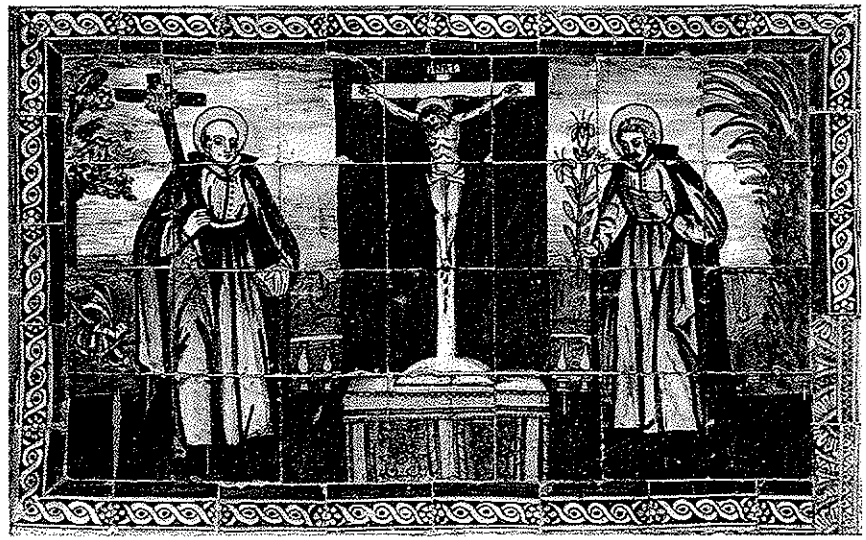


9.5. Tile panels in the church of São Roque, Lisbon, dated 1595. Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

Tiles became a common decorative element in seventeenth-century Portuguese churches, specifically those using the 'diamond-tip' pattern, which was often commissioned from workshops in Seville when they were not made in Portugal. Chequered black and white tiles were also used to cover large areas and create an appealing aesthetic effect that maintained a sense of sobriety and decorative grandeur.

The Jesuits did make some significant commissions of tiles in the eighteenth century, for the two Lisbon colleges of Santo Antão and Arroios. As with the altarpieces, the iconography used causes the tiles to stand out among the other decorative features found in Portuguese churches of that period.

The Colégio de Santo Antão, built in 1579 to replace the oldest Jesuit house in the world, has a small panel of seventeenth-century polychrome tiles showing an altar between the figures of St Ignatius and St Francis Xavier (fig. 9.6).[11] The college's main hall, long ago converted into a hospital, has several allegories of the subjects taught, especially in the so-called sphere class, which focused on astronomy and cosmography. There are eight panels of blue and white tiles showing 'Archimedes' Mirror at the Siege of Syracuse,' as well as allegories of Geometry, Optics, Geography, Geometry, Ballistics, and Astronomy. Portugal



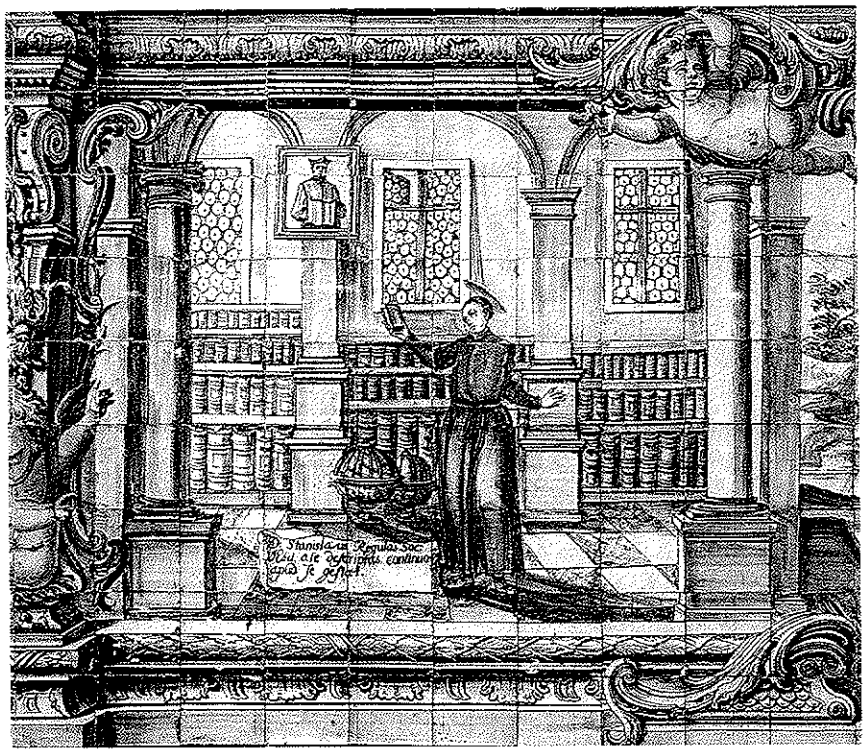
9.6. Tile panel *St Ignatius and St Francis Xavier*, Portugal, first quarter of the seventeenth century, Hospital de São José (former Colégio de Santo Antão), Lisbon. Photo courtesy of Luís Pavão.

had a colonial empire, and there is also a panel showing ships flying the Portuguese flag and a transcription of the first line of Camões's *Lusiads*, 'On seas ne'er before sailed.'[12]

A depiction of the subjects taught by the Jesuits also appears on the panels at the Colégio do Espírito Santo in Evora, which was founded in 1559 and became the first Jesuit university, teaching mathematics, geography, and physics as well as science and military architecture. The blue and white tile panels, mostly produced in the 1740s, depict the sciences but also include allegories of literary genres in a unique iconographic summary of the Jesuit teaching program.[13]

The Colégio de Arroios, founded in 1705 by Catherine of Bragança, was established to train Jesuit priests for the missions in India. The tiled imagery shows the lives of three Jesuit saints: Ignatius, at the entrance, and Francis Xavier and Stanislas Kostka, in what was formerly the main hall. These pieces are among the most important in the Jesuit pantheon, second only to the series on the lives of Ignatius and Francis Xavier produced by André Reinoso and Domingos da Cunha, or 'Cabrinha,' in the first half of the seventeenth century.

The Arroios series depicting the life of Ignatius, attributed to the Lisbon tile painter Bartolomeu Antunes and symbolically located at the entrance to the



9.7. Tile panel from the series *Life of St Stanislas Kostka*, Portugal, second quarter of the eighteenth century, Colégio de Arroios, Lisbon. Photo courtesy of Luís Pavão.

college, originally consisted of five panels.[14] Four have survived: the *Apparition of St Peter to St Ignatius*; the *Gift of Chastity to Our Lady*, the *Conversion in the Frozen Water*, and *Giving Clothes to a Poor Man*. Significantly, more than a hundred years later these works were followed by a series of images produced by Jean-Baptiste Barbé after drawings by Rubens for the *Vita Beati P. Ignatii Loiolae Societatis Jesu*, published in 1609.

Six scenes from the lives of St Francis Xavier and St Stanislas Kostka are depicted along the walls of what was probably the main hall, on the first and main floor of the college (fig. 9.7).[15] The tiles date from the second quarter of the eighteenth century and are part of the so-called *grande produção*. Almost all the stages in the two saints' life stories are accompanied by captions in Latin. But the series on the life of Francis Xavier, one source for which was probably Dominique Bouhours's *Vie de Saint François Xavier*, also includes a small panel without a

caption showing a baptismal ceremony – perhaps evidence of how popular the saint was in Portugal.[16]

Textiles

A consideration of today's churches gives us no real sense of the important role once played by textiles. As well as being exceptionally decorative, textiles provided colour as a visual reflection of the liturgical calendar.

The use of textiles in Jesuit churches went beyond the liturgical vestments worn by the celebrants of the mass to include items, some of them very large, that decorated the chapels; some of these, especially those used on the most solemn occasions, were also richly embroidered.

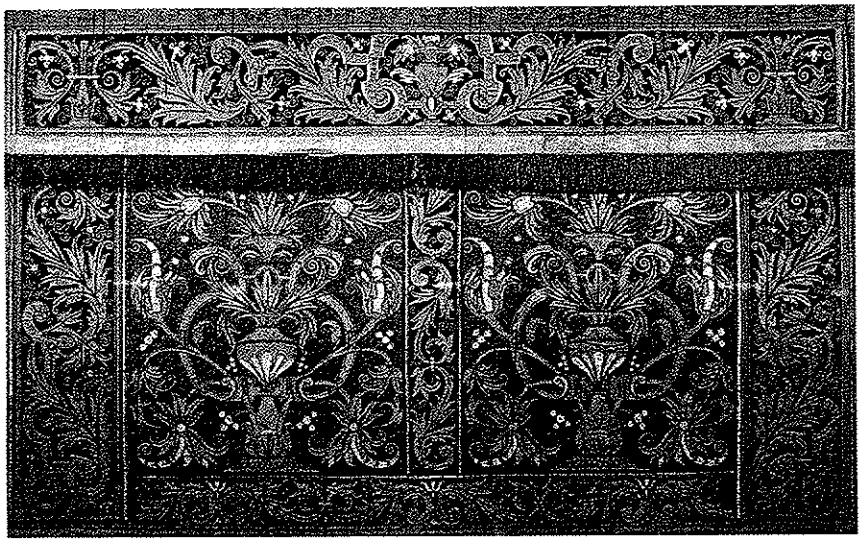
Besides altar frontals, there were curtains, canopies, and wall- and door-hangings, as well as tapestries and even precious carpets. The significance of textiles was so great that the ceiling of São Roque, painted after 1588 by Francisco Venegas and in the early seventeenth century by Amaro do Vale, shows painted *trompe l'oeil* tapestries depicting biblical scenes: 'Gathering the Manna,' 'Jewish Easter,' 'Abraham Meeting Melchisedek,' and 'The Sacrifice of Isaac.'[17]

Owing to the fragility of the materials – among the decorative arts, textiles have always suffered the worst ravages of time – few pieces from before the eighteenth century have survived.

Portugal has preserved, once again at the church and museum of São Roque, an almost complete seventeenth-century set of paraments produced at Portuguese workshops, evidence of Jesuit commissions for textiles. This set of ten altar frontals is richly embroidered with gold, silver, and silk and decorated in places with pieces of glass cut and set to imitate precious stones (figs 9.8, 9.9). Its grammar is late mannerist, with rich cartouches and 'ferroneries' in the earlier pieces, and baroque-style entwining plant motifs in those from the second half of the seventeenth century.[18]

Many of the carpets that covered the chapel floors at São Roque were made in the Far East, as was an almost complete set of polychrome silk and gold vestments, probably from China, for use at mass. It consists of two dalmatics, one chasuble, one chalice veil, one pall, two stoles, and three maniples. The inventories record the pieces from at least 1695, when they are described as 'vestments in Indian satin and yellow cloth.'[19]

The altar frontal that belonged to the Cotovia novitiate, founded in Lisbon in 1619, was another Asian piece produced in China, probably in Macao.[20] The Society's arms are the only religious symbol found on the embroidered silk decoration, which also shows dogs of Fo and gazelles. The piece now belongs to



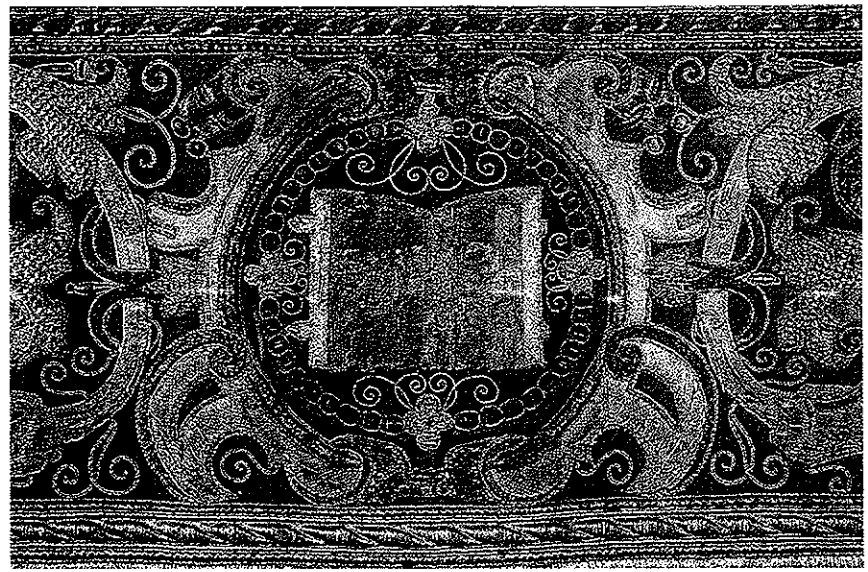
9.8. Altar frontal, first quarter of the seventeenth century, Museu de São Roque, Lisbon. Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

the Museu da Ciência of the University of Lisbon, formerly the Nobles' College, which was built on the site of the original Jesuit novitiate.[21]

As indicated below in the sections on furniture and jewellery, the Funchal church houses some rare examples of the last Jesuit commissions before the expulsion. Despite their poor condition, a pair of door-curtains embroidered with the Society's arms was still in use until recently. The depiction of the arms of the Society under the Portuguese crown is similar to that on the coronas of the monumental transept chapels in the church at the Coimbra college. The Museu de Arte Sacra in Funchal has a set of paraments, consisting of a chasuble, maniple, stole, pallium, veil, and altar frontal, all in red damask with gold embroidery, that is believed to have come from the Jesuit college.[22]

Furniture

The chest in São Roque's sacristy is by far the most important surviving piece of furniture commissioned by the Jesuits. Made around 1600 and recorded in the church inventories as from 1604, it has a broad rosewood surface on an oak carcass. The doors and drawers are decorated with geometrical ivory fillets the



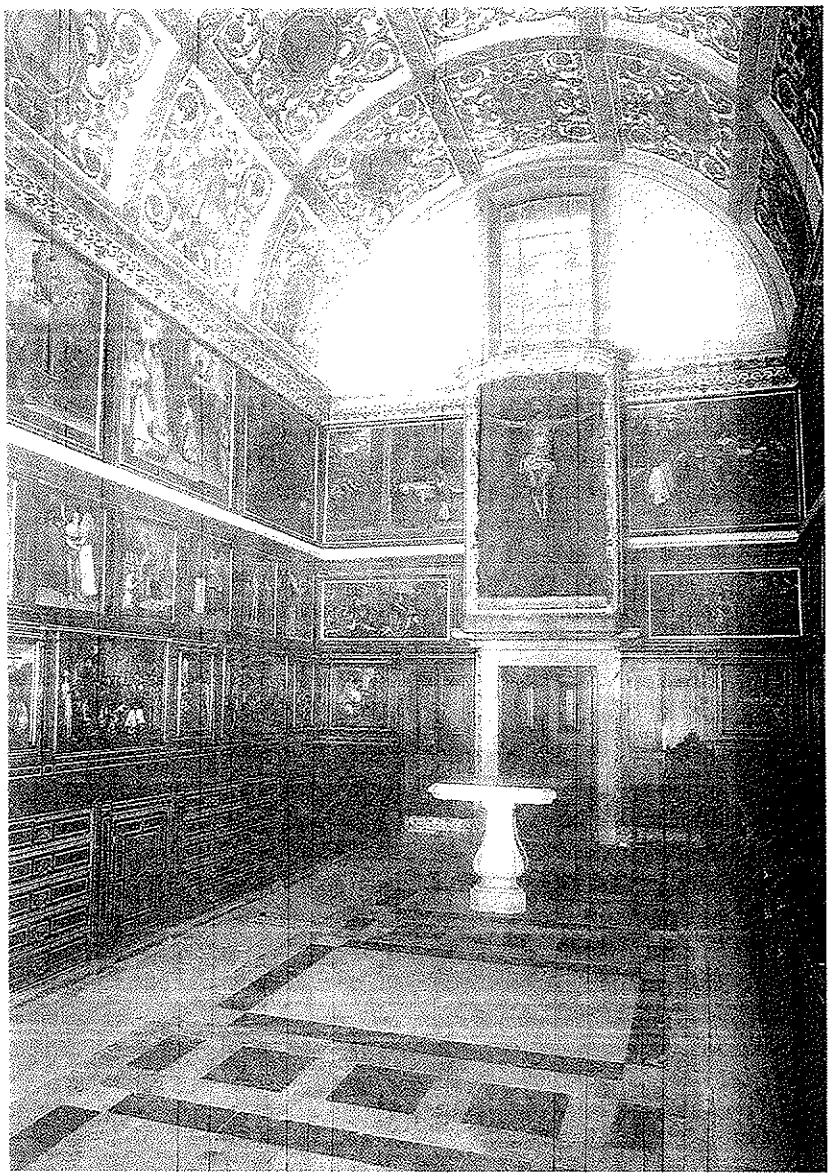
9.9. Altar frontal, last quarter of the seventeenth century, Museu de São Roque, Lisbon. Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

great sobriety of which produces a superb decorative effect (fig. 9.10). The decoration cannot be described as characteristically Jesuit, since it is also found on other Portuguese furniture of the period. But the pieces with similar decoration are smaller in size, and there are no known similar chests.

The balustrades in São Roque's chapels also reveal the use of precious ornamental woods, demonstrating a taste that to some extent can be linked to the Jesuits. The ebony balustrades in the Chapel of Our Lady of Doctrine have 'waves and twists,' produced by incising highly decorative parallel, gently undulating flutes. Many similar pieces from the period are known. The side doors of the same chapel are inlaid with precious woods that recall the furniture produced in Portuguese India. The doors show the iconography of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, namely, a missal and a rosary, an exceptional piece of late seventeenth-century Portuguese marquetry.

Unfortunately, except for some chests, almost all the furniture of the Jesuit colleges has been lost.

One of the last major Jesuit works commissioned from Portuguese joiners is in the sacristy of the Funchal college: a chest with an upright back in gilded wood and paintings on canvas. According to Rui Carita, who has conducted an



9.10. Chest, c. 1600, sacristy at São Roque, Lisbon.
Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque

exhaustive study of the college, it can be dated to 1730. The sacristy also contains three magnificent wall wardrobes framed in inlaid polychrome marble and crowned with the Society's insignia. The doors and inner panelling are in jacaranda. The wardrobes display a synthesis of materials and techniques that recalls the Chapel of Our Lady of Doctrine at São Roque.

The chests and large wardrobes in the Bom Jesus sacristy, in Old Goa, India, are the finest achievements of Jesuit art in the Portuguese Empire. Produced in the 1650s and 1660s by exclusively local craftsmen, these pieces are made of wood inlaid with precious woods and ivory. They belong, however, to a different chapter in the history of the decorative arts.[23]

Precious Celebrations: Gold and Silverware

The pieces in gold and silver produced for the Jesuits, particularly those related to divine worship and the Eucharist, reflect an era when the cult of the Blessed Sacrament, actively spread by the Jesuits, was at its peak. This form of art enjoyed the Jesuits' special attention, the natural result of the Society's presence in a country with a centuries-old tradition in such wares.

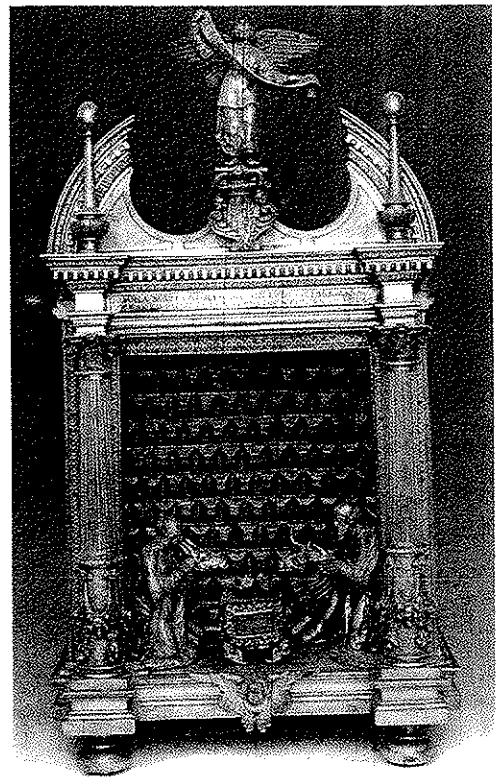
Documents show that the faithful were soon making gifts of money and silver objects to the first Jesuit institutions in Portugal. After São Roque was built in the 1580s, these highly valuable gifts were used chiefly to produce the pieces used in the liturgy. It is also known that pewter images were cast at São Roque, from moulds imported from Spain in 1588. These pieces, which unfortunately have not survived and the subjects of which are unknown – they probably depicted Christ or the Virgin – would later have been sold or used as gifts. The following section examines some of the most significant Jesuit commissions for pieces of silver and gold in chronological order. All but one have survived.

Two of the earliest gold pieces found at Jesuit churches in Portugal are now part of the collection of reliquaries at São Roque. Both items, a reliquary and the centrepiece of a monstrance, date from the late sixteenth century and are made of enamelled gold and rock crystal. The reliquary holds a piece of Christ's crown of thorns and was originally hung among the leaves of a silver tree next to the image of St Ignatius of Loyola in the main chapel (fig. 9.11). It probably started life as a scent bottle; it later was donated to the Lisbon Jesuits by Don Francisco de Bragança (?–1634). The centrepiece came from an imposing monstrance that has been lost and perhaps was melted down. The monstrance consisted of two silver angels supporting an ostensory that held the surviving enamelled gold piece, in micro-architectural Renaissance style and containing a small fragment of the Holy Cross that had belonged to Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV. It was

9.11. Reliquary, c. 1600, Museu de São Roque, Lisbon.
Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

later given, in Bohemia, to Dom João de Borja, the celebrated benefactor of the Lisbon Jesuits and the son of St Francisco Borja.

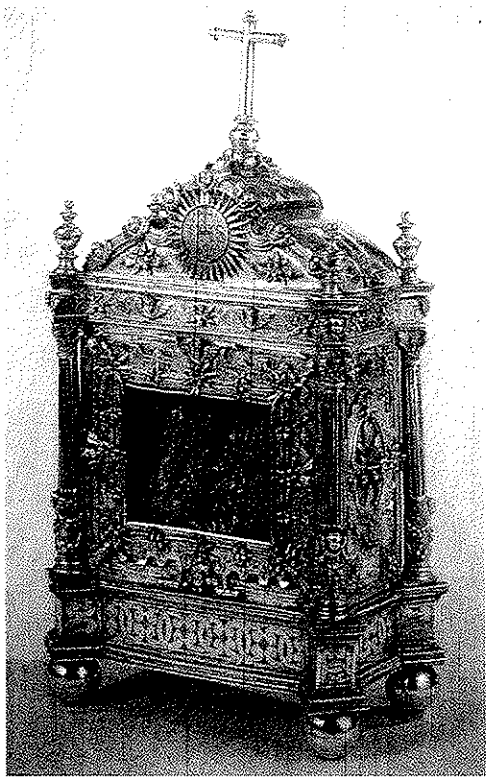
The much larger Reliquary of the Crib, dated 1615, was commissioned by a bequest in the will of Maria Rolim, the wife of Dom Luís da Gama, the grandson of Vasco da Gama (fig. 9.12). The reliquary is made of gilded bronze and silver, and the centre of the exceptional sculptural group showing the Holy Family contains a relic from the manger of the Christ child, which came from Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. It closely follows the model of carved altarpieces. The fact that it dates from ten years before the main chapel at São Roque suggests that the new model adopted for Jesuit altarpieces in Portugal may have been introduced via works of jewellery, specifically the reliquaries that probably



9.12. Reliquary of the Crib, dated 1615, Museu de São Roque, Lisbon.
Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

originated in Italy and Spain. This is yet another open question, having to do with the influence of mobile objects in spreading artistic models.

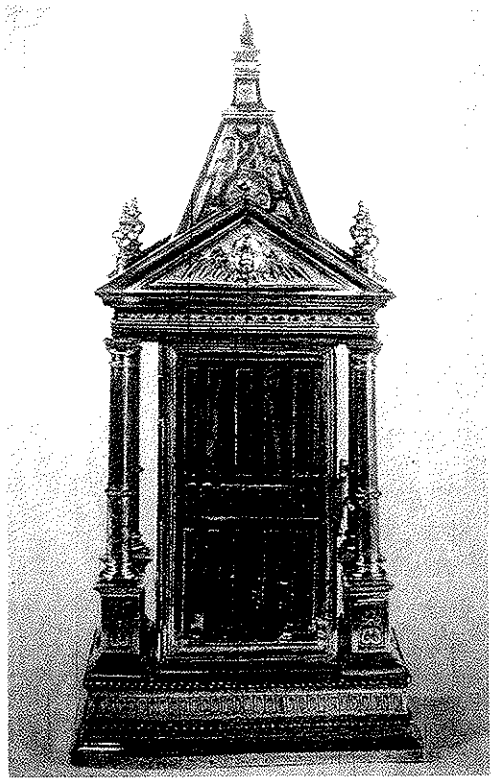
The architectural nature of this new model, which was clearly influenced by wooden altarpieces, is evident in the reliquary from the church of the Onze Mil Virgens, now Coimbra Cathedral, kept at the Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro (fig. 9.13). The sides have composite-Corinthian columns that support a triangular pediment bearing the Jesuit IHS emblem. Like the da Gama family reliquaries at São Roque, this one confirms the rise of the Late Renaissance artistic grammar, with the architectural features that spread throughout the Jesuit-influenced decorative arts, especially during the first half of the seventeenth century.



9.13. Reliquary from the church of the Colégio das Onze Mil Virgens, first quarter of the seventeenth century, Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, Coimbra. Photo courtesy of IPM.

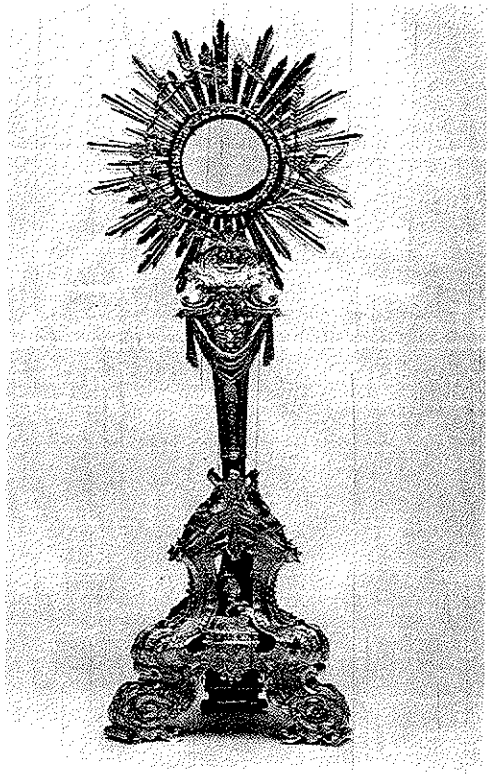
The same college owns an architectural-style reliquary containing a relic of unknown origin, probably of St Lucy (fig. 9.14). This extremely sober piece, the geometrical pattern of which recalls the decoration of the São Roque chest, probably dates from the first quarter of the seventeenth century. The monstrance-chalice originally from the Altar de Jesus at the church of the college of São João Evangelista, Funchal, and now at the Museu de Arte Sacra is of slightly later date.[24] It has a baluster-like foot, and the upper part has a canopy supported by columns and crowned with a cross (fig. 9.15).

The sacrarium of the church of Santo Nome de Jesus is part of the group of pieces from the main chapel at the college of the Onze Mil Virgens, Coimbra (fig. 9.16). The goldsmith João Rodrigues made the sacrarium, including the



9.14. Reliquary of St Lucy (?) from the church of the Colégio das Onze Mil Virgens, first quarter of the seventeenth century, Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, Coimbra. Photo courtesy of IPM.

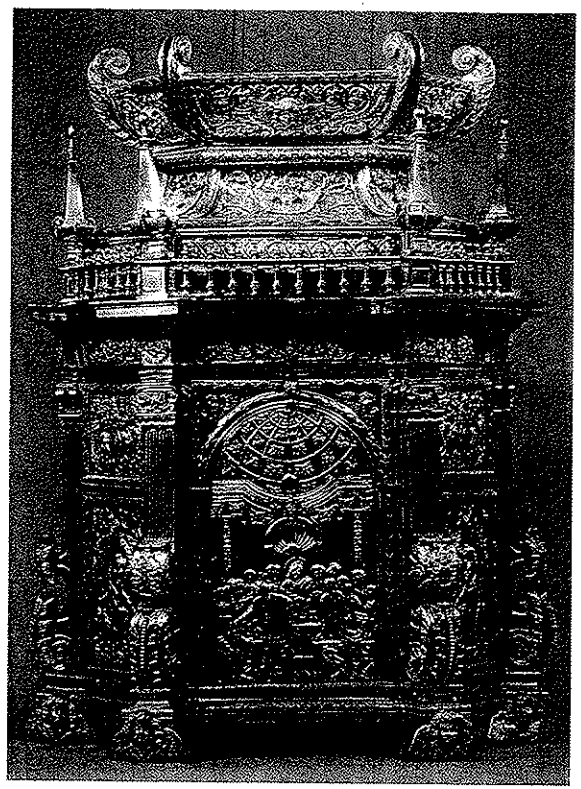
throne and frontal, in silver and bronze between c. 1675 and 1685.[25] Like almost all the surviving silverware from this college, it is now at the Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro, having come from the treasury of Coimbra Cathedral. Along with paintings and furniture, it was numbered among the most important Jesuit pieces for use in worship that the bishop-count incorporated into the cathedral's treasury after the expulsion of the Society. He had all signs or emblems of the Jesuits removed from the pieces so that they could not be identified and incorporated into the royal treasury[26] – which is why the pieces have survived. Significantly, the use of silver and gilded bronze, found here on the Coimbra sacrarium, is also recorded at other Jesuit colleges such as São Lourenço in Oporto and São Roque and Santo Antão in Lisbon, whereas it is not



9.15. Monstrance, second quarter of the seventeenth century, Museu de Arte Sacra, Funchal.
Photo courtesy of Cintra, Castro Caldas.

usual in the treasuries of other Portuguese churches. It may be yet another Roman influence introduced by the Jesuits.

The Coimbra college also owned other important pieces of silverware that were saved by the bishop-count. A seventeenth-century silver cross believed to have belonged to St Francis Xavier can still be seen at the Museu Nacional de Machado de Castro. It is decorated with a highly naturalistic silver crab, representing the crustacean that is supposed to have given the saint the crucifix on the island of Ceram. The inscription states, 'This holy crucifix is the same that the crab brought to St Xavier on the beach' (ESTE STO CRUCIFIXO É O MESMO QUE O CARANGUEJO TROUXE Á PRAYA AO STO XAVIER). The miracle was one of the most celebrated at the time of Francis Xavier's beatification.



9.16. João Rodrigues, sacrarium from the church of the Colégio das Onze Mil Virgens, Coimbra, 1675–85, Museu Nacional Machado de Castro, Coimbra.
Photo courtesy of IPM.

São Roque has a silver book-cover and halo from a figure of St Francis Xavier that was originally on the main altar. Entirely decorated with floral motifs in the late seventeenth-century style, it was commissioned in 1696 from the Lisbon goldsmith António da Cruz, one of the leading craftsmen from whom the Lisbon Jesuits commissioned work.[27]

One of the most important pieces produced for the Portuguese Jesuits was the majestic silver sacrarium at the college of Santo Antão, Lisbon. This colossal structure in silver and gilded bronze was shaped like a globe surmounted by a cross with Christ crucified and supported by two angels. It originally included several other elements such as busts and the canon of the mass. It was destroyed by the Lisbon earthquake of 1755; though some badly

damaged parts were known to be still in existence four years later, no further record of them remains.[28]

The Jesuits had initially commissioned António da Cruz to make this sacrarium, since he had worked before at São Roque, but shortly thereafter they went in search of foreign craftsmen who might create a more modern work for this allegory of the Blessed Sacrament. In due course, two such men came to Lisbon. The first was Jacomo Smith, who was of Flemish origin and who came via Rome to work on the sacrarium in August 1700. The other was Francisco Ludovice, a goldsmith of German origin (the original family name was Ludwig) who had also worked for the Jesuits in Rome – at the Gesù, in association with Johan Adolf Gaap of Augsburg.

Ludovice's arrival in Lisbon in 1701 opened a new chapter in the history of art in Portugal. It is significant that both Smith and Ludovice had studied in Rome; their background reveals that there was interest in introducing a modern Roman baroque–style decorative language into Portugal. This interest is confirmed by the many pieces of silverware that King João V commissioned in Rome and gave to churches throughout Portugal to stimulate a change in the dominant taste for what he called 'village work' (*obra de aldeia* [*sic*]). The finest such pieces are in the treasury in the chapel of São João Baptista, in São Roque; they were produced in Rome between 1742 and 1747. Other religious commissions of Italian silver can be found at the Lisbon Cathedral Museum and the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga. Under the patronage of King João V, Ludovice would become a leading figure in the history of art in Portugal. Shortly after his arrival, without completing his seven-year exclusive contract, he abandoned his Jesuit patrons and started work as the king's architect; he designed the monumental monastery and palace of Mafra, to be a reflection of the monarch's magnificence.

The silver frontal originally in the chapel of Nossa Senhora do Pópulo at the former Jesuit college in Funchal, now Funchal Cathedral, also dates from the first half of the eighteenth century. Its aesthetic model can be found in embroidery.[29]

The 'six new silver candlesticks in Roman style'[30] now at the Museu de Arte Sacra in Funchal and recorded in the inventory of the chapel of Nossa Senhora do Socorro at the local college were very probably the last of the Madeira Jesuits' commissions. They were produced in Lisbon in the second quarter of the eighteenth century by the silversmith IF, who used Roman style for the candlesticks and decorated them with the IHS emblem on the base, an acknowledgment that the commission was from the Jesuits.

Since the Jesuits were part of a nation with a large colonial empire, their treasures included a significant number of Asian pieces in precious metals,

mainly from India and China. Among the most important surviving examples is a seventeenth-century Indian processional cross made of ivory and *lignum vitae*, the silver mounts of which were made in Portugal. It belonged to the Casa Professa de São João Evangelista, Vila Viçosa, formerly a Jesuit college and now the parish church. The Casa Professa of São Roque assembled the most significant group of pieces brought from the Jesuit missions in the Far East. The most important to have survived, owing to its use as a reliquary, is a tortoiseshell and silver casket recorded at São Roque before 1588. This monstrance-shaped reliquary may have come from Macao, but the absence of similar pieces or any documentation on the reliquary makes it impossible to date or classify this extremely interesting piece with any accuracy.

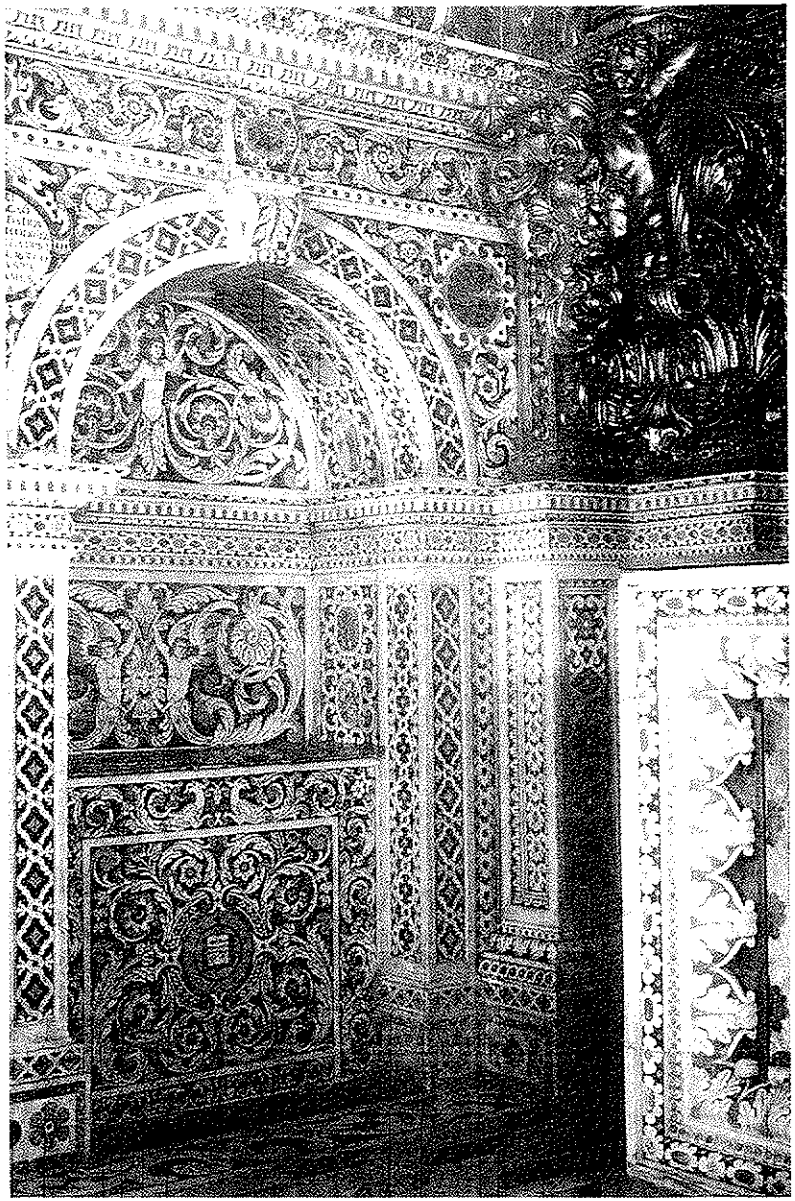
Another of the finest Jesuit treasuries, perhaps second only to São Roque's, can be found in the former Portuguese territories in India, specifically at the basilica of the Bom Jesus, in Old Goa. This church houses the body of the 'Apostle of the Indies' and, formerly, works that were at the Rachol Museum until their recent move to the new museum in the Santa Monica monastery, Old Goa. The overwhelming majority of the pieces date from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Marquis of Pombal had them sent to Portugal, but after the ascent of Queen Maria I to the throne in 1779 and the consequent fall of the dead king's chief minister, they were immediately returned to Goa, without even having been unpacked. The reliquary cross, containing a fragment of the wood of the Holy Cross, was produced around 1650, when the new sacristy was built at the Bom Jesus. It is of particular note became it made direct reference to the architecture – in this case, a facade – of a Jesuit church. In addition, it used the Society's emblem, which can also be found on a fine reliquary-monstrance and a censer boat.[31]

The question of whether or not there was a Jesuit style has not been definitively answered, as Gauvin Alexander Bailey has noted.[32] The importance of the decorative arts, which in this case derive their partly functional nature from their role in liturgy, is demonstrated by the uses to which they were characteristically put in the program of the Society of Jesus. Certain features consistently appear in the models adopted by the Jesuits, thereby demonstrating that the Society pragmatically and systematically retained models that proved to be both functional and successful, such as the carved altarpieces discussed above. Sometimes, however, there was a search for novelty and modernity, as when Roman-trained artists were hired to work on the Santo Antão sacrarium. I believe a clear link can be established between pragmatism and art through study of the work produced for the Society of Jesus, especially the wood carving, tiles, textiles, furniture, and silverware.

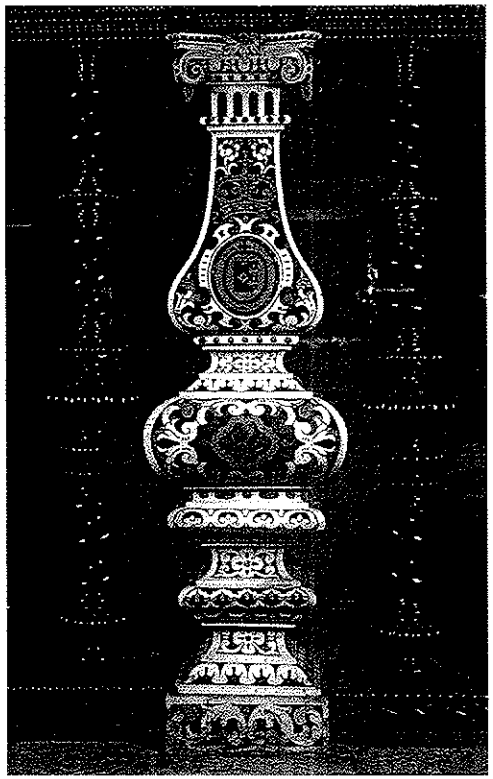
Reliquaries were among the Jesuits' principal cult objects. They can be seen as a synthesis of all the arts, in their fabulous combination of materials such as precious metals, gems, wood, and even textiles and painting to produce some of the most creative art of the Counter Reformation. Fortunately, art history is now beginning to study them properly. São Roque has by far the finest example of the phenomenon of reliquary collection in Portugal, with around 240 pieces. These mostly date from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and were produced in a wide range of locations, from Europe to the Far East.[33]

The techniques and materials were also combined on a far larger scale, as in São Roque's Chapel of Our Lady of Doctrine, where the various decorative arts work together to establish a highly individual iconographic program (figs 9.17, 9.18). The carving, stone, and other inlays in exotic woods on the gates, executed during the redecoration of the chapel in 1688, as well as the frontal in embroidered silk, all feature a rosary encircling a missal that bears the inscription DOCTRINA, ET VERITAS LEVIT, which serves as an ornamental 'leitmotif' for the chapel. The paintings that covered the reliquaries on the two large lateral-wall shrines are the work of Bento Coelho da Silveira, a painter who worked for several Jesuit churches in Portugal. The paintings are the *Apparition of Christ to Our Lady* and the *Ascension of Christ*, a clear reference to St Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, specifically the contemplations of the Fourth Week, as recently identified by Luís de Moura Sobral.[34]

The Jesuits achieved their most spectacular results in temporary decoration. Unfortunately, only signs of these, many of them literary, have survived, such as descriptions of festivals and ceremonies. Yet these reports help us reconstruct, to some degree, the use of ornaments, especially those made of precious materials, which were of great importance for creating a theatrical setting and for promoting the cult of saints and their relics within a liturgical ceremony. While celebrations and festivals were necessarily ephemeral, they represent the high point in the Jesuits' use of ornament. One of the most spectacular public events in Lisbon took place when twelve litters bearing relics and precious reliquaries donated by Dom João de Borja, some of them made especially for the occasion, were taken to São Roque in 1588.[35] The celebrations are recorded in a description by Manuel de Campos that was published in Lisbon in 1588 and in Alcalá the following year, translated by Alvaro de Veanncos.[36] Only later would such ostentation be matched, by a magnificent play performed at the college of Santo Antão when Philip II of Portugal (III of Spain) visited Lisbon in 1619. It involved more than three hundred actors and a wardrobe of Oriental finery studded with precious stones. In all, 1,090 diamonds, 3,000 pearls, 248 emeralds, 1,139 rubies, and precious furnishings from royal and noble palaces, monasteries, and churches were used.[37]



9.17 Chapel of Our Lady of Doctrine, c. 1688, São Roque, Lisbon.
Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.



9.18. Balustrade, Chapel of Our Lady of Doctrine, c. 1688, São Roque, Lisbon. Photo courtesy of Museu de S. Roque.

The celebrations to mark the canonization of Francis Xavier and Ignatius of Loyola in 1622 were equally spectacular and had an enormous impact on the collective imagination of the people of Lisbon. There were allegories with paintings and sculptures on triumphal arches, tableaux vivants, and a host of artistic and emblematic decorations accompanying poetry, dance, and music.

The precious materials all combined to produce a spectacular and intensely visual atmosphere. The Jesuits evidently used gold, silver and precious stones to help create such an atmosphere, and to sacralize it – the materials having an undeniable evocative power, especially in the cult of relics and the Blessed Sacrament.

The so-called decorative arts were the most successful plastic expression of

sacred eloquence ever achieved by the Jesuits. Unfortunately, the destruction and dispersal after 1759 of the artefacts concerned has made it impossible to gain a clear picture of the extent of their impact. Only by cross-referencing objects and works of art, such as those at São Roque, with others in other museums and collections and with documentary and literary descriptions will it be possible to re-create, to some extent, a visual universe that has otherwise been lost for good.

NOTES

This article was translated by Richard Trewinnard.

1 José Eduardo Horta Correia, 'A arquitectura – maneirismo e "estilo chão,"' in *História da arte em Portugal*, vol. 7 (Lisbon, 1986), pp. 110–14.
2 Baltazar Telles, *Chronica da Companhia de Jesu, na provincia de Portugal*, vol. 1 (Lisbon, 1645–7), p. 115.
3 For the adaptation of the Corinthian-composite style as a reflection of triumphalism on the part of the church, see David M. Kowal, 'Innovation and Assimilation: The Jesuit Contribution to Architectural Development in Portuguese India,' in O'M. *Jes. Cult.*, p. 484.
4 Robert C. Smith, *A talha em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1962), pp. 58–62.
5 Teresa Freitas Morna, 'Os jesuítas e a arte,' in *O púlpito e a imagem. Os jesuítas e a arte* (Lisbon, 1997), exhib. cat., p. 30.
6 George Kubler, *A arquitectura portuguesa chã entre as especiarias e os diamantes, 1521–1706* (Lisbon, 1988).
7 Rui Carita, *O colégio dos jesuítas do Funchal* (Funchal, 1987).
8 José Meco, 'As artes decorativas,' in *História da arte em Portugal*, vol. 7, p. 161.
9 See Smith, *A talha*, p. 76.
10 Julio Parra, *Azulejos. Painéis do século XVI ao XVII* (Lisbon, 1994), cat. nos 5 and 6.
11 A.J. Barros Veloso and Isabel Almasqué, *Hospitais civis de Lisboa. História e azulejos* (Lisbon, 1996).
12 M. dos Santos Simões, *Azulejaria em Portugal no século XVIII* (Lisbon, 1979), p. 207.
13 José Filipe Mendeiros, *The Tiles of the University of Evora* (Evora, 2002).
14 Santos Simões, *Azulejaria*, p. 211.
15 Veloso and Almasqué, *Hospitais civis*, pp. 75–85 (these panels are currently undergoing conservation work at the Museu Nacional do Azulejo, Lisbon).
16 Victor Serrão, *A lenda de São Francisco Xavier pelo pintor André Reinoso* (Lisbon, 1993), pp. 49–54.
17 See Joaquim Oliveira Caetano, 'O tecto de São Roque,' in *O tecto da Igreja de S. Roque: História, conservação e restauro* (Lisbon, 2002), pp. 32–6.
18 *Frontais de altar seiscentistas da Igreja de S. Roque* (Lisbon, 1994), exhib. cat.

19 'vestimenta de cetim da India e tela amarela': see *No caminho do Japão: Arte oriental nas colecções da Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa* (Lisbon, 1993), exhib. cat. nos 19–28.
20 Nuno Vassallo e Silva, 'Missions and Merchants: Christian Art in Macao,' *Oriental Art* 46:3 (2000): 84–91.
21 *Encontro de culturas: Oito séculos de missionação portuguesa*, ed. Maria Natália Correia Guedes (Lisbon, 1994), exhib. cat., no. 362.
22 Carita, *O colégio dos jesuítas*, p. 186.
23 Pedro Dias, *História da arte portuguesa no mundo (1415–1822). O espaço do Indico* (Lisbon, 1998), p. 333.
24 *Documentos para a história da arte em Portugal*, vol. 13 (Lisbon, 1975), p. 81; Carita, *O colégio dos jesuítas*, p. 171–6.
25 Fausto Santos Martins, 'A arquitectura dos primeiros colégios jesuítas de Portugal. 1542–1759,' dissertation, University of Oporto, 1994, p. 759; António Nogueira Gonçalves, 'O altar de prata da Sé Nova de Coimbra,' in *Estudos de ourivesaria* (Porto, 1984), pp. 204–10.
26 *Documentos para a história da arte em Portugal*, vol. 3 (Lisbon, 1969), p. 21.
27 Vassallo e Silva 'Aspectos da arte da prata na Companhia de Jesus (séculos XVI a XVII),' in *O púlpito e a imagem* (n5 above), pp. 62–3.
28 *Documentos para a história da arte em Portugal*, vol. 5 (Lisbon, 1969), p. 6.
29 Carita, *O colégio dos jesuítas*, p. 175.
30 *Documentos para a história da arte em Portugal*, vol. 13 (Lisbon, 1975), p. 79; Carita, *O colégio dos jesuítas*, p. 174.
31 Vassallo e Silva, 'A arte da prata nas casas jesuíticas de Goa,' in *A Companhia de Jesus e a missionação no Oriente*, ed. Nuno Silva Gonçalves (Lisbon, 2000), pp. 367–85.
32 Bail. 'Style.'
33 Nuno Vassallo e Silva and Júlio Parra Martínez, *Esplendor e devoção: Os relicários de S. Roque* (Lisbon, 1998), exhib. cat.
34 Luís de Moura Sobral, '*Un bel composto*: A obra de arte total do primeiro barroco português,' in *Struggle for Synthesis*, vol. 1 (Lisbon, 1999), pp. 308–9.
35 William Telfer, *The Treasure of São Roque: A Sidelight on the Counter-Reformation* (London, 1932), pp. 31–52.
36 Manuel de Campos, *Relaçam do solenne recebimento que se fez em Lisbon às santas reliquias q[ue] se leuáram à igreja de S. Roque da companhia de Iesu aos 25 de Ianeiro de 1588* (Lisbon, 1588); *Relacion del solene recebimiento que se hizo en Lisbon a las santas reliquias que se llevaron a la Iglesia de San Roque de la Compañia de Iesus* (Alcalá, 1589).
37 José Sasportes, *História da dança em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1970), p. 121.

10 / Cultural Convergence at the Ends of the Earth: The Unique Art and Architecture of the Jesuit Missions to the Chiloé Archipelago (1608–1767)

GAUVIN ALEXANDER BAILEY

As John W. O'Malley reminds us in the preface to this volume, the 'propagation of the faith' was one of the principal goals set down in the 'Formula of the Institute.' Little did the first companions realize, when drafting that document, how quickly the Society would take that exhortation to heart, by extending their missionary enterprise to the furthest reaches of the globe – to Tibet, Paraguay, and Huronia. Recent studies, including several in both volumes of *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts*, have revealed how important the visual arts and architecture were to these ventures, in providing a bridge between languages, a visual explanation for tricky points of doctrine, and a roof over people's heads. Yet it has been only in the last decade that scholars have begun to pay serious attention to the artistic activities of one of the most distant and fascinating missions attempted by the Society: the missions in Chiloé on the frontier of Chilean Patagonia, the southernmost Catholic missions in the world before modern times.

Very few people – including specialists in mission history and culture – are familiar with Chiloé. While this might not be an issue were Chiloé merely distant and not interesting, the missions to that archipelago turn out to have inspired one of the most intriguing and acculturative artistic traditions of the early modern world, comparable to those of the much more celebrated Reductions in Paraguay. I, for one, wish that I had encountered this missionary episode in time to include it in my own study of Jesuit mission art.[1] This article, which draws upon a wealth of unpublished source material in the National Archives of Chile, is my way of trying to make amends.

The Chiloé missions are unique because both sides of the exchange were different from the norm in colonial Latin America. On the one hand, the Chiloé missions accommodated profoundly to an indigenous woodland culture that has more in common with North American Amerindian culture than it has with that